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Cover Image: Linda Vaʻaelua, *Story Mat*, 2023. Acrylic paint and stitched wool on hessian, 208 x 135 cm. Photograph courtesy of the artist.

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Special Section: “Gendered Objects in Oceania,” Part 2

1 Special Section on Pacific Arts Association–Europe’s Annual Meeting: “Gendered Objects in Oceania,” Part 2
Fanny Wonu Veys

4 Shell-Rings of Power: Gender Relations in Material Culture Production on the Aitape Islands, Papua New Guinea
Maria Wronska-Friend

25 “Tattoo the Women, but Not the Men”: Female Tattooing in Tonga
Fanny Wonu Veys

38 Studying and Conserving a Barkcloth from the Musée Cantonal d’Archéologie et d’Histoire, Lausanne, Switzerland
Nicolas Moret

55 Adorning the Ears: On Marquesan Ear Ornamentation
Caroline Van Santen

88 The Mataisau Clan of Fiji: Roles and Responsibilities
Tarisi Vunidilo

Articles and Creative Work

103 Recollections: Australian Connections, Collaborations, and Collections in the Sepik Region of Papua New Guinea, 1960s–1970s
Susan Cochrane

125 Between the Betweenness: Restoring the Vā
Linda Vaʻaelua

Reviews

137 Book Review: *Rapa Nui Theatre: Staging Indigenous Identities in Easter Island*, by Moira Fortin Cornejo, 2023
Théo Milin

News and Events

143 Announcements

PACIFIC ARTS
Journal of the Pacific Arts Association

FANNY WONU VEYS

Special Section on Pacific Arts Association–Europe's Annual Meeting: "Gendered Objects in Oceania," Part 2

Abstract
Fanny Wonu Veys, president of the Pacific Arts Association–Europe, describes the 2022 annual meeting held at the Musée du quai Branly—Jacques Chirac in Paris. She introduces five essays based on papers presented at the meeting, focused on the theme "Gendered Objects in Oceania."

Keywords: *Pacific Arts Association, Pacific Arts Association–Europe, gender, Oceania, art, Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Marquesas Islands, barkcloth, art conservation, Aitape, shell rings, Tonga, tattoo*

In September 2022, the Musée du quai Branly—Jacques Chirac (MQB) hosted the annual meeting of the Pacific Arts Association–Europe (PAA-E) in Paris. Stéphanie Leclerc-Caffarel, curator of Oceania at the MQB and I, president of the PAA-Europe and curator of Oceania at the Wereldmuseum in the Netherlands, hoped to explore whether and how objects are being gendered in Oceania. If one accepts that things are an intrinsic part of being human and shaping the world, objects also take an essential role in gendering bodies, social relations, and ways of being. It can, therefore, be argued that objects are important vehicles for realisation of individual and group identities. With this idea in mind, we launched a call for papers on the theme "Gendered Objects in Oceania," focusing on material culture as an expression of gendered collecting, gender identities, gendered objects and art practices, and access to collections along gender lines. This PAA-E meeting encouraged cross-fertilisation between the ever-evolving fields of material culture and gender studies—disciplines that have not seemed natural allies to this point.[1]

The collection of five papers presented in this special section of *Pacific Arts* augment the three that were presented in the previous issue of this journal. As Tarisi Vunidilo looks at objects made by the male chiefly clan of *mataisau* in Fiji, consisting mainly of carpenters and woodworkers, she stays most closely to the initial idea for organising the PAA-E meeting in Paris. *Mataisau* objects were

gathered by mostly male collectors and ended up in museums around the world, and Vunidilo presents Indigenous Fijian and museum-professional perspectives on roles and responsibilities. Two other papers explore what a close reading of objects can offer: through careful analysis of the typology of ear ornaments from the Marquesas, Caroline van Santen proposes a gendered reading of the wearers of these ornaments in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and Nicolas Moret takes a conservator's approach to a restoration project of a barkcloth in the Musée Cantonal d'Archéology et d'Histoire in Lausanne, Switzerland. Maria Wronska-Friend explores the central role of women in the economic and social life of Papua New Guinea by looking at the female production of shell rings. In her article she examines how gender dynamics in a small group of coral islands near the northern coast of Papua New Guinea and the town of Aitape were disrupted by European colonisation and missionisation in the late 1880s. Finally, my article looks at the evidence in historical sources for tattooing of Tongan women in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and early nineteenth centuries, debunking some of the myths that allege the nonexistence of tattooing in Tonga.

The eight papers presented in the two special sections of *Pacific Arts* (vol. 23, issues 1 and 2) that are devoted to the PAA-E conference capture some of the diversity of the PAA-E 2022 meeting and provide a glimpse of some of the current thinking around objects and gender in the Pacific.

Fanny Wonu Veys is curator of Oceania at the National Museum of World Cultures (Tropenmuseum, Afrika Museum and Museum Volkenkunde), recently renamed the Wereldmuseum, the Netherlands. She previously worked at the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology in Cambridge, UK, and has held postdoctoral fellowships at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, and the Musée du quai Branly—Jacques Chirac, Paris. Veys curated the exhibitions What a Genderful World*, first presented at the Tropenmuseum, Amsterdam, in 2019 and then at the Wereldmuseum in 2020;* A Sea of Islands: Masterpieces from Oceania *at the Volkenkunde, Leiden, in 2021; and* Mana Māori *(2010–11) at the Volkenkunde, Leiden, for which she published a book with the same title. She co-curated* Australian Art *with Dr. Georges Petitjean and a barkcloth exhibition,* Tapa, étoffes cosmiques d'Océanie*, in Cahors in 2009 with Laurent Guillaut. Veys's research interests are Pacific art and material culture, museums and cultures of collecting, Pacific musical instruments, Pacific textiles, and the significance of historical objects in a contemporary setting.*

Notes

[1] For a more detailed description of the PAA-E annual meeting and conference theme, see Fanny Wonu Veys, "Special Section on Pacific Arts Association–Europe's Annual Meeting: 'Gendered Objects in Oceania,' Part 1," *Pacific Arts* 23 (1), 2023. Some of the description presented here is also included in the introduction to that special section.

PACIFIC ARTS
Journal of the Pacific Arts Association

MARIA WRONSKA-FRIEND

Shell Rings of Power: Gender Relations in Material Culture Production on the Aitape Islands, Papua New Guinea

Abstract

This article first introduces shell ornaments and pottery on the Aitape Islands in New Guinea, discussing the role of women in their production during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It then turns to material culture produced by men—cult houses and canoes—that depended on supplies obtained by trading women's products like shell valuables. By discussing these two gendered art forms together, this article shows how integral women's labour was to the larger social and economic structures in New Guinea that have predominantly been associated with men. It concludes by discussing how colonisation, missionisation, and the introduction of a monetary economy impacted the gendered relations of art production in the islands.

Keywords: *Aitape Islands, Papua New Guinea, women's labour, women's labor, shell ornaments, canoes, religious art*

In this article I introduce shell ornaments and pottery on the Aitape Islands, discussing the role of women in their production. I then turn to material culture produced by men—cult houses and canoes—that depended on supplies obtained from trading women's products like shell valuables. By discussing these two gendered art forms together, this paper will show how integral women's labour was to the larger social and economic structures that have predominantly been associated with men. Unless otherwise stated, I describe production and social relations in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries—the pre-colonial and early colonial period. I conclude by discussing how colonisation, missionisation, and the introduction of a monetary economy impacted the gendered relations of art production in the islands.

The Aitape Islands

Aitape is a small harbour town on the northern coast of Papua New Guinea in West Sepik Province. Several kilometres offshore, there is a group of four small islands commonly known as the Aitape Islands that are inhabited by Austronesian speakers. Although land-poor, with limited means of subsistence and the need to import essential foodstuffs and materials from the mainland, the islands were a thriving centre of shell valuable production until colonial intervention at the end of the nineteenth century. Economic prosperity was generated largely through the labour of local women who specialised in the production of valuable shell goods, which were subsequently traded by their male relatives to mainland communities both near and far from Aitape.[1]

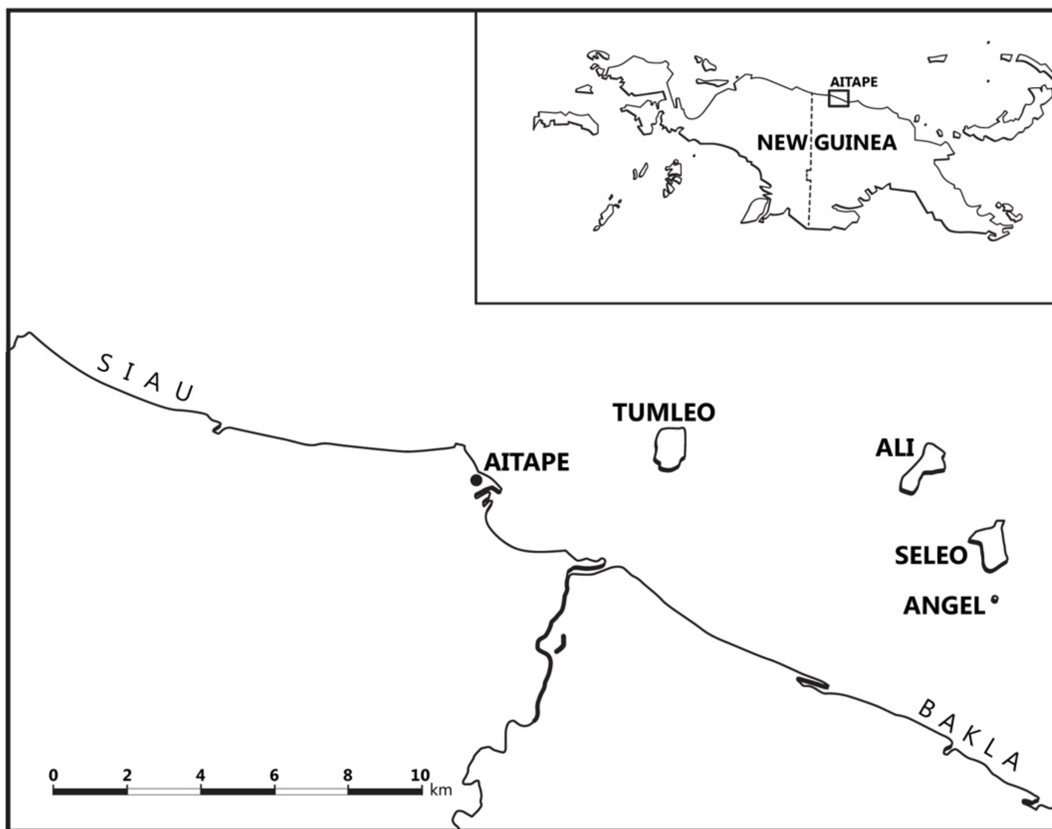

Figure 1. Map of the Aitape Islands. Courtesy of Lukasz Borusowski

The largest island in the Aitape Islands group, Tumleo, is a continental island about two kilometres long and one kilometre wide. Three other islands—Ali, Seleo, and Angel—are small coral isles (Fig. 1). The shortage of land resources required that the bulk of raw materials and staple supplies—particularly sago flour—had to be procured from the New Guinea mainland. Because the *lalal* (stormy season) and its north-westerly winds made it too dangerous to undertake trading expeditions from November through April, contact with the mainland was limited. These drawbacks, however, were compensated for by easy access the islanders had to valuable reef resources—in particular, a vast range of shells—and by an abundance of marine animals such as turtles, crabs, lobsters, and fish.

Until the mid-twentieth century, the Aitape Islands were part of a large economic zone that extended approximately fifty to seventy kilometres west and east of Aitape, from the coastal settlements of Serra to villages situated on the sandbanks of Murik Lakes. The region was, and still is, diverse with regarding the range of inhabited ecosystems, as well as the ethnic and linguistic composition of its people. Through a regular exchange of materials, artefacts, goods, and services, these varied—and, in some cases, quite distant—communities were integrated into a complex network of social and economic obligations.[2]

Figure 2. *Rapa* (shell ring) from Seleo Island, late nineteenth to early twentieth century. Clamshell, diameter 10.2 cm. Collected by M. Wronska-Friend in 1991. British Museum collection (Oc1992,01.161). Courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum

Production of Shell Valuables

Women of the Aitape Islands developed skills that enabled them to turn reef resources, especially shells, into valuable commodities. Of paramount importance was the production of *rapa* (shell rings) drilled from the shells of giant clams (*Tridacna gigas*) (Fig. 2). The process of their manufacture was known to a small group of elderly women, often widows, who lived on Angel and Seleo (Fig. 3). One large clamshell could yield three to four *rapa*, while a smaller one would produce just one ring. The diameter of the largest *rapa* known exceeded ten centimetres, and some were decorated with an incised ornament. Although smaller *rapa* were worn as personal ornaments, they principally functioned as currency units, being exchanged with mainland communities for food and commodities. American anthropologist Albert Lewis, who visited the Aitape Islands in 1909, stated that one large *rapa* would buy thirty bundles of sago, each twenty to thirty pounds, while a smaller one would buy ten bundles.[3] According to information I obtained during my fieldwork in the area from 1987 to 1992, three generations ago one *rapa* could be exchanged for sago flour that would have fed a large family for four to six weeks. The elderly women of Angel and Seleo operated, therefore, a type of a shell currency mint, and by controlling the supply of *rapa*, they were able to regulate local economy.

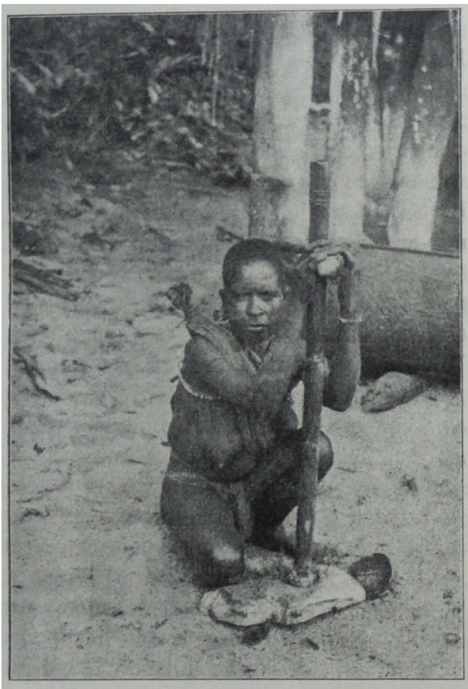

Figure 3. Woman on Angel Island drilling a *rapa* ring, 1898. Source: Richard Parkinson, "Die Berlinhafen-Section. Ein Beitrag zur Ethnographie der Neu-Guinea-Küste," *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie* 13 (1900): 37

In addition to *rapa,* smaller rings called *rep* or *ratot* were cut from the base of a cone-snail shell (Conus). Most widespread, however, was the production of cut cowrie shells (Cypraeidae) known as *tjamew.* Smaller shell valuables were traded unprocessed, as raw materials, or were incorporated into personal finery including headbands, earrings, nose ornaments, necklaces, armbands (Fig. 4), breastbands, legbands, and more.

Figure 4. Armbands decorated with *rapa* shell rings, Seleo Island, early twentieth century. The plaited band was imported in long strips from the Murik Lakes (Yinai area), and on the Aitape Islands it was cut into sections to produce armbands. Collected by M. Wronska-Friend in 1991. British Museum collection (Oc1992,01.187 a,b). Courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum

Although *rapa* production was the responsibility of women, like all other economic activities it required the involvement of both genders. While the local reef provided clamshells, all other materials for *rapa* production had to be brought

from the mainland: the hardwood base on which pieces of clamshell were drilled, the lengths of bamboo used as drills, and even quartz sand—an abrasive material necessary to increase friction in the drilling process and thereby accelerate it. As trade was the prerogative of men, it was their responsibility to support women's work by procuring materials necessary for *rapa* production; women visited the mainland only rarely.

As the Aitape Islands sit on the only reef on a coastal stretch of 140 kilometres, the shell jewellery produced there was in high demand over a large area. Men from the islands distributed it west of Aitape town in the villages situated between Aitape and Serra—an area known as Siau—as well as to Bakla, a section of coast to the east, between Aitape and Suain. They sailed even further southeastwards, establishing trade contacts with Murik Lakes villages (Yinai area). Through a dense network that covered all of New Guinea island, shell valuables were traded to the villagers in the Torricelli Mountains, who would use them to barter further into the interior. Thus, by a rough estimate, the small group of women from the Aitape Islands supplied shell jewellery to at least twenty to thirty thousand people who lived on the northern coast of New Guinea, but this number was probably much higher.[4]

Pottery Production

While the women of Angel, Seleo, and Ali Islands exploited reef resources, the women of Tumleo secured their economic position by taking advantage of the clay deposits there and developing extensive pottery production (Fig. 5). The assortment of pots they made was quite diverse: there were *pier* (cooking pots), *sal* (sago stirring pots), and *tapel* (frying pans), as well as *suyanu* (large storage jars for sago flour). Some of the pots were decorated with abstract motifs such as zigzags, wavy lines, circles, and lozenges that were engraved using fingernails or a piece of wood.[5]

Tumleo pots were in high demand among the mainland communities. They entered the local trade network in a similar way to shell ornaments, traded by sailors from Ali and Seleo to mainland villages between Serra and Suain. Pottery production was of paramount importance to the Tumleo economy, and potters were the most sought-after wives as their work guaranteed a stable income for the family.

Figure 5. Tumleo women with clay pots prepared for sale. In the background, a man in a white shirt displays trade goods, including *rapa* shell rings or their ceramic imitations. Photograph by Br Clarentius SVD, 1908–14. Collection of the Missiemuseum Steyl, Netherlands (no. 388-3/18NG26). Courtesy of the Museum

Ano Barak (Cult Houses)

The profits from women's labour allowed men to procure not only everyday necessities—such as food supplies, tobacco, betelnut, and firewood—from the mainland, but also a range of materials necessary for the construction of family dwellings and men's houses, as well as two major art forms of the islands: the *ano barak* (cult houses) and *lepil* (large trading canoes). Until the beginning of the twentieth century, the landscape of each of the Aitape Islands was dominated by the spectacular, richly decorated *ano barak* with two protruding gables. Their architecture was similar to sacral buildings erected in coastal villages between Serra and Tarawai Island, but the construction of such monumental structures on material-poor islands posed a major challenge.[6]

Figure 6. *Ano barak* (cult house) on Seleo Island, 1893. Photo by Richard Parkinson. Published in A.B. Meyer, R. Parkinson, *Album von Papua-Typen. Neu Guinea und Bismarck-Archipel* (Dresden: Von Stengel und Markert, 1894), pl. 49

Figure 7. Lower section of the Seleo *ano barak* (cult house), 1890s. Photo by Richard Parkinson. Published in A.B. Meyer, *Album von Papua-Typen II. Nord Neu Guinea, Bismarck-Archipel, Deutsche Salomo Inseln* (Dresden: Von Stengel 1900), pl. 13. Courtesy of the National Library of Australia

The tall, two story-buildings were erected on posts, approximately one-and-a-half metres above the ground (Figs. 6–7). Their walls and gables were covered with panels of sago spathes with images of spirits painted with brown, yellow, white, and black pigments. The façade and walls were further enhanced with carvings of anthropomorphic and zoomorphic figures. Besides the high, protruding gables, the characteristic features of *ano barak* were elaborate ladders, the side beams of which were openwork carvings representing rows of elongated, interconnected figures of humans, birds, fish, crocodiles, and other animals (Figs. 8 and 9). The interior of the building was used to perform secret rituals and served as a repository of ritual paraphernalia including masks (Figs. 10–11), ancestral skulls, water flutes, and slit gongs.[7]

Figure 8 (left). Side-beam of the elaborate ladder leading to the Seleo *ano barak* (cult house), prior to 1894. In figure 7, this is the first beam from the left. Carved wood, 270 x 13 x 25 cm. Übersee-Museum Bremen, inv. no. D4722. Photo Volker Beinhorn. Courtesy of the Museum

Figure 9 (right). Side-beam of the ladder leading to the Seleo *ano barak* (cult house), prior to 1894. In figure 7, this is the second beam from the left. Carved wood, 263.5 x 13 x 30 cm. Übersee-Museum Bremen, inv. no. D4721; 263. Photo Matthias Haase. Courtesy of the Museum

Figure 10 (left). Mask from the Seleo *ano barak* (see Figs. 6–7), prior to 1912. Wood, carved and painted, 43 x 20 x 13 cm. Collection of Übersee-Museum Bremen, inv. no. D4574. Photo Volker Beinhorn. Courtesy of the Museum

Figure 11 (right). Mask from the Seleo *ano barak* (see Figs. 6–7), prior to 1912. Wood, carved and painted, 40 x 18 x 13.5 cm. Collection of Übersee-Museum Bremen, inv. no. D4576. Photo Volker Beinhorn. Courtesy of the Museum

The *ano barak* was a place of crucial significance to the community, as it was there that rituals and ceremonies to propitiate the ancestral and local spirits, essential to ensuring the wellbeing of local people, took place. Similar to other Melanesian societies, the men of the Aitape Islands believed that female sexuality could jeopardise ritual tasks that were vital to maintaining community's welfare. For this reason, women were excluded from the space inside and around the cult house under a penalty of death; they never participated in the construction of the houses or in the rituals conducted there by men. The contemporary understanding of religious art and iconography of *ano barak* is limited. It was sacred knowledge, restricted to the group of initiated men, and it was never documented at the time the houses were used.[8]

***Lepil* (Voyaging Canoes)**

The second major art form of the Aitape Islands that was, to a large extent, enabled by women's production of shell valuables, was the *lepil* (large voyaging canoe), constructed mainly by Ali and Seleo Islanders. Similar to cult houses, all materials for their construction had to be brought from the New Guinea mainland, and were obtained in exchange for shell wealth, pottery, and fish through bartering.[9] The largest of those vessels, equipped with big platforms, could carry up to twenty persons plus a load of sago flour over one tonne. The effort put into *lepil* construction went far beyond utilitarian necessity. Richly embellished with elaborate carvings, incised and painted sideboards, and mastheads decorated with pendants of shells, feathers, and leaves, the canoes were akin to huge floating art installations (Fig. 12).

Each canoe was owned by a lineage group of men, although at times non-cognatic community members could be involved in their construction. The process of *lepil* construction was a complex, arduous task that integrated the lineage of men, strengthened group identity, and conveyed technical knowledge and aesthetic standards to the next generation.

While several examples of *lepil* are known from photographs taken by anthropologists who visited the Aitape Islands in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, as with the local cult houses, their construction process and iconography have never been fully documented. Such an opportunity arose only during the years 1990 and 1991 when the Museum für Völkerkunde in Dresden commissioned a full-size Ali Island voyaging canoe, and asked me to document its construction. The canoe was built over a period of fourteen months by Wilhelm Bagore (clan Pa'on) and Filip Birapin (clan Arei Seklal), assisted by a group of men from Ali and Seleo Islands. As it was the first fully decorated canoe built in more than three decades, it was the first opportunity for many inhabitants of the islands to see a fully adorned canoe such as their ancestors would have used and, for some of them, to learn the construction skills.

Airama, the carved and painted motifs of the Ali Island canoes, have been classified by their builders into two groups: some are of a generic nature, and can be used by any member of the community, while others are restricted to the use of a particular lineage. The first group, among others, includes figures of local fish, birds, and other animals that help to impart speed and lightness to the canoe. For example, the prow of the 1990 Ali Island canoe was carved in the shape of a dog's head, so "it would run towards its destination as fast as a hunting dog."[10]

Figure 12. Newly constructed trading canoe on Ali Island beach, 1893. Photograph by Richard Parkinson. Published in A. B. Meyer and R. Parkinson, *Album von Papua-Typen. Neu Guinea und Bismarck-Archipel* (Dresden: Von Stengel und Markert, 1894), pl. 45

Figure 13. Front section of a *lepil* (voyaging canoe) constructed on Ali Island for the Museum für Völkerkunde in Dresden, 1991. The prow has been shaped as a dog's head, and the splashboards decorated with lineage motifs of the face of *awang taming* (bewitched woman) and *rama matakrieng* (men's eyes). Courtesy of Maria Wronska-Friend

Figure 14. Masthead of a *lepil* (trading canoe) decorated with feathers, shells, and small carvings. Ali Island, 1991. Courtesy of Maria Wronska-Friend

Figure 15. Filip Birapin making lashings joining major parts of a canoe. Ali Island, 1991. Courtesy of Maria Wronska-Friend

Designs that indicate one's lineage affiliation are inherited bilaterally through maternal and paternal sides. They have sacred connotations and in the past were also used in the decoration of cult houses and ritual objects. In the case of the Ali Island canoe constructed from 1990 to 1991, the motifs used were *rama matakrieng* (men's eyes) and *awang taming* (face of a female witch) (Fig. 13). The masthead decorations—carved wooden figures; bundles of cassowary, cockatoo, and hornbill feathers; shells; and leaves—arranged in various configurations also express group identity. Distinctive mast attachments helped to recognise the canoe from a distance, so that when it was approaching the village of trading partners or returned home, a welcome party would come to the beach, help pull the canoe ashore, and stage celebrations to commemorate its safe arrival (Fig. 14).[11]

The canoes were built with a great attention to detail and an exceptional care went into making them visually impressive objects—the pride of their owners and the envy of their trading partners. Attention was paid to make even the structural components aesthetically pleasing. For example, the lashings joining various parts of the canoe were modelled in several ways not necessitated by their utilitarian function. The 1991 Ali Island canoe featured nine carefully shaped types of lashings, the most complex ones assembled from five separate components (Fig. 15).

Similar to cult houses, canoes were associated with male agency, and it was believed that the seafaring ability of the vessels could be compromised by female sexuality, especially menstrual blood. For this reason, women were not directly engaged in the canoe construction but performed only supportive duties, such as providing meals for men who built the canoe, and organising a large launch party upon the completion of the work. However, women supported the work in a more direct way at two stages of canoe construction: they prepared materials for caulking the hull and stitched the sail from pieces of coconut fibre. I observed these customs in 1990 and 1991 (Fig. 16–17). The first task, caulking, is labour-intensive and must be done quickly before the material hardens. The sails are stitched out of coconut fibre and this work is similar to other tasks performed by women, who customarily process soft, pliable materials such as tree bark, string, pandanus, and palm leaves.[12]

Figure. 16. Women preparing materials for caulking a canoe hull. Ali Island, 1991. Courtesy of Maria Wronska-Friend

Figure 17. Women stitching pieces of coconut fibre to make a sail for the *lepil* (trading canoe). Ali Island, 1991. Courtesy of Maria Wronska-Friend

Social and Economic Changes of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries

In pre-colonial Aitape society, the gender roles and obligations of men and women were clearly stated, and compliance with these rules was vital for the integrity and social wellbeing of small community groups. While men controlled religious and ritual aspects of life, women, by producing *rapa* and clay pots, were in a position to secure material prosperity and regulate the local economy. The male–female relationship was of a differentiated nature but, at the same time, it was complementary rather than conflicting or competitive.

The colonisation and missionisation that commenced in the Aitape area in the late nineteenth century upset this well-balanced social and economic system and created a major shift in gender relations. In 1884, Germany annexed the northeastern part of New Guinea, naming it "Kaiser Wilhelmsland"—the Land of the Emperor Wilhelm. In 1895, the German New Guinea Company opened a trading station on Seleo, while the following year, German missionaries from the Society of the Divine Word set up a mission station on Tumleo and began converting people to Christianity. The mission and colonial authorities initiated a range of economic enterprises, including setting up several coconut plantations. With the monetary economy in its infancy, the Indigenous labourers expected payment in traditional shell currency. In its place, however, plantation managers, traders, missionaries and even anthropologists who organised vast ethnographic collections used industrial, mass-produced, ceramic replicas of *rapa* and *rep*. Bead producer Albert Sachse in Gablonz (Austro-Hungarian Empire) and the Risler & Cie button factory in Herzogenrath, Germany, exported a large number of these goods to New Guinea. They used not only industrially produced shell rings of diverse sizes but also ceramic replicas of other valuables, such as dog teeth and pig tusks.[13]

The replacement of local shell currency in the Aitape area with ceramic replicas and, in later years, German and Australian coins, greatly affected the pivotal position of local women as economic producers. The uncontrolled, large-scale introduction of fake objects into the local economy resulted in the rapid devaluation of *rapa* and other local shell valuables. Ethnographer Richard Parkinson, who had in 1893 documented production of *rapa* on Angel, found five years later that the production of authentic shell rings had diminished drastically.[14] In the following years, the thriving settlement of Angel was abandoned, with the population moving to Seleo Island and the mainland.

Social and economic changes of the twentieth century affected two major art forms created by Aitape Islands men: cult houses and canoes. The arrival of

Christianity was responsible for the fast and total demise of local sacral art. With the growing number of Christian converts, in the first decade of the twentieth century cult houses fell into disrepair and were never rebuilt.[15] New places of worship—Catholic churches and chapels—were built on the islands by outsiders, such as German carpenters, and included no references to local aesthetics or art traditions. However, as the Catholic church favoured men's involvement in religious rites over women's, local men retained their paramount position in ritual and ceremonial life, albeit of a new faith.

As regards canoe construction, the watershed was the Second World War. During the violent military actions of Japanese and Allied forces, people of the Aitape Islands abandoned their villages for several years and lived in hiding on the mainland. Upon returning, they built trading canoes out of some of the materials left by the military forces.[16] Prior to the Dresden Museum's commission in 1990, the year 1956 was the last time that a large, fully decorated Ali Island trading canoe was built. From that time forward, with the support of the Catholic mission, canoes began to be replaced by plank boats with diesel engines. The new vessels are more efficient and, unlike traditional canoes, are able to provide transport between the Aitape Islands and the mainland all year round. Plank boats are just utilitarian vessels, constructed without any attention to aesthetic qualities.

In July 1998, a powerful tsunami hit the coast of Papua New Guinea approximately twenty kilometres to the west of Aitape, destroying villages situated around the Sissano Lagoon. With more than 2,000 people killed or lost, the tsunami had a disastrous effect on the life of mainland communities, resulting in the relocation of several villages.[17] However, the tsunami largely spared the Aitape Islands and had little impact on the production of local material culture.

Contemporary Production of Gendered Objects

Today, material culture and local art forms continue to be produced on the Aitape Islands, although only on a small scale. While shell rings are not manufactured any longer, women on Seleo and Ali continue to process cowrie shells for necklaces sold at the Aitape market or used as gifts for friends and families of trading partners (Fig. 18). Production of Tumleo clay pots—objects of everyday, practical application—has survived and continues today, although it is of minor commercial significance. Occasionally, the pottery is still used in exchange with trade partners on the mainland, but more often it is sold at the market in Aitape.

Figure 18. Woman processing cowrie shells used to make necklaces. Ali Island, 1991. Courtesy of Maria Wronska-Friend

Figure 19. Modern canoe built in the style of old trading canoes. Seleo Island, circa 1987. Courtesy of Maria Wronska-Friend

Large trading canoes are no longer constructed but at times men decorate splashboards and prows of smaller canoes with carved and painted designs reminiscent of the old canoe decoration (Fig. 19). Those motifs have neither lineage affiliations nor sacred connotations and, unlike designs that decorated trading canoes of their ancestors, they are deemed to be just decorative ornaments that bring aesthetic enhancement to everyday life.

Tourism in the twentieth century played a significant role in encouraging local art production in certain parts of Papua New Guinea. This resurgence, however, did not affect the Aitape area. As the Aitape Islands are situated away from the main tourist routes of the country and are only sporadically visited by outsiders, there is no incentive to produce traditional art forms for an external market. In the same way, the barter exchange with mainland partners, already greatly reduced by the introduction of a monetary economy, is of little significance. Nowadays, this exchange has social and ceremonial significance rather than an economic one. The complex economic interdependence between the islands and mainland communities has declined, as the bulk of economic transactions are conducted at the market in Aitape town.

During the last 150 years, the processes of colonisation and missionisation, accompanied by the introduction of a monetary economy, affected not only economic and social life of the Aitape Islands people but also their gender relations. The pre-colonial production of material culture and art was based on close cooperation between men and women and the complementarity of male and female obligations. The shift to a market economy that commenced towards the end of the nineteenth century upset the close interdependence of both genders, while the new religious ideology introduced at the same time compounded these changes and became the leading factor responsible for the demise of local artistic expression, in particular of the region's sacral art.

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Notes

[1] Unless otherwise stated, all information was collected by the author during her fieldwork conducted in the Aitape area from 1987 to 1992. Additional data was obtained from studying the Aitape area collections at the British Museum, London; Missiemuseum Steyl, the Netherlands; and in several museums in Germany: the Museum für Völkerkunde in Dresden, the Übersee-Museum Bremen, and the Ethnologisches Museum in Berlin. As regards early German records on the Aitape Islands, most important are: Mathias Erdweg, "Die Bewohner der Insel Tumleo," *Mitteilungen der Anthropologischen Gesellschaft in Wien* 32 (1902): 274–310, 317–99; and Richard Parkinson, "The Aitape Coast," in *People of The West Sepik Coast, Record Number 7, National Museum and Art Gallery* (Port Moresby: Trustees of the National Museum and Art Gallery, 1979), 35–107. The latter is an English translation of Parkinson's paper that was initially published in German as "Die Berlinhafen-Section. Ein Beitrag zur Ethnographie der Neu-Guinea-Küste," *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie* 13 (1900): 18–54.

[2] The first extensive study of the trade network in the Aitape area was conducted by German anthropologist and museum curator Frank Tiesler. See Frank Tiesler, *Die intertribalen Beziehungen an der Nordküste Neuguineas im Gebiet der Kleinen Schouten-Inseln* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1969–70). In the 1990s, this topic drew the attention of American anthropologist Robert Welsch, who complemented the statistical analysis of Albert Louis's collection at the Field Museum in Chicago with fieldwork conducted in the Aitape area. Among others, see Robert L. Welsch and John Terrell, "Continuity and Change in Economic Relations Along the Aitape Coast of Papua New Guinea, 1909–1990," *Pacific Studies* 14, no. 4 (1991): 113–28; and Robert L. Welsh, "Language, Culture & Data on the North Coast of New Guinea," *Journal of Quantitative Anthropology* 6 (1996): 209–34. I have studied cultural change and trade relations in the Sissano Lagoon villages in the western part of the Aitape area, see Maria Wronska-Friend, "Kulturelle Wandel an der Lagune—Sissano im 20. Jahrhhundert," in *Von Kokos zu Plastik*, ed. Markus Schindlbeck (Berlin, Museum für Völkerkunde, 1993), 149–81.

[3] Robert L. Welsch, ed., *An American Anthropologist in Melanesia: A.B. Lewis and the Joseph N. Field Expedition, 1909–1913*, Vol. 1 (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1998), 104.

[4] Frank Tiesler estimated that at the beginning of the twentieth century, the Siau area alone was populated by 6,500 to 7,000 people. See Tiesler, *Die intertribalen Beziehungen*, 58.

[5] For a description of the production of Tumleo pottery in the early twentieth century, see Erdweg, "Die Bewohner der Insel," 350–55; and Welsch, *American Anthropologist*, 84–87. Regarding the late twentieth-century production of Tumleo pottery, see Patricia May and Margaret Tuckson, *The Traditional Pottery of Papua New Guinea* (Adelaide: Crawford House Publishing, 2000), 306–13.

