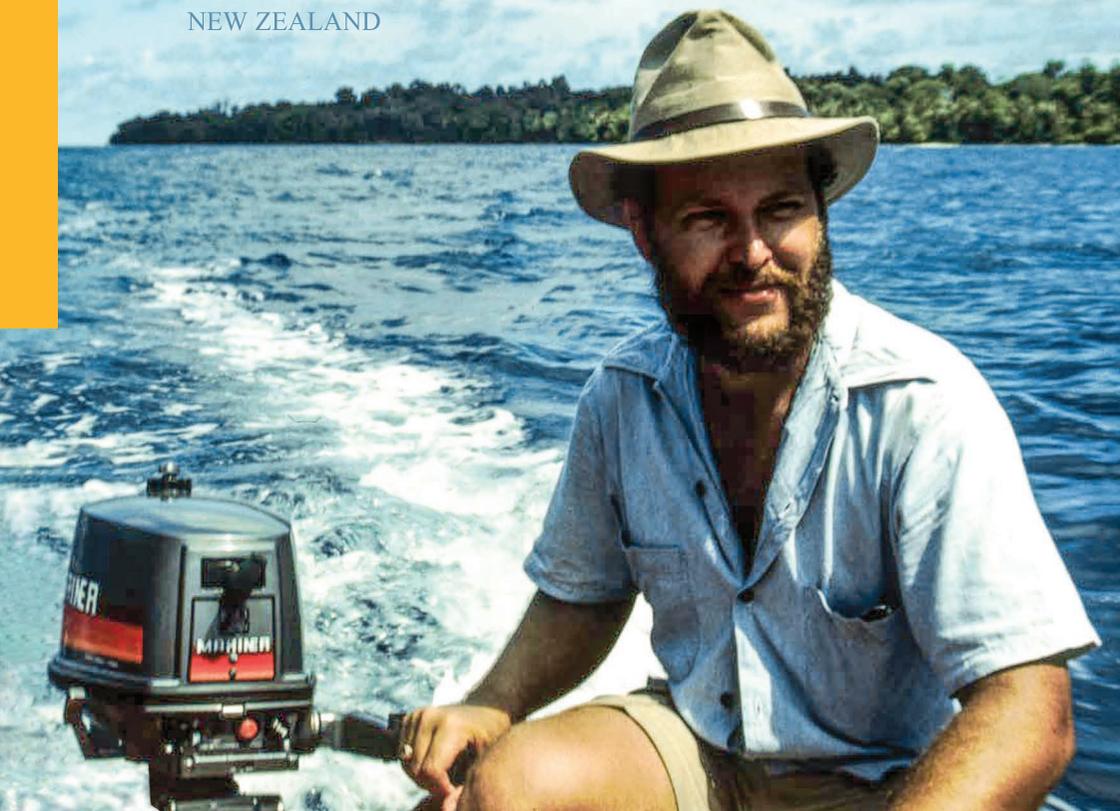


# JPS

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THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND  
NEW ZEALAND



# THE JOURNAL OF THE POLYNESIAN SOCIETY

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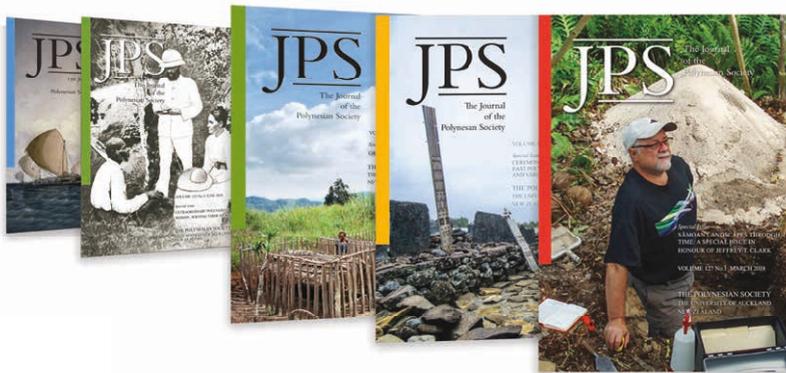
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## NOTES AND NEWS

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### *The Annual Volume Index Retires*

With a sense of nostalgia, but in view of devoting more pages to original research, we have decided to discontinue the annual Index to Volumes. In taking this step the Society also wishes to acknowledge the considerable efforts of Dorothy Brown in producing this valuable research tool since the late 1980s. Readers will note that all recently published issues (from 2012 onward) are available on the Society's web site (<http://www.thepolynesiansociety.org/>), which has an excellent search function for tracking down papers by author, title, date or keywords. Older issues can be found on the University of Auckland website (<http://www.jps.auckland.ac.nz/>) and on JSTOR (<https://www.jstor.org/journal/jpolynesiansoc>).

### *Minutes of the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Polynesian Society*

From 2018 we also will discontinue publication of the AGM minutes in the *Journal*. Henceforth these will be made available to active members via the Society's website. For noting, AGM attendance has been low in recent years and we encourage members to join us for the May 2019 meeting. This year we presented awards to six inaugural recipients of the Bruce Grandison Biggs Postgraduate Research Fellowship Trust. Afterwards Society members and the public were treated to Prof. Patrick Kirch's Nayacakalou Medal lecture at the Auckland War Memorial Museum; a written version of his lecture appears in this issue.

### *Society Publications*

Members and Subscribers should note that this is an excellent time to purchase Society publications as we will be reducing our stock in the near future. *Journal* back issues can be purchased for either \$2 (2011 and earlier) or \$15 (2012 onward) plus postage. Special issues are available for \$15 (plus postage).

A comprehensive list of the Polynesian Society's Māori Texts, Memoirs and Miscellaneous Publications also can be found on our webpage. Some of these are in short supply, so we encourage interested readers to make purchases while they are still available (email: [jps@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:jps@auckland.ac.nz)). Members are eligible for discounts.

### *Contributors to this Issue*

Cecil Richard. Bradley was born in the Wairau (Blenheim), Aotearoa New Zealand and is of Rangitāne, Ngāti Kuia and Ngāti Apa descent. As a student of senior Wairau *kaumātua* 'elders', he gained firsthand knowledge of the customs, traditions and beliefs of the indigenous people of the northern South Island. Over the past two and half decades Richard has been heavily involved in the political life of Rangitāne, having had lead roles in issues such as the Seabed and Foreshore claim and the Māori Commercial Aquaculture claim, both of which were settled in 2008. He has been a lead negotiator for the three Kurahaupō *iwi* 'tribes' whose longstanding Treaty of

Waitangi claims were finally settled in 2014. Richard was instrumental in securing the repatriation of *kōiwi tāngata* ‘human remains’ to the Wairau Bar in 2009. This action created the opportunity for a programme of scientific research by the University of Otago, which in turn led to new insights into the health and lifestyles of Aotearoa New Zealand’s first people.

Patrick Kirch is Chancellor’s Professor Emeritus and Professor of the Graduate School at the University of California, Berkeley. He received his PhD from Yale University (1975) and has conducted extensive archaeological fieldwork throughout Melanesia and Polynesia over more than 50 years and published extensively on related topics. His honours include election to the US National Academy of Sciences, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the American Philosophical Society and the Australian Academy of the Humanities.



Professor Emeritus Patrick Vinton Kirch, with the Polynesian Society President Richard Benton (right) and Orator Chief Levaopolo Taivaasu‘e, following award of the Nayacakalou Medal and his public lecture. Photograph courtesy of Dr Tamasailau Suaalii-Sauni.

Peter N. Meihana was born in the Wairau (Blenheim), Aotearoa New Zealand and is of Ngāti Kuia, Rangitāne, Ngāti Apa and Ngāi Tahu descent. He is a former trustee of Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Kuia and sits on a number of committees for both Ngāti Kuia and Ngāti Apa. Peter teaches history in the School of Humanities, Massey University. Peter’s doctoral research examined the “idea” of Māori privilege and its role in the colonisation of Aotearoa New Zealand. More recently, he has published chapters on the Kurahaupō Treaty of Waitangi settlement and the alienation of Ngāti Kuia’s muttonbird harvesting rights.

Michael Reilly is a Professor in Te Tumu, School of Māori, Pacific & Indigenous Studies at the University of Otago, Aotearoa New Zealand. A graduate in Māori Studies and Pacific Islands History, he is especially interested in the historical traditions of East Polynesia, notably Mangaia and Aotearoa New Zealand. He is lead editor of *Te Kōparaparapa: An Introduction to the Māori World*, published by Auckland University Press in 2018.

# VOICES ON THE WIND, TRACES IN THE EARTH: INTEGRATING ORAL NARRATIVE AND ARCHAEOLOGY IN POLYNESIAN HISTORY

PATRICK VINTON KIRCH  
2018 Nayacakalou Medal Recipient  
*University of California, Berkeley*

The Polynesian peoples have long been noted for their propensity to encode the rich traditions of their ancestors in oral narrative accounts, often memorised by priests or other specialists, and passed down orally from generation to generation. Anthropologists refer to these as oral traditions, oral history or oral narratives, although they are also often categorised as “legend” or “myth”, terms that tend to dismiss their value as witnesses of real human affairs—that is to say, of history. In this lecture, I focus on a particular form of Polynesian oral narrative or oral history—one that is fundamentally chronological in its structure in that it is explicitly tied to a genealogical framework.

Now I confess that I am not a specialist in oral tradition, a subject that is sometimes subsumed under the discipline of “folklore”. I am by training and by practice, over nearly half a century now, an archaeologist first and foremost. But I am also an anthropologist who believes in the *holistic* vision of that discipline as conceived by such disciplinary ancestors as Alfred Kroeber and Edward Sapir at the beginning of the 20th century. While this may make me something of a living fossil in the eyes of younger scholars who hew to narrower subdisciplinary paths, my holistic training and predilections incline me to see the value in working across and between the different branches of anthropology. I have thus taken as my topic for this lecture the relationship between oral narrative—especially that of the genealogically based oral-history kind—and the material remains of the past that are the archaeologist’s purview. Can those traditional narratives—those “voices on the wind”, as folklorist Katherine Luomala (1955) once felicitously called them—be fruitfully combined with the material traces that we wrest from the Polynesian earth?

I will explore this question through four case studies involving my own fieldwork on as many different Polynesian islands, specifically Futuna, Tikopia, Niuatoputapu and the Hawaiian Islands (especially Maui). But first, let me provide some essential background into the changing roles that oral narrative played in Polynesian anthropology during the 19th and 20th centuries.

## WRITING HISTORY THROUGH TRADITION

The oral-aural relating of traditions from generation to generation had gone on within Polynesian societies for centuries, indeed probably thousands of years, a practice quite likely tracing back to their Lapita ancestors. With the arrival of Europeans and the subsequent introduction of alphabets, dictionaries and printing presses, many Polynesians rapidly embraced literacy as the 19th century progressed. In Hawai‘i, Kānaka Maoli scholars such as Davida Malo and Samuela Kamakau set to paper extensive accounts of the previously oral *mo‘olelo* ‘histories or traditions’ (Kamakau 1961; Malo 1951). In Mangaia, the native pastor Mamae similarly wrote down the traditions of his island (Reilly 2003); in Tahiti, the Ari‘i Taimai made a similar record (Arii Taimai 1964). Many other examples could be cited.

Western scholarly interest in Polynesian traditions reached a peak toward the later 19th century that is marked, among other events, by the founding of the Polynesian Society in New Zealand in 1892 and the Bernice P. Bishop Museum in Honolulu in 1889. The work of Abraham Fornander (1878) offers a good example of how Polynesian narrative history was used in the 19th century to construct interpretations of the Polynesian past (see also Grey 1885; Smith 1910, 1921). Fornander arrived in Hawai‘i in 1838, married a Hawaiian woman of chiefly descent from Moloka‘i Island, became fluent in the Hawaiian language, and began avidly collecting the Hawaiian *mo‘olelo*. Fornander’s three-volume *An Account of the Polynesian Race* (1878) relied upon dubious linguistic comparisons to trace Polynesian origins back to South Asia. But ignoring these wilder speculative interpretations and focusing solely on Volume II of Fornander’s *Account*, we find a richly detailed outline of Hawaiian history from the time of the arrival on O‘ahu Island—according to Hawaiian traditions—of the chief Maweke. Using the chronology provided by the chiefly genealogies, Fornander writes of Maweke:

He lived twenty-seven generations ago, counting on the direct line through the Oahu chiefs his descendants, or from twenty-six to twenty-eight generations ago, counting on the collateral Hawaii and Maui lines of chiefs, or approximately about the earlier and middle part of the eleventh century. (Fornander 1878, Vol. II: 47)

Beginning with Maweke and his descendants, Fornander recounts a detailed, island-by-island history of the main chiefly families, their marriages, feuds, wars, conquests and other achievements and misdeeds, down to the famous Kamehameha I and his conquest of the Maui and O‘ahu kingdoms. Fornander’s Volume II is intended to be a real history of named persons, situated within the temporal framework provided by the chiefly genealogies.

In Fornander's own words: "If I have succeeded in showing that the Hawaiians had a history of their past, and a history worth preserving, my labour will not have been in vain" (1878, Vol. II: 349).

Fornander and others laid a foundation that would be drawn upon and greatly expanded by the work of scholars in the emerging academic field of anthropology at the beginning of the 20th century. A burst of anthropological fieldwork throughout Polynesia was launched in 1920 at the instigation of the Bishop Museum's Director, Herbert E. Gregory. The Bayard Dominick Expeditions (1920–21) were followed by additional fieldwork by Bishop Museum staff and affiliates from other institutions, ranging across Polynesia from Tonga and Sāmoa through central Eastern Polynesia, to remote Rapa Nui (see Hiroa 1945 for a summary). A major question underpinning this research program was the so-called "problem of Polynesian origins" (Gregory 1921). The field teams avidly collected oral narratives, especially those of chiefly genealogies and the histories of elite marriages, conflicts, conquests and the like, much as Fornander had obtained for Hawai'i.

This emphasis on genealogically based oral narratives is exemplified in the work of the great Māori anthropologist Te Rangi Hiroa, who in 1935 succeeded Gregory as Director of the Bishop Museum. Hiroa's *Mangaian Society* (Hiroa 1934) serves as a case study, although his work in other islands such as Mangareva (Hiroa 1938) or Tongareva (Hiroa 1932) is equally instructive. On Mangaia, Hiroa augmented his own inquiries into "family pedigrees" (1934: 26) through access to an important manuscript written by the Mangaian pastor Mamae. Significantly, Hiroa refers to those narratives concerning the earliest human settlers to the island, the children of Vatea, followed by an invasion by Rarotongans, as "mythological" accounts, not as history. But the next major section of his monograph is entitled "History", commencing with a discussion of the importance of genealogical records: "The family pedigrees characteristic of Polynesia are of much greater value in tracing a chronological record than are the lists of titleholders which have sometimes been used" (1934: 26). His 58-page long discourse on Mangaian history tied to this genealogical structure is a masterful account of the ebb and flow of competing tribes, such as the Ngati-Vara and Akatauirā, as they vied for power and control of land. As with Fornander before him, Hiroa clearly saw these Mangaian narratives as *history*, not myth or legend.

In his masterwork, *Vikings of the Sunrise*, Hiroa critically discusses the role of genealogies and oral narratives as the basis for Polynesian history (Buck 1938: 21–25), observing first that "the oral transmission and memorizing of genealogies was a routine part of the Polynesian system of education" (1938: 21). Hiroa asserts that "the recital of genealogies was an established technique in social life and served as a chronology of historical events associated with

the sequence of ancestors”, but then thoughtfully adds, “how far back this sequence may be relied upon depends not only on the limitations of human memory but also on the interruptions that may have occurred to direct and orderly transmission of titles” (1938: 22). He does not hesitate to criticise earlier writers, such as S. Percy Smith, who had used clearly mythological accounts to trace the Polynesians back to origins in India. Of such fanciful interpretations, Hiroa writes: “With all my love for my mother’s stock, my father’s unbelieving blood gives me pause” (1938: 25). But for Hiroa, the genealogically based narratives that he and others painstakingly obtained from individual Polynesian informants through their fieldwork, and partly from previously written “native texts”, provided not only an accurate source—but *effectively the only source*—for constructing the histories of Polynesian societies.

#### WRITING TRADITION OUT OF HISTORY

Why was so much emphasis placed on genealogy and oral narrative in this initial period of intensive anthropological research in Polynesia? And why did the Bishop Museum scholars and their collaborators rely so intensively on genealogically based accounts to construct their histories of island societies? After all, the Bayard Dominick Expeditions and other Bishop Museum field teams also included archaeologists. Why did archaeology not contribute more fundamentally to this effort to reconstruct Polynesian history? The answer is simple: the archaeologists of the first half of the 20th century working in Polynesia lacked any independent means of establishing chronology. In the absence of pottery, it was assumed that excavation was pointless; there was no evident way to directly date the stone remains of *marae*, *heiau*, *langi* ‘temples’ and other structures that the archaeologists devoted their time to painstakingly surveying and mapping. Little wonder that Te Rangi Hiroa himself regarded archaeology as a “dry subject” (Hiroa, in Sorrenson, ed., 1986–88, Vol. III: 160).

Shortly before his death in 1951, Hiroa personally witnessed the dawn of a new era in Pacific archaeology, one that would reject his genealogically based approach to Polynesian history and replace it with a new paradigm, one rooted quite literally in the hard science of the new Atomic Age. Willard Libby, a chemist who had participated in the Manhattan Project that developed the atomic bombs that destroyed Hiroshima and Nagasaki, announced in 1947 that he had developed a method of “radiocarbon dating”. One of the first to respond to Libby’s call for archaeological samples was the Bishop Museum’s Kenneth P. Emory, who had begun stratigraphic excavations in the Kuli‘ou‘ou Rockshelter on O‘ahu Island. As related by Emory’s biographer, Bob Krauss:

On February 19, 1951, Buck [Hiroa] called Kenneth to his office and read aloud a letter just received from Chicago. Libby had dated Kenneth's sample of charcoal from the cave at Kuliouou at A.D. 1004, plus or minus 180 years. It was the first carbon date for Polynesia. "Boy, was I excited," said Kenneth later. "Immediately it opened a whole new vista of possibilities." (Krauss 1988: 338)

Supplied now by the physicists with the essential tool they previously lacked—a method for directly dating materials excavated from Polynesian archaeological sites—the archaeologists seized the day. The 1950s and early 1960s were heady times for Polynesian archaeology, as the old assumption that excavation was pointless crumbled in the face of rich new finds in stratified sand dunes and rockshelters, with the fishhooks, adzes, pendants and other objects all fitting into the new chronological sequence provided by radiocarbon dating (see Kirch 2017: 23–28 for a summary of this period in Polynesian archaeology).

One of the first to explicitly question—and reject—the old paradigm of Polynesian history based on the traditional oral narratives was Robert Carl Suggs, a young American archaeologist who excavated sites on the Marquesan island of Nuku Hiva in 1956–57 (Suggs 1961). In an article titled "Historical traditions and archeology in Polynesia," Suggs called into question "the traditionalist approach which long dominated Polynesian prehistory" (Suggs 1960: 764). Drawing on the results of emerging archaeological work in New Zealand and Hawai'i, as well as upon his own Marquesan research, Suggs drew attention to major discrepancies in the dating of initial human arrival in the islands.<sup>1</sup> For the Marquesas, Bishop Museum ethnographer E.S.C. Handy had arrived at an estimated initial settlement date of approximately AD 950, based on traditional genealogies (Handy 1923). Suggs, who had obtained radiocarbon dates of nearly 1,000 years older from the Ha'atuatua site, noted that "there is unfortunately no such agreement apparent between the dates of Marquesan settlement which were reached by genealogical counts and those obtained by radiocarbon age determinations on samples from our earliest excavated site" (1960: 767).<sup>2</sup> For Suggs, the conclusion was self-evident: the genealogically based oral narratives, or as he was inclined to call them, the "legends", did not offer a suitable basis for a scientifically rigorous (pre)history.<sup>3</sup>

But the new scientifically based archaeology with its emphasis on radiocarbon dating and stratigraphic excavation was not the only assault on the primacy previously accorded Polynesian oral narrative history. Hiroa, Handy, Gifford, Burrows and others of the first phase of Polynesian ethnographic research in the 1920s and 1930s had regarded the reconstruction of the "pre-European" cultures and their histories as a primary research goal. But by the 1940s and 1950s, cultural anthropologists were losing interest in this kind of

“salvage ethnography”, and indeed, in historical reconstruction in general. The structural-functionalist school championed by Bronislaw Malinowski, and elaborated by Raymond Firth, Alfred Radcliffe-Brown and Margaret Mead, regarded the historical ethnology of Hiroa and his colleagues as quaint and old-fashioned.<sup>4</sup> But headier critiques were to come, emanating from Paris, through the influential writings of Claude Lévi-Strauss, the so-called “father” of structuralism, the new paradigm that rapidly swept into Anglophone anthropology in the late 1960s and into the 1970s and 1980s, in part through the influential writings of its English advocate, Sir Edmund Leach of Cambridge University.

For Lévi-Strauss and Leach, oral traditions were a source of insight into the structures—usually thought to be dualistic, or quadratic—of the human mind. They were not to be taken as historical accounts, but as timeless myths—origin charters—constructed according to the fundamental dualistic nature of human cognition. Leach, one of the first to introduce English anthropologists to the new French structuralism, did not work in Polynesia. But this did not stop him from offering a searing critique of one of the last efforts to draw upon a body of Polynesian oral narratives as history—specifically Sir Raymond Firth’s *History and Traditions of Tikopia*, published by The Polynesian Society in 1961, based on Firth’s Tikopia fieldwork in 1928 (Firth 1961). Firth regarded those Tikopia traditions that are genealogically grounded to be a kind of “quasi-history”, by which he meant that they were rooted in the real actions of people who had at one time lived and died on the island. To this claim, Leach objected vehemently. Leach asserted that “almost the whole of the material present here [by Firth] under the label ‘quasi-history’ is true mythology” (Leach 1962: 274). Leach continued: “It is at least equally plausible that, for the Tikopia, all time more remote than ‘living memory’ belongs to an undifferentiated past, and that though events in this past are ‘ordered’—by means of genealogy and the like—no particular event can properly be regarded as earlier or later than any other” (1962: 274).

