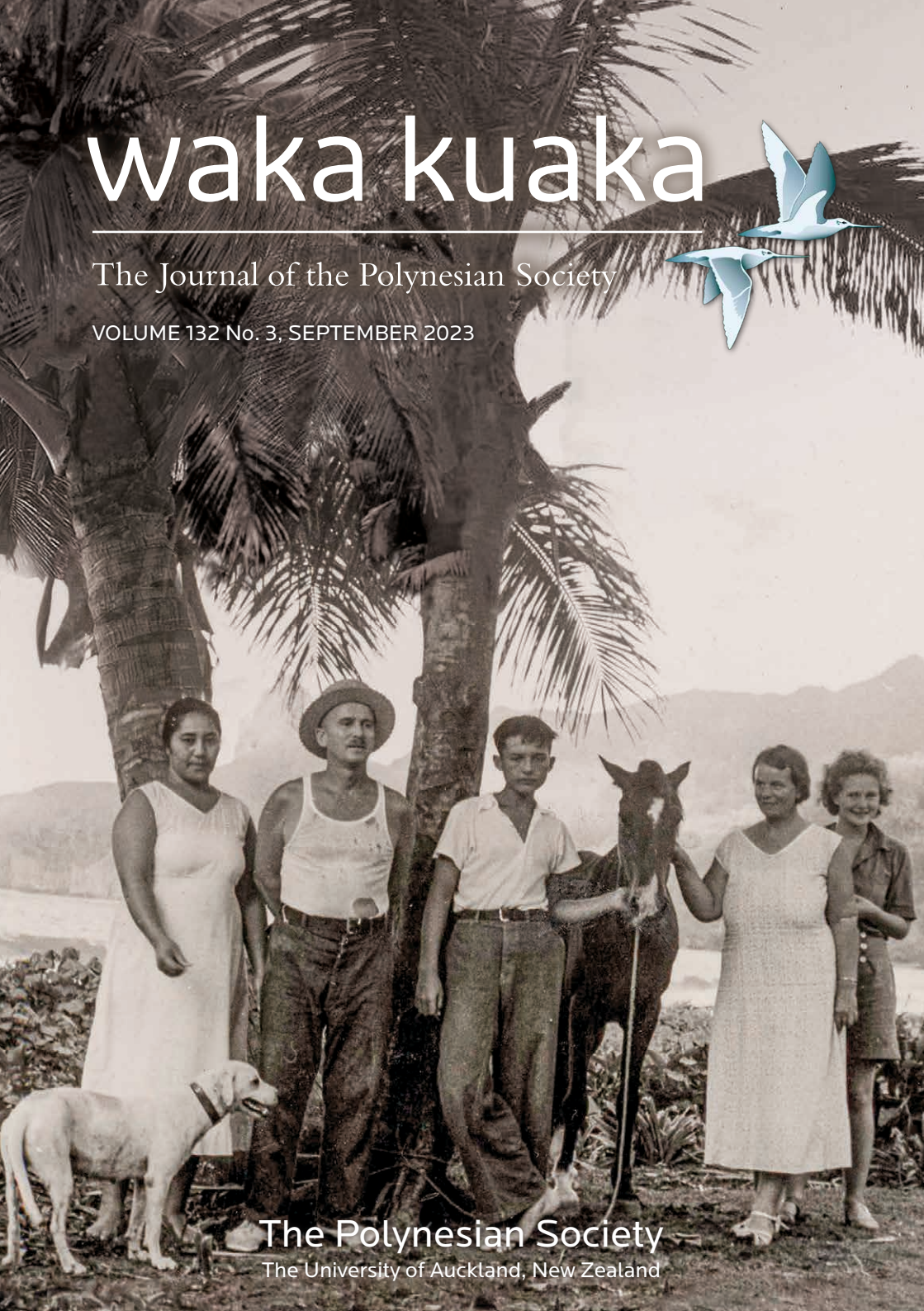


# waka kuaka

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FROM THE EDITOR

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E muamua 'ona 'ou fa'atulou atu 'i le pa'ia ma le mamalu lasilasi 'ua mafai 'ona o'o iai lenei tusitusiga.

E fia 'avea lenei avanoa 'ou te fa'atalofa atu ai ma le agaga fa'aaloalo, 'i le pa'ia ma le mamalu o le aofia.

Fa'afetai tele 'i le Polynesian Society, mo lenei avanoa ua tatou fesilafa'i ai, 'i le lagi e mamā.

Mālō le soifua maua! Talofa lava and Warm Pacific Greetings!

Firstly, I would like to begin by humbly excusing myself to all those who are able to be together through this text.

I would like to take this opportunity to greet you, with humility and respect from my spirit. This greeting extends to all who reach this.

Thank you to the Polynesian Society for this opportunity that we are able to safely gather in clear skies.

Good health and greetings to you. Talofa lava and warm Pacific greetings!

