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Mana Moana:
Wayfinding and Five Indigenous Poets

by
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ABSTRACT

This thesis identifies diverse indigenous worlds in the published poetry of five first and second wave Pacific writers from the Moana Nui a Kiwa: Samoa, Aotearoa (Te Tai Tokerau, and Te Waipounamu), Cook Islands (Tongareva), and Hawai'i (Kaua'i and Māui). Together they form a literary constellation by which I (and many others) have navigated my way as a 'writer-scholar' (Winduo). In order to chart these worlds, this thesis bases its critical approach in the Moana, the ocean beyond the reef (*Pollex*), and articulates a wayfinding kaupapa as a close reading method. Wayfinding is used to identify/chart the identity assertions, cultural signs, re-told narratives, linguistic and social references in the poetry of these writers, as well as the principal relationships deduced from published interviews and recordings, and unpublished layers within available archives. Wayfinding enables a Pacific-centric navigation through these Moanan worlds. It focuses on an indigenous frame of reference. The term 'Moanan' is used in the context of maintaining sociospatial connections - what Ka'ili refers to as the "Tauhi Vā" (92). To be Moanan then is to occupy and maintain the connections between such transnational and indigenous spaces of relationship, also formulated as the 'vā' (Ka'ili 89, 92). This identity is uniquely formed throughout each poem and each poet's oeuvre (life-work); each author brings different sets of relationships and histories to their writing. These differences make the identity assertion necessarily porous and fluid, akin to Kamau Braithwaite's idea of 'tidalectics' as developed by Elizabeth DeLoughrey in an investigation of ground-based and ocean-based discursive modes, or 'roots' and 'routes' in her comparative study of Caribbean and Pacific Literatures. In a Moanan world, the reef - a liminal

zone—is a fecund and porous barrier used to navigate through and hover over the signs of the texts through close reading. This thesis reads these as ‘reefs of literary production’, a modification of Bourdieu’s formulation of the field of cultural production, in order to chart the life-worlds of these texts, in addition to using related strategies drawn from a range of intellectuals and discourses inside and outside the Moana. A number of tropes are explored as modes of inquiry and are used to identify relationships between people, times and locations. These include the kīpuka, the vā, waka navigation, and deified representations of significant natural features including Tangaroa/ Tagaloa/ Kanaloa, Pele, and Papatūānuku/ Papahānaumoku. Aligned with symbolic or figured worlds, the senses and the body are also important. This accumulation of discourses and symbols is likened to traditional wayfinding techniques, particularly that of ‘expanding the target’ (Howe, Diaz) in which general locations are deduced from a range of referents. The traditional techniques rely on memory as knowledge, and recourse to the signs available in the natural world, whereas contemporary navigation relies on instruments and two dimensional charts. Through a similar indigenous navigational and holistic technique, a heterogeneous site (akin to Epeli Hau‘ofa’s sea of islands) is claimed for multi-layered streams of Moanan poetics in English within the works of the five poets. This is not claimed as an exclusive identity formation, as other formations indeed sit alongside/ entangle/ interweave/ flow within Moanan identities such as other racial, sexual preference, gender, and class formations. Rather, this thesis argues that this Moanan wayfinding Pacific-centric close reading technique makes possible the charting of five diverse indigenous worlds, five distinct oeuvres of poetry that derive energy from Moanan identities and ritenga tangata or culturally inherited ways of being.

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Āpiti hono tatai hono, te hunga mate ki te hunga mate. Āpiti hono tatai hono, tātou te hunga ora tēnā tātou katoa. Those who are joined through time, joined through genealogy, the departed to the departed. Those who are joined through time, joined by genealogy, greetings to each of us all the living. *Nō reira, e ngā mana, e ngā reo, e ngā karangatanga maha, kia ora tonu tātou katoa.*

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“If you can read the ocean, you will never be lost.”

Mau Pialug

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CHAPTER 1. KAUPAPA

I place this thesis in a context of respect and reciprocity, juxtaposing the honoured dead with the chosen living, or morehu. Recognising an indigenous poetics belongs to the kaupapa¹ of this thesis in that it asserts a Moanan “discursive space” (Hoskins and Jones 1). I use the term “kaupapa” here to indicate commonly practiced grounds or basic values and intentional principles. The English word ‘Moanan’² meaning ‘person belonging to the Moana’ is used by Tevita O’Ka’ili to emphasize sociospatial connections, the multiple interconnections of the Pacific Islands, derived from the indigenous Polynesian term for deep ocean, ‘moana’ (*Pollex*) with the English suffix ‘-an’ meaning ‘belonging to a place’ (*OED*). This sense of interconnectedness, or relationality, is expressed by Albert Wendt as ‘teu le vā’ or the care required for maintaining relationships

¹ Additional to the term “kaupapa’s” usage in this sentence, a summary of Kaupapa Māori Theory is on page 2 of Fiona Cram, Linda Tuhiwai Smith and Wayne Johnstone’s research report, “Mapping the Themes of Māori Talk About Health.” A special issue of the *New Zealand Journal of Educational Studies*, entitled *He Aha Te Kaupapa?* explores Kaupapa Māori Theory (Hoskins and Jones).

² The New Zealand sociolinguist Alan Bell noted ‘Moanan’ is an English term in a seminar I gave at the University of Hong Kong in February 2015. It is not in common use so it is not a loanword.

(Hereniko and Wilson 402). In the context of this thesis, in recognising the writers' honoured status, and their importance in the spatial and social nexus of the vā, I do not place their works beyond critical inquiry. This selection of five poets was drawn from my past interactions with the writers as I learnt about their poetics before this interpretative project began. I have been wayfinding, in a sense, before this project, and will continue to do so after it guided by the writing of these poets who are indigenous to their particular island groups of the Moana-nui-a-Kiwa / Pacific³. Wayfinding is a form of non-instrument navigation, a mental construct relying on memory, and holistic signs of nature such as positional stars. In the context of this reading project, wayfinding is used as a culturally interpretive method positioning the writers in key relationships to Pacific-centred literature. In addition to poems by Alistair Te Ariki Campbell and Hone Tuwhare, poems by Keri Hulme, Haunani-Kay Trask, and Albert Wendt are closely read using the Moanan frame of reference. Interwoven relationships are part of the fabric of this thesis. In that interwoven sense this thesis builds on the two Anglophone contemporary Polynesian poetry anthologies I co-edited with Albert Wendt and Reina Whaitiri, *Whetu Moana* (2003) and *Mauri Ola* (2010), and a 2014 contemporary and historical Māori poetry anthology I coedited with Whaitiri, *Puna Wai Kōrero*; as well as the field's literary potential, embodied in the three Anglophone poetry anthologies, there is research potential in the field signified by the growth of interdisciplinary scholarship. The five poets selected are each well published and have attracted useful critical resources; however, no one

³ Here the Pacific is formulated as Hau'ofa's "sea of islands" which is a term that is discussed later in the thesis. Note also that I do not italicise terms indigenous to the Pacific as they belong in the region.

has yet examined these significant Pacific poets within a Moanan framework. While their principal medium remains English,⁴ the claim for this thesis is that its Moanan reading methodology articulates the ontologies and epistemologies expressed through the whakapapa⁵ of each writer and that from their blood descent comes a set of relationships to the world that is expressed holistically in an indigenous frame of reference⁶.

I/ we⁷ wove multiple Moanan poetics into the thesis. These Moanan poetics are expressed in the works of the poets; each Moanan poetic is a fleet with sails and engines providing the propulsion on this journey through the poets' archipelagic bodies of work, and each vessel is calibrated differently. Each demonstrates that the ocean and its lands is not an *aqua nullius* providing only scenic content, but rather a dynamic space of multiple reticulating relationships. Major features of such a poetics are the many interwoven relationships to consider among the

⁴ See *Vārua Tupu*, a special French Polynesian issue of the journal *Mānoa*, for an English language anthology of Francophone Polynesian writing (Stewart et al).

⁵ For brevity, I use the Māori term for genealogy. Equivalent terms from Hawaiian, Tongarevan, and Samoan are mo'okū'auhau, haka-papa, and gafa.

⁶ My thanks to Linda Tuhiwai Smith for a discussion regarding indigenous terminology compared to non-indigenous terms such as ontology and epistemology. Smith made the point that the term whakapapa contains both ontology and epistemology and neither claim should be surrendered in translation.

⁷ It is an inherited poetics hence the inclusion of the plural pronoun.

living, the dead, and their figured worlds. Sailing south through the archipelagoes, for Haunani-Kay Trask, I think of Mānoa, the valley beneath the Ko'olau Mountains that stretch at their highest point to Mount Ka'ala, and I greet the earth mother Papahanaumoku, the skyfather Wākea, oceanic Kanaloa, volcanic Pele with her mountains stretching to Trask's ancestral islands of Kaua'i and Māui, and her Kanaka Maoli relations. For Albert Wendt I think of the entire archipelago of Samoa—her mountains and her lava fields, and the well-being of the vā embodied both in ocean and lava as the fabric of the vā solidifies and overlaps the many strands of his relationships. For Keri Hulme I think of Moeraki and the significance of the kaik, the great roaring coastline, and the eroding urupā with the many ghosts of her conversations there. Hone Tuwhare and Alistair Te Ariki Campbell are both the kawē mate⁸ of this thesis in that their esteemed poems circulate and endure within the community.

Albert Wendt, Haunani-Kay Trask and Keri Hulme continue to inspire future generations of Pacific writers and leaders from all walks and seasons of life. This thesis will demonstrate that these living poets, alongside our kawē mate Tuwhare and Campbell, have captured the worlds of indigenous cultures and times geographically located in the Moana in their varying places and varying expressions. At times they intermingle with the concepts and terms of indigenous poetics, or strategically collude with other poetics, and at other instances separate out into individual memories, and language art.

⁸ For a more precise definition of kawē mate, see Cleve Barlow's *Tikanga Whakaaro* (47).

In this section of the chapter I define the terms of my reading methods which incorporate indigenous and non-indigenous tropes and strategies, ontologies (expressed through whakapapa) and worldviews (mātauranga). I refine notions of Moanan poetics, poetry, culture, close reading as wayfinding, tidalectics, and the importance of relationships through the Tongan expression, tauhi vā. After the definitions section, I use a close reading methodology to navigate a key poem by each of the poets. These key poems provide a gateway for each of their life-works.

Moanan Poetics

The oceanic imaginary is global and local: more than seventy percent of our planet's surface is covered by water, nurturing our ecology; a similar percentage hydrates the circulatory processes and the composition of the human body. It makes sense then that one engages with the other, especially in the Pacific, as opposed to continental writing in which the ocean seldom features because it is not a daily reality. This thesis, "Mana Moana," posits a Moanan Poetics in English. It engages with discourses of circulatory and tidal rhythms that flow recursively, or energies that reflect the "thundering sands"⁹ and cliffs of the littoral, or to borrow from Pacific architectural discourse, spaces that are "sucked up in the interplay of folding surfaces and transparent boundaries to break the limits of fixed identification" (Refiti 105), and river flows from the storied land into the metaphorical sea. Through practices of close reading, the thesis seeks to accumulate a number of signs, akin to indigenous, cognitive Pacific wayfinding techniques, with which to identify

⁹ This phrase comes from Alistair Te Ariki Campbell's poem 'The Return.'

bodies of poetry as Moanan to express the islands' worldly complexities and connections rather than as isolated literatures (DeLoughrey 2).

As aforementioned, I have adopted the term "Moanan" from Ka'ili's article "Tauhi Vā: Nurturing Tongan Sociospatial Ties in Māui" as its root word "Moana" has the advantage of being understood within geographical Polynesia while being oceanically open to the rest of the Pacific. It is not a synonym for Polynesia. The Moana is oceanic, but not necessarily constrained to the Pacific in that the naming of the world's oceans is a human construct. A glance at an image of Earth from orbit illustrates the interconnected nature of all the oceans (as in figure 1). The name Moanan does remind or draw attention to differences that may have been assumed to be fully described or normalised in the once colonial languages of the region. This is further discussed later in the chapter with a focus on the history of the word "Polynesia." Elizabeth DeLoughrey's book, *Routes and Roots: Navigating Caribbean and Pacific Island Literatures*, develops the Caribbean author Kamau Braithwaite's concept of "tidalectics" (2-3) which is a cyclical model akin to oceanic rhythms and foregrounding alter/native epistemologies (2). DeLoughrey interprets "tidalectics as a dynamic and shifting relationship between land and sea that allows island literatures to be engaged in their spatial and historical complexity" (2-3).

Close Reading as Wayfinding

Some of the traditional wayfinding and voyaging techniques in the actual moana have themselves circulated via multiple discourses. Related terms such as tidalectics describe these strategies that arise from accumulating the situations and signs of the texts to hand. This semiotic reading method is likened to oceanic wayfinding. Wayfinding is suggestive of the multiple

connections that are sought after and maintained in the Samoan terms *vā fealoaloa'i* and the *vā tapua'i*¹⁰ which are defined respectively by scholar, and head of State, Tupua Tamasese Ta'isi as the social spaces and connections between people, and the “sacred spaces/connections between people and things” (387, see also Tuagalu 111).¹¹ Pacific Studies scholar Teresia Teaiwa, in an article about Pacific Studies and the influence of cultural studies emanating from the History of Consciousness programme at the University of California at Santa Cruz, says that the field “must ultimately be about people (he tangata, he tangata, he tangata, as the Maori proverb goes) and relationships (the *vā tapua'i* for Samoans)” (352). The work of the selected writers is read with their individual and collective worlds in mind; respectively, individuality refers to the unique details of the poets’ biographies, while collectivity refers to the overlapping cultural groups to which their poetry leads.¹² The close reading style is not dialectical, but rather tidalectal. The visible appearances of culture (via metaphorical signs and narratives and even accompanying photographs), and the

¹⁰ As noted previously, Pacific languages are not italicised in the thesis as they are normal terms that belong in the region.

¹¹ I mean both these social and divine aspects of the *vā* when using the term in this thesis.

¹² A great number of the poems to hand are lyrical, that is, they are written in voices that appear to be close to the authors’ own perspectives; there are some major exceptions including Wendt’s *The Adventures of Vela*, Hulme’s *Lost Possessions*, and some of the numbered parts of Campbell’s historical poetry sequences.

invisible spaces that are folded over, are energized by the currents of the poets' imaginaries, and which through close reading and metaphorical navigation I am claiming to find.

Wayfinding, according to the pioneering Hawaiian navigator Nainoa Thompson, is "a mental construct" which relies on the star compass in conjunction with the flightpaths of birds and ocean waves and currents ("On Wayfinding" 1). It relies on such a close reading of the ocean that a finely attuned navigator, on a cloudy moonless night, can lie in the hull of a canoe and read the direction of the waves. "This is where traditional navigators like Mau are so skilled. Lying inside the hull of the canoe, he can feel the different wave patterns as they come to the canoe, and from them tell the canoe's direction," continues Thompson about his teacher, the famed Micronesian navigator, Mau Pialug. Similarly, the wayfinding method strategically aligns itself as closely as possible with the indigenous cultural currents of the five writers beyond conventional close reading, so that the close reader metaphorically lies in the hulls of the poets' vessels and translates ripples into directions. Whether conventional or 'cultural' close-reading, the technique is crucial in knowing a literature.



Figure 1 Earth and Cosmos, featuring the Pacific Ocean (NASA GOES Project).

Feminist and ‘anecdotal theorist’ Jane Gallop (“Historicization” 185) makes the following claim for close reading, “I would argue that close reading may in fact be the best antidote we have to the timeless and the universal.” In the same essay, Gallop highlights the cross-currents between history and literary studies so that close reading methods and cultural history methods are used by both literary critics and by historians. Gallop maintains that it is a matter of disciplinary

equilibrium and even survival for literary critics to focus on close reading.¹³ The wayfinding close readings in this chapter serve to demonstrate the method, and the combinatory energies that reading different writers in a shared space and time will generate.

Indigenous, literary theorist Chadwick Allen describes an intertextual and inter-discursive methodology this way (110):

In moving to a series of engagements with the poem based in understandings of Indigenous systems of aesthetics, it is not my intention to suggest that dominant critical methodologies are inappropriate or ineffective for this material. Like other scholars, I understand that Indigenous writers appropriate and innovate both Indigenous and settler (in some cases, colonial) artistic and rhetorical traditions to produce texts in all genres.

The intention of this thesis is to read closely, find and foreground indigeneity¹⁴ as part of a number

¹³ See also Frank Letricchia and Andrew Dubois's anthology *Close Reading: The Reader* for a history of the method.

¹⁴ This thesis adopts the open UN approach (there is no single definition used by UN agencies) where indigeneity or indigenous peoples are loosely defined as self-identifying, there is historical continuity with precolonial or pre-settler societies, strong links to surrounding territories and natural resources, distinct social/ economic/ political systems, distinct language/ culture/ beliefs, they are non-dominant groups in

of signified ideas in each text. Sometimes indigeneity will be invisible; often times it will be visible like a cloud or reef of indigenous signs located near the bodies of work of each writer for a reader to navigate toward strategically. Similar to Allen's use of indigenous systems of aesthetics, the close-reading lenses used will differ from text to text reflecting the perceived value statements and positions, and the worlds and times of each writer as a result of being attentive to the literary texts. Deconstructionist Marxist feminist Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak describes this reading practice as strategically essentialist. She quotes (*Outside 3*) the *Oxford English Dictionary* definition of strategy, "Usually, an artifice or trick designed to outwit or surprise the enemy." In this context, the strategies are driven by changing circumstances.

Spivak triangulates essentialist positions as necessary risks in order to mobilise people for political ends. The risk arises when the contingent position ossifies into "some irreducible essentialism" (*Outside 3*). My intention as a close reader is to foreground overtly indigeneity and

society, and "resolve to maintain and reproduce their ancestral environments and systems as distinctive peoples and communities" (UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues). The term "resolve" in the previous sentence I take to mean struggle. Samoa is a special case where it is partly independent, and partly an unincorporated United States territory. Western Samoa was a former colony of New Zealand (until 1962), as was the Cook Islands (until 1965). Alice Te Punga Somerville's *Once Were Pacific* also describes the term indigenous as "a terrifically complex word, and it can do its best work when it is allowed to be as supple and flexible as possible" (219).

its strategic essences in the texts to hand. The need for strategy arises if I were *not* to use these identity formations to describe the work of the texts. Avoiding or overlooking indigeneity would not voice the internationalist political and cultural work that has gone into that identity formation of indigeneity over generations. Nevertheless, given the history of movements such as social Darwinism, one would not wish to secure (or ossify) the claim in essentialist biology. As Spivak states, “A strategy suits a situation; a strategy¹⁵ is not a theory (*Outside* 4).” This reading strategy, in its openness, is affected by many currents. To continue the Moanan wayfinding metaphor, the five poets’ works resemble imagined archipelagoes rising in different formations out of the moana. Each poet belongs to a nexus of family, social and cultural relationships enabling and sustaining the mana of their imagined worlds and genealogies. The openness of the self-reflective strategy is designed to sharpen rather than reduce¹⁶ the mana of their works.