And then came the crushing blow, in the following passage dealing with Firth’s careful analysis of the wars between Nga Ariki (ancestors of the present Tikopia) and their rivals Nga Ravenga and Nga Faea, conflicts that Firth regarded as actual historical events:

I should myself have supposed that nothing could be more obvious than that the Nga Faea are an entirely mythical people filling an entirely mythical role, yet Firth having described the traditions relating to their elimination proceeds to argue as if these events had actually occurred ‘two centuries ago’ (p. 142). Of course there were events which actually occurred in Tikopia two centuries ago but I see no grounds for supposing that any of them are recorded anywhere within the covers of this book. (Leach 1962: 276)<sup>5</sup>

With scientific archaeology rejecting genealogically based oral narrative history in favour of its radiocarbon-based chronologies, and with the dominant structuralist paradigm in socio-cultural anthropology prepared to classify all “traditions” as timeless myth, there was little scope left for the incorporation of oral tradition in Polynesian history. The archaeologists rejected the oral histories as unreliable, while the cultural anthropologists were simply no longer interested in history at all. Despite a few exceptions, this is largely how the field looked when I came into it as a young student in the mid-1960s and 1970s.<sup>6</sup>

How then, as a young, aspiring archaeologist, deeply immersed in the prevailing scientific paradigm of the “New Archaeology” of the late 1960s and early 1970s, did I come to be engaged with Polynesian oral narratives? The answer is simple: I went to do fieldwork in several islands where oral tradition was still quite alive and vibrant, and where the people who graciously allowed me to work on their lands and dig in their ancient sites took pains to make me understand that the stone alignments and backrest slabs and middens that I was studying were intimately connected with them and their histories, as these had been and indeed continued to be transmitted from generation to generation. So let me recount some of those experiences of fieldwork at the intersection of archaeology and tradition, the crossroads of voices from the past with the traces from the earth.

#### FUTUNA AND ALOFI: TRADITIONS OF WAR AND CONQUEST

Forty-four years ago, I sailed on a small French freighter from Nouméa to the islands of Futuna and Alofi, part of the French Territory of Wallis and Futuna, to carry out an “ethno-archaeological” study of taro irrigation and other agricultural practices for my doctoral project at Yale University. Partly on the advice of Doug Yen, I had chosen Futuna because its agricultural system was described to me as still more or less traditional, not influenced by commercial cropping or plantation agriculture. Indeed, Futuna in 1974 was linked to the World System by a tenuous thread, despite some of its male inhabitants periodically migrating to New Caledonia for paid work in the nickel mines and smelters.

Nuku Village, where I took up residence in a small bachelor’s hut, had no electricity (nor did any other village); most of the houses were of traditional pole-and-thatch construction with open sides and gravel floors, most cooking was done in separate cookhouses with an earth oven, the water source was a single pipe leading to a large concrete basin where everyone bathed communally in the late afternoon. Most importantly, there was no radio, no television. I paint this scene merely to emphasise that in the Futuna of 1974 that I experienced for some eight months, social interaction—the gathering

of kinsfolk at the water tank, in the cookhouses, and sitting on woven mats around the communal meal fresh from the earth oven—was characterised by people constantly interacting verbally. They talked about the weather, they shared gossip, they discussed the ripening of the breadfruit and the death of the old man in the neighbouring household. And sometimes, they talked about the past, sharing stories and narratives, about persons who had walked the village paths before their time, about events that had shaped this same landscape over previous generations. Oral narrative was still very much a vibrant part of Futunan culture and society.

Most often, I began to hear these traditional narratives while joining in the evening kava drinking at the meeting house of the Tu'i Sa'avaka, one of Nuku's titleholders who welcomed this young *papalangi* 'foreigner' into his kava circle. Futunan traditions were not, I admit, my main interest, but neither was I disinterested in them. I had with me a copy of Edwin Burrows's *Ethnology of Futuna* in which he had devoted a section to "traditional history" (Burrows 1936: 26–56). Upon close reading, I discovered references to places and sites that I was encountering on the ground, as an archaeologist. One such site was A-fili, a fortified ridge in the hills above Nuku (Burrows 1936: 126), associated with traditions of a rebuffed Tongan invasion and of several wars between the Sigave and Alo chiefdoms.

It was then my great luck to be introduced to Sosefo Sekemei, an elder of Vele Village in Alo. Inviting me to tour Alofi Island with him over five days in June of 1974, Sosefo opened my eyes (I should say my ears) to the significance of oral tradition and narrative history in making sense of the Futuna-Alofi archaeological landscape. With Sosefo as my guide, we climbed up the limestone escarpment to the Asoa uplands inland of Vele, where he showed me the backrest stones, still standing, of the *malae* 'ceremonial plaza' of Lalolalo, former seat of Veliteki and Niuliki, successive paramount chiefs of Alo in the early 19th century. We continued on to the summit of the karstic Asoa ridge, where another *malae* plaza was again marked by upright slabs. Sosefo described this place, known as Kelemea, as the residence of Papa, a renowned warrior of the pre-European period.

Returning to the shore, we loaded up an outrigger canoe and paddled across the narrow strait to Alofi. Sosefo guided us across the upland plateau to Loka, the abandoned seat of the Mauifa chiefs prior to their defeat and the extermination of the Alofi population in a war some decades prior to the arrival of the Catholic missionary Père Chanel in 1837.<sup>7</sup> This site, with a *malae* covering about 1,200 m<sup>2</sup>, is the most impressive monumental structure on either Alofi or Futuna (Kirch 1994: 239–41, Figs 99, 100). Sosefo pointed out the row of upright backrest slabs lining one side of the *malae*, the curbstone outline of Mauifa's residence and the grave of the first titleholder of the Mauifa line (Fig. 1).

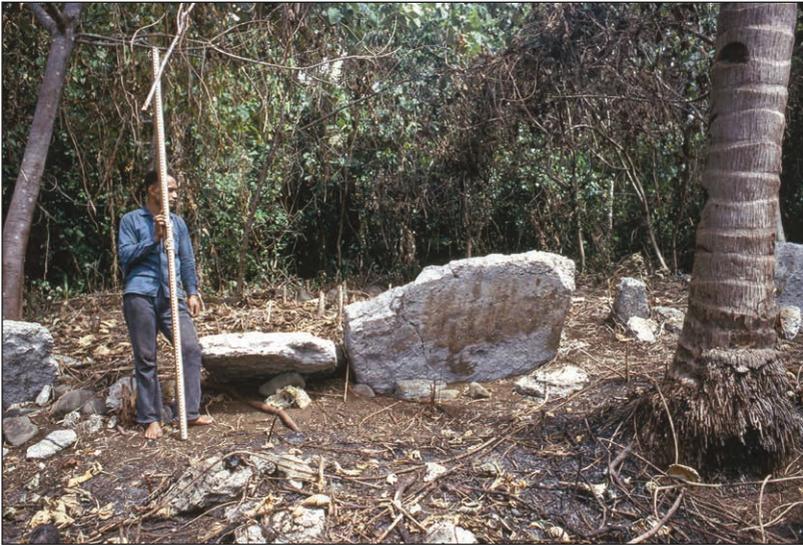


Figure 1. The alignment of cut-and-dressed limestone backrest stones along the rear of the *malae* plaza at Loka, on Alofi Island. Sosefo Sekemei identified this as the former seat of the Mauifa line of paramount chiefs of Alofi Island.

I regret now that I did not spend more time with Sosefo, did not ask him more questions, did not seize the opportunity to have him share—as he was so evidently willing to do—his deep knowledge of Futunan traditions. I was a young man in a hurry: I had a dissertation to write about Polynesian irrigation and ecology. But what I did glean from that wizened elder, and from the traditions recounted by the Tu‘i Sa‘avaka and others, was an initial appreciation of the value of oral tradition for understanding and interpreting Polynesian archaeological landscapes.

For when I began to write up the results of my fieldwork back in Honolulu, I found that the traditional narrative history provided essential keys to unlocking the fundamental tensions that I later came to characterise as “the wet and the dry”, an ecological and agricultural contrast that not only helped to determine the outcome of late Futunan history, but has played out in similar scenarios across many other Polynesian landscapes (Kirch 1975, 1994). My agro-ecological studies had revealed a striking contrast between western Futuna (the Sigave chiefdom), where the volcanic terrain and permanent streams allowed for an economy dominated by intensive irrigation, and

eastern Futuna along with Alofi (the Alo chiefdom), where the limestone terrain limited irrigation to a few small pockets and the agricultural economy was based primarily on shifting cultivation of dryland crops, especially yams and dryland taro. The Futunan traditional history offered independent support for my hypothesis that this ecological tension between “the wet and the dry” had played out over the course of the island’s history in terms of a series of competitions between the main political factions, a series of internal struggles for control of land and resources.

Based on the traditions collected by Burrows (1932, 1936) and augmented with my own conversations with Sosefo Sekemei and others, I synthesised the traditional history of what today comprises the Alo chiefdom into a single diagram (Kirch 1994: 208, fig. 89). The diagram traces six main chiefly descent lines in what were originally as many independent political (and territorial) units, and shows how—over time and through conquest—these successively merged to become one single, powerful chiefdom under the reigns of Veliteki and Niuliki, just prior to the arrival of the Catholic missionaries in 1837.<sup>8</sup> Especially poignant to me was that I had been able to directly link the traditions of both the Lalolalo chiefs (the Fakavelikele line) and the Loka chiefs (the Mauifa line) with actual archaeological sites, specifically the *malae* that had been their ceremonial seats. The traditions and the archaeology meshed—together they told a story that was more powerful and compelling than either by itself.

#### TIKOPIA: DISENTANGLING MYTH FROM HISTORY

In May of 1977, some three years after my Futunan fieldwork, I landed on the beach at Matautu, in the Faea district of Tikopia, the Polynesian Outlier made anthropologically famous thanks to the unsurpassed ethnographic talents of Sir Raymond Firth. As in Futuna, my research goals in Tikopia were not in the first instance directed at traditional history. But I had read Firth’s *We, The Tikopia* (Firth 1936), and who could not set foot on that exquisitely beautiful little island, with its peak of Reani overshadowing the deep blue-green crater lake Te Roto, and not be immediately enmeshed in one of the most vibrant of Polynesian societies? For Tikopia in 1977—this was before the island became a stopping point for boutique cruise-ship tourism—was indeed but little changed from what Firth had experienced and described during his sojourn a half century earlier. Not a single trade store, no resident missionaries (although the island had finally converted to Christianity in 1957), an entirely self-contained subsistence economy, and a society still organised around its traditional clans and governed by the four hereditary *ariki*, the chiefs of Kafika, Tafua, Taumako and Fangarere (in ranked order).

It was the Ariki Tafua—traditional chief of Faea district—and his family who welcomed Doug Yen and me on the beach at Matautu, incorporating us into their household. Together with the other *ariki* ‘chiefs’ and the council of *maru* ‘elders’, Tafua acceded to our request to carry out an archaeological study of the island. After settling into the bachelor house, Taraula, that they graciously cleared out for us, I began to reconnoitre the Faea lowlands, searching along the muddy paths leading inland, soon encountering a number of low alignments of angular basalt cobbles, seemingly the curbstone foundations of former houses. These lay inland of the present coastal hamlets, a short distance behind the long dart pitch known as Te Marae Lasi. The Ariki Tafua and his sons told me that these structures were *noforanga*, the foundations and vestiges of the former village of Nga Faea, the original occupants of Faea district who had been forced to flee the island after an attack by Nga Ariki, the ancestors of the present Tikopia (Firth 1961: 136–43).

Nga Faea: the very people whom Edmund Leach, in spite of never having set foot on Tikopia, condescended to describe in his review of Firth’s *History and Traditions of Tikopia* as “an entirely mythical people filling an entirely mythical role” (Leach 1962: 276). The Ariki Tafua certainly did not regard Nga Faea as mythical, recounting to me the same traditions that his father had related to Firth, of how the Nga Faea chief Tiako, held aloft in his canoe by his supporters, called out to the victorious Nga Ariki to respect and honour Feke, the Octopus God, to assure the fertility of land and reef. The rites of the Octopus God had continued to be practiced into the early 20th century, as witnessed by Firth (1967).

The alignments of hard basalt that became more evident as the Ariki Tafua’s kinsmen helped me to clear away the brush and weeds were anything but mythological. There were three distinct, rectangular house foundations, framing a kind of courtyard (Kirch and Yen 1982: 69–72, Figs 18, 19, 20). Along the inland side of this court an alignment of 13 upright volcanic slabs formed a classic *marae* configuration with the slabs serving as backrests for participants in kava ritual (Fig. 2). The Ariki Tafua explained that this complex of houses and the line of backrests was known to them as Takaritoa, having served as the principal *marae* of Nga Faea. The largest of the volcanic uprights was said to have been the backrest of Pu Perurua, a famous warrior (*toa*) of Nga Faea.

A short distance from Takaritoa we uncovered another rectangular house foundation, again demarcated by basalt curbstones, in the garden tract called Sinapupu. This, the Ariki Tafua informed me, was called Tarengu, and had been another temple, or “Kafika”, of Nga Faea. The structure offered a good opportunity for excavation; the Ariki Tafua willingly agreed to let me commence digging, assisted by his kinsmen (Kirch and Yen 1982:



Figure 2. The line of upright basalt slabs forming part of a *marae* of the Nga Faea at Takaritoa, Tikopia. The largest slab was identified as the backrest of Pu Perurua, a famous Nga Faea warrior.

93–98). It did not surprise me, given Firth’s description of Tikopia temples as sepulchres for the ancestors, when we soon encountered two flexed burials just below the house floor (Kirch and Yen 1982: 110–11, Fig. 40). An entirely “mythical people”? These human skeletons were certainly not mythical. With permission of the Ariki Tafua, a fragment of bone from one of the burials was removed and later radiocarbon dated, yielding Bayesian calibrated age intervals of cal AD 1480–1696 and 1729–1803 (Kirch and Yen 1982: 315; see also Kirch and Swift 2017, Table 5). On the basis of the Tikopia genealogies (using an average of 25 years per generation) Firth estimated that the expulsion of Nga Faea had occurred around AD 1725 (1961: 160). Clearly, the genealogical dating and the radiocarbon date from the Nga Faea temple burial accord very well.

Before returning to Tikopia in 1978 for a second field season, I used the intervening months to closely read Firth's entire ethnographic corpus, paying special attention to *History and Traditions of Tikopia*, knowing that I would have a unique opportunity to follow up on leads into the island's traditions and their possible intersections with the archaeological traces I was uncovering.<sup>9</sup>

Now I must stress that a great many of the Tikopia oral traditions are indeed mythological in character. The Tikopia distinguish between *tara tupua*, which are typically indexed to genealogies and regarded as historical accounts, and *kai*, stories that are generally timeless. Many important *kai* deal with an ancient era when, as the Tikopia say, *e oro ki a tangata kae oro ki a nga atua*, when people "went as men and went as gods" (Firth 1961: 25). Such *kai* include the Kai Tapu, or Sacred Tale, recounting "the adventures of Tafaki and Karisi [known together as Pu Ma], the gods who are basic to the ritual of Kafika clan" (1961: 13). The Sacred Tale is an origin myth, essential, as Firth explains, to Tikopia cosmology and ritual beliefs. So yes, there is much mythology in the Tikopia traditions, but just as the Tikopia themselves have no trouble disentangling myth from history, so we as astute anthropologists should be able to readily discern the same distinctions in their corpus of oral narratives.

But let me return to the category of *tara tupua*, and especially to those genealogically indexed narratives that deal with the origins and histories of the several clans and lineages. Tikopia traditions offer a complex set of stories relating to lineage origins—some mythological and others clearly historical. Of the 23 lineages headed either by one of the four *ariki* or by a ritual elder, Firth writes that "five claim autochthonous descent, six claim to be segmented from the various chiefly lineages, four claim to be residual from the earlier inhabitants, Nga Ravenga and Nga Faea, and eight claim that their founders were immigrants from overseas" (1961: 85). Among the places cited as origins for these immigrant lineages are Tonga, 'Uvea, Rotuma, Sāmoa, Taumako (Duff Islands), Luangiua (Ontong Java), Pukapuka, Somosomo and Valua (Banks Islands). Importantly, Firth observes that "the period of their arrival has a certain consistency; it was well after the initial peopling of the land by the gods, when for the most part the context described was an ordinary human one, and the leading figures were to be regarded as ordinary mortals" (1961: 86–87). The immigrant founders of these lineages are typically situated at what Tikopia call the *fokinga*, or "return point" in the kava ritual formulae, "the point at which the ancestral line begins to emerge from the shadowy citation of names alone to the period at which the personalities involved have begun to take on shape, with a body of information about their doings and temperament ... they are people, not just labels" (1961: 87). In short, they are the starting points for what the Tikopia regard to be real historical accounts of founding lineage ancestors.

Let us explore in a little more depth the origin traditions of Taumako, the line of the third-ranked *ariki*. Firth was told in 1929 that the Taumako line traced its origins back 12 generations, to the arrival of a chief named Te Atafu, who hailed from Tonga (Firth 1961: 88–89; see also Kirch and Yen 1982: 342–43). Te Atafu married a daughter of the Ariki Kafika; their son Rakaitonga, later known as Pu Lasi (literally “Great Ancestor”), became the first Ariki Taumako. Te Atafu eventually left Tikopia, while his son Pu Lasi rose to fame in part through fending off several attempted invasions by other would-be Tongan intruders (Firth 1961: 110–11). Toward the end of his life, Pu Lasi retired to live on the summit of Fongatekoro, literally “fortress hill”, a volcanic massif that rises sheer above the hamlets of Ravenga, and there upon his death he was interred (Fig. 3).



Figure 3. The massif of Fongatekoro (viewed here across Lake Te Roto from the sacred district of Uta) figures in Tikopia traditions as a fortress. Pu Lasi is buried in a small platform on the summit of Fongatekoro.

I was told that the gravesite of Pu Lasi could still be seen atop Fongatekoro; with the assistance of two Taumako friends, I scaled the precipitous ridge leading to the summit in order to verify this claim. Indeed, the tomb of Pu Lasi consists of a small platform about 1 by 1.2 m, with volcanic facing slabs 30 cm high, covered with white sand (Kirch and Yen 1982: 73, Fig. 21). The tops of two femurs had been slightly exposed by erosion; we covered them over with sand.

Later during the 1978 field season, I had occasion to visit the aged and by now blind Ariki Taumako, who had taken to living in Raniniu, the last standing temple or god house (*fare tapu*) in Tikopia, situated near the shore in his hamlet of Potu sa Taumako. The *ariki*, who had reluctantly converted to Christianity following the devastating cyclones of 1952–53, had stubbornly refused to destroy this *fare tapu*; removing some of the sacred contents that had previously been held in the main Taumako temple of Resiake in Uta, he had placed them in Raniniu. Entering Raniniu through the low doorway and allowing my eyes to adjust to the dim light, it became clear that this was a special structure, in spite of its exterior appearance as an ordinary thatched house (Kirch 2015: 138–40). Carved representations of yellowfin tuna ornamented the main posts, while the rafters were decorated with *fakataratara* ‘nubbins’; a kava bowl sat in one corner.

Responding to my queries, the Ariki Taumako reiterated the *tara tupua* of Taumako as recounted by Firth, but added a few critically important details. First, he said that while known in Tikopia as Te Atafu, his ancestor’s Tongan name had been Tui Tatafu. From my previous work in Tonga (see below), I knew that Tatafu was a prominent title in the genealogies of the Tongan paramount lines (Gifford 1929: 30, 35, 84; see also Bott 1982), as well as in the chiefly traditions of ‘Uvea, which came under Tongan domination (Burrows 1937: 29). Indeed, the Tatafu title is closely linked to the protohistoric Tongan domination of ‘Uvea, Niuafu‘ou and Niuatoputapu, the first titleholder being the son of the Tongan lord Tu‘i Ha‘a Takalaua Fotofili, who was sent to ‘Uvea to oversee the quarrying of slabs to be used in a burial mound (*langi*) for the Tu‘i Tonga (Bott 1982). His son, the second titleholder, became the ruling chief of Niuafu‘ou; the title also appears as the name of the son of Pungakaitafola, the fourth Ma‘atu or lord of Niuatoputapu.

When I asked the Ariki Taumako whether he knew the names of any of his ancestor’s kinsfolk in Tonga, the *ariki* told me that Tui Tatafu (Te Atafu) had two brothers, named Tui Pelesa and Tui Saapai. This was quite stunning, for those are unquestionably the Tikopian phonetic transliterations of two prominent Tongan chiefly titles. Tui Pelesa = Tu‘i Pelehake, of the Tongan Faleua line (see Kaeppler 1971a: 182, Fig. 4), while Tui Saapai = Tu‘i Ha‘apai, lord of Ha‘apai and representative in those islands of the Tu‘i Tonga. Notably, the Tu‘i Ha‘apai title has not been used for more than two centuries.

Now the Ariki Taumako had clearly not read the monographs of Gifford, or Bott, or Kaepler; what he was sharing with me that morning in Raniniu was, I have no doubt, traditional knowledge that had been passed down in his family line since the time of Te Atafu, 13 generations earlier. Had Te Atafu, his ancestor, actually been a Tu'i Tatafu titleholder? Quite possibly, but if not, then he was certainly someone with a knowledge of Tongan noble titles.

But there was yet other, tangible, material evidence of the historical veracity of the Taumako *tara tupua* of Tongan origins. I had come to visit the *ariki* partly because I had heard that he possessed a war club reputedly brought by Te Atafu from Tonga, an object said to be shaped like an eel, and indeed named Te Tuna, a representation of the eel god. When I enquired if I might see the club, the *ariki* graciously let my friend John and I examine it. The wooden club, about one meter long, clearly old and somewhat termite-eaten, was of classic Tongan form with a narrow base and expanding head, ornamented with simple geometric carving (similar to the “paddle club” illustrated by St Cartmail [1997: 133–34, Fig. 88a]). I regret that I was not able to photograph it. I saw no reason to question the *ariki*'s assertion that the club had been brought from Tonga by his ancestor.

To conclude this discussion of the intersections between tradition and archaeology in Tikopia I will return to the accounts of the wars over land that for two or three generations consumed the groups known as Nga Ravenga, Nga Faea and Nga Ariki, ending with the latter's mastery over the island (Firth 1961: 128–43). Nga Ariki is the collective name for the present Tikopia population, encompassing all of the lineages, despite their varied origins. Nga Ravenga and Nga Faea—regarded by Prof. Leach as “entirely mythological”—were two distinct groups, the first of whom occupied the coastal lands of Ravenga along the southern part of the island, while the latter controlled the highly productive agricultural lands of Faea District on the west and north. Firth was told that Nga Ravenga “were the true autochthones” of Tikopia (1961: 129), while Nga Faea's origins were dimly traced to the Polynesian Outlier of Luangia.