This issue marks my first year with *Waka Kuaka The Journal of the Polynesian Society*, and the past 12 months have been a period of new directions and reimagining for the journal. As the new editor, it has been a time of learning, reflection, advocacy and collaboration. There have been many talanoa (conversations, sharing of ideas) with colleagues, peers and friends about the Polynesian Society and how we can both honour its history and move towards this new vision symbolised by our renaming of the journal in December 2022.

This reimagining of *Waka Kuaka* was realised in the previous double special issue (March–June 2023), which was edited alongside Dr Lisa Uperesa and showcased a number of emerging Pacific scholars and their work on Pacific research methodologies. It marked an exciting moment of growth and critical reflection in Pacific-led research. This issue further develops our new vision for *Waka Kuaka*, and we are excited to unveil the new feature of the Curatorium as an exclusive space for the gallery and museum sector in the Pacific, showcased in this journal alongside scholarship that is more traditionally aligned with *Waka Kuaka*.

The Curatorium is a collaboration between Dr Nina Tonga, Curator, Contemporary Art at the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, and Dr Andrea Low, Associate Curator, Contemporary World at Tāmaki Paenga Hira Auckland War Memorial Museum. Together, they will coordinate this

feature twice yearly in *Waka Kuaka* to highlight critical discourses and scholarship in the gallery and museum sector. In this issue, they talanoa about their roles as Pacific curators and how curatorial activism features in their practices. They also highlight two collaborative projects between their respective museums and Pacific communities in Aotearoa New Zealand that have worked towards shaping collection and display practices in the sector. This exciting new feature in *Waka Kuaka* seeks to give space to people and ideas in Aotearoa and the wider Pacific about art, curation, museums and the significance of our cultural taonga (treasures).

Giacomo Nericì and Michael J. Koch also contribute an article on how meaning and value are created through a complex range of discourses, understandings, interpretations and actions—academic and traditional, written and oral, formal and informal—that they term “tiki talk” about the ‘I‘ipona statues at Hiva‘oa in the Marquesas, which are of great traditional and spiritual importance. This article is a significant anthropological contribution, arguing that “the rediscovery of tradition should be understood as a hybrid product, conceived by both ‘enata/‘enana (Indigenous people) and hao‘e (foreigners)” (p. 311). Next, Raphael Richter-Gravier surveys and analyses 30 traditional bird stories from Polynesia that feature themes of separation, competition or deception. This fascinating article focuses on traditional stories collected as part of Richter-Gravier’s PhD work at Te Whare Wānanga o Ōtākou University of Otago and documents the significance of manu (birds) for Polynesians who explained their characteristics and behaviours in their oral histories transmitted over multiple generations.

We are fortunate to have Jo Anne Van Tilburg contribute a shorter communication expanding on an earlier piece published in the *Journal of the Polynesian Society* in 2014 that corrects the misidentification of Te Hati Reŋa a Roŋo Pu‘a, an important Rapanui elder.

Finally, in this issue we also have book reviews by Terava Ka‘anapu Casey of Bruno Saura’s *A Fish Named Tahiti: Myths and Power in Ancient Polynesia*, Rowan Light of Bain Attwood’s “*A Bloody Difficult Subject*”: *Ruth Ross, te Tiriti o Waitangi and the Making of History* and Peter Sheppard of Patrick Vinton Kirch’s edited volume *Talepakemalai: Lapita and Its Transformations in the Mussau Islands of Near Oceania*.

We are excited about how this issue of *Waka Kuaka The Journal of the Polynesian Society* both reaches back and strengthens the traditional offerings of the journal and develops our new direction. We are only at the beginning of our journey in new waters, and we hope our readers—both old and new—are excited to be part of our waka/vaka/va‘a (canoe) charting the waves ahead of us.

Dr Marcia Leenen-Young  
Editor

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## CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE

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*Terava Ka'anapu Casey* (Kanaka Maoli and Mā'ohi) is a PhD candidate in the Department of History at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. Her research on the histories of French Polynesia examines eighteenth- and nineteenth-century mobilities of Mā'ohi as examples of migration documented in oral traditions.

*Michael J. Koch* has done research in the Marquesas for more than three decades. He is currently editing the Karl von den Steinen's 1897 field notes as well working as a consultant for the Marquesas UNESCO World Heritage project. He is author of several book contributions and published *Kena, la légende du tatouage marquisien* (Tahiti, Haere Pō 2014) and *Fai, un mythe marquisien sans limites* (Tahiti, Haere Pō 2021).

*Rowan Light* is a historian, Lecturer at Waipapa Taumata Rau University of Auckland and Project Curator (New Zealand Wars) at Tāmaki Paenga Hira Auckland War Memorial Museum. He researches histories of remembrance and commemoration, focusing on how communities respond to war and conflict and how this is shaped by institutions such as memorials and museums. His first book, *Anzac Nations: The Legacy of Gallipoli in New Zealand and Australia, 1965–2015*, was published with Otago University Press in 2022. A follow-up publication, *Why Memory Matters: "Remembered Histories" and the Politics of the Shared Past*, is forthcoming in 2023 as part of the Bridget Williams Books Texts series.