[6] For a comprehensive study of cult houses in the Sepik area, see Brigitta Hauser-Schäublin, *Kulthäuser in Nordneuguinea* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1989). However, note that illustration no. 64, taken by Bethke in 1905, represents not a Tumleo cult house but a deteriorated Seleo cult house that was photographed fifteen years earlier by Richard Parkinson (see Figs. 6–7, this article).
[7] Several carvings from the Seleo *ano barak* are in the collection of the Übersee-Museum Bremen (see Figs. 8–11, this article). They were collected by Dr. Ludwig Cohn who was the zoology assistant at the Städtisches Museum für Natur-, Völker- und Handelskunde (today, Übersee-Museum) in Bremen and who brought them from his visit to New Guinea in 1912. American anthropologist A.B. Lewis purchased two masks on Seleo Island in 1909. See Welsch*, American Anthropologist*, 102.
[8] Erdweg describes the structure and outer elements of the *ano barak*, but he does not provide any explanation regarding the symbolism of artworks associated with those houses; see Erdweg, "Die Bewohner der Insel," 362, 374. Sections of the Tumleo cult house are in the collection of Missiemuseum Steyl.
[9] For example, the tree trunk used for the hull of a canoe could be exchanged for ten Tumleo clay pots and two to three baskets of fish.
[10] Filip Birapin, personal communication, Ali Island, November 1990.
[11] A similar tradition of decorating masts with the insignias of descent groups was practiced in villages in the Murik Lakes that Ali men visited on their trade expeditions. See Kathleen Barlow and David Lipset, "Dialogics of Material Culture: Male and Female in Murik Outrigger Canoes," *American Ethnologist* 24 (1997): 4–36.
[12] The caulking is made of the inner bark of the *ral* tree (*Parinarium laurinum*), mixed with the charred leaf of the sago palm.
[13] Until the end of First World War, Gablonz was in the Austro-Hungarian Empire but today is Jablonec nad Nisou in the Czech Republic. See Maria Wronska-Friend, "From Shells to Ceramic: Colonial Replicas of Indigenous Valuables," *Journal of Museum Ethnography* 28 (2015): 50–69.
[14] Parkinson, "The Aitape Coast," 37.
[15] See Erdweg, "Die Bewohner der Insel," 374, for comments on the deterioration of local art, especially sacral carvings. A.B. Lewis, who visited Tumleo in 1909, mentions that the men's house was in a state of decay; see Welsch, *American Anthropologist,* 84. The *ano barak* on Seleo was already in very poor condition in 1905.
[16] John Woichom, "Canoes to Boats: Ali Exchange. Tradition in Transition on the Siau Coast of the Northwest Papua New Guinea since 1896" (paper presented at the 49th Congress of the Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science, Auckland, 1979).
[17] United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination South Pacific Team, July 23–August 6, 1998, *Mission Report (Rev. 1). Papua New Guinea: The Aitape Disaster Caused by the Tsunami of 17th July 1998* (Port Moresby: UNDP, 1998).

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FANNY WONU VEYS

"Tattoo the Women, but Not the Men": Female Tattooing in Tonga

Abstract
Whether the tattooing of women was practiced in Tonga before the general ban on tattooing in 1839 is debated among both researchers and the contemporary tattooist community. This research note explores oral histories, written sources, and pictorial materials to paint a balanced picture of the history of female tattooing in Tonga and possibly break gender binaries.

Keywords: *women, tattooing, Tonga, history, gender*

The idea that there was little tattooing (*tātatau*—literally "to beat in symmetry"[1]) of both men and women in Tonga is pervasive in academic writing on Tongan arts from the 1970s onward. This assertion was perhaps encouraged by the anthropologist Adrienne Kaeppler, an important scholar of material and performance culture in Tonga, who wrote in 1978: "There was not very much tattooing on Tonga, and what there [was] was done by Samoans."[2] The anthropologist Alfred Gell, in his 1993 book on tattooing in Polynesia, adheres to the theory that in Hawaiʻi and Tonga tattooing of men and women was less prevalent and less socially important, certainly when compared to the Marquesas.[3] If male tattooing in Tonga (see Fig. 1) is debated in academic writing, the existence of female tattooing is mostly completely overlooked. In addition, until recently it was thought that the only nineteenth-century visual record of Tongan tattooing was *Tatouage de la Cuisse des hommes* (*Tattooing of the Male Thigh*; Fig. 2), made by Louis-Auguste de Sainson and published in the atlas accompanying the 1827 journal of Jules Sébastien Dumont d'Urville aboard the *Astrolabe*.[4] This research note examines more evidence of Tongan female tattooing up to the twentieth century and fits within a larger research project studying and nuancing the history and art of tattooing in Tonga against a backdrop of political, social, and gender realities in both Tongan and European contexts.

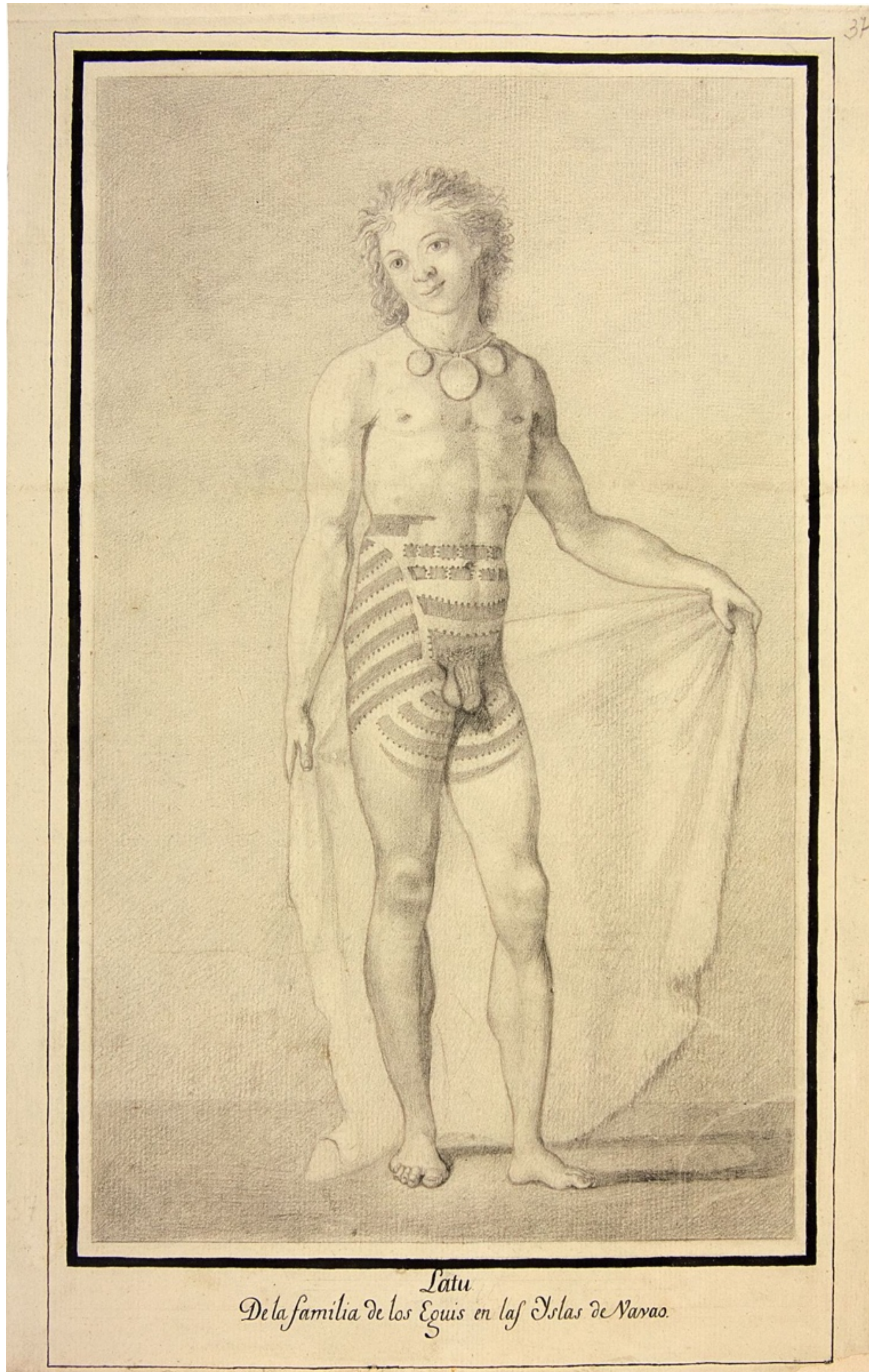

Figure 1. An often-overlooked image from 1793 portraying a young man named Latu with waist-to-thigh tattoos. Juan Ravenet, *Latu, de la familia de los Eguis en las Islas de Vavao* (*Latu from the family of the* ʻeiki *[chiefs] on the islands of Vavaʻu*), ca. 1793. Laid paper and pencil, 38.8 x 24.7 cm. Courtesy of Archivo del Museo Naval de Madrid

Figure 2. The middle image (“5. Tatouage de la Cuisse des hommes (Tattooing of the Male Thigh),”) is long believed to be the only nineteenth-century image of tattooing in Tonga. Louis-Auguste de Sainson, *Tonga-Tabou*, 1830–35. Engraving, 52.5 x 33 cm. From Jules-Sébastien-César Dumont d’Urville, *Voyage de la corvette l’Astrolabe exécuté par ordre du roi: pendant les années 1826-1827-1828-1829* (Paris: J. Tastu, 1830–35). Courtesy of The New York Public Library Digital Collections

Only For Men?

According to a myth recounting the origin of tattooing in Tonga, collected by Methodist missionary Thomas Williams and told from a Fijian perspective, women were not tattooed. The myth tells of a young Tongan chief who saw the practice of tattooing in Fiji. He was given tattooing tools and taught the correct protocol in the form of a chant: "Tattoo the women, but not the men." According to the myth, once back in Tonga, the young chief struck his foot violently on a rock and, in the confusion that followed, mistakenly reversed the order of the chant, thus instructing Tongans to tattoo only men and not women.[5] From a Fijian point of view, the story aims to ridicule the practice of tattooing in Tonga; in Fiji only women were tattooed, and mainly around the hips, genital area, and buttocks, though hands and arms could also be tattooed depending on the region.[6]

But historically, was tattooing in Tonga really only for men? Today, conservative Christians support the view that women should not be tattooed. Tonga is one of only seven countries globally that has not ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.[7] While women in Tonga have traditionally held a high status as sisters, this position has been suppressed considerably through the actions of conservative churches and governmental institutions.[8] For the most part, Western ideas of the proper role, power, and status of women have made it inconceivable for many Tongans—and, more widely, some members of the research community—to contemplate female tattooed bodies. However, members of the Tongan royal family affirm the tradition of tattooing women. When two of the daughters of Princess Pilolevu received tattoos in 2010, one of them, the Honorable Frederica Tuita Felipe, said, "Sadly, what knowledge of tattooing Tongans have left today, [is] simply bits and pieces of its true worth to the culture. Our people have either lost, forgotten or suppressed the value that ta tatau [*sic*] had in our culture and the honor it carried."[9]

In historical sources, tattooing is mentioned only sparingly. The Dutchmen Jacob Le Maire and Willem Corneliszoon Schouten were the first Westerners to visit Tonga in 1616. Le Maire, describing tattooing, struggles to put what he is seeing into words and therefore uses an analogy, saying that tattooed Tongans appear "as if burnt by gunpowder."[10] Le Maire's wordlist of the language of Niua—related to Tongan and spoken on the islands of Niuatoputapu and Niuafoʻou—includes "tetau," which he defines as "their pricking on the body."[11] This characterisation is remarkable as it describes the technical application of tattooing. The journals of the British explorer James Cook, whose voyages reached Tonga in 1773, 1774, and 1777, mention both male and female tattooing, but tattooing for

women is said to be restricted to the hands and the upper arms.[12] In contrast, Louis-August Deschamps, the surgeon and botanist on the 1793 voyage of Bruni d'Entrecasteaux, suggests a complete equality between female and male tattooing. Deschamps, who himself had been tattooed from waist to knee, writes: "The men and the women have the habit to apply different ornaments to the skin by puncturing with an instrument that they dip in a black colour that stays under the epidermis. These designs have an infinite variety and are not totally without taste. These punctures are not very painful as I have experienced myself; but because one needs often to come back to the same place, the operation becomes more sensitive towards the end. One calls this ornament tatao which serves both sexes."[13]

Figure 3. Jacques Louis Copia after Jean Piron, *Femme des Îles des Amis* (*Woman from the Friendly Islands*), 1793. Engraving, plate mark 30.5 x 44.5 cm. The National Library of Australia, PIC Volume 592 #U8147/35-36 NK3030. Courtesy of The National Library of Australia

A drawing made by Jean Piron during d'Entrecasteaux's voyage illustrates another element of female tattooing.[14] In *Femme des Îles des Amis*, a woman with a tattooed necklace, concentric circles tattooed on her shoulder, and a band of interlaced concentric circles on her upper arm is portrayed (Fig. 3). The naturalist on that voyage, Jacques Labillardière, who compiled an extensive list of Indigenous vocabulary words, refers to this type of tattooing as "tai," defined as "tattooing in concentric circles on the arms and shoulders."[15] The tattooed necklace might refer to the bird-feet design tattooed on the throat of priests and dedicated to the devotion of the rail (*kalae*), one of the Tuʻi Tonga's (Tongan king's) sacred animals.[16] Thus, it seems likely that the woman depicted by Labillardière was either part of the entourage of the Tuʻi Tonga or of royal descent.

Seeing Tattooed Female Bodies

With a few exceptions—such as the whaler William Waldegrave, who described seeing tattooed star motifs on women's legs in 1830—nineteenth-century sailors, explorers, and scientists in the Pacific only described those parts of Indigenous women's bodies that were always exposed. Historically, both Tongan men and women dressed with a piece of barkcloth, often covered with a fine mat, wrapped around their lower bodies (Fig. 4). The only way that European men arriving on Tongan shores could possibly have seen Tongan tattoos on the lower body would have been during sexual encounters.

It is well known that the primary, or sole, interest that many eighteenth- and nineteenth-century European sailors had in the Indigenous women they encountered in the Pacific was as potential sexual partners.[17] During his 1769 voyage on the *Endeavour*, Cook had allowed sex between his crew members and Tahitian women. A few years later in Tonga, because of what had happened in Tahiti, Cook was very concerned with preventing his men from spreading sexually transmitted diseases among the Tongan people. While at the beginning of his stay in Tonga Cook thought that chastity seemed "to be held in not great estimation," he later concluded that married Tongan women seemed to be faithful to their husbands, and he argued that the women who came out to meet his expedition's boats were "whores by profession brought to us in order to make the most of the present time."[18]

Regardless, the journal entries written by Cook's crew members are sprinkled with attestations of sexual encounters.[19] For example, Captain Charles Clerke

Figure 4. Juan Ravenet, *Indias del Archipielago de Babao. Islas de los amigos* (*Natives of the archipelago of Vavao. Friendly Islands*), 1793. Watercolour and wash, 22.5 x 18.5 cm, Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales, FL1110210 / FL1110236. Courtesy of the Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales

and the surgeon David Samwell describe some of the Tongan women as “good lasses” who “readily contributed their share to our entertainment” and would spend the night aboard the ship for the price of “a Shirt or a Hatchet.”[20] Samwell also said that the Nomuka girls “followed [them] from island to island . . . to the Haʻapai Isles and afterwards to Tongatapu.”[21] The naturalist William Anderson supported

Cook's prostitution line, saying that there were women who "absolutely converted it into a fixed article of trade."[22] The second officer James King stated that "by no means all of the women are to be understood to be purchased by our riches, all the married and many young women were impregnable, and I am pretty well convinced that the daughters of the Principal Chiefs did not at all appear."[23] As Cook failed miserably in preventing his men from spreading venereal disease, the historian Patty O'Brien doubts his intentions.[24] The anthropologist Marshall Sahlins and the Pacific historian Serge Tcherkézoff have argued against what the latter calls an "exclusively masculinist vision of these episodes" of sexual encounter that "effectively silenced the visions and voices of Polynesian women."[25]

It is noteworthy that the voyage that produced the most detailed information about Tongan tattooing, including names of female tattooing motifs and a drawing of a tattooed woman, was that of Bruni d'Entrecasteaux. During this voyage, it was an open secret—at least to men of upper rank aboard the ship—that the ship's steward, Louis Girardin, was actually a female sailor named Marie-Louise Victoire Girardin.[26] It seems likely that Girardin provided the scientists on the voyage with information on female tattooing by giving names of motifs, for example. In my research, I intend to examine the nature of sexual encounters during voyages of exploration and raise questions around the gender identity markers that transcend the Western binarity of femininity and masculinity to include Tongan social gender categories such as *fakaleitī* (often termed "binarity-confirming third gender"). This may help explain why fewer descriptions were made of female tattooing than male tattooing.

High Rank

Everything in Tonga is based on inequality, a fact that was truer in the past than in the present. There are inequalities in prestige, power, authority, and status, which are always contextual as well. This means that in every situation, inequality is reconfigured taking the context into account. Concerning the rank of women, three principles are important: 1) an older person ranks higher than a younger one, 2) sisters rank higher than brothers, and 3) a man's family ranks higher than his wife's. The brother-sister relationship is still characterised by respect (*faka'apa'apa*) and avoidance. Alfred Gell has suggested that the rank of women in pre-twentieth-century Tonga was perhaps too high for them to get tattoos.[27] The possibility that it was more difficult to find tattooists who could actually touch women, needs to be examined further. It is, for example, well known that the Tu'i

Tonga could not be touched by Tongans because of his high rank. Because of this, when he wished to be tattooed, he would travel to Sāmoa.[28] This practice may also be related to the way tattooing was perceived before the beginning of the twentieth century. The anthropologist Makiko Kuwahara has demonstrated that in precolonial Tahiti, lower ranking people needed tattooing to protect them from the *mana* (power) of high-ranking people.[29] Could it be that both Tongan women and the king, because of their high rank, did not need this protection? Tattooing was certainly a process that young men should undergo, lest they be ridiculed if they did not submit themselves to this practice. There is no account of women experiencing the same social pressure to get tattooed.[30] Whether tattooing also constituted a rite of passage for women needs to be investigated further. It is possible that the Fijian myth not only ridicules Tongans, but might also reflect a reality.

Epilogue

The first written laws in Tonga, the Code of Vavaʻu of 1839, promulgated by Tāufaʻāhau, chief of Vavaʻu and Haʻapai, officially forbade the practice of tattooing, stating: "It is not lawful to *tatatau* or *kaukau* or to perform any other idolatrous ceremonies, if any one does so, he will be judged and punished and fined for so doing."[31] According to the missionary John Thomas, the code that was printed in 1838 had already been in effect because it formed part of the curriculum in Tongan schools in the early 1830s. The code's laws were applied in Vavaʻu and Haʻapai, as those were the places that Tāufaʻāhau exercised his authority. When Tāufaʻāhau became the nineteenth Tuʻi Kanokupolu in 1845,[32] the code was extended to Tongatapu and the rest of Tonga.[33] For offences such as murder, theft, and alcohol abuse, the punishments described in the code are gendered; the weight of the judgment was different according to whether a man or a woman was the perpetrator. However, regarding the prohibition on tattooing, the code does not explicitly stipulate different punishments for men and women. If they were reprimanded alike, does this suggest that women were tattooed as often as men? And that that tattooing was perhaps not the worst of crimes?

Today, both Tongan women and men are increasingly adorned with tattoos, thus playing a crucial role in the resurgence of Indigenous tattooing. Tattooing brings honour and pride to Tongan women today, as it is connected to notions of traditional knowledge, spiritual culture, and kin-based networks. For these

reasons, it is all the more important to insert an accurate portrayal of Tongan women's agency regarding tattooing in the historical record.

Fanny Wonu Veys is curator of Oceania at the National Museum of World Cultures (Tropenmuseum, Afrika Museum and Museum Volkenkunde), recently renamed the Wereldmuseum, the Netherlands. She previously worked at the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology in Cambridge, UK, and has held postdoctoral fellowships at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, and the Musée du quai Branly—Jacques Chirac, Paris. Veys curated the exhibitions What a Genderful World*, first presented at the Tropenmuseum, Amsterdam, in 2019 and then at the Wereldmuseum in 2020;* A Sea of Islands: Masterpieces from Oceania *at the Volkenkunde, Leiden, in 2021; and* Mana Māori *(2010–11) at the Volkenkunde, Leiden, for which she published a book with the same title. She co-curated* Australian Art *with Dr. Georges Petitjean and a barkcloth exhibition,* Tapa, étoffes cosmiques d'Océanie, *in Cahors in 2009 with Laurent Guillaut. Veys's research interests are Pacific art and material culture, museums and cultures of collecting, Pacific musical instruments, Pacific textiles, and the significance of historical objects in a contemporary setting.*

Notes

[1] 'Okusitino Māhina, "Art as tā-vā, 'time-space' transformation," in *Researching the Pacific and Indigenous Peoples: Issues and Perspectives*, ed. Tupeni Baba (Auckland: Centre for Pacific Studies, University of Auckland, 2004), 90.
[2] Adrienne L. Kaeppler, "Exchange Patterns in Goods and Spouses: Fiji, Tonga, and Samoa," *Mankind* 11, no. 3 (1978): 212.
[3] Alfred Gell, *Wrapping in Images: Tattooing in Polynesia* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 163.
[4] See Nina Tonga, "Tongan tātatau and the Sāmoan connection," in *Tatau: A History of Sāmoan Tattooing*, ed. Sean Mallon and Sébastien Galliot (Wellington: Te Papa Press, 2018), 30–31.
[5] Thomas Williams, *Fiji and the Fijians: The Islands and their Inhabitants*, ed. George Stringer Rowe, Vol. 1 (Suva: Fiji Museum, 1982), 160.
[6] Karen Jacobs, *This is not a grass skirt. On fibre skirts (liku) and female tattooing (veiqia) in nineteenth century tattooing* (Leiden: Sidestone Press, 2019), 46, https://www.sidestone.com/books/this-is-not-a-grass-skirt. For drawings, see Theodore Kleinschmidt, "Theodor Kleinschmidt's notes on the hill tribes of Viti Levu, 1877–1878," *Domodomo* 2, no. 4 (1984): 146–90.
[7] American Civil Liberties Union, "CEDAW Public Background Sheet," accessed August 13, 2023, https://www.aclu.org/wp-content/uploads/legal-documents/CEDAW_factsheet_20100429.pdf.

[8] Helen Lee, "CEDAW Smokescreens: Gender Politics in Contemporary Tonga," *The Contemporary Pacific* 29, no. 1 (2017): 66–90.
[9] Cresantia Frances Koya, "Tapa mo Tatau: An exploration of Pacific conceptions of ESD through a study of Samoan and Tongan Heritage Arts" (PhD diss., University of the South Pacific, 2013), 196. Her full name is Frederica Lupeʻuluiva Fatafehi ʻo Lapaha Tuita Filipe. She is the third daughter of Princess Sālote Mafileʻo Pilolevu, The Honourable Lady Tuita (née Sālote Mafileʻo Pilolevu Tukuʻaho), the older sister of King Tupou VI (Ahoʻeitu ʻUnuakiʻotonga Tukuʻaho). According to Tongan kinship behaviour, the older sister has a high status. It is therefore likely that one of the daughters of Princess Pilolevu saying these words carries more weight than if said by someone else.
[10] "ghelijck van Bossecruyt gebrant." Translation by the author. Jacob Le Maire, "Spieghel der Australische Navigatie, Door den Vvijt vermaerden ende cloeckmoedighen Zee-Heldt, Jacob Le Maire. President ende Overste over de tvvee Schepen, d'Eendracht ende Hoorn, uytghevaren den 14. Iunij 1615. 't Amsterdam: Michel Colijn, Boeck-vercooper op 't Water by de Oude Brugh/in 't Huys-Boeck," in *De ontdekkingsreis van Jacob le Maire en Willem Cornelisz. Schouten in de jaren 1615–1617*, ed. W. A. Engelbrecht and P. J. Van Herwerden ('s Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1945), 57.
[11] "Haer pickeersel op 't lijf." Translation by the author. R. A. Kern, "The vocabularies of Iacob Le Maire," *Acta Orientalia* 20–21 (1948): 223.
[12] Johann Reinhold Forster, *The Resolution Journal of Johann Reinhold Forster 1772–1775*, Vol. 3, ed. Michael E. Hoare (London: The Hakluyt Society, 1982), 546; James Cook, *The Journals of Captain James Cook on His Voyages of Discovery, Vol. 2: The Voyages of the Resolution and Adventure, 1772–1775*, ed. John Cawte Beaglehole (Cambridge: Published for the Hakluyt Society at the University Press, 1969), 267; James King, "Extracts from Officer's Journals. At Tonga, May–July 1777," in James Cook, *The Journals of Captain James Cook on His Voyages of Discovery, Vol. 3: The Voyages of the Resolution and Discovery, 1776–1780*, ed. John Cawte Beaglehole (Cambridge: Published for the Hakluyt Society at the University Press, 1967), 1366; William Anderson, "A Journal of a Voyage in his Majesty's sloop Resolution," in Cook, *Journals, Vol. 3*, 930.
[13] "Les hommes et les femmes sont dans l'usage de se faire à la peau différents ornemens en se piquant avec un instrument qu'ils trempent dans une couleur noir qui reste sous l'épiderme. Ces dessins sont variés à l'infini et ne sont pas tout à fait dépourvus de goût. Ces piqûres ne sont pas très douloureuses comme je l'ai éprouvé moi-même; mais comme il faut souvent revenir sur la même place, l'opération devient plus sensible sur la fin. On appelle tatao cet ornement qui sert également aux deux sexes." Translation by the author. Maurice Hocquette, *Louis-Auguste Deschamps 1765–1842, Vol. 39: Sa vie – son oeuvre* (Saint-Omer, France: Société des antiquaires de la Morinie, 1970), 38.
[14] The original drawing on which *Femme des Îles des Amis* is based is not in the collections of the Archives Nationales de France, nor the Musée du quai Branly—Jacques Chirac, where the Piron drawings are kept.

[15] Jacques-Julien Houtou de Labillardière, *Voyage in search of La Pérouse, performed by order of the Constituent Assembly, during the years 1791, 1792, 1793, and 1794, and drawn up by M. Labillardière (translated from the French)* (London: John Stockdale, Piccadilly, 1800), 405. Labillardière's tattooing vocabulary includes: *alapeka*, "tattoo in broad bands round the waist"; *fui*, "tattoo on the thigh"; *kafa*, "tattoo like a wart"; *lafo*, "tattoo like a freckle on the face"; *latetatau*, "tattooing instrument"; *male tatau*, "tattooing"; *now male*, "tap on the head"; *tafa*, "other kind of tattoo"; *tafa*, "raised marks burnt, to cut"; *tai*, "tattooing in concentric circles on the arms and shoulders"; *tatau*, "black mark on the body"; and *tatau*, "puncturation." See Paul Geraghty, "Tongan Wordlists," in *Collecting in the South Sea: The Voyage of Bruni d'Entrecasteaux*, ed. Bronwen Douglas, Fanny Wonu Veys and Billie Lythberg (Leiden: Sidestone Press, 2018), 222.
[16] The rail (*kalae*) was connected to death, as its cry was thought to be an omen for an approaching death. *Kalae* was also known by the name "bier" or *fata*. E. E. V. Collocott, "Notes on Tongan religion. Part I," *Journal of the Polynesian Society* 30, no. 119 (1921): 160–61; E. E. V. Collocott, "Notes on Tongan religion. Part II," *Journal of the Polynesian Society* 30, no. 120 (1921): 233.
[17] Serge Tcherkézoff, *"First Contacts" in Polynesia: The Samoan Case (1722–1848). Western Misunderstandings about Sexuality and Divinity* (Canberra: MacMillan Brown Centre for Pacific Studies, 2004), 2.
[18] Cook, *Vol. 3*, 170.
[19] H. G. Cummins, "Tongan Society at the time of European Contact," in *Friendly Islands: A History of Tonga*, ed. Noel Rutherford (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1977), 86–87.
[20] Charles Clerke, "Extracts from Officer's Journals. Account of Tonga," in Cook, *Vol. 3*, 1308; David Samwell, "Some Account of A Voyage to South Sea's in 1776–1777–1778," in Cook, *Vol. 3*, 1044.
[21] Samwell, "Some Account," 1044.
[22] Anderson, "A Journal," 946.
[23] King, "Extracts from Officer's Journals," 1367–68; Anderson, "A Journal," 946.
[24] Patty O'Brien, *The Pacific Muse: Exotic Femininity and the Colonial Pacific* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2006), 85–86.
[25] Marshall Sahlins, *Islands of History* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1985); Serge Tcherkézoff, "Chapter 4. A Reconsideration of the Role of Polynesian Women in Early Encounters with Europeans: Supplement to Marshall Sahlins' Voyage around the Islands of History," in *Oceanic Encounters: Exchange, Desire, Violence*, ed. Margaret Jolly, Serge Tcherkézoff, and Darrell Tryon (Canberra: ANU-E Press, 2009), 114.
[26] Charles Merger, *Des voyageuses à la découverte du Pacifique: passagères de Bougainville, La Pérouse et d'Entrecasteaux, au siècle des lumière* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2014), 193–260.
[27] Gell, "*Wrapping in Images,* " 82.
[28] William Mariner, *An Account of the Natives of the Tonga Islands, in the South Pacific Ocean: with an original grammar and vocabulary of their language.*

Compiled and arranged from the extensive communications of William Mariner, several years resident of those islands by John Martin, vol. 2, (Edinburgh and London: Constable, 1827), 197; Nicholas Thomas, Anna Cole, and Bronwen Douglas, eds., *Tattoo: Bodies, Art and Exchange in the Pacific and the West* (London: Reaktion Books, 2005), 149.

[29] Makiko Kuwahara, *Tattoo: An Anthropology* (New York and London: Routledge, 2005), 43.

[30] See George Vason, *Life of the late George Vason of Nottingham. One of the Troop Missionaries first sent to the South Sea Islands by the London Missionary Society in the Ship Duff, Captain Wilson, 1796. With a Preliminary Essay on the South Sea Islands, by the Revd. James Orange. Author, of the History of The Town & People of Nottingham* (London, 1840), 178–80; Mariner, *An Account of the Natives of the Tonga Islands*, 104–5.

[31] Sione Lātūkefu, *Church and State in Tonga: The Wesleyan Methodist Missionaries and Political Development, 1822–1875* (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1974), 121. Tāufaʻāhau instituted these laws to encourage peace after a period of civil wars. He was eventually crowned King George Tupou I in 1875.

[32] The Tuʻi Kanokupolu title was established in the seventeenth century and gave political power to the person holding the title. Charles F. Urbanowicz, "Change in Rank and Status in the Polynesian Kingdom of Tonga," in *Political Anthropology: The State of the Art*, ed. S. Lee Seaton and Henri J. M. Claessen (The Hague: Mouton Publishers, 1979), 228.

[33] Lātūkefu, *Church and State*, 121–2, 126–7, 225.

PACIFIC ARTS
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NICOLAS MORET

Studying and Conserving a Barkcloth from the Musée Cantonal d’Archéologie et d’Histoire, Lausanne, Switzerland

Abstract

This research note presents a conservation project of a Polynesian barkcloth belonging to the Musée Cantonal d’Archéologie et d’Histoire in Lausanne, Switzerland. The aims of this project were to deepen existing knowledge about the history of this barkcloth using information gathered from available archives, to place it in time using macro- and microscopic observations and analysis of its materials, to place it geographically through a comparison with other barkcloth pieces kept in different museums, and to consolidate and secure the object for future studies or exhibitions.

Keywords: *barkcloth, tapa, conservation, Polynesia, Sāmoa*

Introduction

This research note, first presented at the Pacific Arts Association conference at the Musée du Quai-Branly—Jacques Chirac on September 14, 2022, is based on a section of the author’s master’s thesis on the conservation of a barkcloth (number MI/1611) stored at the Musée Cantonal d’Archéologie et d’Histoire (MCAH) in Lausanne, Switzerland (Fig. 1a–b).[1] At roughly 163 by 263 centimetres, it is the largest barkcloth in the MCAH’s collection of twenty-one barkcloths.[2] The piece’s width is identifiable by the unpainted edges, while the lower edge is probably one of the ends of its length, as the grid pattern does not continue (Fig. 1b). Prior to conservation in 2020, it was very damaged (Fig. 1a) and could not be studied or exhibited without risking further damage.

Figure 1a (top, before conservation) and 1b (bottom, following conservation in 2020). Unknown artist(s), barkcloth, possibly from Sāmoa, pre-March 1910. Pounded and painted tree bark, 163 x 263 cm. Musée Cantonal d'Archéologie et d'Histoire, MI/1611. Photographs by Nadine Jacquet (1a) and Nicolas Moret (1b). Courtesy of Musée Cantonal d'Archéologie et d'Histoire and La Haute École Arc Conservation-Restauration

I begin this research note with the history of the object from 1910 to the present, determined mainly from its movement through museums in Lausanne. I then present technical characteristics of the work through visual observations and chemical analysis. Lastly, I give an overview of the different treatments used for the object's conservation.[3] This note demonstrates the MCAH's aims to improve conservation conditions within the museum and increase knowledge about its ethnography collection in order to add to its scientific value. It also contributes to current thinking on the study and conservation of barkcloth.

History of MI/1611 in Lausanne's Museums

I discovered the first known mention of barkcloth MI/1611 in the Archive de la Ville de Lausanne (AVL), in the inventory register of the Musée d'Art Industriel (MAI).[4] We learn from curator Henri Lador's writings that the piece was donated or purchased from a "Mr. Delessert" in March 1910 and was given the inventory number 1903. Unfortunately, because this surname is relatively common in the state of Vaud, I have not been able to find more information about this person. Two interesting things about this first record of the piece are its description as an "Abyssinian carpet" ("*Tapis d'Abyssinie"*) and its provenance given as being from "Africa" ("*Afrique*"). A theft-insurance document, dating from around 1910, was also in the AVL.[5] Addressed to the MAI, it lists the insurance price of various objects, among others an "Abyssinian hanging" ("*Tenture d'Abyssinie"*), with reference to the barkcloth. In addition to the change of its description (indicating the lack of knowledge about its function), it is interesting to note that, even as one of the lowest-value objects in the list, the barkcloth is given its own line, which could demonstrate the scientific and/or aesthetic value of this object for the MAI.

In a second MAI inventory register, dating from 1932 and written by then-curator Édith Porret, I found valuable information: the indication of the change of the object's inventory number from 1903 to 1611 (its current number) and dimensions that correspond to the barkcloth.[6] There is the also the first description of its materiality as "wood fibre board, cloth-like—paper used as carpet" ("*Panneau en fibre de bois genre étoffe—papier servant de tapis"*).

The Musée Historique de Lausanne owns a photocopy of a 1950s inventory register titled *Catalogue des collections du Musée d'Art Décoratif de la Ville de Lausanne*.[7] This register includes a more detailed description of the barkcloth: "bark fibre panel, *paparyfera broussonetia* [*sic*], hand printed with black-red geom. patterns" ("*Panneau en fibre d'écorce de* paparyfera broussonetia [*sic*]

imprimé main de motifs géom. noir-rouge”), but the piece is still attributed to being from Abyssinia.