Originally, Nga Ariki were confined to the lands of Uta, the inner shore of the lake (Te Roto). It was this restriction in resources that led to the desire of Nga Ariki to make war on their neighbours. As Firth writes:

They had in Uta only dry ground, no swampy ground suitable for the growth of taro, giant taro, and other kinds of moisture-loving foods. ... Time and again, I was told how day by day they and their households saw the scrapings of giant yam from the cooking-houses of their Nga Ravenga neighbours float past them on the waters of the lake. Feeling the pinch of hunger they collected these scrapings, and baked them for food in their own ovens. Further irritation was given to the chiefs by the fact that Nga Ravenga, while cognisant of their

plight, did not send them any food, as courtesy dictated. ... Moved by the shortage of food, Nga Ariki conceived the idea of attacking Nga Ravenga and seizing their lands. (Firth 1961: 131–32)

A successful surprise attack led to the slaughter of every Nga Ravenga person, save the infant son of the Nga Ravenga chief, whose mother (a daughter of the Ariki Kafika) managed to carry him off to his grandfather who protected him; the child would become the founding ancestor of the Fangarere lineage. Nga Ariki added the Ravenga coastal lands to their holdings, and peace reigned for a generation. But then at the instigation of Fanamoea, an ancestor of the Marinoa lineage, and some others of Nga Ariki, it was decided to attack Nga Faea and seize the fertile western flatlands with their orchard gardens. This time there was no element of surprise, and Nga Faea struggled to defend themselves. The conflict is described in considerable detail (Firth 1961: 138–42), including the struggles of the great Faea warrior Pu Peruraa (whose backrest stone still stands at Takaritoa) with Niupani, the Ariki Tafua of that time. Realising that defeat—and death—were imminent, Nga Faea took to their canoes and abandoned their lands to Nga Ariki.

The women and children were in the canoes; many of the men swam alongside. According to one account, the canoes were decorated with barkcloth streamers, as if it were a gala ritual occasion. Wailing, the folk of Nga Faea abandoned the land, some of them supporting their chief [Tiako] on the deck of his vessel, holding him aloft in their arms, in the gesture of supreme respect which the Tikopia pay to men of rank. ... So they went from sight, to be lost forever from the knowledge of men. (1961: 139)

In fact, not every single Nga Faea departed or was killed. Two sons of the Nga Faea chief Tiako were sent by their father to go to the Ariki Kafika, to assist in the transfer of the sacred rituals of the Atua i Takarito, where the stone of the Octopus God was kept, ritually washed and “invoked for its powers in producing plenty of fish” (1961: 141). These lads and some others gave rise to the present houses of Fasi, Siku and Torokinga. As Firth writes: “The ancestral connection with Nga Faea was still a living thing to those folks in 1929. Pa Torokinga said in telling me that story of his lineage, ‘I am a Faea’” (1961: 142).

On the basis of the genealogies, Firth calculated that these events “can be given plausible dating—about 1725 A.D. and 1700 A.D. respectively” (1961: 160). Not only did our radiocarbon dating of the Nga Faea temple site agree with this genealogically based calculation, as I have already mentioned, but the archaeological and paleoecological work that we accomplished in 1977–78 put these events into a context that explains why Nga Ariki were

driven to take the drastic measures they did to gain mastery of the island. What we discovered was that until quite late in the island's prehistory, the present lake Te Roto was an embayment open to the sea, with a fringing reef that supported a rich supply of shellfish and fish. Between AD 1600 and 1800, probably in relation to one or more cyclone and storm-surge events, the sandy tombolo or beach ridge separating Te Roto from the sea accumulated, changing the ecology from that of a marine estuary to a brackish lake (Kirch and Yen 1982: 346–49, 354; see also Kirch and Swift 2017: 320). The rich shellfish beds died off; even canoe access through the reef to the open sea may have been cut off, depriving Nga Ariki of marine resources entirely. Far from being the stories of a “mythical people filling a mythical role”, the accounts that Nga Ariki felt “hemmed in” at Uta, with its stony ground, and their resource base visibly dwindling, are rooted in the island's real, empirically verifiable historical ecology.

The archaeologically documented history of human occupation on Tikopia, based on radiocarbon dating, extends back to between 1046 and 769 BC (Kirch and Swift 2017), and is divisible through successive changes in material culture into three main phases, the Kiki, Sinapupu and Tuakamali periods (Kirch and Yen 1982). It was only in the third phase, the Tuakamali, the beginning of which we date to cal AD 1158–1212, that the arrival of Polynesian immigrant groups with distinctive Western Polynesian artefacts (basalt adzes of Sāmoan type, pearl-shell trolling hooks, distinctive beads, and a few obsidian flakes of Tongan origin) appear. Tikopia oral narratives of the *tara tupua* kind, indexed to family genealogies (e.g., Firth 1936, genealogies I, II and III), extend back no more than about 13 generations prior to Firth's time, or around AD 1600 using his method of calculation (25 years per generation). These traditions thus pertain only to the latter part of the Tuakamali period. The traditions have their limitations; they cannot take us back to the earliest eras of the Tikopia past. But what they do offer us is a richly detailed window into the final few centuries in the long progression of historical events that shaped the Tikopia known to ethnography. To arrogantly dismiss these traditions as simply myth is to deny the Tikopia their own rich past.<sup>10</sup>

#### NIUATOPUTAPU AND THE TONGAN MARITIME EMPIRE

Niuatoputapu, situated at the northern end of the Tongan archipelago and closer to Sāmoa than to Tongatapu, together with nearby Niuafu'ou, is an outlier of the far-flung “Tongan maritime empire” that in protohistoric times extended as far as 'Uvea, also incorporating the Vava'u and Ha'apai island groups (Guiart 1963; see also Aswani and Graves 1998). I had the privilege of conducting an archaeological study of Niuatoputapu over the course of seven months in 1976 (Kirch 2015: 101–15), between my fieldwork in Futuna and Tikopia.

A small island of about 15.2 km<sup>2</sup> with a central volcanic ridge surrounded by an extensive apron of uplifted coral reef and lagoon, Niuatoputapu is slightly more than three times larger than Tikopia. And as on Tikopia, the archaeological record proved to be both long—extending back to an initial Lapita occupation of around 850–900 BC—and rich in the abundance and diversity of material traces of ancient human activity. But there is a major difference between the archaeological landscapes of these two small islands, for while on Tikopia the stone structures such as those of the Nga Faea temples are of small scale and prosaic, on Niuatoputapu such features are frequently of a scale that can only be referred to as *monumental*.

The conspicuous monuments dispersed over the Niuatoputapu landscape consist of a variety of mounds of sand or earth excavated out of nearby borrow pits and heaped up into large rectangular or circular edifices. The 95 structures I recorded could be divided into two main classes: mounds whose sides are faced with either natural stones or quarried slabs of coral limestone or beachrock; and unfaced mounds, some of which are paved and others unpaved (with the latter in some cases having a central depression) (Kirch 1988: 44–45, Fig. 23). I estimated the volume of the largest unpaved mound to be 2,518 m<sup>3</sup>; many have lengths or diameters in the range of 15–28 m (Kirch 1988, Table 3). In height, most mounds stand between 0.5 and 1 m, although the larger ones rise 3–4 m above the surrounding terrain. These constructions represent a significant labour investment, in the digging out and heaping up of earth and sand, and in the quarrying, hauling, facing and trimming of retaining stones, many of which had to be extracted from beachrock quarries along the shoreline.

The functions of these mounds within traditional Tongan culture and society is fairly well established through the ethnohistoric record (McKern 1929). In general, the faced mounds served as burial facilities, either *fa'itoka* where multiple individuals of an extended family or lineage were interred over an extended period, or in the case of chiefs or other prominent individuals, constructed for their exclusive interment. The term *langi* is sometimes applied to the more elaborate mounds with carefully prepared, cut-and-dressed limestone facades. The unfaced mounds (*sia*) are thought to have been used mainly in two ways: as sitting platforms for persons of high rank (*'esi*), or in the case of mounds with a central depression, as elevated “stages” for the chiefly sport of pigeon snaring (*sia heu lupe*). Many of the burial mounds (but not all of them) are located in and around the present-day villages, whereas most of the putative pigeon-snaring mounds are found around the island's perimeter, a zone where the *Eugenia* forests that provide the pigeons' favoured fruit are concentrated.

After seven months of fieldwork, it was clear that Niuatoputapu had at one time been under the domination of a regime powerful enough to induce,

or coerce, the population to undertake remarkable architectural feats that indelibly inscribed the landscape with these monuments. But when had this activity taken place, and over how long a period, and to what ends? The answers to these questions were not immediately evident. The distribution of many of the pigeon-snaring mounds on former reef flats that had only fairly recently been tectonically uplifted provided one hint that these monuments probably dated to the more recent than truly distant past. With permission of the chief Telai, we excavated one of the stone-faced burial mounds, at Houmafakalele. Radiocarbon dating one of the three interments yielded an age estimate of cal AD 1420–1815 (Kirch 1988: 129–38, Table 13, 1 $\sigma$  age range), placing this structure within the protohistoric period.

The Niuatoputapu people with whom we lived and worked in 1976 were well aware of these monuments, and could often give us proper names for some of the more elaborate mounds. Yet in contrast with Tikopia, there was a surprising dearth of traditional knowledge as to who was buried within particular mounds, who might have resided upon them, or who had engaged in the chiefly pigeon-snaring competitions. The last holder of the Ma'atu title—paramount lord of Niuatoputapu—had passed away in 1935, the title lapsing thereafter. The *hou'eiki* 'chiefs', such as Telai of Hihifo Village where we resided, seemed to have little knowledge of, or interest in, these decaying monuments of a past era.

It was only after returning to Honolulu and beginning to work up my materials in the Bishop Museum that I was able to put this rich monumental landscape into the context of a traditional narrative history, thanks primarily to the corpus of material collected by Edward Winslow Gifford during the Bishop Museum's Bayard Dominick Expedition of 1920–21 (Gifford 1929, MS). Gifford had been given access by the then young Queen Sālote and by Prince Consort Tungi to the Tongan royal archives, including the genealogies of the Tamaha (sacred sister's daughter of the Tu'i Tonga) as well as several manuscripts containing traditional lore. Gifford's synthesis of these materials provides the basis our understanding of Tongan history through the lens of the chiefly oral narratives. His baseline research has been more recently augmented by Bott (1982) and Kaepler (1971a, 1971b).

The clues as to when Niuatoputapu was brought into the orbit of the so-called Tongan "maritime empire" are contained in the Tongan chiefly genealogies and their associated traditions (see Kirch 1984: 223–42, 1988: 8–13). The Ma'atu title holders, who ruled over Niuatoputapu until 1935, originated from a junior branch of the Fale Fisi (House of Fiji), the offspring of unions between the sacred Tu'i Tonga Fefine and a Fijian chiefly line. The Tu'i Tonga Fefine Sinaetakala-'i-Langikela married the Fijian chief Tapu'osi; their male child Fonomanu in turn married the Tu'i Tonga Fefine 'Ekutongapipiki, who bore a son named Latumailangi. As related by Bott,

... the Tu'i Tonga sent Latumailangi to Niuatoputapu to see whether he could secure the loyalty of the people there. He succeeded in doing so, and became the great 'eiki ['chief'] of Niuatoputapu, almost an independent line. He changed his name to Utuma'atu shortly after his arrival. There were a number of older titles already in existence there when Latumailangi arrived; all have become subordinate. It is possible that some may have been created after he arrived (Vivili, Tafea, Telai) ... (Bott 1982: 106)

If we apply the same kind of temporal estimate that Firth used in calculating time spans for the Tikopia genealogies, the 11 generations of Ma'atu titleholders would take us back to the middle of the 17th century. It seems no coincidence that when the Dutch voyagers Schouten and Le Maire touched at Niuatoputapu in 1616 (the first Europeans to land there), they report that the island's "king" was called by his people "Latou" (Schouten 1619). Was Latumailangi himself ruling Niuatoputapu at the time of the Dutch visit? We cannot be completely certain, but it seems entirely plausible. A 17th-century assimilation of Niuatoputapu into the Tongan maritime empire fits well with the radiocarbon dating of the Tongan-style burial mound at Houmafakalele. Both the archaeological record and the Tongan traditions converge on the interpretation that Niuatoputapu was brought within the orbit of the Tongan maritime empire during the 17th century, and that the many monuments in classically Tongan style, such as burial mounds and pigeon-snaring mounds, were most likely constructed during the 17th to 18th centuries.

Recent work by my colleagues Geoffrey Clark and David Burley, along with their students, has further integrated the genealogies and traditions of the Tu'i Tonga, Tu'i Ha'atakalaua and Tu'i Kanokupolu lines with the increasingly well-dated, archaeological evidence for the rise of an archaic state on Tongatapu Island (Burley 1994; Clark 2016; Clark and Reepmeyer 2014; Clark *et al.* 2008). I tentatively explored these genealogies many years ago in *The Evolution of the Polynesian Chieftdoms* (Kirch 1984: 223–30), arguing that they provided a history of the rise of the Tongan dual paramountship. I showed that it was possible to link the chiefly genealogies with archaeological evidence for the sequence of construction and elaboration of the Tu'i Tonga capital at Lapaha, with its famous *langi* burial tombs, fortification works and stone canoe dock. Those correspondences between the traditions and the archaeological record are now well attested thanks to the additional work of Clark, Burley and their students at Lapaha and other sites. One remarkable discovery, recently made by Travis Freeland (2018), concerns an oral tradition relating to the first seat of the Tu'i Tonga line (prior to its move first to Heketa, and then to Lapaha), which is said to have been at Toloa, in central eastern Tongatapu. This is a shadowy period in the traditions, relating to the reigns of the first nine Tu'i Tonga titleholders. Using LiDAR aerial imagery Freeland identified a previously

unreported complex of large earthen mounds at Toloa. The central mound, oriented nearly north-south, is a truly massive construction, 105 m long by 50 m wide, incorporating an estimated 10,356 m<sup>3</sup> of earth (Freeland 2018: 131, Table 8). While Freeland's interpretation of this mound complex as the original Tu'i Tonga capital needs to be confirmed through subsurface excavation and dating, it nonetheless suggests that the Tongan royal traditions have an historical basis extending back in time as far as the 13th century.

MAUI AND HAWAI'I:  
CHIEFLY AGENCY IN EMERGING ARCHAIC STATES

An exceptionally rich tradition of oral histories passed down from generation to generation in Hawai'i was eventually put into written form in the 19th century (Fornander 1878; Kamakau 1961; Malo 1951). For various reasons, however, archaeologists in Hawai'i have all too rarely sought to link these *mo'olelo* to the archaeological record, overlooking their potential significance. In the late 1990s, however, as I began to work on the problem of the emergence of "archaic states" in the islands (Kirch 2010), I found the indigenous Hawaiian traditions to be a rich lode of insights into the processes that transformed Hawaiian society between the late 16th century and the early European-contact period. In *A Shark Going Inland Is My Chief*, I endeavoured to weave these rich traditions together with the archaeological evidence to yield a more compelling story than either source could provide independently (Kirch 2012). I will touch here upon just one small part of that rich history, focusing on the early Maui ruler Kiha-a-Pi'ilani, and how we may trace some of his "footprints" in the archaeological record.

The *mo'olelo* of Maui *ali'i nui* 'paramount chief' Pi'ilani—and of his two sons who fought to the death over the succession to the kingship—is as central to the history of Maui as that of Līloa and 'Umi is to Hawai'i Island (Fornander 1878, Vol. II: 205–7; Kamakau 1961: 1–21; Valeri 1985). In fact, the two royal houses were linked by bonds of marriage, for Pi'ilani's daughter Pi'ikea became one of 'Umi's royal wives, the union arranged by the clever priest Kaleiokū to cement a political alliance between Hawai'i and Maui.

Pi'ilani ruled over Maui during the final decades of the 16th century, as reckoned from his genealogy. Fornander tells us that it was under either Pi'ilani or possibly his father Kawaoka'ōhele that the entire island of Maui first became a unified polity. This initial unification was achieved peacefully, the Hāna chiefs acceding to the suzerainty of the Pi'ilani line, whose origins centred on west Maui. The ancient seat of the Pi'ilani clan of chiefs was Nā Wai Ehā, the "Four Waters" of Waihe'e, Waichu, Wailuku and Waikapū, whose streams fed canals that watered extensive taro irrigation works on the alluvial flats, giving Kawaoka'ōhele, and his son Pi'ilani, their economic base. Pi'ilani's royal residence of Hale Ki'i in Wailuku overlooked the 'Iao Stream, at the centre of this intensive production zone. Although sometimes

referred to as a *heiau* or temple, Hale Ki'i seems to have been a residential terrace, with the *luakini heiau* 'temple of human sacrifice' being nearby Pi'ihana Heiau (Kolb 1999).

Pi'ilani had two high-ranking sons by his wife La'ieloheloheikawai (a sacred chiefess from O'ahu), the oldest named Lono-a-Pi'ilani (hereafter Lono), and a younger son named Kiha-a-Pi'ilani (hereafter Kiha). Kiha had been raised by his maternal kinsfolk in the royal court of O'ahu Island, whereas Lono—following the norms of patrilineal succession—had been groomed as the heir to the Maui kingship. On his deathbed, Pi'ilani declared that Lono would succeed him as *ali'i nui* of Maui, commanding Kiha to live peacefully under his older brother.

It did not take long for jealousy to arise between the royal siblings. Lono became envious at the way in which Kiha was developing his irrigated fields in Waihe'e Valley. Usurpation being an age-old theme in Polynesian politics, Lono suspected that Kiha was plotting to steal the kingdom. Lono began to humiliate Kiha, one day throwing a bowl of briny water filled with octopus into Kiha's face. Realising that Lono was plotting to kill him, Kiha fled to Moloka'i. Kamakau (1961: 22) identifies Paku'i, a large stone terrace at Manawai on Moloka'i's south coast, as the "fortress" where Kiha-a-Pi'ilani resided while on the island. Bishop Museum archaeologist John Stokes mapped Paku'i in 1909 (Stokes MS), and I had the opportunity to visit the structure a few years ago (Fig. 4). In its layout, Paku'i closely resembles Hale Ki'i, consisting of a massive stone terrace supporting several smaller superstructures (presumably residential structures). It seemed to me to have been built on the same basic architectural plan.

Kiha evaded the warriors sent by Lono, fleeing to Lana'i, and then secretly stealing back to Maui, making his way to the dry sweet-potato farmlands of upland Honua'ula and Kula, on the broad slopes of Haleakalā, masquerading as a commoner among the farmers of the uplands, a ruse that failed when rainbows frequently appeared over Kiha's head (the sign of a high chief). During this time, Kiha demonstrated his skills both as a cultivator and leader of men.

Kiha left Kula for Hāna, a district then ruled over by Ho'olaemakua, a warrior chief fiercely loyal to Lono. Kiha thought that if he could convince Ho'olaemakua to turn against Lono and support his own cause, he would have a powerful ally. Kiha was handsome, with, as Kamakau tells us, eyes "as bright as those of a *moho'ea* bird". He had mastered the art of surfing in his youth, riding the long breakers at Waikīkī. As it happened, Ho'olaemakua had a daughter, Koleamoku, who also loved to surf. Koleamoku was determined to have Kiha as her husband. They eloped, and Koleamoku began living with Kiha in his house at Kawaipapa. When her father Ho'olaemakua heard what had happened, he flew into a rage, for he had placed a *kapu* or taboo on her which could only be lifted by the king, Lono-a-Pi'ilani. Ho'olaemakua disowned Koleamoku.



Figure 4. The stone terraced platform of Paku‘i on Moloka‘i Island is said to have been the residence of Kiha-a-Pi‘ilani.

Koleamoku bore Kiha a son, whom they lovingly raised. Sensing that Ho‘olaemakua’s anger would have subsided, Koleamoku went to her father’s house to present him with his grandson, and to offer a feast of reconciliation. The Hāna chief greeted his daughter and his infant grandson with great affection, but refused to take his daughter’s side.

Kiha now swore vengeance against his father-in-law, and resolved to cross the stormy ‘Alenuihāhā Channel to Hawai‘i, where his sister Pi‘ikea was married to ‘Umi, now king of that largest island. He would seek ‘Umi’s assistance in gaining control over Maui. Arriving at the royal residence of Kamakahonu, Kiha went in search of his sister. Urged on by Pi‘ikea, ‘Umi agreed to help Kiha overthrow Lono and become the ruler of Maui. A year was spent constructing a fleet of war canoes to transport the Hawai‘i forces across the channel. ‘Umi and Kiha took the battle straight to Hāna, where Ho‘olaemakua had refused to lend his support to Kiha. The old warrior chief had prepared his fortress hill of Ka‘uiki, standing sentinel over Hāna Bay (Fig. 5). When the fleet of war canoes filled with Hawai‘i Island warriors arrived, they were held off by the barrages of sling stones cast by the Maui warriors from their vantage point on Ka‘uiki, unable to dislodge Ho‘olaemakua’s forces.

Under the cover of darkness, Pi'imaiwa'a, the famous warrior who had helped 'Umi kill Hākau and gain control over Hawai'i, crept up close to the steep entrance to the hilltop fortress. It seemed to be guarded by a huge warrior. Pi'imaiwa'a lanced his spear into the "warrior", but it did not move. Climbing closer, he hit the giant with his club. It stood motionless. Pi'imaiwa'a realised that this was a dummy built of wood and wicker, to fool the invaders at night so that the Maui defenders could rest. He sent word for the Hawai'i warriors to follow him up the steep ladder into the fortress where they fell upon the slumbering Maui forces. Many were killed, or leapt to their deaths off the steep cliffs encircling the hill. In the darkness a few escaped, including Ho'olaemakua. The old chief was finally hunted down at Kapipiwai, tortured and killed. His hands were brought back to Kiha to confirm his death.

During the battle at Hāna, Lono-a-Pi'ilani had remained safely on west Maui at Wailuku, the old seat of the Pi'ilani line. When he heard that the fortress of Ka'uiki had fallen, and that Ho'olaemakua had been captured and killed, he was filled with dread. By the time Kiha and 'Umi with the Hawai'i forces arrived at Wailuku, Lono was dead, evidently of sheer fright.



Figure 5. The fortress hill of Ka'uiki at Hāna, Maui, where Ho'olaemakua was defeated by the forces of 'Umi and Kiha-a-Pi'ilani.

Kiha-a-Pi'ilani was now the undisputed lord of Maui. As was the custom, he divided the districts and *ahupua'a* 'subdistrict land division' among his loyal followers and warriors. 'Umi and his fleet returned to Hawai'i, leaving Maui under the rule of his brother-in-law. It was probably at this time that Kiha had the great terrace at Pi'ilanihale Heiau constructed, making it his royal centre and principal *luakini*. The structure is similar in basic design to the older residence at Hale Ki'i, but built on a much grander scale (Kolb 1999). Yet another archaeological expression of Kiha's new dominance over all of Maui was the rapid expansion of a system of mid-sized temples, many of which have been dated through U-series dating of coral offerings to a narrow time span from the end of the 16th into the 17th centuries, corresponding with Kiha's reign and that of his son Kamalālāwalu (Kirch and Sharp 2005; Kirch *et al.* 2015). The descendants of Kiha-a-Pi'ilani would continue to rule over Maui in an unbroken succession until the end of the 18th century, when Kamehameha the Great took possession of the island during his conquest of the archipelago.

