

Collecting, exhibiting and engaging with East Polynesia at the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa

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ABSTRACT: The Pacific Cultures collection of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa (Te Papa) holds significant artefacts from the islands of East Polynesia, including the Austral Islands, Society Islands, Marquesas Islands, Tuamotu Archipelago, Pitcairn Island and Rapa Nui (Easter Island). Some artefacts are important because of their historical association with the voyages of eighteenth-century English explorer James Cook. Others are less well documented but of outstanding aesthetic quality and once belonged to the early twentieth-century English collector William Oldman. In this survey article, we describe the holdings of East Polynesian material culture in Te Papa and argue for their relevance in the national museum of New Zealand. We also examine other holdings in Te Papa that have associations with East Polynesia, and outline a short history of outreach and engagement with communities from this region.

KEYWORDS: East Polynesia, material culture, Austral Islands, Society Islands, Marquesas Islands, Pitcairn Island, Rapa Nui (Easter Island), Te Papa, Tahiti, James Cook, William Oldman.

Introduction

Given New Zealand's twentieth-century colonial ties to the relatively close islands of Samoa, Niue and the Cook Islands, it may appear that the other islands of East Polynesia would be peripheral to the future development of the Pacific Cultures collections at the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa (Te Papa). However, the recent history of collecting activity and the display of material culture from East Polynesian societies proves otherwise. East Polynesia has an important role in telling the New Zealand story as well as the familiar stories relating to the broader history of the arts, exploration and cultural encounter in the Pacific Islands.

This article is organised in two parts. First, we survey Te Papa's East Polynesia collection holdings by each individual island group.¹ The island territories and groups we cover in this article are French Polynesia (Austral Islands, Society Islands and Marquesas Islands), the Pitcairn Islands and

Rapa Nui (Easter Island). We do not cover the Tuamotu Archipelago or Mangareva (Gambier) Islands, as there are no cultural artefacts from these locations at Te Papa. Although East Polynesia also includes the Cook Islands, Hawai'i and New Zealand, an article surveying the Cook Islands collection has already been published (Hutton *et al.* 2010) and an article about the Hawai'i collection is in preparation for 2014. We examine the development of these collections across a chronology beginning in the late nineteenth century and ending in the twenty-first century. Key accessions and individual objects or groups of objects are highlighted – some for their formal qualities, others for their histories. We include an emphasis on accessions made between 1990 and 2012. This period coincides with the development of Te Papa and initiatives to increase contemporary collecting.² This focus allows us to present new examples of material culture to the academic literature and visual record.

Second, we examine Te Papa's deployment of these collections in the museum's activities. Our emphasis is on how the societies and cultures of East Polynesia have been represented in other Te Papa collections, the museum's events programmes, exhibitions, publications and community outreach activities. We argue that the collections from islands far to the east have been, and continue to be, important in the context of New Zealand's national museum. They play a critical role informing what we know of New Zealand's settlement, its long history of interaction with the region and its contemporary history. This article contributes to a literature that explores archaeological dimensions of that interaction, nineteenth- and twentieth-century connections, and contemporary social and cultural developments.³

It is only since 1993 that Te Papa has managed its Pacific treasures as a separate collection. For most of the institution's history (as the Colonial Museum from 1865 to 1907, the Dominion Museum from 1907 to 1972, the National Museum from 1972 to 1992, and Te Papa from 1993 to present), Pacific items formed a significant part of what was called the Foreign Ethnology collection. As currently defined, the Pacific Cultures collection consists of about 13,000 items, encompassing both historical and contemporary material from the Pacific Islands, including Papua New Guinea but excluding Indonesia, the Philippines and Australia. An exception is made for the Torres Strait Islands, which are part of Australia but culturally more aligned to Papua New Guinea. The Pacific Cultures collection has been shaped by changing institutional and curatorial priorities, which in turn have been influenced by the history of New Zealand as a Pacific nation, the roles that New Zealanders have played in the Pacific Islands and the migration of Pacific peoples to New Zealand in recent decades. What began in the nineteenth century as a comparative collection of ethnographic 'specimens' – objects collected during the scientific study of peoples and cultures – has broadened to include contemporary works by known artists. This expansion of the collection's scope has tended to blur the boundaries between the Pacific Cultures, Māori, History and Art collections. Since the late 1980s, there has been a sustained focus on collecting the art and material culture of Pacific peoples living in New Zealand (Davidson & Mallon 2004).

In 2008, the Pacific Cultures team commenced a survey of Te Papa's Pacific Cultures collection. This process included recording or upgrading object information such as

descriptions, measurements, provenance, storage locations, key terms of association to assist online and database searching, and the updating of accession lot records. In addition, a digital photographic record of each object was taken and added to the museum's *Collections online* database.⁴ The Cook Islands collections were the first to undergo this process, followed by the Niue collections (Hutton *et al.* 2010; Akeli & Pasene 2011). This is the third article to be developed from this ongoing survey.

Collecting East Polynesia

The most historically significant items of material culture from East Polynesia in Te Papa were collected by European seafarers in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. They found their way into private collections and institutions in the United Kingdom and returned to the Pacific and New Zealand in the twentieth century, when acquired by the museum. The key accessions of artefacts have come from England from Lord St Oswald (1912), William Oldman (1948) and the Imperial Institute (1955). The collections from Lord St Oswald and the Imperial Institute include material culture associated with the voyages of English explorer James Cook, who undertook three scientific expeditions into the Pacific. The first voyage was from 1768 to 1771, the second from 1772 to 1775, and the third from 1776 to 1780. The objects in Te Papa associated with these voyages are well documented by Kaeppler (1974, 1978), and in part by Livingstone (1998) and Davidson (1991, 2004, 2012). They include adornments, fishhooks, tools and textiles from the Pacific and its rim. The objects associated with Cook often attract the most international interest from researchers, curators and cultural groups. They are key artefacts both in the history of European exploration and in the cultural history of indigenous peoples.⁵ The Oldman collection is less well documented.

Former Te Papa Pacific curator Janet Davidson⁶ published a short history of the Pacific collections (Davidson 1991) that includes details about these accessions. In brief summary, she records that Lord St Oswald unexpectedly presented his family collection to the Dominion of New Zealand in 1912. As mentioned previously, a highlight of his collection are artefacts collected on the three voyages into the Pacific by James Cook. They include the 'ahu ula (cloak) and mahiole (helmet) presented to Cook by the Hawai'ian chief Kalani'opu 'u on 26 January 1779. The objects in the



Fig. 1 W.O. Oldman with his collection at his Clapham villa, London, England, c. 1940 (photo: Te Papa O.027324).

collection were gathered together by an English collector named William Bullock (Kaeppler 1974). Some of them he acquired directly from Joseph Banks, a scientist who was part of Cook's first expedition. He purchased others from private collectors, and from the sale of the Leverian Museum collection in London in 1806. Bullock displayed them in his own museum in London until 1819, when he sold his entire collection. The items now in Te Papa were bought by Charles Winn (1795?–1874) for his private collection. They stayed with the Winn family for nearly a century. In 1912, Charles Winn's grandson, Rowland Winn, 2nd Baron St Oswald (1857–1919), gave them 'to the Dominion of New Zealand'. The gift came as a complete surprise to the museum's director, Augustus Hamilton. He commented in a letter at the time, 'Goodness knows what the reason was that prompted Lord St Oswald to send them out to New Zealand' (Hamilton to Edge-Partington, 18 November 1912). Today, the objects in the Lord St Oswald collection

are regarded as treasures that connect us with the history of European exploration in the Pacific but also with our Pacific and Māori ancestors.

In 1948, the New Zealand government purchased the Māori and Pacific collection of the London dealer William Ockelford Oldman (Fig. 1). Today, the collection is known internationally as the Oldman collection and is recognised as world class by overseas collectors and connoisseurs. In the 1940s, New Zealand academics petitioned the government to buy the collection. Their vision was to make New Zealand the main centre for studying Māori and Polynesian artefacts. The government's decision in 1948, to purchase the 3100 items for the substantial sum of £44,000, signalled New Zealand's commitment to the cultural heritage of its nearest neighbours. When the collection arrived in New Zealand, it was divided on indefinite loan among the four large New Zealand metropolitan museums, with small groups of items going to smaller public museums.⁷ The Dominion Museum

received most of the Māori, Marquesan, New Caledonian and Admiralty Islands components of the collection, together with small numbers of items from other island groups. These items were described at the time as being ‘on long-term loan’ (Neich & Davidson 2004: xxi). In 1992, Te Papa’s share of the collection became a gift of the government. The majority of the items in the Oldman collection have poor records. However, as Neich & Davidson (2004) noted in the introduction to the republished Oldman collection catalogues, the state of the documentation may reflect the fragmentation and loss of information associated with objects as they changed hands between collectors and passed through auction houses in Europe and the United Kingdom. In any case, ‘Oldman’s focus was, by and large, on artistic quality (as he perceived it)’ (Neich & Davidson 2004: xxix). Overall, the Oldman collection holdings are in good physical condition and outstanding in their appearance and quality of workmanship, a trait important to private collectors and their interests.

In 1955, the museum acquired a collection of items from the Imperial Institute.⁸ Established in London in 1887, the institute conducted scientific research to benefit the British Empire. Many of the items in this accession were associated with the voyages of James Cook. They had once been in the possession of Queen Victoria and were given to the Imperial Institute by Edward VII. Kaeppler (1978: 286) has speculated that Cook himself may have given a collection of artefacts to George III after his second voyage.

The three major accessions of artefacts described above are the foundations of Te Papa’s East Polynesian collection. Overall, the objects are in remarkably good condition. They include finely crafted and rare items associated with the social and cultural elite of East Polynesia. Only some objects have provenance, but for many others their contexts of manufacture and use are retrievable from the ethnographic or historical literature. Collectively, they offer a tantalising glimpse of the region’s material culture in an important period of European encounter and significant cultural transformation.

In the following paragraphs, we survey some of the major accessions by island group of origin. We focus on collection highlights but also on objects where we have been able to expand upon museum records and bring new information to light. The order of the survey is organised geographically from southwest to north and east from the French Polynesian territories, beginning with the Austral Islands and expanding outwards to Rapa Nui (Easter Island).

French Polynesia

Politically, French Polynesia is currently an overseas territory of France. It comprises of a group of five archipelagos – the Austral Islands, the Society Islands, the Marquesas Islands, the Tuamotu Archipelago and the Mangareva (Gambier) Islands. There are 118 islands scattered over a vast region the size of Europe. Tahiti, in the Society Islands, is the largest, rising to 2241 m and with a land area of 1042 km². The dates of first settlement of the Society Islands and the various East Polynesian island groups discussed in this article are the subject of fierce debate and controversy among archaeologists. Scholars are divided on the issue, with many of the older dates challenged by a recent review (Wilmschurst *et al.* 2011), which argues for initial colonisation of the Society Islands not more than 1000 years ago, followed by expansion throughout East Polynesia, including New Zealand, by between 800 and 700 years ago. Archaeological investigations suggest that in prehistorical times the islands in the modern territory of French Polynesia were connected through intermittent trade and exchange networks (Rollett 2002).