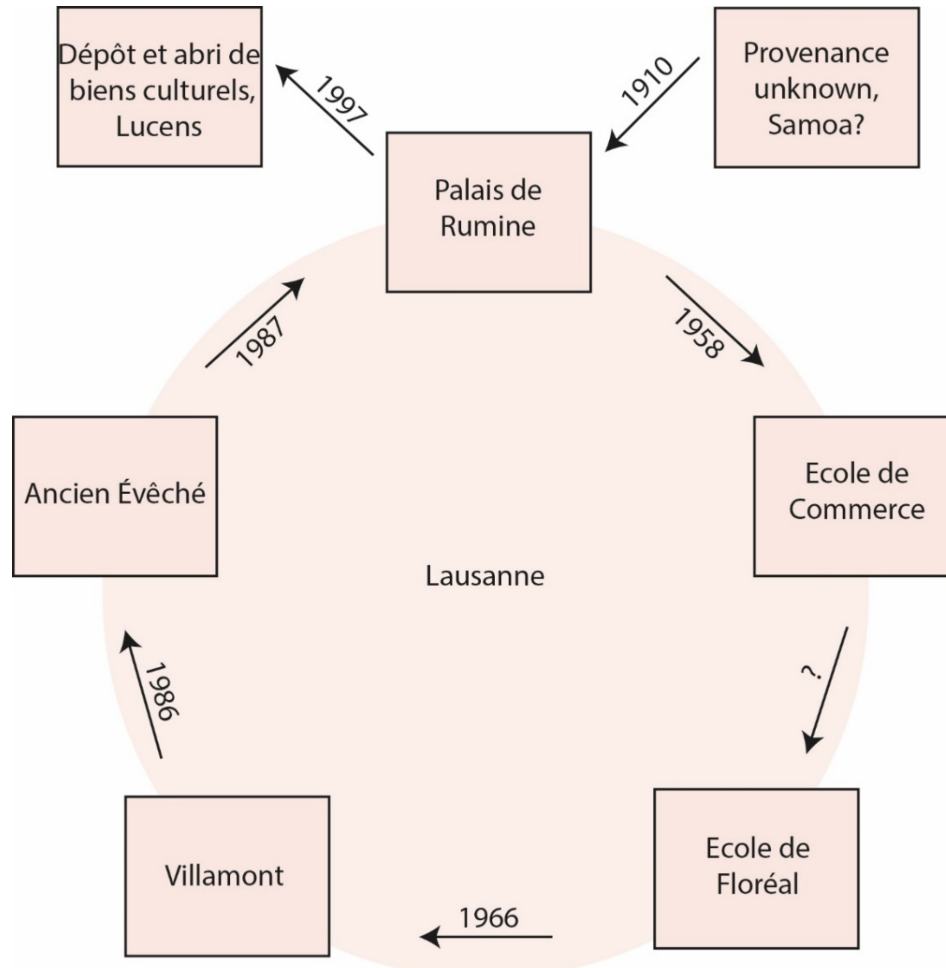


Figure 2. Diagram of the movements of barkcloth MI/1611 within Lausanne, 1910 to the present. Courtesy of Nicolas Moret and Musée Cantonal d’Archéologie et d’Histoire

Thanks to the previously mentioned documents and other works on the subject, I have been able to trace the movement of the barkcloth within Lausanne’s museums (Fig. 2 and Table 1).[8] To date, I have not found any information about its origin and how it arrived in Lausanne. In March 1910, it entered the Musée d’Art Industriel in the brand-new Palais de Rumine.[9] The museum closed in 1958 due to lack of visitors, and the barkcloth was then stored with the rest of the collection in the attic of the École du Commerce, then later at the École de Floréal until 1966. Pierre Pauli, the curator at the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in the

1950s,[10] brought this collection to the museum's Villamont building, but in 1986 he decided to keep only the regional Swiss and Western European pieces of decorative arts. He gave the rest of the collection to the Musée de l'Ancien Évêché (now the Musée Historique de Lausanne). The following year, that museum divided up the collection and retained only the local historic pieces; the ethnographic collections were returned to the MCAH in the Palais de Rumine.

Date	**Institution**	**Place**
Prior to 1910	unknown	unknown
1910–1946	Musée d'Art Industriel	Palais de Rumine
1946–1952	Musée d'Art Industriel et Décoratif	
1952–1958	Musée d'Art Décoratif	
1958–1966	École de Commerce	École de Commerce
	École de Floréal	École de Floréal
1966–1986	Musée des Arts Décoratifs	Villamont
1986–1987	Musée de l'Ancien-Évêché	Ancien-Évêché
1987–1997	Musée Cantonal d'Archéologie et d'Histoire	Palais de Rumine
1997–present		Dépôt et Abri de Biens Culturels, Lucens

Table 1. Summary of the Movements of Barkcloth MI/1611 within Lausanne Museums, 1910 to the Present. Courtesy of Nicolas Moret and Musée Cantonal d'Archéologie et d'Histoire

In 1997, a new storehouse, the Dépôt et Abri de Biens Culturels, opened in a former underground experimental nuclear power plant located next to the village of Lucens.[11] Most of the MCAH's collections, including barkcloth MI/1611 and other ethnographic objects, were moved to this location. Following the arrival of the current director, Dr. Lionel Pernet, the ethnographic collection attracted more interest, and objects within it became the subject of numerous studies.[12]

Techniques in the Manufacture of Barkcloth

Barkcloth is made from strips of the inner layer of tree bark that have been stretched through repeated pounding with a beater on an anvil, both of which are probably made of wood. Other techniques such as soaking the bark strips to relax the fibres or sun-drying them are sometimes involved in the process but proof

that MI/1611 underwent either of these processes could not be determined during this study.[13] In the case of MI/1611, the base layer is made with three or four layers of barkcloth pasted together, giving an area density of approximately 130 g/m^2 (Fig. 3).[14] Each layer is very thin; the final thickness is less than one millimetre. No beater marks are noticeable on barkcloth MI/1611 and there are no patterns on the reverse, which indicates that a rubbing board was not used (Fig. 4).[15] Fourier transform infrared spectroscopy (FTIR) analysis of the base layer found traces of curcumin, indicating that it may have been dyed with turmeric.[16]

Figure 3. Superposition of three layers of barkcloth MI/1611, non-pasted on the edges. Photograph by Nicolas Moret. Courtesy of Musée Cantonal d'Archéologie et d'Histoire and La Haute École Arc Conservation-Restauration

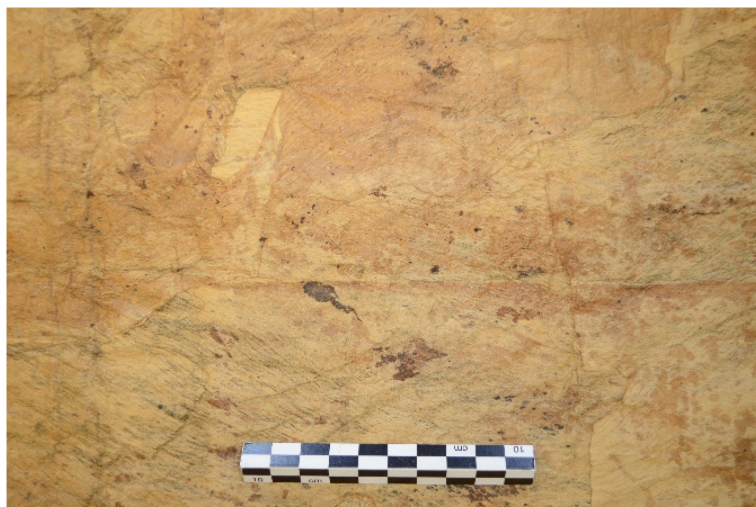


Figure 4. The back of barkcloth MI/1611 with the layers of beaten cloth visible, but showing no rubbed patterns or beater marks. Photograph by Nicolas Moret. Courtesy of Musée Cantonal d'Archéologie et d'Histoire and La Haute École Arc Conservation-Restauration

The pattern of barkcloth MI/1611 includes a hand-drawn red grid, inside which large red diamonds, alternating between vertical and horizontal orientation, are arranged. Each of these diamonds contains between one and three smaller concentric black diamond shapes, with the "two diamonds" variant appearing in eighty-one of the ninety-six diamonds (Fig. 5). The squares enclosing the diamonds are filled with thin black lines; smaller obliques emerge from some of the long lines, and each square has a unique design (Fig. 6).

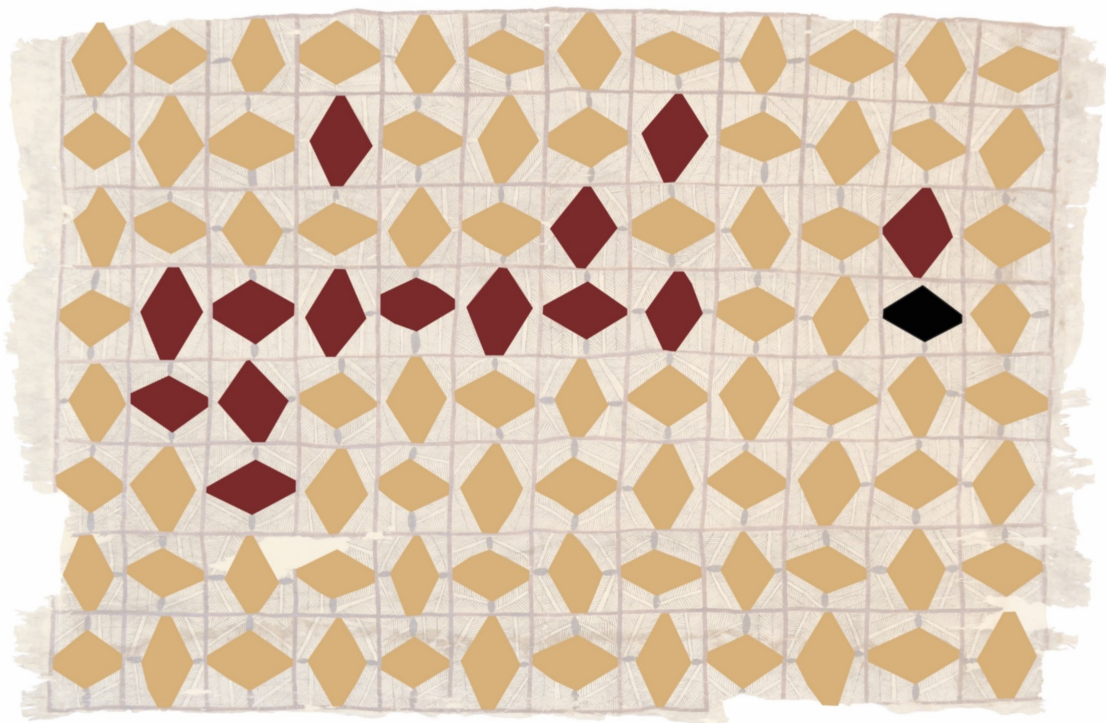
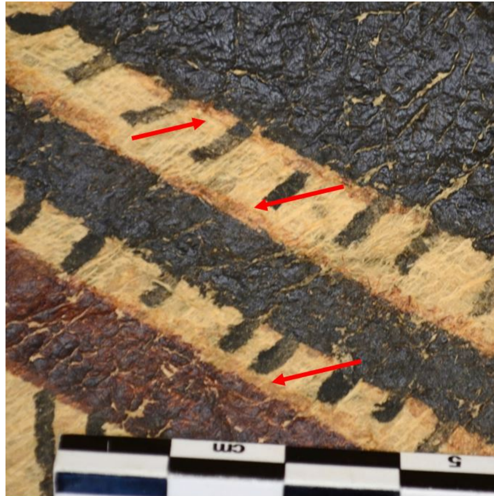


Figure 5. Layout of the different types of diamonds (top) and number of diamonds of each type (bottom) on barkcloth MI/1611. Photograph and drawing by Nicolas Moret. Courtesy of Musée Cantonal d'Archéologie et d'Histoire and La Haute École Arc Conservation-Restauration

Figure 6. Examples of the unique line patterns surrounding barkcloth MI/1611's diamond motifs. Photograph by Nicolas Moret. Courtesy of Musée Cantonal d'Archéologie et d'Histoire and La Haute École Arc Conservation-Restauration

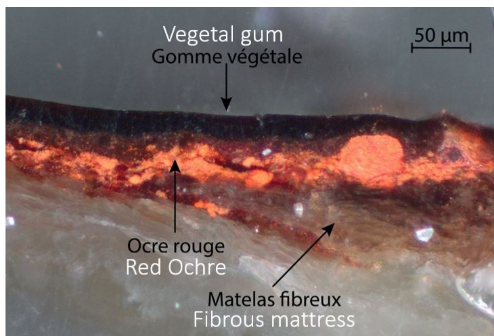
To create the bold stripes of the grid and the diamonds, the maker(s) of barkcloth MI/1611 made a preliminary drawing using a matte red-pigmented substance before coating it with red or black glossy paint (Fig. 7). The maker(s) filled in the blanks with thin black lines as a second step, as these occasionally cover the bold stripes. In cross-section samples, a top layer made of vegetal gum can be seen (Fig. 8). FTIR analysis identified the red pigment as red ochre. Unfortunately, the black pigment remains unidentified but is likely a carbon-based substance such as soot.[17] The pasted inner bark layers, the colours and pigments used, the glossy layers over large lines, and the intricate diamonds in a grid pattern are all typical of barkcloth from Western Polynesia, especially Sāmoa.[18]



Preliminary drawing in light red

Filling at the end

Figure 7. Visual indications of the sequences of pattern creation in barkcloth MI/1611. Photograph by Nicolas Moret. Courtesy of Musée Cantonal d'Archéologie et d'Histoire and La Haute École Arc Conservation-Restauration



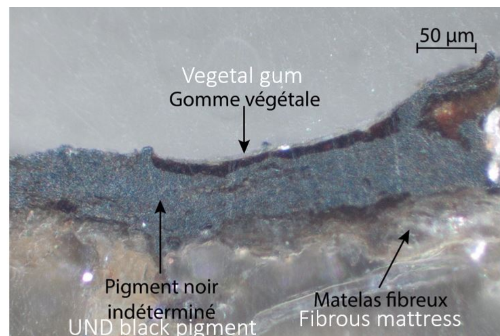


Figure 8. Cross-sections of the red (left) and black (right) pigment samples of barkcloth MI/1611. Photographs by Nicolas Moret. Courtesy of Musée Cantonal d'Archéologie et d'Histoire and La Haute École Arc Conservation-Restauration

Conservation Treatment of MI/1611

Prior to its conservation treatments, barkcloth MI/1611 was rolled around a small cardboard tube (Fig. 9). It was very fragile due to years of mishandling, poor packaging, poor conservation, and improper mounting; these resulted in tears, gaps, folds, dust, and stains. Because it was very damaged, especially in the lower part (Fig. 10), it was risky to unroll it entirely, as it could easily be further damaged; thus, it was unsuitable for study or exhibition. The following section describes the main alterations and conservation treatments conducted on barkcloth MI/1611 by the author in 2020.[19]

Figure 9. The packaging of barkcloth MI/1611 before conservation treatments. Photograph by Nicolas Moret. Courtesy of Musée Cantonal d'Archéologie et d'Histoire and La Haute École Arc Conservation-Restauration

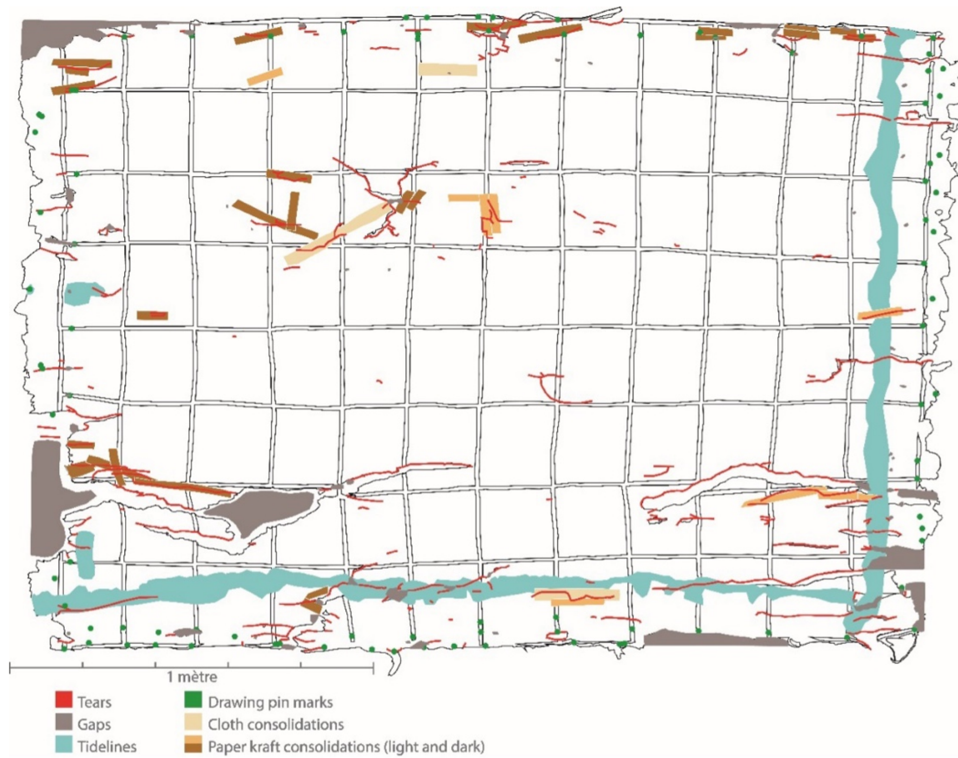


Figure 10. Mapping of the damage appearing on both sides of barkcloth MI/1611 before conservation treatments. Drawing by Nicolas Moret. Courtesy of Musée Cantonal d'Archéologie et d'Histoire and La Haute École Arc Conservation-Restauration

Prior to conservation, the barkcloth had approximately 180 tears, ranging from one to seventy centimetres in length; when added together, they totalled more than sixteen metres. Most of the tears were in the direction of the fibres and were often related to the way the piece had been folded. I consolidated these tears using Japanese paper of different weights, pasted with a mixture of tapioca and wheat starch that had been tinted with acrylic paint to resemble the background colour.[20] I flattened the folds with a cold steam-producing ultrasonic nebuliser and then dried them between blotting paper, using weights.

Sixty-eight gaps of various sizes were spread across the barkcloth. The losses were approximately the area of an A3 paper sheet or 2.7% of the cloth's surface. I filled gaps with two layers of Japanese paper, to better match the thickness of the barkcloth, and the same starch mixture used with the tear consolidation. The museum decided that, because the barkcloth can be studied in its current state of conservation and it will not be exhibited soon, there is no need to reproduce the missing patterns in any way. Because conservation treatments evolve over time, particularly in terms of aesthetic interventions, work on reproducing the missing patterns could be done in the future.

Two long and dark brown "tidelines"—marks created by a liquid on a substrate containing soluble and coloured particles—appeared on two sides of the barkcloth (see Figs. 1a and 10). The horizontal tideline was likely the result of water damage that occurred when the barkcloth was stored in an attic. Whenever this tideline was discovered, the barkcloth was simply turned a quarter-turn to dry. This resulted in more water damage, which produced the vertical tideline. The same thing happened a second time. I faded these tidelines by using multiple applications of agar gel, which dissolves and absorbs water-soluble compounds simultaneously (Fig. 11). It was impossible to remove the tidelines completely, but they are less visible now and the pH is less acidic.

The linearity of both tidelines suggests that they occurred while the barkcloth was framed. A note on the side of the page from the *Catalogue des collections du Musée d'Art Décoratif de la Ville de Lausanne* confirms that the barkcloth was "mounted on a wooden frame" ("*monté sur un cadre en bois*"); this would have been done prior to the 1950s, based on the estimated date of the catalogue.[21] As well as indicating that the object was probably on display for a time, this reference to a frame correlates with other observations I made during the conservation of the object: there are two wear-lines on the bottom resulting from friction actions. In addition, between seventy to ninety drawing-pin holes are visible all around the barkcloth's edges, some of them with round rusting marks.

From this evidence, the mounting system that was used when the barkcloth was framed can be extrapolated (Fig. 12).

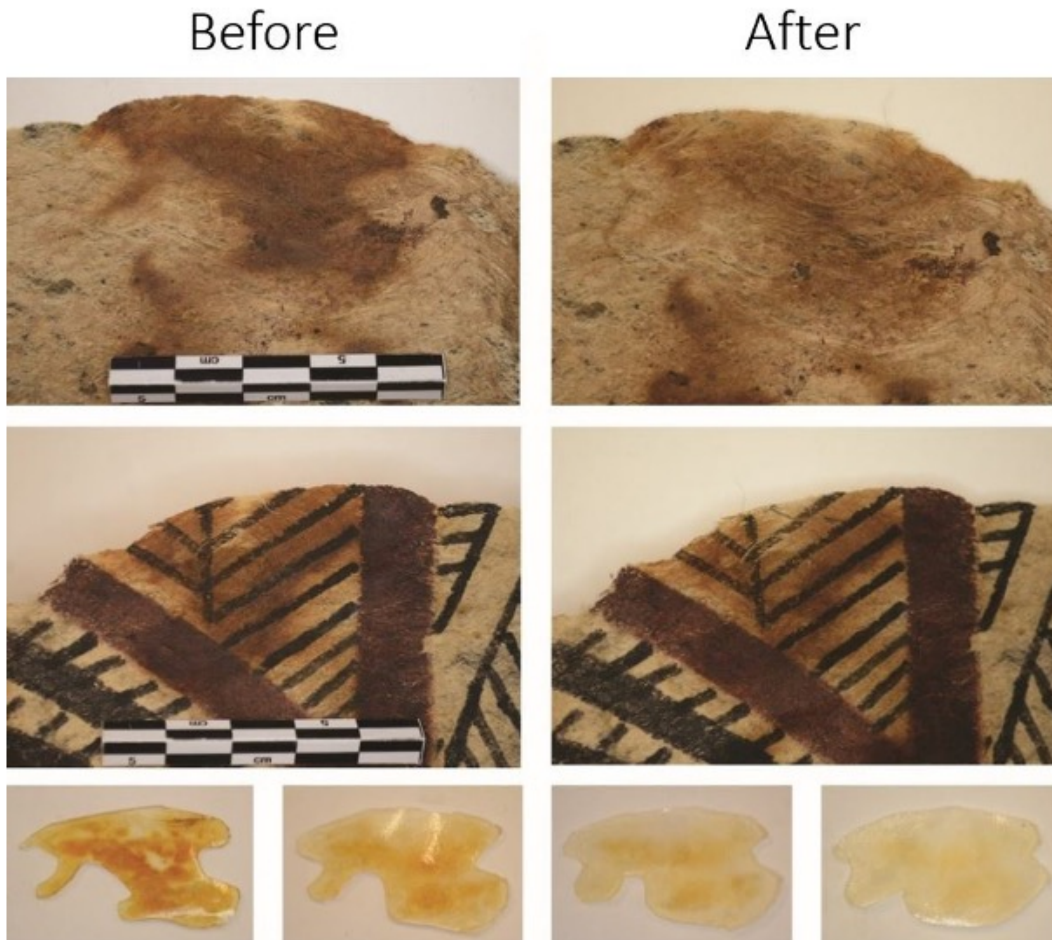


Figure 11. Barkcloth MI/1611's tidelines (top) were reduced with four applications of agar gel (bottom). Photographs by Nicolas Moret. Courtesy of Musée Cantonal d'Archéologie et d'Histoire and La Haute École Arc Conservation-Restauration

Prior to its restoration in 2020, thirty-eight previously done consolidation repairs were still present on the back of the barkcloth. Unfortunately, there is no record of who made these consolidations or when they were done. Most of them were made with kraft paper glued to the barkcloth with animal gelatin, while some were made with textile pieces affixed to the barkcloth with PVC-based adhesive (Fig. 13). These remnants of repair demonstrate the care given to the object since it entered the museum. I removed the old consolidations by using cold steam to soften the animal gelatin and using only a scalpel for those fixed with a PVC-based adhesive.[22]

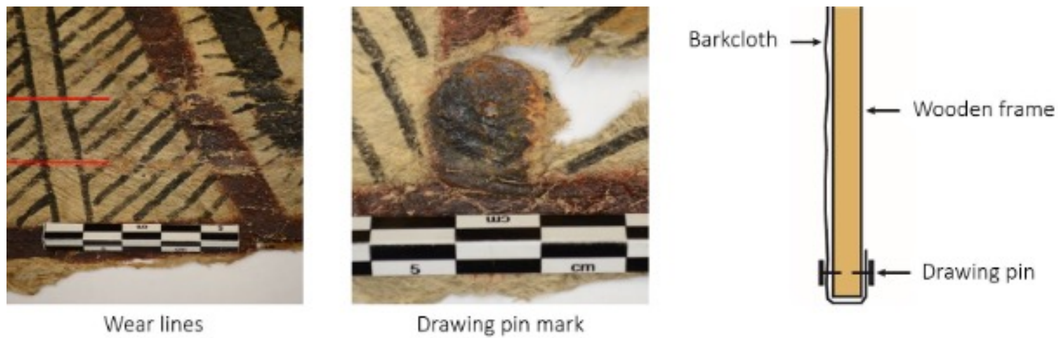


Figure 12. Evidence of the mounting system used for barkcloth MI/1611 and an extrapolation of its construction. Photographs and drawing by Nicolas Moret. Courtesy of Musée Cantonal d'Archéologie et d'Histoire and La Haute École Arc Conservation-Restauration

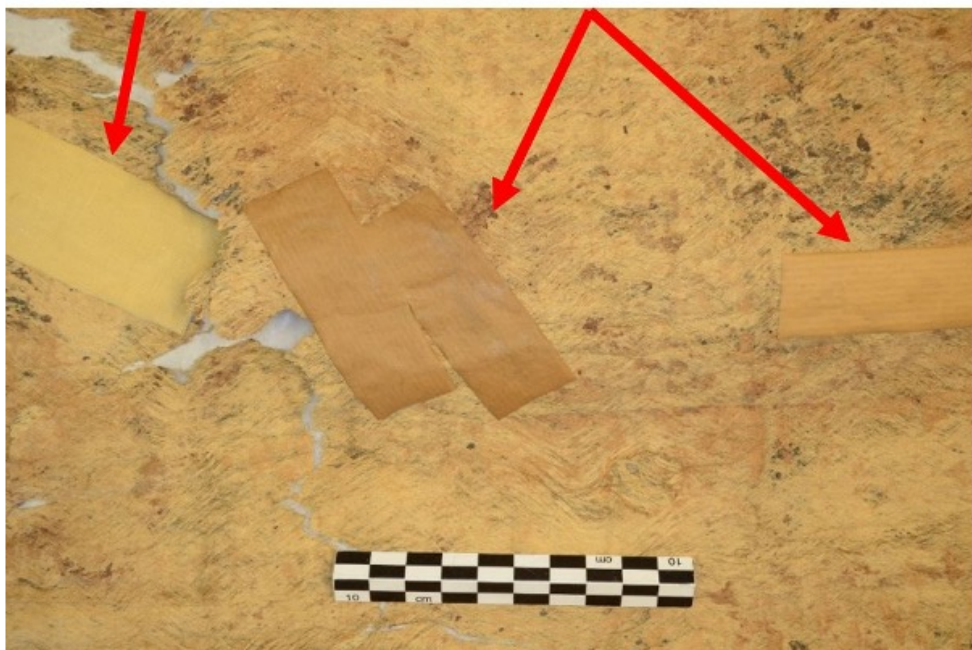


Figure 13. Different types of existing consolidations on the back of barkcloth MI/1611. Photograph by Nicolas Moret. Courtesy of Musée Cantonal d'Archéologie et d'Histoire and La Haute École Arc Conservation-Restauration

As a final step in the conservation of barkcloth MI/1611, I built it a new rolled packaging, made out of a large synthetic tube covered with cotton, for its storage. Before being rolled around the tube, the barkcloth was placed on a sheet of polyethylene non-woven fabric (Tyvek®).

Conclusion

Thanks to records of the movements of barkcloth MI/1611 through different collections, it is possible to better understand the histories of the museums in Lausanne and their interconnections. The MAI inventory catalogue allows us to know exactly when the barkcloth entered the public collection: in March 1910. No information has been found about its previous history and its “Abyssinian” provenance, which indicates that it was probably poorly or erroneously documented at the beginning.

Materially and technologically, it is very interesting to see improvements in the description of the barkcloth over time. Observations made prior to its conservation treatments allow us to bring the object closer to its true origin, which seems to be Western Polynesia and more likely Sāmoa.

The conservation treatments I conducted on the barkcloth give it better structural resistance, allowing the object to be safely studied in the future. If needed for an exhibition, the pattern over the now-filled gaps could be completed by following current ethical guidelines about aesthetic interventions. Source communities could be consulted regarding their point of view on how the design should be reconstructed. Also, if the new consolidations prove to be not suitable, they are easily removed, thanks to the starch mixes used.

This object now has an increased scientific value as it is better documented. New research could be undertaken to clarify the geographical origin of this barkcloth, in particular through a more in-depth study of its design motifs. Research into the identity and life of its donor, Mr. Delessert, would also be of interest in determining the object’s path to the museum. With regard to the conservation of the object, it would be worthwhile to follow the evolution of conservation practices in terms of whether or not motifs are restored to the large gaps in Polynesian barkcloth. In addition, monitoring the progress of the conservation treatments carried out in 2020 will enable us to assess their compatibility with the medium over a long term.

Nicolas Moret is a conservator at the Musée Cantonal d’Archéologie et d’Histoire (MCAH) in Lausanne. He completed a bachelor’s degree in preventive conservation and a master’s degree in conservation-restoration of archaeological and ethnographic objects at the Haute École-Arc in Neuchâtel, Switzerland. His bachelor’s thesis focused on the conditioning of South American hammocks conserved at the Musée d’Histoire de Berne. His master’s thesis was on the conservation-restoration

of barkcloth MI/1611 and on a report on the state of conservation of the barkcloth collection of the MCAH.

Notes

[1] Nicolas Moret, “Les *tapa* du Musée cantonal d’archéologie et d’histoire de Lausanne: Conservation-restauration du spécimen MI/1611 et projet de conservation-restauration pour la collection” (master’s thesis, Haute-École ARC, Neuchâtel, 2020), https://sonar.ch/hesso/documents/313426. This conservation thesis was carried out in the MCAH conservation laboratory under the supervision of David Cuendet (chief conservator) and Karen Vallée (conservator). Mentoring was provided by Claire Musso (independent conservator from the Paris area, France).

[2] The other pieces of barkcloth at the MCAH, mainly from Oceania but also from Africa, are presented in the author’s master’s thesis; see Moret, “Les *tapa*,” 2020. Some inventory numbers contain several pieces or cut pieces. Further information about the MCAH’s ethnographic collection can be found in Claire Brizon, “Voyageurs, naturalistes et militaires. Des collectes dans les îles du Pacifique et de l’océan Indien aux réserves du Musée cantonal d’archéologie et d’histoire à Lausanne,” *PatrimoineS. Collections cantonales vaudoises* HS1 (Lausanne: Musée cantonal d’archéologie et d’histoire, 2019), http://theexotic.ch/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Patrimoines_HS1-MCAH-WEB.pdf; Claire Brizon, Claude Leuba, and Lionel Pernet, “Musée Cantonal d’Archéologie et d’Histoire, Lausanne,” in *Collecting in the South Sea: The Voyage of Bruni d’Entrecasteaux 1791–1794*, ed. Bronwen Douglas, Fanny Wonu Veys, and Billie Lythberg (Leiden: Sidestone Press, 2018), 175–83, http://theexotic.ch/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/12BrizonEtAl2018Ch12MCAHLausanne.pdf; and *Comptoir ethnographique sous la responsabilité de Nicole Froidevaux et Alain Monnier* (Lausanne: Musée cantonal d’archéologie et d’histoire, 1997), https://www.mcah.ch/fileadmin/groups/2/Publications_MCAH/PDF_Documents_du_Musee/1997_-_Comptoir_ethnographique.pdf.

[3] For in-depth details, see Moret, “Les *tapa*,” 2020, and Nicolas Moret, “Barkcloth conservation at the Musée cantonal d’archéologie et d’histoire in Lausanne (CH); Managing a Master’s thesis with the Covid-19 pandemic,” *ICOM-CC Objects from Indigenous and World Cultures: Conservation Newsletter* 6 (June 2022): 8–16, https://www.icom-cc.org/en/newsletters/objects-from-indigenous-and-world-cultures-newsletter-6_june-2022.

[4] Archives de la Ville de Lausanne (AVL): 328/8086, envelope no. 5: “Registre d’entrée des collections du musée, août 1909–14 mai 1931, Nos 1800–3168,” one document. The MAI was opened in 1909 with the artistic and ethnographic objects of the Musée Industriel, which had been created in 1862 by Théophile Gaudin thanks to the patronage of Catherine de Rumine. The aim of this predecessor institution was to assemble a collection documenting the main materials used by

man, as well as their transformation, for the benefit of young people and workers. AVL: 328/8086, envelope no. 1: "Plan général de la collection industrielle de Lausanne" with Charles-Théophile Gaudin et Gabriel de Rumine's preface, Lausanne, 1861, 16 p. (two copies of the same document, one without the title page).

[5] AVL: 329/8087, envelope no. 6: "Copie de l'évaluation approximative des collections du musée, remise à la compagnie d'assurance sur la vie et contre l'incendie, L'Union, à Lausanne (montant Fr. 70'000.-)," around 1910, one document. The given average date is assumed by the AVL. In all cases, the document cannot be older than March 1910, the date when barkcloth MI/1611 entered the collection, or younger than 1946, when the MAI was re-named Musée d'Art Industriel et Décoratif.

[6] AVL: 328/8086, envelope no. 6: "Catalogue des objets des collections du musée, à savoir objets anciennement acquis, récoltés et les autres, cotés au fur et à mesure de leur entrée, avec en regard les résultats d'un récolement des collections et l'attribution de nouvelles cotes, la désignation des objets, leur provenance, donateurs, achat et prix (concerne les Nos 1 à 2600)," [1932]–1959, one document.

[7] Musée Historique de Lausanne, "Catalogue des collections du Musée d'art décoratif de la Ville de Lausanne," n.d. [photocopy]. The original catalogue has not been found.

[8] Isaline Deléderray, "Une princesse russe, un précepteur et leurs successeurs au service d'une idée nouvelle au XIXe siècle; Le Musée industriel de Lausanne (1856 à 1909)" (master's thesis, University of Neuchâtel, 2011), https://www.peristyle.ch/publication/8498-une-princesse-russe-un-precepteur-et-leurs-successeurs-au-service-dune-idee; Catherine Kulling, "Le Musée industriel de Lausanne: une idée originale et ses avatars," *Mémoire vive: pages d'histoire lausannoise* 4 (1995): 17–33; Catherine Kulling, *Musée historique de Lausanne; Les collections du Musée industriel; Catalogue* (Lausanne: Musée historique de Lausanne, 2014).

[9] The museum changed its name twice—becoming the Musée d'Art Industriel et Décoratif in 1946 and the Musée d'Art Décoratif in 1952—corresponding to shifting interests in its collections.

[10] Now the MUDAC (Museum of Contemporary Design and Applied Arts).

[11] The PAA (Pacific Arts Association) visited the Dépôt et Abri de Biens Culturels in 2017 during its meeting at the Musée d'Ethnographie de Genève. The power plant closed in 1969 after a nuclear accident and the state decided to reallocate it as a cultural goods storage for different institutions.

[12] Claire Brizon, "De la collecte à l'usage: Les artefacts du cabinet de l'Académie de Lausanne au 18e siècle," *Colligo* 1, no. 1 (2018): 57–67, https://perma.cc/P5LG-KZS3; Claire Brizon, "Collections coloniales? L'implication de la Suisse dans le processus d'expansion coloniale européen au siècle des Lumières," *TSANTSA* 24 (May 2019): 24–38, http://theexotic.ch/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Tsantsa-collection-coloniales-2.pdf; Claire Brizon, Pierre Crotti, Vincent Fontana, and Claire Huguenin, "Musée cantonal d'archéologie et d'histoire," *PatrimoineS. Collections cantonales vaudoises* 3 (2018): 68–81,

https://mcah.ch/fileadmin/groups/2/Publications_MCAH/Patrimoines/Patrimoines3_WEB.pdf; Lionel Pernet, "Musée cantonal d'archéologie et d'histoire," *PatrimoineS. Collections cantonales vaudoises* 2 (2017): 22–31, https://mcah.ch/fileadmin/groups/2/Publications_MCAH/Patrimoines/Patrimoines2-WEB.pdf; Lionel Pernet, Jérôme Bullinger, Pierre Crotti, and Claire Huguenin, "Histoire des collections," in *Révéler les invisibles. Collections du Musée cantonal d'archéologie et d'histoire, Lausanne 1852–2015*, ed. Lionel Pernet (Gollion, Switzerland: Infolio, 2017), 18–21.

[13] Simon Kooijman, *Tapa in Polynesia*, Bernice P. Bishop Museum Bulletin 234 (Honolulu: Bishop Museum Press, 1972), 415–33; Mary J. Pritchard, *Siapo: Bark Cloth Art of Samoa* (Pago Pago: American Samoa Council on Culture, Arts and Humanities, 1984), 22–31.

[14] The type of paste used could not be identified but it is probably a kind of starch or a plant mucilage. It was not possible within the scope of this study to precisely identify the fibres that make up the barkcloth, but the main plants used in the making of barkcloth were *Broussonetia sp.*, *Artocarpus sp.*, and *Ficus sp.* Kooijman, *Tapa in Polynesia*, 1.

[15] Rubbing boards are flat objects, often quadrangular, with motifs in relief (carved wood or assembled plant materials). They are placed under the barkcloth and a colouring substance is rubbed on the barkcloth to reveal the patterns underneath.

[16] Moret, "Les *tapa*," 55, 204.