¹⁵ Stephen Greenblatt (1988) says a reading practice that aims to celebrate literary authority or authorship, “repeatedly fails for one reason: there is no escape from contingency” (3). In the same chapter he notes the continuing importance of the life-worlds of the writers.

¹⁶ That is to say, the open strategy does not intend to produce a general or reductionist model of Moanan literature, but rather a strategic approach to reading Moanan literature.

THE FIELD AS REEF¹⁷

This thesis develops a strategic approach to Moanan literature rather than builds a general model.¹⁸ It supports explicitly indigenous or, as explained previously, strategically essentialist (Spivak, *Outside* 4-10), frameworks for building like-minded communities of artists, audiences, and critics. For this purpose, I have found the term Moana more apt than Polynesia as discussed later. For a community to exist there must be agreement on sufficient identifying commonalities, which is inherently a socio-political, artistic and historical set of narratives. Meant to cast meaning on the present, these accounts of the past are always subjective in that they are narrated by people with conscious and unconscious biases. Among these narratives are those identified by audiences as art

¹⁷ Wendt first connected the Pacific artist with the idea of reefs in his essay, "The Artist and the Reefs Breaking Open," in 1978.

¹⁸ In "Savaiki Regained" (2006) I identified possible thematic categories in Campbell's poetry that could be seen as features of Polynesian poems in English (at that point I was not yet using the term Moanan). The following categories were seen as suggestive of Polynesian features (118-127): 1. Littoral and the oceanic; storied landscapes. 2. Myth and spirit. 3. Family. 4. Cultural approaches to death: tangi and orature. 5. Language. 6. Tapu/sacred/private information versus the public domain. 7. Politics and history. 8. Gender identity and relations. 9. Trauma and the wounds of colonialism. Janet Hunt's 1995 Masters thesis identifies the following themes in Tuwhare's poetry: 1. Poems influenced by traditional lore. 2. Waiata tangi or laments. 3. Landscape. 4. Waiata aroha, waiata whaiaipo, love. 5. Protest. 6. From or about international settings. 7. Belief and spirituality. 8. The wider NZ artist community.

and literature, which receive specialized legitimating attention reserved for the arts on personal, public and institutionalised official levels, described by Pierre Bourdieu as “consecration” (*Field* 50-52). One term I wish to trouble is ‘field’ by substituting the oceanic term, ‘reef’—an equally fecund and grounded descriptor. As an object of navigation used to align one’s reading, the reef is a cognitive, metaphorical device. In nature, the reef is a site of tremendous biodiversity providing feeding grounds for fish stock, and providing many ecosystem benefits for people including food production, habitat refuges, coastal erosion protection, and waste management (Costanza et al 256). Coral reefs are also sensitive to climate change, acidification, and pollution. As large and living parts of the ecosystem, reefs have holistic connections to their marine and coastal environments. The health of the reef is an indication of the health of the biosphere. In combination with people, it is an ecosystem service that produces human welfare (Costanza et al 254). Synergistic with indigenous ecology, the reef metaphor contributes to the holistic and indigenous reading of the texts as well as being a central navigating trope.

There are multiple specialised narratives in which poetry from the Polynesian region might immerse itself, such as Pacific Islands Studies discourses and their major insider and outsider theorists. This area of study includes some of the specialised discursive terms concerning concepts of regional identity divisions or boundaries within Oceania and the intra/extra-encounters between individuals. The poems in a sense are swimming, not in a sea of islands or a new Oceania, but rather are darting in and out of a vast reef of fragmentary and competing discourses of identity, desires, and being. The anthology, *Inside-Out: Literature, Cultural Politics and Identity in the New Pacific*, edited by Vilsoni Hereniko and Rob Wilson, gathered critical essays by many writers and scholars across Oceania principally focused on indigenous or new literatures. Numerous books have

subsequently appeared since its publication in 1999. Notably, it includes Epeli Hau'ofa's influential essay "Our Sea of Islands" which emphasises an enlargement of the Pacific imaginary as opposed to colonial or neocolonial belittlement which depicts isolated, territorialised islands to their inhabitants (27-38). The anthology also includes Sig Schwarz and Vilsoni Hereniko's essay "Four Writers and One Critic" (55-64) concerning the role of the critic. It explores indigenous authors' boycotting of *The Faber Book of Contemporary South Pacific Stories* in opposition to the New Zealand author and scholar C.K.Stead's editorship due to his "extensive history of insult and attack on Māori and Polynesian authors" (55). More importantly, the essay writers encourage critics to practice "feutagai, consulting closely with the writers and speaking on their behalf" (58) as tulāfale or talking chiefs, and also to be familiar with the histories, communities and cultures of the writers. Finally, Schwarz and Hereniko advocate accountability to the indigenous communities concerned.

The thesis calibrates some key concepts¹⁹ from a constellation of works by DeLoughrey, Vicente Diaz, and Vilsoni Hereniko, Michelle Keown, Susan Najita, Paul Sharrad, Subramani, Alice Te Punga Somerville, Ka'ili, Henare Tate, and Sina Va'ai. The cognitive star compass continues with work by Epeli Hau'ofa, Albert Wendt, Chadwick Allen, Caroline Sinavaiana, ku'ualoa ho'omanawanui, Brandy Nālani McDougall, Selina Tusitala Marsh, Mason Durie, Cleve Barlow, Manuka Henare, Tui Atua Tupua Tamasese Ta'isi, Maori Marsden, and Briar Wood. While the

¹⁹ These include but are not limited to tidalectics, the vā, the kīpuka, the Moana(n), mana, expanding the target, poetics, indigeneity, tulāfale, mythologies, cosmogonies, and associated assertions of life-worlds or te ao mārama.

commentary is not directly influenced by Francophone writing translated into English, such as Kareva Mateatea-Allain, Alexander Dale Mawyer, and Frank Stewart's anthology *Vārua Tupu*, there are parallel and intersecting issues such as a concern for reviving or maintaining cultural traditions, political struggles, and strong environmental stances. Francophone literary scholar Raylene Ramsay has produced a book-length anthology of critical essays *Cultural Crossings/A la croisée des cultures: Negotiating Identities in Francophone and Anglophone Pacific Literature* which includes Portuguese, French and English language indigenous literatures. Other scholars whose interest in indigenous Pacific literary production in English contributed to this thesis via articles or personal conversations include Steven Winduo, Teresia Teaiwa, Dieter Riemenschneider, Peter Marsden, Claudia Duppé, Jon Battista, Reina Whaitiri and April Henderson. In addition to the above constellations of scholars, many of the above have encouraged cohorts of graduate students to investigate Pacific writing. Many of the scholars are themselves creative writers so that they both create and feed from the reef. As a wayfinder, I name the scholars as reference-stars reflected in the stillness of a reflexive ocean; when I move through the journey, just as the signs of nature shift on an actual voyage, their significances to the cognitive journey will shift too.

READING PROCESS: PHENOMENOLOGY, FIELD, VĀ

My method of inquiry pays attention to visible and invisible layers (Landes 233-243) within poetic texts to hand which may at times include the social and biographical circumstances (emplaced in the vā) of their production. In the close readings I draw on biographical, social, historical and cultural information to deduce meanings from the texts, and so in a sense I anticipate

a set of meanings, or create a foreground and a horizon of understanding which is both expanded and limited by that information.

The readings are subjective from at least two perspectives: my own as well as the accounts—filtered through libraries, archives, and personal communications with the authors—of the poets’ lives as individuals and as members of groups with whom they have self-identified. The horizons of my understanding are also limited by my historical situation.

A Moanan reading methodology here translates into indigenous methods and voyaging poetics Samoan, Māori, Hawaiian and Tongarevan worldviews of the *vā* of relationships (Wendt, Tuagalu). The *vā* concept is also embodied in the Māori terms *tika* and *tikanga* about correct conduct to maintain good relationships (Tate 127). Navigational metaphors traverse the physical and intellectual spaces of the *vā*. The heterogeneous world of the Moanan imaginary²⁰ is fundamentally important to the poetry of the selected five poets in this thesis, and so careful readings of poems incorporate this world, its sensory and named places, histories, and worldview(s). I also quite consciously focus on being present in the world, *te ao mārama*, as it represents an emplaced presence or a particular-ontology (or *whakapapa*, *mo’okū’auhau*, *hakapapa*, *gafa*) and worldview which can be drawn from a poem or poems at hand. I am reluctant to place my use of terms within a uniform discourse (apart from very broad conceptions such as

²⁰ I use the term “imaginary” in this thesis according to Edouard Glissant’s usage: “For Glissant the imaginary is all the ways a culture has of perceiving and conceiving of the world. Hence, every human culture will have its own particular imaginary” (*Poetics of Relation*, xxii).

postmodernity), as it is my intention to emphasise plurality and interdisciplinarity within and without ('inside out') an indigenous frame. For the purpose of this thesis, phenomenology, for instance, focuses on qualitative human experiences grounded in "perception, imagination, thought, emotion, desire, volition, and action" (*Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*) from the first person point of view. Edmund Husserl's concept of 'life-worlds,' of human 'intentionality' toward meaningful encounters with the world—the flows of time, objects, self-awareness, imagination, memory, desire, social activity and other types of conscious experiences—are tools of phenomenology. The life-world hence moves us beyond "linguistic meaning to a broader conception of meaning," linked to perception (Carr 303). I use the Māori language term 'te ao mārama' to broaden the life-world's reference to an indigenous knowledge system, and to further strengthen the holistic nature of the indigenous frames of reference.

I do not wish to ground this thesis singularly in the discipline of phenomenology as interdisciplinarity is the project here. The circulating gaps between different waves of disciplines themselves are pertinent to this argument and form part of the method. The gaps enable more voices to meaningfully join this interpretive project, voices which do not necessarily speak the uniform vocabulary of a unified discourse, but rather one closer to the rhythms and currents of the Moana. As an instance of this, tohunga and philosopher, Māori Marsden, describes Western epistemologies grounded in sense perception and consciousness not in phenomenological terms, but encompasses terms such as humanism, new physics, the real world (29-30) before articulating a Māori epistemology and ontology which incorporates spiritual as well as objective realms of consciousness. A phenomenology which does not find room for Marsden or Tui Atua Tupua Tamasese Ta'isi, the Samoan Head of State, cultural theorist and philosopher, among many others

for the purposes of this project feels too distant from the material, the texts at hand and the worlds that the texts appear to be projecting into a reader's mind. These wave-like gaps, ripples and inter-folding differences between Western concepts and disciplines empower indigenous and marginalised mātauranga and whakapapa which can be used to interpret the text. Te Punga Somerville refers to Tuwhare's poem "Rain" in the title of her 2008 essay, "I can hear you making small holes in the silence, Hone," where the silence might represent the silencing of articulations of indigenous points of view. Her essay describes a teaching and reading method relevant to the one in this thesis:

We try to introduce our students to the idea that no text is an island: writers read each other and re-read themselves, and it's useful to find ways to talk about these connections. Intertextuality, allusion, whakapapa, rewriting, trope, writing back, return, reworking. (171)

Like Te Punga Somerville's essay this interpretive project is also an appeal to an enlarged sense of the poems or bodies of work through gathering up the major and minor articulations of Moanan indigeneity in the texts. These traces left by interactions with others suggest that the works belong to the poets and others with whom they are communicating, as well as a range of articulated contexts.

SOME DEFINITIONS OF VĀ, MOANAN GEOGRAPHY

Careful or close readings of Moanan poems draw on the idea of belonging to others in expressions of the self, hence the relevance of the vā which is grounded in spaces of relationship. A concept of belonging comes with a set of social expectations. To turn to the macro level of describing Moanan geographical spaces, sociologist and Marxist David Harvey highlights cartography's socially constructed nature ("Between Space and Time" 418-419) which is historically relevant to the division of Oceania into broad regions for colonisation. The division of space into geographical regions creates intellectual structures, which are then projected onto the actual space and peoples occupying that space (424). For example, boundaries of nation-states cause services to be available in some areas and not in others: people in Samoa have limited access to a small, poorly resourced hospital or rural health clinics (Hinrich) while those in American Samoa have access to Medicaid ("Medicaid Can Help"); yet Crocombe notes that global commodities such as fast food are not limited by national boundaries (79). James Cook's cartographic expeditions in the Pacific were as much driven by financial as well as scientific endeavours. Harvey's point that maps are closely related to money in that they are "a vital source of economic and military power" (424) is apt for the European exploration of the Pacific. In terms of the Moanan imaginary, it is common-place to note that most non-navigators' maps do not indicate currents or wind flows.²¹

²¹ Francophone literary scholar Charles Foresdick, writing of the early twentieth century ethnographic novelist and poet, Victor Segalen, who for a time lived in and fictionalised Tahiti, notes the

The geographical idea, Polynesia, is not entirely free of bounded national spaces in that its conception allowed a political colonial mindset to envisage Polynesia as a grand space worthy of territorial expansion. New Zealand premier Richard ‘King Dick’ Seddon, as an instance of this, envisaged New Zealand at the centre of a South Pacific empire. His administration annexed the Polynesian islands of Niue in 1905 and the Cook Islands in 1901 (King 292-293) which historian Michael King says was originally part of a greater plan by Seddon to federate them with Hawai‘i, Fiji, Tonga and Samoa. To an extent, in contrast to the terms Polynesia and Polynesian, the differentiating terms Moana and Moanan do not come with the same European imperial/ colonial associations.

MANA AND MOANA

The title of this thesis, “Mana Moana,” suggests power as well as spaciality. Yet the power I intend to convey is grounded in the *vā* of social reciprocity where one’s mana which may be translated as status, authority, prestige or effectiveness depends on the regard of others. Most Polynesian languages gloss the term, ‘mana’, as having a supernatural power (*Pollex*). Mana and

exoticising intentions of mapping (4) where etymology is the analogy: the once-fluid Polynesian diaspora is fixed “like beautiful insects condemned to death, on the white cork of the maps.”

moana are stable terms within the Polynesian region, being widely understood without lexical modifications. According to the lexical database, Pollex, initiated by the linguist and founding Professor of Māori Studies, Bruce Biggs in 1965, and which continues to compare terms from all known Polynesian languages (Greenhill and Clark 556), mana is a Proto-Oceanic word and so it is understood beyond the Polynesian region, whereas moana has Proto-Polynesian roots. For instance, the synonymous term for ocean in indigenous Fijian is ‘wasawasa’ (Capell), and yet the country borders the Polynesian island groups of Tonga, as well as Wallis (Uvea) and Futuna, where the term is moana.

The overlapping and circulatory nature of the term, ‘moana’, or ocean also emphasises the interconnections of being a Pacific Islander, while its depth is generative of the imagination. Neither mana nor moana rely on self-regarding constructions of the self, but rather on care for others (mana), and regard for nature (moana). I took care not to hyphenate the terms moana and mana in the title so as to allow the gap between the concepts to physically represent the vā while allowing the tactile, liquid, tidal and circulatory²² nature of the Pacific to embody one metaphor²³ for a set of

22 Stephen Greenblatt, at the end of his lecture “Towards a Poetics of Culture”, describes circulatory processes “of materials and discourses” as unsettled rather than stable or fixed positions. He also uses rhythmical or fluid terms such as dynamic, recursive, and “strategies of negotiation and exchange” to characterise the practices of artists and writers. These processes have clear synergies with tidalectics and Moanan tropes.

relationships derived from mana. Tuagalu (110) asks which vā? It is the vā of social dimensions or obligations, vā fealoaloa'i, as well as the spiritual justifications for the way those relationships are organised or vā tapua'i (Tuagalu 111). Subsequent references to the vā in this thesis incorporate both aspects. Similar to these varieties of vā (also spelt va), there are various aspects of mana.

The New Zealand Māori theologian Henare Tate identifies ten aspects of mana (80): “power, spiritual power, authority, influence, psychic force, control, prestige and status, manaaki (hospitality), charisma, and rangatiratanga (chieftainship).” Barlow’s New Zealand Māori definition of mana also incorporates its divine manifestations: “ko ia te kaha mau tonu o ngā atua / Mana is the enduring, indestructible power of the gods” (60, 61). As well as mana atua (very sacred power), Barlow defines further related terms of ‘mana tupuna’ (power of ancestors), ‘mana whenua’ (power associated with possession of the land), and ‘mana tangata’ (power acquired by an individual). Each

23 Selina Tusitala Marsh (97) notes the agency of metaphor in her doctoral thesis, citing Greg Denning’s *Islands and Beaches*: “The beauty of using metaphors as a critical framework is that its dynamism reflects life [sic]...Denning asserts that it is usually the outsider who names one meaning, essentialises it, and then categorises it in order to create a model. What was once “particular, active, unbroken and complex” is then turned into something “general, static, structured and simple” (93) [sic]...the open ended metaphor becomes a closed model. Hence, as Denning concludes about outsider/insider research: “the outsider’s model never really fits” (93). I note the similarity here between “strategy” as posited previously in this chapter and “metaphor” as posited by Tusitala Marsh.

of these usages of mana as expressions of enduring power in different spheres is acknowledged in the thesis title. Davianna Pōmaika'i McGregor notes that steam is a sign of the mana, "the life force and energy of Pelehonuamea" (144) and so the moana is in that case transformed by the forcefulness of the Pele clan of deities when they encounter one another.

By juxtaposing mana and moana in the title, I wish to assert the breadth and depth of all-encompassing mana in this oceanic region between waves and ripples, between lands, and between depths similar to vā space. Like the vā, mana is defined by relationships. In this formulation mana and moana together in juxtaposition signify the vā of relationships between people who care for one another and the world(s) they inhabit. My usage of indigenous language terms such as 'vā', 'mana', or 'moana,' partly situates the thesis within an indigenous world or framework which is a major motivation for the project, while remaining situated in English Studies. I care about indigeneity. This care has potential problems. The assertion of mana in the thesis title is perhaps idealised but its naming is intended as a strategy to highlight its ongoing erasure and yet its potency. While I remain skeptical about any *enduring* claims for pure or authentic culture, as noted earlier in this chapter, strategic essentialisms (Spivak, *Deconstructing Historiography* 205) sometimes inform this thesis, where contingent assertions of cultural authenticity (each termed an essence) might be used to identify as 'indigenous' or 'Māori' or 'Moanan' in response to a variety of circumstances.