Austral Islands

The Austral Islands are located 500 km south of Tahiti. They are the southernmost islands in the modern French Polynesia group. English explorer James Cook was the first European to find the island group, in 1769. Other Europeans followed, including mutineers from the HMS *Bounty*, who attempted to settle one of the islands. In the nineteenth century, the introduction of European diseases to the islands greatly reduced the local population.

A highlight of Te Papa’s Austral Islands collection is a flywhisk attributed to nineteenth-century Rurutu or Tubuai (Fig. 2). Flywhisks were made in sacred and utilitarian forms and used in religious and secular contexts (Rose 1979: 207). The whisk handle at Te Papa features two small carved Janus figures⁹ with some fragments of braided fibre running along a spindle to where the coconut-fibre whisk would be attached. The attribution of the handle to the Austral Islands is based on the research of Roger Rose (1979), who surveyed 38 double-figured flywhisks and their histories. He proposes an Austral Islands origin for them, and identifies three main variants indicative of styles or schools of carving from specific islands within the group. He argues that the Janus whisks are stylistically distinct from those produced in the Society Islands (Rose 1979: 202). However,



he acknowledges that their carved figures 'belong to a general tradition of figural sculpture wherein certain artistic conventions are similar to the Austral and Society Islands, and to a lesser extent, the Cook Islands' (Rose 1979: 207).

Oldman's (2004) collection catalogue records that the whisk in Te Papa was 'Brought home by Capt. Lord Byron in H.M.S. *Blonde*'.¹⁰ His annotation refers to Captain Lord George Ashton Byron (1789–1868) of the Royal Navy. In 1824, he sailed a mission to Hawai'i with the *Blonde* to return the remains of King Kamehameha II and Queen Kamamalu (Byron *et al.* 1826), who had both died of measles while visiting England. How Byron came by the whisk is a mystery. On leaving Hawai'i, the *Blonde* sailed for Tahiti but was unable to make headway. Instead, the ship stopped briefly at Ma'uke before sailing directly to Valparaíso, Chile. The expedition did not visit Tahiti, or any of the Austral Islands en route. However, it is possible Byron picked up the whisk while on Ma'uke. This island, now part of the Cook Islands, is relatively close to the Austral and Society islands and inter-island communication in the region had been long established, albeit intermittently (Rollett 2002). Indeed, the journal of the voyage records that the crew met two native teachers on Ma'uke who had been 'qualified' by the London Missionary Society based at Tahiti (Byron *et al.* 1826). They may have been the source of the flywhisk. Less likely is the possibility

Fig. 2 Flywhisk, Rurutu, Austral Islands, 1800s, wood, plant fibre, length 340 mm. Artist unknown. Oldman collection. Gift of the New Zealand government, 1992 (Te Papa OL000390).

that Byron acquired the whisk earlier in the voyage from another source in Hawai'i.

Te Papa's material culture from the Austral Islands is dominated by 48 wooden 'ceremonial paddles', whose entire surfaces are decorated with distinctive densely carved motifs (Fig. 3). The majority of these came to the museum in 1948 as part of the Oldman collection. There are also three examples that were part of the Lord St Oswald collection but lack other provenance details.¹¹ Researcher of Austral Islands' history Rhys Richards has made a close examination of historical records before 1850 in search of an indigenous- or non-European-oriented use for the paddles. His investigations revealed no 'eye-witness accounts of their use or function' (Richards 2012: 141). However, it is clear to even the untrained eye that Austral Islands 'ceremonial paddles' are not suitable for paddling canoes. The examples in Te Papa's collection are thin, fragile and often not well proportioned. According to Richards (2012: 143), Austral Islanders manufactured the paddles to use as trade items in their encounters with Europeans. Most of them were made in a period of intense production between 1821 and 1842. In 2001, Richards (2012: 143) undertook a global census of Austral Islands paddles, locating 850 examples and estimating that there are probably 1000 in museum collections around the world. Pacific art historian Steven Hooper suggests the paddles were 'perhaps the most collected objects in the Pacific in the first half of the nineteenth century' (Hooper 2006: 216).

Despite the absence of provenance and contextual information, some of the paddles are striking examples of woodcarving and indigenous

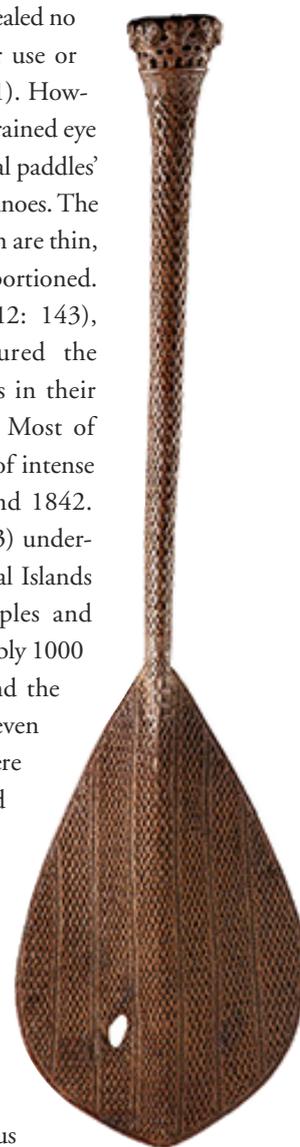


Fig. 3 Ceremonial paddle, Austral Islands, 1800s, wood, length 745 mm. Artist unknown. Oldman collection. Gift of the New Zealand government, 1992 (Te Papa OL002055/2).

principles of design and composition. If Richards' arguments are correct, the paddles mark a short but important period in the history of the Austral Islands and their neighbours. As the circumstances of the paddles' production becomes clear, so too do narratives of trade and commerce with the growing number of Europeans visting the region. The origins of the paddles highlight the early nineteenth-century transactions that perhaps marked the beginnings of the tourist trade. This area of activity becomes critical to the region's economy through the twentieth and into the twenty-first century.

Society Islands

The Society Islands are north of the Austral Islands and played a major part in the history of European exploration and representation of the South Pacific. Dutch explorer Jacob Roggeveen sighted the islands in 1722. However, it was not until after the arrivals of English explorer Samuel Wallis in 1767, and French navigator Louis Antoine de Bougainville in 1768, that the region started to find a place on European maps and charts. The islands became a transit point for Europeans into the Pacific throughout the nineteenth century, developing into an important commercial hub and, in the twentieth century, a focal point for the region's tourism.

The oldest Te Papa accession from the Society Islands consists of stone implements purchased from Major F.G. Gentry in 1918, including sinkers, toki (adze blades) and a penu (food pounder) (Fig. 4). Unfortunately, these items have no provenance. The key historical-period holdings of material culture are mainly of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century origin, and arrived at the museum as part of the Lord St Oswald, Oldman and Imperial Institute collections. They include rare adornments, costumes and textiles of the social and cultural elite, and offer researchers a glimpse of indigenous cultures before sustained interaction with Europeans and their influences. However, the collection also contains items from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries that represent other histories of encounter and travel, both physical and virtual. The curiosity and imagination that inspired the voyages of Cook and others into the Pacific is the same imagination that inspires works created and collected today.

Several items in the Lord St Oswald accession are from the Society Islands and are associated with Cook's voyages. They include a mask and 'ahu parau (chest apron) from an eighteenth-century mourning costume used by the arioi, a



Fig. 4 Penu (food pounder), Society Islands, c. 1800s, stone, height 195 mm. Artist unknown. Gift of F. Gentry, 1947 (Te Papa FE008557).

special class of priest (Salmond 2012) (Fig. 5). The chief mourner of the arioi wore the costume of many parts, which completely covered his body. Accompanied by a host of attendants with blackened skins and wearing loincloths, the chief mourner and his procession would roam around making noise and terrorising people. The ritual and procession could continue for weeks or even months after the death of a prominent person. The costumes and ceremony were described in a journal kept by naturalist Joseph Banks during Cook's first voyage, when he actually took part in the ritual.

Such mourning costumes were extremely valuable. The stunning 'ahu parau in the museum would have required many hours of labour to shape and stitch together the hundreds of finely cut slivers of pearl shell. The European visitors were unable to acquire any examples of the costume on the first voyage; however, parts of at least 10 costumes were taken to England on Cook's second voyage. The pieces depicted here were probably collected at that time. They are thought to have been given by Joseph Banks to William Bullock, and therefore part of the collection purchased by Charles Winn at the sale of the contents of Bullock's Museum in London in 1819 (Kaepler 1974; Davidson 2004: 250).

Another Society Islands artefact from the Lord St Oswald accession is a taumi, an item worn in battle by tribal chiefs



Fig. 5 'Ahu parau (chest apron), Society Islands, 1700s, pearl shell, plant fibre, shell, length 560 mm. Artist unknown. Gift of Lord St Oswald, 1912 (Te Papa Collection FE000336/1).

and their principal lieutenants in Tahiti (Fig. 6). In the eighteenth century, much of the warfare in the region took the form of engagements between large double canoes, and the chiefs could be seen standing on the platforms of the canoes. William Hodges, an artist on James Cook's second voyage, depicted some of these impressive scenes when the expedition visited Tahiti.

Taumi were very valuable items, with high exchange value in Tahitian society. Their elaborate construction consists of a base of woven coconut fibre, to which are attached sharks' teeth, feathers and a fringe of white dog hair. Although they were mostly worn on the breast, a man might occasionally wear two: one on the back and one on the breast, joined at each shoulder. The taumi at Te Papa was



Fig. 6 Taumi (gorget), Society Islands, 1700s, feathers, plant fibre, shark teeth, dog hair, length 690 mm. Artist unknown. Gift of Lord St Oswald, 1912 (Te Papa FE000335).

listed in the first catalogue of Bullock's Museum in 1801. Again, this item was purchased by Charles Winn, who bought it for £1 2s at the sale of the Bullock's Museum contents in 1819 (Kaeppler 1974; Rose 1993; Davidson 2004: 250).

When the Oldman collection was distributed across New Zealand museums on its arrival in the country, most of the Society Islands material went to the Auckland War Memorial Museum Tamaki Paenga Hira (Auckland Museum). The holdings at Te Papa include a vivo (nose flute) (Fig. 7), four matau (fishhooks) and a penu (food punder). The vivo (Te Papa OL00452/1), made from bamboo, is one of two Oldman collected that were formerly in the Duke of Leeds

collection. On the other vivo in Auckland Museum is a label that reads 'Tahitian Nasal Flutes, G. B. 1823'. Oldman (2004) believes this is in the handwriting of George Bennet (1775–1841), who belonged to the London Missionary Society and spent three years (1821–24) in Polynesia amassing a large ethnographical collection (Hooper 2006: 270). There are several other items associated with Bennet in the Oldman collection but held in other museums in New Zealand.

Highlights from the Imperial Institute accession are a ta (tattooing implement) (Fig. 8) and a mallet. The mallet is shaped like a miniature paddle, with a narrow shaft and a spatulate blade. The ta takes the form of a small blade



Fig.7 Vivo (nose flute), Society Islands, *c.* 1820, bamboo, length 335 mm. Artist unknown. Oldman collection. Gift of the New Zealand government, 1992 (Te Papa OL000452/1).

attached to a short wooden handle with a fibre cord. The blade is made from small sections of boar tusk or bone, each section with a row of very fine, sharp teeth cut into it. A tattooist working on a tattoo dips the ta into a reservoir containing pigment, which is then drawn up into the toothed edge of the blade. Using the light mallet, the tattooist then places the ta on the skin and taps the back of it, perforating the surface of the skin and depositing the pigment beneath it.