[17] Moret, "Les *tapa*," 56, 200.

[18] See "Samoa Islands," in *Tapa: De l'écorce à l'étoffe, art millénaire d'Océanie de l'Asie du Sud-Est à la Polynésie orientale*, (Paris: Somogy Editions d'Art, 2017), 248–71, https://issuu.com/baranes/docs/tapa_2017__extrait_; Kooijman, *Tapa in Polynesia*, 210–48, 415–56; or Pritchard, *Siapo*. The closest example I have found in a museum collection to date is barkcloth number 99-15-70/53903 at the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University. Purchased in 1899, it has a grid with concentric red and black diamonds inside each square, but it has also a rubbing-block pattern on the back which is missing on barkcloth number MI/1611. See https://collections.peabody.harvard.edu/objects/details/87062?ctx=2b05212ac88e5fca026c19d91e257a5311abd282&idx=369.

[19] This section is only an overview of the conservation treatments described in Moret, "Les *tapa*," 2022.

[20] I chose Japanese paper and a mix of tapioca and wheat starch after numerous tests, but mainly because of their stability over time, their ease of removal, and their proximity with the materials used to make barkcloth. Moret, "Les *tapa*," 112–3.

[21] Musée Historique de Lausanne, "Catalogue des collections."

[22] They are now stored with the object.

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Adorning the Ears: On Marquesan Ear Ornamentation

Abstract

This article explores historical developments in ear adornment on the Marquesas Islands by examining their descriptions in historical sources—both written and pictorial—and ear ornaments in museum collections. From the first historical records onwards, Marquesan men and women were reported to have pierced earlobes, but the extent to which outsiders observed they wore ornaments in their ears changed over time. Four main types of ear ornaments are discussed and placed in a historical perspective. Large, oval-shaped wooden ones (kouhau) were worn by men of rank and S-shaped ear ornaments made of turtle shell (uuhei) were worn by women. Oval-shaped ear ornaments made from whale tooth (haakai) were worn by certain women and men in a ritual context. The last type, composite ear ornaments with a shell front (pūtaiana), of which a typology is presented, seems to have changed both in appearance and gender-use over time; initially they were worn by a few men, later on more men wore them, and finally, around the 1840s, they were worn by both men and women.

Keywords: *Marquesas Islands, material culture, body adornment, ear ornaments, Polynesia, museum collections, ethnography*

Many eighteenth- and nineteenth-century accounts on the Marquesas Islands—which consist mostly of travelogues by short-term visitors such as explorers, whalers, and traders, and narratives by long-term residents such as missionaries—include references to ear adornments. With their relatively small size and their decorations—of anthropomorphic figures (*tiki*) and, less commonly, geometric motifs and zoomorphic figures—they were popular collectibles among foreign visitors.[1] The Dutch navy officers who visited the Marquesan island of Nuku Hiva in May 1825—the encounter I examined in my PhD research—were no exception; in their writings they made remarks on ear adornment, drew ear ornaments, and collected examples. In this article I will examine Marquesan ear adornment in a historical framework to provide a chronology of the types of ear ornaments and the ways in which they were used over time.

Figure 1. John Hall, after a drawing by William Hodges, *Opperhoofd van het Eiland St. Christina* [Chief of the Island of St. Christina], 1777. Engraving, 150 x 109 mm. From J. Cook, *Reizen rondom de waereld* (Leiden, Amsterdam & 's-Gravenhage: Honkoop, Allart & van Cleef, 1795-1803), pl. XLIV. Derived from an engraving in J. Cook, *A voyage towards the South Pole* (London, 1777), pl. 36. Courtesy of Caroline van Santen

To provide the reader with some context, I will first give a general description of Marquesan ear ornaments. In museum collections—and in the wider literature on Marquesan material culture[2]—four main types of ear ornaments are distinguished:

- Kouhau: made from a single piece of lightweight wood, consisting of a large, relatively thin, and flat (slightly elongated) oval disc worn in front of the ear, with two spurs at the back, between which it was secured to the ear (see Fig. 1 for frontal view)

- Uuhei: made of an S-shaped strip of tortoiseshell decorated with bunches of dolphin teeth and glass beads (see Fig. 4)
- Haakai/hakakai: generally made from a whale tooth, consisting of a large, thick, oval-shaped disc worn in front of the ear, with a spur at the back (see Fig. 11)
- Pūtaiana/pūtaiata: made from shell with additional materials; the front consists of a shell cap with a spur at the back generally made from boar tusk, human bone, or whale ivory (see Figs. 2 and 5, among others)[3]

Figure 2. Artist unknown, Pūtaiana type 1a, before 1774. Shell, wood, 33 x 74 x 29 mm. Courtesy of Pitt Rivers Museum, University of Oxford, inv.no. 1886.1.707

The different types of ear ornaments are described as having been worn by men, women, or both. With haakai and pūtaiana, in particular, sources are not in agreement on their gender-specific use. Also, relatively few ear ornaments have information about when and where they were collected in the Marquesas Islands and by whom. Therefore, while examining ear ornaments for my doctoral research, I paid particular attention to those museum pieces with early collection dates to

see if more could be learned about possible changes in the appearance of ear ornaments over time.

When I closely studied (parts of) pūtaiana, I discerned differences regarding their physical appearance, the materials they were made from, and the way in which they were attached to the ear. Pūtaiana consist of a "cap," the front part made of shell, and a "spur," which is worn at the back of the ear and can be made from different materials. With these distinctions, I developed a typology based on the cap type and the shape and ornamentation of the spur. In Table 1, two main types are differentiated, each having two subtypes, and a third type is also distinguished. Pūtaiana type 1 have a hollow cone-shell cap filled with a wood substance and either a spur with hardly any or no decoration (type 1a; Fig. 2), or spurs ornamented with (generally) two figures (type 1b; Figs. 4 and 5). Pūtaiana type 2 have a relatively small, solid cap carved from a thick piece of shell material, such as the lip of a helmet shell. The spurs of this type are either roundish and ornamented with two or three figures (type 2a; Fig. 7), or flat with at least three connected figures (type 2b; Figs. 9 and 10). Type 3 are ear ornaments made from a solid piece of shell (instead of having a cap and spur made from different materials) that are similar in appearance to composite pūtaiana (Fig. 8). This typology will be used throughout this article as I explore the historical developments in ear adornment. Table 1 also includes the dates of the earliest-known illustrated or collected examples of the different pūtaiana types.

The main question this article addresses is what can be learned from historical sources, including physical objects, about Marquesan ear ornamentation? My premise is that in order to understand Marquesan ear adornment and the developments therein, all available sources—the physical objects themselves, details about their collection, and written and pictorial historical accounts regarding the ornaments' appearances, their users, and the circumstances surrounding them—need to be considered in connection with one another. Consequently, I discuss in chronological sequence information on ear ornamentation obtained from a number of historic visits by Europeans and Americans to the Marquesas: late eighteenth-century visitors (1774–1799), traders and other visitors prior to the region's occupation by the French (1800–1842), French officers and traveling collectors (1842–1875), and field researchers (1897–1921).[4] To assist the reader, Table 2 provides a schematic overview of the visits and related narratives, images, and objects discussed. Based on these sources, I conclude by summarizing the historical developments of ear ornaments from the late eighteenth to the early twentieth century and their gender-specific use. With regard to pūtaiana, the hypothesis

of this study is that the broadening of their gender-defined use coincides with the development of a new type of pūtaiana in the 1840s: pūtaiana type 2.

PŪTAIANA				
Type	**Subtype**	**Shell cap type**	**Spur materials and appearance**	**Earliest-known example(s)**
1	a	hollow	plainish wood, bone, boar tusk, whale tooth or bird's beak	Collected in 1774 by Johann Reinhold and George Forster
1	b	hollow	ornamented boar tusk or whale tooth	Depicted in Porter, 1815; collected in 1825 by the Dutch
2	a	solid	roundish ornamented boar tusk or whale tooth	Donated in 1841 by Favarger
2	b	solid	flat ornamented whale tooth or (human) bone	Collected in 1874 by Voy; possibly preceded by Loti in 1872
3		made out of one piece of solid shell		Collected in 1792/93 by Hewett (plain); collected between 1840–44 Pierre-Alphonse Lesson and De Ginoux de la Coche between 1843–48 (decorated)[5]

Table 1. Types of Pūtaiana and their Earliest-Known Depicted, Collected, or Donated Examples

***Visit to the Marquesas Islands**	****Date of visit /stay**	**Mentioned/ Described**	**Depicted**	**Collected (still traceable)**	**Kouhau**	**Uuhei**	**Haakai**	**Pūtaiana**	**Other**
1774–1799									
Second voyage of James Cook (James Cook, Johann Reinhold & George Forster)	1774	x	x	x	x			x	

Expedition Étienne Marchand (Claret de Fleurieu)	1791	x							
George Hewett	1793			x				x	
William Pascoe Crook	1797–1799	x			x	x	x	x	
1800–1842									
Krusenstern expedition (Von Krusenstern, Von Langsdorff, Lisiansky, Tilesius)	1804	x	x	x	x			x	x
Edward Robarts	1798–1806	x					x		
David Porter	1813	x	x		x	x	x	x	
John Shillibeer	1814	x			x			x	x
(Benjamin Rotch)	1800–1815			x			x		
Nathaniel Page	1816			x		x	x		
Camille de Roquefeuil	1817–1818	x					x		
Johan Adam Graaner	1819	x					x		
(Alexandre Isidore Leroy de Barde)	(1825)			x				x	
Dutch navy visit (Cosijn, Eeg, Van Haersolte, Singendonck)	1825	x	x	x	x	(x)	x	x	x
Hiram Paulding	1825	x						x	x
Frederick Debell Bennett	1835	x						x	
London Missionary Society (Stallworthy, Darling/Thomson)	1834–1841	x		x			x	x	x
Expedition Dumont d'Urville (Du Bouzet, Dumont d'Urville, Jacquinot, De Roquemaurel)	1838	x	x	x	x		x	x	x

Mathias Gracia	1838–1842	x							x
(Frédéric Favarger)	(1841)			x				x	
1842–1875									
Jean-Benoît-Amadée Collet	1842–1844			x	x				
Jean Daniel Alphonse Rohr	1842-1844			x	x		(x)	(x)	(x)
Pierre-Alphonse Lesson	1840, 1843–1844			x			x	x	x
French missionary	1845			x				x	
Edmond de Ginoux de La Coche	1843–1848	x		x	x		x	x	
Julien Viaud (Pierre Loti)	1872			x				x	
Charles David Voy	1874			x			x	x	
Wyville Thomson	1875			x				x	
1897–1921									
Karl von den Steinen	1897–1898	x	x	x			x	x	x
American Bayard Dominick expedition (Edward S. Craighill Handy, Ralph Linton)	1920–1921	x			x	x	x	x	x

Table 2. Visits by Europeans to the Marquesas Islands, Their Related Narratives' Mentions and/or Depictions of Ear Ornaments, and their Collection
*Names in brackets are the recorded donors of ear ornaments to a museum collection, not those of actual visitors to the Marquesas Islands.
**Dates in brackets are recorded dates of ear ornaments entering museum collections.

Early Visitors, 1774–1799

Although the Spanish visited the Marquesas Islands in 1595, the first written references regarding ear ornaments date to April 1774 when, on his second voyage to the Pacific, James Cook called at Tahuata. In his travelogue, Cook mentions that everyone there had pierced ears, but that none were wearing earrings.[6] However, his publication includes a portrait of hakāìki (chief) Honu wearing a pair of wooden ear ornaments (Fig. 1).[7] Scientist George Forster described them as consisting of oval-shaped flat pieces of light wood which had been painted white with lime.[8]

These ear ornaments are now known as kouhau. While there is no record of any member of Cook's crew collecting kouhau, Forster and his father, fellow scientist Johann Reinhold Forster, did collect another type of ear ornament, now at the Pitt Rivers Museum: a pūtaiana type 1a with a shell front and a wooden spur at the back (Fig. 2).[9] The collection of the British Museum contains a very similar ornament without accession information, which might also have been collected during the 1774 visit.[10] These are the only known pūtaiana with wooden spurs.

In June 1791, Étienne Marchand, commander of a French commercial expedition, visited Tahuata. To date, no objects have been traced to this particular visit, but the expedition's chronicler, Claret de Fleurieu, made a number of observations on ear adornment. He relates that both women and men had their ears pierced—the holes being "three to four lines [7 to 9 mm] in diameter"—but that no men wore ear ornaments all the time and that very few women wore them.[11] However, both women and men would wear other items they valued in their ears, such as nails.[12] It is interesting to note that between 1774 and 1791, the wearing of ear ornaments was apparently not yet a common practice—or at least it was not a common practice in Vaitahu, the bay on Tahuata visited by both Cook and Marchand—even though both women and men had pierced ears. The large wooden ear ornaments which were noted during Cook's visit do not figure in Claret de Fleurieu's account.

Nine months after Marchand's visit, in March 1792, the HMS *Daedalus*, the supply ship for the exploratory voyage by George Vancouver of the northwest coast of North America, docked at the Marquesas for the first time; it came again on its return journey in February 1793.[13] During these visits, surgeon's mate George Hewett acquired several Marquesan objects, including a small ear ornament made from a solid piece of shell with a round front and tapered point—a plain pūtaiana type 3 (see Table 1).[14]

During the period 1797 to 1799, William Pascoe Crook, a missionary with the London Missionary Society (LMS), stayed on Tahuata and Nuku Hiva for nineteen months. In the elaborate written account of his stay, he describes several types of ear ornaments, though he does not identify the wearers. In addition, Marquesan words for types of ear ornaments are included in a Marquesan-English dictionary that he co-authored in 1799. In it, Crook is the first to record Indigenous names of some of the types of ear ornaments, such as the "hekkaki," which closely resembles the present-day name haakai/hakakai.[15] He describes it as consisting of "a flat Oval Ornament, made of a Sperm Whale's tooth, cut cross-wise" attached to a bone with a hole in it through which "the rib of a Cocoa Nut leaf is thrust" for fastening.[16] It is interesting that his description seems to refer to a composite

haakai, whereas most haakai were cut out of a single whale tooth. Another ear ornament Crook mentions is an S-shaped one made of turtle shell or coconut shell and decorated with dolphin teeth.[17] These are named "oúhwe" in his dictionary and are presently called uuhei.[18] All the uuhei that I have seen in museum collections thus far are made of turtle shell. Additionally, Crook also refers to kouhau (wooden ear ornaments)—"kofáou" in the dictionary—and to "a pearl Shell, fastened to a reed."[19] The latter is rather puzzling, as this may refer to pūtaiana with a front made from a cone shell, but this type of shell does not have mother-of-pearl. In the dictionary, the term "hekkaki" is also used for ear ornaments made from shell, which might mean that both ear ornaments made of shell and of whale ivory shared the same name at the end of the eighteenth century.[20] Apart from the pearl-shell ear ornament, the other ear ornaments Crook describes are clearly recognizable by both his descriptions and their relation to names which are still in use at present. Also, he is the first to describe both uuhei and haakai, which means that these ear ornaments must already have been in use prior to 1800.

Traders, Explorers, and Long-term Visitors, 1800–1842

In his 1813 travelogue, A. J. von Krusenstern, who visited Nuku Hiva in May 1804 as part of a Russian expedition, provides a clear description of the construction of pūtaiana type 1:

> . . . they adorn their ears with large white muscles [*sic*] of a circular form, filled with a hard substance like sand, to which a perforated boar's tooth is affixed for the purpose of fastening it to the ear; a small wooden peg that passes through the tooth, serving as a clasp to prevent its falling out.[21]

The substance described as being "like sand" is, in fact, wood, which is used to fix the spur to the shell cap. As the wood is covered with a layer of sawdust in resin, it has the appearance of hard sand.[22] Another expedition member, the naturalist Tilesius, notes in his sketchbook and in his unpublished journal that "Putaÿata" was the Marquesan name connected with shell ear ornaments, which resembles one of the spelling modes of the present-day name.[23] He also identifies the round shell parts as belonging to a type of sea snail called *Conus marmoreus*.[24] Lisiansky, commander of the expedition's second ship, makes a specific remark in his travelogue about the piercing in women's ears: "It is astonishing that women . . . do not

tatoo [*sic*] themselves here; except with a few lines on the lips, round the perforation in the ears, and on the hands."[25]

Drawings and images in this expedition's travelogues show several Nuku Hivans wearing ear ornaments, mostly pūtaiana type 1 (Fig. 3).[26] It is noteworthy that none of the women depicted wear ear ornaments, although some wear a flower or a feather through an earlobe. The travelogues of Von Langsdorff and Lisiansky also show illustrations of just ear ornaments.[27] Several members of the Krusenstern expedition collected ear ornaments and, of these, twenty-one can be located. They include fifteen pūtaiana type 1a, with spurs made from various materials such as bird's beaks, boar tusks, and whale ivory; four kouhau; and two small ear ornaments made entirely from whale ivory.[28] Surprisingly, none of the expedition members collected or referred to large oval-shaped ear ornaments made from whale teeth. However, one of the expedition's informers, the stranded Englishman Edward Robarts, mentions haakai ear ornaments one time in his extensive journal recounting his stay on the islands from 1798 to 1806: when describing women's dance costumes during funerary rites.[29]

Figure 3. Hermann Ludwig von Löwenstern, A Nuku Hivan man (detail), 1804. Watercolor drawing, dimensions unknown. Courtesy of the National Archives of Estonia, Arch. No. EAA.1414.3.3:95

In October 1813, US Navy Captain David Porter arrived on Nuku Hiva to stay for about six weeks. In his travelogue, he describes kouhau and haakai worn by a particular group of men, namely warriors, as part of their regalia.[30] Regarding women, he mentions them wearing uuhei—made from darkish wood decorated with beads, teeth, and mother-of-pearl—as well as haakai.[31] He does not specify when these were worn, but provides the following reference:

> . . . it [a song] was the history of the loves of a young man and a young woman of their valley: they sung their mutual attachment, and the praises of their beauty; described with raptures the handsome beads and whales' teeth earrings with which she was bedecked . . .[32]

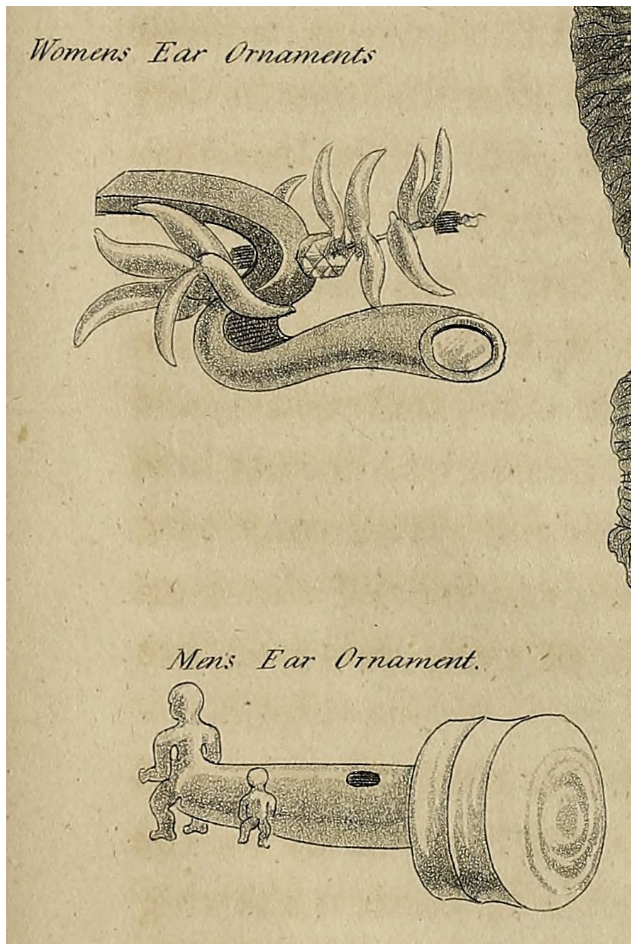

Figure 4. W. Strickland, untitled (detail) showing uuhei and pūtaiana type 1b ear ornaments. From David Porter, *Journal of a Cruise made to the Pacific Ocean, by Captain David Porter, in the United States Frigate Essex, In the Years 1812, 1813, and 1814, Vol. II* (Philadelphia: Bradford and Inskeep, 1815), between 118–9. Courtesy of the Smithsonian Libraries

Although Porter's travelogue includes a few images of Marquesans wearing ear ornaments, it does not include any wearing haakai or any examples of these ear ornaments. However, his image of the pūtaiana type 1b is most likely the first depiction of one with a spur decorated with small tiki figures (Fig. 4).[33] The ornamentation of pūtaiana spurs seems to have begun around 1800, as suggested by Ivory and Thomas.[34] The execution of the example in Porter's travelogue with its well-defined figures suggests that this trend may have been well established by 1813. Porters' image of the uuhei ear ornament (Fig. 4) is also the first depiction of this type.[35]

A year after Porter's visit, Lieutenant John Shillibeer visited the Marquesas for four days with the HMS *Briton*. In his published journal, he mentions that Marquesans wear ornaments in their ears: men made them from shell or whitened wood, while women would wear flowers.[36] Shillibeer does not mention uuhei—which, according to Porter, were worn by women—and neither does he mention haakai, possibly because Shillibeer was only on the Marquesas for a short time, during which there may have been no special events.

The Peabody Essex Museum in Salem, Massachusetts (USA), holds two pairs of ear ornaments which were probably collected in the Marquesas by Captain Nathaniel Page in 1816, when he visited the islands with the ship *Indus* to collect sandalwood for the Chinese market.[37] He donated them to the East India Marine Society in 1817. Both pairs, haakai and uuhei, are the oldest of their type known to have been collected.[38] However, the haakai may have been preceded by a pair in the Bristol Museum & Art Gallery, which were donated by whaleship owner Benjamin Rotch in 1824 and were possibly collected between 1800 and 1815.[39] Interestingly, this pair of composite haakai is made entirely from elephant ivory instead of whale ivory.

In his travelogue, Camille de Roquefeuil, captain of the French navy ship *Le Bordelais* (which called at the islands from December 1817 to February 1818), provides an explanation of how elephant ivory could have arrived in the Marquesas. Drawing on information he learned from an American interpreter named George Ross, De Roquefeuil states that a Captain Rogers had been in the Marquesas in 1810 to collect sandalwood and realized he could acquire quite a large amount of this wood in exchange for a whale tooth. When returning to the Marquesas from China to collect more sandalwood, Rogers brought with him ivory pieces that had been shaped into the form of whale teeth. Initially, he was successful in using these fake whale teeth for exchange, but soon Marquesans realized that this was not their preferred type of ivory and showed no further interest.[40] The fake whale teeth were most likely made from elephant ivory, which

was readily available in China. Although at first glance elephant ivory and sperm whale teeth may look quite similar, those familiar with these materials find it relatively easy to discern the differences.[41]

De Roquefeuil also refers to ear ornaments in his travelogue, mentioning that on specific occasions, women wore ones made from whale teeth, to which he adds that "the largest are the handsomest; there are some above two inches in diameter, but those usually worn are not above half that size."[42] In the French version of his travelogue, he describes these whale teeth ear ornaments as "false, perpendicular ears." He provides an explanation of how these ear ornaments were affixed to the ear and mentions that men also wore them. However, the way in which De Roquefeuil describes the fastening seems to correspond more with the wooden kouhau, which has two spurs at the back, than with the one-spurred haakai.[43] Other writers mention that kouhau were only worn by men, so it is possible that De Roquefeuil got the two types mixed up. Another practice he remarks upon, as is also noted by Lisiansky, was that some women were tattooed around the ear perforation.[44]

Just over a year after De Roquefeuil left the Marquesas, Johan Adam Graaner made a six-day stopover in Taiohae, Nuku Hiva, as a passenger on the British merchant ship *Rebecca*. He spent quite some time with interpreter George Ross. Graaner noted that both women and men wore several types of ear ornaments and that both genders wore ear ornaments consisting of a large, oval-shaped disc at the front with a spur on the back—in other words, haakai. However, his observations may have been influenced by the fact that he was in Taiohae during a feast, about which he also writes.[45] Neither De Roquefeuil nor Graaner seem to have collected ear ornaments during their stay, at least none that can be traced today.

In 1825, the Musée Boulogne-sur-Mer (France) acquired a large collection—the museum's founding collection—of natural history specimens and ethnographic objects from artist and collector Alexandre Isidore Leroy de Barde. The collection contained a pair of pūtaiana type 1a with undecorated pieces of bone as spurs. De Barde had lived in London from 1792 to circa 1814, where he made drawings of natural history specimens in the Leverian Museum and visited many public auctions. It is likely that he acquired the pūtaiana during his stay in London; it is unknown when these were collected on the Marquesas.[46]

The same year in which the museum in Boulogne-sur-Mer acquired its collection, two Dutch navy ships visited the Marquesas en route from South America to Indonesia. In May 1825 they stayed in Taiohae, Nuku Hiva, for twelve days. Several crew members wrote short comments about ear adornment, mostly referring

to pūtaiana worn by men.[47] A Nuku Hivan man drawn by Johan Christiaan van Haersolte also seems to wear a pūtaiana.[48] Willem Carel Singendonck describes an ear ornament made from black wood worn by women (which may refer to uuhei) and Jacob van Wageningen mentions that foreign objects were used as ear ornaments, such as buttons by women and nails and cigars by men.[49] Commander Christiaan Eeg observes that some men wore shell ear ornaments, but that most women and men hardly wore any adornment.[50] The Dutchmen collected three pairs of pūtaiana type 1b, including ones with spurs decorated with small tiki figures, which so far are the oldest known collected examples of this type that can still be traced today. One of these pairs was collected by Adrianus Cosijn (Fig. 5), who also made a drawing of one of the pūtaiana and of a kouhau, an ear ornament type that does not seem to have been collected by the Dutch. However, Van Haersolte did collect a pair of quite small haakai.[51]

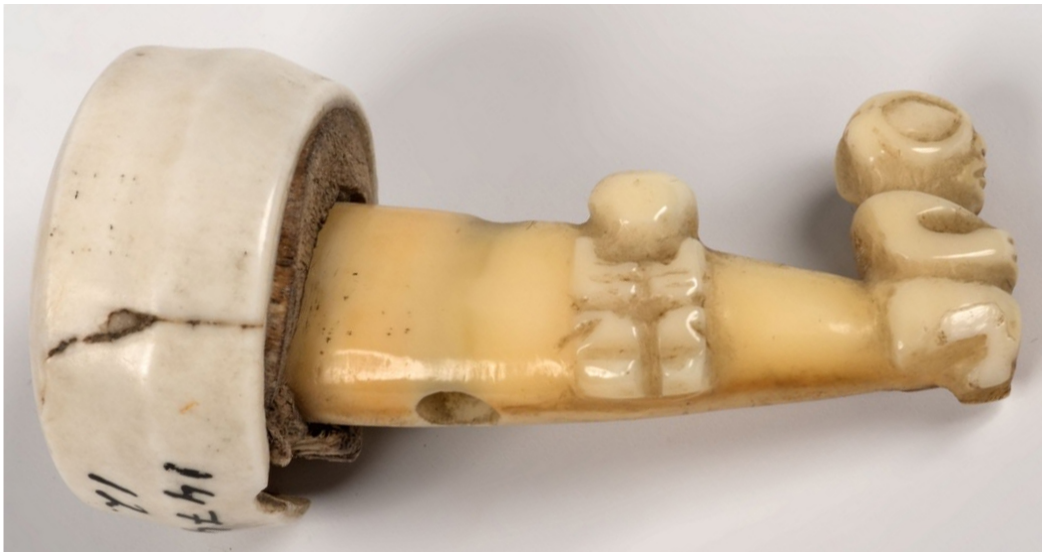

Figure 5. Artist unknown, Pūtaiana type 1b, before 1825. Shell, wood and boar tusk, 30 x 59 x 26 mm. Collection Museum Volkenkunde inv.no. RV-1474-12. Photograph courtesy of Wereldmuseum Leiden

Later in 1825, the USS *Dolphin* anchored in several different bays on Nuku Hiva. In his travelogue, Lieutenant Hiram Paulding describes how, on leaving Comptroller's Bay, a chief from Happah gifted him his neck ornament and a pair of pūtaiana, of which the spurs had a carved image.[52] Just like Eeg, Paulding noted that both women and men did not wear many ornaments and that women often only wore a small flower in the ear.[53]

At the beginning of March 1835, Frederick Debell Bennett—the ship surgeon on a British whaling ship—stayed for about a week in the Marquesas, particularly on Tahuata. In his book recounting his experience, he provides a detailed description of a pūtaiana type 1b. He is probably the first to identify the likely materials used for the filling of the shell front, namely breadfruit wood and resin. Also, he is the first to clearly describe how ivory spurs are decorated with humanoid figures. Moreover, Bennett is the first to mention specifically that pūtaiana were worn by women and men.[54]

Between 1834 and 1841, the LMS had a mission post on Tahuata. The missionary George Stallworthy acquired seven ear ornaments, a haakai and six ear ornaments that originally were attached to a card with descriptions presumably written by Stallworthy. Four were described as “taiana” and two as “hakakai,” although as the latter were made out of a whale tooth and have a rather atypical shape for a haakai, they are more like pūtaiana type 1. The “taiana” ear ornaments are most likely all pūtaiana type 1b, although only one still has a shell front. Even though the card includes written information on how the ornaments were worn, it does not provide information on the wearers.[55] Four relatively small and simple haakai were also collected by LMS missionaries in the same period, probably by either David Darling on Tahuata or by Robert Thomson on Nuku Hiva.[56]

The French expedition ships *Astrolabe* and *Zélée* stayed on Nuku Hiva from late August to early September 1838. The expedition’s commander, Jules Sébastien César Dumont d’Urville, published an extensive journal of the voyage in which he incorporated writings from fellow officers. First Lieutenant Gaston de Roquemaurel (*Astrolabe*) mentions acquiring a pair of ear ornaments from a Marquesan man in exchange for a razor blade. He most likely meant a pair of pūtaiana, as he describes Marquesan men as wearing “pendants made with a shell and a carved fish tooth.”[57] He collected one pair of these and a pair of haakai as well.[58] Besides Dumont d’Urville, who describes the spurs of pūtaiana as finely carved and at times decorated with small human heads, other officers also remark upon the decoration.[59] Charles Jacquinot mentions a pūtaiana spur decorated with “a sculpted human figure.”[60] Eugène du Bouzet provides another layer by observing that the figures represent “Atoua or God.”[61] The *Atlas pittoresque* accompanying Dumont d’Urville’s travelogue includes several portraits of Nuku Hivan males wearing pūtaiana (Fig. 6).[62] A large funerary scene, which may well have been an imaginary reconstruction, drawn by the expedition’s artist, Ernest Goupil, also shows Marquesan men wearing ear ornaments. The men either seem to wear kouhau or pūtaiana. None of them wear haakai, which are also not mentioned by any of the expedition members, although these ornaments were available, as the pair

collected by De Roquemaurel proves. From both the descriptions and the images, it is not clear if the pūtaiana concerned were types 1b and/or 2a. However, it is notable that no mention is made of any women wearing ear ornaments, and the only image of a Marquesan woman with ear adornment in the pictorial atlas shows her wearing a flower.

Figure 6. Bayot after Louis le Breton, *Naturels de Nouka-Hiva. (Baie Anna Maria)*, 1846. Engraving, dimensions unknown. From Jules Dumont d'Urville, *Voyage au pôle sud et dans l'Océanie sur les corvettes l'Astrolabe et la Zélée*, *Atlas Pittoresque, Tome Premier* (Paris: Gidé, 1846), plate 60. Courtesy of Universitäts-bibliothek Heidelberg

One of the first Catholic missionaries in the Marquesas, Father Mathias Gracia, recorded many observations he made during his residency between 1838 and 1842 in letters that were published in 1843. Besides a few vague remarks regarding ear ornaments, he describes an event that concerned the piercing of the ears of a chief's daughter, which required a human sacrifice. However, he imagines there may also have been another reason for the sacrifice, namely establishing the girl's role as a priestess. This is the first time that the act of ear piercing, necessary before ear ornaments can be worn, is mentioned. In this specific case, it was part of a ritual, but unfortunately it is not clear if Gracia was of the opinion that ear piercing was always part of a ritual or if this was an exceptional case.[63]

In January 1841, Frédéric Favarger, a native of Neuchâtel, Switzerland based in Valparaiso, Chile, donated a large collection of objects from the South Pacific to the scientific society in his hometown. While a considerable number of these objects originate from the Marquesas, there is no evidence that Favarger ever visited the islands, so he may have amassed the collection from one or more of the numerous ships that harbored at Valparaiso.[64] Another possibility is that Favarger acquired the Marquesan objects in Lima, Peru, from a Peruvian captain returning from the Marquesas.[65] Favarger's donation contains four pūtaiana—three of them are pūtaiana type 1b and one is a pūtaiana 2a, which to date is the oldest of its type known in a museum collection (Fig. 7).