To return to the term, 'mana', theologian Martin Buber highlights its effecting and its relational nature: "Mana is simply the effective force, that which has made the person of the moon, up there in the heavens, into a blood-stirring Thou" (20). The relationship, expressed through multiple gods representing and animating the natural world, Tangaroa Ocean, Tāne Mahuta Forests,

Tāwhirimātea Winds, Papatūānuku Earth, Ranginui Sky, hence represents an 'I' relationship to a 'Thou' or animated world, rather than an 'I' in relation to an 'It' or object world. Buber's book, written in the early twentieth century, divides the world into I-Thou (interpersonal) and I-It (self and objects) relationships. Here, despite his comments couched in the language of his time about primitivism, and a misunderstanding about Rona who was a woman associated with the moon in Māori mythology, he touched on a fundamental difference between Māori and Western conceptions of being.

The predominant mode of the thesis is relational and vā-centred. In this context of circumstances or situations, many identity terms relevant to this thesis such as 'indigenous', 'Māori',²⁴ 'Polynesian', 'Samoan', 'Maoli', 'Tongarevan', are problematized strategically. I return to Spivak's point: "A strategy suits a situation; a strategy is not a theory" (*Outside* 4). In this formulation identity terms such as 'Māori' are mobilized for political ends. Spivak cautions that there is a risk that the use of such powerful terms might ossify groups into fixed identities which in turn, through conformist social pressures, represses or subordinates groups (Morton 127). An example of this is embodied in the collective noun Māori which is used to describe Hone Tuwhare as a Māori writer, when due to his tribal affiliations he could more particularly be identified as a Ngā Puhi writer. It is worth noting here that the term, 'whakapapa', shifts strategically depending on which marae one is visiting as different shared familial connections are identified. A Northern

24 This note is a reminder that the term, 'Māori', conceals the significance of tribal or iwi affiliations.

Māori person may identify broadly as Ngā Puhi Nui Tonu which describes the Tai Tokerau or Northland region of multiple iwi (including Ngā Puhi, Te Rarawa, Te Aupouri, Ngāti Kahu, Ngāti Whātua o Kaipara). They may also identify particularly with a hapū centred on a single marae, or even identify with an ancestral waka such as Mātaatua which has shared whakapapa with the North Island east coast tribe Ngāti Awa, depending on the people being encountered. Biographical notes on Tuwhare’s poetry collections name the many hapū of Ngā Puhi with which he has descent relationships underlining his position in the whakapapa and the vā of Northland.

RITENGA TANGATA, FIELDS AND REEFS

Each individual has both an idiosyncratic set of understandings and a set of guiding influences from their life worlds. In this thesis, I use the Māori term ‘ritenga tangata’ or “the application of sacred and constructed knowledge to human behaviour” to indicate a similar set of culturally inherited dispositions (Williams and Henare 3). The argument in the context of my interpretive project does not centre on the precise social meanings or social placement of the poet’s work, but rather the broader associative range of symbols and relations that the poet’s oeuvre assembles in order to paint broad targets to steer towards, or cultural reefs toward which to orientate. The generative and organizing principles of ritenga tangata influence dispositions of

sexuality, gender, mimesis, space, symbolism, and virility²⁵. In other words, here they are aspects of appearance or occupation in the world, or te ao mārama, of the writers and others. These principles are outlined by Manuka Henare and Les Williams in the following (3):

Te ao mārama	Wholeness, cosmos
Mauri	Life essences, vitalism, reverence for life
Tapu	Being and potentiality, the sacred
Mana	Power, authority and common good
Hau	Spiritual power of obligatory reciprocity in relationships with nature
Wairuatanga	The spirit and spirituality
Tikanga	The right way, of the quest for justice
Manaakitanga	Care and support, reverence for humanity
Whānaungatanga	Belonging, reverence for the human person
Hohou rongo	Peace, reconciliation, restoration
Kotahitanga	Solidarity
Kaitiakitanga	Guardianship of creation
Te ao hurihuri	Change and tradition

The oceanic wayfinding reading method belongs to these principles of indigenous behaviours and relations as there is a connection through whakapapa.

²⁵ I am indebted to Bourdieu's concept of 'habitus' as a useful starting point for 'ritenga tangata'.

In addition to ritenga tangata, centred on individuals (in this case the five poets) and their socially inherited behaviours, Bourdieu formulates the collective term, 'the field of cultural production'. He believes that to more fully understand a literary work one ought to explore the sets of relations that sustain it:

This includes recognition of the functions of artistic mediators (publishers, critics, agents, *marchands*, academics and so forth) as producers of the meaning and value of the work. Rather than an instance of individual creativity (in accordance with a Romantic conception) or 'literariness' (as the formalists would have it), each work thus becomes an expression of the field as a whole. Within this framework, internal analysis is indeed untenable and reductive. (Bourdieu, *Field* 11)

These sets of relations are grouped according to hierarchies of taste or consecration. Bourdieu claims there are literary or art for art's sake writers, as opposed to writers who are concerned more with social issues, and those who are in a state of equilibrium between the social and art positions. The sample of five poets in this thesis ranges from an emphasis on social issues in the cases of Wendt and Trask, to an equilibrium between social and art causes in the case of Tuwhare, to art for art's sake writing in Hulme and Campbell. A 'reef' accumulates over time. In this case, significant reef-builders of earlier generations are under discussion, and their significance has been made visible via the signs of consecration, critical and publishing attention.

I coin the term 'reefs of literary production' to situate the account in the Moanan settings of the writers, and to suggest further inquiry as it relates to the wayfinding term 'expanding the

target'. Pohnpeian historian, cultural critic, and self-described student of traditional seafaring, Vicente Diaz, in a Micronesian context, uses the Carolinian term 'pookof' for the latter term, in close conjunction with 'etak' or moving islands (59) where a navigator imagines that one's vessel is stationary and that the islands are moving. Continuing, Diaz notes that this is a cognitive navigational process, but then asserts that the islands move "tectonically, as well as culturally and historically" (59). This fluidity of the islands in their maritime settings brings together and opens out geopolitical, ancestral and environmental reefs.

CULTURAL IDENTITY: MĀORI? TONGAREVAN? SCOTTISH? PĀKEHĀ? POLYNESIAN?
PLETHONESIAN?

Each of the poets comes from a region that shares a linguistic, ethnic, cultural and historical heritage noticed by early European explorers which they named Polynesia. Historian Serge Tcherkézoff (179) reminds us that the term Polynesia was first used by Charles de Brosses in 1756 to denote all of the islands of Oceania: "I shall give this part the name of Polynesia because of the many islands it encompasses (from 'polus' multiplex and 'ne'sos' insula)." It was narrowed later in 1831 by Domeny de Rienzi in a paper presented at a meeting of the *Société de Géographie* in Paris to islands who shared the "etiquette of taboo" (Tcherkézoff 181). De Rienzi's original term for this region was 'Tabooed Plethonesia', that is, a multitude of islands using taboo. The region included parts of Micronesia, the South Pacific, and coastal islands of America. Dumont D'Urville altered this with his own paper to the society the following year limiting the region of Polynesia to its present area (D'Urville 166):

Thus, Polynesia includes the Hawaiian archipelago, or the Sandwich Islands, Nuku Hiva, or the Marquesas, the Puamotu [Tuamotu] Islands, or the Dangerous Archipelago, Tahiti, or the Society Islands, Hamoa [Samoa] or Navigators Islands, Tonga or the Friendly Isles, and finally, the large islands of New Zealand. In addition, it encompasses a multitude of islands scattered outside those archipelagos, such as the inhabited islands of Fanning, Roggewein [Roggeveen], Mangia [Mangaia], Savage, Rotuma, Watiu or Easter Island, Chatham, etc., and several desert islands such as Palmyras, Christmas, Pylstart, Sunday, Macauley, Curtis, and the islets to the south of New Zealand. As I have said, all these islands are occupied by people who obviously have common ancestry, considering that they have so many physical and moral similarities, speak the same language, and all abide by the mysterious, sacred rules of tapu.

Setting aside the careful, if disquieting, derivation by Tcherkézoff of the three-part historical division of Oceania into zones based on Cuvier's model of black, yellow and white races, the unspoken point here is that the contemporary terms, "Polynesia", "Micronesia" and "Melanesia" were settled during two scientific meetings held in 1831 and 1832 in Paris. Because of the constructed nature of the term Polynesia or Polynesian, it is difficult to avoid the feeling that any connections between Tuwhare and Campbell on the basis of Polynesian heritage are similarly constructed both on inclusive and exclusive grounds. If I were to travel back in time, for instance, to 1757 the term Polynesian poetry would be synonymous with Oceanic poetry as it was once an extraordinarily inclusive term obscuring many cultural and linguistic differences between groups stretching from Malaysia to Easter Island. On the other hand, Pacific historian Paul D'Arcy makes

the point that overemphasis on differences has perhaps been placed on groups identified as Melanesian as opposed to Polynesian; an example of these exaggerated differences is the social stratification theory based on descent in Polynesia, and the 'big man' leadership theory in Melanesia, since both elements of social organization feature in both regions. DeLoughrey makes the related argument that a Western emphasis on 'accidental' rather than intentional traditional voyaging sought to isolate islands and islanders so that they were made more available for exploitation (DeLoughrey 113-114).

This thesis rejects the term Polynesian while allowing the linguistic, cultural, and historical commonalities in the geographical region to speak for themselves through the poets. Ka'ili suggests using the term Moanan, or person of the ocean, instead of Polynesian because the word Moana is a specifically Polynesian term. Even though Moanan is not yet a commonly used or normalised English term (recognizing paradoxically that normalisation is a feature of colonialism), I will adopt the term as its root word Moana is used in each of the island groups of the five poets, as well as throughout Polynesia (*Pollex*). The principal comparative meaning of 'Moana' is ocean beyond the reef, or deep ocean as opposed to coastal waters (*Pollex*) and thus it appropriately applies to this poetic 'sea of islands'.

The very large term 'Pacific' encompasses an expansive array of epistemologies.²⁶ There is rich comparative work in this regard. The proceedings of the Pacific Epistemologies Conference, *Dreadlocks Vaka Vuku*, edited by the poet Mohit Prasad, in 2006, contains some insights from the wider Pacific, such as David Gegeo's categorising epistemologies as belonging to inland or coastal groups (7-8) based on his Solomons Islands and Melanesian research. Both Te Punga Somerville and Allen have produced significant comparative studies: Te Punga Somerville reveals the actual, historical and potential agency of the term 'Pacific' for Māori writers and artists, articulating an alternate Hawaiki-centred and hence wider indigenous identity for iwi Māori, while Allen juxtaposes indigenous approaches from different nations inside and outside the Pacific historically and currently. Te Punga Somerville (210-211) supports the Ngāti Kahungunu rangatira Ngahiwi Tomoana's call for a Hawaiki²⁷ centred identity, supported also by Rewiti Kohere and Te Rangikaheke generations earlier. She notes that this does not remove the possibility of wider connections within the Pacific (210). Thus, Te Punga Somerville and Allen's recent works contribute to broader sets of relations in terms of geography and multi-genre literary scope. There is a need to respect major differences in approach within the wider Pacific, and the necessity to

26 Additionally, for Māori, anthropologist and historian Anne Salmond describes twelve different epistemologies for iwi Māori reinforcing also the open nature of Māori knowledge in that "tribal thinkers were acutely aware of alternative cosmological and historical accounts" (253).

27 The mihi opening this thesis imagines Tuwhare and Campbell returning to Hawaiki.

focus on the closer set of relations embodied in the term, Moanan, since this is a vā-centred thesis, which emphasises human relations and the mana of being.

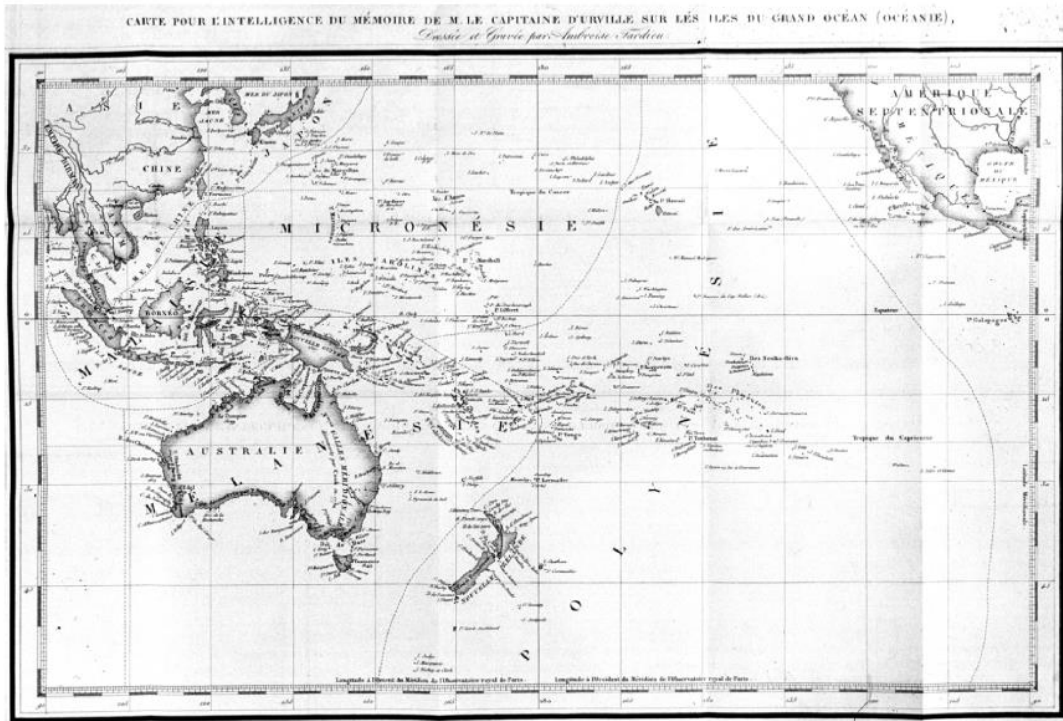


FIGURE 1: Dumont d'Urville's map showing the divisions of Oceania published in the *Bulletin de la Société de Géographie*, 17 (105), 1–21, in January 1832: 'Carte pour l'intelligence du mémoire de M. le Capitaine D'Urville sur les Isles du Grand Océan (Océanie)'.

Figure 2 Dumont d'Urville's map.

Looking at figure 2, beyond the vast expanse of epistemologies it contains, the other point to notice is the vast range of the terms currently dividing the Pacific. By grouping large numbers of islands geographers have scaled up the 'Nesian' entities to rival the size of continents, which potentially reduces the perceived importance of localised, individual-island based, cultures; concomitantly, my interpretative project, based in indigenous traditions, must remain alert to this

reductive possibility. On a positive note, the grouping aids in comparativist approaches with other literary traditions inside and outside intellectual and geographical Oceania. Allen approaches this issue comparing Native American and Māori literature in his book *Transindigenous* (2012). He discusses the prefix *trans* as a more holistic marker of global indigenous studies, rather than terms such as *comparative* or even *and* (xiv-xv). For Allen it overcomes the notion of equality between compared traditions or literatures (xvii), rooted in the term ‘compare’ with its root words meaning together (*cum*) and equal (*par*). The prefix, *trans*, instead highlights “purposeful juxtapositions”, where diverse texts are brought close together. The prefix then could be applied to the usage of the term Moanan here in this thesis because it brings closer together five significant Moanan poets from different and related cultures. My reason for not extensively using the prefix is partly stylistic and partly because the apparatus for the thesis evolved independently of Allen’s work. The prefix is also not an indigenous term—I admire the term ‘Moana’ partly because it belongs to an indigenous frame of reference. I also retain ‘Moanan’ as the idea of crossing the Moana Nui a Kiwa (or Pacific Ocean) has a valence which Te Punga Somerville notes in her work *Once Were Pacific* (37):

A great deal of energy, both contemporary and historical, has been expended on exploring the historical migration of Māori people through the Pacific to Aotearoa.

This sense of continuity, connection and mobility has a genealogy in the term Moana which I wish to assert strategically. By using the English term, ‘Moanan,’ I acknowledge the interconnections of indigenous and non-indigenous peoples and cultures, the indigenizing of English in the region, and the globalization of cultures. I acknowledge that there are many contradictions inherent in bringing together such a heterogeneous and porous oceanic and land-based region, especially as a

formulation of individual and social identity. The term might be used interchangeably in some contexts in this thesis with the term Polynesian but only due to the latter term's common usage. Clearly, the term Pacific has both a close and a wider set of social relations. Again, the Hawaiki nation concept proposed by Tomoana²⁸ is another attractive alternative name for Polynesia, which Te Punga Somerville (*Once Were Pacific* 248) reminds us, has been carried forward by events such as the Takitimu festival where descendants of the voyagers of the ancestral Takitimu Waka gathered in 2008.

Poetry

Poetry as opposed to other literary genres is focused on in this thesis. Where necessary to clarify points, I refer to authors' other genre works. I also note the intertextual nature of poetry, combining registers of literary and everyday language as well as references to other kinds of texts, screenplays, activities and performances which are also true to a greater or lesser extent for other genres. In particular, poetry as a form relies on spaces or gaps. The metre of syllables, the breaking

28 To underscore the significance of Hawaiki, Cook Islands Māori poet Kauraka Kauraka says in the brief introduction to his first poetry collection *Return to Havaiki*, "Havaiki is the unidentified ancestral home of the Polynesians. The island is known today as Manihiki, but the original form is Manuhiki, which is still used as an honorific, or to represent the idealised Manihiki society." Interestingly, Manihiki is one of the closest islands to Alistair Te Ariki Campbell's ancestral island of Tongareva. There are many Hawaikis in the Eastern Polynesian region.

of lines, and stanzas, or the wide open expanse of free-verse poetry, relies on spaces (both as spoken and as laid-out visually) opening out and closing in with regular and irregular patterns of word shapes and sounds. Hence as a form, poetry lends itself to semiotic or Moanan currents. Additionally, due to the intersubjective approach of the thesis inspired by my relationship with the five writers, the *vā* that exists between myself as a reader, former student, co-editor, co-poet, is through poetry. Poetry is also more subjective, more material in one's emotional and experiential life, and arguably better suited to a semiotic close reading approach than other narrative based forms of writing. As a poet and poetry anthologist my scholarship is put to best use by focusing on this genre.

DEFINING A 'POEM'

The English word *poem* is derived from the Greek word ποιεῖν (*poiein*), 'to make' (*OED*) which emphasises the constructed or made nature of the craft's disciplinary qualities. Technical ability is prized within the bounds of this definition. Likewise, Polynesian types of poetry (*waiata* and its varieties, *moteatea*, *haka*, *mele* and its varieties, *solo* and its varieties) are also highly constructed according to agreed rules of prosody, themes, and symbols. Essentially, Polynesian-language poetics continues to emphasise orature or sung or chanted performance (Ngata I xxxiv, McLean and Orbell 7, McRae and Jacob 49, Pukui and Korn xiii, ho'omanawanui 2005: 30, Luomala 1993: 964). The five poets I am studying are not known as performance-poets, nor does their English language prosody replicate that of Polynesian language poems, but there are other

elements of indigenous language poetics in their English language poems which this thesis identifies through Moanan wayfinding techniques.