It is possible that the tattooing tools were collected during the Cook's voyages. They were in the possession of Queen Victoria and given to the Imperial Institute in London, England, by Edward VII. We highlight the ta because in the twenty-first century tattooing has become a most visible part of contemporary Tahitian and other Polynesian cultures including Māori. The indigenous tool forms and how they are used are a point of similarity and shared culture for contemporary practitioners and tattoo enthusiasts from different ethnic origins.

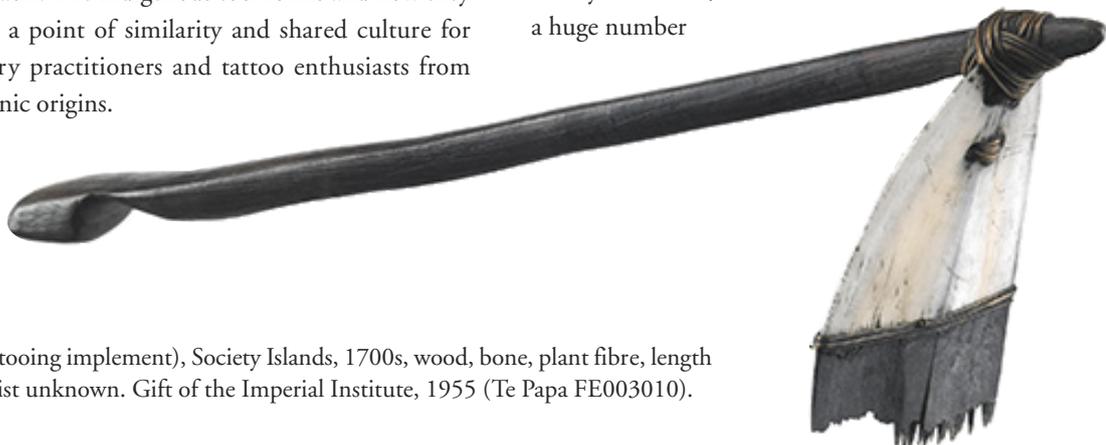


Fig.8 Ta (tattooing implement), Society Islands, 1700s, wood, bone, plant fibre, length 190 mm. Artist unknown. Gift of the Imperial Institute, 1955 (Te Papa FE003010).

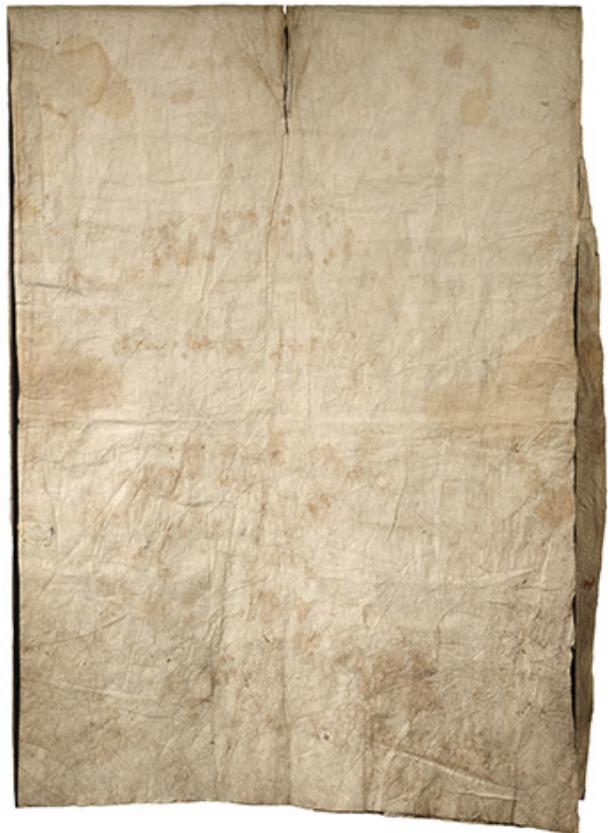


Fig.9 Tiputa (poncho), Society Islands, 1700s, bark cloth, length 1170 mm. Artist unknown. Gift of the Wellcome Collection, 1952 (Te Papa FE004054).

Aside from those that entered Te Papa through the accession of the three main collections, there are some eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Society Islands objects that came to the museum from public and private collections. A tiputa (bark-cloth poncho) attributed to the Society Islands is notable example (Fig. 9). It was originally in the Wellcome Museum in London, which acquired it at auction in 1932. The museum was associated with philanthropist Henry Wellcome, who amassed a huge number

of objects (Larson 2009), and in 1952 it gifted the tiputa to Te Papa.

Our attribution of the tiputa to the Society Islands is based on the absence of decoration on the cloth and the presence of a vertical slit for the head to go through rather than a circular opening. This feature is also found on a tiputa from the Society Islands made from purau (*Hibiscus tiliaceus*) plant fibres, now in the Cook-Forster collection of the Georg-August University of Göttingen, Germany (Kruger *et al.* 1998: 153; Weber & Watson 2006: 65). The Te Papa tiputa is one of eight examples from Polynesia in its collection. The museum also has examples from Niue, Samoa and the Cook Islands, where the influence of Tahitian or Tahitian-trained missionaries was significant in the nineteenth century, and where the tiputa was often a marker of an individual's conversion to Christianity (Kooijman 1972; Thomas 1999: 16; Pule & Thomas 2005: 58).

Other examples of textiles from the Society Islands include two pieces of undecorated 'ahu (tapa cloth). One of them (Te Papa FE002786) was collected by businessman Sir Joseph Kinsey and presented to the museum by Lady Sarah Kinsey; the other (Te Papa FE001473) was formerly owned by Alexander Turnbull, a New Zealand-based bibliophile and private collector. Turnbull also donated a costume mat, finely woven by hand from hibiscus-bark fibre and with a decorative knotted fringe along its four edges (Te Papa FE001476). (We use the terms woven and weaving throughout this article. The distinction between weaving, with a loom, and plaiting has a long history among ethnologists, and is rightly disputed by Polynesian women who work with fibres and consider themselves weavers and their work weaving; this article follows their view.) Mats of this kind served as either wrap-around skirts, or capes, particularly in wet weather when garments made from 'ahu could not be worn. Accessories and other items of adornment include six tipua, or eardrops (Te Papa FE003023/1–6).

Essential adornments in many Pacific cultures are hei and lei (necklaces or garlands). They are often used as part of dance costumes, given as gifts or worn for special occasions. Tahiti's popularity as a tourist destination is referenced through a remarkable set of hei (necklaces) made from shells (Fig. 10). They were given to the family of a young boy who, suffering from peritonitis during an ocean cruise through the islands in 1966, had to undergo an operation at the Clinique Cardella in Papeete. An English-speaking Tahitian, along with friends and nursing staff at the

clinic, presented the necklaces to Anton Coppens and his mother, Mary, when after a fortnight's stay they departed for New Zealand. The hei form a beautiful set, especially when arranged and viewed together. They are elegant in their composition and meticulous in their construction. Their specific period of production, as related through the Coppens family story, creates opportunities for locating the hei in narratives of tourism and travel, as well as interpersonal exchange. However, there are some other small accessions made in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries that reference the recent cultural history of the archipelago, and signal the increasingly transnational and multi-ethnic dimensions of the region's society.

Te Papa's collections represent twentieth-century Society Islands culture by highlighting tourism's influence and the creations of artists in a growing Tahitian diaspora. Today, there are artefacts in the museum made by people of Tahitian descent living in New Zealand in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.¹² According to the 2006 New Zealand census, 1329 people marked Tahitian as one of their ethnic groups (Statistics New Zealand 2006). This is a larger number than other long-established ethnic groups such as the I-Kiribati community (Statistics New Zealand and Ministry of Pacific Islands Affairs 2010). The claiming of Tahitian identity is conspicuous and represented in New Zealand's Parliament through MP Charles Chauvel, who is of Tahitian, Scottish and French descent (Whimp 2012: 276). In local community life, Tahitian people in Auckland have formed a cultural group called Tahiti Ia Ora (Walrond 2012) and Tahiti has its own pavilion at the annual Pasifika Festival in the city. The Ma'ohi (Tahitian) cultural influences filter through to activities in New Zealand's social and cultural life, such as Pan-Polynesian tattooing and waka ama (outrigger canoe racing), which originated in modern Tahiti and Hawai'i (Mallon 2012b: 302).

Contemporary material culture made by people of Tahitian ancestry is acquired for Te Papa's collections not only because it has been made by Tahitians, but also because it is part of wider cultural developments in New Zealand and the Pacific Islands. People of Tahitian ancestry are part of connected transnational communities. The term transnational is often used by social scientists to refer to how communities can be made up of people connected to one place (in this case Tahiti), and who sustain connections with this place from a range of other places to which they have moved. They are considered a transnational population because they maintain ties and exchange goods, ideas and



Fig. 10 Hei (shell necklace), Society Islands, 1960s, seashell, fibre, length 1050 mm. Artist unknown. Gift of Anton Coppens, 2009 (Te Papa FE012425).

information across national borders that may or may not include the place of origin.

Transnational populations and their connections are represented in the Te Papa collection through the work of people such as tifaifai/tivaevae (quilt) makers Pauline Maono and Ngatuaine Utia, New Zealand-based fashion designer Jean Clarkson, and artist Michel Tuffery. The tivaevae manu (appliqué quilt) seen in Fig. 11 was cut, designed and started by Pauline Maono from Tahiti, and finished by her Cook Islander relative Ngatuaine Utia in New Zealand in the 1980s, and was made to acknowledge the connection between the Tahitian and Cook Islands families. The merio (mermaid) pattern is usually associated with Tahitian forms of tifaifai but makes a conspicuous appearance in this unusual work. This tivaevae manu, as it would be described in the Cook Islands, was acquired by Te Papa in 2012 from Mimetua Tupangaia, the niece of Maono.

Two garments made by a fashion and textile designer of the Tahitian/Pitcairn diaspora are 'Prince of Peace' (Fig. 12) and 'Silk and Banana Bark' ensemble (Te Papa FE012021/1–4). Jean Clarkson is a New Zealand-born fabric artist of

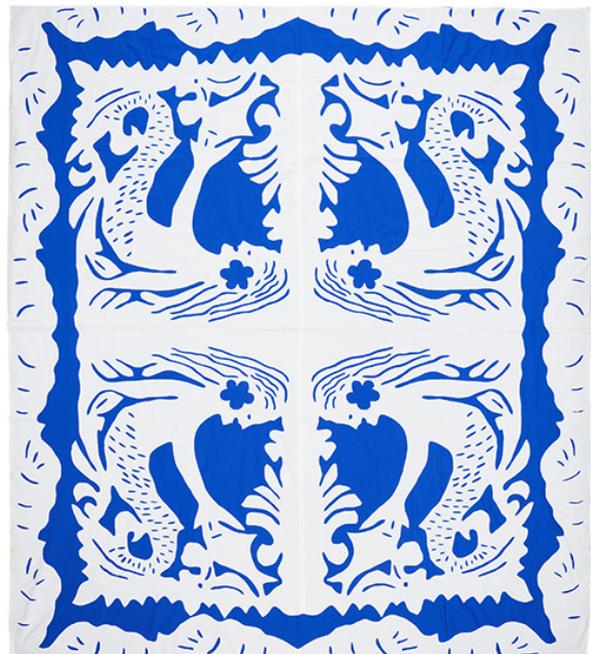


Fig. 11 Tivaevae manu (appliqué quilt), New Zealand, 1980s, cotton, 2540 × 2286 mm. Artists Pauline Maono and Ngatuaine Utia. Purchased 2012 (Te Papa FE012667).