Figure 7. Artist unknown, Pūtaiana (type 2a), before 1841. Shell and boar tusk, 17 x 50 x 16 mm. Musée d'Ethnographie de Neuchâtel, Switzerland, inv.no, V.26. Photograph by Caroline van Santen. Courtesy of Musée d'Ethnographie de Neuchâtel

French Colonial Officers and Traveling Collectors, 1842–1875

From 1842 to 1875, when France occupied the Marquesas, French administrators and officers collected Marquesan objects when stationed on the islands. A number of these collections found their way into French museums. The collection acquired by Captain Jean-Benoît-Amadée Collet, the first supreme commander of the islands, includes four kouhau.[66] Between 1842 and 1844, one of his subordinates, Second Lieutenant Jean Daniel Alphonse Rohr, also assembled a considerable collection comprising, among others, two kouhau, four shell ear ornaments, and two whale-tooth ear ornaments, all of which he donated to his hometown of Colmar, France, in 1845.[67] The Musée Hèbre (Rochefort, France) holds a number of objects collected by medical officer Pierre-Alphonse Lesson either in May 1840, when he visited the islands with the *Pylade*, or between October 1843 and June 1844, when he headed the medical service in the Marquesas. This collection contains a pair of haakai, a pair of smaller whale ivory ear ornaments, four pūtaiana type 1b, and three pūtaiana type 3.[68] Besides officials, other foreigners were present in the Marquesas as well, including French missionaries. The collection of the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology at Cambridge University holds two pūtaiana type 3 which were bought at an auction in 1923 and which were reportedly collected by a French missionary on the Marquesas in 1845 (Fig. 8).[69]

French journalist Edmond de Ginoux de la Coche visited the Marquesas several times between 1843 and 1848 and collected a considerable number of objects, including ear ornaments.[70] In a catalogue he compiled in 1866, he makes several observations that are not mentioned in earlier writings by other visitors. Regarding wooden ear ornaments, which he calls "Kouhaou" (kouhau), he remarks that they were worn on days of combat or feasts, and that by wearing them warriors enhanced their tattoos.[71] Of the four pairs of kouhau he collected, three pairs can still be traced.[72] Referring to "Hakaé" (haakai), De Ginoux de la Coche observes that these "luxury ornaments" were worn by women and men on feast days.[73] The third type of ear ornaments he remarks upon are "Poutaüana-Kétou" (pūtaiana), everyday ear ornaments for men and women that are part sperm whale ivory and part shell (speckled cone).[74] He describes them as having a delicately carved figure of a tiki (which he calls a "domestic genius") on the less visible part that is worn behind the ears. He collected ten pairs of this type, one pair of which was made entirely of shell, which is the first written reference to pūtaiana type 3.[75]

Figure 8. Artist unknown, Pūtaiana (type 3), before 1845. Shell, 22 x 38 x 15 mm. Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, Cambridge University, inv.no. 1923.114 B. Courtesy of Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, Cambridge University

Figure 9. Artist unknown, Pūtaiana (type 2b) with flat spur, before 1874. Whale tooth and resin, 18.5 x 46.5 x 7 mm. Penn Museum, inv.no. 18023K. Courtesy of the Penn Museum

From approximately the 1870s onward, scholars and collectors began making voyages around the Pacific that, in contrast to many earlier expeditions, had a salvage ethnographic character.[76] Either for institutions or for their own private collections, many of these professional travelers called at the Marquesas. During their stays, which were generally three to four weeks, they would visit several islands, where they often acquired a considerable number of objects. American naturalist Charles David Voy was one of these traveling collectors. He visited the Marquesas in 1874 and acquired a collection of both older and contemporary objects.[77] The ear ornaments Voy collected are six haakai—one of which is made from elephant ivory—and six pūtaiana. Of the pūtaiana, all consist of type 2 caps, but only two still have their spurs, both of which are elaborately carved flat spurs (Fig. 9). These pūtaiana type 2b spurs are, so far, the earliest collected to be identified.[78] It is possible that French navy officer Julien Viaud, better known as Pierre Loti, collected a similar flat spur pūtaiana two years earlier. However, the attribution of this ear ornament in the collection of Maison de Pierre Loti to both collector and collection date is not definite.[79] In 1875, a year after Voy's visit, the HMS *Challenger* called at the Marquesas. Aboard was naturalist Wyville Thomson, who also acquired a pair of pūtaiana type 2b with flat decorated spurs (Fig. 10).[80]

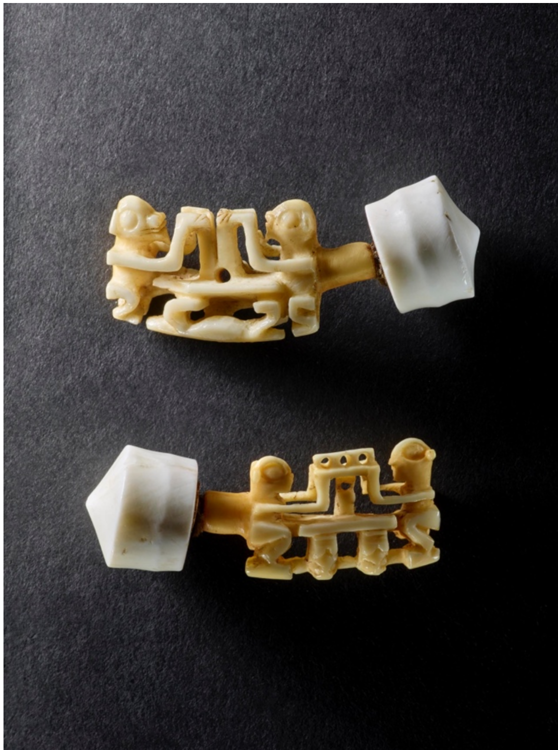

Figure 10. Artist unknown, Pūtaiana (type 2b), before 1878. Shell, whale tooth, pith, 19 x 50 x 15 mm and 19 x 53 x 15 mm. British Museum, inv.no. Oc,+.592.a-b. Courtesy of The Trustees of the British Museum

Field Research, 1897–1921

It was not until the end of the nineteenth century that the first scientific fieldwork was undertaken on the Marquesas. One of the first fieldworkers on the islands was German ethnologist Karl von den Steinen. He stayed in the Marquesas from August 1897 to February 1898 to obtain Marquesan objects for the ethnological museum in Berlin, for which he also gathered information on objects' uses and meanings. Among the objects he acquired were two pairs of haakai, a considerable number of pūtaiana type 2b, and some pūtaiana type 2a, as well as a few other types of small ear ornaments. For most of the objects, the location where he collected them is known, and with one pair of haakai even the name of the last Marquesan owner, a woman named Tetuaatuoho, is known, as well as the name of her ancestor (tupuna kakiu), Mahuetee, to whom they originally belonged.[81] It is quite unusual to know the name of a former owner/wearer of ear ornaments; so far, no other such records have been found.

Von den Steinen also addresses ear ornaments in his publications on Marquesan art, which he published decades after his fieldwork. Regarding ear ornaments' construction, he recognizes two main types: simple and composite. Simple ear ornaments are made from one piece of material such as whale tooth, boar tusk, shell, or wood. He divides this category in two subgroups: small knobs with a front similar in appearance to pūtaiana, which he refers to as okaoka, and large disc knobs made out of whale teeth—haakai. He assumes that kouhau were used as substitutes for haakai. The second type Von den Steinen defines are composite ear ornaments with a shell front and a spur of a different material—pūtaiana. Into this group he places older ones with relatively plain spurs (pūtaiana type 1), as well as newer ones with richly ornamented spurs, most of which have solid caps (pūtaiana type 2).[82] Von den Steinen subdivides spurs that are decorated with three or more figures into two categories. The first group he calls "Indifferent comrades": ones with figures that are situated next to or behind each other but do not seem to be interacting. The second group he denotes as "Tiki having relationships with each other," of which he recognizes four representations: "Embrace," "French kiss," "Childbirth," and "Girls swing." Of pūtaiana with a "Childbirth" spur, he notes these were only worn by women.[83]

In 1920 and 1921, as part of the American Bayard Dominick Expeditions, a research team including anthropologist Edward S. Craighill Handy and archaeologist Ralph Linton was sent to the Marquesas. In 1923, Handy published a study on Marquesan culture based on information from missionaries, foreign residents, and Marquesan people. Adding to the information recorded by Gracia, Handy

relates that ear piercing was performed on children ages six to ten. With boys, he learned from Linton, it was performed at the same time as their circumcision. Ear piercing was generally done in groups at a sacred place but often without much ceremony; only for children of high-ranking individuals were ceremonial ear-piercing feasts organized. The piercing was performed by a tuhuna (specialist).[84] Regarding haakai, Handy mentions that they were worn by women and men and that the most valuable ones were considered special family possessions. Just like Von den Steinen, he considers kouhau to be substitutes for haakai. Additionally, Handy groups larger composite shell ear ornaments under the name haakai, a similar term to the one used by Crook et al. in 1799. Of the smaller pūtaiana, Handy mentions that the spurs were made from ancestral limb bones and were only worn by women. They were handed down in the female line. Contrary to Von den Steinen, Handy is of the opinion that okaoka is the general term for ear ornaments.[85]

In his publication on Marquesan material culture, Linton distinguishes ear ornaments worn by women and men. According to him, the S-shaped turtle shell ear ornaments were used by women, as were pūtaiana with solid caps of white shell and thin spurs richly ornamented with figures made from human bone—allegedly made from ancestral human remains—or sometimes from boar tusk. However, of these pūtaiana type 2b, a fair number of spurs are also made from whale ivory. According to Linton, “The most highly prized of the men’s ear ornaments were the ha’akai,” which he bases on the 1904 version of Dordillon’s dictionary.[86] This is interesting, as Handy believes that both women and men wore them. The 1931 revised edition of Dordillon’s dictionary does not specify that haakai were only worn by men.[87] Linton also refers to other types of male ear ornaments—wooden ones or kouhau and shell composite ones (pūtaiana type 1)—but only by quoting earlier visitors to the Marquesas. He also recognizes that certain ear ornaments were worn by women and men equally, such as those for keeping “open freshly perforated holes in the ears” and what he calls “intermediate” ear ornaments placed in between “taiana and haakai types.” From the examples in museum collections that he refers to, he seems to describe several ear ornaments that could be considered as pūtaiana type 1, which were likely no longer in use when he was on the Marquesas.[88]

Figure 11. Artist unknown, Two haakai, before 1871. Whale tooth, 76 x 83 x 47 mm and 75 x 82.5 x 48.5 mm. British Museum, inv.no. Oc.7279.a-b. Courtesy of The Trustees of the British Museum

Conclusion

In records from 1774 onwards, both men and women in the Marquesas are reported to have pierced earlobes, but the actual wearing of ear ornaments is hardly mentioned. Reviewing observations on adorning the ears, there seems to be a gradual shift from only a few high-ranking men wearing ear ornaments in the late eighteenth century, to most men and some women wearing them by the early nineteenth century, and to reports in the 1840s of both men and women generally wearing them. However, the fact that pierced earlobes were prevalent among both men and women suggests that wearing ear ornaments must already have been a common practice by 1774, but likely reserved for special occasions.

Several developments in Marquesan ear ornaments can be discerned from historical accounts. I will consider these by returning to the four different types of ear ornaments mentioned in the introduction. The earliest accounts describe large, lightweight wooden ear ornaments made of a flat piece of whitewashed wood with two spurs at the back. Visitors to the Marquesas repeatedly record seeing this type from 1774 to the 1840s and they are known to have been collected from 1804 to the 1840s, and possibly later. There seems to be general agreement that these were worn by men of a chiefly rank and probably not on a daily basis. Only field researchers in the period 1897 to 1921 consider these to be

substitutes for whale tooth ear ornaments. In 1799, Crook et al. are the first to provide the Marquesan name for this type of ear ornament, "kofáou," and in the 1840s De Ginoux de la Coche names them "Kouhaou," resembling the current spelling, kouhau.

The second type of ear ornament, uuhei, which was mentioned by Crook between 1797 and 1799, is the S-shaped ornament typically made of a strip of turtle shell adorned with dolphin teeth, and later with glass beads. Porter and others mention that uuhei were uniquely worn by women. Crook et al. provide the name "oúhwe" for this type of ear ornament.[89] Dordillon's dictionary gives the name "uuhe," which is quite close to the present name of uuhei.[90] Although Porter produces an image of this type of ear ornament in 1815, and the first pair in a museum collection that can be traced were probably acquired on the Marquesas in 1816, it is interesting to note that to date no images of Marquesans wearing this type of ornament have been found.

Crook observed a haakai—an ear ornament made from a large tooth of a sperm whale—during his stay between 1797 and 1799. In his account he does not provide a name for them, but in Crook et al. the name "hekkaki," relatively close to the present-day haakai/hakaki, is used for both ear ornaments made from ivory and from shell. This raises the question of whether terminology has changed over time—as during the 1840s De Ginoux de la Coche notes the name "Hakaé" only for whale tooth ear ornaments—or if there are different perspectives on the name, as Handy also uses the term "hakakai" to refer to both whale tooth ear ornaments and composite shell ear ornaments in 1923. From the earliest accounts, it can be deduced that haakai were worn by women and men during feasts, either high-ranking or fulfilling a certain role in rituals. It is therefore remarkable that in quite a number of catalogues haakai tend to be described as male ear ornaments. The reason for this may be that Ralph Linton (of the 1920s Bayard Dominick Expedition) writes in his publication on Marquesan material culture that "the most highly prized of the men's ear ornaments were the ha'akai," implying they were exclusively worn by men.[91] This assumption seems to be incorrect and needs rectification, as the historical accounts do not support this.

Composite shell ear ornaments, or pūtaiana, are first mentioned in the accounts of the missionary Crook relating to the period 1797 to 1799, but as one with a wooden spur was collected during Cook's visit, they must already have been in use by 1774. Over time, the spur came to be made of other materials such as boar tusks and whale ivory. The spur also became decorated, which seems to have been a development starting around 1800, as was also suggested by Ivory and Thomas, most likely due to the availability of metal (precision) tools.[92] The image

in Porter's travelogue, which is the first known example depicted—as was also noted by Von den Steinen—suggests this may have been well established by 1813.[93] The earliest pūtaiana type 1b that are found in a museum collection were collected during a Dutch navy visit to Nuku Hiva in 1825. Whereas pūtaiana type 1 have a hollow cone-shell cap filled with a wood substance, pūtaiana type 2 have relatively small solid-shell caps. The first example of a pūtaiana type 2a was donated by Favarger in 1841. This pūtaiana type may well be a transitional variety between types 1b and 2b. The earliest flat spurs belonging to pūtaiana type 2b seem to be the ones collected by Voy in 1874, or possibly the one collected by Loti two years earlier. Following others and in contrast to Von den Steinen's categorization, I have placed ear ornaments completely made of one solid piece of shell in my pūtaiana typology as type 3.[94] The first plain pūtaiana type 3 was already collected in 1792/1793 and the first decorated ones in the 1840s. As for the naming of composite shell ear ornaments, the historic term closest to the present-day name of pūtaiana is "Putaÿata," noted by naturalist Tilesius in 1804. Initially, pūtaiana appear to have been solely worn by men, but from the 1840s female wearers were also being observed. Later opinions differ on who wore them, which is probably due to an indiscriminate use of the term pūtaiana for a broad range of similar ear ornaments. The shift in observations of women wearing pūtaiana may well have coincided with the shift in cap form. Therefore, this study hypothesizes that the broadening of gender-defined use coincides with the development of pūtaiana type 2.

This paper has shown that although the common term pūtaiana for Marquesan composite shell ear ornaments may imply a uniformity, as it is applied generally to this particular type of ear ornament, a critical reading of both historical sources and objects reveals that there are more differences in these ornaments' forms and uses than previously assumed. Such an examination widens the understanding of a form of material culture and the changes therein over time.

Caroline van Santen earned her PhD from the Sainsbury Research Centre, University of East Anglia, in Norwich, United Kingdom, in 2022. She is curator at the Zeeuws Museum, a regional cultural history museum in Middelburg, the Netherlands, and works as an independent researcher on the material culture and history of the Marquesas Islands.

Notes

[1] This article is an elaborate version of the paper I presented on September 14, 2022, at the 2022 Pacific Arts Association–Europe Conference "Gendered Objects in Oceania," held at the Musée du quai Branly—Jacques Chirac, Paris. It is primarily derived from a case study in my PhD thesis in which I explore a Dutch navy visit to the Marquesan island of Nuku Hiva in May 1825. In my thesis, I did not set out to look for the gender-specific use of ear ornamentation, but when the conference theme was presented, I realized that gender was a considerable factor in my historical analysis. Caroline van Santen, "Nuku Hiva 1825: Ethnohistory of a Dutch-Marquesan Encounter and an Art-Historical Study of Marquesan Material Culture" (PhD diss., University of East Anglia, 2021), 165–97, https://ueaeprints.uea.ac.uk/id/eprint/85985/.

[2] See for example: *Trésors des îles Marquises* (Paris: Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 1995), 50–1, 110–1; Eric Kjellgren, *Adorning the World: Art of the Marquesan Islands* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2005), 53, 74–80; Anthony Meyer, "Ornements d'oreille ha'akai et taiana" and "Ornements d'oreille kouhau," in *Art ancestral des Îles Marquises*, ed. Nadine Berthelier et al. (Chartres: Musée des Beaux-Arts de Chartres, 2008), 76–85; Tara Hiquily and Christel Vieille-Ramseyer, *Tiki* (Tahiti: Au vent des îles/Musée de Tahiti et des Îles–Te Fare Manaha, 2017), 166–9, 179–80, 210–3.

[3] The spelling of the Marquesan names of the ear ornament types is based on the dictionary on the website of the Académie Marquisienne, https://www.academiemarquisienne.com/index.php/dico, and the glossary in *Matahoata: Arts et société aux îles Marquises*, ed. Carol Ivory (Paris: Musée du quai Branly/Arles: Actes Sud, 2016), 302–3. For both haakai/hakakai and pūtaiana/pūtaiata, two variants of the Marquesan name are in use; the first name mentioned is commonly used in literature and will be used from this point forward.

[4] I have attempted to include as many as possible known/recorded visits in my study, but I do not claim that my research is exhaustive.

[5] The ones collected by Lesson seem to be in an unfinished state.

[6] James Cook, *A Voyage Towards the South Pole, and Round the World*, Vol. I (London: W. Strahan and T. Cadell, 1777), 310.

[7] Kjellgren, *Adorning the World*, 50–53.

[8] George Forster, *A Voyage Around the World*, Vol. II (London: B. White et al., 1777), 15–6.

[9] Pitt Rivers Museum inv.no. 1886.1.707.

[10] British Museum inv.no. Oc1980,Q.1064.

[11] C. P. Claret de Fleurieu, *Voyage Around the World Performed During the Years 1790, 1791 and 1792, by Étienne Marchand*, Vol. I (London: T. M. Longman and O. Rees, 1801) 154–5.

[12] De Fleurieu, *Voyage*, 154–5, 161, 190.

[13] George Vancouver, *A Voyage of Discovery to the North Pacific Ocean, and Round the World; in which the Coast of North-west America has been Carefully Examined and Accurately Surveyed*, Vol. III (London: John Stockdale, 1801), 142–59; Greg Dening, *Islands and Beaches: Discourse on a Silent Land: Marquesas 1774–1880* (Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii, 1980), 106.
[14] British Museum inv.no. Oc,VAN.400. Although originally listed as an ear ornament, McKinney, in her study of the Marquesan collection of the British Museum, describes it as an ear piercer. Natascha R. McKinney, "The Marquesan Collection at the British Museum, London: Genesis, Growth and Stasis" (master's thesis, Massey University, 2012), 135. However, this object is most likely an ear ornament, as Govor et al. also argue. See Elena Govor, Nicholas Thomas, Maia Nuku, et al. "Tiki: A Catalogue of Artefacts from Nuku Hiva Collected or Recorded by Members of the Krusenstern Expedition," in *Tiki: Marquesan Art and the Krusenstern Expedition*, ed. Elena Govor and Nicholas Thomas (Leiden: Sidestone Press, 2019), 134.
[15] William Pascoe Crook, Samuel Greatheed, and Tima`u Te`ite`i, *An Essay Toward a Dictionary and Grammar of the Lesser-Australian Language, According to the Dialect Used at the Marquesas (1799)*, ed. H. G. A. Hughes and S. R. Fischer (Auckland: Institute of Polynesian Languages and Literature, 1998), 22. Académie Marquisienne (https://www.academiemarquisienne.com/index.php/dico) and Ivory, *Matahoata*, 302.
[16] William Pascoe Crook, *An Account of the Marquesas Islands, 1797–1799*, ed. Greg Dening et al. (Papeete: Haere Po, 2007), 58.
[17] Crook, *An Account*, 59.
[18] Crook et al., *An Essay*, 38.
[19] Crook et al., *An Essay*, 29; Crook, *An Account*, 58–9.
[20] Crook et al., *An Essay*, 22.
[21] A. J. von Krusenstern, *Voyage Round the World in the Years 1803, 1804, 1805, & 1806, by Order of his Imperial Majesty Alexander the First* (London: John Murrey. 1813), 157–8.
[22] This observation was made by restorer Carolin Binninger of the Museum Fünf Kontinente (Munich) while inspecting one of their ear ornaments from the Krusenstern expedition collected by Von Langsdorff. Carolin Binninger, personal communication, June 8, 2017.
[23] Wilhelm Tilesius von Tilenau, *Skizzenbuch des Hofrath Dr Tilesius v. Tilenau Naturforschers der Krusensternischen Reise um die Welt in den Jahren 1803–1806.* Russian State Library, Manuscript Department (Moscow, Russia), fond 178, M 10693b, f. 8, cited in Govor, et al., "Tiki: A Catalogue," 133.
[24] Govor et al., "Tiki: A Catalogue," 133. The exact species according to Govor et al. is *Conus marmoreus suffusus*.

[25] Urey Lisiansky, *A Voyage Round the World in the Years 1803, 4, 5, & 6: Performed by Order of his Imperial Majesty Alexander the First, Emperor of Russia, in the Ship Neva* (London: J. Booth/Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme & Brown, 1814), 85.
[26] See, for example, A. J. von Krusenstern, *Atlas zur Reise um die Welt: unternommen auf Befehl seiner Kaiserlichen Majestät Alexander des Ersten auf den Schiffen Nadeshda und Neva unter dem Commando des Capitains von Krusenstern* (St. Petersburg: Schnoorschen Buchdruckerey, 1814); Georg Heinrich von Langsdorff, *Bemerkungen auf einer Reise um die Welt In den Jahren 1803–1807* (Frankfurt am Rhein: Friedrich Wilmand, 1812); and Herman Ludwig von Löwenstern, "Anmerkingen, die ich zur Reise mit Capitain Krusenstern gemacht habe," manuscript, National Archives of Estonia: Arch.No. EEA.1414.3.3, 1803–1806.
[27] Langsdorff, *Bemerkungen*, plate 12; Elena Govor, "From Nuku Hiva to Europe: The Collections' Histories," in *Tiki: Marquesan Art and the Krusenstern Expedition*, ed. Elena Govor and Nicholas Thomas (Leiden: Sidestone Press, 2019), 56 (fig. 2.1 b/d).
[28] Govor et al., "Tiki: A Catalogue," 133–40. These can be located in museums in Russia (Peter the Great Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography in St. Petersburg and Museum of Anthropology of Moscow State University), Estonia (Estonian History Museum in Tallinn and the Estonian National Museum in Tartu), Switzerland (Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich), and Germany (Museum Fünf Kontinente in Munich).
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[30] David Porter, *Journal of a Cruise made to the Pacific Ocean, by Captain David Porter, in the United States Frigate Essex, In the Years 1812, 1813, and 1814*, Vol. II (Philadelphia: Bradford and Inskeep, 1815), 12, 27.
[31] Porter, *Journal*, 65.
[32] Porter, *Journal*, 87.
[33] Porter, *Journal*, plate between 118–9.
[34] Carol Ivory, "Marquesan Art in the Early Contact Period 1774–1821," (PhD diss., University of Washington, 1990), 240; Nicholas Thomas, "Tiki, Mana, History: Reflections on Marquesan Art and the Krusenstern Expedition" in *Tiki: Marquesan Art and the Krusenstern Expedition*, ed. Elena Govor and Nicholas Thomas (Leiden: Sidestone Press, 2019), 107.
[35] Porter, *Journal*, plate between 118–9.
[36] John Shillibeer, *A Narrative of The Briton's Voyage, to Pitcairn's Island* (London: Law and Whittaker, 1817), 46.
[37] "Indus (Ship) Logbook, 1815–1817," Internet Archive, 90, 92, 120–1, 123, https://archive.org/details/log111indus; R. Gerard Ward, "An Intelligence Report on Sandalwood," *Journal of Pacific History* 3 (1968): 178–9.

[38] Ernest Stanley Dodge, *The Marquesas Islands Collection in the Peabody Museum of Salem* (Salem: Peabody Museum, 1939), 13–4; Christina Hellmich Scarangello, "The Pacific Collection in the Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, Massachusetts," *Pacific Arts* 13/14 (1996): 69–72; Ivory, "Marquesan Art," 159–60, 404.
[39] Bristol Museum & Art Gallery inv.no. E1189. Information about these haakai was related to me by postgraduate researcher Rachael Utting. Rachel Utting, personal communications, May 21, 2021; July 6, 2021; June 25, 2022.
[40] Camille de Roquefeuil, *A Voyage Round the World between the Years 1816–1819* (London: Sir Richard Phillips and Co., 1823), 52–3. According to Dening, George Ross was an American stationed on the Marquesas from 1813 to 1822 to assist in the collecting of sandalwood. Dening, *Islands*, 122, 302.
[41] Joseph Schames and Mayer Schames, "Law and the Identification of Ivory in Tribal Art," *Tribal Art* 80 (Summer 2016): 132–41.
[42] Roquefeuil, *A Voyage*, 55.
[43] Camille de Roquefeuil, *Journal d'un voyage autour du monde pendant les années 1816, 1817, 1818 et 1819*, Vol. 1 (Paris: Ponthieu, Lesage, Gide 1823), 305.
[44] Roquefeuil, *A Voyage*, 55–6.
[45] Brita Åkerrén, "Nuku Hiva in 1819," *Pacific Studies* 7, no. 1 (1983): 34–5, 48, 51.
[46] Roger Boulay, "Les collections océaniennes du musée de Boulogne-sur-Mer," *Journal de la Société des Océanistes* 90, no. 1 (1990): 29–30; Adrienne Kaeppler, *Holophusicon: The Leverian Museum. An Eighteenth-Century English Institution of Science, Curiosity, and Art* (Altenstadt: ZKF Publishers, 2011), 31; Marie Hoffmann, "Appréhender les collections ethnographiques dans un musée au début du XIXe siècle: le cas de Boulogne-sur-Mer," in *Arts premiers dans les musées de l'Europe du Nord-Ouest* (Belgique, France, Pays-Bas), ed. Thomas Beaufils and Chang Ming Peng (Villeneuve d'Ascq: Publications de l'Institut de recherches historiques du Septentrion, 2018), n.p., https://books.openedition.org/irhis/3246.
[47] Willem Anne de Constant Rebecque, "Dagboeken, delen I–IV," manuscript, National Archives of the Netherlands: Collectie 066 De Constant Rebecque, Entry 2.21.008.01, Arch.No. 70–73, 1824–1828, [16]; Johan Christiaan van Haersolte, "Brieven aan Coenraad van Haersolte en Louise Hora Siccama van hun zoon Johan Christiaan van Haersolte tijdens zijn reizen in dienst van de Marine. Met bijlagen," manuscript, Historisch Centrum Overijssel: Entry 0237.1, Arch.No. 76, 1824–1834, letter 09-1825.
[48] Johan Christiaan van Haersolte, "Journaal gehouden op eene reis rondom de wereld, door JCHvH," manuscript, Historisch Centrum Overijssel: Entry 0237.1 Haersolte, familie Van, tak Haerst, den Doorn en Zuthem, Arch.No. 129, 1824–1826.
[49] Willem Carel Singendonck, "Beschrijving van een reis naar Indië over Kaap Hoorn met ZrMs "Maria Reigersbergen" en "Pollux", loopende van Mei 1824–Aug 1825," manuscript, Het Scheepvaartmuseum inv.no S.1539 [nr 0001], 1824–

1825 [31]; Jacob van Wageningen, "Verhaal eener reis om [Kaap Hoorn] naar de Oost Indien in de jaren 1824–1827," manuscript, Private collection, 1824–1827, 66–7.

[50] Christiaan Eeg, "Generaal Journaal van Z. M. Korvet Pollux over de Jaren 1824, 1825, 1826 en 1827. Scheepsjournalen, 1813–1995," manuscript, National Archives of the Netherlands: Entry 2.12.03, Arch.No. 3601, 1824–1827, [174].

[51] See also: Caroline van Santen, "Nuku Hiva in 1825: Artefacts collected during the voyage of the Maria Reigersberg and the Pollux," in *Tiki: Marquesan Art and the Krusenstern Expedition*, ed. Elena Govor and Nicholas Thomas (Leiden: Sidestone Press, 2019), 85–102; Ear ornaments: Tropenmuseum inv.no. TM-1322-248 (one spur is missing) and TM-4847-14 collected by Van Haersolte; Museum Volkenkunde inv.no. RV-360-7180 and RV-1474-12 collected by Kist and Cosijn. Drawing Cosijn: Museum Volkenkunde inv.no. RV-0o-500. Singendonck also collected two ear ornaments, most likely haakai, but unfortunately the present whereabouts of these objects are unknown. Koloniaal Museum, "Note regarding donation 366," manuscript, Archive TM: Arch.No. NL-KIT-7846_48, 1877.

[52] Hiram Paulding, *Journal of a Cruise of the United States Schooner Dolphin among the Islands of the Pacific Ocean; and a Visit to the Mulgrave Islands, in Pursuit of the Mutineers of the Whale Ship Globe with a Map* (New York: G. & C. & H. Carvill, 1831), 45–6.

[53] Paulding, *Journal*, 1831, 68.

[54] Frederic Debell Bennett, *Narrative of a Whaling Voyage Round the Globe from the Year 1833 to 1836*, Vol. I (London: Richard Bentley Bennett, 1840), 311–2.

[55] Museum of Anthropology, *Robert Stallworthy's Pacific Collection, Collected by Reverend George Stallworthy 1809–1859* (Vancouver: Museum of Anthropology, 2017), 11, 12; Museum of Anthropology at UBC inv.no. 3254/7 to 3254/13.

[56] McKinney, "Marquesan Collection," 58; British Museum inv.no. Oc1980,Q.1060.a to Oc1980,Q.1060.c and Oc1982,Q.674.

[57] Jules Dumont d'Urville, *Voyage au pôle sud et dans l'Océanie sur les corvettes l'Astrolabe et la Zélée*, Vol. 3 (Paris: Gidé, 1842), 229–30, 445.

[58] Stéphanie Leclerc-Caffarel, "The Oceanic Collections of Gaston de Roquemaurel," *Journal of Museum Ethnography* 26 (2013): 124, 130–1; Muséum de Toulouse inv.no. ETH AC MA 23, ETH AC MA 24 and ETH AC MA 25.

[59] D'Urville, *Voyage*, Vol. 3, 229.

[60] Jules Dumont d'Urville, *Voyage au pôle sud et dans l'Océanie sur les corvettes l'Astrolabe et la Zélée,* Vol. 4 (Paris: Gidé, 1842), 268.

[61] D'Urville, *Voyage*, Vol. 4, 277.

[62] Jules Dumont d'Urville, *Voyage au pôle sud et dans l'Océanie sur les corvettes l'Astrolabe et la Zélée, Atlas pittoresque*, Vol. 1 (Paris: Gidé, 1846).

[63] Mathias Gracia, *Lettres sur les Iles Marquises, ou Mémoires pour servir à l'étude religieuse, morale, politique et statistique des îles Marquises et de l'Océanie orientale* (Paris: Gaume Frères, 1843), 66–7.
[64] Société des Sciences Naturelles, "Nouvelles acquisitions du musée," in *Mémoires de la Société des Sciences Naturelles de Neuchâtel* 3, no. 5–13 (1846): 7; Musée d'Ethnographie de Neuchâtel inv.no. V.21, V.22, V.25 and V.26.
[65] Patrick O'Reilly, "Note sur les collections océaniennes des musées d'ethnographie de la Suisse," in *Journal de la Société des Océanistes* 2 (1946): 121–2. It is unclear on which source O'Reilly bases his assumption that Favarger acquired the objects in Lima from a Peruvian captain. I would like to thank Roland Kaehr, the museum's retired curator, for bringing this information to my attention.
[66] Musée de quai Branly–Jacques Chirac inv.no. 71.1909.19.22.1 Oc, 71.1909.19.22.2 Oc D, 72.84.227.1 and 72.84.227.2.
[67] Madeleine Jehl, "Inventaire de la collection des îles Marquises du Muséum d'histoire naturel et commentaire," *Bulletin de la Société d'histoire naturelle de Colmar* 53 (1969): 28, 30; Stéphanie Sears, *Catalogue de la Collection des Iles Marquises ramanée par Jean-Daniel Rohr en 1845* (Colmar: Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle de Colmar, 1993), 18, 19; Musée d'Histoire Naturelle et d'Ethnographie de Colmar inv.no. 999-468 to 999-475. From the database information which was provided by director Claire Prêtre on July 23, 2020, it was not feasible to deduce for certain what specific type of pūtaiana Rohr collected, but possibly they were ones made entirely out of solid shell.
[68] Claude Stéfani, "La collection Lesson du musée Hèbre de Rochefort: essai d'une reconstitution historique," *Journal de la Société des Océanistes* 152 (2021): 65, 72; Musée Hèbre inv.no. E 22-182.1 to E 22-187.
[69] Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, Cambridge University inv.no. 1923.114 B.
[70] His collection is now in the Musée des explorations du monde in Cannes, France.
[71] Edmond de Ginoux, *Edmond de Ginoux: Ethnologue en Polynésie française dans les années 1840*, ed. Frédéric de La Grandville (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2001), 82.
[72] Musée des explorations du monde inv.no. inv.no. 2002.21.1 to 2002.26.1.
[73] Ginoux, *Edmond de Ginoux*, 174; MEM inv.no. 2013.0.139.1 and 2013.0.139.2.
[74] Ginoux, *Edmond de Ginoux*, 175; According to Jacques Pelleau, 'Kétou' probably stands for the Marquesan verb ketu which means to push/lever. Jacques Pelleau, personal communication via email, September 11, 2021.
[75] Ginoux, *Edmond de Ginoux*, 175. Of the twenty pūtaiana, twelve remain in the museum collection today, one of which is made of solid shell. Musée des explorations du monde inv.no. 2008.0.312.1, 2008.0.312.2, 2009.0.507, 2009.0.508.1, 2009.0.508.2, 2009.0.509.1/2, 2009.0.510.1, 2009.0.510.2/3, 2009.0.511, 2009.0.512, 2009.0.513 and 2013.0.143. Database information provided by director Théano Jaillet.

[76] Douglas Cole, *Captured Heritage: The Scramble for Northwest Coast Artifacts*. (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1995 [1985]), 50. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, emerging and revitalized museums in Europe and North America were looking for ways in which to add to existing collections or to establish new collections of ethnographic materials from around the globe, especially with regard to the Northwest Coast of North America. There was, according to Cole, "the realization that civilization was rapidly destroying the subject of that interest."

[77] Henry A. Pilsbry and Edward G. Vanatta, "Mollusca of Flint and Caroline Islands, in the Central Pacific," *Proceedings of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia* 57 (1905): 291; Ivory, "Marquesan Art," 71, 198; Carol Ivory, "Shifting Visions in Marquesan Art at the Turn of the Century," in *Gauguin, Polynesia*, ed. Suzanne Greub (Munich: Hirmer Verlag, 2011), 327; Jeremy Coote, "Notes on a Marquesan Tiki Headed Ke'a tuki popoi (Breadfruit pounder) in the founding collection of the Pitt Rivers Museum," *Journal of the Polynesian Society* 124, no. 3 (2015): 306, 311–2. In 1891, Voy's collection found its way into the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology (now Penn Museum).

[78] Penn Museum Archives; Penn Museum inv.no. 18005A to 18005F (haakai), 18023K and 18023L (pūtaiana spurs) and 18023M to 18023R (pūtaiana caps).

[79] Alain Quella-Villéger and Bruno Vercier, *Pierre Loti : Dessinateur. Une œuvre au long cours* (Saint-Pourçain-sur-Sioule: Bleu autour, 2010), 144–55; Caroline van Santen, "Un personnage à figure hideuse," in *Et Julien Viaud devint Pierre Loti. Le voyage de la Flore dans le Pacifique, 1872*, ed. Claude Stéfani (Rochefort: Musée Hèbre, 2023), 90–1; Claude Stéfani personal communication via email November 28 to December 1, 2022; Maison de Pierre Loti inv.no. MPL TRB 82. Database information provided by curator Claude Stéfani on November 29, 2022.

[80] McKinney, "Marquesan Collection," 129–30. Thomson donated these pūtaiana to the British Museum in 1878; British Museum inv.no. Oc,+.592.a-b.

[81] Karl von den Steinen, *Die Marquesaner und ihre Kunst; Studien über die Entwicklung primitiver Südseeornamentik nach eigenen Reiseerlebnissen und dem Material der Museen, Band II: Plastik* (Berlin: Verlag Dietrich Reimer/Ernst Vohsen, 1928a), 23–6, 137–48, 261; Karl von den Steinen, *Die Marquesaner und ihre Kunst; Studien über die Entwicklung primitiver Südseeornamentik nach eigenen Reiseerlebnissen und dem Material der Museen, Band III: Die Sammlungen* (Berlin: Verlag Dietrich Reimer/Ernst Vohsen, 1928a), βP-βR. Most of these are still in the collection of the Ethnologisches Museum in Berlin (information provided by curator Dorothea Deterts).

[82] Steinen, *Marquesaner . . . Plastik*, 260–2.

[83] Steinen, *Marquesaner . . . Plastik*, 136–48.

[84] E. S. Craighill Handy, *The Native Culture in the Marquesas*, Bernice P. Bishop Museum Bulletin 9 (Honolulu: Bernice P. Bishop Museum, 1923), 91.

[85] Handy, *Native Culture*, 286, 289.

[86] Ralph Linton, *The Material Culture of the Marquesas Islands*, Bernice P. Bishop Museum Bulletin 8 (5) (Honolulu: Bernice P. Bishop Museum, 1923), 430–2.
[87] René Ildefonse Dordillon, *Grammaire et dictionnaire de la langue des Îles Marquises: Marquisien-Français* (Paris: Institute d'Ethnologie, 1931), 137.
[88] Linton, *Material Culture*, 430–2.
[89] Crook et al., *An Essay Toward*, 38
[90] Dordillon, *Grammaire*, 432.
[91] Linton, *Material Culture*, 431
[92] Ivory, "Marquesan Art," 240; Thomas, "Tiki, mana," 107.
[93] Steinen, *Marquesaner . . . Plastik*, 137.
[94] See, for example, Hiquily and Vieille-Ramseyer, *Tiki*, 211.