In recounting this oral tradition of Kiha-a-Pi'ilani, I purposefully left in some of the little details that give this history such a distinctly Polynesian cultural form—such as the frequent appearance of rainbows over Kiha's head and the ruse of the giant warrior dummy at the Ka'uiki fortress. It is just such details that have persuaded some Western scholars that traditions such as these should be treated as myth rather than history. In my view, however, these details merely serve to situate the real historical actor—in this case Kiha—within a cultural context that would have been perfectly reasonable to an indigenous Hawaiian listener. I see no reason to think that Kiha was anything other than the actual ruler of Maui in the early 17th century; and indeed, we can trace his "footprints" to several key archaeological sites both on Maui and on Moloka'i.

\* \* \*

Through these four examples drawn from my own field experiences, I have tried to demonstrate how Polynesian oral narratives or traditions—in particular those that are linked to a chronology defined by lineage or chiefly genealogies—have a real historical basis that can often be integrated with material evidence derived from archaeological survey and excavation to arrive at a fuller, more nuanced account of the past. This is by no means to deny the mythological content of much oral tradition (especially that concerned with cosmology), or to insist that all oral traditions are historical. Clearly they are not. But when a particular corpus of traditions, such as the *tara tupua* of Tikopia, treat in detail of the actions of men and women who

are linked in a chronological chain to present descendants, why should we not regard these as reasonable sources of historical knowledge? And in particular, when such accounts can be referenced to specific localities and indeed sometimes to particular archaeological sites and structures, then it seems to me that the potential for an integration of these two different ways of historical “knowing” should not be ignored.

But the “voices on the wind” and the “traces in the earth” do not tell us the same things about the past, and it is precisely these differences that should make us want to incorporate both sources, rather than rely exclusively on one or the other. Archaeology rarely has the ability to resolve history at the level of the individual actor, or even of discrete events. Archaeological landscapes are notorious for being “palimpsests”, their surfaces partially erased and written over repeatedly. Even the best stratified sites encapsulate months, years or even centuries within a single feature or layer. Advances in radiocarbon and U-series dating have helped to greatly refine our chronologies in recent years, but our temporal resolution remains at the best plus or minus the length of a human generation. Given these constraints and limits to our methods, we archaeologists tend to write history in terms of broad “processes” and “trends”. We trace the major shifts in settlement patterns, in economic systems, in population growth or decline, in stylistic changes in material culture. Ours is a history of what Fernand Braudel called the *longue durée*, the long run (Braudel 1980).

Oral narrative history of the Polynesian kind, in contrast, is essentially a history of the *événementiel*—the event, as plotted and enacted by individual actors who are urged on by their own desires, emotions, fears and dreams. It is an “insider” history (an emic history, to use the old anthropological distinction between emic and etic), one informed by indigenous knowledge, and acted out within the culturally prescribed norms (or sometimes, in flagrant violation of culturally acceptable behaviour). Oral history takes us where archaeology can never go, at least not by itself. But then archaeology offers a wider perspective to the historical particulars, allowing us to see them as part of the broader sweep of human affairs. In short, archaeology gives us process; oral tradition gives us agency. Together they give us a history that is both culturally nuanced and comparatively contextual.

#### NOTES

1. In the introduction to his monograph on the archaeology of Nuku Hiva, Suggs comments as follows on the use of oral traditions to determine settlement dates for Polynesian islands: “One of the most profound effects of the concentration on tradition on the part of early writers was their tendency to rely almost

completely on genealogies for purposes of dating. This reliance on genealogies shortened the perspective of all prehistorians in Polynesia, with the result that it became generally accepted that the Polynesian arrival in Eastern Polynesia was very recent and that no island had been settled for more than one millennium” (1961: 11).

2. It is, of course, more than a little ironic that we have now, with the hindsight of many advances in radiocarbon dating of archaeological materials, come around to the conclusion that Suggs’s early dates were almost certainly the result of samples derived from old wood (in some cases probably driftwood) with large in-built ages that did not accurately date the age of initial human arrival on Nuku Hiva. The most recent high-precision dating for the Hane site on ‘Ua Huka Island indicates human colonisation of the northern Marquesas around AD 950 (Conte and Molle 2014), essentially the same as Handy’s estimate based on the genealogies!
3. To be sure, Suggs did not call for the outright rejection of “traditions” in Polynesian anthropological research, admitting that these could provide “a body of general data which can be used ... as a kind of paleo-ethnology for the culture in question, to aid in the interpretation of the cold facts and sequences of archeology” (1960: 771).
4. Hiroa’s reaction to this is evident in his pithy remarks regarding “functional and psychological methods”, in his 1943 overview of Polynesian anthropology: “Another approach to the study of native peoples is what has been termed the functional method. It is primarily associated with the names of Malinowski and Radcliffe-Brown, who, like Moses and Aaron, lead their followers into a land of greater promise. The greater field of promise lies in ignoring the bondage of the historical past and devoting attention to the functioning present” (1945: 127).
5. I myself had occasion to be subjected to Edmund Leach’s famously cutting prose, when at the 1983 Pacific Science Congress in Dunedin, at a symposium in which Leach was presenting I had the temerity to suggest that he was wrong about his critique of Firth’s treatment of the Tikopia traditions as history. Having recently conducted archaeological fieldwork in Tikopia, I had plenty of evidence that the Nga Faea had indeed been real people, for I had excavated one of their temple houses. To this statement Leach vociferously boomed from the podium, “That is like saying that King Arthur was a real person!” (dismissed, young American archaeologist).
6. One significant exception that must be acknowledged is the work of José Garanger in Vanuatu, where he explicitly drew upon oral traditions in his archaeological research, especially at the burial site of Roy Mata on Retoka Island (Garanger 1972a, 1972b).
7. Alofi Island is known to have been populated at the time of the arrival of the Dutch voyagers Schouten and Le Maire in 1616, as the chief of Alofi and his warriors came across to visit the foreigners (Kirch 1994: 237). Père Chanel visited Alofi in July of 1838, finding abundant evidence of recently abandoned habitations. He was told that the Alofi people had been exterminated during several wars under the rule of Veliteki, paramount chief of Asoa.

8. Daniel Frimigacci (1990) later explored these sites in greater detail than I was able to, incorporating Futunan oral traditions into his interpretations. Frimigacci's attention to oral tradition no doubt reflects the influence of his mentor, José Garanger.
9. Aided by my prior efforts to gain fluency in Tongan (during my 1976 fieldwork on Niuaotupapu), I was fairly rapidly able to gain conversational ability in Tikopian in 1977. This allowed me to speak directly with the older people, such as the Ariki Tafua and Ariki Taumako, who did not speak either English or "Neo-Melanesian" pidgin.
10. A structuralist interpretation of Tikopia society with its four clans was advanced in a short monograph by Anthony Hooper (1981). As with Leach's critique of Firth, Hooper (although he never worked on Tikopia or with Tikopia informants) effectively dismisses the historical basis of Tikopia traditions as a starting assumption. He therefore arrives at the conclusion that "the Tikopia conceive their social and cultural order as a deliberately created thing, something closer to our notions of a work of art than to the precipitates of the chance fortunes of a historical past" (1981: 42). In fact, my own experience of ethnographic work on and with the Tikopia was precisely the opposite—that the Tikopia are acutely aware of and constantly situate themselves within the rich history that is simultaneously inscribed in their traditions and on their landscape.

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#### ABSTRACT

Polynesian societies have long been noted for encoding their histories in the form of oral narratives. While some narratives are clearly cosmogonic or mythological in nature, others purportedly recount the affairs of real persons, chronologically indexed to chiefly and family genealogies. Late 19th- and early 20th-century scholars such as Abraham Fornander and Te Rangi Hiroa relied upon such oral narratives to write the pre-European histories of various Polynesian societies. In the second half of the 20th century, however, archaeologists and cultural anthropologists alike have tended to dismiss the historical validity of oral narratives. Based on four case studies from Futuna, Tikopia, Niuaotupapu and Hawai'i, I reassess the linkages between oral narratives and the archaeological record, finding that in all cases there is strong evidence to support the view that the traditional narratives relate to real persons and events. Such traditional narratives typically do not extend farther back in time than three to four centuries, but for these later time periods they offer an invaluable resource—an indigenous perspective on island histories that complements and augments the empirical archaeological record.

*Keywords:* Polynesian archaeology, oral traditions, oral history, Polynesian genealogies, Futuna, Tikopia, Niuaotupapu, Hawai'i

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# REPATRIATION, RECONCILIATION AND THE INVERSION OF PATRIARCHY

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This article aims to provide an indigenous Māori perspective on the history of scientific investigations, and more recent community collaborations, at an important ancestral Māori site in Aotearoa New Zealand. The first objective is to provide a perspective on the events surrounding the archaeological excavations and repatriation of *kōiwi tāngata* ‘human remains’ at Te Pokohiwi ō Kupe, also known as the Wairau Bar or “moa hunter” camp. The second objective is to reflect on the character and reputation of Hohua Peter MacDonald, a Māori elder and the principal opponent of the initial excavations in the 1950s. We do this by contextualising Peter’s protests within a longer history of Kurahaupō<sup>1</sup> resistance to colonisation. We argue that despite a difficult history, Rangitāne and the scholarly community have reconciled many of their differences. Here we discuss research undertaken as part of the repatriation. Our last objective is to demonstrate how an increasing knowledge of the Wairau Bar community, one of New Zealand’s first settlements, has spurred a renaissance within the *ahi kā roa*<sup>2</sup> community of the Wairau. Mitochondrial DNA sequencing, for instance, has led to a shift in focus from narratives that elevate male ancestors (Māori and Pākehā ‘European’) to narratives that retell the stories of female ancestors.

The significance of Te Pokohiwi ō Kupe has been recognised for some time; indeed, a plethora of scholarly articles, books and book chapters confirm this. The origins of the people who first settled there, when they arrived, their means of subsistence and their material culture are questions that scholars have attempted to answer. This scholarship can be traced back to 1912, when H.D. Skinner (1912: 105–8) documented the 21 km of canals in and around the Wairau Lagoons. The “whence of the Māori” has entertained the thoughts of Europeans since the time of James Cook, but it was the accidental discovery of human remains by Jim Eyles in 1939 that brought Te Pokohiwi to prominence. For three decades following Eyles’s discovery, human remains and artefacts were removed from the site, often under the supervision of professional archaeologists (Brooks *et al.* 2011: 13). The findings of Roger Duff (1950, 1956, 1977), Owen Wilkes (in Brooks *et al.* 2011) and Michael Trotter (in Duff 1977: 348–54) would be drawn on by future archaeologists

and researchers. It was Duff's work, however, that "became one of the most important contributions to the development of New Zealand archaeology and theory" (Brooks *et al.* 2011: 14), linking this site with the earliest period of Hawaiki dispersals.

While archaeologists have revelled in the opportunities the Bar has presented, for *tāngata whenua* 'people of the land' the experience has not been as positive. When Eyles made his discovery he set in motion a series of events that would occupy the lives of many, right up to the present day. Eyles would continue to fossick and excavate the site, collecting a great number of artefacts. Roger Duff's career would be greatly enhanced, and Rangitāne elders would pass on to the next generation the burden of bringing their *tūpuna* 'ancestors' home. In the end, it would be the grandchildren and great-grandchildren of those elders who first protested at the Wairau Bar that would oversee the repatriation. With such a fraught history, it is difficult to imagine any kind of reconciliation between Rangitāne and the museum and archaeological communities. Nevertheless, in 2009 a significant move in that direction took place. Alongside a 2014 Treaty of Waitangi settlement, the repatriation stands as one of the most significant achievements for Rangitāne of the last 30 years. Another significant moment and a further step toward reconciliation occurred in June 2016 when Rangitāne hosted the New Zealand Archaeological Association Conference at Ukaipō, the tribe's cultural centre.

Despite these achievements there is, for Rangitāne, some unfinished business—the retelling of the story of Te Pokohiwi from their perspective. Useful here is a 2009 report commissioned by Rangitāne to "provide the fullest possible account of the circumstances under which human remains and artefacts were removed from the Wairau Bar between 1939–1964" (Armstrong 2009: 1–3). According to David Armstrong, the report's author, opposition to the removal of *tūpuna* began in 1946 when Rangitāne elder Peter MacDonald became aware of what was taking place (Armstrong 2009: 6–7). Protests took the form of complaints to the police, an attempt to take the case to the Māori Land Court, an approach to the Minister of Lands and a series of columns in the *Marlborough Express* written by Peter MacDonald (Anderson 2014: 100–1). This article builds on the Armstrong Report, providing a counter-narrative to the view that Rangitāne were complicit in the removal of human remains and artefacts from the Wairau Bar.

The article opens with a history of the excavations, and the Rangitāne response. At the time of the initial excavations, Peter MacDonald's knowledge of the history and traditions of the Wairau was questioned by scholars who also had an interest in the excavations. It will be shown that Peter's account was consistent with the views of earlier Kurahaupō scholars and scribes. The events that led to the return of *tūpuna* to Te Pokohiwi are then addressed, followed by a discussion of the research findings. Another focus of the article is the

impact of the repatriation and research on today's Rangitāne community. In particular, it considers the mtDNA sequencing carried out on the *kōiwi tāngata*, and mtDNA collected from Rangitāne members in 2016. An outcome of this work, led by the University of Otago's Professor Elizabeth Matisoo-Smith, is that members of Rangitāne were unambiguously confirmed as belonging to the same haplogroup as those ancestors returned to Te Pokohiwi in 2009 (Matisoo-Smith, letter to participants, 2016a). This has had unexpected but positive results. It will be argued that science has been a catalyst for a reassessment, a shifting of the lens through which *whakapapa* 'genealogies' and tradition have in recent times been interpreted. The story begins with the excavation of Burial 1, affectionately named "Aunty" by Rangitāne. It is retold here as it forms such a large part of Rangitāne's recent past, particularly for those who shouldered the burden and privilege of repatriation.

#### THE STORY BEGINS

In January 1939, following the discovery of a moa egg, Jim Eyles unearthed a human skull and ivory necklace (Eyles 2007: 61–63). The egg was perforated at one end and the necklace was made of seven whale ivory reels and a sperm whale tooth pendant (Brooks *et al.* 2011: 20). Both were deposited in the strong room of the National Bank in Blenheim for safekeeping, but such was the interest that the artefacts were collected daily to be displayed in a local fish shop (Eyles 2007: 64). As for the skull, "special pains are to be taken by Mr Perano to see that it is fittingly re-buried" (*Marlborough Express* 25 January 1939: 6). Eyles's unearthing of Aunty, and the excavation of Burial 2 three years later, opened the way for further excavations; indeed, Eyles and Duff excavated a further five burials in 1942 (Brooks *et al.* 2011: 57–58).

The focus of the excavations at this time were the burials and grave goods (Buckley *et al.* 2010: 2). In his book *The Moa-Hunter Period of Maori Culture*, Duff (1950) compared those artefacts obtained at Te Pokohiwi with those from the Marquesas, Cook and Society Islands and concluded that the people of Te Pokohiwi were of Eastern Polynesian origin. These findings debunked the theory, first advanced by Haast in 1871, and later by Smith and Best, that Māori were a late arrival who had dispossessed an earlier Melanesian people (Brooks *et al.* 2011: 14). Significantly though, Duff did not challenge the chronology posited by Smith; rather, he suggested that "the Moa-hunters were Polynesians from the migrations of Toi (1150 AD), Kupe, or earlier" (Duff 1977: 23). This would allow Duff to argue that the moa-hunter burials at the Wairau Bar, although Māori, were in no way connected to Rangitāne, whose ancestors had arrived with the so-called "Fleet" (Armstrong 2009: 4).

Soon after Eyles's discovery, offers to purchase the artefacts began to arrive. Eventually a deal was struck with the Dominion Museum (now Te Papa Tongarewa), which paid £130 for the moa egg and necklace. The museum

required that an indemnity be signed in case other claims arose (Eyles 2007: 66). Aunty's fate, for the most part, has remained outside of public discourse. Having been disinterred, photographed and reinterred, she was dug up a second time and shipped to the Dominion Museum in Wellington (Anderson 2014: 100–1). Here she remained until 2005 when Rangitāne led a community initiative that saw many Wairau Bar artefacts held at Te Papa and Canterbury Museum loaned to the Millennium Public Art Gallery in Blenheim for the *Kei Puta Te Wairau* exhibition (Marlborough District Council 2005: 3). As part of this initiative Aunty was returned home (Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa 2005: 50). Although she would be the first to make it back to the Wairau, it would be take another four years before she would be finally laid to rest, along with the many other *tūpuna* who had been removed during the middle of the 20th century.

In March 1942 Eyles made another discovery. The *Marlborough Express* reported that while digging an air-raid shelter at the Wairau site Eyles came across a “varied collection of examples of the arts and crafts of the early New Zealanders”. These included “rough unpolished stone axes and chisels, not usually associated with Maori finds”, and a reel necklace similar to that belonging to Burial 1 (20 March 1942: 4). The *Express* noted that “they were quite without the finish and polish that the Maori put upon his artefacts and weapons”. The conclusion was that the site was the “scene of a more primitive and earlier type of culture than was later brought to these shores by the migration fleet” (28 March 1942: 6). Subsequent columns in the *Marlborough Express*, entitled “Before the Maori”, reinforced this view (30 March 1942: 6; 31 March 1942: 6).

Alerted to Eyles's find by the 20 March *Marlborough Express* article, Duff visited the Wairau Bar in April. He informed *Express* readers that the artefacts were “archaic Polynesian”, and that the “reels” were made of moa bone (13 April 1942: 4). He later wrote that Burial 2 was “a young man in the prime of his life” and, in comparison to the other burials, was furnished with the “greatest accumulation of offerings”. Duff also considered Burial 2 to be “most suitable for museum display” (Duff 1950: 38). Thus, Duff returned to Christchurch in possession of many artefacts on loan from Eyles (*Marlborough Express* 20 April 1942: 4). Burial 2 would be placed on display until, after ongoing criticism, the Museum removed the Wairau *kōiwi tāngata* from display.

Excavations at the Wairau Bar continued throughout the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s. Many would be led by Duff, although Eyles undertook excavations on his own. Of particular interest are Burials 16a and 18. As will be discussed below, they, like Aunty and Burial 2, would become part of the ongoing story of the Wairau Bar. Burial 16a was unearthed in August 1943. In the few

months prior to this, “paddock 1” was re-ploughed, exposing Burials 8 to 11. The same technique was then applied to “paddock 3”, the area described by Duff as the “southern burial area”. It was as a consequence of ploughing that Burials 12 to 16 were found and excavated, at which time Burials 17 to 20 were found (Brooks *et al.* 2011: 20–23). Duff recorded that Burial 16 was “one headless (?) reburied heap of bones” and that “it was not possible to demonstrate whether the missing cranium had been carried away piecemeal in both ploughings”. Burial 18 was a “reburied heap of bones” found close to Burial 16 and the “base of the skull had been shattered by earlier ploughing, but from the remainder I judged it to be that of a middle-aged female” (Duff 1950: 58–59).

#### RANGITĀNE RESPONDS

What, then, was the Rangitāne view of the excavations? The Rangitāne oral traditions relating to the Wairau Bar come primarily from Peter MacDonald. These traditions, written by Peter and reproduced in the *Marlborough Express* during April and May 1947, leave no doubt as to the Rangitāne position. As far as Peter was concerned, the activities at the Wairau Bar amounted to nothing less than the “desecration” of a burial ground. He stated that his protest was not just one of “principle”; his ancestors were interred at the Bar, and he intended to utilise the Māori Social and Economic Act 1946 to have the area defined as a cemetery by the Native Land Court (10 April 1947: 4). Peter’s fight was, however, a one-sided affair. Pitted against a scientific fraternity armed with the most up-to-date theories and methodologies and a Marlborough community who took great pride in Eyles’s finds, he had little hope. Duff’s rejection of indigenous knowledge and his interpretation of the archaeology had the effect of disenfranchising Rangitāne.

Peter was the son of Teoti MacDonald, “the intelligent head of the natives” cited by Skinner as the source of information relating to the fish traps adjacent to the Wairau Bar (Skinner 1912). His maternal grandfather, Meihana Kereopa, and uncle, Tahuariki Meihana, were during their time tribal scribes whose *whakapapa* manuscript would be integral in the resurgence of the Kurahaupō tribes during the 19th century. The Meihana Manuscript (Kereopa and Meihana n.d.), and the later Hemi Manuscript (Hemi Te Pou n.d.), show four distinct *whakapapa* “groupings”: connections to Kupe, connections to Rangitāne, connections to Ngāti Apa (and Muaūpoko), connections to Ngāi Tahu, and the intermarriages of the aforementioned migrants to Ngāti Māmoë women. The point to note here is that Peter had access to elders of the previous generation while Peter himself sat on the Ngāti Māmoë and Ngāi Tahu Census Committee and was one of three official representatives appointed to petition Parliament in 1938 (*The Press* 6 January 1938: 14).

Peter's history of the Wairau Bar begins by naming and locating three villages and their associated burial grounds. Te Moua, the first burial ground, "takes in the present excavations", while its associated *pā* 'fortified village', specifically Te Aro Pipi, ran along the edge of the lagoon, "about where Mr Perano's house now stands". About a mile away, also on the edge of the lagoon, was Te Pokohiwi Pā and burial ground, the "main pa along the Boulder Bank". Opposite Te Pokohiwi, running out to sea, is a "rock formation ... on which an abundant growth of mussels was to be found". Further towards the Vernon Bluffs was Motueka Pā, which sat partly on an island extending towards the centre of the lagoon. "It is on this island that Purama, the last of the Rangitane chiefs, is buried. The last pa, situated at the foot of the Bluffs, was occupied by a race of spirits and giants." These beings were unacquainted with fire and lived on berries and roots (*Marlborough Express* 17 April 1947: 3). Importantly, Purama was the cousin of Te Ruaoneone, the Rangitāne chief of Kōwhai Pā when it was sacked by Te Rauparahā c. 1828 (Waitangi Tribunal Report 2008: 116). His nephew, Ihaia Kaikōura, signed the Treaty of Waitangi at Port Underwood in 1840 (Waitangi Tribunal Report 2008: 180).

Peter's account of Rangitāne just prior to their arrival in the South Island begins "near where the Ruamahanga enters the sea". Since the arrival of their ancestors in New Zealand these people had increased in number until they occupied the area from Dannevirke through to the Manawatū, and on to Lake Horowhenua. According to Peter, pressure from the north and "dissension among their own elders" compelled branches of Rangitāne and Ngāti Apa to move south. The migrants eventually crossed Cook Strait and entered Tōtaranui where they settled for a time at Ship Cove. The "characteristics and language" of the people they found, the "Ngatimamoe", were "similar to their own". The eventual "elimination" of these people "was accomplished more by intermarriage than force of arms" (*Marlborough Express* 24 April 1947: 6; see also below). From here Rangitāne entered the Wairau Valley via the Para swamp. The occupation of the Wairau Bar, writes Peter, took place following a series of battles, the first at Te Aro Pipi and the second at Te Pokohiwi, both localities on the Bar. Ultimately, the conflict was concluded with an agreement whereby the Ngāti Māmoe leadership would vacate the area and guarantee safe passage as far as Waipapa (*Marlborough Express* 15 January 1947). The marriages Peter refers to have been recorded in tribal *whakapapa* manuscripts, allowing for an estimation of the time at which these events took place, the late 17th or early 18th century being the most likely.