Fig. 12 'Prince of Peace' (male costume), New Zealand, 1996, canvas – desutti, feather from the Norfolk Island feral rooster (*Gallus gallus*), PVA, dyes, screen printing. Artist Jean Clarkson. Purchased 2007 (Te Papa FE012022).

Tahitian/Scottish descent who takes inspiration from her heritage on her mother's side. Her mother was a Norfolk Islander and Jean is direct descendant of HMS *Bounty* mutineer Fletcher Christian and Mauatua, his Tahitian wife. Mauatua made block-printed tapa clothing on Pitcairn Island and Jean has based many of her contemporary designs on these patterns. She also employs the same direct leaf-print technique the Tahitians used in their early tapa.¹³ Both of Clarkson's garments were modelled at the New Zealand-based Style Pasifika (now Westfield Style Pasifika) fashion show in Auckland in 1996 and 1999, respectively. 'Prince of Peace' won the Traditionally Inspired section and the Supreme Award in 1996, and 'Silk and Banana Bark' was runner-up in the Evening Wear section in 1999.

'Prince of Peace' comprises four parts, including a cloak, lavalava, headpiece and peace banner. A highlight of the garment is the lavalava, made from unbleached calico and

screen-printed with a nuclear-free image that incorporates the words 'Niuklia Fri Pasifik' (Nuclear-free Pacific), which as the designer states in the object catalogue record 'is in pidgin English the common language of the Pacific People'. A banner accompanying the garment has the peace sign at its centre. A woven headpiece is made from black recycled plastic and calico strips, imitating natural leaves.

The 'Silk and Banana Bark' ensemble has four components, including a skirt, a headdress, a woven bodice and a cloak. The skirt is made from light parachute silk that fills with air as the model walks down the runway. The headdress and bodice are made from banana bark. Screen-printed photographic images of the woven bark feature along the edges and down the middle of the back of the cloak, which is adorned with shells, textiles and feathers.

New Zealand-born artist Michel Tuffery describes himself as a Polynesian artist. He has a Samoan mother and



Fig. 13 *First Contact* (digital artwork), New Zealand, 2012. Artist Michel Tuffery MNZM, New Zealand International Arts Festival 2012 at Te Papa, Wellington, Aotearoa NZ (photo: Gareth Moon, Nektar Films; reproduced courtesy of the artist).



Rarotongan and Tahitian father. Te Papa has many of his works in its collection, including prints, a painting, and the sculptural works *Pisupo lua afe* (*Corned beef* 2000) (1994) and *Asiasi II* (2000). *Night Dance in Christkeke* (2007) is a painting that reimagines an image made during one of Cook's expeditions to the Pacific. It is one of a series of works by Tuffery exploring the history of cultural exchanges that took place during these momentous eighteenth-century voyages.

In 2012, Te Papa hosted the exhibition of a large-scale digital artwork created by Tuffery and projected upon Te Papa's western external wall. *First Contact* featured images from Te Papa's collections and those of other museums and libraries (Fig. 13). A significant part of the narrative relates to the story of Tupaia, a priest and navigator from Ra'iatea in the Society Islands who joined Cook's first voyage in 1769 (Salmond 2003, 2012). Promotional material for *First Contact* explained that "by bringing the "inside out" from Te Papa's extensive collections, Tuffery breathed new life into historical material recorded by the Pacific ambassador Tupaia, and the scientists and artists from Captain James Cook's three epic voyages – linking them with his own distinctive works and 21st-century visual and sound bites" (New Zealand International Arts Festival 2012).

Also captivated by Tupaia and his relationship to James Cook is New Zealand costume designer Jo Torr, who made

Fig. 14 *Tupaia's Paintbox – Barter*, New Zealand, 2005, machine-embroidered images on tapa cloth (barkcloth), 960×530 mm. Artist Jo Torr. Purchased 2006 (Te Papa FE011973).

a series of waistcoat patterns out of tapa cloth. They reference a similar tapa waistcoat now in the collections of the Mitchell Library in Sydney, Australia, which Cook's wife, Elizabeth, was embroidering for him before his death in Hawai'i. Torr has embroidered her version of tapa waistcoat patterns with reproductions of drawings made by Tupaia during his travels with Cook (Fig. 14), aligning the personalities and histories of these key cultural encounters through time, image and material.

As Torr is not Tahitian, her works may not interest the cultural essentialist, but they illustrate the type of cultural and historical entanglements that engage contemporary artists from a range of ethnic backgrounds. These histories have inspired non-indigenous historians and writers for generations. They have also inspired artists, not only in the moments of encounter as experienced by William Hodges and Sydney Parkinson on Cook's voyages, but across the decades and centuries beyond those moments. The work of contemporary artists continues a tradition very much rooted in the Pacific and the European imagination. Te Papa's collections are developing in ways that reflect this.

Marquesas Islands

The Marquesas, comprising nine raised islands, are also part of French Polynesia and are located 1500 km northeast of Tahiti. Spaniard Álvaro de Mendaña was the first European to sight the islands in 1595, naming them Las Marquesas de Mendoza. Today, the indigenous people of the islands use the name Te Henua'enana, meaning 'The Land of the People' (Hooper 2006: 151).

The largest accession of material culture from this region came to Te Papa with the Oldman acquisition of 1948, although a small number of items were subsequently redistributed to the Auckland, Canterbury and Otago museums. The first objects related to the Marquesas and acquired by the Colonial Museum were a group of plaster casts taken of stone sculptures called tiki ke'a (human images) and painted to resemble the originals (Te Papa FE000302/1–4).

Tiki are found frequently in the carved historical stonework of the Marquesas Islands, and range in size from the monumental to the very small and portable. They featured on ancient me'ae (sacred ceremonial sites), where they could be presented to etua (ancestral deities). Tiki were also found in private households, where they were treasured personal items with sacred qualities (Kjellgren & Ivory 2005: 41). Images of tiki continued to be made in the Society and

Marquesas islands throughout the twentieth century and to the present day. Although their religious significance has diminished since the nineteenth century and with the introduction of Christianity, they remain powerful signifiers of contemporary cultural identities in the region. They decorate tourist resorts and are sold as souvenir items, and images of tiki are printed on pareu (wrap-around garment) and shirts, and appear on tattooed bodies.

The plaster tiki ke'a in Te Papa's collection were made in the 1880s. In the *Twenty-second annual report of the Colonial Museum and Laboratory*, mention is made of a collection of 'models, moulds and casts' produced for the *Indian and Colonial Exhibition* held in London in 1886. Four casts are listed, two described as 'Human Figure' and two as 'Two Human Figures, attached by their backs'. The records indicate that the originals were in the Sir George Grey collection and that 'extra copies can be made, which will be available for exchange' (Hector 1887: 33 and 36). It is not clear, but it appears that the moulds and subsequent casts were created at the instigation of the Colonial Museum director, Sir James Hector.¹⁴ He was a principal organiser of the New Zealand contribution to the *Indian and Colonial Exhibition*, which included the Māori pataka (storehouse) Te Takinga, along with numerous other taonga Māori from the Colonial Museum.

In the museum's annual report for the following year (1887–88), two casts of basalt human figures from the Marquesas are listed as being sent by the Colonial Museum to Melbourne for display in the New Zealand court of the Centennial International Exhibition (1888) (Hector 1889: 6). Although they are casts, it is interesting to note their selection for the exhibition and their subsequent registration (around 1912) into the museum's collection. The Marquesan tiki ke'a may have been selected for exhibition because of their visual affinities to Māori hei tiki and other similar artefacts. This would have pointed to some kind of cultural connection between East Polynesia and New Zealand. However, the catalogues for the London and Melbourne exhibitions do not provide evidence to support this.

There is also a genuine stone tiki ke'a in the Te Papa collection (Fig. 15). It is a small double figurine carved from a heavy, close-grained volcanic stone. The figures have large round eyes in relief and arms across their chests. They are joined to each other through the back of their heads. The tiki ke'a is one of two items (the other is a tahi, or fan) that were collected during a 'yachting cruise' in 1881 by the grandfather of Mr C.J. Lambert of Tunbridge Wells, England. Both



Fig. 15 Left: tiki ke'a (carved human form), Marquesas Islands, 1800s, stone, height 130 mm. Artist unknown. Oldman collection. Gift of the New Zealand government, 1992 (Te Papa OL000185). Right: tiki ke'a (carved human form), Marquesas Islands, c. 1885, casting plaster, height 150 mm. Artist unknown (Te Papa FE000302/3).

items end up in the Oldman collection and subsequently at the Dominion Museum.

Another example of a stone tiki from the Oldman collection is much larger in size and could well have sat on an ancient me'ae (Te Papa OL000181). According to Oldman's catalogue records, it was collected on the Krajewski expedition of 1908. This annotation may be referring to André Krajewski (Krajewski), born in 1886 in Warsaw when this part of Poland was incorporated into the Russian Empire. According to historian Elena Govor (Govor to Mallon, 24 October 2012), Krajewski was a man of means and travelled extensively in the South Pacific between 1907 and 1913 and after the First World War. He was a banker, probably based in Papeete.¹⁵ There is evidence in Oldman's (2004) catalogue that Krajewski also collected artefacts in Hawai'i, but this is where the paper trail goes cold. At time of writing, we were unable to uncover any further information about Krajewski or the nature of the 1908 expedition.

A more recent acquisition with a verifiable but unusual history is a painted plaster mannequin of a nineteenth-

century Marquesan toa (warrior) (Fig. 16). For nearly 45 years, the toa was a permanent fixture of the Dominion Museum Pacific displays and remains so now at Te Papa. It has served as the ideal model or prop to contextualise Marquesan headdresses, adornments and weapons in the museum's holdings. The mannequin was made in 1959 by museum display artist Gordon White in collaboration with Terence Barrow, museum ethnologist at the time (1948–65). It was built up from a shop-window dummy with the head of a young Samoan man cast from life (MacKay 1973: 2). A photograph of the mannequin appears in Barrow's *Art and life in Polynesia* (1972: 92).

Despite its long history in the museum the mannequin was registered into the collection only in 2007, as an example of 'classic' museum display techniques and an attempt at sensitive representation of a Polynesian body. It continues to provide a useful way of highlighting artefacts from the Oldman collection that relate to the presentation of the body and image of nineteenth-century Marquesan toa, as shown in Fig. 16 and described on p. 121:



Fig. 16 Mannequin (Marquesan warrior), New Zealand, 1959, casting plaster, height 1750 mm. Artist Gordon White (Te Papa FE012002).