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TARISI VUNIDILO

The Mataisau Clan of Fiji: Roles and Responsibilities

Abstract
Mataisau *is the Fijian word relating to a clan in Fiji known as the "born carpenters." They were a group of individuals gifted with carpentry skills—especially in building houses, boats, furniture, and tools—passed down by their ancestors through many generations. My paper is devoted to highlighting the role of the* mataisau *and to reaffirm how highly regarded and integral they were to Fijian society. I believe it is a traditional role that has been undervalued, underappreciated and overlooked in the literature of Pacific ethnobotany and cultural studies. Visitors to Fiji and the Pacific two centuries ago documented the vast botanical knowledge possessed by the Indigenous islanders. They utilised this knowledge to access and extract plants and trees for their survival. The islanders then incorporated a barter system to trade and exchange resources to which they did not have access. One such example was the trade route between Fiji, Tonga, and Samoa. Over many centuries, they traded various resources, including people who knew how to build and carve ocean-going vessels such as the* drua *(double-hull canoes). During my research visit to the island of Kabara in 2006, I was able to witness the remnants of such ancient trade through the presence of the Lemaki clan descendants who are still proud to be engaging the craft of their forefathers. Although the number of carvers is dwindling, the knowledge of and appreciation for the* mataisau *still exists in the Lau islands.*

Keywords: *Fijian art; mataisau, carving, Kabara, ethnobotany, canoes, architecture, weapons, Lemaki clan, iTaukei*

Introduction

Humans and plants have coexisted and had an equal hand in an intertwined relationship that has spanned many millennia, predating our own recorded history. Throughout this history, many cultural groups and their respective subcultures have expanded upon this unique relationship in cultural practices related to food, medicine, arts, religion, and more. In some cases, the relationships between people and plants are at the centre of cultural belief systems, ideologies, and people's

understanding of the world around them. This is true for the *iTaukei* (Indigenous Fijian) communities and their connection to certain trees that are vital source materials for the *mataisau* clan. The *mataisau* was a clan that specialised in wood carving in Fiji and was responsible for building houses, canoes, weapons, and food implements. It is imperative to highlight that although such ancient roles have become a collective memory of the past, it is critical to pay them the recognition that they deserve. In many parts of Oceania, Fijian wood-carving skills were respected and acknowledged. European voyagers in the eighteenth century recognised that carved wooden Fijian ocean-going vessels represented the supreme achievement of Oceanic cultures.[1]

This paper is based on personal observations and informal discussions of artistic carving traditions between the author and local villagers on the island of Kabara, Lau province, in 2006. I used a qualitative method for this research, which involved interviewing individuals who lived in the village of Naikeleyaga on the island of Kabara. In the early stage of the research, I intended to build on the work already undertaken by Dr. Steven Hooper from the University of East Anglia in the United Kingdom in the late 1970s. This involved reading his work and speaking to him for his recollection of working on Kabara. I was also blessed to be accompanied by Mr. Sepeti Matararaba who is from the neighbouring island of Matuku. Getting his perspective while discussing the role of the *mataisau* added so much value to this paper. Most of the stories gathered in 2006 are included in this paper. After describing my research methodology, I provide a brief sketch of colonial history in Fiji and discuss its impact on wood carving. I then define the word *mataisau* and examine the role that members of the *mataisau* clan played in Fiji prior to 1874. I next discuss *mataisau* knowledge of carving materials and conclude by looking at the role of *mataisau* in Fijian society today.

Fiji's Colonial History and its Impact on Wood Carving

Fiji is situated below the equator, in the centre of the southern Pacific Ocean, and is located between the cultural groupings of Melanesia to the west and Polynesia to the east. It is made up of over 300 islands (Fig. 1), with approximately one third of the islands being inhabited. The two main islands, Viti Levu and Vanua Levu, have vegetation consisting mostly of rainforests and tall hardwood trees. Fiji's cultural connections to Melanesia and Polynesia are evident in its traditional arts. For context, Indigenous Fijians are officially known as *iTaukei* (literally meaning "owner"; in this case, owners of the land and resources in Fiji). Due to its

geographic location, many refer to Fiji as the "Hub of the Pacific," and this has influenced the historical and contemporary relationships Fiji has with its neighbouring islands and with Europeans.

Figure 1. Detailed map of Fiji showing the main islands. Courtesy of WorldAtlas.com

In the late 1700s and early 1800s, there were three key turning points in Fiji's history. The first was in 1774, with the arrival of British explorer Captain James Cook; the second was in 1830, when three Tahitian teachers working with the London Missionary Society introduced Fijians to Christianity; and the third was the ceding of Fiji to Great Britain in 1874. These three events each impacted the role played by Fiji's woodworking clan, as the introduction of Western goods and materials reduced the demand for wood. Cook's voyage paved the way for Europeans to pursue trade and settlement in the region. The first Europeans to settle in Fiji were seamen who either obtained proper discharge from service or deserted from sandalwood ships. The introduction of these white settlers and their weapons impacted the role of Fijian woodworking clans because they introduced alternatives to wood that were mechanical and durable. Newcomers to Fiji brought ideas and resources that replaced the raw materials that the woodworking clans were accessing.

In 1830, Tahitian missionaries working with the London Missionary Society arrived in Fiji. They were followed by Rev. William Cross and Rev. David Cargill in 1835, two missionaries who collated Fiji's Bauan dialect and compiled a dictionary. The missionaries impacted Fiji's woodworking clans by shifting their attention away from building houses and canoes to proselytising to members of their communities to serve God.

When Fiji was ceded to Great Britain in 1874, the new colonial government utilised Fijian labour to plant cotton, as well as to harvest and process copra (dried coconuts) and bêche-de-mer, also known as sea cucumber. During the First World War, the British government recruited many Fijian men, some of whom were from the *mataisau* clan, to go to war in France, Malaysia, and the Solomon Islands.

Defining *Mataisau*

Dissecting the word *mataisau* and defining each part provides more clarity of the meaning and importance of the role of *mataisau* in Fijian society. From an *iTaukei* perspective, *matai* is the prefix; it is used as an adjective to describe someone's great competence in a task or someone who is skilled. For instance, a *matai na tuli kuro* is a skilled potter, and a *matai na tara vale* is a skilled carpenter or an expert builder of houses. The word *sau* means power, known among *iTaukei* people as something that only chiefly and other highly ranked individuals possessed.

Mataisau is a kin-based group of skilled individuals whose traditional role primarily focuses on wood carving. They have always been leaders in the field of craftsmanship and traditional carpentry, spearheading projects like making canoes, building houses, and forging weapons such as war clubs and spears. Carving techniques have been passed down through many generations of *mataisau* descendants. While members of this clan acknowledge the skills and knowledge that have been passed down to them, few young men take up carpentry and woodworking roles today due to many factors including Westernisation and the prevalent use of imported materials in manufacturing. Fijians today do not build large houses or canoes as they once did, though many still manufacture smaller wooden items such as clubs and spears for the tourist market.

It can be argued that, despite the low number of Fijians taking up carpentry tools as they once did, the role of the *mataisau* was and always will be held in high regard. A large number of engineers who now work for the British Army in England are descendants of the *mataisau* clan.[2] Pauliasi Volavola, a Fijian language and culture student of mine, shared this example: When he asked his coworkers in the

British Army which clan they belonged to, many mentioned that they belonged to the *mataisau* clan. When he next asked them about their current roles in the army, they looked at each other in bewilderment, realising that they were all in the engineering division. Until that moment, they had never thought about their career choice having been influenced by the clan to which they belonged.[3]

Practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, and skills are considered to be part of a place's cultural heritage. Over time, cultural heritage is passed down through many generations and becomes part of the fabric of a people. In some instances, it forms a knowledge base that can be categorised as ancient knowledge—a taboo system that, in turn, affects people's behaviour and how they relate to one another. Clans in Fiji have been in existence for many generations. Every *iTaukei* person belongs to a clan, which holds a rank in the complex Fijian social hierarchy. Every clan has a totem tree, totem fish, and totem bird, which also have taboo or cultural rules associated with them to which clan members must adhere.[4] If one belongs to a clan that has as its totem a particular fish, bird, or tree, they may behave a certain way to another tribe that shares similar totems.

The *mataisau* are known to have descended from Rokola*,* the chief of all carpenters in Fiji. With reference to taboo, there is a strict etiquette that exists within the *mataisau* clan that includes restrictions on their interactions, as well as on what they eat. There are also restrictions prior to the cutting down of a tree that has been selected for a house or a canoe. These include not eating a certain type of fish or being required to present kava roots to the chief of the village before they cut down the tree. Adhering to such protocols brings prosperity to the village and removes any ill will toward the families of the carpenters. Additionally, in certain ceremonies their participation and salutations are verbalised by speakers who, during such events, acknowledge the work that they did.

Another name for carvers in Fiji is *liga ni kau* (*liga* means "hand" and *kau* means "wood"). *Mataisau* and *liga ni kau* are synonymous, though the term *liganikau* is often used in an endearing manner to describe the specialised work of carvers. The term is also used to highlight the role that the *mataisau* played in comparison with other clans that had different duties in the province. For instance, the *liga ni wau,* which translates as "the hand that holds the war club," refers to the warriors whose role was to protect the chief and the *vanua* (a Fijian concept often translated as "land," but which also encompasses people, community, and custom). For example, in the Namosi province, the *liga ni kau* were known to build houses, carve weaponry, and make everyday utensils such as *takona* (food bowls), *tanoa* (kava bowls), and *yaya ni kana* (food and cooking

utensils) for the paramount chief of the province known as the Tui Namosi.[5] Even though many do not practice this skill of wood carving as their forefathers did, they are still referred to as the *liga ni kau* today.

Museum director and curator Fergus Clunie distinguishes between the words *mataisau* and *matainisau*.[6] The latter, which has *ni* between *matai* and *sau*, refers particularly to the builders of the chief's canoe. The *mataisau* could build canoes for those of lower rank. Each *mataisau* clan was headed by the *matapule* (leader) who took charge of the construction of voyaging canoes. The word *matai* or *mataisau* is common across Polynesia and can be found in Sāmoa, Tonga, Tokelau, Tahiti, Rennel, and Tikopia, as well as Fiji.[7] It is also included in the languages of East Uvea, East Futuna, and the Marquesas. Linguists have confirmed consistency in the meanings of this word across the region. In the case of Tonga, the Churchward Tongan-English dictionary defines *matai* as "to be an expert, to be very clever or skillful."[8] The Baker dictionary defines *matai* as "a clever one, the best one, the single one, someone who is intelligent."[9] In the table below, which combines the analyses of Tcherkezoff, one can see the similarities in the meanings of the words.[10] These words confirm the application of *matai* not only to carpentry but to other forms of art, such as tattooing, as well as to leaders of families and clans.

ISLAND NATION	WORD	VARIOUS MEANINGS OF MATAI DENOTING EXPERT AND LEADER IN THE CLAN
Rennel	Matai/sau	Expert craftsman, tattooer
Sāmoa	Matai	Titled head of extended family; master
Tahiti	Maatai	Skillful, knowing
Tikopia	Matai/tangata	Leading man
Tokelau	Matai	Male head of a clan; master; headman; boss
Tonga	Maatai	To be an expert

Table 1. Places in Polynesia that Use the Words *Matai* and *Mataisau* and their Meanings. Courtesy of Serge Tcherkezoff, "The Samoan Category Matai (Chief): A Singularity in Polynesia? Historical and Etymological Comparative Queries," *The Journal of Polynesian Society* 109, no. 2 (June 2000): 173

One can conclude that the definitions "expert," "master," "skillful," "headman," and "boss" signify the important roles of *mataisau* in Polynesian cultures; they were highly regarded and respected as both carpenters and knowledgeable

experts. Despite many *mataisau* not currently doing woodworking as they used to, they are still regarded as leaders in this field. Though they do not possess academic qualifications, their experience in dealing with trees and their environment warrants them the title of scientists and, more specifically, botanists.

The Historical Role of the Mataisau

From an Indigenous perspective, the *mataisau* historically performed a role that combined botanical, scientific, artistic, and pedagogical skills. Chiefs treated the *mataisau* with favour, gave them gifts as tokens of gratitude and appreciation, and acknowledged their roles. They were also known in the Fijian language as the *liganikau*. This means that they were renowned for their knowledge, workmanship, and craftsmanship using wood. Some products they created were *vale vakaviti* (houses), *waqa* (canoes or water vessels), *yaragi* (weapons), *iyaya ni kana* (utensils), and *wai vakaviti* (medicine).[11]

Architecture

The Indigenous architectural heritage of Fiji preserves and reveals the culture and tradition of its people and mirrors what was once their way of life. Traditional thatched homes not only provided shelter for Fijians, but served as representations of their social rank. For instance, houses that belonged to chiefs and priests were more elaborate than the average villager's home. In every traditional Fijian village, there were many different types of dwellings depending on the occupants and their purposes or functions.

Before the arrival of Europeans, a *burenisa* was a type of dwelling for young men and the *burekalou* (priest house) was the tallest building in any village. In the nineteenth century, the *burekalou* had a high *yavu* (foundation) and a very tall roof—the belief was that the taller the roof, the closer the building's occupants were to the deities that they worshipped. Inside the *burekalou*, a long piece of white *masi* (tapa or barkcloth) was attached from the top of the ceiling to the middle of the dwelling where the *bete* (priest) sat to communicate with their gods. In pre-colonial days, Fijians worshipped numerous gods and goddesses. Animism—the belief that animals, plants, rocks, rivers, weather systems, human handiwork, and, in some cases, words all possess a distinct spiritual essence—was also part of their worship. The *masi* hanging in the *burekalou* was the bridge

between the spirit world and the world of man. Next to the *burekalou* was the *vale levu* (big house), which belonged to the *turaga* (chief). It was often a large dwelling with intricate decorations on both the exterior and interior. The *mataisau* clan were the most influential in the building of these houses.

Canoe Making

Traditional ocean-going canoes represented the pinnacle of South Pacific craftsmanship, and Fijian canoes were among the finest for centuries. Pratt confirms that *mataisau* was a respectful term for a master canoe builder.[12] The special hardwood used by the Fijians for their canoes grows well on many Fijian islands. Between the 1700s and 1800s, some *mataisau* on the islands of Kabara and Fulaga (Lau province) were contracted by Tongans and Sāmoans to construct canoes at Kabara. They were known as the Lemaki clan, and in Sāmoa they were entitled and well respected. Hooper confirms that the Lemaki were skilled in the art of hull planking.[13] Their artistic skill was recognised by the king of Tonga and their services moved to Tonga at his request. Similarly in Fiji, the Tui Nayau, the paramount chief of Lau province, also requested the Lemaki's services. In the mid-eighteenth century, the island of Kabara in southern Lau was rich with *vesi* trees (*Intsia bijuga*) which were used for canoe building. Because the people of Kabara were under the rulership of the Tui Nayau, there was ease of movement of the Lemaki clans from Sāmoa to Tonga and then to Fiji. When the Tui Nayau converted to Christianity in 1853, most of the Lemaki did the same. Many stayed on Kabara after their boatbuilding program was completed. They married local women and their descendants continued the art of boat building and wood carving.[14] Apart from the Lemaki clan, there was also the Jafau clan, who similarly were known for their craftsmanship. The Lemaki and the Jafau were *mataisau* clans that have close affinity to Tonga and Sāmoa and now call Fiji their home.

One specific group of the *mataisau* were the canoe builders with carpentry skills. These boat builders often formed *mataqali* (clans), which were attached to a *yavusa* (tribe). Descendants of such builders are commonly found around the coastal areas and the smaller islands of Lau and Cakaudrove. Most *mataisau* based in Lau province had lineages connected to Tonga and Sāmoa and were known as Jafau and Lemaki. Today, they can be found on the islands of Fulaga and Kabara. Their descendants still continue the tradition of wood carving and boat building. The most significant non-Fijian boat builders were Sāmoans who came by way of Tonga in the 1800s, serving the Tui Nayau and settled at Kabara Island. The Tui

Nayau used the services of these artisans in building *drua* (large double-hull canoes).[15] In 1842, Thomas Williams wrote about Tui Nayau's massive canoe, *Rusaivanua*, among other well-known vessels. He described the length as 118 feet (equivalent to thirty-six metres) and the height of the mast as sixty-eight feet (twenty-one metres).[16]

Chiefs in the nineteenth century used canoes in warfare and were always looking for canoe builders. Because the Tui Nayau also had close traditional ties to Sāmoa and Tonga through marriage alliances, and due to the demand for canoes at the time, builders from both countries were serving the Tui Nayau simultaneously. These traditional kinships made the arrival of the Lemaki and Jafau more easily accepted. As intertribal and interisland war were rife at the time, canoes were an important resource. Possessing such large-scale canoes was important for chiefs, which made the *mataisau* highly sought after. Other *mataisau*, some of whom also claim direct Tongan lineage, lived in the villages of Nukutubu, Rewa, and Solotavui in Kadavu (in the southern province of Fiji). Some of these individuals moved to other parts of the country and abroad. They originated from Narauyaba, Nakauvadra Hills in the Ra province, in northeastern Viti Levu.[17]

Weaponry

Before 1830, when missionaries arrived, war was part of life in Fiji due to the many inter- and intra-migrations. Life was so dangerous that Fijian men, even during times of peace or nontribal conflict, were always armed and constantly on guard.[18] Prior to the introduction of the musket, the weapon of choice for a Fijian warrior or chief was the war club—a carved, wooden weapon designed for hand-to-hand combat. Fijian men were regarded as fierce warriors, and their war clubs were often family heirlooms passed through generations. A war club gained *mana* (spiritual power) and became *tapu* (taboo or sacred) through the killing of another person, regardless of whether they were man, woman, or child.

So revered was the war club that each was given its own name in a ceremony. Naming was also a rite of passage for a warrior, who reached a new level based on the number of people he had killed. It was common throughout Polynesia that the head of a person was *tapu*, so to take the life of another by clubbing them to death on the head exalted one to the coveted status of *koroi* (killer). The name *koroi* was bestowed on a man during a *veibuli* ceremony. The title *visa* was given to a warrior who had killed twenty individuals.[19]

Because of the aura afforded to the war club, it required a specialist craftsman to make it.[20] The *mataisau* made war clubs and spears, which came in many different types with distinct shapes and decorations.[21] In Fiji, many types of trees were used for weapon-making purposes. Using a certain type of tree was very specialised in terms of the wood's appearance and function, and with their botanical knowledge, the *mataisau* played a huge part in the fashioning of weapons. The throwing club known as *iula* was crafted in such a way that it could be propelled toward its target with speed and precision. A club known as a *vunikau* (tree) resembles the root of a tree—its rough root stubs typically proved to be deadly to its victims—and *totokia* were battle hammer clubs. From my analysis of Fijian weapons, very large clubs, often ceremonial in use, were made from ironwood. Hardwoods were often used to make clubs for combat, while the light-wood varieties were used for other purposes, such as when young boys participated in initiation rites and war combat training from the ages of six to twelve. Hardwood clubs, most with elaborate designs and decorations, were commonly collected by early explorers.

Mataisau Knowledge of Carving Material

Prior to the establishment of trade with Europe, Fijians had to look around their environment for resources to assist them in their work. *Mataisau/Liga ni kau* are known to have a deep and knowledgeable understanding of the forest, including the names of trees and plants and their many properties and functions. For instance, the *vesi,* a very robust ironwood tree that grows on large volcanic islands in Fiji, was used for building *drua*. Kabara was a wood-carving centre for many centuries due to its access to *vesi* trees and the immense knowledge of carving held by the Lemaki clan in its village of Naikeleyaga. The oldest preserved *drua* in a museum collection, the *Ratu Finau* at the Fiji Museum, is made of *vesi*.

Although the *vesi* tree was the supreme hull-building timber, according to Clunie other hardwoods such as *dilo* (genus *Calophyllum*), *tarawau* (*Dysoxylum*), and *tavola* (*Terminalia*) could be used.[22] In some instances, bamboo was used instead of hardwood.[23] It was common knowledge among the *mataisau* that at least twenty different species of plants were used in the construction of a Fijian *camakau* (sea-going outrigger canoe). Wood was skillfully chosen by the carpenters with material constraints in mind. The glue, rope, and sail were also constructed from native plant materials. The importance of canoe-building technology in the Pacific, and its unique flora, shaped Kabara into an island of

strategic influence within the South Pacific.[24] The early settlers of the islands of the South Pacific exhibited a remarkable ability to exploit the plant resources of their environment. A variety of plant species was, and continues to be, used for shelter, food, medicine, and ritual objects in Fiji today.

Other resources that were in high demand for canoe making in the 1800s were the sail mats made of pandanus leaves, coconut coir lashings, and other cordage made from *vau* (wild hibiscus plants). For natural materials that the *mataisau* may not have access to, they were able to conduct an exchange known as *veisa* (barter). During pre-colonial days, sail mats were woven by the women of Yasawa in northwest Fiji.[25] Women played a key role in the canoe-making industry, and most of them had close affiliation with the *mataisau* clan. Nemani provides a case study in the province of Namosi, where the gathering of natural resources for the building of their traditional meeting house (*valenivanua*) took place in 1935. The *valenivanua*, which is still in existence today, is an important structure in any Fijian village. It is a gathering place for the people summoned by the *turaga* (chief). In Namosi, the gathering of raw materials for the meeting house is a role that is taken seriously. Even though women may take the lead in the weaving or in the making of strings to be used for binding, men often provide their support and assist where needed. In most cases, the *mataisau* clan will take the lead in such an event. Nemani outlines how the roles were divided among five villages in the Veivatuloa district of Namosi as follows:[26]

Village	**Natural Material**	**Part of the Tree**	**Part of the House**
Veivatuloa	Sago palm	Leaves	Roof thatching
Mau	Hardwood	Trunk	Posts
Qilai	Wild hibiscus	Bast	Binding strings
Lobau	Hardwood	Branches	Roof rafters, beams, and purlins
Nakavu	Makita tree	Leaves	Wall thatching

Table 2. Distribution of Materials and Building Tasks for the *Valenivanua* in the Veivatuloa District, Namosi Province. Sipiriano Nemani, "Valenivanua: A Communal Cultural Space, The Pinnacle of Indigenous Values, Peace and Mana," *Traditional Architecture, Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage*, ed. Angela DiSanto and Michael Peterson (Seoul: ICHCAP, 2014), 10

The Role of the Mataisau Today

Today, the *mataisau* clan still conducts traditional house building in some parts of Fiji, but it is not as prevalent as before. In some places, it is only the chief's house or the village meeting house that is built using traditional materials. Apart from the village of Navala, in Ba province, northwestern Viti Levu, many villages today have modern homes made of brick, wood, and corrugated iron. If the *mataisau* clan's skills are needed, they can be consulted for design, the gathering of raw materials such as thatching and wood, and labour, mainly through *solesolevaki* (communal work). Older people have confirmed that the negative impact of the cash economy has contributed to the decline in builders of all ages taking up the tools to build traditional *bures* (homes).[27]

Knowledge of the *mataisau* of today is conserved through oral history and storytelling. Although not many members of the *mataisau* clan actively engage in the wood-carving activities of their ancestors, evidence of such roles is still in existence today. Traditional *bure*, *waqaniviti* (canoes), and *iwau* (wooden war clubs) have been inherited and kept in homes as family heirlooms to serve as remembrances of these practices.

While working at the Waikato Museum of Art and History in New Zealand from 2003 to 2007, I was fortunate to be part of archaeological fieldwork team from the Australian National University in Canberra. Led by Dr. Geoff Clark, we travelled to the island of Kabara. British colonial administrator Basil Thompson mentions that the island of Kabara was the most esteemed island to the east of Fiji that housed descendants of canoe builders from Tonga and Sāmoa.[28] Their wood-carving skills had intrigued me for so many years, ever since I learned in school about their traditional role as wood carvers.

While on Kabara Island, I visited a mountain on the island where the *vesi* tree grew in large quantities. Nearby was a cave called Qaraitavuliti, where we conducted an excavation and found evidence of human habitation. As a team, we were also billeted near the clan that was traditionally connected to the Lemaki clan, which has links to Sāmoa. I viewed wood-carving tools that one of the descendants of the Lemaki clan, fondly known as Tua Maciu, had inherited from his father and grandfather. These included stone adzes of many shapes and sizes. Maciu shared some of his memories of his father and grandfather building canoes and making kava bowls. He remembered the name of the mountain behind the village of Naikeleyaga, near Qaraitavuliti, where men of all ages hiked to find large *vesi* trees to be harvested. He remembered some of the customs and ceremonies that were to be done prior to the collecting and harvesting of trees, one of which

was the ceremonial presenting of kava to the Tui Kabara to allow them to harvest the tree. Maciu also mentioned how elders at that time would know which tree was to be cut, based on their observations. Apart from the size and the height of the tree, they could also determine if a tree had matured.[29]

During my observations, I also noticed that Maciu was using some modern tools while carving out a kava bowl, known as *tanoa* (or *kumete* in the Lauan dialect). I asked him why he preferred the modern axe over the stone adzes. He replied that he was more comfortable with it and was able to carve much faster. He was very appreciative of the abundance of the *vesi* trees that were the source of the wood that he was carving. Wooden kava bowls like the one he was making had also become a source of income for him. He was proud to be from Kabara and to belong to the Lemaki clan. He understood the role the Lemaki clan played as *mataisau* and he took his wood-carving skills very seriously. It was a congenial experience that further confirmed that the *mataisau* clan still hold high social status due to their vast and extensive knowledge of the trees and their various uses.[30] In comparison to other tribes within Kabara, the Lemaki clan was familiar with the botany of the island. The Lemaki knew the uses of other trees for other parts of the canoe such as the outrigger, the mast, and the sail. On Kabara Island, the Lemaki held knowledge of the botanical history of the village of Naikeleyaga and its neighbours. Decisions made in the village are often taken seriously when the Lemaki clan agree on what action is to be taken. The knowledge of the trees truly connects to woodworking clans in Fiji and the conversation with Maciu, combined with my observations, reaffirms that the *mataisau* still hold high status on Kabara Island.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that the role of the *mataisau* was taken seriously in the past and is still revered today. In many parts of Oceania, their roles in boat building, house building, and wood carving were respected and acknowledged. Europeans who ventured into Oceania in the 1800s confirmed the presence of ocean-going vessels that signified the supreme achievement of Oceanic cultures. Although many admired the artistic abilities of Fijian *mataisau*, surprisingly little attention has been directed to the botanical sources and raw materials that they used to create canoes, houses, weaponry, and wooden tools. The ethnobotanical aspects of such raw materials offer a rich avenue for further study. The *mataisau*'s adaptation to their island environment is clear, as they became very resourceful by

using raw materials available to them to the best of their ability. They also were able to trade with other neighbouring islands that possessed other materials for boat building or house construction.

The role of the *mataisau* is indeed special and demands recognition. Their knowledge of trees and plants is magnificent and should be remembered. Knowledge of the correct tree to use must be acquired before the physical creation of a canoe, a house, or any other wooden tool. Their skills provided shelter to many and enabled people to move across the ocean and rivers. May we continue to celebrate their stories and ensure that our current and future generations are aware of their contributions to the Pacific.

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SUSAN COCHRANE

Recollections: Australian Connections, Collaborations, and Collections in the Sepik Region of Papua New Guinea, 1960s–1970s

Abstract

This paper traces collecting practices and field research in the Sepik region of Papua New Guinea during the 1960s and 1970s, when there was heightened interest in the cultural heritage of Papua New Guineans in Australia. It begins with William Dargie, chairman of the Commonwealth Arts Advisory Board, who went to the Sepik in 1968–69. It then investigates the collecting activities of several other Australians working in the Sepik region at that time: Robert MacLennan, Helen and Paul Dennett, and Percy and Renata Cochrane. The paper also discusses exhibitions and collaborative projects that have arisen from these collections and field trips, signalling that a wealth of information remains to be discovered by researchers examining these archives.

Keywords: *Sepik art, Kambot art, Abelam art, art collections, art collectors, Papua New Guinea, Territory of Papua and New Guinea, Australian National Gallery, Papua New Guinea National Museum and Art Gallery*

Introduction

Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, successive Australian governments progressively prioritised autonomy for the Territory of Papua and New Guinea (TPNG), which gained its independence as the nation of Papua New Guinea (PNG) on September 15, 1975.[1] Under the conservative coalition governments of prime ministers John Gorton and William "Billy" McMahon, the Australian administration oversaw the development of an internal political system of village councils, the debut of the House of Assembly in 1964, and infrastructural improvements in communication networks, health services, schools, and higher education. As prime minister from 1972 to 1975, the Labour leader Gough Whitlam accelerated progress of political institutions, granting self-governance to PNG in 1973 and independence in 1975.

In tandem with these political movements, there was heightened interest in

the cultural heritage of Papua New Guineans within Australia. In 1966, the Lindsay Report on the foundation of the Australian National Gallery (ANG) strongly recommended the development of a comprehensive collection of Oceanic art, especially Melanesian art, as one of its priority areas. The Lindsay Report made particular recommendations for the ANG to distinguish itself among the world's art museums:

> 2.10 The Committee feels that a unique opportunity exists to establish within the Gallery's collections special provisions for work associated with Australia's geographical and historical position. Specifically, there is no art gallery in the country with the responsibility of acquiring works of art representing the high cultural achievement of Australia's neighbours.[2]

The Commonwealth Arts Advisory Board (CAAB) was formed at Federation in 1901 to advise the prime minister's department on acquisitions for the national collection. Members of the CAAB were artists of renown. Its scope of responsibilities grew over the years to include negotiations for international exhibitions and the formation of a collection of Australian fine art for a future national gallery.[3] Following the Lindsay Report, the CAAB was to be the responsible body for the formation of a Melanesian art collection: "The Board agreed that although it had come rather late to this field, every effort should be made to ensure the Melanesian Collection was one of the showpieces of the new Gallery."[4]

The eminent Australian artist Sir William Dargie, who was chair of the CAAB between 1968 and 1973, accepted the challenge of forming the Melanesian collection. Once the CAAB committed to acquiring this collection, it was decided that a significant part would be commissioned directly from living artists by Dargie and the appointed Ethnic Art Field Agents. Ethically provenanced pieces were also acquired from art galleries and private collections. The CAAB field collection inevitably linked the interests of the ANG and the Papua New Guinea National Museum and Art Gallery (hereafter, PNG Museum) when they were both at a foundational stage. Due to the imminent change in the political relationship between Australia and PNG when the latter transitioned to an independent nation, the CAAB established ethical collection policies and procedures from the outset. In 1970, it further emphasised the principles of shared responsibility and cultural equity when Australia adopted the UNESCO Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property, condemning looting and illicit trafficking.[5]

This paper recapitulates some of my previous research on the CAAB collection formed by Dargie and his team of ethnic art field collectors in PNG.[6] Although they collected in other provinces of PNG and in Vanuatu,[7] the discussion in this paper is restricted to Dargie's collecting activities in the Sepik region, where he went on field trips in 1968 and 1969. I also investigate the collection activities of several other Australians working in the Sepik region in the 1960s and 1970s. In the course of their duties and activities, each of them had prolonged contact with and sustained interest in Sepik communities and their cultural productions. Their professional activities served the interests of Papua New Guineans by introducing new materials for artistic expression and inter-cultural communication. Mutual trust and respect, as well as shared interest in the outcomes, were essential to achieve results. These outcomes included producing and selling art outside of the community and recording music and songs for radio broadcasts.

From 1960 to 1975, the Australian administration governed the Territory of Papua New Guinea. During this period, a number of individual Australian expatriates in diverse professional capacities worked in the Sepik region, both for long stretches and intermittently, and were known to each other: medical doctor Robert MacLennan, schoolteachers Helen and Paul Dennett, and district officer Mike Cockburn. In addition were my parents: Percy Cochrane, head of the TPNG administration's network of radio stations, and Renata Cochrane, the TPNG administration's film unit and publications officer. Each of these individuals documented materials related to their respective interests that they collected in the field and compiled the results of their activities into publications and/or archives. MacLennan, Cockburn, Helen Dennett, Percy Cochrane, and Renata Cochrane had consistent working relationships with Papua New Guineans. Connections and collaborations were inevitable, not just because of difficulties of access and scant resources, but also due to shared interests and relationships with Sepik artists and communities.

With only a small community of expatriates working in remote Sepik communities, there was bound to be contact with any visitors to the Sepik, including Dargie, as noted in my earlier essay on Dargie's collecting activities for the CAAB.[8] However, it was not because of any connection with Dargie that the Australian collectors discussed here are of interest. Rather, it is their own carefully documented fieldwork, resulting from their diverse occupations, which provides insights into Sepik art and artists during the 1960s and 1970s. The last section of this paper concerns my inter-generational professional interest and curatorial activity. Growing up in PNG from the 1950s to 1970s, I was exposed to my parents' activities at work and in the field. With my mother, I compiled the Percy and Renata Cochrane PNG Collection now deposited at the University of Wollongong, NSW,

Australia. In addition to my childhood journeys, as my own curatorial career developed from the late 1980s, I frequently travelled to PNG to undertake fieldwork for exhibitions and publications and to acquire materials for public institutions. Relevant here is my shared research interest with Robert MacLennan between 2008 and 2010, when we were collaborating on an exhibition project focused on his and Anthony Forge's collections of works on paper from the late 1950s to 1970s. Unfortunately, the proposed exhibition never eventuated. In 2010, the Campbelltown Regional Gallery commissioned me to undertake the Sepik River Project, which I discuss below. I took the opportunity to return albums of photographs and catalogues from my parents' archive to the Sepik communities of Aibom and Kanganaman. At the same time, Helen Dennett entrusted me to return her photograph albums of Kambot artists and their art to Kambot communities. The Sepik River Project of 2010 also enabled the collection of a new set of works on paper depicting the creation ancestors represented on the facade of their *haus tambaran* (spirit house). Some of the Kambot artists still living, including Ignaus Keram and Zacharias Waybenang, were among Dennett's chief collaborators in drawing and print-making projects in the 1960s and 1970s.[9]

Sir William Dargie and the CAAB Collection, 1968–73

Dargie's initial connection with PNG was as an official war artist during World War II. By the 1960s, he was recognised as an eminent Australian artist and was an eight-time winner of the national portrait award, the Archibald Prize. He became chair of the CAAB in 1969, taking over from Sir Daryl Lindsay, and was knighted in 1970. He admired Melanesian art and strongly supported the arguments for its aesthetic value. Due to his position, Dargie had numerous contacts within the colonial hierarchy. At the time, his son Roger was working as a patrol officer in New Britain.

In the interest of ethical collecting, it was necessary to have not only the commonwealth government's approval and funds for the intended Melanesian art collection for the ANG, but also the approval of the territory's administrator. Sir Alan Mann, chief justice and chairman of the trustees of the Public Museum of TPNG, affirmed that the CAAB, pending the establishment of a council for the national gallery, would come within the range of high-standing institutes permitted to export works of art, provided, of course, they were not required for the territory to expand its own museum.[10]

One of the major works Dargie commissioned for the CAAB collection was the entire sixty-foot-high facade of a *korombu* (the Abelam name for their *haus tambaran*, or spirit house) attributed to the senior artists Gunjel and Waiam of Kalabu No 2 village. Following his trips to PNG of 1968 and 1969, Dargie was faced with the growing responsibilities of overseeing not only the acquisition, but also the packing, transport, and conservation of the collection, including the *korombu* facade which, despite considerable logistical difficulties, made it to Canberra. Dargie realised that new strategies would have to be implemented and specialists employed if the CAAB was to achieve its objective of acquiring a great Melanesian art collection by the time the national gallery opened. In 1970, Graham Pretty, then curator of anthropology and archaeology at the South Australian Museum, was asked by the CAAB to appraise the Melanesian collections belonging to the Commonwealth government (including Dargie's acquisitions), to identify gaps in the collection, and to consider any issues related to the acquisitions, as well as difficulties of transportation, storage, and conservation of the collection. The collection strategy Pretty outlined, based on a network of field agents, was rapidly adopted by the CAAB, with Pretty appointed as the first ethnic art field agent.