Peter's view of what was taking place at the Wairau Bar was representative of more general Kurahaupō views, which were shaped by *whakapapa* and tradition. The notion of absorption through intermarriage can also be discerned from statements made by other Kurahaupō elders. For instance, Eruera Wirihana Pakauwera, a Musket Wars survivor, considered Ngāti Tūmatakōkiri

and Ngāti Kuia to be very closely related, a result of intermarriage. That the present generation are the descendants of first peoples is suggested in tribal *whakapapa* manuscripts. One of the earliest *whakapapa* recorded in the Meihana Manuscript is dated July 1867 and comes from his Ngāti Hinekauwhata relative, Hōhepa Te Kiaka, who at the time was resident at Rangitoto or D’Urville’s Island (Kereopa and Meihana n.d.: 210). A veteran of the Musket Wars, Hōhepa, and his relatives Hura Kopapa and Wirihana Kaipara, joined the recently arrived Ngāti Koata in raids down into Canterbury (Nelson MB2 1892: 311). The Kurahaupō tribes had longstanding grievances with their Ngāi Tahu relatives and would have embraced the opportunity to settle old scores. Taking an overland route, their role in the war party—as Ngāti Koata had no knowledge of the interior—was as lead scouts, using knowledge that had been accumulated and passed from one generation to the next, beginning arguably with those ancestors who first exploited the resources of the Nelson mineral belt. In 1856 Hura and Wirihana signed the Ngāti Kuia and Rangitāne Deed of Sale (Mackay 1873: 316), while Hōhepa was a signatory to the so-called Ngāti Koata Deed (Mackay 1873: 317). As it transpired, Hōhepa did not receive any portion of the £100 paid, nor was he included in any of the promised reserves (Jenkins to Domett 1858). Evidently, Hōhepa’s assistance to the Ngāti Koata leadership had been forgotten following the deaths of senior Ngāti Koata chiefs.

It was in the context of highlighting this poor treatment that Hōhepa articulated his connection with Rangitoto Island and illustrated alliances through intermarriage and their links with land rights. The *whakapapa* dictated to Meihana in 1867 was accompanied by a letter addressed to Donald McLean. Hōhepa questioned McLean as to the Crown’s failure to provide him with land. In the first instance he recites his *whakapapa* from Tu Pehia, the younger brother of Haemaiiterangi—“*te putaki te kingi nui no taua motu*”. Having established this connection to the “King of Rangitoto”, Hōhepa declared:

*Ka waiho ahau he putake hei paki aka ora mataua e motu Rangitoto no reira ka nono taua iwi a Ngati Koata ki runga ki toku tuara hei putake tonu ahau mo ratou he oti ano taku.* (Kereopa and Meihana n.d.: 9)

I will leave that which is the source and a vine of life to that other island for Rangitoto. From there dwelt that tribe Ngati Koata upon my back so I could be a source for them. [see Campbell 2000: 18–19]

Hōhepa, then, is the source, and it is upon his back that Ngāti Koata stands, and from whom their rights to Rangitoto emanate. For Peter this kind of imagery would have been deeply entrenched in his psyche; indeed the circumstances surrounding Huataki’s marriage to Wharepuka invokes similar imagery (Bradley 2003: 22–23). While there are no extant traditions

of migration associated with Haemaiiterangi, as there are with Huataki, what has been remembered are the many marriages between the King of Rangitoto's descendants—Ngāti Hinekauwhata—and migrating peoples. Rangitoto was an important point of arrival for migrants from the north, and in particular, those coming from the Rangitikei, Horowhenua and Whanganui (Moses 1996). For instance, multiple migrations of Ngāti Apa arrived and quickly married into the resident population. Hōhepa makes no mention of the *tuku* 'gifting of land' by Tutepourangi, the customary mechanism by which Ngāti Koata settled in Te Taihū (northern South Island); however, two Ngāti Hinekauwhata women married Ngāti Koata chiefs as part of the arrangement. This ensured that the descendants of those marriages would, in Durie's words, have "all ten toes embedded in the soil" (Durie 1994: 65). Peter would have been well aware of this, and it would have shaped his understanding of history and custom in the northern South Island.

Despite Peter's standing and credentials, Duff continued to assert the pre-eminence of his own knowledge. Furthermore, rather than respond to Peter via the *Marlborough Express*, as he had been invited to do, Duff wrote to the Rangitāne elder. He asked why Peter had not contacted him, "a friend of the Maori people", before "dragging the bones of your ancestors before the eyes of the Pakeha in the newspaper" (perhaps an ironic phrasing considering Duff had removed Burial 2 for the purpose of display). As for the identity of the Wairau Bar burials, Duff was quite certain they had nothing to do with Rangitāne:

...when you say that we have dug out your ancestors, the matter is different, I know and you do not. We have not been digging in an urupa; we have been digging in a kainga, so old that moas and other birds which have become extinct were the food of those people. Those people lived in peace, they had no enemies, they buried their dead near their houses. What Maori tribe ever did the same? Not one, as you know, and we all know. [see Armstrong 2009: 79–80]

Before writing to Peter, Duff consulted W.J. Elvy. Elvy worked as a survey draughtsman for the Lands and Survey Department at Blenheim and had at times clashed with Māori when their interests conflicted with the Crown's. Peter, according to Elvy, was after "cheap notoriety", and his "knowledge does not extend far back probably 100 years at most" (Armstrong 2009: 75–76). Elvy was also an amateur ethnographer who, despite his view of Peter, was happy to cite the Rangitāne elder, "who at his death was the oldest representative of the Rangitane tribe living in the district". In fact, in his *Kei Puta Te Wairau* Elvy quoted large chunks of Peter's *Marlborough Express* articles (Elvy 1957: 45–47).

Peter's inability to prevent the excavations had much to do with Duff's reputation as a senior scholar. The theory advanced by Duff that the Wairau Bar burials were Māori, but not the ancestors of Rangitāne, who it was widely accepted had arrived with the fleet. Furthermore, Eyles, through whom Duff maintained access to the Bar, seems to have relied on an apparent conversation between his stepfather, Charlie Perano, and Manny MacDonald. Following the first disinterment of Aunty, Manny, according to Eyles, had told Charlie, "It's nothing to do with us, Charlie .... He's not one of ours" (in Eyles 2007: 64). Even if this was the case, it is apparent, perhaps because of the protests of the more senior Peter MacDonald, that Rangitāne consent was withdrawn. In 1955, the *Marlborough Express* (16 November 1955: 6) reported that Peter's nephew, Nugget MacDonald, a representative of the Wairau Tribal Committee, declared that he would protest any further excavations at the Wairau Bar.

#### THE LONG ROAD HOME

The fate of Te Pokohiwi, the land itself, is essentially the story of colonisation. Historic Crown land purchases and subsequent ownership and leasing arrangements all undermined the ability of Rangitāne to influence what happened at the Bar (Armstrong 2009: 51–54). It is worthwhile noting the Armstrong Report's conclusion that those with interests at the Bar colluded to keep Rangitāne in check, the extent of the collusion going so far as withholding a Crown Law opinion that raised questions as to who in law owned the *kōiwi* and artefacts (Armstrong 2009: 54–59). From the 1990s, there has been a shift in thinking, and in turn, a greater recognition of the connection Rangitāne has to Te Pokohiwi. Katharina Ruckstuhl and colleagues (2015: 637) write that this shift reflected international trends. In New Zealand, legislation giving greater consultative powers to Māori and the acceptance of *mātauranga* Māori as a "legitimate knowledge domain in its own right" has led to fruitful dialogue. What must be remembered also is the legacy of protest and resistance left behind by Peter MacDonald.

At the time Peter was protesting, the Kurahaupō peoples of Te Taiuhu were still living on or near reserves created as a result of 19th-century Crown purchases or established under the South Island Landless Natives legislation of 1906 (Waitangi Tribunal Report 2008: 658). Peter and his wife, Sarah, for instance, had recently moved from Endeavour Inlet, a Landless Native reserve, to Picton. Following World War II, however, people started to steadily move from the Pelorus and Queen Charlotte Sounds, Port Gore, Croisilles Harbour and Canvastown to larger urban centres such as Blenheim (the Wairau), Nelson and Picton. In many cases, those families that settled in the Wairau were in fact resettling. These urban migrants were the children or grandchildren of individuals who had left the Wairau, having in some

cases been excluded from the Wairau reserves through the processes of the Native Land Court. This aside, their return sparked a number of initiatives, including the establishment of a *marae* ‘community complex’ at Omaka and the building of a *whare tūpuna* ‘carved meetinghouse’.

Officially opened on 27 October 1985, Te Aroha o Te Waipounamu was the first carved meetinghouse built in Te Taihū in the post-war period. During the early 1980s the Marlborough Māori community concentrated its energies on establishing a *marae* at Omaka, though the thought had been there for some time. Te Aroha o Te Waipounamu is the physical manifestation of oral tradition and *whakapapa* (Bradley 2003: 16–17). The name of the *whare* is suggestive of its geographical location—a point of arrival and departure—a reality that is reflected in the *whakapapa* make-up of the *tāngata whenua*. The *poupou* ‘carved posts or panels’ and *tukutuku* ‘woven panels’ that adorn the walls of the house retell the area’s history while at the same time giving us an insight into the thinking of those elders who provided guidance in its construction (Te Aroha o Te Waipounamu 1985). These elders were the students of the previous generation’s learned men and women, people such as Peter MacDonald and Eruera Pou Hemi Whiro.

As one enters the courtyard in front of the *whare* one is met by four male ancestors. At the apex of the *whare* stands Ngahue, and beneath him, Kupe. To Kupe’s right stands Huataki, and to the left, Marukaitātea. These ancestors represent different phases in the peopling of the Wairau. At one level they act as mnemonics for a more complex retelling of the past. The story of Huataki, for instance, cannot be retold without reference to his Ngāti Māmoē wives, who it could be argued are the more important characters in the story of the Wairau. Inside the *whare* stand ancestors credited with supernatural powers. Te Hau, it is said, was resident in the Wairau at the time of Kupe’s visit, and their encounter caused earthquakes and tsunamis resulting in the creation of significant landmarks. The building of Te Aroha o Te Waipounamu was a great achievement for the Marlborough Māori community, and since then Omaka has been the venue for a number of significant national *hui* ‘meetings’. Indeed, it was here that the Wairau Bar *tūpuna* would make their last stop before returning to Te Pokohiwi.

Before then, however, high-level negotiations between parties would take place. The context for such negotiations, as noted above, were changes to legislation and the emergence and acceptance of Māori-centred epistemologies. The work of the Waitangi Tribunal has been instrumental in this space, helping to shape judicial procedures and policy requiring various government agencies to consult with Māori. The Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014 is one piece of legislation that speaks directly to the issues addressed here. The Act empowers Heritage New Zealand to identify, record and protect historic places. This includes archaeological sites. Another

key development, as far as the Wairau Bar is concerned, took place in 1998 when Canterbury Museum adopted Ngāi Tahu's *kōiwi* policy (Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu 1993), which changed the way the Museum dealt with issues relating to *kōiwi tāngata*. Here the influence of then Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu Chairperson Mark Solomon was important. Furthermore, "Canterbury Museum's agreement to relinquish the *kōiwi tāngata* was not achieved without some pressure on the part of Rangitāne who were at the time negotiating with the Government to finalise their claim to the Waitangi Tribunal" (Ruckstuhl *et al.* 2015: 642–45). Settlement discussions also led to the return of land at the Wairau Bar (Meihana *et al.* 2017).

Realising that research would be a condition of repatriation Rangitāne sought the advice of archaeologists Foss Leach and Janet Davidson. In previous years, they had established a positive relationship with the tribe, and they suggested Rangitāne approach Professor Richard Walter, who was then a Co-director of Southern Pacific Archaeological Research (SPAR) at University of Otago. At a *hui* held in Christchurch in September 2008 researchers presented the proposed research programme for the Wairau Bar. Their aim was to use modern archaeological methods to gain a greater understanding of the site and allow researchers to better interpret previously excavated material. In December, the parties signed a Memorandum of Understanding, "the first of its kind in New Zealand" (Ruckstuhl *et al.* 2015: 646). Unlike the excavations carried out by Duff and Eyles, the research undertaken by SPAR was built on relationships and mapping areas of trust.

The research programme resulted in a number of published articles, some of which have been consulted here (Brooks *et al.* 2011; Davidson *et al.* 2011; Greig *et al.* 2015; Jacomb *et al.* 2014; Knapp *et al.* 2012; Kinaston *et al.* 2013; Ruckstuhl *et al.* 2015; Walter *et al.* 2010; Walter *et al.* 2017). The science was of great interest to Rangitāne, but their interest also extended to the circumstances that led to the excavations; this was the context in which the Armstrong Report was commissioned. The Armstrong Report for the most part has been confined to the archives; nevertheless, it has made a valuable contribution to the story of the Wairau Bar, bringing together primary source material, much of it held in the Canterbury Museum archives, and hitherto available to a limited number of people. Moreover, it addressed the issues that are important to Rangitāne.

#### OLD ENEMIES, NEW ALLIES

Prior to the *kōiwi* being returned to the Wairau, they were transported from Canterbury Museum to the University of Otago where they underwent macroscopic examination and isotope (carbon, nitrogen, strontium) analysis of bone, tooth collagen and enamel (Ruckstuhl *et al.* 2015: 646). The test sample consisted of bone from 38 individuals and 24 teeth. A "reflection of

diet and childhood residence”, the isotopic signatures of Burials 1 to 7 “may be representative of the TEP-like [tropical East Polynesian] diet consisting of protein primarily derived from domestic species” (Kinaston *et al.* 2013: 6). This group of burials, which included Aunty, also contained a far greater portion of grave offerings, including moa eggs, necklaces and ornaments. Isotope analysis, when taken in conjunction with other archaeological evidence, supports the hypothesis that these burials were part of the founding population (Kinaston *et al.* 2013: 8). The remaining burials show a variability in diet that might suggest a degree of mobility “during the colonizer phase of New Zealand prehistory” (Kinaston *et al.* 2013: 9).

DNA analysis was also carried out at the University of Otago. Geneticists have over decades developed techniques that have helped trace the movement of peoples. A technique first used to gain greater insight into the evolutionary history of other species, it was later applied to humans, giving rise to the “Out of Africa” or “Mitochondrial Eve” hypothesis (Matisoo-Smith 2016b). Mutations constituting the so-called “Polynesian motif”, or haplogroup B4a1a1 (previously referred to as B4a1a1a) are found throughout the Pacific, and even as far away as Madagascar (Razafindrazaka *et al.* 2010). Another study, investigating metabolic disease in Māori and other Polynesians, suggested that “the genetics of Polynesian populations has been shaped by island hopping migration events, the result being an increased risk of disease” (Benton *et al.* 2012: 1). The study, which sequenced 20 modern Māori individuals, also identified three previously unreported haplotypes within the B4a1a1 haplogroup, B4a1a1c, B4a1a1a3 and B4a1a1a5, as well as “novel” variants hitherto undocumented: 1185T, 4769A and 16126T (Benton *et al.* 2012: 6).

Of the 42 *tūpuna* returned to the Wairau, 19 were screened by University of Otago researchers, of which “4 provided sufficient sequence data for downstream analysis”. It was determined that Burials 1 and 16a belonged to B4a1a1a3 (now called B4a1a1c), Burial 2.1 to B4a1a1a, and Burial 18 to B4a1a1. The “novel” variants identified by Benton *et al.* were also carried by all four individuals. Burials 1 and 16a were found to carry the mutation 1185T, and mutation 4769G was displayed in Burials 2.1 and 18 (Knapp *et al.* 2012: 18351). According to Knapp *et al.* these mutations could “not have evolved and gained dominance in a population in <50 y” and must therefore have arrived in New Zealand on the voyaging canoes (Knapp *et al.* 2012: 18352).

In June 2016 Rangitāne hosted the New Zealand Archaeological Association Conference. This was another important step towards reconciliation. During the conference, three significant events took place: the results of the mtDNA sequencing of Wairau Bar *tūpuna* were presented (Collins *et al.* 2016); participants had the opportunity to visit Te Pokohiwi, where researchers and Rangitāne retold the story of the Wairau; and, as part of the Africa to

Aotearoa project, Rangitāne descendants were given the opportunity to have their DNA tested. This last event was led by University of Otago professor Elizabeth Matisoo-Smith. Many of the participants were interested to know if they were connected to those *tūpuna* at the Wairau Bar. It was explained that if “they do share those same mtDNA signatures, that means that, at some point they shared a direct common maternal ancestor. It could have been Auntie (Burial 1) or it could have been a more distant ancestor in Hawaiiki” (Elizabeth Matisoo-Smith pers. comm., 2016). In December participants received the results. Rangitāne *whānau* ‘extended family’ were excited to see the idea of their East Polynesian heritage expressed through the scientific genetic analysis. Moreover, it was noted that all of the lineages identified were found throughout New Zealand and the wider Pacific, excepting B4a1a1c, which includes Aunty and Burials 16a and 22a, and which has thus far only been found in Polynesia (Matisoo-Smith 2016a).

#### A NEW PERSPECTIVE

Genetic testing of *kōiwi tāngata* was one aspect of the research programme that initially aroused concern for Rangitāne, and some of the leadership were even opposed to it. In retrospect, however, it can be said that the mtDNA sequencing has had some positive, albeit unexpected, results. The repatriation and an increased understanding of Aunty and her life has engendered an acute awareness in the *ahi kā roa* community of heritage and its importance. This heightened awareness and sensitivity was recently seen in relation to a Heritage New Zealand (HNZ) investigation concerning damage to an archaeological site on the northern side of the Wairau River mouth. Tribal members raised the issue at the Rangitāne Annual General Meeting in 2015 (Te Rūnanga a Rangitāne o Wairau 2015). Of particular concern was the fact that a newly elected trustee of Te Rūnanga a Rangitāne o Wairau (Tribal Council) was a director of Montford Corporation, the entity subject to the investigation. However, the Rūnanga was prevented from discussing the matter as proceedings were under a suppression order (Te Rūnanga a Rangitāne o Wairau 2015). In July 2016 HNZ’s legal advisor sent a memorandum to the Heritage New Zealand Board and the Māori Heritage Council, which summarised the case. The memorandum noted a legal analysis carried out by Montford’s counsel that weighed up the likelihood of a successful prosecution. The memorandum also noted that an offer had been received from Montford to pay for an archaeological survey of their property with an undertaking that it would be followed in any further work in the area if the prosecution was withdrawn. The offer was accepted by HNZ (Memorandum, 2016).

The archaeological report commissioned as part of an out-of-court settlement with Montford Corporation noted that the Montford Estate

contained 13 sites, four of which are newly recorded (Habberfield-Short 2016: 74). While most were middens or associated with cooking, one site, recorded in 1961, is a burial site that Duff considered was contemporaneous with the Wairau Bar (Habberfield-Short 2016: 37). According to the report, “all sites are of sufficient rarity/uniqueness by their association with the Wairau Bar archaeological landscape”. Significantly, however, “they are likely to be further affected by farming practices, vineyard development, and on-going vineyard operations” (Habberfield-Short 2016: 2).

*Whakapapa* manuscripts, oral tradition and a carved meetinghouse not only are indicative of a deep interest in history and heritage, they are also constitutive of a Kurahaupō epistemology. However, indigenous knowledge systems have struggled in the face of European colonisation. The imposition or adoption of Western colonial structures, now often deemed to be “traditional”, have resulted in a tendency to elevate male ancestors. The expectations of the Native Land Court and its processes, coupled with the adoption of Christianity and its culturally defined hierarchies, has also resulted in the reification of patriarchy (Mikaere 2011: 196–98, 206–07). The effect of Christianity was such that Hoani Makitanara (MacDonald), the younger brother of Peter, lamented that with the arrival of the missionaries, and subsequent Māori conversion, the “ancient gods ... withdrew their protection and retreated to the heavens, where, so our *tohunga* [‘experts’] tell us they will remain until the Maori returns to his ancient customs and beliefs” (Elvy 1957: 73).

It is somewhat of a paradox, then, that science, often considered an instrument of Western imperialism, has been a catalyst for the inversion of patriarchy. A positive outcome of the Wairau Bar research, and in particular the mtDNA sequencing, has been a refocusing on the past. “Aunty”, who she was, how she lived and how she died has led to a greater interest in *ahi kā roa* as expressed in *whakapapa* through female ancestors: Hinekoareare, Te Heiwi, Wharepuka, Ruamate, and Hinepango. The stories of female ancestors, so often submerged beneath the deeds of their migrant husbands, are now being retold, albeit spurred by scientific observation. This shift (or return) has been hastened, arguably, by the reconciliation of tensions between scholastic and *iwi* ‘tribal’ communities, allowing ideas of their different knowledge traditions to be better shared. There is potential for this to challenge historical and contemporary structures, such as 19th-century Crown purchases, Native Land Court decisions and contemporary treaty settlement arrangements, which although “settled” remain live in a customary world.

\* \* \*

The repatriation of kōiwi tāngata in 2009 has had a significant impact on the Rangitāne people of the Wairau. It has presented the tribe with an opportunity to address a grievance that multiple generations have carried. For the

descendants of Peter MacDonald that grievance has weighed heavily. The repatriation has also resulted in the fostering of new relationships between Rangitāne and the scholastic community, and has in turn created the space in which knowledge traditions can be shared. The scientific research carried out as part of the repatriation has excited the interest of Rangitāne, and in particular, mtDNA sequencing. Confirmation of the connections between East Polynesia, the people who first settled at Te Pokohiwi (“Aunty”), and Rangitāne has led to more questions being asked about other female ancestors. Moreover, the improved knowledge of the past has engendered in the local Rangitāne community a desire to protect heritage and archaeological sites.

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#### NOTES

1. Here the term “Kurahaupō” is used to denote three Māori tribal groups: Ngāti Kuia, Rangitāne and Ngāti Apa. The Kurahaupō tribes also claim descent from other ancestral migratory canoes.
2. The term *ahi kā roa* ‘continuous occupation of land’ is used here to describe the Rangitāne community that continues to live in the Wairau.