Selection of Poets

As claimed earlier, I selected Campbell, Tuwhare, Wendt, Trask and Hulme because I personally regard them as tuakana, writers of preceding generations, who have each grappled with their art in broadening contexts; they each have lessons of wisdom to share on aesthetic and biographical levels. In addition to the poets' publications, their work has attracted a range of research resources of assistance to this project. It is a coincidence that they each approach poetry from a similar free-verse standpoint with Campbell perhaps the most formal voice among them. Each poet is deeply informed by their own indigenous cultures, and they each have offered thoughts on national, if not international indigenous cultures. Arguably the traditions that inform their poetic development are partly grounded in Moanan language poetic traditions of highly nuanced and voiced messages. In addition, I felt an ethics of belonging to my writing community. A contributing factor to the selection of poets was the spread of their origins, residences and travels throughout the moana. Campbell lived in Tongareva and Aotearoa; Hulme lives in Aotearoa's Te Waipounamu; Tuwhare has lived in Aotearoa's Te Ika a Maui and Te Waipounamu as well as Samoa, Bougainville and Japan; Wendt has lived in Fiji, Samoa, Aotearoa and Hawai'i; Trask has lived in

Hawai'i and travelled extensively. As an anthologist²⁹ I am familiar with the works of many Moanan poets writing in English. The selected poets presented the most opportunities for me to follow many currents. As noted earlier in this chapter, Trask and Wendt have emphasised anti-colonial aspects in their poetry, Tuwhare has aspects of both, while Campbell and Hulme tend toward art for art's sake writing with the notable exception of Hulme's feminist sequence, *Lost Possessions*.

There are a number of other tuakana or tauihu (prow of the waka) poets who have single-authored collections I might have included in the thesis. J.C. Sturm and Konai Helu Thaman are for me the most likely poets for inclusion. They have each gathered significant bodies of poetry and other publications, but they have not received sustained critical attention. Sturm began publishing poetry in the late 1940s in the same period as Alistair Te Ariki Campbell at Otago University. Her first collection, *Dedications*, was not published until 1996. Sturm's collection of short fiction, *The House of the Talking Cat*, might have appeared decades earlier than its 1983 publication date and would have been the first work of fiction by an iwi Māori writer. The Tongan poet and scholar, Konai Helu Thaman has several poetry collections which have achieved prominence internationally, yet there are a limited number of critical and scholarly resources available in relation to her poetry. She was also a significant member, along with Albert Wendt, of the South Pacific Creative Arts Society founded in the mid-1970s. Due to word count constraints, it has not been possible to

²⁹ In addition to *Whetu Moana* and *Mauri Ola*, I co-edited a special Māori literature edition of the journal *Mānoa*, and the Māori poetry in English anthology *Puna Wai Kōrero* (Auckland University Press, 2014).

include both writers. I plan in the future to expand this critical study to include Sturm and Thaman's work.

CULTURE, AND MOANAN OR INDIGENOUS LANGUAGE POETICS

The term culture comes with a lot of freight, and so it is my intention to define it without unnecessarily restricting possible understandings of this tangible and intangible arena of human activity and presence. I take culture to refer to the everyday and extraordinary activities and practices of people, sometimes shaped by the national narratives of the state, and other group narratives (race, class, gender, sexuality), as well as its other significant meaning of the subjective appreciation of art known as 'taste' which is shaped by social norms, and agencies through awards, exhibitions, literary production, performances on screens and stages (Bourdieu, *Field 1*).

Culture has several levels of engagement, according to sociologist Gordon Mathews (1-29), and two basic kinds of definition: "the way of life as a people" (1) and "as the information and identities available from the global cultural supermarket" (1). This latter concept of the market refers to both the material and the cultural, although Mathews points out that the cultural supermarket resembles the structure of the internet rather than a map of the world. The planet is currently divided into geographic nation-states and economic territories that in the Pacific sometimes project 200 miles off-shore, which shape the thinking of citizens through public

education and mass media (Mathews 7). The ever-increasing reality is that there are huge global flows of information and products around the world no longer bounded by nations. This represents, in Mathews' formulation, a kind of global cultural supermarket where consumers are free to pick and choose identities. This sometimes involves money. There are two aspects to the cultural supermarket: the origin of the cultural 'goods' and their realm of use.

My interest in culture, as already explained in Moanan terms, is similar to an object of navigation. The texts examined are circulating within and beyond the reefs of literary production³⁰. I accept the complexity of identity assertions and their often contingent nature as dependent on forces such as the State and the market. These State and market assertions of identity are often resisted by the poets, so they are useful counterweights to ethnic identities that endure often despite the State and the market. I am most interested in the energies that circulate or mobilise what the poets and poems are saying about their ethnicity in regards to the Moana and their local ethnic grouping (Māori, Kanaka Maoli, Tongarevan, Samoan). Samoan theologian Terry Pouono describes the tension between Samoan indigeneity and papalagi or 'western' influences in the image of "coconut juice in a Coca-Cola bottle" (Pouono 170).

This interplay of identities is dynamic. Mathews notes, for instance, that ethnic identity and national identity at times can be closely aligned. In the cases of Wendt and Campbell, the sense of culture and ethnicity is expressed with dual or even multiple allegiances to other parts of the

30 The term "reefs of literary production" is similar but not identical to Bourdieu's term "fields of cultural production."

Moana constituting transnational or even (to borrow Chadwick Allen's term) transindigenous identities. While Hulme, Trask and Tuwhare remained in the nation states governing their indigenous nations, they each have lived outside their traditional lands within the nation state. Individual texts by all of the writers have embraced their ethnic heritages and, equally, have not embraced ethnicity in favour of other collective or personal topics.

TAUHI VĀ

By situating this thesis in the Moana, I have sought to de-emphasise national narratives while privileging one set of ethnic identity assertions. Often these assertions are made to nurture the set of relations expressed in Samoan culture as tauhi vā which Ka'ili glosses as "to take care of one's social (relationship) space with kin or kin-like members via reciprocal exchanges of food, goods, and services" (106). He notes that vā, which is the sociospatial connection between people and things, has four dimensions: "physical, social, intellectual and symbolic" (89-90). 'Okusitino Mahina explores the epistemology of vā (space) and tā (time) in Tongan artistic contexts. This has broader implications for Oceanic contexts. In addressing the communicative aspect of art, he describes the 'experience' from a Tongan perspective (Mahina, *Art* 87):

It is, as a specific condition of mind, an eternal kind of 'divine' experience.

As continuous emotional or psychological states, they exist in Tonga as *māfana*, *vela* and *tauēlangi*, which is conceived of as a flow of energy, i.e., a type of histrionic, *tā-vā* movement symbolically beginning with 'warmth' via 'burning fire' to 'reaching the sky'. As a climaxed form

of elation, melodramatically affecting both creator and appreciator of art,
it tends to have an effect of an orgasmic nature.

I highlight this section of a very complex text on aesthetics noting the Tongan term *vela* which has a similar gloss in Samoan, but also taking care to remember that there are differences between the related Tongan and Samoan languages which are not accessible to me as I do not speak them. There are similar New Zealand Māori words for two of the terms: mahana for warmth, and wera for hot. In very broad structural terms, Albert Wendt's *The Adventures of Vela* could be characterised as making similar movements in intensity and upward direction. Wendt has also written about the *vā* in his essay "Tatauing the Postcolonial Body" (Hereniko and Wilson 402):

A well-known Samoan expression is 'Ia teu le va.' Cherish/nurse/care for the va, the relationships. This is crucial in communal cultures that value group unity more than individualism: who perceive the individual person/creature/thing in terms of group, in terms of va, relationships.

In an unpublished paper, Samoan sociolinguist Emma Kruse-Va'ai also notes the embodiment of relational space and the protocols implied by the expression: "To know how to keep one's distance physically and socially in terms of human relations is also implied by the Samoan phrase - *teu le va*." Sociolinguist Alessandro Duranti also emphasises the correctness of relationships in his translation

of the verb “teu”³¹ which means “to put something in order” (29) while Bradd Shore also notes that it is an internal rather than external kind of ordering (*Sala'ilua* 159).

This emphasis on space, being in space, and between-ness, is a theme of this thesis. Time in its various slices also features, but not in the fluid coherent narratives termed by some as histories although of course the understandings/interpretations of texts, as well as their presentation, are always historically-situated or time-saturated. This thesis emphasises interpretations grounded in individual and social spaces while allowing for the many interpolations of the fourth dimension, time. Samoan historian and social theorist I'uogafa Tuagalu distinguishes between the social and spiritual dimensions of the *vā* (110):

However, the term *va*, defined as 'distance, space between two places, things or people', usually appears in phrases which describe the 'space' to which it refers (Milner 2003:307). So there are many types of *va*. *Va o tagata* refers to the relational space between people; *va feiloa'i* refers to the protocols of meeting; *va feilofani* refers to the brotherly and sisterly love that people should show one another; *va fealoaloa'i*, the respectful space and *va tapua'i*, the worshipful space.

Airini, Melani Anae and Karlo Mila-Schaaf, writing a report on Pacific health research approaches, give four Tongan perspectives and one Samoan perspective of the *vā*

31 Duranti (29-30) notes the noun form means a bouquet of cut flowers, and so the verb also connotes beauty. Its reduplicated form, *teuteu*, means to beautify.

(10) to emphasise relational or collective or collaborative research frameworks rather than individual agendas. They define vā,

as a spatial way of conceiving the secular and spiritual dimensions of relationships and relational order, that facilitates both personal and collective well-being and teu le va as the ‘valuing’, ‘nurturing’ and ‘looking after’ of these relationships to achieve optimal outcomes for all stakeholders. (10)

These remarks addressing kaupapa launch a number of vessels investigating Moanan identity in the works of these English language writers, and whether it is possible to claim that their bodies of work may be regarded as identifiably Moanan. Clearly the research impulse is a collective one. The method of inquiry relies on inside and outside approaches to the material: for example in the case of Campbell, a textual studies approach constitutes an external investigation of the publishing and editorial practices that contributed to the published texts of his sixty year career; his biographical data, on the other hand, contributes to insider interpretations of the text; additionally, the theorists drawn on come from within the growing insider tradition of Pacific literary studies, as well as outsider traditions. The intertextual nature of the following arguments and discussions, readings and analyses, reflect the entangled various signs, practices and narratives of ‘culture’.

The term “indigenous language poetics” is repeated throughout this thesis. The term is a trace of another planned interpretive project. I had once intended to demonstrate possible continuities between Māori language poets and Māori poets writing in English through shared techniques, linguistic and literary devices. While I think it is indeed possible in the work of Hone Tuwhare to demonstrate how he crosses the language poetics gap, it would be more difficult to

demonstrate consistently over a greater number of poets. Tuwhare, for instance, throughout his body of work animates great and minor features of nature allowing each to possess their own characteristic voices and dispositions. This poetic consistency most likely owes its stability to a stable range of stock natural references and formulaic phrases within Māori language poetics. Other Māori poets, such as Apirana Taylor, do not feature nature to such an extent in their work, in that the centre of the poems appears to be a human centre focusing on personal and/or social psychological and emotional states. Perhaps my use of the phrase is a subconscious palimpsest of that earlier project. Thus indigenous language poetics in this thesis both refers to the conscious formal poetic forms, devices and other features of the native language traditions of the Moana (in this thesis in particular those of Samoa, Tongareva, Aotearoa and Hawai‘i), but also of the original desire to demonstrate these connections between English language and native language poetics which has been superseded by the current interpretive project.

Finally, in this chapter, while fluidity, liquid oscillation, wave formation, tidal rhythms, of the Moana suggests instability, the many seafaring traditions of island peoples have created technologies and methods of navigation to make stable that which is inherently unstable. Diaz’s documentary comparing the traditions of Polowat (in Chuuk) with relatively metropolitan Guam, *Sacred Vessels: Navigating Tradition and Identity in Micronesia* (1997), reminds us that the canoe is more than a foundation of our heritage. “The canoe is a metaphor for our history of island and islander travel.” Technologies such as the outrigger, and hulls that use aerodynamic lift, as well as “incredible knowledge of stars, winds and currents, clouds and waves and ocean currents and the movement of sea creatures”, enabled Pacific peoples to maintain connections and their collectivity. DeLoughrey, referencing both Diaz and navigator David Lewis, uses the Micronesian term *etak*, or

moving islands, to describe the method of navigation “where the voyaging canoe is perceived as stable while the islands and cosmos move toward the traveler” (*Routes and Roots* 3). For me, Mana and Moana provide a similar “tidalectic between sea and land” (DeLoughrey 3) as well as a wayfinding method that triangulates many discourses and moving poems.

CLOSE READING AS MOANAN WAYFINDING: TUWHARE AND CAMPBELL

Here, on the outgoing tide, I explore and refine the wayfinding method with two paradigmatic poems, “No Ordinary Sun” by Hone Tuwhare and “The Return” by Alistair Te Ariki Campbell, to calibrate my reading practices. I then compare the two deceased poets’ work. I do so separately from the living poets to acknowledge the difference between death and life which ultimately has its basis in tikanga Māori. For me, the two poets are like tauihu, or prow figures leading many vessels as they cut into the Moana and harness or negotiate the atmospheric forces of the hau.

My reason for selecting “No Ordinary Sun” by Hone Tuwhare, and “The Return” by Alistair Te Ariki Campbell is that the poems are signs of time and place, both associated with the bodies of work of each poet and with Moanan literature, as they each stand at the beginning of book production within imaginative writing of the South Pacific. Campbell’s 1950 book *Mine Eyes Dazzle* is the first collection of poetry by a Cook Islands Māori or Polynesian written in English. Tuwhare’s *No Ordinary Sun* was the first book written in English, published in 1964, by a New Zealand Māori

poet.³² Each of the two poems comes respectively from these two ‘first’ collections. Standing before these two major figures of Moanan and Pacific literature, I also want something local and concrete with which to attach my thinking, rather than veering off into the void as a disembodied or universal voice; hence I include in the opening chapter a close reading and comparison of the two significant poems.

READING HONE TUWHARE’S “NO ORDINARY SUN”

This close reading demonstrates the Moana methodology. I am tempted to refer to the numerous words of others here because this particular poem (CW 52) has been ‘written’ about or

³² *Miss Ulysses from Puka-Puka*, by Florence ‘Johnny’ Frisbie was the first book of creative writing by a Cook Islands or Polynesian author, published by Macmillan in 1948. The first book of creative writing in English by a New Zealand Māori writer was R.T.Kohere’s *The Autobiography of a Maori* published in 1951 by A.H. & A.W. Reed. Arguably, Kohere’s Ngāti Porou history and biography of Mokena Kohere, *The Story of a Maori Chief*, published in 1949, is creative nonfiction; if that were the case that could make it the first book by a Māori literary writer. Many individuals have published creative works in English language periodicals from the nineteenth century onward.

inscribed or tattooed³³ by a number of literary critics and theorists inside and outside Aotearoa. I am attempting an uninscribed reading even though my reading has been informed by others. I will return to the interpretations of other critics in the forthcoming chapter on Tuwhare, and to this significant poem. This Moanan method of close reading is guided by the moving signs of the poem contextualising times, places, events and multi-layered meanings.

The poem begins as an instruction, or at least that is the religious communication I am assuming in the phrase “not sharply in supplication,” invoking destruction by forces derived from below, and not from the “bright enhaloed cloud” that a worshipper would normally “incline a deferential head to.” Its religious nature is underscored by the chant-like³⁴ three stresses of the first line (similar to Gregorian triple meter) and the long vowels, as well as its incantatory style:

Tree let your arms fall:
raise them not sharply in supplication
to the bright enhaloed cloud.

33 Albert Wendt notes in his essay ‘Tatauing the Postcolonial Body’: “The tatau as script/text has a long history” (Hereniko and Wilson 403). Tatau is the Samoan word for tattoo, similar to the Hawaiian term kakau which also refers to writing (Pukui and Elbert 119).

34 See *The Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics* (222-223). It notes a tendency in contemporary poetry to an admixture of chant and lyric which “complicate conventional notions of individualist lyric.”

Much has been made by others about the personification of the tree (Jackson 193, Mitcalfe 18-19, McEldowney 125-126, M.Wilson 193-194), but it can also be regarded as an address by the narrator to a fellow being, to the tree itself, rather than to a personified being projected as the tree. It is difficult to assess the nature of the tree without being familiar with the author's intention here. It is speculation to claim that the tree represents the Māori deity of the forest and of humanity, Tāne Mahuta, yet the cosmic associations encourage at least at a subconscious level a divine reading of the image. The word 'O' makes its frequent appearance in the Psalms and it is often used in the Bible to address God. A generic divinity could also be an addressee, that is the divine immanence and extraordinary nature of all beings, without being culturally, botanically, or theologically specific. This lack of specificity reminds me that this poem appeared first in the 1950s, an era when cultural diversity was generally swept beneath the broad official paradigms of social assimilation³⁵ into western ways of living, before "No Ordinary Sun" was published in the book of the same name in 1964. This chronology also influences my reading of Alistair Te Ariki Campbell's poem "The Return," which was initially published in the 1950s, and which was similarly immersed in the cultural mores of its time.

Before I move on to explicate the Campbell text, it is worth noting that Tuwhare's "bright enhaloed cloud" echoes an Old Testament image of the "pillar of the cloud" (Exodus 13:22) God sent to guide the Israelites out of Egypt; much later, Moses ascended Mt Sinai, which was covered in

³⁵ Eric Schwimmer (260) defines assimilation as integration, "aptly described by a Māori student as: 'What the shark said to the snapper.'" See also Awatere (24-27).

cloud, to receive the ten commandments where “the sight of the glory of the Lord *was* like devouring fire” (Exodus 24: 17). In Revelations 1:7, “Behold he cometh with clouds...” the Lord’s arrival is announced. The subsequent often quoted verse in Revelations (1:8) states that God is the alpha and the omega, the beginning and the end, which the “blast” imagery of the poem draws on for religious effect. As mentioned above, it might also refer to the Tree of Knowledge, or the Tree of Good and Evil. I had originally believed that the poem referred to atomic testing, as the author was in New Zealand’s J Force as part of the post-war occupation of Japan; he visited Hiroshima in 1946 (Hunt 49). However, despite wishing to read this poem untattooed by the words of others, DeLoughrey’s 2009 article about the poem uncovers its concerns with the hydrogen bomb, and that nuclear device’s history of testing within the Pacific. According to DeLoughrey, by the time of the poem’s first publication in the magazine *Northland* in 1959, over 250 nuclear devices had been detonated in the Pacific. The first hydrogen bomb was tested in the Marshall Islands’ Enewetak Atoll in 1952, where forty-one other H-Bomb tests were held until 1958. Janet Hunt’s Tuwhare biography (50) also has an undated handwritten poem called “Cogitation on the Hydrogen Bomb”: “It would be unseemly/ for humankind/ to join their ancestors—/ the atoms/ with such precipitate/ haste.” This poem’s brevity reminds me of Tuwhare’s use of the haiku form later on in his work, so the adoption of the haiku might be influenced by his military service in Japan from 1946-47.