In his report, Pretty stressed that whether acquiring artworks from dealers or commissioning them directly from leading artists, ethical collecting practices should be implemented. From his experience appraising the collections that were being reviewed for the foundation of the PNG Museum in 1968, Pretty was aware that the Ordinance for the Protection of National Cultural Property was being flaunted and this issue was the cause of much local concern. He indicated that it was time for TPNG to develop its own national collections due to rising awareness of the importance of safeguarding cultural property. He also warned that, in response to the insatiable appetite of traffickers and tourists, the territory's administration was likely to place more restrictive ordinances on the export of cultural property in the near future.[11]

Over several years, the CAAB made a number of purchases of Melanesian art from the Stephen Kellner Gallery. In negotiations over certain objects being considered for acquisition, Pretty wrote to Kellner on September 3, 1971:

> Dear Stephen,
> I think that for a figure of this magnitude any prospective purchaser could reasonably expect you, the present vendor, to supply the full history for each item. That covers the following:
> a) precise locality of origin;
> b) date of its acquisition from that locality;

> c) the name of the man or persons it was bought from and the knowledge of its age, maker and significant stories about it, etc.;
> d) history of its subsequent ownership;
> e) name of its vendor . . .
>
> I must have that information. It is the dealer's responsibility to find this data and pass it on that guarantees a dealer my respect of him and his interests . . .
>
> This secretiveness among curio hunters is perplexing and discredits them as useful agents for galleries and museums. I don't need to remind you that it is the main reason behind all the moves from several quarters in New Guinea to place a ban on all collecting by outsiders.[12]

From the start of his own collecting trips in 1968, Dargie had been warned by Sir Alan Mann, chair of the board of trustees of the PNG Museum in Port Moresby, of increasing local sensitivities regarding the protection of PNG's national cultural property. Despite all the policies and procedures for ethical collecting negotiated by Dargie and Pretty for the CAAB's collection, Dirk Smidt, the director of the PNG Museum, and members of the museum's board raised questions over whose interests took priority: Australia's or Papua New Guinea's. There had been some scandalous incidents of unscrupulous dealers flaunting the Cultural Property Act.[13] Following discussions in May 1972 with Smidt and others concerned with the discrepancy between the chronically underfunded PNG Museum and the "no expense spared" actions taken for Australia's national gallery, one of the ethnic arts field agents, Barry Craig, alerted the CAAB: "It is apparent that the time is near when NO FURTHER export of traditional artefacts and art objects will be allowed. Already indigenous politicians are giving thought to such regulations."[14]

The trustees of the newly renamed PNG National Museum and Art Gallery were now adamant about its duty to safeguard the country's heritage, especially valued items of movable cultural property, from the predations of collectors. This mirrored the sudden change in the power relationship between Australia and Papua New Guinea, with the acceleration towards PNG's independence following the election of Whitlam's Labour Government in 1972. Smidt issued a document, "Proposed Procedures for the CAAB Research and Collecting Activities in Papua New Guinea," which contained criticisms of the CAAB's collecting activities and insisted that Australia provide collections, documentation, and facilities for the

PNG Museum as part of the field collecting activities. It also underscored the difference in the facilities and resources allocated to the local institution by the Australian government, in comparison to Australia's national gallery.

In January 1973, the CAAB's collecting activities were destabilised by Gough Whitlam's radical policy change, which abjured Australia's interests in forming a Melanesian collection in favour of PNG obtaining Australia's recent field collections as part of a five-million-dollar cultural gift to PNG. In January 1973, what Pretty called a "sort of chaotic purge" occurred due to the restructuring of Australia's bureaucracy and arts agencies by the Whitlam government. Dargie resigned in protest and the CAAB was disbanded, with the Australia Council for the Arts taking over its role.

Although the work of the ethnic art field agents in conducting surveys, collecting, and commissioning art came to an abrupt end in 1973, it is demonstrable that Prett's system established a sound philosophical basis and workable model for encouraging the continuation of traditional art practices with their associated ceremony, while at the same time providing a viable source of high quality artworks for museum collections and the international art market.

Dargie's acquisitions, which had already arrived in Australia, went into storage in Canberra because the then-director of ANG, James Mollison, did not share Dargie's enthusiasm for Melanesian art. Belatedly, in the 1990s, under the directorship of Ron Radford, the National Gallery of Australia (the name was changed from ANG in 1980) decided to have a dedicated Pacific gallery. Included in its initial displays in 2008 were some spectacular pieces from the collection of the defunct CAAB. Remembering that in 1969, Mike Cockburn, the district officer in the East Sepik area, had organised the complex logistics for a collecting trip by Dargie, I wondered if pieces from this trip would finally be displayed. The NGA's Pacific curator, Crispin Howarth, confirmed that the ancestral figures and pig sculpture that appear in one of Mike Cockburn's photos of the interior of an Abelam *korombu* were those he collected for Dargie: "Yes, this image is of the Abelam ensemble that Mike Cockburn acquired for Dargie. I had them all out on display two years ago and followed the field photograph for positioning."[15] The works were included in the exhibition *Gods, Ghosts, and Men: Pacific Arts from the National Gallery of Australia* (October 10, 2008–January 11, 2009), which acknowledged that this was "the first major exhibition of Pacific art to be held in Australia for nearly twenty years. Many of the works . . . have never before been seen by the Australian public."[16]

Australian Connections, Collaborations, and Collections

My focus now turns to the group of Australians working in the Sepik in diverse occupations during the 1960s and 1970s. These individuals were known to each other, whether as close associates or as occasional collaborators. All maintained a lifelong interest in the Sepik communities they frequented while working in the Sepik region. Each person had some special interest, whether in art or music, beyond the practice of their respective professions, with the artists and communities with which they engaged. In accordance with their particular skills and interests, these Australians took photographs, made recordings, collected drawings and made art prints with the agreement of the creators. Their activities supported the interests of the artists of Sepik communities, and the outcomes, such as sets of photographs, or art prints by Kambot artists and money earnt from sales, or music recorded in their village played on radio. All these collectors recognised that, for the Sepik communities with which they engaged, artistic productions were an integral part of an active ceremonial and secular life.

Even after some of these Australians retired from their professions, their interest in PNG art and culture continued. For example, my parents, Percy and Renata Cochrane, donated their PNG collection to the University of Wollongong, and MacLennan digitised Percy Cochrane's music recordings, which had originally been made on reel-to-reel magnetic tapes. In 2010, I travelled to several Sepik communities and to Kambot and liaised with Helen Dennett as she prepared sets of photo albums to return to the Kambot artists she had worked closely with in the 1960s and 1970s. By the 1980s, when the Australia–PNG relationship segued into the postcolonial era, my parents, like many other Australian expatriates, felt that Australia and Australians had lost interest in Papua New Guinea, and their life's work was devalued in the upsurge of post-colonial theory.

Robert MacLennan

The British anthropologist Anthony Forge is renowned for his innovative scholarship on art and aesthetics among the Abelam people of the Sepik region, based on his fieldwork from 1958 to 1963. His work was influential in the paradigm shift in the anthropology of art during the 1960s and 1970s, raising issues of style, meaning, social significance, and aesthetic value.[17] Forge formed major collections for the Museum der Kulturen in Basel. Relevant to this essay are his collections of

Figure 1. Colour photo prints of paintings in natural pigments on paper from the set Robert MacLennan obtained at Pukago. Images numbered (clockwise from upper left): RM DSCF0913; RM DSCF0916; RM DSCF0845; RM DSCF0841. Mandeville Department of Special Collections, University of California San Diego. Images courtesy of Robert MacLennan

works on paper housed in several university art museums in the United States; these are discussed in relation to MacLennan's fieldwork and collections.

Forge and medical doctor Robert MacLennan had close and long-lasting collaborations. MacLennan learned from Forge what would be of interest to anthropologists and museum collections. They continued corresponding on their common interests well after Forge became Foundation Professor of Anthropology at the Australian National University in 1974, and until his death in 1991. MacLennan's photographs detail the panoply of Sepik art on all surfaces, and are complemented by his field recordings of songs and music. He followed Forge's methodology of systematically collecting sets of works on paper depicting the ancestor heroes and clan designs painted on spirit houses (Fig. 1).

Painting in natural pigments occurs on all two- and three-dimensional Abelam ritual and ceremonial objects, as well as on the body. MacLennan's photographs show Abelam initiates with dramatically painted faces performing and embodying ancestors (Fig. 2). All of the figures in the interior of the *korambo* are embellished with human features and the palette of natural colours—yellow, red, black, and white.

Figure 2. *Korambo* at Kalabu Nyambak, Eastern Abelam, during the performance of a *Nggwal puti* initiation, 1962. Dargie visited this village and the *korambo* is similar to the one he commissioned. Photograph by Robert MacLennan. Courtesy of Robert MacLennan[18]

In 2007, during his retirement, MacLennan revisited the United States to re-locate and re-examine his own and Forge's collections of Sepik paintings on paper. Between 2007 and 2010, I collaborated with MacLennan on an exhibition project to draw attention to his and Forge's collections of works on paper.[19] Jacquelyn Lewis-Harris, a scholar at the University of Missouri–St. Louis, assisted with locating the Forge and MacLennan collections of works on paper in support of the proposed exhibition. She confirmed that the Southern Illinois University (SIU) at Carbondale held thirty-three paintings that MacLennan had collected and donated to the SIU University Museum during Phillip J. C. Dark's tenure there. She added that "there is a collection of his in the Salem Museum (Abelam), which has been there on long-term loan, and another in Southern Illinois University which are FANTASTIC."[20]

MacLennan enumerated in detail the series of works on paper that Forge had collected, and deposited at the University of California San Diego. In particular he commented on the fourth sub-series, "Abelam Artwork":

> These paintings were created in a group of villages in the North Wosera area and are said to represent all of the traditional designs known to every artist in the area at that time. The designs were executed on black or dark grey paper corresponding to the two colours of mud surfaces used by the Abelam and corresponding size to the sago-spathe panels traditionally used. The artists used black, white, red, and yellow ochre tempera colours corresponding to the earth pigments traditionally used. The paint was applied using traditional brushes. Also included in this series are colour charcoal drawings and ink drawings.[21]

MacLennan said of his own collection of paintings on paper from the Abelam village of Pukago that the men were keen to engage in the activity when he proposed it. As no *korambo* had been constructed in their village for many years, painting their ancestors and clan designs on paper presented an important opportunity for the initiated men to produce an entire set of the paintings for the facade as a physical affirmation of their intangible cultural heritage. For the elders who retained the knowledge, this activity was a means of transmitting it to younger men.

Helen Dennett—Kambot Works on Paper

In the early 1960s, Helen and Paul Dennett commenced their careers as schoolteachers in the Sepik region. In 1973, they moved to the government station at Angoram, which lies on the confluence of the Sepik and Keram Rivers. Several tributaries flow to the lower Sepik, and each is associated with a distinctive artistic style. Initiated Kambot men in village communities alongside the Keram River decorate their ceremonial houses with sculptures and complex sequences of paintings. The long, horizontal gables are filled with painted compositions of the ancestral heroes Mopul and Wain with totemic animals and legendary figures. Ancestor figures are surrounded by a constellation of motifs—birds, crocodiles, the sun, the moon, and stars. These sequences of paintings are made on sago-spathe panels using natural pigments.

Helen Dennett's interest and engagement with Kambot artists began with the inventive carvings of "storyboards" being made by Zacharias Waybenang and his brother, Ignas Keram, of Kambot. She provided them with paper and pencils to take back to their village. When they returned with a collection of drawings, she was particularly impressed by the work of Simon Nowep. She travelled down the Keram River, where Nowep produced a number of drawings from which Dennett produced the first series of monotone prints of his work.

Over the next several years, Dennett compiled collections of drawings of all the dominant ancestral figures, including Mopul and Wain, as well as designs associated the bird-headed figures from the legend of Lawena and Dawena. The Kambot artists she collected from included Simon Nowep, Zacharias Weybenang, and Ignas Keram. She supplied the artists with new art materials, black paper, and white crayons to experiment with. In the 1960s, and even today, it is not unusual for PNG people in remote areas to have rarely used paints and paper except at school, and as school fees are high, many children have minimal schooling. Beyond Wewak (the provincial capital on the coast), there are no shops supplying even basic art materials such as art paper, canvas, and acrylic paints, making access to introduced art materials very limited.

Figure 3. Left and center: Kambot artists Zacharias Waybenang and Ignaus Keram painting works on paper for the Sepik Project, 2010. Right: Hubert Yambin curating the order of the artworks. Photographs by Susan Cochrane. Courtesy of the artists

Appreciating the compelling imagery depicted by Kambot artists on their works on paper, Dennett made limited-edition prints of them, so the artists could gain income from sales of their art. She was well aware that, since the late 1960s, Ulli and Georgina Beier had mentored a number of artists, notably Akis and Kauage, and initiated exhibitions and the production of limited-edition prints in Port Moresby, the capital of PNG.[22] The Kambot art prints found a ready market among the expatriate community in Port Moresby, especially as they were relatively inexpensive, easy to transport, and did not require export permits. As another way of increasing knowledge about this new form of Kambot art, in 1975, Helen and Paul Dennett published an excellent reference book on their research and collections, *Mak Bilong Sepik*.[23] The British Museum and the Australian Museum acquired works on paper by Kambot artists who were promoted by the Dennetts. More recently, in 2017 the Queensland Art Gallery–Gallery of Modern Art acquired Kambot artworks from Dennett.[24]

Drawings and prints by Papua New Guinea artists, including the Kambot artists, were significant in the emergence of contemporary art expressions by PNG artists more broadly in the 1970s and 1980s. At the same time, Port Moresby was undergoing a period of rapid urban growth. Architects and urban planners involved in the construction of buildings defining the character of the emerging nation—such as the Parliament House, the University, the National Bank, and the Catholic Cathedral—incorporated original artworks of Papua New Guinean artists into these buildings.[25] Helen Dennett used her network of contacts to promote

Kambot artists in this milieu. In 1971, on his visit to Kambot, the director of the PNG Museum, Dirk Smidt, commissioned Nowep to paint a *haus tambaran* facade featuring Mopul, the paramount ancestor figure of Kambot, for the future PNG National Museum. This image inspired the facade of the current museum building, which opened in 1977.[26]

Percy and Renata Cochrane

In 1960, PNG had a population of nearly four million people, the vast majority living in microsocieties with very little or no knowledge of their compatriots outside their traditional alliances and trading networks. The PNG administration's objective was to create awareness across all media of coexistence and common purpose among the Indigenous people of this emerging nation.

My parents, Percy and Renata Cochrane, lived in PNG from 1949 to 1970 and raised their three children there. They were both public servants employed by the TPNG's administration. Percy specialised in radio broadcasting; he devised programs to reach the widest possible audience throughout PNG. From the 1950s, radio was recognised as the most cost-efficient and effective means of communication in PNG, especially given the rugged terrain and multiple small-scale societies, with some 800 languages spoken. In hindsight, radio was influential in the rapid spread of the vernacular Tok Pisin, and an essential vehicle for conveying government news and educational content. PNG reporters and presenters were trained to broadcast in local languages with local content for the government. From the mid-1960s, as chief of the broadcasts division, Percy implemented a chain of radio stations. An amateur ethnomusicologist, he frequently went on "radio patrol" in Sepik communities to record music and ceremonies to use as example recordings for Radio Wewak.

Renata Cochrane was employed as a publications officer in the government's Department of Information and Extension Services, producing newsletters and publications for distribution to local audiences throughout PNG and, later, writing scripts and acting as producer for the department's film unit.[27] In their free time, both Percy and Renata wrote books in simplified English for adult literacy, and encouraged several of the radio reporters to write and publish their stories and poetry, including Allan Natachee, who was heralded as the first Papuan poet. For several years, Renata also wrote a topical column, "What Do You Think?," for the PNG *Post Courier*.

As the pace towards PNG self-governance accelerated, the need for effective communications increased. As the chain of radio stations grew, so did the distribution of transistor radios through the patrol network. The demand for local news and music necessitated frequent "radio patrols" to negotiate approved content with village elders. Hearing themselves on radio broadcasts was a source of cultural pride for people living in remote villages—far more appreciated than pop music or BBC news. Recordings on reel-to-reel magnetic tape were made in village communities, incorporated into programs, and broadcast on local stations, such as Radio Wewak for the Sepik region.

Throughout PNG, literacy rates were very low, but communication at the village level was essential. In addition to radio broadcasts in local languages, newsletters and readers with high visual content and documentary films about PNG for local audiences were produced on an increasing scale. Renata Cochrane wrote some twenty film scripts, often gathering material for them on location in order to work more closely with informants and encourage their participation.

Even into the 1970s, the Department of Information had only one staff photographer and one film director. There was a constant need for photography for use in the newsletters such as the Tok Pisin weekly *Yumi Nau* (*All of Us Today*). Like MacLennan, Cockburn, and Helen Dennett, the Cochranes always had their cameras and the essential rolls of film with them. Supplies of film and recording tapes had to be maintained as they would be unobtainable in the field.

Due to the constant lack of resources and personnel, when on school holidays the Cochrane's teenage daughters were sometimes commandeered to be "gofers," assisting the film crew and keeping curious children off the film set. For example, when I was fifteen years old, I went with my mother to the Sepik village of Aibom on the Chambri Lakes for the filming of *Women of Aibom* (1965), about women potters. Once completed, they screened the short documentary films on a sheet hung in the village grounds or showed them in village schools and missions.

Even in Port Moresby, resources were rudimentary. Administration offices were concentrated in wartime Quonset huts at Konedobu, with practically no storage or comforts like air-conditioning. Once, upon returning from a long service leave, my father found that his precious collection of music master tapes, which he stored in a special locked filing cabinet in his office, was missing. He had been safe-keeping the recordings until the university or national archives had archival storage space built and was furious to find that an associate had taken about fifty tapes and wiped them to record news stories. Luckily, he had kept another almost complete set at home.

As there were no film development shops in PNG, my parents sent all their

rolls of film to Australia for processing. When the precious yellow boxes of colour slides came back, there would be a much-anticipated slide show at home, and the best images would be used for publications. All the slides were carefully annotated on their paper frames and kept in old cardboard suitcases under our beds.

In addition to my parents, I had some professional interest and personal involvement with these Australian collectors. Growing up in TPNG during the 1950s to 1970s, I was exposed to my parents' activities at work and in the field. Throughout my career as a researcher and curator of contemporary Pacific art from the 1980s to the 2010s, I returned to PNG on numerous occasions, and specifically to the Sepik region, for several curatorial projects. Most relevant to this paper are my connections with Robert MacLennan and Helen Dennett. In 2007, while I was a research fellow at the University of Queensland, I met again with "Bob" MacLennan, who had been a friend of my parents.

In 2010, I was commissioned to undertake the Sepik River Project, part of the ambitious *River Project,* an international, multi-arts event and exhibition initiated by the Campbelltown Arts Centre (CAC) in Sydney, Australia.[28] The scope of the Sepik River Project required me to undertake a field trip upriver from Wewak to the mid-Sepik region and then to Kambot with Port Moresby-based contemporary PNG artist and co-curator Jeffry Feeger.

Figure 4. Kawa Gita (Korogo Village, Iatmul people) painting a work entitled *Mariman (Bride Price)* using earth pigments on sago spathe, 2010. Photo Susan Cochrane. Courtesy of the artist

On this trip we commissioned Sepik artists to make a small collection of paintings of ancestral beings related to the *mariman* (bride price) using earth pigments on sago spathe (Fig. 4); Kambot artists to make works on paper; and Jeffry Feeger to make portraits of several of the artists we encountered on our journey (Fig. 5).[29] Among my preparations for the trip, I made copies of photographs and documents from my parents' collection, catalogues from the Tjibaou Cultural Centre, and Helen Dennett's albums of photographs to return to the Kambot artists she had worked with in the 1970s, as noted above. I travelled to Kambot, where the artists were delighted to receive these gifts for those still living and for the families of deceased artists. The albums of photos prepared by Helen Dennett immediately created a stir of great interest and genuine appreciation.

Figure 5. Jeffry Feeger with his Sepik portraits of (left to right) Tony Kumbui, Kawa Gita, and Zacharias Waybenang. Photograph by Susan Cochrane. Courtesy of the artist

This was also the opportunity for the Kambot artists to create a new series of works on paper depicting legendary heroes and creation stories. This suite of works is directly related to the collections made by Dennett in the 1970s; some of the same artists were active participants in the 2010 series. It had been more than fifteen years since her last visit to Kambot, which was the last time the artists had been given Western art materials to use. Through the good offices of Materina Wai, we had sent art materials ahead to Kambot. We arrived at Kambot village to find a painting session in full swing, with senior artists Zacharias Waybenang, Ignas Keram, and Hubert Yambin sitting in groups with their sons and other younger artists, all painting on the black canvas and black and white paper we had supplied.[30] Although Cochrane had brought tubes of acrylic paints in a range of colours, the Kambot artists preferred to restrict their palettes to white, black, red, and a touch of yellow ochre. Within two days, the artists produced some thirty

paintings and drawings of Kambot ancestral stories of Mobul and the twin sisters Lawena and Dawena; Hubert Yambin laid out the sequence of paintings for us to adhere to when they were displayed in the exhibition (Figs. 3 and 6).

Figure 6. Installation of Kambot works on paper in the Sepik River Project (detail), *River Project*, Campbelltown Arts Centre, 2010. The configuration follows Hubert Yambin's layout (see Fig. 3). Photograph by Susan Cochrane. Courtesy of the artists and Campbelltown Arts Centre

While the Kambot artists were absorbed in creating their works, Feeger made pencil portraits of the individuals involved. The Kambot artists and Feeger had never previously experienced the other's art practice, and there was genuine interest and appreciation all around.

Through its "recollections," this paper has endeavoured to use a more "up close and personal" lens to recount the experience of several Australian collectors in the Sepik region in the 1960s to 1970s. A wealth of information based on lived experience remains to be discovered by researchers examining their archives, which are replete with original artworks, photographs, documents, recordings, and other material.

Susan Cochrane has achieved recognition as a specialist on the Indigenous art of the Pacific region. Her formative years in Papua New Guinea influenced her career path as an art historian, curator, and writer. Frequent fieldwork in Pacific countries has contributed to her long-term professional relationships with Indigenous artists and communities. Her innovative curatorial approach has led to roles as guest curator of or consultant on major exhibitions and art events in Australia. Internationally, she has been a consultant to the Tjibaou Cultural Centre in New Caledonia and Kaohsiung Museum of Fine Arts in Taiwan on several occasions. She has published extensively on contemporary Pacific art and regards writing for diverse publications as an indispensable component to making Pacific art accessible to a wide audience.

Notes

[1] Officially the country was the Territory of Papua and New Guinea (TPNG) until the date of independence. However, to avoid confusion I use its sovereign name, Papua New Guinea (PNG).

[2] Sir Daryl Lindsay, *Report of the National Art Gallery Committee of Inquiry* (Canberra: Prime Minister's Department, 1966), 12.

[3] The Australian National Gallery's name was changed to the National Gallery of Australia in 1980. It was known as the Australian National Gallery during the period under review here.

[4] CAAB Minutes, December 3–4, 1969, Item 18, 9. Papers of Sir William Dargie, MS No. 7752, National Library of Australia.

[5] Some pieces acquired by John Friede had dubious provenance and were subject to approval under PNG regulations prior to inclusion in the Jolika Collection at the de Young Museum, San Francisco. Christina Hellmich, "Carving the Story: Recovering Histories of Sepik Art in the Jolika Collection," *Journal de la Société des Oceanistes* 148 (2018): 97–105.

[6] Papers of Sir William Dargie, MS No. 7752, National Library of Australia.

[7] The CAAB's team of ethnic arts field agents in PNG were Australian anthropologists Graham Pretty, Barry Craig, and Tony Crawford. See Susan Cochrane, "Mr Pretty's Predicament: Ethnic Art Field Collectors in Melanesia for the Commonwealth Arts Advisory Board, 1968–1973," in *Hunting the Collectors: Pacific Collections in Australian Museums, Art Galleries and Archives*, ed. S. Cochrane and M. Quanchi (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2011), 243–74.

[8] "Arrangements were through political channels from the Prime Minister's office to the Administrator, David Osborne Hay, who then provided contacts with district officers and private individuals known to have an interest in 'native art and artefacts.'" Cochrane, "Mr Pretty's Predicament," 249.

[9] Susan Cochrane, "Sepik Journey," in *The River Project* (Campbelltown, NSW: Campbelltown Arts Centre, 2010), 94–114.

[10] Correspondence from W. R. Cumming (Prime Minister's Department), December 14, 1967; Dargie to D. O. Hay, December 12, 1967; J. F. Donovan (Department of Territories) to Secretary, Prime Minister's Department, November 20, 1967, concerning arrangements for Dargie's visit. Papers of Sir William Dargie, MS 7752, series 12, box 9, folder 6, National Library of Australia.
[11] Graham L. Pretty, "Report on the Commonwealth Collection of Primitive Art from New Guinea and the Pacific Islands" (Canberra: CAAB, 1970).
[12] Extract of a letter from G. Pretty to Stephen Kellner, September 3, 1971. Typescript, Pretty Files, South Australian Museum.
[13] Unscrupulous collectors flaunting the provisions of the Cultural Property Ordinance came to a head in 1972. The minutes of the trustees' meeting of July 14, 1972, reported the seizure of artefacts from dealers Barry Hoare and Rudi Caesar. Hoare's shop in Madang was sealed and valuable artefacts in the category of national cultural property were found in a secret room. Artefacts were also confiscated from Caesar's house. Dirk Smidt, the director of the museum, requested the seizure of artefacts about to be exported by a US citizen, Mrs Lynda Ridgeway. The consignments were seized under the Customs Ordinance and National Cultural Property Ordinance; the artefacts seized had no export permit and were packed in cartons marked "household effects." A list of items judged national cultural property was appended to the agenda for the trustees meeting held October 9, 1972. Papers of Sir William Dargie, MS 7752, series 12, box 19, folder 6, National Library of Australia.
[14] Extract of a letter from B. Craig to the CAAB, May 27, 1972. Papers of Sir William Dargie, MS 7752, series 12, box 19, folder 1, National Library of Australia.
[15] Crispin Howarth, e-mail message to author, October 10, 2008.
[16] National Gallery, Australia, *Gods, Ghosts, and Men: Pacific Arts from the National Gallery of Australia*, accessed June 21, 2023, https://nga.gov.au/exhibitions/gods-ghosts-and-men/.
[17] See "Anthony Forge Papers," Special Collections and Archives, University of California San Diego, https://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/tf6w1008pf/entire_text/. Box 6, folders 7–8, and box 9, folders 1–8, contain Abelam works on paper. Among Forge's seminal works on the anthropology of art is "Style and Meaning in Sepik Art," in *Primitive Art and Society* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973).
[18] MacLennan's description of this photograph reads, "Initiating *ara* (moiety) have entered the *amei* (hamlet's ceremonial ground) and are parading anticlockwise. Lime has been rubbed on by spectators in recognition of the excellence of their decorations which are completely traditional with the exception of one youth who has shorts. The others are completely naked as the Abelam were on first Australian contact. Their eyes are covered with yellow paint. They are the *nggwal* ancestor spirits that are also represented in the lowest row of the façade above wooden carved *tikit*."

[19] Despite our joint efforts, the exhibition did not materialise.

[20] Dr. J. A. Lewis-Harris, director of the Connecting Human Origin and Cultural Diversity Program, University of Missouri—St. Louis, email to the author, May 10, 2010.

[21] Robert MacLennan, e-mail to the author, October 13, 2010. The email reads, in part: "The Special Collections of the Mandeville library of the University of California San Diego has a register of Anthony Forge academic output – MSS 0411. It appears that the original paintings are not in the library, only colour photo-prints. My collection in Pukago was also analysed and has colour prints in MSS 0411. Abelam Artwork, the fourth sub-series, contains 363 original paintings and drawings by Abelam artists, commissioned by Forge on his second trip to Papua New Guinea, 1962–1963. The majority of the paintings are arranged numerically according to assigned numbers on the verso of each piece, 1–262 (missing numbers include 53, 231, 234, 237, 239, 242, 243). The production of this group of paintings was documented by Forge in notebooks contained in series 3B and photographs located in sub-series 5A and 5D. Forge also analysed this Abelam artwork in chapter 10 of his book *Primitive Art and Society*. Miscellaneous numbered paintings follow the first numbered sequence."

[22] Melanie Eastburn, *Papua New Guinea Prints* (Canberra: National Gallery of Australia, 2006).

[23] Paul and Helen Dennett, *Mak Bilong Sepik: A Selection of Designs and Paintings from the Sepik River, Papua New Guinea* (Wewak, PNG: Wirui Press, 1975), 24–40, 75–81, 84, 85, 88. These pages include Kambot Village artists' ancestral legends and their associated images.

[24] Ruth McDougall, "Simon Nowep: Maintaining a Place for Spirits," Queensland Art Gallery/Gallery of Modern Art blog, January 11, 2017, https://blog.qagoma.qld.gov.au/simon-nowep-maintaining-a-place-for-spirits/.

[25] Susan Cochrane, *Contemporary Art in Papua New Guinea* (Sydney: Craftsman House Press, 1997), 105–18.

[26] Cochrane, *Contemporary Art in Papua New Guinea*, 105–18.

[27] Renata Cochrane and Susan Cochrane assembled the Cochrane Papua New Guinea Collection during 1981–82. It consists of sound recordings, black-and-white photographs, colour slides, manuscripts, correspondence, and publications. See Cochrane Papua New Guinea Collection, D160, University of Wollongong, NSW Australia, https://archivesonline.uow.edu.au/nodes/view/665.

[28] The *River Project* was a culmination of a three-year cultural and social research program focused on the interface between nature and culture. Directed by Lisa Havilah and Binghui Huangfu, it was contextualised by artists from Australian, Asian, and Pacific riverine communities. See *The River Project* (Campbelltown, NSW: Campbelltown Arts Centre, 2010), 8–10.

[29] Susan Cochrane, "Sepik Journey," in *The River Project* (Campbelltown, NSW: Campbelltown Arts Centre, 2010), 94–114; and Jeffry Feeger, "Sepik Field Notes,"

in *The River Project* (Campbelltown, NSW: Campbelltown Arts Centre, 2010), 115–32.

[30] Dennett advised us to take black art paper to Kambot village, as the Kambot artists preferred this as a base because traditional paintings on *pangal* are always on a dark surface.

PACIFIC ARTS
Journal of the Pacific Arts Association

LINDA VAʻAELUA

Between the Betweenness: Restoring the Vā

Abstract
Artist and designer Linda Vaʻaelua's work explores her identity as a female of mixed Samoan and Scottish heritage who grew up as part of the Samoan diaspora in Aotearoa New Zealand. She reflects on cultural and language loss, vā (relational space), and weaving cultures together harmoniously. She expresses her gafa (genealogy) through her arrangement of patterns, shapes, colours, composition, and materials.

Keywords: *Linda Vaʻaelua, afakasi ("half caste"), cultural mixture, Samoan diaspora, Aoteaora New Zealand, Samoan art, Scottish art, contemporary art, vā, textiles, gender*

My work explores where I sit as a female of mixed Samoan and Scottish heritage who has grown up as part of the Samoan diaspora in Aotearoa New Zealand. Tāmaki Makaurau (Auckland) is the largest Polynesian city in the world, where Samoan is the second most spoken language (after English).[1] Yet, within this context, I have still experienced loss of language and identity. Identity and "who I am?" are always at the forefront of my thoughts. As a designer by profession, I always consider how to visually communicate my ideas to the viewer. I start by arranging patterns, shapes, colours, composition, and materials as a way of expressing my gafa (genealogy).

My thoughts about the concept of vā—relational space—shape my work: the vā between myself and Sāmoa, between family and me, between Scotland and me. I think about how relationships ebb and flow. When there is crisis and breakdown, the vā becomes evident. It becomes uneasy. Eventually, there needs to be reconciliation for the vā to be restored. My ideas about relational space focus on opposites—harmony versus chaos, light versus dark. I think about how opposing cultures contrast yet work in harmony to make me who I am. For instance, in *Faʻatasiga (the coming together)* (Fig. 1), I represent the harmony of opposites by combining circles, bold contrasting colour combinations, and expressive brush strokes in divided, yet balanced, compositions. The coming together of opposites is dynamic and fluid, as indicated in the swirling, merging

forms. In *So'oga Mauga (mountain range)* (Fig. 2) and *Lagi Taimane III* (Fig. 3), I use a similar—divided and opposing—composition to express my label of being afakasi (half caste), though this time focused on triangles with sharp, perfect outlines. The triangles mirror each other and emerge as mauga (mountains), with the horizontal line dividing the canvas becoming the horizon that helps me to navigate across northern and southern hemispheres. Although the triangular forms mirror each other across the horizon, they are opposed in terms of colour. My colour choices are sometimes bold and jarring to express the tensions and possibilities of opposites coming together. They also reference the brightly coloured fale (houses) and buses—home and movement—in Sāmoa.

The paintings described above, as well as most of the other works included here, are painted on disused hessian (burlap) sacks for coffee and firewood. During the COVID-19 global pandemic that began in 2020, I had run out of art supplies and was unable to readily purchase replacements. I stumbled across a pile of firewood sacks that I had been keeping over the winter and thought I would try painting on these. The rawness of the material breathed life into a whole new body of work. The simple lines and abstract shapes in my hessian works contrast greatly with the imperfections of the hessian surface onto which they are painted. The hessian bags also materialize the export of commodities and the migration of peoples around the world.

My work also draws on patterns from my Sāmoan and Scottish heritages to help me navigate and plot my journey. My paintings incorporate motifs and patterns featured in Sāmoan tatau (tattoo) and siapo (tapa cloth), such as the gogo (frigate bird), 'alu'alu (jellyfish), aveau (starfish), fetu (star), and pua (frangipani). I also use clan tartan patterns from my Scottish culture. Straddling these contrasting cultures, I think about different kinds of value. Through mass production, the tartan has become a devalued motif. On the other hand, in my Samoan tradition I wear patterns of my ancestors on my thighs (in my malu, or Samoan female thigh tattoo) as a daily reminder of service to my aiga (family) and community. In my exhibition *From Tartan to Tatau*, I merged contrasting forms and contexts of value.[2] For instance, in *Upega Taimane (diamond net)* (Fig. 4), I used a low-cost polypropylene bag commonly used around the world that has a tartan-like pattern. I deconstructed the bag and painted enlarged patterns from my malu onto it. In this work, and others in this series, I explored what the malu patterns started to look like when taken out of the context of being a tattoo on skin and I elevated the cheap bag to be a canvas for these treasured Samoan patterns.

Patterns also appear on Scottish family crests. My Livingston clan crest (from my palagi Scottish grandfather) hung in my grandparents' house. It included a small wooden crest with a piece of the clan tartan, motto *Si Je Puis* ("If I can"), and symbol. My work *Crest tasi, Crest lua, Crest tolu, Crest fa, Crest lima, Crest ono* (Fig. 5) builds on the idea of the family crest. I used small plywood blocks to create my own crests using malu patterns and limited the colour palette to red, dark green, black, and white—partially refering to my tartan colours. The title includes the Samoan words for the numbers one through six. I merged English and Samoan words to again reference the merging of my two cultures. Very graphic abstract patterns resulted, which aimed to challenge viewers' perception of cultural patterns and how they could be read.

For other artworks, I researched Scottish heraldry and the use of standards and banners to identify an approaching group as friend or foe and their display in royal houses and castles. These banners were ancient forms of graphic design in which colours and symbols had genealogical significance and visualized family identities. In *Saleaula standard* (Fig. 6) and *Mauga ma le Lā* (Fig. 7), I created my own banners using abstracted shapes such as the triangle to represent mauga (mountains) and semicircles to symbolize the sun or moon. Presented on metal rods, the paintings were transformed into banners that herald both my Samoan and Scottish heritages. Further connecting my cultures, I digitally superimposed my banners on a fale (house) in Sāmoa (*Fale banners*, Fig. 8) and then, in *Saleaula standard in Scotland* (Fig. 9), on a castle ruin in Scotland.

My largest work to date, *Story Mat* (Fig. 10), took inspiration from the repeated bold patterns of pua (frangipani) in Samoan siapo (tapa cloth). I painted only triangles and semicircles in a grid pattern, similar to the visual structure of siapo, on six large squares. I then sewed the squares together to create a large mat. Viewed from a distance, the painting/textile looks like a series of large shapes, but when viewed up close, one can see where the designs do not line up precisely. These "imperfections" are characteristic of siapo designs, which are made with freehand painting, but the overall effect is one of continuity, repetition, and beauty. I incorporated wool stitching, adapted from the use of wool on Samoan woven mats (fala), to create lines, patterns, depth, and added physical and conceptual layers. In *Story Mat* the red stitching creates lines that complete the triangle patterns. I also stitched a red wool fringe along the bottom edge much like our woven fala (floor mats).