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#### ABSTRACT

During the 1940s and 1950s *kōiwi tāngata* (human remains) were excavated at the Wairau Bar and taken to the Canterbury Museum. The excavations provided the scientific community with an abundance of data about the Polynesian settlement of New Zealand. For the Rangitāne community of the Wairau the excavations have been a cause of distress. At the time of the excavations, tribal elder Peter MacDonald protested the removal of the *kōiwi tāngata*. Although his protests were unsuccessful, his legacy of protest was passed to subsequent generations. This article examines the history of the Wairau Bar and the excavations from a Rangitāne perspective, contextualising the tribe's experiences within a longer history of European colonisation. The article discusses the negotiations between various institutions and Rangitāne, which led to the repatriation of *kōiwi tāngata* in 2009. A condition of repatriation was that the *kōiwi tāngata* undergo scientific analysis, including mtDNA sequencing. Despite having some reservations initially, the research has had positive but unexpected outcomes for Rangitāne. The article suggests that mtDNA sequencing, with its focus on maternal descent, has led to a growing interest in female ancestors generally.

*Keywords:* New Zealand, Māori, Wairau Bar, *kōiwi tāngata* (human remains), repatriation, Rangitāne, Ngāti Kuia, patriarchy, community archaeology

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# MOVING THROUGH THE ANCIENT CULTURAL LANDSCAPE OF MANGAIA (COOK ISLANDS)

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The distinguished Pacific scholar and writer Epeli Hau‘ofa envisions Oceania as an interconnecting world of movement between and within islands. In earlier times, Pacific peoples navigated their way on ocean-going vessels to other islands to trade, to expand “social networks”, to search for adventure or to seek war and dominate other groups of Islanders (Hau‘ofa 2008: 33). They also participated in a “more localised mobility” within islands where the natural landscapes of particular lands were “maps of movements, pauses, and more movements” (Hau‘ofa 2008: 72–73). Island landscapes are never passive elements, but rather actively contribute to the cultural world of the people who travel about in them. In a classic definition, geographer Carl Sauer explains this dynamic connection:

The cultural landscape is fashioned from a natural landscape by a culture group. Culture is the agent, the natural area is the medium, the cultural landscape the result. ... The natural landscape is of course of fundamental importance, for it supplies the material out of which the cultural landscape is formed. The shaping force, however, lies in the culture itself. (Sauer 1963: 343)

In order to move around in such a cultural landscape people need to possess some kind of “spatial consciousness” in the form of a cognitive map of their surrounding physical world (Mawyer and Feinberg 2014: 245). In finding their way through the land they also observe “the traces of other people’s movements and agency”, and listen to “the narratives of yet other people’s agency” (Gow 1995: 59). By recounting these narratives at the places where they occurred, a new generation learns about their ancestral past: “the landscape tells—or rather *is*—a story. It enfolds the lives and times of predecessors who ... have moved around in it and played their part in its formation”. To look at a landscape is “an act of remembrance” for “an environment that is itself pregnant with the past” (Ingold 1993: 152–53).

This paper originates in my own slow realisation that the traditions I discovered in archives and books were located within an “eco-cultural history” of particular cultural landscapes (Lepofsky *et al.* 2017: 459). Two quite different kinds of authorities influenced me. The first was my reading of some of the publications arising from an important interdisciplinary research project, begun in 1989, that looked at how people transformed the ecological

systems of colonised islands, with a particular focus on Mangaia (Fig. 1). The project also drew on oral traditions and ethnohistorical sources to help explain aspects of the longer-term process of landscape and environmental change (e.g., Kirch 1994 [especially chapter 4 on Mangaia], 1996, 2017; Kirch and Hunt 1997; Kirch *et al.* 1991, 1995). The second influence came about when I was privileged to be taken in hand by several Mangaians, notably Teariki No‘oroa and Mataora Harry, who talked to me about their island’s landscape. Mataora, late *kavana* ‘chief’ of Kei‘ā district, had a big hand in my education when he invited me to stay with him in 1998.<sup>1</sup> In between discussing various traditions and their appropriate translations, Mataora began taking me on tours of the different historic sites we were talking about, bumping our way

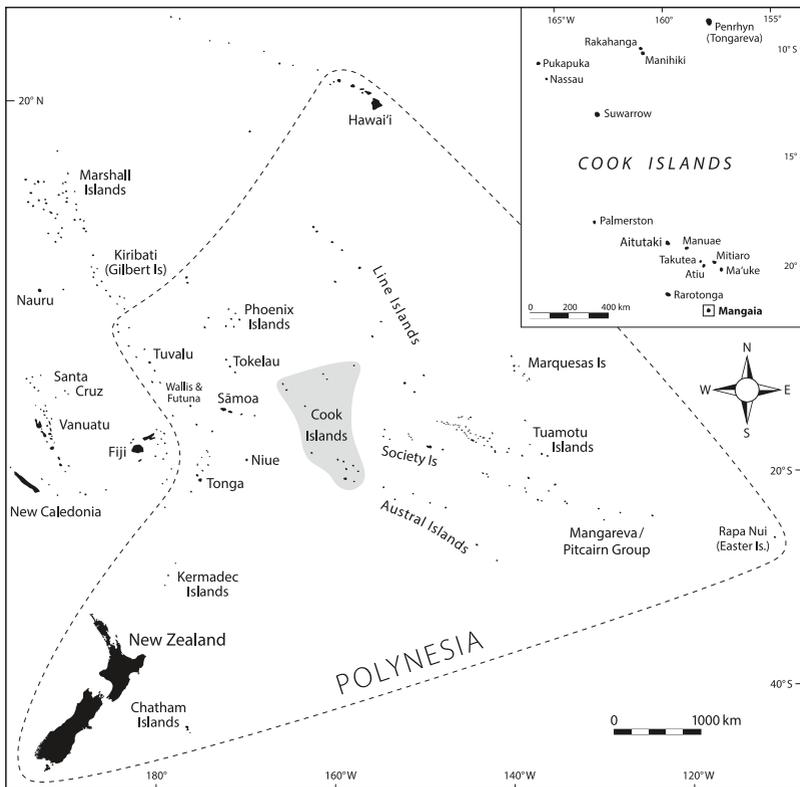


Figure 1. Mangaia in the Pacific. Map by Les O’Neill, 2017.

in his truck along the old, inland paths that had been widened for four-wheel vehicles. He would periodically stop on high points of the island so that I could get an overview of the island's landscape. We also visited a range of historic sites: old *marae* 'sacred sites' hidden in the luxuriant tropical bush, such as Ōrongo, Tukitukimātā, 'Aka'oro, Rangita'ua, Maungaroa and 'Aumoana; the pool, Vairorongo; the *'are va'ine* 'women's house', Te Puaimatareka; and famous lithic landmarks, like 'Oimara's stone and Moke's footprint. One day we waded through the lagoon to an ancient battle site at a fishers' cave, Ananui, with the help of a local guide Mataora had organised.

These trips, intended as a visual complement to the discussions of vernacular written texts, resemble other journeys. In the Marquesas Islands, Emily Donaldson and locals walked up the valleys and chatted about the ancestral sites they visited. She observes that such "embodied relationships to the land" allow locals "to engage with specific features and memories of ancient sites, carving place out of space" (Donaldson 2018: 9). For Huli historians in the Southern Highlands of Papua New Guinea, oral testimony given at the right physical location combines "with the visual and sensory evidence to impress on the audience the truth of the past" (Ballard 2014: 106–7); the sites themselves become "portals to an archive of memories of movement" (pp. 97–98). The elders in the indigenous communities of coastal British Columbia prefer to talk about their knowledge of the old ways, such as fishing or harvesting, at the appropriate cultural sites where these were practised so as to ensure the younger generation learns not only how to do things correctly but where the tasks should be appropriately carried out (Lepofsky *et al.* 2017: 455). Just so, by taking me to specific historic places in Mangaia, Mataora made sure I understood that the words about which we were talking so abstractly were rooted deeply in particular parts of his island, a land alive with multiple layers of ancestral associations.

The stories remembering Mangaia's past stem from the extraordinary collaborations between the London Missionary Society's William Wyatt Gill, who served the people of Mangaia between 1852 and 1872, and his numerous indigenous consultants who shared with him their knowledge of their island's cultural landscape. In a series of publications Gill retold these stories, quoting songs and proverbs associated with particular ancestral deeds within their natural world. While the stories themselves are told in English they draw from the oral traditions he heard from his Mangaian associates. Low-priced republications by the University of the South Pacific ensure several of Gill's key works remain accessible to Oceanic audiences, including Mangaians, for whom these writings are "artifacts of continuing value" (Myers 2017: 9, 11), preserving and perpetuating that ancestral knowledge, as living documents, for new generations of local (and other) readers.

In some of these stories Gill gives us a sense of how he and his local consultants went about remembering the people and places associated with them. A good example introduces the story of the war refugee, Vivi. Gill explains that one day he walked through the centre of the island, heading to the other side of it, accompanied by “an intelligent young man as a guide”. His unnamed Mangaian guide suggested they leave their narrow path “in order ‘to see where Vivi rolled himself down’”, to which Gill agreed. He continues: “A few minutes’ walk along a narrow hill-ridge through the crisp fern which we crunched under our feet, brought us to a conical eminence, up which we climbed. On either side was a deep valley with precipitous sides. ... ‘Down there’, said my guide, ‘rolled poor Vivi’”. The guide told Gill the story as the two men rested under the shade of some *toa* ‘ironwood’ (*Casuarina equisetifolia*) trees (Gill 1984 [1894]: 115–16).

In this account Gill shows how he learned about the island’s past as he moved across the landscape, often as part of his pastoral duties. Other times, he explored some part of the landscape which Mangaian had mentioned in their narratives, always taking along local people to show him about (e.g., Gill 1984 [1894]: 214–36). As in this example, these Mangaian guides would suggest interludes in their journeys so that the party could sit and hear a story associated with the place. Gill went to great lengths to see the places and to hear the stories associated with them. He prefaces various accounts with descriptions of how he climbed trees, clambered up cliff faces, explored subterranean caves and walked through the *makatea* (Fig. 2) and the *rāei kere*. The *makatea* is an ancient uplifted reef that surrounds the island like a fortress wall and possesses a forbidding surface of “hard, splintery limestone” with “sharp serrated pinnacles” and many crevices, covered over in “a tangle of interlacing vegetation” (Kirch 2017a: 9–12; Marshall 1927: 20). The *rāei kere* ‘black rocks’ is an area of the southern *makatea* characterised as a desolate moonscape devoid of any vegetation (‘Arepō n.d.a; Gill 1984 [1894]: 216–17). Such challenging locations show the extent of Gill’s desire to understand fully the local world of his parishioners, a commitment that doubtless encouraged Mangaian to tell him stories about the land and its people.

The following paper is divided into three sections. In the first, the paper introduces local directions which orientate travel about the land. These come from conversations with locals, modern ethnographies and historical and contemporary language samples. In the second section, the paper focuses on what can be learned from the historical literature about the island’s *ara* ‘paths, tracks’ that continue to allow people to criss-cross the land. The final part of this paper describes the kinds of journeys undertaken in ancient Mangaia, including processions for ritual or mourning, expeditions to seek victims or make war, and trips to use resources or attend entertainments.



Figure 2. *Makatea* near coastal road, Veitātei. Author's photograph, 2001.

#### DIRECTIONS

In writing about spatial relationships in Tonga, Giovanni Bennardo (2014: 254) observes that “giving directions is an activity which requires the activation of deeply seated knowledge of one’s environment (physical and social)”. In Manguaia, people utilise a series of locative bases in order to communicate a quite precise location and directionality in terms of a subject’s movements within the landscape. With reference to the culturally related society of Mangareva in French Polynesia, Alexander Mawyer, citing William Hanks, explains such locatives as “referential practice” whereby a person is able “to locate [themselves] in the world, to occupy a position, however fleetingly, in one or more sociocultural fields” (Hanks 1990: 514 quoted in Mawyer 2014: 287).

For Manguaia, the first locatives are the oppositional pair of *tai* ‘sea, seaward’ and *uta* ‘inland, landward, ashore’. Concerning ancient Tahiti, Douglas Oliver (1974: 584) suggests this contrast “was a fundamental one to these land-dwelling but sea-going Islanders”. Mawyer (2014: 288) notes similar usages throughout Polynesia, suggesting there is “a standard model of the Polynesian cultural figuration of sea-land orientation”. This polarity

is also significant in Mangaia as it appears elsewhere in the local cultural world, for example, in the titles of the two most prestigious pre-Christian priestly offices, the *ariki pā uta*, responsible for inland and eastern parts of the island, and the *ariki pā tai*, responsible for the western shore (Reilly 2009: 47). Sample historical sentences illustrate how these locatives are used. Both appear in a dream later recounted by the *ariki pā uta*, Nūmangātini, about his first encounter with Christian missionaries:

*Tē 'aere ra aia e 'ātoro i taua pa ʻī rā, e tae atura aia ki tai i Ōrongo. Kite atura aia i 'e tokorua tangata nō runga mai i te pa ʻī kua tau mai i ʻuta i Avarua.*

He was walking down to the shore at Ōrongo [a marae or sacred site] to take a look at the ship. He saw two people from the ship land at Avarua (underlining added) [a reef channel; Fig. 3]. (pp. 113–14)

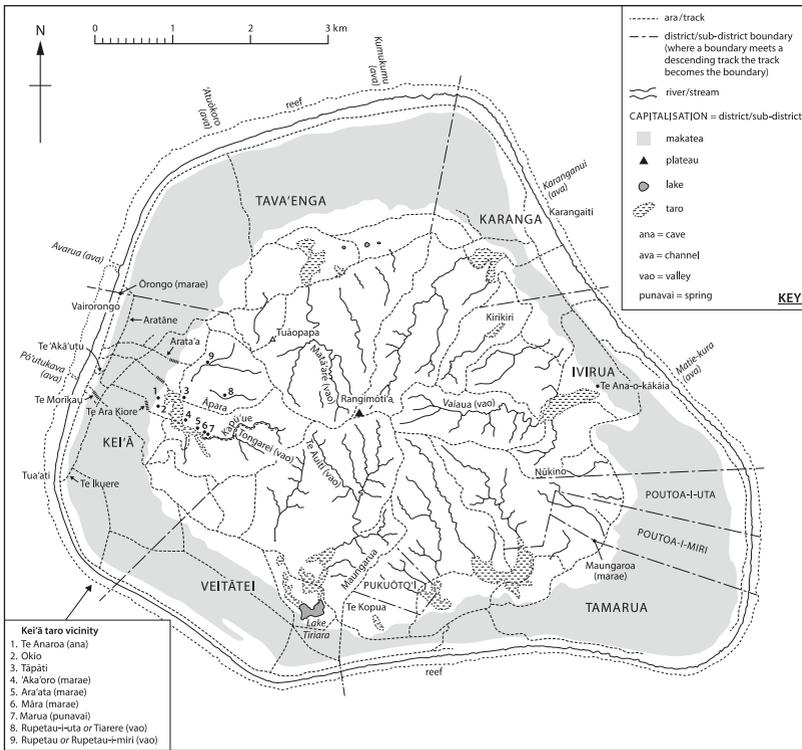


Figure 3. Mangaia's cultural landscape. Map by Les O'Neill, 2017.

In the first sentence Nūmangātini is walking from the hinterland towards the sea. In the second, the two men from the missionary ship, described as a *pa'ī*, the word for Oceania's sea-going double-hulled canoes, have come ashore at the reef channel, that is, they have travelled in a landwards direction. Both locatives also appear together in an old song where defeated Teipe tribal members are described as birds flitting inland and seaward in a desperate search for a refuge from their enemies: “*Nā uta, nō tai, 'akaea Teipe manua*” (Gill 1984 [1894]: 122). At any point of a line drawn between the centre of the island, the *maunga* ‘mountain’, and the sea, a Mangaian can plot their position in relation to these two locatives. The mountain itself has been described as “the most extreme point *'i uta* (landward) possible”, just as the sea was the extreme termination in the other direction (Mark 1976: 43, underlining in original).<sup>2</sup>

The second contrastive locative pair comprises *runga* ‘up, east’ and *raro* ‘down, west’.<sup>3</sup> The anthropologist Mary V. Mark identifies two local ways of using these locatives. First, if applied vertically, *runga* and *raro* locate a person's movement up and down as they travel across the island's rugged landscape (Mark 1976: 44–45). Two samples from historical narratives illustrate this usage: “*kake atura nā runga i te maunga*” ‘climbed up the mountain’ (Reilly 2009: 27); “*taka atura rāua i raro i vēta 'i ngā 'i 'aka 'aka*” ‘they fell down into a low area’ (Reilly 2010: 130). In the last sample, two brothers fighting on a trail fell down the mountain side.

The second local use of these locatives applies them horizontally to the landscape. As Mark explains, *runga* and *raro* refer to a person who travels on a circular course around the island, keeping parallel to the sea and the mountain. A person is travelling *ki / 'i runga* when they move from Kei'ā district in the west and head around the northern side of the island to Tamarua district, at the eastern extremity, before returning through the southern side back to their starting point (Fig. 3). If the traveller were to reverse the direction of their journey around the island they would be going *ki / 'i raro* (Mark 1976: 45–46). Put more simply, a traveller going *'i runga* is heading eastwards while *'i raro* is going west.

This application appears in various historical and contemporary examples. Polynesian navigators referred to sailing east as *runga* and west as *raro* (Gill 1876a: 25). Oliver (1974: 584) explains this nautical usage as “upwind-downwind (i.e., toward or away from the prevailing easterly trades)”, directions that would have applied as much in Mangaia as in Tahiti since both islands are roughly located on an east-west axis. Mangaian sentence samples illustrate local usages of this east-west orientation: “*E anga ki runga; e anga ki raro*” ‘Look eastward; look westward’, from an 18th-century lament (Gill 1876b: 197); “*Ka 'aere au i runga i Tamarua*” ‘I'm going up (east) to Tamarua’ (Mauriati *et al.* 2006: 416). Other text samples demonstrate that

people located in each of Mangaia's six districts generally use *runga* for movement in an easterly direction and *raro* when moving westwards within their various districts (Shibata 1999: 244). The one anomaly arises when someone positioned in Oneroa village, in the western district of Kei'ā, heads towards the southern side of the island, in the direction of Veitātei district. They are considered to be moving *ki raro* (Mataora Harry pers. comm., 24 January 2003; Shibata 1999: 244; Tua'ine Papatua pers. comm., 30 January 2017). My best guess is that for someone positioned on the west coast, *runga* is a clockwise progression by way of the northern side of the island to the east while *raro* is a counter-clockwise progression through the southern side of the island to the east and back round towards the west again.

Mataora Harry (pers. comm., 24 January 2003) draws on the ancient conceptualisation of Mangaia as a fish when talking about this horizontal usage of *runga* and *raro*. Someone travelling *ki runga* is moving in the direction of the districts considered the *pāuru* 'head of the fish', Ivirua and Tamarua, located on the east side of the island. Conversely, someone travelling *ki raro* is heading from the *pāuru* towards the districts at the other extremity, Kei'ā and Tava'enga, on the western coast, metaphorically considered the 'uku or 'iku 'the tail of the fish' (Fig. 3).<sup>4</sup>

Another locative, *roto* 'inside, within', is used in relation to the *makatea* which measures between a half and two kilometres in width (Kirch 2017a: 10). As Mataora Harry explains it (pers. comm., 24 January 2003), if someone walks into the *makatea*'s bush, perhaps to collect *maire* (*Alyxia stellata*), or coconut to feed their pigs, then they are said to be "*tei roto i te makatea*" 'in the *makatea*'. A historical narrative describes survivors of a massacre who ran away and "*ua no 'o i roto i te makatea*" 'dwelt inside the *makatea*' (Reilly 2009: 213). In both cases the people concerned had ventured into the inner recesses of the *makatea* where the bush cover would have made for an excellent refuge in pre-Christian times.

Another orientation of the Mangaian landscape is revealed by the locatives *mua* 'front, before' and *miri* or *muri* 'behind, back, rear, after'.<sup>5</sup> An old story from Mangaia describes how a challenger for the high chiefly (*mangaia*) title lodged faeces in an irrigation channel, "*ia tere te kava o te tūtāe i miri*" 'in order to hasten the bitter taste of the faeces *i miri*'. In English *miri* might be translated as downstream, referring to the water's movement through the channel towards the *makatea*. However, during a discussion of this incident in the story, Teariki No'oroa pointed out to me a more fundamental orientation of Mangaia's natural and cultural landscapes. As he explains it, the irrigation system begins in the mountain, the source of the fresh water that sustains the entire system of wetland *taro* plantations found in the valleys.<sup>6</sup> The interior mountain is therefore the front or beginning (*mua*) of the irrigation system. The water flows through the various *taro* plots till reaching the back or end

(*miri*) of the system, the last plots before the water disappears under the *makatea* and so out to sea. Teariki reminded me that in the pre-Christian era Māngaians lived in the inland areas of their districts. In that situation they conceived of their system of irrigated plantations as being orientated to face towards the mountain (Fig. 4; Reilly 2009: 181, 299 n.12).

As a directional term *mua* indicates a location closer to the mountain whereas *miri* refers to that part of the pre-Christian interior living spaces nearest the *makatea*. An old story describes the ancestral founder, Rangi, travelling “*nā miri ... nā te pae mato*” ‘behind ... by way of the cliffs’, a reference to the inner-facing cliffs of the *makatea* (Fig. 5; Reilly 2009: 24–25). This organisation of the landscape is confirmed by past and present sub-district (*tapere*) names: Rupetau-i-uta and Rupetau-i-miri in Kei‘ā and Poutoa-i-uta and Poutoa-i-miri in Tamarua (Fig. 3; Hiroa 1971 [1934]: 127–28). Mataora Harry (pers. comm., 24 January 2003) confirms that the places with the suffix *uta* are nearer to the mountain than those with the suffix *miri*. In this usage, *uta* refers to the inland area which conceptually is considered to be *mua*.



Figure 4. A view from the *makatea* of Tamarua’s *taro* swamps facing the mountain in background, with paths (widened for modern vehicles) criss-crossing the valley floor. Author’s photograph, 1998.

By contrast, *miri* is in the direction of the *tai*. Hence Mangaian people had their backs to the sea and faced towards Rangimōti‘a, the mountain named by the founding ancestor of Mangaian society (Mataora Harry pers. comm., 18 October 2001). As directional terms *mua* and *miri* seem more localised forms, orientated along the *uta-tai* line, but focused on the relationship of the interior living and planting areas to the mountain and the *makatea*, both of which loom over the lands where the people dwelt in the pre-Christian era. Given that the mountain provides the people with the source of their fresh-water supply it is not too surprising that they orientate their world to look in that direction.

According to Mawyer (2014: 281), Oliver thought the *mua-muri* pair was culturally foundational in relation to Polynesian spatial orientation. Oliver himself speculates that *mua-muri* primarily referred to “socially valued activity” in ancient Tahiti, so that *mua* might be more accurately translated as “center, or focus (of some interest)”, and *muri* as “margin of the same” (Oliver 1974: 1082, italics in original). Mangaian usages indicate that *mua* and *uta* refer to more socially significant and culturally valued inland spaces, in contrast to *tai* and *miri* (*muri*) which encompass the *makatea* and coast, both considered marginal living areas until the advent of Christianity.