The phrase “no ordinary” in the poem’s title refers either to that which is special, or extraordinary, or by extension supernatural. This divine or supernatural element layered within the phrase would normally (ordinarily) mark a recognition of the *mana* of the sun, where the mana derives from its tapu or sacredness, and its power, and the mana of its life-giving hospitality or

manaaki or care for other beings (Tate 80, 83) such as the tree; yet here the phrase, “no ordinary”, marks a horrendous erasure of that which was once ordinary or natural.

The title “No Ordinary Sun” initially draws me away from the tree toward the “radiant ball”, yet there is roundness too in the depiction of the tree as its “sap” rises to the moon, and its head is “wreathed” by birds. This focus on the round (sun, moon, ball, wreath) also connects the tree to the “enhaloed cloud”. The last stanza’s invocation, “O tree”, voices this roundness literally for the final time in the poem, where the rest of the imagery is flattened into two dimensions (lines 26-28), where even mountains have no shadows, the ocean floor is “drab”, plains are whitened, and the final line lacks an image: “your end at last is written.” Yet, on reflection, there is an image, that of marks on paper, or tattoo on skin, since to be “written” is a visual if two-dimensional omega.

Tuwhare’s tree depends on a world of seasons, yet while evoking a completion it is unnatural, not ‘ordinary’, the conclusion of the tree itself and all that has been associated with it: the tickling wind, birds, lovers, and even axes and fire, as well as the cosmic rounds of the sun and moon associated with life and the world. Rather than a seasonal completion or accomplishment, Tuwhare’s tree is starkly planted in an antithetical ‘not’ or ‘no’ nature (“*No Ordinary Sun*”[my italics]), and works against other images of trees that we might inherit from literature, orature (the Māori³⁶ myth of the tree-deity Tāne Mahuta is a possible connection), or personal experience. As well as the rounded cosmicity, a feature of the poem is the generic name for the flora in the body of

36 Unless otherwise stated, since it might refer to Cook Islands Māori people or language, the term Māori in this thesis refers to New Zealand Māori.

the poem, “tree”, encouraging a general reading that draws us out to a world-view concerned with time itself. Superficially this is not an obvious point to draw, so I will spend time on the explication.

The term “tree” accounts for an enormous number of plant-species, on an order greater than ten thousand, but it is difficult to be precise given variations in defining characteristics. Natural historian and arborist Peter Thomas (3) indicates the earliest trees evolved in the early Devonian period (approximately 390 Million years ago), taking hold in the lush forests of the Carboniferous period (around 360 Million to 290 Million years ago). The *New World Encyclopedia* entry for trees mentions significant occurrences in folklore, religion and mythology, such as the Bodhi tree which belonged to a class of Fig trees “sacred to Hindus, Jains and Buddhists...” or the Old Testament trees of knowledge good and evil, the Greek myth of Daphne who was transformed into a tree as she fled Apollo, or the Chinese peach tree which grows a peach granting immortality once every three thousand years (see also Faust and Timon 338-342). In other cultures such as the Adivasis of India, Moriori of the Chatham Islands, and other Polynesians, trees are closely associated with spirituality and divinity. To summarise, then, on geological, theological and cultural time scales, the tree concept has tremendous reach. To return to the poem at hand, the phenomenology of the “tree”, Tuwhare’s in isolation from its “former shagginess” (line 12) and also in its stark separation from other trees, and also in its posthumous evocation as a historicised text written with the destruction of immense and timeless features such as shadows on mountains, ashened earth, and the drying up of the sea, time is seen to be part of the tree’s being. The end of time is depicted as a human, a written, construct:

O tree

in the shadowless mountains

the white plains and
the drab sea floor
your end at last is written.

The poet's tribe has within its traditional boundaries some of the greatest kauri forests in New Zealand. The concept of trees has a great reach for members of the Ngā Puhi iwi whose tribal district is traditionally described as a house with mountainous posts (Kawharu 96-99).

In the Tuwhare chapter, I further explore "No Ordinary Sun" on a range of environmental, mythological, and political levels. The repetition of the close reading is a kind of Moanan return where the first set of waves have set out, and now return as reflections. In addition to Tuwhare's seminal poem, the politics of the poetry composed in the 1970s is explored. The cover portraits of *Small Holes in the Silence* and *Hone Tuwhare: A Biography* are also read in both a kanohi-ki-te-kanohi / vā relational sense and a phenomenological sense.

READING ALISTAIR TE ARIKI CAMPBELL'S "THE RETURN"

Ideally, returning specifically to Campbell, and perhaps this is my personal desire for cultural coherence, Tongarevan terms for literature and art would be to the fore in Campbell's work, but that would not convey the complex layers regarding his maternal Tongarevan and paternal Scottish-Pākehā heritage, nor of his upbringing since the age of six in New Zealand with its own broad social connections to the former British Commonwealth. Let me set aside this biographical data without losing sight of it. This version of "The Return" appears in his 2005 work, *The Dark Lord of Savaiki: Collected Poems* (25-26), but it was first published in 1950 in *Mine Eyes*

Dazzle. John Thompson (1980) notes that an earlier version appeared in *Hilltop: a Literary Paper* in June 1949 as “Landscape with Figures.”

John Thompson also notes that this poem owes its origins in large part to D.H. Lawrence’s poem “Middle of the World” (Lawrence 575). I agree with Thompson that there are two striking similarities: the first is a reference to the Greek god Dionysos (Campbell’s spelling); and the second is the set of figures crouching on the beach around fires. The Lawrence poem is focused on Cnossos which was the principal ancient Minoan city on the island of Crete. The connection here with Campbell is that many of Campbell’s poems are concerned with Asia Minor; for instance his Gallipoli sequence was written in memory of his father Jock Campbell, who was an Anzac veteran of that campaign, and so reading the Lawrence text as a palimpsest enables us to deduce biographical as well as mythological material in “The Return.” I do not completely agree with Thompson’s reading however, as his assertion that there were no bird-headed figures in Māori myth is contradicted by the many beaked figures of taniwha in meeting houses throughout the country, or of the well-known Kurangaituku or bird-woman myth from the Te Arawa region, and other traditional bird narratives (Orbell 47, 33, 63). While it is still possible to read the poem, as Thompson does, as a substitution of Polynesian/Moanan mythopoetics for European mythopoetics as symbolized by Dionysos drowning, who Thompson marks as ‘individualistic’ as opposed to the collective figurative deities that emerge in the poem, my assertion here is that this poem embraces both European and Moanan worldviews, which are also based on Campbell’s dual heritage.

In addition to the D.H. Lawrence palimpsest we have access to an earlier 1949 version of the poem entitled “Landscape with Figures.” There are two more lines in the fourth stanza lengthening the poem:

Men like wind-bred saplings, straight in the back
Like a spear, with long hard thighs, and fine hands;
And sweet as incense-clouds, the smoke rising, the fire
Spitting with spots of rain, and mist low with rain;

As well as the deletion of the first two lines from the fourth stanza above, the informal phrase “spitting with spots of rain” is tightened to “spitting with rain” in the final version. Lines 17-19 were previously:

Plant gods, tree gods, gods of the cloven hooves
Of miracle honey and milk and the gushing rock;
Gods of inland lakes, and still streams. Face downward

I note here that the deletion of “cloven hooves” for its substitute phrase “middle world” in the final version opens up a Moanan or Oceanic reading of “gods” rather than an exclusively Hellenistic one in that Polynesians did not have cloven fauna, while the deletion of “miracle and honey milk” removes an Old Testament or land of milk and honey reference (Exodus 3: 8, 3: 17, 13: 5), although it is still possible of course to *additionally* infer a pan-Hellenistic or Western symbolism. It also reveals a deliberate effort not to assert overly Moanan/Tongarevan or Māori identifiers here as the Greek ones are actually named. Admittedly this could be due to the Lawrence original, which clearly influences this poem.

The Dardanelles/Asia Minor/Gallipoli is a potent setting for Campbell, because of his father’s service there in World War I. We could use this focus to read Gallipoli in this poem:

And on the surf-loud beach the long spent hulks,

The mats and splintered masts, the fires kindled
On the wet sand, and men moving between the fires,
Standing or crouching with backs to the sea.

As well as seeing Moanan waka imagery of mats and masts one can also imagine a military landing party, where a “mat” describes a bivouac, or a blanket roll, and the splintered masts belong to the wrecked “hulks” (line 5) of the masted, torpedo-boat destroyers and other warships deployed out to sea (Wilkie 15). The “drowned Dionysos” (line 19) is a fallen soldier, “the thundering sands” thunder with the sounds of bombardment rather than surf, the “shrunkened” heads are a result of disfigurement from a war which has an “antique” nature, especially in this region of the world, while the “mists” are those of historical as well as mythological time. It is too strong to claim these are fixed or stable readings of the text, but they are suggested by the poet’s biography. There might be a lineal, chronological connection between the Moanan waka imagery and the historical military interpretation, or there might not be. The ambiguity depends firstly on the identification of the Moanan interpretation of the text, and then secondly whether to directly connect the military WWI interpretation with the Moanan one. If they are connected, the Moanan interpretation precedes the WWI interpretation and provides a deepened sense of history where WWI echoes an earlier foundational encounter on a beach-head. In the chapter on Campbell, I look at a range of influences on his poetics: the influences of editors over the years by looking at the flow of amendments and revisions of poems to seek the origins of the texts’ indigeneity, and also the growing influence of the indigenous frame of reference in Campbell’s oeuvre even though the poet is always indigenous and Tongarevan.

POSSIBLE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN TUWHARE'S AND CAMPBELL'S POETICS

It is understandable, given the lack of English language Moanan literary precedents, and the prevailing assimilationist, paternalistic and stereotypical beliefs of 1950s and 1960s official and everyday Pākehā New Zealand culture (Schwimmer 1968), that neither the Tuwhare nor the Campbell poems make explicit Moanan cultural references; it is also understandable that Campbell is comfortable making overtly Eurocentric references in both the early version and the final version of "The Return" while partly submerging the Polynesian references. Campbell attended Otago University in early 1944 (Weir I 269) and took the same first-year classics course as the poet James K. Baxter (Campbell, *Poets in Our Youth* 37), while Tuwhare's education was enhanced by his membership of the New Zealand communist party (Hunt 41-42). In the collected works of both poets, I would venture to say that one key difference between their approaches is that Campbell received a classical literary education and mixed with artistic elites such as the Wellington Group (Campbell, *Island to Island* 114-120), while Tuwhare was exposed to politically class-conscious writers and aestheticians who valued one's collective and cultural roots. For instance Tuwhare does explicitly refer to Māori poetic forms and material culture in his first collection, *No Ordinary Sun*, yet Campbell only glancingly does so in the beginning phase of his career in *Mine Eyes Dazzle* (which was published fourteen years before Tuwhare's first book). Over the span of their careers Tuwhare remains remarkably consistent in the content, if not the stylistic manner, of his cultural referencing, while Campbell shifts toward his Tongarevan heritage still maintaining connections with his English Romantic, Graeco-Roman, and American influences (Weir I 269-271; Campbell,

Poets in Our Youth 40-42). Their contrasting educations brought different attitudes to culture as well as the large narratives of history, class, and literature.³⁷

As well as their varying educations they each had difficult but different upbringings in terms of parental guidance and nurture: from the age of eight Campbell was an institutionalised orphan who only had his young siblings to rely on for emotional support (Campbell, *Island to Island* 84); and Tuwhare, having lost his mother at the age of six, was at least in the care of his father who was briefly itinerant for a time during the Great Depression and then worked in Chinese market gardens on the outskirts of Auckland (Hunt 21). Their careers also span the growth of the cultural fields of New Zealand and South Pacific literatures as new literatures in English.³⁸

TĀTOU TE HUNGA ORA: WE THE NAVIGATORS

The paradigmatic poems I have selected from the living poets are “Pūowaina: Flag Day” by Haunani-Kay Trask, “Inside Us the Dead” by Albert Wendt, and “Waiting on the Laughing Owl” by Keri Hulme. The selection depends on traces imbued within my own memories of initial encounters with these texts. To paraphrase historian, Susan Najita, by reading with attention to context and a “side-glancing historical eye,” the stakes of this reading practice are decolonising (17). This close reading strategy is particularly attentive to the visible and invisible indigenous or Moanan life-

³⁷ I use the term oeuvre in this thesis to refer to the collective life works of the writer specifically in the genre of poetry or verse.

³⁸ The term New Literature in English in this context is clearly Anglophone.

worlds depicted in the texts, through fragments of history, personal biographical details, psychology, and lore. It recuperates these literary texts as indigenous/tribal/island centred accounts of personal and/or collective resistance. Therefore the stakes are the maintenance or endurance of indigenous dignity, rangatiratanga, mana, sometimes countering peacefully, sometimes forcefully, the many systems and paradigms³⁹ governing, normalising, and organising Moanan individuals (descendants of Hawaiki). This reflects also my own subjectivity.

READING HAUNANI-KAY TRASK'S "PŪOWAINA: FLAG DAY"

I will begin in this world of the living by acknowledging the Kanaka Maoli writer, leader and scholar Haunani-Kay Trask and her poem "Pūowaina: Flag Day" (Trask, *Night is a Sharkskin Drum* 28), which she spoke about in a 2003 videotaped reading *Poet's Insurrection*. Trask's father was a WWII veteran who was buried in the United States National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific located directly above the city of Honolulu in Punchbowl or Pūowaina crater.

In March 2010 I visited the cemetery on an ordinary day. In the distance were two soldiers delivering a flag at a small raised platform on the far east side. Unlike the national memorial cemetery at Arlington in Virginia with its upright stones, the many grave markers were in long rows just below grass-height. I could hear the small tractors of the caretaking staff as they drove around

³⁹ This is influenced by but does not conform to French Marxist philosopher Louis Althusser's essay on ideological and repressive state apparatuses.

the grounds. There were some flowers placed on a few of the graves, but none stood in vases like those at civilian graveyards. I discovered later on the memorial website that permanent fixtures like vases were banned. On another visit, I had seen the large memorial statue raised on a platform with the colonnaded mosaics mapping battles in the war against Japan in the Pacific, and the Korean War. It seemed intentionally like a place for contemplation to me, even though I was constantly aware of its official memorial status, and the stories justifying war for which it was a significant symbolic component. I understand the national politics, but I also understand the need to grieve for loved ones and the need to find meaning in their sacrifices. Those family needs, as well as the nationalistic military ones, were being met here.

So it is partly coincidental that I selected this poem in particular to read, especially given the role of heterotopias in Trask's poetry. Trask says in the video that her family had gone to visit their father and grandfather's grave, which happened to be on Flag Day, when American flags are prominently displayed along the tree-lined drives there, and miniature flags are placed on each grave. She says in the video, prior to reading the poem, that in Polynesian culture older generations hand down knowledge to the younger generations. She wanted her nieces and nephews present to know what to do with the flag planted on their grandfather's grave, that is, "burn/ their American/ flag." Trask also claims in the video that the military stole the cemetery site, along with 250,000 other acres of Hawaiian land (largely supported by an official Hawaiian advisory committee report *Broken Trust*).

It is a feature of Trask's poetics that she uses original Hawaiian place-names rather than American English names, which has the effect of raising up Hawaiian history and practices in the locations on which she focuses. In this instance the American presence as symbolized by the flag

and the military memorial setting, is undercut by the title of the poem which uses the proper noun, Pūowaina. I say undercut because the term restores an original name, one belonging to the prior justice, governmental and religious system of Kanaka Maoli. *Place Names of Hawai'i* (195) defines Pūowaina as “hill of placing [human sacrifices] (for which this hill was famous).” Handy and Pukui in their article, “The Polynesian Family System in Ka-u, Hawai'i”, also associate the crater with the important Hawaiian deity of Pele:

The most important *kupuna* for all 'ohana of Ka-u, greatly loved in spite of her bad temper, was Pele-honua-mea (Pele-the-sacred-earth-person). The Volcano Goddess was also called Wahine-o-ka-Lua (Woman of the Crater) because she made her home in the depths of Hale-ma'u-ma'u and other craters on the slopes of Mauna Loa. To the island of Hawai'i she had come by way of Maui⁴⁰ where, as recited in the chants of her epic, she formed the vast crater of Hale-a-ka-la (House of the sun). All extinct craters in these islands are spots where she dug with her staff Paoa, seeking a dry place for her eternal fires. Before coming to Maui she dug on Oahu the craters called Kohe-lepe-lepe (“Koko Crater”), Leahi (“Diamond Head”), Pu'u-o-waina (“Punchbowl”), Alia-pa'akai (“Salt Lake”). To Oahu she had come from Kauai, and to Kauai she had made the migration from Tahiti (Kahiki), accompanied by brothers and sisters and other relatives.

I will explore later in the thesis the importance of Pele's revolutionary nature for Trask's poetics, literally as the volcano goddess responsible for eruptions and all-consuming lava and as a member

⁴⁰ None of my sources use the macron on the 'a' in Maui although that is the correct usage.

of the Pele family interconnected with Hawaiian cosmogony and being on land, air and ocean. Pele's immense power and forceful identification as a Hawaiian female deity rallies symbols and natural forces for the culture whose original journey to the island chain came from Kahiki, or Tahiti. Her presence inspires supra-national and supernatural agencies within aware Hawaiian audiences. The name Pūowaina uncovers such a past for those conscious of the Pele narratives and serves to denaturalise the mosaic texts and maps of the military, placed recently in the crater, in contrast to the millennial Pele narratives. Trask brings her family to the national cemetery to educate her nieces and nephews not only with anti-Americanism, but also perhaps to uncover or recognise the marks left by Pele with her staff Paoa.