- A The mannequin has worn three forms of headdress, including two feather headdresses and a pa'e kaha made from plates of turtle shell.
- B In the nineteenth century, pu taiana (ear ornaments) were worn through a hole pierced in the earlobe, with the decorated end projecting behind the ear. Pu taiana were made in several forms that are distinguishable by particular carved elements, including tiki forms. However, their basic construction consists of a cylinder of *Conus* shell from which a carved spur of whale bone or boar's tusk projects. Researchers believe that pu taiana were worn predominantly by women and only occasionally by men. Craftspeople used a range of materials to make these adornments but whale ivory was particularly highly prized. Whales were not captured in the Marquesas (Linton *in* Whimp 2008) but nineteenth-century European and American whalers provided a source of whales' teeth (Hooper 2006: 151).
- C Another form of personal adornment are ivi po'o, pieces of whale ivory that could be plain or intricately decorated. Examples featuring a carved human form are referred to as a tiki ivi po'o and are believed to represent ancestral deities. In the nineteenth century, people wore tiki ivi po'o around their necks on cord or in their hair. They also attached them to all manner of objects as decoration.
- D An accessory that is displayed with the toa is a container made from a large coconut with a thick domed wooden lid. It sits in a finely made plaited sennit carrier ornamented with ivi po'o and larger tiki ivi po'o. These ornaments were also tied to putona (shell trumpets) and incorporated into the design of fan handles and other treasured household items.
- E Putona were used throughout East Polynesia in the nineteenth century for signalling and summoning people together. *Charonia tritonis*, the shell from which this putona has been made, was preferred, although other shells were sometimes used. Putona are sounded by blowing into a hole at the pointed end of the shell or on the side, as in the case of the example in Te Papa (OL000199). Extremely fine plaited cords of coconut fibre provide lashings and a carrying strap. Attached to this is a carved bone toggle into which tufts of human hair are drawn together.
- F This warrior is carrying an u'u (club). These heavy clubs are carved with striking facial motifs on both sides. Several u'u in the museum's collection have handles with fine fibre bindings decorated with human hair. Hooper states

that u'u were collected in relatively large numbers in early nineteenth century and estimates that about 200 survive worldwide (Hooper 2006: 163). Carvers of u'u would create the characteristic dark patina by steeping the weapon in swamp mud and polishing it with coconut oil.

- G The mannequin was decorated with tattoo markings copied from the classic study of Marquesan art by Karl von den Steinen (1925–28). These images have faded with time but they help complete the whole ensemble.
- H Warriors wore body adornments made from twisted locks of human hair, bound at the bases with sennit and attached to a fibre cord.

Tapuvae (stilt steps) feature prominently in the collection and are examples of Marquesan carving as well as artefacts of indigenous sport. Former Te Papa ethnologist Robyn Watt has written about a pair of fake tapuvae in the collection that were forged in 1910 by English dealer James Edward Little and purchased by the museum (Watt 1982). Little was also a forger of Māori artefacts and apparently copied the tapuvae from an example in Oldman's collection that was still in England at the time. Watt's (1982) analysis has the aim of developing a set of diagnostic criteria for assessing other examples of forgery of wood carvings.

In 1984, the museum acquired a small collection of objects from Australia and the Pacific that belonged to former New Zealand Prime Minister Robert Muldoon (1921–92) and his wife, Thea. In 1979, Muldoon went on holiday to Tahiti, where he was gifted two staffs from people of the village of Pueu, in Tahiti Iti (Fig. 17).

They are carved in a Marquesan style and are probably typical of the type of product being made in Tahiti at the time mainly for foreign visitors. Muldoon's visit was well into a period where the tourist industry in Tahiti had grown dramatically following the opening of Faa'a Airport in 1961 and the development of the French nuclear

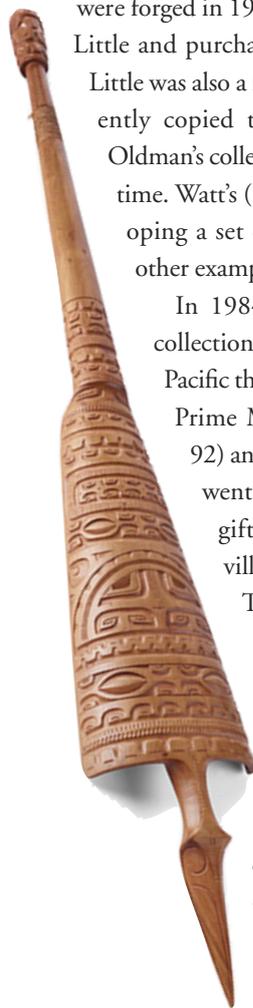


Fig. 17 Paddle staff, Society Islands/Marquesas, c. 1970s, wood, length 1190 mm. Artist unknown. Gift of Robert Muldoon 1984 (Te Papa FE007973).

testing programme. Between 1960 and 1970, visitor numbers went from 4000 to 50,000 a year (*Encyclopédie de la Polynésie française. Vol. 8* in Stevenson 1990), and tourism became a major influence on cultural production throughout the region. According to Carol Ivory (1999), most tourist articles for sale in Tahiti in the late twentieth century originated in other parts of French Polynesia. The expansion of the tourist market in Tahiti influenced the development of carving styles and products from the nearby Marquesas, Tuamotus, Austral and Gambier islands (Ivory 1999: 323). The two staffs collected by Muldoon were probably a product of these flourishing markets. Today, in woodcarving as in tattooing, there is almost a pan-East Polynesian style, in which Tahitian and distinctly Marquesan material can be difficult to differentiate.

In the last 20 years, Te Papa curators have not been actively collecting Marquesan material culture. In contemporary New Zealand society, the awareness and presence of Marquesan culture is not as prominent as, or discernible from, that from Tahiti. Historically, the collecting focus for Pacific Cultures curators has been on the communities with the greater population base in New Zealand. However, Marquesan culture has some contemporary visibility through tattoo designs influenced or copied from books or seen on television. There is a wide and growing international interest in Marquesan tattooing styles, and for several years in the 2000s the Tattoonesia tattoo festival was a regular occurrence in Tahiti that attracted the participation of Māori and other New Zealand-based tattooists. Until recently, the frequency of Te Papa staff contact with Marquesan people has been limited, as the difficulty of accessing the islands has been discouraging and expensive. However, with the development of better transport this situation could change.

Pitcairn Islands

The Pitcairn Islands consist of Pitcairn Island, Henderson Island (a bird sanctuary), and Ducie and Oeno islands (both low-lying coral atolls). They are located between the Society Islands and Rapa Nui (Easter Island). In English maritime history, they are most famous as the home of the mutineers of the Royal Navy ship HMS *Bounty*, who settled on Pitcairn in 1790. The mutineers were joined by six Ma'ohi men, 12 women and a baby girl. Today, the descendants of the mutineers still live on the island. Politically, the islands are administered by a governor who is the British High Commissioner to New Zealand.



Fig. 18 Adze blade, Pitcairn Island, date unknown, basalt, length 200 mm. Maker unknown. Gift of H. Lukins 1946 (Te Papa FE006287).

The oldest items from Pitcairn in Te Papa's collection are a small selection of stone tools (Fig. 18). The island was once a significant quarry and source for stone tools for indigenous people in the region, and adzes and blades made from the local high-quality fine-grade basalt were part of an exchange network that included Mangareva and nearby Henderson Island (Turner 2010). The earliest items acquired from Pitcairn came to the museum in August 1868, with documents recording the receipt of a 'Piece of Tappa Cloth from Pitcairn Island', acquired from Mr E. Elliott (Hector 1869: 5). Another piece of barkcloth is attributed to Pitcairn on the basis of a label reading 'Tapa cloth (sheeting) from Pitcairn Is, 1855 M.W.'.

Pitcairn Island's isolated location means it is only occasionally visited by ships. In the period after the Second World War until the 1960s, ships would call up to 40 times a year. According to maritime historian Gavin McLean, 'Pitcairn is a roadstead port (that is, there is no harbour, so ships lie in the open sea, or roadstead). For two hours, on average, passengers hung over the railings while Pitcairners sold them stamps and souvenirs and loaded supplies into their wooden longboats' (McLean 2012: 124). The sale of painted seashells, carvings and weaving were an important source of income for Pitcairn Islanders. They also used them to barter with ship crews for luxury goods, and foods (McBean 1964: 39).

Te Papa's collection of Pitcairn objects includes examples of decorated shells, some woodcarving, and pieces of



Fig. 19 Painted seashell, Pitcairn Island, 1900s, spider conch shell, 280 × 175 mm. Artist unknown. Gift of Erskine College, 1986 (Te Papa FE008660).

weaving and barkcloth. They give an indication of what was made on the island over the course of a few decades but are also markers of the ships and people who were passing through the region. Two painted clam shells (Te Papa FE008709/1–2) were collected by Arthur Phillips, a marine engineer of the Port Line, a passenger and cargo shipping company. During the Second World War, he was often part of shipping convoys and voyages between Australia, New Zealand, the American west coast and the United Kingdom. The shells are decorated with hand-painted flowers and foliage, and the words ‘Pitcairn Is’. Another example of this kind of souvenir is a painted spider conch shell, originally from the collection of Erskine College in Wellington, New Zealand (Fig. 19). There is also a painted fan collected by a family of immigrants to New Zealand in June 1957. Professor Douglas and Margaret Kidd set out from England aboard the ship *MV Rangitane* of the New Zealand Shipping Company, and it made a stop at Pitcairn Island en route. In 2003, the fan was presented to Te Papa by their daughter Alison Lloyd Davies.

In the early decades of the twenty-first century, the arts and crafts on Pitcairn continue to play a small but important economic role for the island’s population. The same types of objects appear to have persisted for decades. These include indigenous and non-indigenous crafts such as weaving, tapa-making, carving, box-making, and wooden models of long-boats and the *Bounty*. The sale of postage stamps is another

source of income. However, in the age of the Internet and improved telecommunications, people no longer need to travel to Pitcairn to acquire these collectibles as they can now be ordered online through websites that Pitcairn Islanders have created.

In 2009–10, the Pacific Cultures team at Te Papa were fortunate to meet the ‘Ahu Sistas – a group of women descended from the eighteenth-century mutineers and the Ma’ohi men and women who accompanied them to Pitcairn Island. The group comprises Pauline Reynolds, Meralda Warren, Jean Clarkson and Sue Pearson, who are researchers, writers and artists. ‘Ahu refers to the barkcloth made on Pitcairn, of which Meralda Warren is the foremost practitioner. The making of ‘ahu stopped on Pitcairn around the 1940s, and Warren has been leading a small but determined revival of the craft there. Some of her decorated pieces have found a place in museum and private collections in Europe and America.

In July 2011, Warren was a keynote speaker at the Māori and Pacific Textile Symposium held at Te Papa, and she was joined there by the other ‘Ahu Sistas. Te Papa curators took the opportunity to acquire two pieces of ‘ahu made by Warren for the museum’s collection. One of the ‘ahu is undecorated, while the other is hand-painted and titled *Woven through time* (Fig. 20). It is made from six panels of cloth and depicts aspects of Pitcairn life. Included in the composition are images of hibiscus and frangipani flowers,



Fig. 20 'Ahu (tapa cloth), *Woven through time*, Pitcairn Island, 2011, bark cloth, dyes, 107 × 150 mm. Artist Meralda Warren. Purchased 2011 (Te Papa FE012634).