Figure 5. Kei‘ā’s inner-facing *makatea* cliff with inland path (right foreground) widened for modern vehicles. Photograph by Richard Walter, 2001.

Mangaian use locative bases to describe the particular directions they take as they journey through their island landscape. Their movements to the sea, inland towards the mountain, in an easterly direction towards the head of the fish, or into the *makatea*, all identify their journey in relation to an absolute position in the surrounding landscape. Travel is described as radiating out from or to some fixed and constant point in the spatial environment, a perspective Mangaian share with other Polynesians (Bennardo 2014: 257–58, 261, 266–67; Mawyer 2014: 284).

#### PATHWAYS

Mangaia is criss-crossed by numerous *ara* that help tie people together and enable access to various land and sea resources (Fig. 3). The first paths appear in the foundation stories about Mangaian society. For example, when the early Tonga‘iti people were defeated in battle in Kei‘ā district the survivors fled by a road right across the island to Tamarua. Many of the places along the pathway are named after the warriors killed at these spots as they stood to fight their pursuers (Gill 1876b: 288; Reilly 2003: 28; Shibata 1999: 138, 323). They became part of the landscape, imbuing it with human associations that are remembered in the stories told about these locations, themselves now “the stage set for the human drama itself” (Richards 1999: 91).

Paths ran up the steep-sided mountain ridges from the interior valleys and across Rangimōti‘a which seems to have served as a central junction (Fig. 3). As in Gill’s day, these main trunk roads allowed people to move from one valley or district to another. Historical narratives describe these pathways as *ara iti* ‘narrow tracks’, requiring groups to pass in single file (Gill 1885: 99–101; 1984 [1894]: 193–94, 115; Shibata 1999: 138). For example, Ivirua invitees to an important feast in Kei‘ā proceeded down the Āpara mountain ridge to Tāpāti lying at its foot and the site of the feast (Fig. 3). An army marching to battle in Ivirua took the same route in reverse (Gill 1984 [1894]: 166–67; Hiroa 1971 [1934]: 56; Pāmetu Metuauti pers. comm., 24 October 2001; Reilly 2003: 61–62). Two Ivirua men in search of retribution took the Karangapai ridge and descended into Tamarua’s Te Kōpua sub-district (Fig. 3; Aratangi n.d.a). When parties met there could be disputes, especially when persons of consequence were involved as neither wished to step aside and risk coming under the other’s *mana* ‘authority’ (e.g., Gill 1876a: 353–4). However, on reaching the flat mountain summit the principal track widened out becoming an *ara ngao* or *ara nui ātea* ‘wide path’. Off it ran various narrow minor pathways leading down the mountain’s steep slopes to particular residential areas in the valleys below (Gill 1876a: 344–6; Shibata 1999: 34).

Other paths radiated outwards in the opposite direction, like spokes of a wheel, from the valleys down to the sea, known as *ara ‘aere i tai* ‘paths going

to sea' (Shibata 1999: 34). These paths allowed access to the coastal and sea resources for the people who, up to the Christian era, lived enclosed lives in their *kāinga* 'living areas' in the interior valleys. Unlike the apparently anonymous ridge and mountain trails, these land-to-sea paths are identified by name. For example, the Arata'a path saw the chiefly Paoa take leave of his family and go down to Avarua, or another reef channel, and seek death at sea in consequence of a verbal attack that affected his *mana* (Fig. 3; Gill 1984 [1894]: 275–82). Another Kei'ā path through the narrow gorge, Te Ikuere (or Te Ikuari), witnessed the killing of the chiefly woman, Tā'aumārama, returning from the reef at Tua'ati with calabashes filled with salt water for cooking—a victim of her father's political intrigues (Fig. 3). He later chose this spot to go down fighting against his opponents, joining his beloved daughter in death (Gill 1984 [1894]: 88; Reilly 2003: 50–51; 2009: 184–85; Shibata 1999: 339). In Tamarua, the important valley-to-sea track, Teone, became a critical escape route into the *makatea* for survivors of the battle at nearby Pukuōto'i ('Aerepō n.d.b; Gill 1984 [1894]: 170–72, 183, 196–97; Hiroa 1971 [1934]: 62). Other seaward paths include Te Morīkau in Kei'ā (Fig. 3), Raurau in Veitātei, Anarea in Ivirua and Karangaiti and Arapiri in Karanga. All these paths were "narrow and rugged", but used daily by fishers and those collecting seawater for cooking (Fig. 6; see 'Aerepō n.d.c; Aratangi n.d.b; Gill 1984 [1894]: 28–31, 103–4, 110–11, 177–80; Shibata 1999: 300, 311).



Figure 6. A path (centre) through *makatea* from Veitātei's coast inland to Lake Tiriara. Author's photograph, 2001.

War refugees sheltering in the *makatea* used these valley-to-sea tracks as they moved in and out of their hiding places, playing an endless cat-and-mouse game with enemy warriors in search of them (Gill 1984 [1894]: 152–53). The heroine, Kārua, at great personal risk, warned her brother-in-law of an assassination plot by running in the dead of night to his residence inland along one of these paths winding through the jagged *makatea*, an act, Gill points out, difficult enough to do in daylight (pp. 161–62). When these paths went down the *makatea* cliffs they were called *ara 'eke'eke* 'descending paths' (Shibata 1999: 34), and even today some require great care, comprising only a few flattish rocks placed at intervals down the cliff face.

Located between the dominating crest of the mountain and the high cliffs of the *makatea*, the interior living areas were criss-crossed by pathways running the length and breadth of each valley. These were the *ara 'aere i te kāinga* 'paths going to the inland living areas' and *ara i uta* 'inland paths' (Shibata 1999: 34). In Kei'ā, perhaps one of the best-known internal paths is Te Ara Kiore 'The Rat's Pathway', the main track connecting the valley to the top of the *makatea* from whence it links up with other paths either inland to Veitātei, or by way of the Aratāne path, through an area of the *makatea* known as 'Are-mauku, down to the sea at Avarua (Fig. 3; Gill 1984 [1894]: 292–93; Mataora Harry pers. comm., 3 July 1998; Shibata 1999: 36). At the Aratāne, atop the *makatea*, stood the early *mangaia*, Mokea, watching for any Rarotongan warriors returning in search of a compensatory victory for their earlier drubbing at the hands of Mangaia's defenders ('Aerepō n.d.d.).

The various valleys in each district possessed a network of paths, including subsidiary tracks in the smaller tributary valleys and arterial roads running the length of the main living areas. These pathways formed the stage set for the two refugees, Vaiā and his sister, Mangaia, who had descended into Tongarei, a long valley in Kei'ā, where they were seized by nearby residents and taken by a narrow path to the *ara nui* 'main road' at Kapū'ue, site of a waterfall and pond (Fig. 3). Here they were met by Te Uanuku, the *mangaia*, who had run up Kei'ā's main valley to save the two refugees who were relations of his mother's (Gill 1984 [1894]: 201–6). Major internal thoroughfares appear in other districts: Ivirua possessed *te ara nui o Toi* 'the main road of Toi' (Rakauruaiti and Aratangi n.d.). Despite the existence of such arterial paths, most interior tracks in the pre-Christian era were typically narrow, with people walking in single file (Fig. 7; Gill 1876a: 42–43; 1984 [1894]: 76–77, 146).

In selecting battlefields to decide the next *mangaia* titleholder, challenging leaders made sure that there was an internal pathway leading off the chosen site, allowing quick access either to the mountain or the *makatea* for the defeated party, as at the battle of Rangiuē in Ivirua (Gill 1984 [1894]: 47; Reilly 2003: 38). These escape paths ensured that most battles were



Figure 7. An old single-file path (centre) crossing the *taro* swamps in Kei‘ā’s valley towards ‘Aka‘oro, c. 1950s. Photograph by Donald Marshall, courtesy of D.S. Marshall Archive, University of the South Pacific, Cook Islands Campus.

not decisive ones resulting in heavy casualties. An exception to this was the battle of Āua in Kei‘ā where paths became an important factor in the destruction of the superior force under Rāei by those following Mautara. As Mautara’s smaller force descended a narrow path from Veitātei into Kei‘ā his secret supporters on Rāei’s side realised Mautara’s army could be easily bottled up on the track by a small group of warriors. One of these supporters signalled Mautara to lead his band by a more circuitous path, enabling them to emerge behind Rāei’s assembling formation. This manoeuvre, along with a coordinated surprise attack from the secret supporters against their former companions, pushed the defenders into a confined space where there were no lines of escape along paths towards either the sea or interior (Gill 1984 [1894]: 211; Hiroa 1971 [1934]: 63; Reilly 2003: 65–67).

The numerous paths criss-crossing the valleys included many side roads or alternative tracks that were less travelled, because either they took a long way around or went through more challenging terrain. These backroads allowed for much surreptitious movement around the island. Refugees took them to escape detection by alert parties of enemy warriors (Gill 1984 [1894]:

115–121, 155). Wives of such defeated refugees used them to bring food and support to their trapped partners (p. 291). In Mangaia, marriages being exogamous, these women often came from the victorious descent group and so could move about quite freely (Hiroa 1971 [1934]: 91). The fortunate Maikai, out collecting fallen chestnuts with other women, took such a path to elude pursuing enemy warriors (‘Aerepō n.d.e; Gill 1984 [1894]: 287–89; Shibata 1999: 315, 377). Such unfrequented paths were favoured by hunting parties tasked with surprising and killing the designated human sacrifice for a new *mangaia*’s inauguration rituals (Gill 1876b: 302).

#### JOURNEYS

##### *Mourning the Dead*

When someone died or was killed in battle, immediate family carried them in a procession, sometimes for considerable distances, before interring them in the burial cave set aside for the deceased’s descent group (Gill 1876b: 211–14). The mourning party would bring food for the dead and stay there for some days (pp. 187–89). For some time following a death, a mourning family would repeat the journey to the burial cave in order to reoil and reclothe the body (Gill 1876a: 75–76). To remember their loved one some families undertook exhausting processions around the island during which they would pause periodically to perform laments and appropriate funeral dances, before finally returning home (pp. 182–83, 187).

On the death of a prominent person, a *manu* ‘messenger’ ran around the island announcing the news at the border of each of the six districts. Following that announcement, extended family members would travel with gifts to the dead person’s house. The young men of the deceased’s district would go and fight in ritual battles, called ‘*e teina nō te puruki*’ ‘a younger brother of war’, with each of the other districts. Following each battle, the opponents would join up and travel on to the next district, and so on, until the men from all the districts returned as a single group to the place where the body was laid out (Gill 1876b: 268–69).

When Kurapē‘au’s husband, the priestly medium ‘Ākunukunu, was assassinated by her own kinsmen, after she had promised him her people’s protection, she began wandering around on a protracted journey of mourning, up mountain ridges and through valleys in Ivirua and Tamarua districts. Her suffering only ended with her death at the hands of the refugee warrior, Tamangoru, at a place called Rū-ā‘iva, the site of a *marae* for the Tepei (Teipe) clan (*kōpū*), probably near the foot of the mountain ridge at the end of the Vaiaua valley (Fig. 3). The killer hid her body in a nearby *taro* patch where it was discovered, eight days later, by her son, Mautara, following an extensive search throughout the area (Gill 1984 [1894]: 124, 128–29; Hiroa [1934] 1971: 175; Mautara n.d.).

*Kimi atu koe i tō metua  
Tei uta ē, i te vao roa,  
I te po'o i Vaiaua.*

You searched for your parent  
(You found her) inland, in the long valley,  
At the end of Vaiaua.

...

*Mangere i kona ē,  
Tei Rū-ā'iva ē.*

Left there,  
At Rū-ā'iva.

### *Rituals and Sacrifices*

The inauguration of a new *mangaia* involved a sequence of seven processions by large groups around the entire island. The first procession was the most violent, occurring as it did soon after the decisive battle to determine who ruled the land. The victorious army would march around the island to assert their authority, killing anyone foolish enough to cross their path. Later processions were marked by ritual acts at the island's *marae*, and included a ceremonial breaking of weapons, to mark the shift from war to peace. The final procession involved a beating of drums throughout the island, signalling the cessation of violence and the advent of peace (Gill 1876b: 294–305; Reilly 2009: 248–59).

Prior to the final procession, the presiding *ariki* 'high priest' nominated a victim and selected warriors to hunt for them and bring their body to the *marae* of 'Aka'oro in Kei'ā (Fig. 3). These hunting parties might travel quite far, often by backroads at night to maintain secrecy, only to find victims being sheltered by protectors or in hiding, and requiring trickery to catch. Hunting parties were known to kill people connected to a victim who they happened to come across. When caught a victim was carried in a procession round parts of the island to 'Aka'oro. For example, the victim 'Akaruke, a young boy, was taken alive and led by a rope to various leading chiefs on the northern side of the island, visits attended by some ceremony. At the end of the sacrifice, portions of a victim's body were carried back to each of the island's *marae* (Gill 1876a: 36–42, 277, 344–6; 1876b: 297, 302–3, 306; 1885: 232–33; Reilly 2009: 257).

Periodically, the *ariki pā uta* 'inland high priest', assisted by the medium (*pi'a atua*) for the important spirit power, Mōtoro, summoned the young people of each descent group to return to their tribal god's *marae*, located in the group's ancestral homeland. There they underwent a ritual recognition of their name, as a means of identifying to which spirit power members of the younger generation belonged (Gill 1876b: 38).

### *Killings and Theft*

The killing of people involved extensive and frequently clandestine movements across the landscape. The violence normally took place secretly during the darkest period of the lunar month between the 17th to 28th nights: Rākau, Rākau-roto, Rākau-‘aka’oti, Korekore, Korekore-roto, Korekore-‘aka’oti, Tangaroa, Tangaroa-roto, Tangaroa-‘aka’oti, ‘O Tāne, Rongo-nui and Mauri (Gill 1876b: 318–19). The killers were proverbially likened to the *unga puku’ara* ‘coconut or robber crab’ (*Birgus latro*), which also emerged on these nights and travelled long distances across the island in search of food (Gill 1876a: 277). As with sacrifice victims, killers seeking retribution might use trickery to lure their target into walking away from their protector’s residence, across country, to a killing ground in an unpopulated spot, such as a mountain ridge (e.g., Gill 1885: 100–102). In other cases, a killing party would travel to the location of those targeted for retribution, often covering a considerable distance. Taipiro brought a Tonga’iti war party from Tamarua, in the east, across the mountain, to a *makatea* cave located in Tava’enga, in the northwest (Gill 1984 [1894]: 83–85). A killing party set off from Ara’ata *marae* in Kei’ā, through the inland living areas in Tava’enga and Karanga districts where they slew several enemy leaders, and then across Ivirua’s *makatea* to a seaward-facing fishers’ cave, Ananui, where they attacked a large party of enemies (Fig. 3). Famously, this war party used calabash torches: just one to guide their journey, before lighting the rest to illuminate the cave attack (pp. 18–21; Reilly 2003: 30–33). Other killings were more opportunistic. A refugee hunting party came from Ivirua to Kei’ā’s coastline in search of food and unsuccessfully tried to kill a fisherman on the reef, before eluding pursuing warriors in the *makatea* (Gill 1984 [1894]: 175–77).

When the Ngāti Vara *mangaia*, Te Uanuku, was assassinated at night in his home in Ivirua, the conspirators also tried to finish off his influential father, Mautara, living in Kei’ā. Warned of their approach he and his family escaped, heading first to pick up his son’s body and hide it from any ill-treatment, probably at Nūkino, on the mountain ridge dividing Ivirua and Tamarua, before moving through Tamarua to Veitātei, recruiting additional supporters, until they encamped at Āriki near Lake Tiriara (Fig. 3; Gill 1984 [1894]: 209–10; Reilly 2003: 65; 2009: 224–27; Shibata 1999: 163).

Extended wars and natural calamities like drought affected the availability of food supplies, and prompted those affected by hunger to venture into more bountiful areas to steal food. Typically, they would creep across the island on the moonless night dedicated to ‘Iro, the spirit patron of thieves, and take various foods, especially *māmio* ‘taro’ (*Colocasia esculenta*) but also other important crops, like banana. One Ivirua thief visiting Veitātei spotted a good target and returned on the appropriate night. Landowners (‘*atu* ‘*enua*) moved about, especially on the thieving night, trying to safeguard their

plantations. If a thief was identified, the afflicted landowners might travel en masse to the perpetrator's district and destroy all of its crops as a collective punishment, forcing the thief's family to kill him. Similarly, hungry war refugees who came down from the *makatea* and were caught taking food from inland plantations might be killed by vigilant landowners (Gill 1876a: 47–51; 1876b: 318; 1885: 65–66).

### *Escapes*

Mangaian enjoyed telling Gill stirring stories of escape by their ancestors from certain death at the hands of enemy parties, often taking him to the stage set of their narrative to point out significant landmarks (e.g., Gill 1984 [1894]: 296–97). The following is a selection of such escape stories (for others see pp. 177–79, 287–89; Gill 1876a: 344–46). A lone survivor from a massacre of feast-goers at Tāpāti (Tāpātiu), in Kei'ā, ran off to warn priestly mediums at Tuopapa (Tuāopapa) in Tava'enga district and at Te Ruakeretonga in Karanga, before racing on to notify his own people in Ivirua who hid in the large Te Ana-o-kākāia refuge cave (Fig. 3; Aratangi n.d.c; Aratangi 1989; Gill 1984 [1894]: 166; Reilly 2003: 60; 2009: 211–14).<sup>7</sup> The escapee, Matenga, made his way through Tamarua's *makatea* to the coast where he took a fishing boat and paddled around the length of the island to Kei'ā, where his brother-in-law protected him (Gill 1984 [1894]: 292). Besieged with his supporters in the refuge cave behind Lake Tiriara, in Veitātei, Panako famously slipped through the enemy lines dressed and walking like a woman out collecting firewood. Unchallenged, he journeyed to and from Tamarua by an unfrequented backroad, successfully concluding an alliance with One and his Tonga'iti people to break the siege (pp. 76–79; Reilly, 2003: 41–43). Kie of Ngāti Tāne carried her seriously wounded husband, Atatoa, out of a fight at Okio, at the foot of the inner *makatea* cliff in Kei'ā. Still pursued by the enemy she carried him up a cliff path to Te Anaroa and then Te Anaiti caves: “*Pikaio, e Kie, i tō tāne, / E 'apai atu i Te Anaroa, i Te Anaiti*” ‘Tenderly wrap up your husband, o Kie, / And carry (him) from Te Anaroa to Te Anaiti’. Fearing pursuit she then carried him by way of the *makatea* path, Te 'Akā'utu, to a cave of the same name lying at the foot of the *makatea* overlooking the sea where, despite her nursing, he succumbed to his wounds (Fig. 3; Gill 1984 [1894]: 296–304; Mataora Harry pers. comm., 18 October 2001; Tua'ine Papatua pers. comm., April 2001).<sup>8</sup>

Some escape stories highlight the vulnerability of less powerful groups in Mangaian society, particularly children and young people, during periods of sustained warfare associated with challenges for the *mangaia* title. For various reasons they became separated from other family and would move from shelter to shelter in remoter areas, foraging on local wild foods, ever fearful of capture by their enemies or of being killed by hungry refugee

warriors. In these and other stories, Gill's consultants suggest that the killing of young people was considered socially and culturally abhorrent, and perhaps only occurred at times of widespread famine brought on by the disruptions to normal life caused by warfare (e.g., story of Tukekovi in Gill 1876a: 123–24). Two well-known stories illustrate the secretive journeys of such youthful escapees.

After the defeat of their descent group three young girls, Kaiara and her two younger sisters, hid in Te Mata-o-Rongo, an area of the *makatea* in the east of Mangaia, rather than accompanying most of their kin to the refuge cave of Te Ana-o-kākāia in Ivirua (Fig. 3). The women lived on wild foods and fruits, such as the *nono* 'Indian mulberry' (*Morinda citrifolia*), in the region of Poutoa on the borderlands of Ivirua and Tamarua (Fig. 3). A party of refugee warriors discovered them and captured the younger sisters who (according to Gill) were later killed and eaten. Kaiara escaped a determined pursuit, hiding in various small holes in the *makatea*, before making her way in the middle of the night into the *makatea* in Ivirua near the coastline. There she met up with Taveru, another kinswoman of about her age, and they lived in this area until they were caught by another hostile band. After escaping again back into the *makatea*, they left the Ivirua area and, after a difficult journey of some days through the interior of the *rāei kere*, reached Tamarua where they found a lifetime's protection with their cousin, Te Tui, and her husband, the *ariki*, Namu (Gill 1984 [1894]: 184–91).

Later on, the refugees hiding in Te Ana-o-kākāia panicked following news of their side's heavy losses at the battle of Puku-ō-to'i, in Tamarua, and fled in all directions (Fig. 3). The young brother and sister, Vaiā and Mangaia, made for Marotangi'ia, in the *makatea*, possibly in Veitātei district. The siblings deliberately chose their new hiding place because it had plenty of wild foods to subsist on, including land crabs (*tupa*, *Cardisoma carnifex*), rats (*kiore*, *Rattus exulans*), fruit bats (*moakirikiri*, *Pteropus tonganus*), and even the occasional fish, cautiously caught from the reef, along with the berries, roots and herbs that grew in the *makatea*. Subsequently, Ngako, an escapee from Puku-ō-to'i, who had initially hidden in Tamarua's *makatea*, joined the siblings in their hideaway. Fearing that he might in desperation kill and eat them, Vaiā and Mangaia escaped and ran on to Kei'ā where they were eventually given protection from relations on the victorious side (Gill 1984 [1894]: 199–202).<sup>9</sup>

### *Forced Migrations*

Individuals, families and groups might be forced to move, either elsewhere in Mangaia, or more seriously, out to sea. In a number of cases these people had unsuccessfully challenged the authority of the ruling *mangaia* title holder and his supporting chiefs. Such leaders had control of all the island's districts

and sub-districts, including those of their opponents, all of whom came under their *mana*. Inevitably, locals from other descent groups tried to challenge that power. Less serious challenges resulted in internal displacements, as when Autea of Ngāti Tāne, a clan living in parts of Ivirua and Tava‘enga, refused a request from his sub-district chief and was evicted, along with his family, from their lands and forced to seek refuge with his brothers in Tava‘enga (Gill 1984 [1894]: 99–102). A *mangaia* title holder might expel a supporting chief and his followers who were found to be challenging the former’s authority. As in the case of Arepe‘e this could precipitate conflict (see Reilly 2009: 179–93). In more serious situations ruling chiefs would require unsuccessful challengers to sail into exile. When leaders from a descent group, unrelated to the ruling chiefs, were discovered plotting they and their families were forced to sail away from the island on ocean-going double-hulled *pa‘ī*. Some of them famously reached Rarotonga where they were allowed to settle (Gill 1984 [1894]: 130–36; Reilly 2003: 44–46; 2009: 197–200).