That the conclusion of the poem instructs the members of her family to “burn their American flag” is appropriate, since the location was originally a hill of sacrifice, where kahuna or priests made burnt offerings to the gods in response to breaches of taboos or kapu. The burnt offerings that Trask encourages her family to make are clear Hawaiian symbols of sovereignty, which coincides with the site's former role as a sacerdotal centre designed to placate the sovereignty of the gods. “Bring *lei hulu*,/ *palapalai*, *pīkake*. Bring/ *kapa*, beaten fine/ as skin.” The feather leis (*lei hulu*) were worn by ali'i women to denote their high rank, while *palapalai* ferns were sacred to the god Laka and were used to adorn hula altars (Handy and Pukui 68); *pīkake* are endemic flowers used to make leis. Their appearance in the poem is thus as representative *kaona*. ho'omanawanui glosses the poetic associative technique, *kaona* (31), as “hidden, underlying or multiple meanings.” Handy and Pukui (192) also make these significant points about the *kaona* in the term for feathers, *hulu*:

Hulu kupuna is a term for one of the few remaining of the living blood relatives of the grandparent's generation. They are as precious, as dearly loved as the choice feathers (*hulu*, a term of dignity and beauty) woven into a feather cape. *Hulu makua* is the precious elder of the parent's generation. (*Lei*, wreath, is the term for the precious person of the same generation or one younger: one whom one would embrace with the arms, like a *lei*).

Trask's remark in the video about the need to educate the younger generation underscores the symbolism behind *hulu* as explicated by Pukui and Handy above. The poet's nieces and nephews are her father's grandchildren.

The poem's inclusion of *kapa*, bark-cloth, parallels the cloth of the flag, or performs a ceremonial function such as the wrapping of bones; its association with skin gives the *kapa* a human quality, and sensitises the situation around the gravesite. This is the resting place for the poet's father. The anti-American conclusion of the poem is strongly deliberate. On a formal level Trask's poetry makes visual movements across and down the page, reminiscent of *kakau* or tattoo patterns, or more precisely *kapa* patterns, or the Hawaiian Quilt flags (called *Kapa Kuiki*) which are nineteenth century descendants of the *kapa* (Bishop Museum Ethnography Database artifact 1974.021):



Figure 3 Hawaiian Quilt Flag

The tercets in Trask's poem parallel the red-white-blue pattern in the flag stripes. Trask's poem has five distinct sections or stanzas; to transpose the Kapa Kuiki flag structure onto the poem, the central coat-of-arms is the skin-stanza ("as skin. Bring/ the children/ to chant"), a nakedness symbolic of the loss of sovereignty, but also of hope by calling on the voices of children. Trask deploys the same form of brief, shaped stanzas arranged diagonally down the page in multiple poems, each time encouraging different understandings dependent on the poem's context. The terse structure of the tercet lends formal intensity to the messages by isolating the statements by phrase and word such as "as skin. Bring" (line 7) or "for our dead", (line 10). The final stanza is filled with breath, and rhetorical pauses, "and burn/ their American/ flag."

The illustrated Kapa Kuiki above was sewn during King Kalakaua's reign according to the Bishop Museum's ethnography database and was owned by his descendant Prince Jonah Kuhio. The

quilt flag also reminds us that Pūowaina, as well as a temple complex, was also a Hawaiian defensive fortification that overlooked Iolani Palace with a battery of cannons, which was strengthened during Kalakaua's reign (Nogelmeier 54). After the 1893 overthrow of the monarchy the fort was taken by the republican government. A group of royalists attempted "to wrest the mountain fort from the new government's forces" (Nogelmeier 55), but they failed. It is reasonable to assume that the poet knows the history of Pūowaina Temple Complex and Pūowaina Fort and also knows the strong associations with the monarchy and its defenses, since Trask was a Professor of Hawaiian Studies at the state university. Clearly the site of the poem is one of intrinsic Hawaiian sovereignty. The term lāhui (stanza 4) references the Hawaiian nation, as well as the sovereignty group that Trask herself led, called Ka Lāhui Hawai'i.

These analyses of the Trask poem assume that it is possible to reveal meanings by following strands such as kapa, or the kaona behind plants or feathers, or the different governing system of the original temple complex as compared to the contemporary as well as monarchical military complex. Additionally, the poem can be read on a fundamentally human level: the straightforward upset of the poet at witnessing an American flag adorning her father's grave, and wanting to set the record straight for younger family members present. I suspect that this human level, this emotional level, is a gateway to Trask's work as she has the immense courage and determinedness of character to appeal directly to anyone who listens about historical and contemporary violations against Hawaiian sovereignty.

In the chapter on Trask's poetry, I further explore the kaona of place-names and locations, expressions of sovereign mana, her responses to geothermal and tourist development culture in terms of the 'āina or land, the continuing empowerment derived from the Goddess Pele, and

assertions of indigenous memory expressed in care for grave sites and cultural kīpuka (areas of undamaged native culture) despite the tourist heterotopias and compradors who seek to erase or literally bulldoze troubling memories such as occurred during the construction of the H-3 Freeway. I explore Trask's referencing of the resistance song "Kaulana Na Pua" which was composed after the overthrow of the Kingdom by American planters and many other references which would be visible to informed audiences and invisible to uninformed audiences.

READING ALBERT WENDT'S "INSIDE US THE DEAD"

The poetic sequence, "Inside Us the Dead", was first published in 1970 in *Landfall* 95 and has been anthologised in a history collection *Remembrance of Pacific Pasts* and a revisionist literary anthology *Big Smoke: NZ Poems 1960-75*; it also provides the title for a French translation of Wendt's selected poems, *Au fond de nous les morts*. Finally it is the titular sequence for Wendt's first poetry collection published in 1976 by Longman Paul.

The sequence is a complex interweaving of intensely personal, historical and cultural threads. The first poem in the sequence (Wendt 7-8) works on a mythological level which is both personal and cultural. The reference to the "blood clot" (line 22) draws on the birth of the war-goddess Nafanua who reappears some forty years later in Wendt's 2009 epic sequence *The Adventures of Vela*. Nafanua "delivered western Savaii from its oppressors" (Te Rangihiroa, *Samoan Material Culture* 551). She was formerly known as Tilafainga who along with her Siamese twin

Taema were the patron goddesses of tattooing (*Samoa Material Culture* 658, 660). The feats of Nafanua thus immediately foreground acts of successful resistance, female power and culture. This is similar to the position of the narratives in Trask's work featuring the Hawaiian deity Pele.

Another similarity is that both figures, Pele and Nafanua, are derived from precolonial life. In his 1978 essay "The Artist and the Reefs Breaking Open", Wendt comments on the role of artists:

In pre-palagi Oceania, the position and role of artists varied from society to society. However, it can be said that they shared our societies' basic values and beliefs and ways of viewing the cosmos...

Predominantly, the functions of their work were ritualistic and magical and for everyday living. The arts were not for their own sake but to serve society. Over the centuries, art styles changed slowly.

Then the reefs broke open. (107)

Briar Wood and Paul Sharrad have each explored the role of shamanism in Wendt's work. Wendt applies the term *taulaaitu* in his later work, especially in his play *The Songmaker's Chair* and *The Adventures of Vela*. The term glosses as a mixture of priest and prophet in *Vela*, even at times as a spokesperson for the god. The high diction of the poem encourages a priestly or prophet-like stance, "seeking/ these islands by prophetic stars..."

The highly condensed historical information in this poem and the sequence as a whole reveals Wendt's expertise in Samoan history. His master's thesis is a socio-political history of the early years of the Mau resistance movement in Samoa. At times Wendt provides similar information in this sequence: his thesis describes Papalagi or Europeans with the epithet "Sky Bursters" (60), while in the second poem of "Inside Us the Dead" (line 2) they are given the epithet "Sky Piercers."

Another affinity between the poetic sequence and Wendt's thesis is the attitude to a former social order which remained powerful (114):

The matai system, with its roots entrenched in antiquity, had not decayed by 1926. The authority of Pule and Tumua, in the Samoan world beyond Apia, was still powerful; [it] dominated the loyalty, the thinking and attitudes of most of the population. Old Samoa was very much alive; the chiefly elite, whether part of the Administration or not, were still the real power in Western Samoa.

Nafanua represents a genealogical and divine connection to such chiefly power, albeit divided and competing (part of Wendt's thesis describes a nineteenth century civil war between competing families for titles). I will expand these points in my discussion of *The Adventures of Vela* later.

Flora and fauna imagery such as turtles, coral, tamarind pods, fern, yam, blood hibiscus, encourage an awareness of the environmental circumstances of Samoan history, and in their specificity eschew grander narratives with which the high diction might otherwise risk aligning itself. They also recall Polynesian (Wendt's term on line 4, and the title of the first poem) motifs within indigenous language poetics and also speak to an interrelated nature of people and other beings without endorsing clichéd perceptions of paradise. Another effect of such imagery is to accept that there is being in the world and to wonder at the nature of that world. Finally, this sequence is tightly constructed. Stanzas range in length, but the language is richly textured. It is also highly charged, "...burnt/ out by storm and paddles slapping/ the hurricane waves on, blisters/ bursting blood hibiscus...", where stanzas move like frequent waves or chant in the miraculous and alliterative diction of an oracle.

As aforementioned, in the chapter on Wendt I explore the imaginary of *The Adventures of Vela* and its rich intertextual weaving of Samoan culture, politics, mythologies, heterogenous world views, family power dynamics, and the vā reaching out into global artforms such as postcolonial literature and cinema.

READING KERI HULME'S "WAITING ON THE LAUGHING OWL"

Hulme's poem, "Waiting on the Laughing Owl", appeared in 1985 in the literary journal *Poetry New Zealand* 6, and in the 1992 collection *Strands*, where it is in Section Two titled "Against the Small, Evil Voices" (Hulme 52). I first read this poem in 1986 during my freshman New Zealand Literature course at the University of Auckland, and remember my delight on that reading. There is a sense in the poem that the native bird is one of the last of its kind, and that the author associates herself with it in a literary way. Hulme won the Booker Prize in 1985 for *The Bone People*, and lived until recently in relative isolation near Fiordland National Park in the South Island. The only Māori language in the poem is cried by the bird, "whekau!" which is also its Māori name. The humorous quotes from "old authors/ longdead listeners" is a self-deprecating dig.

The history of naturalists in New Zealand parallels the history of colonisation and anthropology both there, and in the Pacific. Many museum cabinets in Britain contain the preserved corpses of bird such as the Whekau. Sir Walter Buller, best-known for his *History of the Birds of New Zealand*, which is a sought-after rare book with full-colour plates, was also known for his legal work in settling large Māori land blocks such as the Manawatu Purchase (Galbreath 1). Imperialism is at

play here. Hulme is preserving a memory of a bird she has never seen, while speaking of a birdwatchers' expedition intent on revealing the laughing owl. There have been a few 'sightings' of the owl in Fiordland since its extinction in the early twentieth century, just as there have been hoax-sightings of the long-extinct moa.

Hulme's language is chatty, the diction friendly, open to a good joke at the expense of imperialism, or just the joy of being in the open waiting to see an owl. The poignancy here is that the last bird of its kind refuses sadness—it is laughing. The solemn/ reflective/ contemplative water imagery of the fish kissing the water's surface is interrupted by the idea of the shrieking bird. This creature will not "go gently into that good night." Even though this bird is most likely to be extinct, its account here is thoroughly, with a side-glancing wink, *alive*. There is no imperial opera (although it might be a Gilbert and Sullivan), no serious pomp that can be found in unconsciously comic accounts of Māori legends like "Ranolf and Amohia" by Alfred Domett. As a bird of a feather aside, here is an extract from Canto XI of *Ranolf and Amohia: A South-Sea Day-Dream* (188) describing the cry of a night-hawk or morepork (owl):

Two loud harsh notes assail her ear—
The night-hawk's! harsh but yet so *near!*
She blest them! to her present plight
Seemed never song-bird's notes so dear,
So sweet, as that melodious screech
Startling the darkness with delight.

I think the faux-quotes in Hulme's poem, such as "a scream to raise/ horripilation" (lines 10-11), owe something to the nearly-silly spirit of Domett's unconsciously humorous text, and remind us that grand, descriptive projects make mildly funny targets.

The bird in this poem is associated with the earth and not the air as the narrator imagines it emerging from the limestone cliffs. It is also situated in a Māori poetics of "lake mirroring light" (line 2), where the term *waiata* when divided into its constituent words of *wai* and *ata* means reflecting water. Perhaps the poem is a meta-text commenting on quieter poems that kiss the surface of the water, "a fish kisses the watertop" (line 21), disturbed by the interpellation "whekau!" (line 25) which almost sounds like an expletive. This last laughing owl is quoted in *te reo* Māori proclaiming its name and its cry. The vocalisation not only anthropomorphises the owl, it indigenises its expressiveness, and its resistance—it disappears shrieking its Māori name, and not the English term Laughing Owl. The name joins others in the text, "jackass", "kicked dog, a whipped pup", each describing the call of the bird which is also the only Māori word here. "Horripilation" suggests a raising of the dead which is in keeping with the grave-like limestone "crevices and holes" where the last owl might be buried or hiding. It is worth noting that limestone is often formed of the skeletal remains of marine organisms such as coral—at the very least, it is a sedimentary rock, and so its presence in the text suggests layering and perhaps a layering of organic pasts formed from other extinct creatures. To return to the word "mirroring", perhaps this liquid mirror of nature—

with its inverted dramatic echo of Hamlet⁴¹—is a reference to self-knowledge. To return to limestone, the first-person narrator of Hulme’s poem “Te Rua Haeroa o Te Tokotoru” begins “Dig me a pit in the cold clay” (35) so that the crevices and holes in the limestone cliffs of “Waiting on the Laughing Owl” might also mirror the narrator’s hiding place.

The owl is figured historically as the “last” of its kind so that the creature represents or at least oscillates between representing and not representing an unsettled time before “peace and light.” The oscillation comes between the anticipated shrieking and the peacefulness in between the not-remembered or historicised shrieks. The poem might also be a love song but for the noise: there might be only two people “huddled under a blanket” waiting for the bird while drinking whisky but this is not a romantic setting given the imagined loudness of the bird’s shrieks. It might also be a gesture on the part of the narrator to an imagined reader so that it is the reader and the narrator who are metaphorically huddling, drinking whisky, and waiting at times exultantly “as the fire reaches for the moon” (line 15). The Williams *Dictionary* additionally defines whēkau as “internal organs of the body, entrails.” Perhaps the laughing owl relates to whisky drinking or alcohol in general. In the poem “He Hoha” (41) the narrator likens her body to “a boozy brain with stinking breath, a sour/ sweetened flesh;/ I am riddled with kidneyrot, brainburn, torn gut, liverfat” (lines 12-14). In *Strands* the next section that follows is entitled “Some Winesongs” (53). To

⁴¹ “To hold as ‘twere the mirror up to nature; to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his own form and pressure” (Act III, sc.2, 21-24).

reiterate, the key word (as well as interpellation) to this suggested interpretation is the indigenous term whēkau.

In the Hulme chapter, similar to the Trask chapter, I explore the invisible references (named as “silences”) to culture through the geography of the Moeraki peninsula as well as the world there as it is portrayed in the poetry through sensory, embodied emphases, and Kāi Tahu names referencing significant deities, communal achievements, sacred sites and dwellings, tohu or signs. The spirituality of an alternate, indigenous consciousness is also explored which summons the ghosts of ancestors into the poems. I contrast this with a reading of *Lost Possessions* which has a political and feminist motivation. In one reading I see it as a response to the critique by C.K. Stead that the author is not Moanan enough, but I also concede that it is more likely to relate to the Mervyn Thompson incident. Even in that case, the poem is a response to a basic humanity, and so it bears some relevance to human dignity, and the embrace of indigenous identity by Hulme.

In summary, this thesis traverses some of the first wave⁴² and second wave generation poets of the Moana, that is, those who wrote single-authored collections. It takes direction from the accumulation of signs as signifiers of life-worlds embodied in the poems. The mauri of this thesis might be signified by two stones known as rehutai (seaspray) and hukatai (sea foam) which are natural signs created by a vessel as it travels the moana. This ocean journey was symbolically undertaken by initiates in the traditional houses of learning, according to the theologian and tohunga Maori Marsden, representing the passage from learning to knowledge which was why the

⁴² I am ambivalent about the term ‘wave’ given the recent history of tsunami or ‘galu’ in the Pacific.

students symbolically swallowed the stones as part of the initiation ceremony prior to the transfer of knowledge (58). In that sense, as they find their way, the wayfinders accumulate knowledge.

A NOTE ON ORTHOGRAPHY, PUNCTUATION, STYLE

Long Māori vowels are macronised rather than using the double vowel system relying on H.W. Williams's *A Dictionary of the Māori Language* and the Māori Language Commission monolingual dictionary *He Pātaka Kupu*. Where possible, in the discussion of Hulme's work I use Kāi Tahu dialectal terms. As I am not a speaker of Samoan, diacritical marks are reproduced from the scholarly sources consulted. I also relied on G.B. Milner's *Samoan Dictionary*, and Mosel and Hovdhaugen's *Samoan Reference Grammar*. Glottal stops are indicated by the raised inverted comma (there is variation in sources). For Cook Islands (mainly Rarotongan) Māori orthography, Buse and Taringa's *Cook Islands Maori Dictionary* was consulted. For Hawaiian words, I relied on diacritical marks in the Pukui and Elbert *Hawaiian Dictionary*.

Other conventions conform to the third edition of the *MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing*, and the seventh edition of the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*.

CHAPTER 2. ALBERT WENDT AND *THE ADVENTURES OF VELA*

Readers will arrive at this book-length text, labelled by Albert Wendt at least twice as a “novel in verse”, with varying degrees (or gaps) of knowing Samoan culture, politics, and heterogeneous worldviews, or of Wendt’s previous postcolonial criticism and creative work, including his regional anthologies. I intend this reading to be phenomenological and political, concerned with the ‘āiga⁴³ as polis, an exploration of entangled power in civil political structures and relationships at work while maintaining relationships with the gods. In reading *Vela*, I will define, observe, mirror, and locate in time and space and national context the effects of the poem, revealing or uncovering a truth. The poet here is “a mediator between gods and mortals” (Pattison 171).

As I read and re-read the verse novel, a binding theme is the workings of family power through the dynamics of contested genealogies running from divine to earthly and regional levels, a rich referencing of family-centred mythologies stemming from the progenitor deity Tagaloalagi in the tenth heaven, his descendant the goddess of war Nafanua, her descendants of the Tonumaipē’a line (Krämer – Verhaaren 123-127), and Nafanua’s high priests or taulaitu or shamans (Sharrad

⁴³ Kindred, descent group, family.