Chapter 1 (Fig. 11) is a smaller work that follows in the same vein as *Story Mat* by expressing similar themes through semicircle and triangle shapes. I hand-dyed the loose weave hessian and then layered pieces on top of each other. This

made the work feel more like a textile than a painting. I took the raw undyed hessian and created a trim along the bottom of the work, adding another nod to the yarn fringe found on the edge of Samoan fala.

Overall, my work expresses an effort to navigate my relationship with heritage and identity by bringing together an amalgamation of diverse cultural signifiers. As a Samoan-Scottish woman, I use women's arts—such as siapo, malu, and wool stitching—to weave together the various aspects of my identity. Like the coarse but unified texture of hessian sacks, my wayfinding across different lands, cultures, and oceans is rough and bumpy but also coalescing and harmonious.

Linda Va'aelua is of Samoan and Scottish heritage and grew up in West Auckland, New Zealand. She graduated in 1999 with a bachelor of design (visual communications) from Unitec Institute of Technology in Auckland. With more than twenty years of experience as a graphic designer, she was the first Pasifika art director for the publication New Zealand Woman's Weekly *and has worked on other publications including the* New Zealand Listener*. More recently, Linda designed the award-winning book* NUKU: Stories of 100 Indigenous Women *(Ockham New Zealand Book Awards 2022 finalist and PANZ Book Design Awards 2022 finalist). In 2023, she self-published* Tusiata ole Tala ole Vavau: Artists of the Forever Stories*. In 2021, she launched her visual arts career with a virtual exhibition* HALF*, and has since been practising as a full-time artist with numerous group and solo exhibitions to date.*

Notes

[1] Tāmaki Makaurau is the Māori name for Auckland.
[2] The exhibition *From Tartan to Tatau* was held at Studio One, Auckland, April 7–May 5, 2022. See "Studio One Toi Tū—Linda Va'aelua—*From tartan to tatau*," artsdiary.co.nz, April 6, 2022, https://artsdiary.co.nz/160/3675.html.

Figure 1. Linda Va'aelua, *Fa'atasiga (the coming together)*, 2021. Acrylic paint on hessian, 80 x 100 cm. Photograph by Sait Akkirman. Courtesy of the artist

Figure 2. Linda Va'aelua, *So'oga Mauga (mountain range)*, 2021. Acrylic paint on hessian, 80 x 100 cm. Photograph by Sait Akkirman. Courtesy of the artist

Figure 3. Linda Va'aelua, *Lagi Taimane III*, 2022. Acrylic paint on hessian, 200 x 73 cm. Photograph courtesy of the artist

Figure 4. Linda Va'aelua, *Upega Taimane (diamond net)*, 2022. Acrylic paint on Polypropylene bag, 50 x 84 cm (including frame). Photograph courtesy of the artist

Figure 5. Linda Va'aelua, *Crest series: Crest tasi, Crest lua, Crest tolu, Crest fa, Crest lima, Crest ono*, 2022. Acrylic paint on plywood, each 20 x 20 cm. Photograph courtesy of the artist

Figure 6. Linda Va'aelua, *Saleaula standard*, 2022. Acrylic paint on hessian, 180 x 40 cm. Photograph courtesy of the artist

Figure 7. Linda Va'aelua, *Mauga ma le Lā*, 2022. Acrylic paint on hessian and mixed media, 140 x 100 cm. Photograph courtesy of the artist

Figure 8. Linda Va'aelua, *Fale banners*, 2022. Digital work. Courtesy of the artist.

Figure 9. Linda Va'aelua, *Saleaula standard in Scotland*, 2022. Ilford smooth pearl lustre print, 59.4 x 84.1 cm. Courtesy of the artist

Figure 10. Linda Va'aelua, *Story Mat*, 2023. Acrylic paint and stitched wool on hessian, 208 x 135 cm. Photograph courtesy of the artist

Figure 11. Linda Va'aelua, *Chapter 1*, 2023. Hand-dyed hessian and acrylic paint, 95 x 80.5 cm. Photograph courtesy of the artist

PACIFIC ARTS
Journal of the Pacific Arts Association

THÉO MILIN

Book Review: *Rapa Nui Theatre: Staging Indigenous Identities in Easter Island*

Abstract
Book review: Moira S. Fortin Cornejo, Rapa Nui Theatre: Staging Indigenous Identities in Easter Island, *London and New York: Routledge, 2022. ISBN: 9781032277356, 226 pages, 33 black-and-white illustrations. Hardback $170.00, Ebook $52.95*.

Keywords: Theatre, Rapa Nui, Easter Island, Polynesia, New Zealand, performance, arts, authenticity, tradition

Rapa Nui Theatre: Staging Indigenous Identities in Easter Island sets out to analyse and historicise theatrical phenomena on Rapa Nui (Easter Island) at the crossroads of dramaturgical studies, history, and "multi-sited" ethnographic research. Author Moira Fortin Cornejo's overview is based on an extensive bibliography, interviews, ethnographic notes, photos, and a few diagrams. This diversity of material makes it possible to effectively flesh out this history. Fortin Cornejo's many interviews with key members of the Rapanui community show the perspectives of the actors involved in theatrical and artistic production in Rapa Nui (and elsewhere), and the plurality of their approaches and positions.

The book follows a mainly thematic structure and is divided into "acts" and "scenes." Act I presents the characteristics of theatre on Rapa Nui through an in-depth dialogue with other Polynesian performance traditions. It also introduces the theoretical framework that organises Rapa Nui theatre into three categories: "believed-in," in which the "truthful" aspect of performance is more important than the aesthetic; "community," a theatre that enables the sharing and collective creation of stories with the audience, aiming ultimately at participation in the political dialogue;[1] and "popular theatre," characterised by its accessibility, both in terms of location and price. The collective function of theatre is emphasised on several occasions, notably with the use of the concept of *communitas*,[2] a term Fortin Cornejo borrows from anthropologist Victor Turner and applies to the collective formed by the actors and the audience, even speaking of "Pacific

communitas" (p. 27). "Through these popular performances," she writes, "indigenous communities connect, not only through kinship, language, and culture, but also through the shared experience of theatre" (p. 35).

Fortin Cornejo also discusses the tourist phenomenon, for its major impact on the way "culture is made and seen." Performances for tourists are often judged for their lack of authenticity and the way they are merchandised and staged. She underscores the primarily economic function of these performances (pp. 42–3) and the inevitable constructions and rearrangements of authenticity and tradition (pp. 60–1). The important thing, she says, is to continue to negotiate spaces of representation that are neither oriented towards the tourist market nor conditioned by its expectations; in short, to maintain a "backstage" with differentiated "accesses."

In fact, the dilemma of and search for authenticity run throughout the book. The author explores visions of "tradition" and "authenticity" on Rapa Nui, which are essential for understanding the link between identity, historical periods, and theatrical creation. Tradition, as a "fixed point in the past," can hardly be altered, and, as carver Benedicto Tuki Paté explains, the contemporary is often seen as a mockery of the ancients (p. 55). In a context where pre-colonial narratives are favoured as powerful tools for transmitting traditional stories and group identity, innovation can sometimes be difficult, for artists are stuck between fear of contamination and the vital need to create.[3] In this setting, the book argues for more room for appropriation and novelty. It highlights, for example, the notable absence of recent and colonial history in theatrical performances—something that was not always the case in the past, as shown by the Miro O'One celebrations, which feature a pantomime of a Western maritime crew (p. 106).

Another of the salient points of the highly conceptual Act I is that it proposes a constant movement between Rapa Nui and New Zealand, a close dialogue that benefits from the author's intimate knowledge of both islands. One wonders whether the theoretical implications and presuppositions of a comparative approach might not have benefited from being made more explicit. This back-and-forth approach brings a highly fruitful decompartmentalisation to the analysis, a marked trend in recent work on Rapa Nui. The book emphasises the island's undeniable Polynesian identity, but also its limitations, particularly in terms of the effectiveness of contacts with the region. Fortin Cornejo explains that while cultural exchanges, in the form of performances at the other's home, are a common phenomenon, co-creation and close artistic collaboration are rarer (p. 27).

Act II goes into more detail about the local chronology of the theatrical event. Its first two scenes briefly summarise the history of Rapa Nui and the world. They begin with the first contacts, mentioning the dramatic and violent episodes of the slave trade expeditions in 1862, the importance of the introduction of Catholicism, and the abandonment of ancient beliefs and practices such as the *Taŋata Manu* ritual (pp. 67–8). This huge cultural loss during the nineteenth century explains the weight put on preservation and performance of the tradition today.

Fortin Cornejo gives a brief account of major events in Rapa Nui since annexation in 1888, characterised by the official government being first in private hands and then military hands. She looks at the government of the Compañía Explotadora de la Isla de Pascua (1903–53), and then that of the Chilean Navy (1953–65) up until the revolution of 1964, which brought access to civil rights to the Rapanui population. These are complex periods, involving violence, discrimination, economic exploitation, and isolation. But they also saw agency and a certain "domestication of colonial power" (p. 72), a concept used by Rapanui historian Cristián Moreno Pakarati to designate the game of alliance, negotiation, and balance of power that the island community established with the colonial structures. The author then turns to the modernisation of the island, a period that is often cited in the literature as beginning with the opening of Mataveri International Airport in 1967. This era is characterised by a sharp rise in tourism, the introduction of more intercultural education against a backdrop of a decline in the use of Indigenous language, and the creation of some recent initiatives promoting Rapanui culture such as the Tāpati Rapa Nui Festival, Mahana o Te Reo Festival, and the Toki School of Music.

The book's third and final "act," the denouement, is the most consequential and complex. It begins by proposing a genealogy of antecedents for theatrical expression, pointing out that while ancient ceremonies have been analysed in the past, the vitality and constant reconfiguration of the island's ritual and festive sphere has been studied less. In the end, it is the elements of a Rapanui "festive being" that Fortin Cornejo foregrounds here in her exploration of celebrations and ritual forms. The *a'amu tuai,* the living repertoire of island dramaturgy, opens this section. The author makes an interesting comparison with Brecht's epic theatre, which aims to deepen the audience's knowledge and understanding through an epic rather than seeking emotions, by adopting an expository and narrative genre (pp. 84–6). The parallel is illuminating in terms of the structure of Rapanui stories, which often focus on facts and context rather than on individual feelings, as well

as on certain narrative practices—such as the use of an outside narrator—to weave the web of facts into a story.

Fortin Cornejo then focuses on *koro*, a pre-colonial festive form, and the historical matrix of *a'amu tuai*, a staged interpretation of a legend, story, or event from the past (often a mixture of all three). She reviews and describes its genre variations: *koro 'ei*, *koro paina*, and *narinari*. Material traces are rare, and testimonies are often indirect (e.g., Thomas S. Barthel and his informants). Nevertheless, the author's concern with finding various anthropologists' informants, and a review of secondary and photographic sources, leads us to believe that before contact, and later during colonisation, masked and performative traditions existed in the vicinity of the *ahu* (ceremonial platforms where the *moai* statues are often erected).[4] The same elements are repeated in the various celebrations, past and present: the omnipresence of food and gifts, joint effort (*'ūmaŋa*), comedy, and transmission. Other celebrations are then mentioned, including the Tāpati Rapa Nui Festival. Highly dynamic and touristic, the festival is centred around an election of queens, which was gradually "rapanuised" from 1967 to the present day, with an acceleration in the 1980s. The book highlights Tāpati's role as an interface between the community and the outside world. This does not come without its problems: "Visitors often fail to understand the significant and longstanding family effort and work put into each contest that exists behind the festival" (p. 116). The "tourist gaze" thus generates misunderstandings, for example when the *a'amu tuai* is judged to be "boring," as it is often performed only in *re'o rapa nui* (the vernacular). We could postulate that the closure of meaning is a deliberate mechanism for keeping the spectacle and commodification of the culture under control. The importance of the candidate for queen as the centripetal point of Tāpati's productive effort, also translated in terms of *'ūmaŋa,* can also be noted.

In Scene VII, Fortin Cornejo focuses on the Mata Tuu Hotu Iti group—central to the development of Rapanui theatre and to the reconstruction of Rapanui identity in the 1970s and 1980s—which gradually defined the traditional corpus and reaffirmed an ancestral identity (p. 128). The group produced profoundly immersive performances, combining locations, events, costumes, and audiences that would leave their mark on all future artistic creations. Mata Tuu Hotu Iti is subsequently regularly discussed in the book, as a point of departure, counterpoint, and reference.

Fortin Cornejo highlights the forms, actors, and founding periods of Rapanui theatre, leaving us with the content proper: the cultural and artistic practices. The book classifies artistic forms as "conceptual" (music and dance),

"physical" (costumes, sculpture, and stage spaces), "symbolic" (body painting and string figures), and "literary" (words and stories). These practices and their functions have been transmitted and circulated over time. Fortin Cornejo's typology offers a comprehensive and intelligible overview, but also shows its limitations when the intimate interweaving of the different dimensions becomes apparent, destabilising the categories in a salutary way. For example, the *kai kai* string game is classified as symbolic, but relies on the physicality of the thread and the literary aspect of the recitations (or *pata'uta'u*).

Scene X, the final scene of the book, offers six examples of theatrical experiments between 1995 and 2021. It looks at their actors, their production process, and the course and consequences of each. In this way, it constitutes a very valuable and original documentary contribution to anthropological, historical, and cultural studies of the island. The six works described, created by Rapanui people or Chilean women living on the island (including Fortin Cornejo), reveal different ways of appropriating and portraying Rapanui tradition and cultural codes. Above all, they offer a glimpse of the place of theatre in Rapa Nui in today's society, through and beyond Tāpati (p. 171). Sometimes the narrative of a performance is adorned with a staging that departs from the Mata Tuu Hotu Iti canons, or adopts a specific medium, like the puppets in the play *Ka Ori kavakava. Nuku Te Maŋo: Articulated Sculptures* (2001), created, written, composed, and directed by Sofia Abarca Fariña. At other times, it is the story that is new, while still constantly drawing on local history, as in *Honu Ure Mea Mea* (2009), directed by Ema Pakomio, Petero Huke, and Moira Fortin. The "grammar" of Rapa Nui theatre emerges here in the background, in particular the importance of the transmission of the story, the generational sequence, the educational and memorial significance, and finally the omnipresence (even figurative) of the great visual and symbolic repertoire of the island.

All this leads the author to affirm, in a short conclusion in the form of an epilogue, the continuing existence and singularity of Rapa Nui theatre. It aims, she says, "to depict customs, values, stories and life experiences that are believed to represent the behaviour and morals of pre-colonial Rapa Nui society, thus linking the notion of cultural past with cultural performance in the present" (p. 194). But the mixture of influences is also characteristic of the latter and marks out a "road in search of identity." Ultimately, the book proposes a profoundly multi-sited approach, through its transdisciplinarity and mixed methodology, and through the spaces and historical periods mobilised for the analysis. It provides an interesting vector for approaching the relations between the island and the rest of Polynesia,

as well as tourism and the Chilean nation-state. On this last point, we might wonder what places Chilean national celebrations (such as those observed annually on May 21 and September 9 and 18), the latter of which do not feature much in the book, occupy in the theatrical and festive repertoire described. Do the dynamics around authenticity, educational objectives, and transmission via the epic—identified for the other celebrations—play out in the same way in these "celebrations of the nation"?

Théo Milin has a master's degree in political science from Sciences Po Rennes (France) and a doctorate in anthropology/social sciences from Rennes 2 University and the Universidad de Chile. He studies festive and ritual systems on Rapa Nui (Easter Island) and in the Atacama Desert (northern Chile), paying particular attention to the constructions of identities that these systems involve and their historical transformations.

Notes

[1] The mention of community theatre is a welcome opportunity for the author to define the perimeter and uses of the term "community," a term that is very present and much debated on the island (p. 26).
[2] It would seem that while the companionship and shared experience aspect of the concept serves the author's purpose, other aspects covered by the original concept are more difficult to incorporate into the proposed analysis, such as the symmetry and equality of objective conditions, and the sharing of a temporary liminality.
[3] These traditional stories and the sources for each of them are listed in the bibliography on p. 198.
[4] I differentiate between "contact" and subsequent "colonisation." The term "contact" is used here to refer to the period from 1777, when European ships landed on the island—a period marked by exchanges and violent episodes, such as the terrible slavery expeditions of 1862, but during which no permanent settlement took place. The first permanent Western settlements and colonisation ventures did not appear until 1864, with the missionary Brother Eugène Eyraud, and mariner Jean-Baptiste Dutrou-Bornier following in 1868.

PACIFIC ARTS
Journal of the Pacific Arts Association

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pacific Arts — Call for Submissions

Pacific Arts, the journal of the Pacific Arts Association, has an **ONGOING OPEN CALL** for submissions on the arts of Oceania and its diasporas focusing on visual arts, material cultures, and heritage arts. The scope is temporally broad, highlighting both historical and current topics while engaging with a wide range of creative mediums, forms, and subject matter. *Pacific Arts* encourages interdisciplinary approaches to examining the political, social, economic, cultural, aesthetic, and environmental stakes in the production and study of Indigenous visual and material cultures in Oceania, past and present.

Please send full-length submissions and an abstract to pacificarts@ucsc.edu. Submissions should follow the *Pacific Arts* style guide. *Pacific Arts* is a peer reviewed open access online journal published by the University of California/eScholarship and encourages broad participation and circulation.

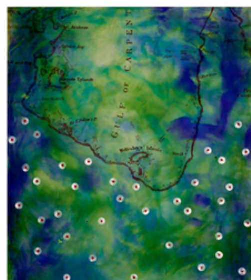
Pacific Arts is also accepting reviews of books, media, and exhibitions that relate to visual and material cultures of Oceania. Authors, artists, museums, and publishers interested in having their work reviewed and anyone interested in writing a review should contact the editors at pacificarts@ucsc.edu.

Current and recent issues can be accessed here: https://escholarship.org/uc/pacificarts

Pacific Arts
Journal of the Pacific Arts Association

N.S. Vol. 22 No. 1
2022

Pacific Arts
Journal of the Pacific Arts Association



N.S. Vol. 22 No. 2
2022

Pacific Arts
Journal of the Pacific Arts Association

N.S. Vol. 23 No. 1
2023

The Pacific Arts Association is an international organization devoted to the study of the arts of Oceania. The Pacific Arts Association (PAA), founded in 1974 and established as an association in 1978, is an international organization devoted to the study of all the arts of Oceania. PAA provides a forum for dialogue and awareness about Pacific art and culture. By connecting individuals and institutions around the world, PAA encourages greater cooperation among those who are involved with the creation, study, and exhibition of Pacific art.

The peer-reviewed ***Pacific Arts* journal** features current research, creative work, and reviews. The **PAA Newsletter** provides timely information about important events to members. PAA's triennial **International Symposium** takes place in alternating venues across the globe and includes special tours, performances, exhibitions, and presentations of academic and artistic research on the arts of Oceania. Members also have the opportunity to meet and participate in a PAA-sponsored session at the **College Art Association** annual meeting. PAA-Europe holds a meeting in Europe annually.

PAA's **goals** are:

- To make members more aware of the state of all the arts in all parts of Oceania.
- To encourage international understanding among the nations involved in the arts of Oceania.
- To promote high standards of research, interpretation, and reporting on the arts of Oceania.
- To stimulate more interest in the teaching of courses on Oceanic art especially but not only at the tertiary educational level.
- To encourage greater cooperation among the institutions and individuals who are associated with the arts of Oceania.
- To encourage high standards of conservation and preservation of the material culture in and of Oceanic arts.

Membership: US$50 for professional individuals and institutions, US$35 for visual and performing artists, students, and retired persons. Memberships are for a calendar year. Individuals and institutions wishing to become members of PAA can visit the membership page of the PAA website www.pacificarts.org/membership or contact the treasurer, Kailani Polzak, at treasurer@pacificarts.org.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Mira Costa College, Oceanside, California

jobs@miracosta.edu

MiraCosta College is building a robust and comprehensive critical Ethnic Studies program that centers the historical and intersectional experiences of Black, Indigenous, People of Color while critically deconstructing systemic white structures of power and how they have impacted the experiences of historically marginalized groups in the United States, e.g., Latinx/Chicanx, Black/African American, Native American, and Asian Americans communities.

We are developing foundational courses and curriculum in the traditional four areas of study within Ethnic Studies: Latino/a/Chicana/o Studies, Black/African American Studies, Native American Studies, and Asian American Studies. As we establish Ethnic Studies as a newly independent program and department, we are committed to not only expanding our curricula, but doing so in a way which is respectful of the historical development of the field of Ethnic Studies, and rooted in Ethnic Studies frameworks and practices.

Ethnic Studies Instructor (2024), Tenure-Track
MiraCosta College's Ethnic StudiesDepartment invites applications for one equity-minded, full- time (10 months per year), tenure-track faculty position beginning in August 2024. Principal responsibilities include teaching and helping develop curriculum in all four Ethnic Studies areas, i.e., Chicana and Chicano Studies, Black Studies, Native American Studies, and Asian American Studies. The person selected will share leadership roles with other full-time instructors in coordinating and developing curriculum and using culturally-responsive pedagogical techniques.

Position and application details: https://jobs.miracosta.edu/postings/3955
Deadline: Feb. 6, 2024

Ethnic Studies Associate (Part-time) Instructor Pool
Position and application details: https://jobs.miracosta.edu/postings/3835

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

University of California, Los Angeles

Tenure-Track Assistant Professor in the Conservation of Native American/ Pacific Islander Cultural Heritage

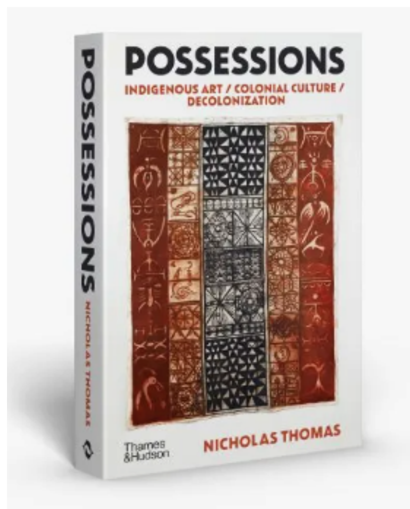
UCLA Getty Conservation Program, American-Indian Studies, Anthropology, Asian-American Department, Department of Chicana/o Studies, Department of Gender Studies, Geography, History, Sociology / Social Sciences / UCLA

Job #JPF08917
Apply Now: https://recruit.apo.ucla.edu/JPF08917

The UCLA/Getty Interdepartmental Degree Program (IDP) in the Conservation of Cultural Heritage invites applications for a tenure-track faculty position to begin as early as July 1, 2024. The appointment will be split 50:50 between the UCLA/Getty Conservation IDP and an appropriate home department within the Social Sciences Division. Some home departments may include, but not limited to, American Indian Studies, Anthropology, Asian American Studies, Department of Chicana/o and Central American Studies, Gender Studies, Geography, History, & Sociology. The appointment will be made as part of the UCLA Native American and Pacific Islander Bruins Rising Initiative:
https://equity.ucla.edu/ucla-native-american-pacific-islander-bruins-rising-initiative/.
Faculty duties include teaching at the graduate and undergraduate level, research, service, and supervision of student research in both the Conservation IDP and the home department.

Candidates should hold a Ph.D. and have expertise in Native American / Indigenous cultural heritage. Preference will be given to candidates with experience working with collections and with Native American / Indigenous communities. Research specialization may be in Traditional Ecological Knowledge, Visual Anthropology, Museum Studies, Tribal Law, or other similar fields. Evidence of sustained engagement with Native American or Pacific Islander communities is highly desired. Faculty appointed through this search are expected to actively maintain an affiliation with the American Indian Studies Center or the IAC and AASC (for Pacific Islanders), champion the achievements of Native American or Pacific Islander scholars, and further develop their mentoring initiatives. Strong candidates will have a demonstrable record of work within the Program's core values of collaboration, sustainability, and diversity, equity, & inclusion.

PUBLICATION



Possessions: Indigenous Art / Colonial Culture / Decolonization

By Nicholas Thomas

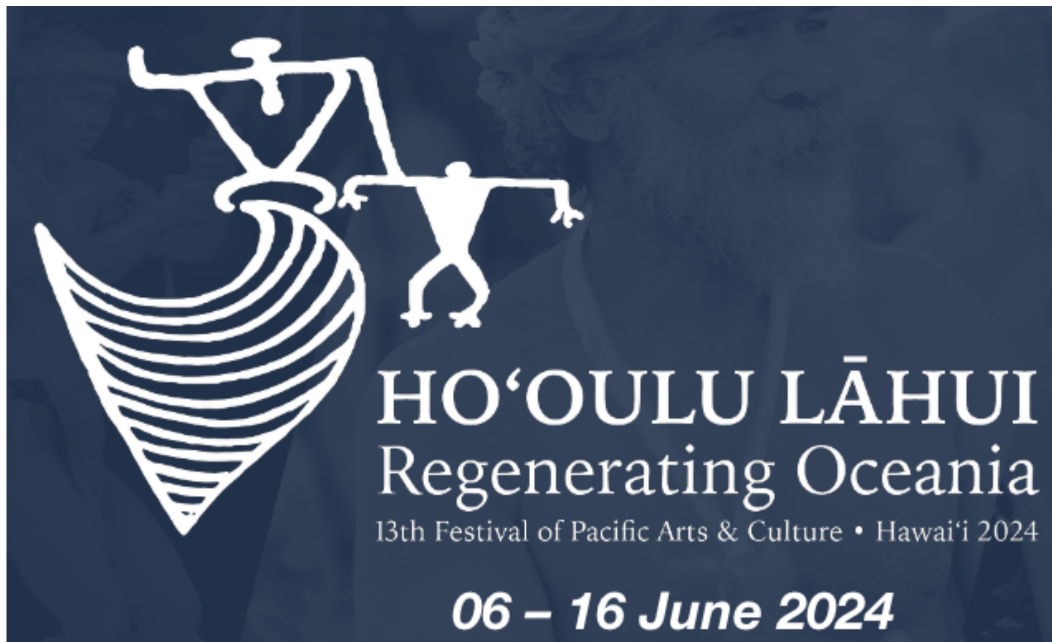
The arts of Africa, Oceania and Native America famously inspired twentieth-century modernist artists such as Picasso, Matisse and Ernst. The politics of such stimulus, however, have long been highly contentious: was this a cross-cultural discovery to be celebrated, or just one more example of Western colonial appropriation?

Highly acclaimed on first publication, and now revised and updated, this revelatory book explores cross-cultural art through the lens of settler societies such as Australia and New Zealand, where Europeans made new nations, displacing but never eclipsing Native peoples. In this dynamic of dispossession and resistance, settler artists and designers have drawn upon Indigenous motifs and styles in their search for distinctive identities, while powerful Indigenous art traditions have asserted the presence of First Nations peoples and their claims to place, history and sovereignty. Cultural exchange is a two-way process, and an unpredictable one: contemporary Indigenous art draws on global contemporary practice, but moves beyond a bland affirmation of hybrid identities to uphold the enduring values and attachment to place of Indigenous peoples.

For anyone with an interest in the current debates about decolonization, Indigenous culture and the history of art, this is essential reading.

Ordering information: https://thamesandhudson.com/possessions-indigenous-art-colonial-culture-decolonization-9780500296592

FESTIVAL OF PACIFIC ARTS 2024



ARTS, CULTURE, AND HEALING

The Festival of Pacific Arts & Culture (FestPAC) is the world's largest celebration of Indigenous Pacific Islanders. The South Pacific Commission (now The Pacific Community) launched this dynamic showcase of arts and culture in 1972 to halt the erosion of traditional practices through ongoing cultural exchange. It is a vibrant and culturally enriching event celebrating the unique traditions, artistry, and diverse cultures of the Pacific region. FestPAC serves as a platform for Pacific Island nations to showcase their rich heritage and artistic talents.

The 13th Festival of Pacific Arts & Culture, will convene in Hawaiʻi, June 6-16, 2024. **"Hoʻoulu Lāhui: Regenerating Oceania"** will serve as the theme of FestPAC Hawaiʻi 2024, honoring the traditions that FestPAC exists to perpetuate with an eye toward the future.

https://www.festpachawaii.org/

EXHIBITION

The ***Project Banaba*** exhibition by Katerina Teaiwa commemorates the history of Banaba Island in the Pacific Ocean, which was destroyed by environmentally devastating phosphate mining during the 20th century. This led to the total relocation of its people in 1945, with the 78th anniversary of their displacement to be observed on Dec. 15, 2023, during the run of the exhibition.

NOVEMBER 4, 2023–FEBRUARY 18, 2024

ADMISSION INFORMATION
https://www.bishopmuseum.org/
https://www.bishopmuseum.org/project-banaba/

EXHIBITION

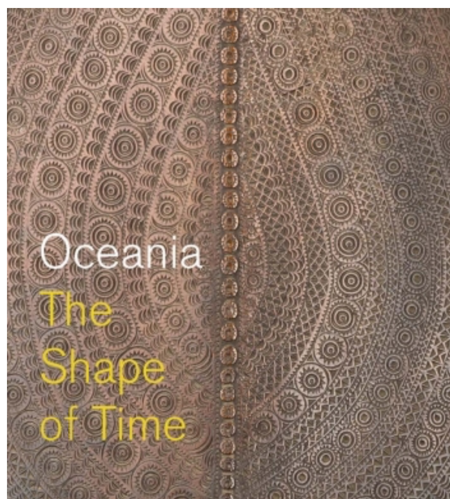
THE SHAPE OF TIME: ART AND ANCESTORS OF OCEANIA FROM THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

The National Museum of Qatar
24 October 2023–15 January 2024

The National Museum of Qatar will host nearly 130 cherished works from The Metropolitan Museum of Art's unparalleled Oceanic collection, which are travelling outside of The Met's walls for the first time in nearly a century, as the Michael C. Rockefeller Wing is being renovated.

The exhibition is organised by themes—Voyaging, Ancestors and Time—which demonstrate the interconnectedness of Pacific Islanders and their rich cultural heritage, and the dynamic artistic expressions on display that date back four centuries.

Exhibition catalogue: *Oceania: The Shape of Time*
By Maia Nuku



The visual arts of Oceania tell a wealth of dynamic stories about origins, ancestral power, performance, and initiation. This publication explores the deeply rooted connections between Austronesian-speaking peoples, whose ancestral homelands span Island Southeast Asia, Australia, Papua New Guinea, and the island archipelagoes of the northern and eastern Pacific. Unlike previous books, it foregrounds Indigenous perspectives, alongside multidisciplinary research in art history, ethnography, and archaeology, to provide an intimate look at Oceania, its art, and its culture. Stunning new photography highlights more than 130 magnificent objects, ranging from elaborately carved ancestral figures in ceremonial houses, towering slit drums, and dazzling turtle-shell masks to polished whale ivory breastplates. Underscoring the powerful interplay between the ocean and its islands, and the ongoing connection with spiritual and ancestral realms, Oceania: The Shape of Time presents an art-focused approach to life and culture while guiding readers through the artistic achievements of Islanders across millennia.

ADMISSION INFORMATION
https://nmoq.org.qa/en/calendar/oceania-metropolitan-museum-of-art/

UPCOMING PANEL

at College Art Association 112th Annual Conference

February 14–17, 2024
Chicago, Illinois

Pacific Arts Association Panel:
Curating Pacific Art in the United States: A Roundtable Discussion

Friday, February 16, 2024
4:30 PM - 6:00 PM
Hilton Chicago, Joliet Room

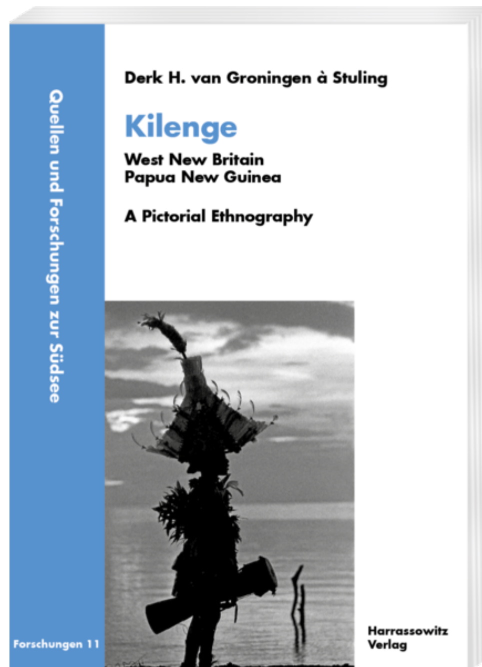
This roundtable discussion brings together curators and researchers who work with and care for museum collections of Oceanic visual and material culture in the United States. The panelists will share updates on current projects, including the redevelopment of Pacific galleries, acquisition strategies, and new research on collections. This will be an opportunity to discuss critical issues in Oceanic art curation, including: community engagement and critical methodologies grounded in Pacific epistemologies; the ethical and sociopolitical issues around museum collection and display; how to engage with different audiences, especially in the settler colonial context of North America; and how to collaborate across institutions.

Panelists:
Sylvia Cockburn (co-chair), Metropolitan Museum of Art
Halena Kapuni-Reynolds, Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian
Ingrid Ahlgren, Harvard Peabody Museum of Archeology and Ethnology
Maggie Wander (co-chair), Metropolitan Museum of Art

Information: https://www.collegeart.org/programs/conference/conference2024

PUBLICATION

Kilenge, West New Britain, Papua New Guinea: A Pictorial Ethnography
by
Derl H. van Groningen à Stuling



In 1977–78, right after Papua New Guinea had achieved its political independence, Derk van Groningen was living among the Kilenge people on the north-west coast of the island of New Britain. Originally, his ethnographic field research centered on the circular migration pattern in the Kilenge area. Being permitted to take photographs of their daily activities, his focus became much broader.

Groningen's work presents a photographic documentation of many aspects of Kilenge life during the transition period from colonial rule to self-determination and governance. His original observations and photographs are published here for the first time.

https://www.harrassowitz-verlag.de/Kilenge/titel_7242.ahtml

CONFERENCE

Empires and Cultures of the Pacific Revisited

The 28th annual conference of the
New Zealand Studies Association (NZSA),
together with University College Prague

Prague, Czech Republic
9 – 12 July 2024

A special 4-day international conference, with excursion and conference dinner
Includes a free symposium for graduates & ECRs on 8 July

Keynotes:
Professor Michael Belgrave
Professor Brigitte Bonisch-Brednich
Professor Angela McCarthy
Professor Jane Samson
Nalini Singh
Professor Tatiana Tökölyová
John Wilson

The New Zealand Studies Association has a long and strong history in promoting New Zealand and Pacific Studies, which for 11 years has been expanded through its twice-yearly *Journal of New Zealand and Pacific Studies*. The 2024 gathering builds on the successes of the conferences in Stockholm/Turku (2023), Marseille (2022), Athens (2019), Aveiro (2018), Strasbourg (2017), Lugano (2016), Vienna (2015), Oslo (2014), Nijmegen (2013), Gdansk (2012), Frankfurt (2009), Florence (2008), London (2007), and Paris (2006).

Proposals for 20 minute papers to be sent by 31 January 2024 to Ian Conrich (ian@ianconrich.co.uk). Abstracts need to be between 200 and 250 words with a bio added of 100-150 words. Interpretations of the theme are broad and papers can address a range of topics related to the Pacific and New Zealand. Proposals for papers will be accepted within three main strands: 1) Oceania, 2) New Zealand and 3) Oceania/NZ in relation to any aspect of the Pacific Rim. We are particularly keen to receive papers on the third strand as we are hoping to extend the Association's interests into areas we have not widely explored before. The conference fee includes annual membership to the NZSA, which for 2024 includes a twice-yearly journal. A selection of papers from the conference will be published in the Scopus-indexed *Journal of New Zealand & Pacific Studies*, published by Intellect.

The conference will accept proposals on a range of subjects including the following:
history, literature, film, music, art, cultural studies, media and communication, sociology, geography, tourism, war studies, politics, international relations, identity and multiculturalism, anthropology, Māori Studies, Pacific Studies, archaeology, heritage and museum studies.