The people of a district might force someone to leave their lands. When Ue, from Tahiti, sought to introduce his spirit being and build it a new *marae*, Maungaroa, in Tamarua (Fig. 3), the locals, who worshipped another god, drove him out of their valley into the bleak *rāei kere*, after which Ue sailed away to Aitutaki with his lone local supporter (Gill 1984 [1894]: 58–59).

A young man might sail out to sea to escape a social death caused by personal humiliation. Before he set off family and friends would intervene, trying to dissuade the man from his action. Thus Paoa left after being berated by his father for his choice of marriage partner and told to leave the island. Paoa’s wife, as well as senior kinsmen, pleaded with him, but without success. Various relations, including an *ariki pā tai*, even paddled after him still calling out to return, only to perish with him after being struck by a huge wave (Gill 1984 [1894]: 275–77).

### *Seeking Refuge and Protection*

In the battles to control the *mangaia* title, those on the defeated side would seek to escape death by disappearing into the remote, bush-clad fastnesses of the upper valleys or the *makatea*, with the intention of later finding protection from relations connected with the other side, as happened with Te Vaki (Gill 1984 [1894]: 69–71, 129) and Namu (pp. 152–56, 158, 189). The story Gill heard sitting on a hilltop about Vivi is a good example as it shows how composers remembered in their songs many of the details of the landscape through which such refugees moved (see pp. 116–122 for the story and songs; see Fig. 8 for image of mountain Rangimōti‘a, and steep upper valleys).



Figure 8. Valleys with Rangimōti'a plateau in the background, c. 1950s.  
Photograph by Donald Marshall, courtesy of D.S. Marshall Archive,  
University of the South Pacific, Cook Islands Campus.

Originally, Vivi, along with his *teina* 'younger brother', Tito, lived with other Tepei tribal members in Ivirua, on the eastern end of the island, but they escaped their enemies by climbing up the *makatea* cliff at Tetuokura and taking refuge in the *rāei kere* on the borderlands of Veitātei and Kei'ā, in places like Motuvera cave, overlooking the sea.

*Tikina i tai ē, tei Motuvera*

...

*Tērā roa tei rotopū i te rāei.*

*Tei Tetuokura, i kake ake nā Pei toe*

*I o pikimato, 'ānau atu i te kāinga.*

Fetches from the sea, at Motuvera

...

Long there within the *rāei*.

At Tetuokura, the survivors of Pei climb up

The cliff face, (from their) natal homeland.

Despite the remoteness of their refuge, its various localities are remembered in the songs. They allude to the brothers' various refuges and food-working places, either along the shore, like Avaavatakina, Avaavaotao, Ronaki and Putaranunga, or in the *makatea*, at Tuanaki and Tepikoiti.

Mautara sent a message to these kinsmen inviting them to come and live under his protection: “*O ‘ai te puta ia uta? / Mautara koi i te kiko o Tāne*” ‘Who invited (Vivi and Tito) to the interior? / Mautara, the flesh of Tāne’. Various songs praise Mautara’s protective gesture: he is letting down a rope to the refugees dwelling in a bottomless pit (“*Taura tukua ē i te tāeva ē!*”), or sheltering refugees in his house (“*Te ‘are ‘ao nā Mautara*”), a favourite Mangaian metaphor. To take up this offer Vivi and Tito wisely travelled at night, crossing the mountain down a ridge-line path and hiding in Takimivera, a secluded area of “impervious thickets”, near Mautara’s residence in the narrow Te Aumoko valley: “*Eketia i raro i Teaumoko / Tei Takimivera ‘oki te pūnanga / Pūnanga i te ‘ao ē!*” ‘Climb down into Teaumoko / The refuge was at Takimivera / Refuge for the defeated!’

Mautara was the priestly medium for the powerful Ngāriki people (*ivi*), and in order to hear the voice of their god, and share in the food gifted to the medium, many of its leaders lived near his home. One of them, Tamangoru, suspected their medium was sheltering refugees and instituted an extensive search of the area. Realising their peril, Vivi and Tito tried to escape up the mountain (to the location where Gill heard their story).

*Pūkiekie e kore rāi Tokoano ai  
E ‘oro ei Vivi ē  
Mei uta i te vao  
Tā ‘i puku kakengatā, e kōrua.*

Helpless were (the sons of) Tokoano (Vivi and Tito)  
Vivi ran away  
From the valley inland  
You two (perished) on a hard-to-climb hill.

Vivi managed to get to the top only to find his escape blocked by the warriors Tamangoru and Koputureia. He threw himself back down the slope while his pursuers took a path through the mountain’s *tuānu ‘e* ‘fern’ (*Dicranopteris linearis*):

*Kua taka ‘aere, taka io Vivi nei,  
Kua tangi te rau o te tuānu ‘e,  
‘O te vaevae ‘oki o te tamaki,  
Koputureia ē Tamangoru.*

Falling, Vivi fell down,  
The leaf of the *tuānu* 'e sounded  
(Under) the feet of the fighters,  
Koputureia and Tamangoru.

They reached Vivi as he lay, barely conscious, on the ground in Te Auiti valley (Fig. 3), and killed him.

*Pokia io i te kāivi i te kārava*  
*'Ua 'amanga te rima o te tamaki*  
*I uta i Teauiti i te vao ē!*  
*Vivi e tueruia rā ē!*

Concealed on the crest of the ridge  
Caught in the hand of war  
Inland in the valley of Teauiti (he perished)  
Vivi was hunted to death.

Meanwhile, Tito hid himself for a couple of days in a house amongst the thick bushes at a place called Te Tānga-a-te-uanuku, in Mangarua valley, before he too was discovered and slain.

*'Ua kimikimi Ngāriki ē*  
*Nā ivi ta 'ito ia Tito te vi para ē*  
*Tei uta Tito i te vao mangarua*  
*Pō rua 'oki au e pokia io.*

Ngāriki hunted about  
That ancient tribe for Tito the short-lived  
Tito stayed inland in the Mangarua valley  
For two nights I lay concealed.

*Tei miri Tito i Tetānga-a-te-uanuku*  
*Tō 'are rau na 'e kopiopiotā*  
*'Eia 'a te 'ao i toe ai ē!*

Tito was (hiding) at the back of Tetānga-a-te-uanuku  
(Hunted in) your sheltering kingfern-leaved house  
(Tamangoru said,) Don't let the refugee survive!

For those refugees who managed to avoid their enemies, the next step required them to undergo a necessary ritual act before being reintegrated into the community. Their protectors would escort them around the island in a procession which ended with immersion in a sacred pool, probably Vairorongo, in Kei'ā (Fig. 3), in order to mark their transition to a new life (Gill 1984 [1894]: 234).

*Utilising Land and Sea Resources*

The elite of Mangaia made use of the land's bounty, maximising their access to such plenty by travelling about through different districts. When priestly mediums moved from district to district to perform various rituals at *marae*, their tribal leaders accompanied them in order to share in the large volume of food offerings given to the medium as a spirit being's human representative (Gill 1984 [1894]: 69, 117). Not for nothing were sub-district chiefs called *kairanga nuku* 'land-eaters', referring to their consumption of their land's produce (Hiroa 1971 [1934]: 124). To this end, the elite had multiple residences scattered around the various districts; for example, the Te 'A'aki clan leader, Iro, lived in his ancestral home, Tamarua, and in Rupetau, Kei'ā (Fig. 3), while other Tonga'iti *ivi* leaders spread themselves across Tamarua, Veitātei and Kei'ā (e.g., Reilly 2009: 138, 186, 199).

Many resources of the land and sea were available to everyone. People would travel from different parts of the island in order to access them. A good example are the different rocks used for tools or in tool making. Basalt was taken from quarries at Rupetau, in Kei'ā, and at the head of Matā'are valley, located near the centre of the island where the boundaries of Tava'enga, Kei'ā, Veitātei and Karanga converge (Fig. 3; Gill 1876a: 117; Shibata 1999: 132). Red quartz, used to chip the basalt into shape for *toki* 'adzes', came from a quarry at Ma'ana, located to the northeast, in Karanga district (Gill 1984 [1894]: 223–24). The stalagmites and stalactites found in the *makatea* caves, especially in the *rāei kere*, the area of *makatea* on the south and southeast coast, provided the stone from which craft specialists (*ta'unga*) produced *reru* 'food pounders' (p. 228; Kirch 2017b: 213–14).

Individuals or groups of men or women regularly walked by way of the *makatea* paths to go fishing by day, and torch-fishing by night, on the reef, or in small boats just off it, seeking to catch the many varieties of fish living in the reef's extensive underwater fissures. Sometimes, large crowds would race down from their inland residences if abundant fish were spotted (Gill 1876a: 36, 131, 137, 145, 278–80, 284–91, 307; 1885: 67; 1984 [1894]: 203–4, 247, 276, 279; Hiroa 1971 [1934]: 68; Shibata 1999: 229). Women went night fishing inland at Lake Tiriara, in Veitātei (Fig. 3), for *kōura vai* 'fresh-water shrimp' (*Macrobrachium* sp.) and *kōkopu* 'fresh-water brown gudgeon' (*Eleotris* sp.) (Gill 1984 [1894]: 177; Shibata 1999: 101, 107). Men hunted for the *tupa* crab which lived in burrows in the sandy, coastal areas and in inland soils (Buse with Taringa 1995: 525; Gill 1876a: 136; Shibata 1999: 224; Whistler 2009: 193–94). Girls and single young women carried calabashes to the sea to fetch salt water for cooking and to inland fresh-water springs for drinking water (Aratangi n.d.d; Gill 1984 [1894]: 104). Everyone resorted to the interior streams and ponds for bathing, even refugees in hiding, especially after being out at sea (e.g., p. 180; Hiroa 1971 [1934]: 68; Reilly 2015: 153–54, 156).

People visited the wild bush of the *makatea*, from their inland residences, for a number of food and plant resources (Fig. 9). Youths and men hunted at night for the abundant *kiore*, a popular food valued for its very sweet-tasting meat (Gill 1876a: 15, 317, 328; 1984 [1894]: 124–25; Williams 1837: 210). Men hunted various birds, such as the easily caught *tītī*, tentatively identified as the black-winged petrel (*Pterodroma nigripennis*) (Buse with Taringa 1995: 499; Clerk 1981: 259; Gill 1876a: 135; 1984 [1894]: 26), and the *ngōio* ‘brown noddy’ (*Anous stolidus*), which was sometimes caught and kept as pets (Clerk 1981: 258–59; Holyoak 1980: 33; Shibata 1999: 173).<sup>10</sup> Besides being a food source, such birds also provided *ta’unga* with feathers for clothing and decorations: the red tail feathers of the *tavake* ‘red-tailed tropicbird’ (*Phaethon rubricauda*) were particularly desired (Gill 1984 [1894]: 228). Groups of women visited the *makatea* to pick up the ripe fallen nuts of the *tuitui* ‘candlenut tree’ (*Aleurites moluccana*), growing abundantly there, which they used as a lighting source, a sooty black dye and a famine food (Gill 1885: 192–93; 1984 [1894]: 152; Hiroa 1971 [1934]: 126; Whistler 2009: 30–31). Individual women came to strip the bark off the abundantly growing *aoa* ‘Polynesian banyan’ (*Ficus prolixa*) and make it into a coarse *tapa* cloth (Gill 1984 [1894]: 90). *Ta’unga* visited Tava’enga’s *makatea* to strip off the bark from the *orongā* ‘nettle tree’ (*Pipturus argenteus*) in order to manufacture a very strong fibre, particularly favoured for creating fishing nets and as backing for feather-decorated *tīputa* ‘poncho-like cloaks’ (pp. 26–28; Whistler 2009: 174–75). Young people came to the *makatea* to pick berries and flowers to make into ‘*ei*’ necklaces’, such as *poepoe* ‘Job’s tears’ (*Coix lacryma-jobi*), *poro’iti* ‘red-berry nightshade, cannibal cherry’ (*Solanum viride*) and the fragrant white Cape Jessamine flower, *Gardenia jasminoides* (Gill 1984 [1894]: 125; Shibata 1999: 220; Whistler 2009: 76; Wikipedia contributors 2017).

People collected various plant resources from around the island, such as wild foods, especially when other food sources were scarce. Low-status girls or women collected the bitter-tasting *poro* ‘black nightshade’ (*Solanum americanum*) and ‘*a’a*’ leaf-stalk of *māmio*, which could be cooked and eaten as a meal (Gill 1885: 232). People went inland and dug up the roots of the *tuānu’e* fern from the interior hills and ridges (Allen 1969: 26; Gill 1876a: 149; Shibata 1999: 340). Women or young girls, in groups or as individuals, would collect the fallen nuts of the *i’i* ‘chestnut’ (*Inocarpus fagifer* or *Inocarpus edulis*), found in groves near streams in the interior, which were stored to provide a handy food source in the leaner winter months (Gill 1885: 194–98; 1984 [1894]: 111, 202, 286; Whistler 2009: 134–37). Groups, such as refugees, would pick the *vī kavakava* ‘Otaheite apple or Polynesian plum’ (*Spondias dulcis*) as a supplementary food (Gill 1984 [1894]: 231; Shibata 1999: 388; Whistler 2009: 195).<sup>11</sup> The importance of the ‘*akari*’ coconut’ (*Cocos nucifera*) as food and raw material meant that even refugees had to



Figure 9. The wild bush of the *makatea*, on a track behind Lake Tiriara, Veitātei. Author's photograph, 2001.

risk discovery and venture out into the valleys and coastal areas to access them (Gill 1984 [1894]: 196; Hiroa 1971 [1934]: 62).<sup>12</sup> Large building projects, such as a canoe, required groups to travel into the upper valleys to cut down trees from the stands of forest located there (Gill 1984 [1894]: 245).

### *Entertainments*

During periods of peace, Mangaians would travel across the island to attend a range of festivals and other events involving the performing arts, particularly dance, and sports. The performing-arts events, known as *kapa*, and involving numerous dance-songs and a large feast, occurred during the nights of 'O Tāne and Rongo-nui, named for the two principal spirit patrons of dance (Gill 1876b: 219 fn. 1, 318). Specific dances came under the patronage of young and good-looking spirit beings known as *tapairu*, believed to travel from 'Avaiki 'Spirit World' to participate in these performances (pp. 256–62). These *kapa* could be huge events and lasted all night: one comprised some 200 male dancers, with most of the island's population travelling to watch the performances (Gill 1984 [1894]: 251–52). Another night-time event, the *tara kakai* 'death recital', commemorated the recent death of a person of rank. Members of their descent group would attend and perform as many as 60

especially composed laments while the organiser liberally provided participants with food (Gill 1876b: 269–71; Hiroa 1971 [1934]: 192).

Feasts were another significant entertainment event to which people might be invited from other parts of the island. Some involved the whole island community, with one half of the island inviting the other. Invitations to such events were communicated by a youthful messenger, the *manu* or '*oro 'oro*, who ran around the island silently tying an '*uku kīkau* 'tail end of coconut frond' to the residence of each invitee of rank, implicitly inviting all of their subordinate people as well (Buse with Taringa 1995: 293; Gill 1876a: 134; 1885: 204–5; 1984 [1894]: 214; Shibata 1999: 185, 363). While the hosts accumulated large stocks of food for several months, those invited would manufacture *tapa* cloth as a return gift. On the appointed day the guests would travel across the mountain paths down into the valleys carrying their load of gifts and return with their share of the food (Gill 1876a: 132, 1885: 102).<sup>13</sup>

Major artistic and sporting festivals attracted large crowds who would travel from around the island to attend. These events included daytime *teka* 'dart' throwing games during which dance-dramas would also be performed. These activities were organised and performed by one sex for the other: when women put on a festival, the men would be invited to attend as spectators (Gill 1876b: 228, 243–44; Hiroa 1971 [1934]: 151; Reilly 2015: 156–57). Deaths of prominent persons might be commemorated by a daytime performance of the '*eva*, a funereal event comprising various dramatically performed laments involving family and other mourners. For one '*eva* Gill reported that most of Mangaia's population attended, all of them participating in the performance (Gill 1876b: 271–73).

\* \* \*

Mangaia's people were in constant movement across the face of their island, utilising the complex of pathways radiating outwards from their valley homelands, to reach across the *makatea* to the sea, and over the mountain to other communities and resources located elsewhere in the island's natural landscape. They moved through a familiar country where every spot, even in the remotest *makatea*, could be recalled by name in the oral traditions repeatedly told down the generations about particular ancestors: the house sites they lived on; the paths they took to sea and mountain; the spots on the reef where they fished or fetched seawater; the ponds they used to wash in or drink from; the *marae* they processed to and worshipped at; the *taro* patches they cultivated; the natural resources they utilised; the spaces they feasted, danced and played on; the battlefields they fought upon; the refuges they fled to; and, the burial caves where their remains were deposited and mourned over.

As the ancestors moved about the land they located themselves in specific spaces, conscious that they lived between the sea and the land, always facing towards the mountain, as the source of their life-sustaining fresh waters, their backs to the extensive wilderness of the *makatea* and the sea beyond. Their movements around the island, from one district to another, resembled the ancient sea journeys of their ancestors, as they voyaged west or east between islands. That sea orientation continued even after generations of life on Mangaia, the land itself imagined as a fish located within the larger ocean.

When Gill arrived to minister to his Christian parishioners he discovered this ancestral landscape by travelling on the ancient pathways, observing the distinctive nature of the landscape around him and hearing from his guides the traditions associated with the places he was visiting. He sought to remember the journeys and oral histories in writing, providing readers today with a window into this living world of the ancestors. When I started studying Mangaia's historical records my thesis supervisor, Niel Gunson, told me to get to know the island and the people by living in the field for a while. That way I would have a better insight into the written texts. It has taken me rather longer to understand what he was getting at. I think Chris Ballard's Oceanic historicities, with its privileging of landscape and those people who dwell within it, gets close to it (Ballard 2014: 105–7).

Some Mangaians, like Mataora, who took the time to teach me a little of what they knew about their island are no longer here to share their knowledge. Mataora lies buried alongside other *kavana* in the cemetery of his church in Oneroa. The landscape too has changed at least a little since we talked. There are new structures, like Vairorongo's water-pumping station, built to enhance the lives of Mangaians. Every generation reshapes their environment. They will have their own stories to tell about how past generations made their mark upon the land. Peter Gow (1995: 60–61) warns against reducing history simply "to one aspect of human material-making, the production of texts, representations". Instead, he argues that there are "other possible histories inside nature", including ones about vegetation, paths, old gardens and "telling stories in a particular place and at a particular time". Such "other histories", he suggests, should be thought of "as modes of lived experience". Mangaia's past will always remain alive in the landmarks and memories of the people whose place this is. As Gill understood, the stories the people of the land remember are the substance from which any island history is produced.

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This paper is based on historical research undertaken for a project on the cultural landscape of Kei'ā with Richard Walter and the late Mataora Harry between 2001 and 2003. Over the years Mataora patiently asked after our work, and I hope this belated paper helps repay the enormous debt Richard and I owe him for all his assistance over the years. The Manganian cultural landscape map (Fig. 3) is based on field maps drawn by a research associate, James Robinson, along with data from maps in Allen (1969), Bellwood (1978), Buck (1993), Marshall (1927) and Land Information New Zealand (2014). The maps used in this article were kindly drawn by Les O'Neill, Department of Anthropology and Archaeology, University of Otago. Particular thanks to the former Cook Islands National Archivist, George Paniani, who kindly granted me access to the Manganian *kōrero* 'oral history' series papers; Rod Dixon, University of the South Pacific, Cook Islands Campus, for permission to reproduce Donald Marshall's photographs; and Erica Newman, who digitised my old Manganian photographs. Thanks also to the late Teariki No'oroa who first introduced me to orientations in Mangaia's landscape, and to Tua'ine Papatua who shared some of his knowledge about the landscape and, along with his wife Liz, provided generous island hospitality to Richard and me during our field work. Finally, a particular thanks to the two anonymous referees whose feedback substantially enhanced this paper, and to the patience and helpfulness of the editor. Any remaining errors are my own and I welcome any corrections regarding the paper's cultural knowledge.

## NOTES

1. Previously, Pāpā Aratangi, the Manganian scholar whom I had known since 1987, had recommended Mataora as someone who could assist with my historical research. Thanks to a University of Otago research grant I was able to bring Mataora to Dunedin to work with me for several months in 1997. My 1998 visit was a continuation of this collaboration.
2. Note that Manganian language texts often replace 'k' with a glottal stop, thus *ki uta* or 'i *uta*. Both forms appear in this paper.
3. Older Manganian texts sometimes replace *runga* with the variant *nunga* (Shibata 1999: 163).
4. The variant 'uku appears to be a Manganian term while 'iku is Rarotongan Māori (Shibata 1999: 363).
5. The variant *miri* is the Manganian term while *muri* is Rarotongan Māori (Shibata 1999: 142).
6. In Mangaia, *taro* refers to the wetland plot while *māmio* is the local term for the *Colocasia esculenta* which grows there.
7. According to Mataora Harry (pers. comm., 24 October 2001), Te Ruakeretonga was a boundary stone (*kena*), suggesting this placename was located on a district or sub-district border.
8. Mataora Harry was a direct descendant of Atataoa.

9. See Gill (1984 [1894]: 125–27) for a similar story involving two youths, Oromanarangi and Oromanuanuku.
10. Other birds that were hunted included the *kau 'ā*, tentatively identified as the long-tailed cuckoo (*Urodynamys taitensis*) or the bristle-thighed curlew (*Numenius tahitiensis*), the *tavake* 'red-tailed tropicbird' (*Phaethon rubricauda*) and the *pirake* 'white-tailed tropicbird' (*Phaethon lepturus*) (Clerk 1981: 259–60, 266–68; Holyoak 1980: 16–17, 28–29, 35–36).
11. Gill calls the *vī kavakava* the “Brazilian plum-tree”.
12. On uses of *'akari*, also see Gill (1885: 204–66) and Whistler (2009: 60–75).
13. On feasts generally see Gill (1984 [1894]: 160–65, 214–16) and Hiroa (1971 [1934]: 138–41).

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#### ABSTRACT

A cultural landscape is pregnant with memories of the past that are remembered and retold through oral traditions. These memories include the movements of the ancestors through their natural world: how they orientated themselves within their landscape, the paths they took to travel from one place to another and the many kinds of journeys they embarked upon, such as ritual and mourning processions, expeditions to war, escapes to refuges, trips to access natural resources or jaunts to enjoy entertainments. This paper explores these movements as they are remembered within the cultural landscape of Mangaia in the Cook Islands.

*Keywords*: landscape, movement, Mangaia, directions, pathways, journeys

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## PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED\*

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- Adams, Julie, Polly Bence and Alison Clark (eds): *Fighting Fibres: Kiribati Armour and Museum Collections*. Leiden: Sidestone Press, 2018. 201 pp., biblio., illus., plates. €39.95 (softcover).
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