232-235), who manipulate political affairs as oracles. The effect is to focus the narrative on the workings of power centred in Samoa. Augustin Krämer summarises the life of the deity Nafanua:

Ulufanuase'ese'e married Sinalalofutu of Fagaiofu at Falelatai, she bore to him the well known twins, Taema and Tilafaiga, who were joined together, but broke apart in their flight. They swam to Tutuila, where Taema married Togiola, whilst Tilafaiga returned to Savai'i, married her uncle Saveo Si'uleo, and gave birth to the dreaded goddess of war, Nafanua, who freed her homeland Falealupo from the oppressors. Therefore Nafanua is dreaded as the goddess of war; should anyone be attacked he travelled to Falealupo, to beg for her help, whilst Tutuila implored success, (tapua'ina), but did not join in the fight, because Taema is the aunt of Nafanua. (Kramer – de Beer 79-80)

I begin with this version of Nafanua, but there are others (Fraser, Hovdhaugen for example), each emphasizing different aspects of the goddess, her being, and her feats. Wendt's presentation of Nafanua is thus one among many, stretching from the oral to the written, entwined with cosmogonic cycles of Samoa, and the Moana. At this point, as a place-marker, the effect on me is to

be 'thrown' into the worldview with its history of oral and written texts as if I have just entered a space ruled by the tulāfale or talking chiefs of Savai'i.⁴⁴

Vela, spokesperson, high priest, oracle or taulaaitu for the Goddess Nafanua, begins his life crying "Va-Va-Va-Va-aaa!" (10). As discussed in Chapter 1, the concept of the vā belongs to Samoan cosmogony. I am tempted to describe vā in this context as a space-time continuum. Hovdhaugen defines its noun-form as a "space between two places" (216). Pratt gives the verb form two definitions, "1. To rival. 2. To have a space between" (332). Pratt gives the additional noun meaning "a noise." The newborn Vela makes a noise, and literally makes space for himself in the world as he enters the world uttering the cry. The vā is substantial in the verse-novel as it is subject to military desires because it is the *war* goddess uttering vā. One can also see in the vā the essence of mysteries, the infinite vā-nimonimo (infinite space) depths from whence the goddess came, and also the gafa genealogies leading to the supreme procreator Tagaloaalagi in the tenth heaven. Vela is a chronicler, a songmaker, who has no fantastic birth or significant feats: he faithfully retells the birth of the universe, constructs it artfully, but does not insert himself into the narrative: he is etic

⁴⁴ Mellon describes tulāfale as "custodians of Samoan culture and history in Samoan society (131). They are keepers of knowledge and directors of its associated functions and protocols. They play an important role in representing the interests of ali'i in any formal occasions or events, but they are also the mouthpiece and representative of the people of a family, village or district." Sig Schwarz and Vilsoni Hereniko (Hereniko and Wilson 58) propose a talking chiefs model of literary criticism where the person speaking requires sufficient mana to speak on behalf of the writer.

(an outsider or 'experience-distant') when narrating the tale from the first-person, and emic (an insider or 'experience-near') when Alapati is narrating Vela's life (Geertz 57). Vā is uttered four times, and the saga is divided into four books. The vā is spoken just after Vela, at some point later in time, recites "Le Tupuaga," the beginning of the universe where the deity Tagaloaalagi creates the world from out of the Vā-nimonimo (the infinite space between). I note here that the stem 'tupu' is inadequately glossed as "king" by Krämer (Verhaaren 666), and so from the 'beginning' of the novel there is a preoccupation with titled power, its transmission through ranking and contested descent lines (Tuimaleali'ifano), and the assertion of a Samoan worldview.

The chronicler Vela is separate from the poets Mulialofa, Alopese, and Alapati, or Alapati's grandmother Auva'a. He has the epithet taulaaitu, not poet. Also Vela is not literate. Alapati has the task of writing the narrative, "Vela who appointed me [Alapati] his chronicler/ in the written script of the Albinos" (6). Literally, Vela is a part of the continuum of historical narrative, attached since the beginning to Tagaloaalagi's creation, a taula or anchor to the aitu or spirits, a taulaaitu, or as Krämer quotes Stair, a special kind of priest:

The four kinds of priests taulaitu (from taula, anchor and aitu, demon) are according to Stair page 220: 1. Taula aitu o aitu tau, priest of the war gods (Nafanua) consulted in warfare; 2. Tausi aitu tau (va'afa'atau o aitu tau), they watched the emblems of the war gods such as shell trumpets (pu) etc.; 3. Taula aitu o 'āiga family priests, usually the matai; 4. Taula aitu vavalu ma faitu'i (foretelling and cursing) for the invocation of certain gods... (Krämer 41).

Allowing for the term demon from the Victorian translator,⁴⁵ one can see the four aspects in the facets of Vela in each of the four books.

I had originally envisaged the structure of this poem as a spiral, but now I am drawn to the archipelago as a structure as it is grounded in genealogically-based geography or storied landscapes, where the ocean is likened to sea-water in the narrator's skull (23), although that could be a reference to Tagaloaalagi the oceanic creator. Coincidentally perhaps, there are four major groups of islands in the Samoan archipelago so perhaps there is a connection between the structure of the book and the geography of Samoa. The 1875 population census cited in Turner, for instance, divides the group into four parts (248), as does the opening section of Krämer (Verhaaren 8). The poem "The Mountains of Ta'u" is set in Ta'u which is the spiritual heartland of the Tagaloa family or Sa-Tagaloa:

The island of Tau, an isolated conical peak like the world mountain Meru, encompassed by the waves of Oceanus, represents the middle of the Samoan world. The gods dwell in an eightfold heaven, even as the Indian mountain of Meru was thought to be divided into eight grades. (Krämer – de Beer 38)

⁴⁵ Najita, for instance, glosses taulaaitu as a spirit medium (note 6, 190). She says aitu "take the form of animals, birds, humans, and other natural objects."

Setting Krämer's orientalist interpretations aside, if Ta'u is indeed the spiritual centre of Samoa, then its prominence in the Wendt saga emphasises a place-based interpretation of the poem/novel where family bloodlines come to the fore, beginning with Tagaloalagi. Fraser says the island of Ta'ū is in the Manu'a portion of the archipelago (172). The term fanua refers to land, and also is buried within the name Nafanua, who was born as "a bloodclot" and was then buried or hidden in the earth: nanā i le fanua (Hovdhaugen 41), and who is also famous as a heroine who liberated Western Savai'i "against the domination of the east side" (Hovdhaugen 32). Three regions feature in the myth: Manu'a, Savai'i, and Tutuila. In Wendt's poem, the Fafā or entrance to Pulo is at Falealupo (9), which is the westernmost part of the island group. Ta'u is at the easternmost part of the chain. At a surface level then, the poem encompasses the east-west breadth of the Samoan nation rather than the contemporary political divide of independent Samoa (Savai'i, Upolu) and the US unincorporated territory of American Samoa (Tutuila and Manu'a). This east-west geography also conjures the vā in that space may be characterised directionally. Additionally, by grounding the verse novel in the gafa tradition of genealogies where places are associated with famous ancestors, Wendt moves beyond the reaches of globalised discourse by digging into the fanua to reveal within the empowering goddess, and control of one's own affairs as opposed to outside powers which could on a political level be defined as sovereignty (56):

Nafanua (and our religion) held all
the Tafa'ifa Titles—the first in history
Now there was unity in Her person
and wars were outlawed (as Auva'a

and Tupa'i had planned for)

She was hailed Diviner and Uniter

The island of Ta'u, prominent in the Wendt narrative (41), lends the saga a political or sovereign air; it is the traditional seat of power for the Tui Manu'a dynasty. To paraphrase the ethnologist Clifford Geertz, who is speaking in a Balinese context, designations and title systems "represent the most time-saturated aspects of the human condition" (64). To this point one can obviously add gafa or genealogy, and to return to the vā as a place within and without time and space. This verse novel is saturated with the vā. The Tui Manu'a features in "The Contest"⁴⁶ (23-33); his taulaaitu Alopese is outperformed by Vela in a poets' contest with rock n roll and break-dancing rhythms. The Tui Manu'a grants Vela's wish for Alopese's voice by literally cutting the war lord's vocal cords from his throat (31-32):

No sound of fear as the knife dug in
and slit across and blood bubbled
up to the blade and skilled hand

⁴⁶ "The Contest" was also staged as a play in 1993 by Pacific Theatre Company in Auckland with modifications such as a change to the character Vela, who is divided into two parallel characters by playwright Paul Simeon-Barton. April Henderson discusses this staging, and highlights the poem's orality for a younger generation attuned to modern and oral beats such as hip-hop (306-307).

that lunged in and down through
gullet into the sacred depths
of chest heart and moa
Grasped the kicking voice on fire
and wrenched it up and out
into the circling gasping air

While typing the above extract, I noticed the anatomy of the vā, the spaces within the chest, quite literally in the use of space rather than punctuation marks to delineate syntax; to labour the point, the author has literally inserted the vā itself as a marker of time and breath and meaning rather than commas, full stops and other meaningful European markers. One can also see Samoa in “the sacred depths/ of ... moa” lines. The passage is driven by transitive verbs, and is remarkable for its precise actions and conjuring of anatomical imagery as one imagines the vocal cords being whipped out and ‘circling’. Such violence to Alopese is in vengeance for the suffering of Mulialofa who is the subject of a particularly beautiful four sonnet sequence (20-22), and who had lost a similar contest to Alopese. The prize that Alopese exacted was the removal of Mulialofa’s bones, so that Vela had to find pig-bones to re-insert into his poet-lover’s flesh. To keep the focus on the vā, Foucault (23) describes space thus:

The space in which we live, which draws us out of ourselves, in which the erosion of our lives, our time and our history occurs, the space that claws and gnaws at us, is also, in itself, a heterogeneous space. In other words, we do not live in a kind of void,

inside of which we could place individuals and things. We do not live inside a void that could be colored with diverse shades of light, we live inside a set of relations that delineates sites which are irreducible to one another and absolutely not superimposable on one another.

Literally, Mulialofa relies on the strength of his amorous relationship with Vela, in a woman's form, to reconstitute the skeleton stripped from him by Alopese with the bones of a pig. The narrative reaches into the props of one's physical being, and substitutes them with an animal's skeletal structure, or rather, deviates from a lover's ideal form with the taboo mixing of animal and human. The narrative constantly juggles heterotopias. I will return to this juggling of ideals and their deconstruction/reconstructions in the discussion of the "Nei" section. To return to the vā, Sina Va'ai makes the point that the Vā-tapuia are "the norms of behavior which determines the relationships of her Samoan world" (60).

Paul Sharrad's comprehensive survey of Wendt's work to 2003 pointedly notes that Alopese is the "paramount 'talking chief', warlord and shaman of the Tuimanu'a" (231). Sharrad's political emphases here lead me to note the highly contested nature of tama'āiga titles which have been the source of multiple wars within Samoan oral and written history (Tuimaleali'ifano), as well as legal disputes throughout Samoa's periods of colonial and postcolonial jurisprudence. Wendt's 'contest' reminds us of the violence behind chiefly titles through the exacting of revenge: Alopese's circling vocal cords, Mulialofa's missing bones. These titles are not misty-eyed names, but the hard-nosed result of battle on numerous fronts. These contested paramount titles, first brought together by the historical person Nafanua, who was a warrior-priestess in the mode of Joan of Arc (speculated as

living in the 16th century by Tuimaleali'ifano), so that her leader became the first tafa'ifa (holder of the four paramount titles of Samoa), cause me to recall Pratt's first definition of 'vā', "to rival".

To shift focus away from Samoa, I realise that my summary of the verse novel is an overly localised account of the narrative, for the section "Nightflight" takes place on a plane trip from Guangzhou, in the heart of China's Pearl River Delta, which is the largest city in South China and a long established centre of international commerce. Furthermore, the narrative references one of the most global artforms, cinema, peppered with references to Jon Voigt (193, 198), *Aliens* (199), Ben Kingsley (223), *Batman Returns* (225), Peter O'Toole in *The Power and the Glory* (234), Lawrence of Arabia (241), Cecil B. DeMille (247), Kurosawa's *Throne of Blood* (252), Coppola's *Dracula* (252, possibly 135), and *Kill Bill* (253). The last section of the verse-novel is likened to a movie-script called "The Final Revelations" directed by Nafanua herself. I could seek out other pop culture references, such as rock-n roll which April Henderson discusses in regard to "The Contest", tracing its influence on Samoan rap, or Wendt's other world references such as café culture, tourism, world religions, cargo-culture, the pseudo-Orwellian *Animal Farm* chant "Pig is best Pig is/ delicious Pig is aristocracy Pig Pig Pig! ..." (139). These references speak of the porosity of culture, or the multiple entanglements of identity assertions of all kinds, and also to the possibilities of identity, so that one can burst forth as Vela does from the sacred moa in entirely globalised contexts and remain assertively Samoan even as the ulcer patients in the ward bemoan Vela's family deserting him and their Samoan alofa, their Samoan-ness, for "the mighty Tala" (note the ambiguity of Tala, which means dollar and story). Vela mysteriously appears next to Alapati in Moto'otua Hospital which is in Apia on Upolu Island. Like Alapati, he has a perforated duodenal ulcer (3), and so they both bear surgical scars on their bellies or moa. Pratt (221) defines 'moa' as the epigastric

region (centre of the upper belly). As well as a western medical or globalised context, there is also a local context in the name of Samoa itself:

The hereditary name of the kings of Manu'a is Moa, and according to this tradition the name Samoa is simply this name with the prefix "Sa", which in Samoan means "the family of" -SA- MOA, *the family of Moa*.

This derivation of the name, however, is exceedingly doubtful. There are several other traditions all referring to one Lu, the son or grandson of Tagaloa of the heavens—the great God who existed in space—and his fowls, *moa*, which he made *sa* (sacred, not to be killed), hence SA-MOA, *sacred fowls*, or *preserve fowls* (Turner 238).

The relevant term here is "moa" which is the "centre" of the difficulties of the narrator Alapati and the taulaitu/ prophet/ priest Vela in the opening section of *The Adventures of Vela*. There are multiple openings here, such as "Zipp! Pause Zipp! Pause Zipp!" (5) which is the sound of Vela uncurtaining his hospital bed before he unplugs his life-support. The description of the surgical scar, like a "centipede" (4), could also physically describe a zip (as well as a tatau motif). In this initial context of openings, the very first meeting of Alapati and Vela in the *national* hospital in Apia, we are reminded of earlier Wendt works featuring illness and death: *Flying Fox in a Freedom Tree* is narrated from a hospital bed by the dying Pepesa; the six-part title poem of *Inside Us the Dead* references the deaths of the writer's mother (11), and his brother who died in a car accident (12); and *Pouliuli* opens with its lead character Faleasa Osovae experiencing uncontrollable nausea.

Illness is a reminder of vulnerability and mortality or impermanence even if Vela and the Goddess he is anchored to refuses to die. It is worth noting here that Vela is an anti-hero, a kind of anti-Maui who lacks a wondrous birth, indeed his placenta is dug up by dogs and eaten (11) while his name is given as an afterthought: he resembles something cooked and red (11), “Ordinary Homely Easy/ on the tongue and to forget” (12). His descriptions include fat, yaw-footed, stupid (12). The narrative strategy works by inserting vulnerability into the prophetic voice of Nafanua’s high priest. It is difficult to summarise this narrative without dipping and rising into and out of other narratives, but this is not inter-textuality for the sake of interest. As mentioned earlier, the text constantly draws attention to its insider and outsider statuses as if it is narrated from the ocean in the skull. The ground of being for the poem is Samoa before, during and after colonisation, that is, a Samoa that exists in the vā continuum populated by a world rivalling/ “contesting” the current one. The saga is intensely spiritual, in parts utopian, and in the Nei section dystopian/ colonial, as well as political.

The “Nei” section is narrated by Vela, but initially this is blurred as he is identified by his belly’s “unhealable ulcers” (123) so that it could also be Alapati. The section first appears in the 1990 collection *Photographs* along with “The Mountains of Ta’ū” and “The Contest.” As Sharrad notes (233), circles and numbers recur in both “Night Flight” and “Nei”. The fantastical inhabitants of “Nei” called the Tangata Nei live in crews of ten people, each brain-linked with other crews so that they are incapable of independent individualism:

Each crew’s schedule was linked to others
in an ever-spiralling circle that meshed
earth sea sky and Vanimonimo

No choice for individuals to pursue separate
destinies to excel to innovate civilization further (129)

Vela seeks out the secret of brain-linking, observing the everyday lives of the Tangata Nei as a kind of faux anthropologist, or explorer, and uses the knowledge to control the entire population of Tangata Nei. The result of Vela's rise to supremacy is his over-reach into all areas of life, for which he expresses insincere regret reminiscent of colonial descendants: "an unforgiveable crime/ of my sightless arrogance" (140). He attempts to change the Tangata Nei's mathematical patterns of sleep, and their five seasons, by legislating "a 12-month year seven-day week/ four-week month and enforced it with imprisonment and torture . . ." (147), and upon failing, dreams up ever more elaborate social engineering schemes in an attempt to perfect Samoanness in his subjects. Groups of Tangata Nei have gained individual consciousness thanks to their colonial master Vela, and use their knowledge to launch suicidal waves of resistance against him until they succeed in a horrific series of battles out of which Vela flees, "too cowardly to accept responsibility built / a canoe and sailed out of the tragic consequences . . .". Sharrad makes the point that it is "a cautionary counter-discourse for imperialists, both secular and spiritual, Islander and foreign" (231). Writing in 1995, Sina Va'ai draws our attention to the related theme of individuality/ collectivity (66):

This basic conflict between the Western world view, rational and materialistic with the individual as the central focus and the traditional Samoan world of communalism where the emphasis remains the welfare of the group, the legacy of

the colonial encounter and the fundamental problems resulting from this pluralism can be seen in all of Wendt's five novels.