*Andrea Low* is Associate Curator, Contemporary World at Tāmaki Paenga Hira Auckland War Memorial Museum, where she co-curated the permanent exhibition *Tāmaki Herenga Waka: Stories of Auckland*. Andrea traces her mo'oku'auhau (ancestry) to the ahupua'a (customary land divisions) of Kahana and Kualoa on the island of O'ahu, Hawai'i; to the village of Fasito'otai, Sāmoa; and to Tongareva/Penrhyn (Northern Cook Islands), Fanning Island/Tabuaeran (Kiribati) and Fiji. With ties to Ayr and Montrose in Scotland as well, the entanglements of history, colonialism, Indigeneity, biography and diaspora are central to her research interests. She is a frequent contributor of articles and exhibitions that trace histories of Pacific peoples in Tāmaki (Auckland) and the wider Pacific. Andrea is a Council member of the Polynesian Society and Book Review Editor for the Society's journal, *Waka Kuaka*. She is also on the advisory board of *Marinade: Aotearoa Journal of Moana Art* and a board member for Te Uru Waitākere Contemporary Gallery in Tāmaki.

*Giacomo Nerici* is a PhD candidate in Social and Cultural Anthropology at the University of Milano-Bicocca. His research interests initially focused on Indigenous claims and heritage among the Sami people (northern Norway). He is currently carrying out a doctoral project based on the UNESCO World Heritage List inscription campaign of the Marquesas Islands and the rediscovery of traditions as part of a cultural and artistic awakening in the islands. He has published several articles in academic journals and book chapters as well as the monograph *Sulle orme dei nostri antenati: Riappropriazioni culturali e usi del passato tra i Sami norvegesi* (Rome, CISU 2021).



*Raphael Richter-Gravier* holds a Diploma of Archivist-Paleographer (École nationale des chartes), a PhD in Māori Studies (University of Otago) and a PhD in Anthropology (University of French Polynesia). He completed a master's degree in French medieval history, and his doctoral research focused on Polynesian oral traditions. At the University of Otago, he completed research on te reo Māori (Māori language) revitalisation projects and on a project about cognition and emotion in Pacific languages. In the latter he used text analytics to build a database of mental state attributions in Pacific cultures to contribute to identifying the structure of and variation in mental state attributions across cultures. Raphael's research interests include Māori history, the history of Aotearoa New Zealand, Pacific ornithology and ethnozoology. Raphael currently works as a researcher in Māori–Crown relations.

*Peter Sheppard* is an Emeritus Professor of Anthropology, School of Social Sciences, Waipapa Taumata Rau University of Auckland, having joined the academic staff in 1992 and retired in 2021. He has conducted archaeological research in the Solomon Islands since 1989 when, as a postdoctoral fellow, he was sent by Roger Green to Malaita to locate sources of chert found in the Lapita sites of Temotu Province. Returning to the Solomon Islands in 1996 he began a series of projects with his students and colleagues that involved survey and excavation throughout the islands of the Western Province. In 2009 he turned to the eastern Solomons, where he carried out field studies on Santa Ana, followed by research on Santa Cruz in Temotu Province with reexcavation and dating of the SE-SZ-8 Lapita site originally excavated by Green. Much of this work is summarised in the first monograph-length survey of Solomon Island archaeology, *Archaeology of the Solomon Islands* (University of Otago Press, University of Hawai'i Press), which he published with Richard Walter in 2017. Peter is also Co-editor of the journal *Archaeology in Oceania* with Peter White.

*Nina Tonga* is an art historian and Curator of Contemporary Art at Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa. She is from the villages of Vaini and Kolofo'ou in Tonga and was born and raised in Aotearoa New Zealand. She curated the acclaimed exhibitions *Pacific Sisters: Fashion Activists* (2018–2019) at Te Papa and *To Make Wrong/Right/Now* for the second international Honolulu Biennial (2019). Her solo exhibitions include projects by Lemi Ponifasio, Nike Savvas, Chiharu Shiota, Dame Robin White and Mataaho Collective. Her interdisciplinary PhD research (Art History, Waipapa Taumata Rau University of Auckland) focuses on the ways that Internet platforms have shaped and influenced contemporary art practices. Nina is a Council member of the Polynesian Society and serves on the editorial board of the *Pacific Arts Journal* and of *Artlink* magazine. She also serves as an advisor to the arts organization Hawai'i Contemporary.

*Jo Anne Van Tilburg* is an archaeologist, Director of the Easter Island Statue Project and Director of the UCLA Rock Art Archive, Cotsen Institute of Archaeology, University of California, Los Angeles.