Fig. 21 Eei (tapa beater), Pitcairn Island, 1800s, whale bone, length 358 mm. Artist unknown. Collection development loan, 1964 (Te Papa TMP012489).

and of petroglyphs left on Pitcairn Island by earlier inhabitants, and at the centre is the ship *Bounty*. Other elements depicted include a fishhook, an una (coconut grater), an ometea (wooden dish), and a stick for husking coconut, a hatchet and an e'e (tapa beater). Te Papa also acquired examples of contemporary woven baskets. These were made by Meralda's mother, Mavis Warren, who had been weaving for 60 years. The selection includes several

lidded baskets and a mobile phone cover, all woven from dried pandanus leaf and piory thatch, which is grown and processed on Pitcairn Island.

The 'Ahu Sistas' research into their cultural heritage has shed light on a mysterious 'ahu beater made from whale bone on long-term deposit at Te Papa (Fig. 21). 'Ahu beaters were used to beat soaked bark into thinner pieces of cloth. In Tahiti, the 'ahu beater is named i'e, in Tubuai it is i'e tutu and on Pitcairn it is e'e or eei (Reynolds 2008: 15). The women on Pitcairn made and used both wooden and whalebone e'e. Reynolds (2008) has identified several examples of whalebone e'e in museums. These are identical in shape and size, have the same number and depth of grooves as the wooden e'e, and at the end of the handle is a Z or an N, which appears to be a mark of ownership; other small marks on the face of the beater also indicate possession. The e'e in Te Papa is marked in this way, as are two further e'e owned by Meralda Warren on Pitcairn Island (Reynolds 2011: 3).

Rapa Nui (Easter Island)

Rapa Nui (Easter Island) is about 1500 km east of Pitcairn Island and was settled around 1600 years ago. In 1722, Dutch explorer Jacob Roggeveen was the first European to

make contact with the island, and in 1770 Felipe González de Anedo claimed it for Spain. Through the nineteenth century, the local indigenous population suffered and greatly reduced in size due to disease and the impact of black-birding raids for the Peruvian slave trade. Chile annexed the island in 1888 and today administers the island as one of its provinces.

The Rapa Nui collection at Te Papa is small. There is a group of artefacts from the nineteenth century, and recent artefacts from the 1990s that reflect a cultural renaissance among Rapa Nui people. A key artefact is a moai kavakava, one of the earlier documented figures of its type, having reached England in 1828 or 1835 (Davidson 2004: 252) (Fig. 22). It is thought to have been collected during Frederick William Beechey's expedition on the HMS *Blossom* in 1825. Expanding on Janet Davidson's research, we have found that while Beechey's engagement with Rapa Nui was brief and confrontational, he made some direct observations that suggest one or more figures may have been secured by members of the expedition. He writes that the shore party was inundated by people swimming out to their boat to offer them bananas, potatoes and yams, idols and nets in barter. He mentions that some of these items were actually 'thrown into the boat' by swimmers. Later, he records that 'One of the natives offered an image for sale, and being disappointed in the price he expected, refused to part with it; but a by-stander, less scrupulous, snatched it from him without ceremony, and parted with it for the original offer without a word of remonstrance from his country man' (Beechey 1832: 44).

There seem to have been few opportunities to develop Te Papa's holdings of Rapa Nui material culture beyond the acquisition of the Oldman collection. The Oldman items retained at the museum include a small obsidian tool (Te Papa OL000238/.S), an ao (dance paddle) (Te Papa OL001116) and two ua (clubs or staffs). The majority of Oldman artefacts from Rapa Nui were deposited in the Canterbury Museum in Christchurch when the collection was originally divided up. It was not until the mid-1990s and early 2000s that any new accessions were made by Te Papa.

The more recent items acquired over this period include four woodcarvings (Te Papa FE016055–58) by Bene Aukara Tuki Pate, an artist based on Rapa Nui. They were brought by Pate to the *Tu Fa'atasi* exhibition, part of the programme of the New Zealand Festival of the Arts held in Wellington in 1996. Te Papa purchased the pieces from the artist through



Fig. 22 Moai kavakava (human figure), Rapa Nui (Easter Island), 1800s, wood, bone, shell, obsidian, height 405 mm. Artist unknown. Oldman collection. Gift of the New Zealand government, 1992 (Te Papa OL000342).



Fig. 23 Left: *Ika Tangata* (*Fish Man*), Rapa Nui (Easter Island), 1996, wood, length 410 mm. Artist Bene Pate. Purchased 1996 (Te Papa FE010657). Right: paoa (hand club), Rapa Nui (Easter Island), 1996, wood, length 500 mm. Artist Bene Pate. Purchased 1996 (Te Papa FE010656).

the exhibition organisers, Siva Lava Productions, and hosted him briefly at the museum. Pate's works are inspired by older, well-established carving forms such as the moai kavakava mentioned above, and feature what are now distinctive elements of indigenous style and imagery (Fig. 23). However, they also incorporate his own artistic innovations and interpretations, in the sense that there has always been variation in the seemingly homogenous style of Rapa Nui carved works (Heyerdahl 1979).

Pate's work complements examples of contemporaneous carvings from other Pacific Islands groups in the collections. The market for contemporary carvings from Pacific peoples is awash with product due to the influence of mass production (sometimes offshore and factory-based) aimed at

tourists, and it is often difficult to find well-established artists who are recognised as such in their own communities. This is an area of cultural production that Te Papa's Pacific Cultures curators would like to continue to collect selectively. The *Tu Fa'atasi* exhibition was an unexpected opportunity to acquire contemporary items from Rapa Nui. However, Pate's presence at the festival was part of a mid-1990s phenomenon where Rapa Nui people were increasingly being invited to international festivals, exhibitions and cultural events. Historian Steven R. Fischer notes that the 1990s was a period when Rapa Nui was controversially designated a World Heritage Site by UNESCO (1996); as a result, tourist visits doubled from 4961 in 1990 to 10,968 in 1996, and 'Easter Islanders themselves were experiencing the world' (Fischer 2005: 244).

As part of this re-emergence of Rapa Nui culture, Sean Mallon saw several examples of dance costumes worn by Rapa Nui performers at the 7th Festival of Pacific Arts in Samoa in 1996, and in 2004 at the 9th Festival of Pacific Arts in Palau. In 2005, Te Papa acquired dance costumes from Rapa Nui to feature in the exhibition *Culture Moves! Dance costumes from across the Pacific* (September 2005–August 2006). The groundwork for the acquisition was made possible by three developments: first, the establishment of contacts at the museum in Rapa Nui by the director of History and Pacific Cultures, Claudia Orange;¹⁶ second, the availability of Internet and email communication; and third, the Spanish-language skills of Te Papa staff at the time. *Culture Moves! Dance costumes from across the Pacific* was curated by Kolokesa Māhina-Tuai (curator Pacific Cultures). She negotiated the acquisition of the costume initially through Maine Pakarati (third secretary consul at the Embassy of Chile in New Zealand), who used her contacts to identify a costume maker, Sara Roe, in Rapa Nui. The process was then assisted by Francisco Torres Hochstetter (director, Museo Antropológico P. Sebastián Englert), who acted on behalf of Mrs Roe, and assisted her in freighting the costumes to New Zealand.

Māhina-Tuai acquired three complete Rapa Nui dance costumes: a kahu pipi (female dance costume), a hami (male dance costume) (Fig. 24) and a kahu kakaka (male dance costume). The costumes are made from local materials, including kakaka (banana fibre) and shells, and imported materials, such as the feathers and nylon. When dressing a performer, body paints and pigments are often applied to complete the costume. Certain dance performances involve



Fig. 24 Hami (male dance costume), Rapa Nui (Easter Island), 2005, banana fibre, mahute fibre, chicken feathers, black shells, glue. Artist Sara Pakarati. Purchased 2005 (Te Papa FE011961/1).

the use of accessories such as *ao* and *rapa* (dance paddles) and *ua*. The *Culture Moves!* exhibition was the catalyst for Te Papa's Pacific Cultures curators to acquire several complete Pacific Islands dance costumes for the collections.¹⁷ It was also an opportunity to explore questions about the ongoing representation of dance and other forms of intangible cultural heritage in the museum (Māhina-Tuai 2006).

East Polynesia and other collections

It is important that researchers visiting Te Papa do not limit their enquiries about East Polynesia to the Pacific Cultures collection. The historical narratives relating to the region are mediated by objects in other collection areas of the museum. As our other articles developed from the survey of the Pacific collections have demonstrated, objects needn't be locked into being representative of some mythic classic culture. While it is true that the artefacts from East Polynesia speak most directly to their cultures of origin at specific historical moments, they also speak to the stories of cultural encounter, private collectors, museums and other institutions. As they circulate and change hands, they accumulate associations and become storied objects.

The few examples that follow highlight how East Polynesia, and particularly Tahiti and the Society Islands, are not just the preserve of the Pacific Cultures collection. Like histories, objects mediate encounters where material cultures overlap and intersect, often becoming entangled with each other in surprising ways. Together, the artefacts in collections stores across the museum remind us that the history of East Polynesia is intertwined with the material culture and artistic traditions of settlers and travellers from places both within and outside the Pacific. The Pacific Cultures collection can tell a small part of this story, but a wider view of the entire holdings of Te Papa opens up a rich spectrum of enquiry and opportunity.

Botanical collections

A remarkable example of a plant specimen in the Botanical collection is *Tupeia antarctica* (G. Forst.) Cham. & Schltdl., a species named after Tupaia, the priest and navigator from Ra'iatea who joined the first expedition of James Cook to the Pacific in 1769. The specimen was collected during this voyage in 1770 at Totaranui (Queen Charlotte Sound, New

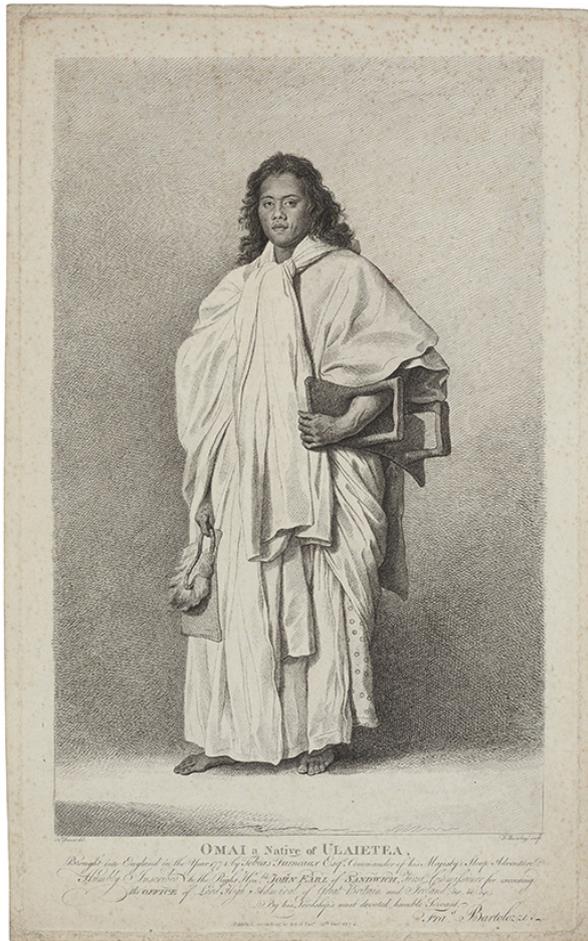


Fig. 25 Engraving, *Omai a native of Ulaietea*, England, 1774, ink, paper. Artist Francesco Bartolozzi. Gift of Horace Fildes 1937 (Te Papa Collection 1992-0035-1801).



Fig. 26 *Poetua [Poetua]*, daughter of Oreo, chief of Ulaietea, one of the Society Isles, 1785, oil on canvas. Artist John Webber. Purchased 2010 (Te Papa 2010-0029-1).

Zealand). Davidson (2004: 248) has referred to *T. antarctica*, with an illustration of the specimen held in Te Papa from the Banks and Solander collection (see also Brownsey 2012), and Tupaia's experiences on Cook's expedition are documented by Salmond (2012: 57–75). Although scholars have discovered and authenticated drawings made by Tupaia, there are no known portraits of him. This makes *T. antarctica* a rare memorial to the man and a tangible record of his visit to New Zealand.

Art collections

In Te Papa's Art collection, East Polynesia is represented mainly by eighteenth- and nineteenth-century artworks (McAloon: 2009), which are important markers in European traditions of representation in, and of, the Pacific. A highlight is the portrait of Mai, or Omai as he was called by Europeans

(Fig. 25). He was a young man of Huahine, near Tahiti, who so charmed members of James Cook's second Pacific voyage that they took him to England with them. In 1774, he became the first person from the Pacific Islands to visit Britain. English people saw Mai as the very embodiment of the 'noble savage' – an ideal associated with French philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–78). Mai was presented to King George III and sat for portraits by leading artists of the day. In the Te Papa print, Mai holds a Tahitian tuarua (headrest), similar to one in the museum's collections. He returned to Tahiti in 1776, on Cook's third voyage, but died soon after.

In 2010, Te Papa acquired a portrait of Poetua by John Webber (1751–93), one of the artists on Cook's third voyage (Fig. 26). Poetua was a Tahitian princess who was kidnapped briefly by James Cook and held below decks, where the sketches for this portrait were made. Part of the portrait's



Fig. 27 Poster, 'Tahiti', New Zealand, 1950s, paper, ink, 970 × 630 mm. Artist Arthur Thompson. Purchased 2001 (Te Papa GH009292).

significance is its value as a painting connected with Cook's voyages, but it also holds an important place in the history of representation of Pacific peoples – indeed, the portrait may have set the conventions for images made in the region ever since (Christie's 2008: 12). Poetua is the perfect accompaniment for another large-scale portrait by Webber of James Cook, which is also at Te Papa. Together, they are key portraits in the history of art and cultural encounter in the Pacific.

In a contemporary vein, the painting *He purapura i ruia mai i Rangiatea* (*The seed scattered abroad from Rangiatea*) (1985) by Māori artist Robyn Kahukiwa is an image that speaks to the origin stories of the ancestors of Māori who settled New Zealand from East Polynesia. Rangiatea (Ra'iātea) is widely believed to be the home of the ancient voyager Kupe and the other Pacific people who followed his path to New Zealand; Māori often refer to this homeland as Hawaiki. Kahukiwa's painting expresses this link between

Māori and their homeland, using the forms of carved poutokomanawa (centre posts in meeting houses).

Photography collections

East Polynesian-related photography holdings at Te Papa include postcards and photographs mainly taken in Tahiti and the Society Islands. There is a small collection of black and white lantern glass slides by late nineteenth-century Auckland-based photographer Josiah Martin (1843–1916). He was known predominantly for his portraits and landscapes of New Zealand, but his work includes a few East Polynesian locations, including Bora Bora, Moorea, Papeete and Ra'iātea. Also of note is a series of photographs of Pitcairn Islanders taken by Eric Lee-Johnson (1908–93) around 1938. Lee-Johnson and his family called in at Pitcairn during a journey from England to Wellington, and these portraits and scenes capture what were surely fleeting moments of barter and conversation during the stopover.

In 2001, a large collection of images by renowned New Zealand photographer Brian Brake (1927–88) were gifted to Te Papa by Raymond Wai-Man Lau (McCredie 2010). Many of these images appeared in *Art of the Pacific* by Brake *et al.* (1979), in which he included photographs of East Polynesian artefacts in Te Papa, and the Auckland and Otago museums.

History collections

The New Zealand history collections have artefacts associated with tourism and protest movements against nuclear testing in East Polynesia. The poster 'Tahiti, Fly TEAL' (Fig. 27) is part of a collection of posters by commercial artist Arthur Thompson (1915–97) documenting the visual representation of New Zealand and the South Pacific as tourist destinations in the 1950s. The airline TEAL (Tasman Empire Airways Limited) was established in 1939 and flew routes through the South Pacific. Te Papa history curator Stephanie Gibson collected the posters for their potential to illustrate 1950s graphics and the commercial artwork of one of the main airlines operating in the South Pacific at the time. Gibson has also been active in collecting posters related to nuclear testing and its associated protest movements in the Pacific. Some of this material relates to French Polynesia and the testing programme that took place there between 1966 and 1996. The collection also includes anti-nuclear testing themed badges, T-shirts and other ephemera.



Fig. 28 Entrance to *Tangata o le Moana* exhibition, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, 2007 (photo: Norman Heke; Te Papa MA_I.115972).

East Polynesia material culture on display

Since the opening of Te Papa in 1997, material culture from, or associated with, East Polynesia has been displayed in many exhibitions.¹⁸ The objects and cultural treasures have provided a medium to tell stories about local and global processes and events, and ordinary and extraordinary objects. We briefly survey some of these exhibitions here, with an emphasis on the current long-term Pacific exhibition *Tangata o le Moana: the story of Pacific people and New Zealand* (2007–present) (Fig. 28).

In Te Papa's opening Pacific exhibition *Mana Pasifika: celebrating Pacific Cultures* (1997–2007), the ethnographic and largely comparative cultural displays included historical artefacts from the Society Islands, Marquesas Islands and Rapa Nui. For example, the Tahitian mourning costume was displayed in a case about costume and regalia, as was the fully adorned Marquesan toa. The moai kavakava from Rapa Nui was one of several ancestor figures in a section on

indigenous forms of religion, and a tatai (drum) from the Marquesas appeared in a display on musical instruments. A key aim of the exhibition was to put a significant number of the museum's most noteworthy cultural treasures on display in the confined space available to celebrate the survival of the artefacts but also the cultures that made them. *Mana Pasifika* achieved this to some extent, although the museum's subsequent short-term exhibition programmes allowed curators further opportunities.

One short-term exhibition after opening of *Mana Pasifika* that included East Polynesian artefacts was *Jewelled: adornments from across the Pacific* (2001–02 and 2005).¹⁹ In the same period, in 2002, the large-scale temporary exhibition *Voyagers: discovering the Pacific* allowed for the display of indigenous and non-indigenous artefacts associated with the exploration of the Pacific Islands over 40,000 years. East Polynesian artefacts linked to the voyages of James Cook featured prominently, including original paintings of East Polynesian scenes by artist William Hodge, borrowed from overseas institutions. The exhibition offered a range of

perspectives on the history of voyaging and exploration in the Pacific. Starting with the first Polynesian navigators and continuing through to Cook and contemporary indigenous seafarers, *Voyagers* deployed natural history specimens, objects, artworks, films and interactives. It positioned and connected New Zealand as one of many destinations and departure points for voyagers in the Pacific.

As mentioned above, the exhibition *Culture Moves!* was the catalyst for acquiring and displaying examples of Rapa Nui dance costumes, something that may not have taken place without the development of new relationships and the added motivation of an exhibition opportunity. Marquesan adornments made from dolphin teeth were included in the international touring exhibition *Whales / Tohorā* (2007–08), which explored the biology of whales and their significance in Māori and other Pacific Islands cultures.

The historical and contemporary connections with East Polynesia are very important for museums in New Zealand. In the context of Te Papa, the idea of the nation and telling a national story are primary concerns. Collections from, or associated with, East Polynesia can play a significant part in these narratives. While some of the museum's collections are valued for their connections with the voyages of James Cook, or as art objects or ethnographic specimens, they do more than illustrate past artefacts or curiosities of Pacific peoples. They give material form to indigenous and non-indigenous histories of travel and settlement.

While New Zealand's twentieth-century connections with the Pacific often emphasise colonial ties to Samoa, the Cook Islands and Niue, around 1000 years ago the islands of influence were those in East Polynesia. Today, objects and stories connected to these eastern islands continue to shed light on this history. For example, in the exhibition *Tangata o le Moana: the story of Pacific people and New Zealand* (2007–present) museum visitors are presented with stories about the first settlers in New Zealand, the ancestors of contemporary tangata Māori (Māori people) (Mallon *et al.* 2012). A to'ō (staff) from the Marquesas Islands displayed in the exhibition illustrates the importance of genealogy in tracing ancestral connections to East Polynesia, and rests alongside a Māori tokotoko (staff). Some Pacific societies place special value on genealogies and histories that have been passed down orally. They use them to remember and reaffirm their relationships to other people and places, and to justify claims to leadership, land, culture and identities. The to'ō in *Tangata o le Moana* is constructed from plaited coconut fibre and is part of the Oldman collection. The knots in the strings of the

to'ō were probably used by Marquesas Islanders to help them recall people and events when reciting their genealogy and stories of their past, in much the same way as the Māori tokotoko was used.

The to'ō (Marquesas) and tokotoko (Māori) resemble each other in purpose and are connected linguistically in name, as are tiki (Māori), ti'i (Society Islands) and tiki (Marquesas), and vaka (East Polynesia) and waka (Māori). These material manifestations of linguistic connections or shared origins have been useful to highlight the historical depth of relationships between Māori and other Pacific peoples. Sometimes, contemporary cultural politics, ambivalence or ignorance can overshadow these connections (Teaiwa & Mallon 2005: 207).

The first Pacific people who settled in Aotearoa/New Zealand encountered a place vastly different from their tropical homelands in East Polynesia. It was full of new materials, including new types of wood, stone and shells, as well as plants for fibre. These materials inspired changes in how the settlers created tools and adornments. However, many elements of design remained largely the same – as the objects in *Tangata o le Moana* reveal. These design links have helped archaeologists to identify relationships between Māori and other Pacific peoples. Examples included in the exhibition include toki and to'i (hafted adzes), weapons, tiki and ti'i, reel adornments and pendants, tattooing tools and fishhooks.

Another object used to effect in the exhibition is a large-scale model of an eighteenth-century tipaerua (double-hulled sailing canoe) from the Society Islands (Fig. 29).²⁰ The high stern and low prow of the tipaerua are design features that persist in contemporaneous Māori waka taua (war canoes) and waka hourua (double-hulled canoes) in Aotearoa/New Zealand. Notably, it is through the revival of indigenous navigation and ocean voyaging that Māori and East Polynesian peoples are reconnecting with each other. *Tangata o le Moana* accounts for this history. The 1973 launch of the Hawai'ian double-hulled sailing canoe *Hokule'a* inspired a surge of interest in indigenous forms of navigation across the Pacific. Since then, voyagers from Hawai'i, Aotearoa/New Zealand and the Cook Islands have retraced the sailing routes of their ancestors across the Pacific. Two voyaging initiatives between New Zealand and East Polynesia stand out. The first is the voyage of Matahi Brightwell, who built the waka hourua *Hawaiki-nui* and in 1985 sailed from Tahiti to New Zealand in 33 days. The crew of five had no support boat, radio contact, maps or



Fig. 29 Model tipaerua (double-hulled sailing canoe), Society Islands, in the *Tangata o le Moana* exhibition, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, 2007. Artists Izzat Design Ltd, Wellington (photo: Michael Hall; Te Papa MA_I.115664).

modern navigation devices, instead relying on the sailing techniques of their East Polynesian ancestors. In 1991, Hekenukumai Busby built *Te Aurere*. This waka hourua has made a series of epic voyages, retracing the paths of Kupe and other Pacific navigators, and voyaging along two sides of the Polynesian Triangle marking the outermost reaches of eastern Pacific settlement – New Zealand, Hawai‘i and Rapa Nui. At the time of writing, *Te Aurere* and another waka, *Ngahiraka Mai Tawhiti*, were on the final stage of a voyage to complete the triangle by sailing from New Zealand to Rapa Nui and back again.

The histories of East Polynesia are evident elsewhere in the museum beyond the dedicated Pacific Cultures collections display space. In 2010, Te Papa opened the long-term New Zealand history exhibition *Slice of Heaven: 20th century*

Aotearoa. Its connection with East Polynesia is through the history of nuclear testing and protest in the Pacific the late twentieth century. From 1966 to 1996, France conducted 190 nuclear tests at Moruroa and Fangataufa atolls. By the 1990s, New Zealand was a leading voice against nuclear testing in the Pacific region, and in 1987 it passed anti-nuclear legislation. The exhibition features a display called *Radioactive Pacific* and uses film footage and artefacts to discuss this history, which has profoundly shaped New Zealand’s international cultural and political identity (Fig. 30).

In 2011, the major temporary exhibition *Oceania: early encounters* featured artefacts from East Polynesia to illustrate a series of narratives around indigenous and European encounters in the Pacific. They included a model canoe, a ti‘i and a tuarua alongside European etchings and engravings of Pacific peoples and scenes. The accompanying art exhibition, *Oceania: imagining the Pacific*, was developed by the City Gallery Wellington and ran concurrently. Most recently, the Māori iwi (tribal) temporary exhibition *Tai Timu, Tai Pari, Tainui: journey of a people* (2012–14) highlights a large colour image of Ra‘iatea near its entrance, immediately positing the iwi’s origin story firmly in the Society Islands.

These exhibitions highlight how artefacts from, and associated with, East Polynesia have helped curators tell a national story in a national museum. A key emphasis has been on stories of origin, genealogy and settlement, and the connections between Māori and Ma‘ohi through language and material culture. However, the artefacts have also facilitated the telling of regional and global narratives of exploration, migration and settlement; colonisation and militarism, decolonisation and self-determination; and material culture and aesthetics. The collections don’t exist in a vacuum; they have told the story of the nation and demonstrated how it is connected both to the stories of other nations and to the global flows of history.

Outreach and community engagement

Outreach and community engagement around collections is a key focus and challenge of contemporary museum work. In-house activities and events, books, blogs, online publishing and television all take objects and stories from the collections to audiences outside the museum. The visits of researchers and cultural and community groups, and their



Fig. 32 Group Tauherenui from Parara, Tahiti Nui, during their visit to the Pacific Cultures collections storeroom, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, 2012 (photo: Grace Hutton).

brought to television and online audiences (via YouTube) stories of the Tahitian mourning costume at Te Papa and the artworks of Michel Tuffery.

The development of the Internet has been a major influence and access point for information about the museum's collections. Newell (2009) argues that digital and online sources have great potential to open up Pacific collections to East Polynesian and other Pacific peoples. This is happening already: the number of enquiries about the Pacific Collections we receive via email has trebled in recent years. Te Papa's *Collections online* database has helped facilitate this. Museum websites, collection catalogues and exhibitions online make the museum storerooms more accessible than ever before (Mallon 2007: 301–303; Newell 2009).

Between 2007 and 2012, 'through the door' visitors to Te Papa from East Polynesia also noticeably increased. Some visited as museum professionals, touring the Pacific Cultures collections store and/or contributing to the museum's events programme as performers in dance troupes. According

to Newell (2009), Te Papa is one of only four institutions to have received visits to their collection stores by Tahitians. Indigenous visitors to the collections in the past five years have included Te Makatu o Oatea Nui Marquesas (2008), staff of the Musée de Tahiti et des Îles (2008), Groupe Evangeliste de Tahiti and Cook Islands, Mo'orea Hururu's French Polynesia Group (2011) and Group Tauherenui Tahitinui (2012) (Fig. 32). Researchers have also visited the storerooms, their interests ranging from Pitcairn Islands and Tahitian adzes, to Marquesan u'u and Austral Islands paddles.

However, Tahitians in particular are not visiting Te Papa to view their own cultural treasures in the collections, but to engage with Māori. This development may not always have been clear to Te Papa staff, as first points of contact have often directed Tahitian visitors immediately to the Pacific Cultures team. Like other tourists, Tahitians may not be interested in visiting new places to view their own cultural treasures. They may actually prefer a more touristic experience – one that allows them to see other indigenous

peoples and their cultures. This was the case in 2012, when a group of Rapa Nui people visited Te Papa and were actually more interested in seeing artefacts from other cultures than those from Rapa Nui. After a short viewing of the small Rapa Nui collection, they spent several hours in the Taonga Māori storerooms and visited the Natural History collections (Cairns 2012). Another factor that may influence Tahitians' engagement with overseas museums is that the largest collections of Tahitian material culture in the world (approximately 7000 objects) are at the Musée de Tahiti et des Îles on Tahiti Nui. With such a range of historical cultural resources at their immediate disposal, Tahitian artists, craftspeople and scholars are less likely to make the significant financial investment to visit international collections (Newell 2009).

Despite these circumstances, over the last 20 years Māori and East Polynesian peoples have enjoyed increased interaction through museum-related work and in conferences, cultural and sporting events across the region and internationally. The increased prominence of East Polynesia in Te Papa mirrors activity outside the museum, where cultural festivals, ocean voyaging, tourism and travel are bringing Pacific peoples together more frequently and deepening their knowledge and understanding of each other.

The history and cultures of East Polynesia have had an important role at Te Papa in telling the New Zealand story, as well as the stories relating to the history of the arts, exploration and cultural encounters across the Pacific Islands. Exhibitions at Te Papa have highlighted the deep genealogical relationships that communities in New Zealand and East Polynesia have in common. The ongoing engagement of contemporary Māori and other New Zealanders with the people of the region will strengthen ties. The exhibitions show visitors that East Polynesia was the departure point for Polynesian settlement of Aotearoa/New Zealand, and later a staging point for the European exploration of western Polynesia. However, the connections don't stop there, because East Polynesia's growing transnational communities, especially in New Zealand, provide impetus for ongoing work at Te Papa. This is work that requires further collecting and representation of the contemporary lives and experiences of East Polynesian peoples in ways that are relevant for visitors to the physical and online museum.

Acknowledgements

The authors would like to thank our colleagues Safua Akeli and Shane Pasene, who shared the collection auditing task. We are grateful to the staff of Te Aka Matua Research Library for research assistance, and the imaging team at Te Papa for the photography of collection items. Elena Govor, Andrew Mills and Serge Tcherkezoff assisted us with our query about André Krajewski (Krajewski). Thanks must also go to Jayne and Michel Tuffery for permission to reproduce an image from *First Contact*, and to two referees for their useful suggestions and commentary on this article.

Notes

- 1 We have organised this article with the view that visitors and/or readers usually orient their enquiries by island groupings rather by object type or collectors.
- 2 From the late 1980s to her retirement in 2002, archaeologist and curator Janet Davidson led pioneering efforts at Te Papa to address the challenges of exhibiting, collecting and describing contemporary material cultures from the Pacific.
- 3 The literature is extensive, but recent survey articles and books include Addis (2012), Davidson (2012) and Howe (2006).
- 4 See *Collections online*, <http://collections.tepapa.govt.nz>.
- 5 A survey article on the collections from Hawai'i held at Te Papa is in preparation by Safua Akeli and Shane Pasene. Janet Davidson is preparing a book on the collections from Cook voyages, and therefore they are not discussed in detail in this article.
- 6 Janet Davidson was a staff member at the museum who filled various positions: vacation Assistant (summers of 1959–61, Dominion Museum); ethnologist (February 1987–October 1991, National Museum of New Zealand); senior collections curator History (November 1991–November 1993, National Museum of New Zealand); conceptual leader Pacific (November 1993–July 1996, Te Papa); curator Pacific collections (July 1996–July 2002, Te Papa).
- 7 Although these items are on indefinite loan to other museums, this article deals only with Oldman collection items physically held at Te Papa.
- 8 In 1958, the Imperial Institute changed its name to the Commonwealth Institute.
- 9 A Janus figure is one with two heads facing opposite ways.
- 10 This flywhisk is one of several collected by Oldman (2004: 6).
- 11 Te Papa FE000340, FE000341 and FE010541.
- 12 At present, these objects are the subject of a book in preparation by Janet Davidson.
- 13 Significantly, in 1994 Clarkson set up Style Pacific, a design printing group of young, mainly Polynesian ex-students. The group created the distinctive Pasifika festival logo,

- which was designed by Lesley Robb. Clarkson's commissions include leading the team that created the large hand-printed Pacific Panels on permanent display on the Galleria at Parliament Buildings, and the Pacific Sisters official lavalava for the Festival of Pacific Arts in Samoa in 1996. She has also created fabric designs for *Xena: Warrior Princess* (Pacific Renaissance) and Moontide International Ltd.
- 14 James Hector was a well-known naturalist and geologist, and first director of the Colonial Museum. He gave greater emphasis to collecting geological and biological specimens, although some cultural artefacts, mainly from Māori and Pacific peoples, were also acquired.
 - 15 We thank Elena Govor, Andrew Mills and Serge Tcherkezoff for their assistance with this query.
 - 16 Claudia Orange was part of a New Zealand delegation to a number of the Pacific Islands, including Rapa Nui.
 - 17 They included dance costumes from Samoa, Hawai'i, Palau, Banaba and Polynesian cultural groups from secondary schools in Auckland, New Zealand.
 - 18 Livingstone (1998) outlines the history and use of foreign ethnology collections in exhibitions at New Zealand's national museum before 1997. Her discussion includes material culture related to the voyages of James Cook.
 - 19 This temporary exhibition was curated by Janet Davidson. It toured to small New Zealand museums and was exhibited twice at Te Papa.
 - 20 The museum's model tipaerua was based on drawings and paintings from Cook's voyages, and sketches and paintings by Hawai'ian artist Herb Kawainui Kane (1928–2011). It was built in Wellington, New Zealand, by Izzat Design Ltd in 2006–07.

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