To ground this free-flowing discussion, I disclose the spiral diagram below:

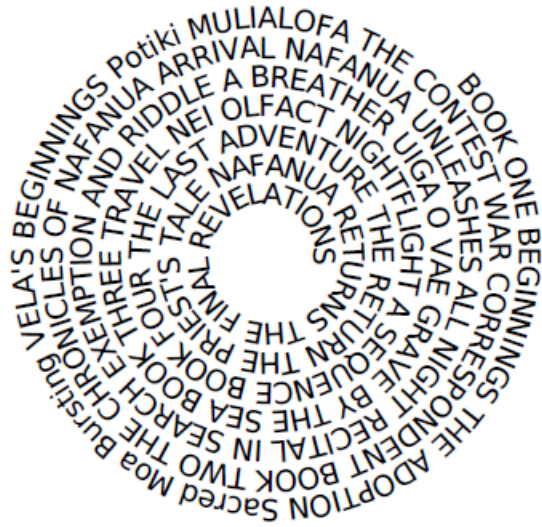


Figure 4 Spiral Structure of the Adventures of Vela

As mentioned earlier, I might have represented the verse-novel as an archipelago, as below:

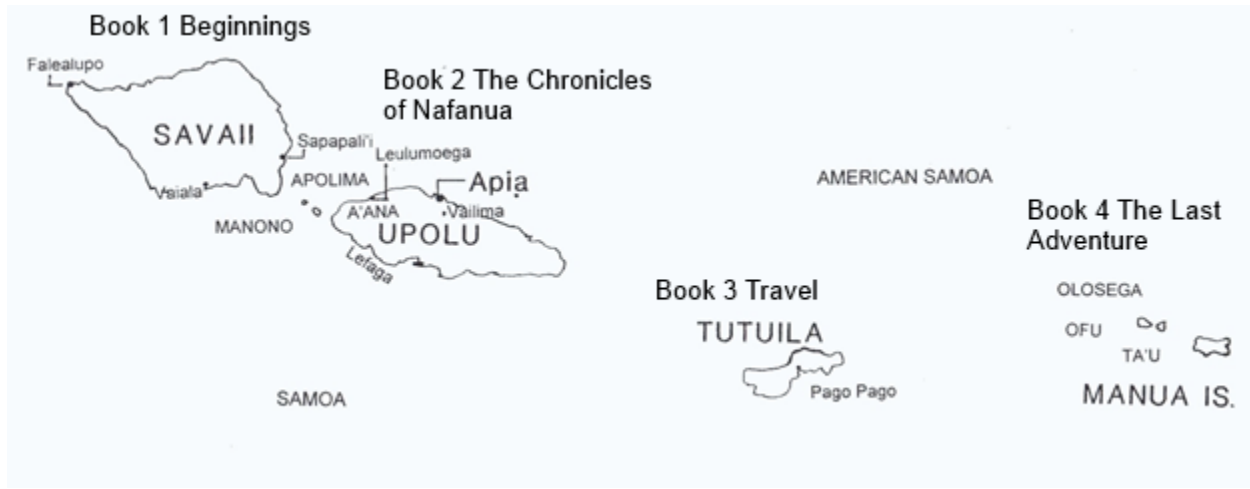


Figure 5 Vela as Archipelago. Map source (Sharrad xiii).

Three of the four books are set in Samoa, while “Book Three: Travel” is set in a number of places. Subconsciously, at least, the structure above aligns with Samoan geography. There are four recognizable island groups in the archipelago.

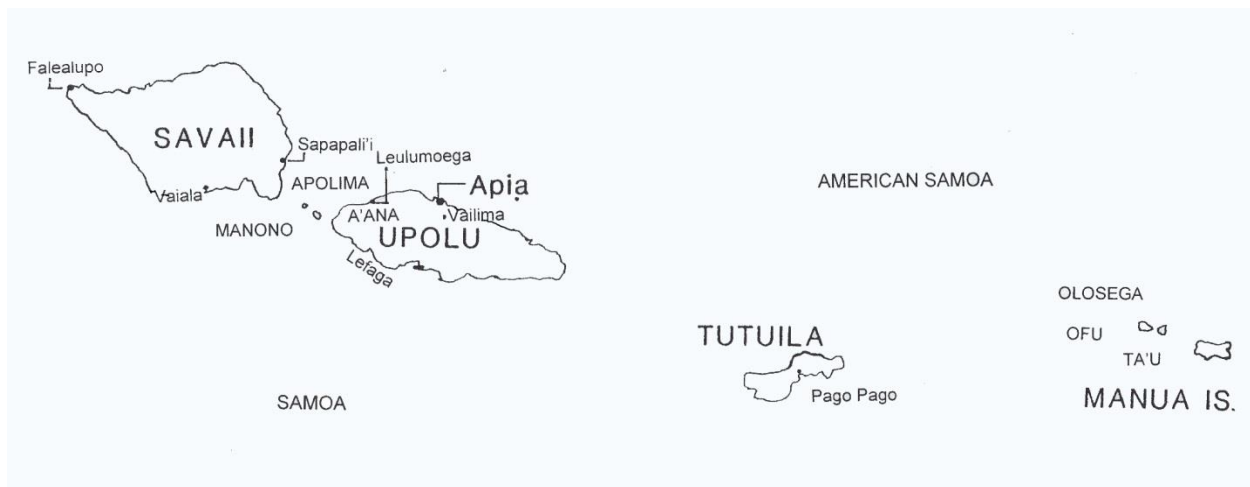


Figure 6 Map of the Samoan Islands (Sharrad xiii).

At this point I am reminded of the talking-chief (tulāfale) model of criticism first asserted by Schwartz and Hereniko in the *Inside Out* conference proceedings (see also Marsh, “Ancient Banyans” 103-104). The interlinking of land and verse, gafa and fiction, attests to a nexus of relationships that move on horizontal as well as vertical axes between material, plant and animal forms, allowing for dips and rises as in the contours of geography hugging the land and riding the waves of the sea. There is a shared affinity with Giles Deleuze and Felix Guattari’s *A Thousand Plateaus* in Vela’s assertion of an alternate rationality akin to schizoid fragmentation, especially the descent into madness in the “Nei” section brought about by colonialism, albeit at the hands of Vela himself, or the completely alternative society of ‘Olfact’ whose primary sense is smell. Wendt names Foucault in the saga (204) who he describes as a conjurer “of the vocabulary / of decoding the illusion / of language / and living in history . . .”, and so a link to Foucauldian genealogy and archaeologies of knowledge is most apparent. To take a flying fox leap, if Wendt’s writing is to be characterised as a house, and I am to occupy its moa, it would be a disservice to describe it simply as an open-walled fale (although the ritualised aspects of such a space are complex to the extreme); at this stage, inflected by Foucault, I feel like I am standing in the centre of the panopticon looking through the barred windows of multiple cells on multiple levels in a prison-house of language, or in the castle of my (or his/ her) skin.

To leap again, to a book by the Head of State and Tui Atua of Samoa with a foreword by Wendt, which discusses “the Samoan indigenous reference,” I am drawn to the chapter headed “In Search of Tagaloa.” It discusses a meeting between the Tui Atua and two Māori scholars and leaders, Pita Sharples and Rev Morris Gray, at a Samoan archaeological site called Pulemelei. On

walking up a steep pathway to the site, which is a mound, Gray responded as if he knew the place (190):

this is where our people came from. My family emblem is the wheke (octopus) and this mound is a legacy of the wheke. And, there are in this environment definitive markings which underline the sacred figure of 8.

The star-navigator Kupe sailed in a figure 8 through the North and South Islands of Aotearoa when he discovered the land.

Morris's reference to the wheke and the figure of 8 impacted on me because the river that flows through the plantation on which Pulemelei is sited, has 8 waterfalls. Morris did not know this at the time. 'There are links between this mound and the skies, the sun, the moon and the stars,' he proclaimed. 'There is a link between this mound and the pathway.' The astrology of this, he suggested, was what enabled the Moanan diaspora.

Rev. Gray then went on to correctly predict the alignment of mound features with the path of the rising sun, and also the location of human remains. He then conducted a chant of purification. I raise this as a point of significance for Wendt's book as he heavily references Tagaloa mythology and the Samoan indigenous reference: the Pulemelei site and the response by leading Māori to it attests to a broader Moanan heritage.

Tui Atua is a tama'āiga whose title is derived from the oceanic deity Tagaloa. There are other such titles of equivalent status derived from the god. Wendt uses the tama'āiga title explicitly

for political rather than divine effect: the Tui Manu'a is called "the most paramount" (35), Nafanua through her most successful taulaaitu Tupa'i helped the Tuiatua and the Tuia'ana to win victories (56), Nafanua's strength and arrogance is amplified in a long monologue (69-78) where she gives a "nameless" Tama'aiga the return of their "pet turtles and lizards" (74), while competing Tama'aiga later in the narrative are depicted as sources of war and conflict "Vela / reminds / Her [Nafanua] of the wars that had erupted between the Tama'aiga // after the country had been divided" (258), and "Apia was quickly becoming a Papalagi centre which sold guns // and the new weaponry to Her tama'aiga to fight out their rivalry" (271). It is worth noting in the last quotation that Nafanua traditionally manipulates the rival high chiefs through her high priests, but now she observes that Westerners have displaced her influence.

Nafanua's Tonumaipe'a line⁴⁷ (Krämer – Verhaaren 123-127) has a foundational story about a swarm of flying foxes rescuing the main ancestress Leutogi (Krämer – Verhaaren 121). At the penultimate section of *The Adventures of Vela* (276):

Nafanua spreads Her wide arms Auva'a and Vela move in and She
gathers
them into Her sides Every leaf of every branch of every tree around us
comes alive with our flyingfoxes who break up into the air and then
in a swirling torrent swoop up catch the pagan Trinity

⁴⁷ See Tui Atua (33-52) for a description of the political and military influence of the dynasty and religion.

and whirlpool them up and up and up while I watch and watch
and witness their holy ascension into Tagaloaalagi's Lagituaiva

The "pagan Trinity" is Nafanua and her two taulaaitus Auva'a and Vela, with Alapati being the outsider/ insider writer and observer. The Lagituaiva is the ninth heaven, the highest heaven available to beings other than Tagaloaalagi who occupies the tenth heaven (Wendt personal communication).

At this stage of the reading, I return to Gayatri Spivak's notion of strategic essentialism since a large proportion of the discussion of the text has been centred on Samoan assertions of the world. Wendt clearly remains wary of his position as a text-based narrator, couched within a colonial history of 'epistemic violence' (Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" 271) toward subjugated others, stepping away from the elitist position of native informant by keeping the text close to the Samoan indigenous reference: "I don't think I *lied* to Nafanua not telling Her the title of *our* book" (276), if one accepts that the fictional narrator Alapati is closely associated with Albert (Alapati is Samoan for Albert). This comment in the last section of the verse novel reminds us that Nafanua for many people continues to exist, whether she is a goddess or an ancestor or combinations of both those roles through historical, mythological, and genealogical time and place. I note here also the irony of Alapati, Auva'a, Tupa'i, and Vela's roles as subalterns of Nafanua. These subalterns all speak in the name of the goddess. Additionally, the subaltern Alapati in mock-humour claims to save the savior Nafanua through the "resurrection" of the book: "grander even than that of Jesus" (276). To borrow another Spivak term, Wendt's last line

is another “worlding” that takes us into a new social “world of publication and distribution” (Ashcroft et al 270). The ethnographic tone of the last section, where the narrator Alapati claims that because Nafanua was all-knowing “She *knew* what I was going to do while we collaborated on Her / biography” (276), also places us within an ethics of representation and discloses Alapati’s own complex position as an all-seeing narrator and insider informant who perhaps has reservations about completing the biographical narrative, freeing or un-anchoring Vela from the goddess, and sending Nafanua so cineromantically, and pseudo-biblically, to the ninth heaven following “the written script of the Albinos” (6). Sharrad (63) makes similar points about “Flying Fox in a Freedom Tree”:

He [Wendt] must represent ‘the Islander’ to Islanders themselves, and to outside readers, but he cannot pretend that he is more than a distorting medium— someone at the intersecting edges of the world in the representation, the world of the writing, and the worlds to which the two must speak. (63)

In a sense, Alapati remains the taulaaitu, continuing to be concerned about the opinions of the goddess, who is perhaps a cipher for his culture, and so remains in communion with her in the continuous / continuing / contiguous list of places in the text, that is “Samoa—Fiji—Aotearoa/ New Zealand—Hawai‘i—Aotearoa/ New Zealand” (276), the many other imagined realms of the narrative, the world of publication and its many entanglements with contemporary global capital responsible for the scripts that inhabit/invigorate/categorise the va.

The assertion of another ‘world’ in *Vela*—in fact there are several worlds depicted in the verse novel—brings me back to the idea of authorship, since a phenomenological approach to the text considers the possible perceptions of the writer. A descendant of Nafanua, Wendt has himself been given a high title, Maualaivao. *Vela* has elements of other-worlds such as upper class dynastic conceits, the strange mind-linked world of Nei, the circles of mythological narrative represented by Vela him/ herself, the new world of China, and the geographies of Samoa-Hawai’i-Aotearoa. Events in these worlds are chronicled by Alapati who mirrors in the text the author Albert, although we are not provided enough information as to the reliability of the chronicler. The depictions of Vela emphasise his/ her unreliability as a person, so we can reasonably suppose that Vela is an unreliable narrator! Unlike Tuwhare and Campbell, Wendt’s portrait does not feature prominently on his poetry collections.⁴⁸ This does not mean that his biography is irrelevant to a close-reading of the poetry. It possibly indicates there is an extra-remove, another degree of separation, and hence another layer of relationships to consider, between the author and the text. The covers for *The Book of the Black Star* and *The Adventures of Vela* feature Wendt’s visual art. *Vela*’s cover art has an image of a red landscape in fractions or frames with some of the text painted in the lower half. The author’s name and the title are superimposed on the image. In the top right corner is the black star which could be analogous also to the flying fox and its indigenous frame of reference. The redness

⁴⁸ The cover of *Inside Us the Dead* possibly features a highly pixelated image of the author but it is hard to tell who it is. The cover of *Photographs* has some family portraits but they are purposefully obscured by Michael Tuffery’s illustrations.

of the landscape resembles lava so that the mountains literally appear to flow. It reminds me of the Pele series that Wendt painted during his tenure at the University of Hawai'i. The square-shaped frame with the black star in it is slightly darker, while the square-shaped frame with the author's name is slightly lighter. The squares have the effect of filters or lenses; their other visual effect is a sense of fragmentation, making it impossible to assert a single uniform space due to the variety of visual emphases. Another thing to notice is the grounding of the text, and the elevation of the star. The text in very large hand-painted red and gold font says, "Easter Evening / The Black Star hovers / over Maui / It wants Haleakala to tell it / the story of Maui's battle / with the La" (Wendt's capitalisations). The cover encourages an attitude of decipherment, and also seats the viewer/reader in the giant crater of Haleakala on the island of Maui, or perhaps on one rim of the crater as it "tells" its story to the black star. The crater is the site of the battle to slow the sun, so for it to speak like a storyteller, and also like a god, encourages another worldview, one that allows multiple identity assertions, multiple deities such as the black star/ flying fox, Christianity, Maui, and Nafanua's high-priest Vela. The story of Maui's battle with the sun literally encompasses a Moanan worldview—the narrative is told across the Pacific—and on another level, the battle provides a traditional explanation for the movement of time, and given that Maui is half-human, humanity's direct struggle with temporality. This book cover is larger than life, on a hyper-scale, addressing the most fundamental issues of heaven and earth including the nature of being. This cover presents a reader with some visible horizons, and a portal through the figure of the black star which cuts into the sky like a tatau. The redness might be powered by the rising sun, or the birth of the crater, depending on which time-frame one chooses to look into. The tremendous energy being referenced speaks of birth or rebirth, and the nature of power. In the next part of this chapter I will

use the black star as a portal to travel to the book of that name, to the collection *Photographs*, and to the early works *Shaman of Visions* and *Inside Us The Dead*.

Photographs is arguably the closest collection to *Vela* in that it contains a fifty page extract from the verse novel. These include the sections of “Nei”, “Nightflight”, “The Contest” and the poem “The Mountains of Ta’u”. The latter poem opens *The Adventures of Vela* section of *Photographs*. The effect here leaves me wondering which collection I am discussing, *Vela* or *Photographs*? In a sense, though, all collections contribute to a final *Collected* yet Wendt has not published one for his poetry so this is still a future projection. The other significance is the opening mountain which does not open the verse novel but does reveal a central significance in a novel of many centres or “Books”. “The Mountains of Ta’u” appears in the “War Correspondent” section of “Book One: Beginnings” (41). In *Photographs* it appears with a macron in the name Ta’ū. As with other Moanan languages, marked vowel lengths carry meaning, but as I am not a Samoan-language speaker I do not have easy access to the semantic possibilities of the difference except to note the possibility between the two versions. There are only minor differences in the texts: The aoa tree in the fourth stanza has a macron on the first ‘a’ in the novel, but not in the collection; the term atua, or god, is capitalised in the fourth stanza also in the collection but not in the novel. The greatest difference is that the collection is 24cm high and 12cm wide which means it can contain more of the length of the poems, but not their width, unlike the verse novel which has dimensions of 21cm by 13.5cm. The font in both works is similar, but the size in the novel is at least one point smaller. The effect brought on by page size is that there is less page-turning in the collection—the poem moves over two pages, whereas in the novel it runs across three. The mind is able to fix in space a greater sweep of the visible poem per page in the collection, but there is less invisible space to allow the mind to breathe

or muse as the white margin at the right of the page is relatively narrow, making the eye move down more rapidly than in the novel's layout. To sum this difference up, verticality is emphasised in the collection, while horizontality is emphasised in the novel. This difference is in keeping with the nature of the novel which creates entire fictional worlds in the verse, while in the collection, which contains many short poems, there is no attempt to create entire worlds and so no need for horizons. It also makes sense, then, to place a mountain at the beginning of such a vertically orientated collection. Knowing that this poem begins another version of *The Adventures of Vela* does help a scholarly reading of the novel in that we know that Ta'u/ Ta'ū is at the heart of the island grouping of Manu'a which, as mentioned earlier in this chapter, is central to the Tui Manu'a kings of Samoa and to the Nafanua religion. One could argue that Ta'u/Ta'ū is a portal between the two books, a kind of hypertext connection, just as the black star is a kind of portal between *The Book of the Black Star* and *The Adventures of Vela*. In a sense, the author's worldview creates the series of threads that bring their works together. Obviously, without the author's guiding hand, and assertion of moral ownership of works, there would be no reason to make claims regarding the genealogy of separate works. In Wendt's case, I would claim that the threads of authorship are highlighted so that a scholarly reader, if interested, can tug on them so that the current transport is halted and the reader mounts a new transport—the other work. There is a sense of "travel" in the term "adventure" which includes travels to other worlds which might be other cultures, other islands, and other times.

The cover image for *Photographs* is by the artist Michael Tuffery. It features six family photographs superimposed by yellow and white stencils of a budding stalk, three frangipani shapes, and indeterminate shapes that frame the stalk so that it looks like it is in the centre of a mountain-

shape or a cone. The stencils to my eye resemble patterns on lavalava cloth. The black and white photos are of children and grandchildren, some with the author standing with them, and one of his partner Reina Whaitiri. These personal images are related to the themes of this book. Unlike the other poets examined in this thesis, Wendt is himself a visual artist who studied fine art, and who has had exhibitions at art galleries in Honolulu and Auckland. This adds a layer of intentionality to the covers and their art. Wendt would have supplied the family images to Tuffery with which to adorn his book. This makes a reading of these covers more difficult in a way, since the aesthetic is controlled more closely by the author so that any reading is inflected by the artist's and author's collaboration. I say this because later in this thesis I read Hone Tuwhare's and Alistair Te Ariki Campbell's cover portraits, searching for phenomenological signs of each poet's being in the world or *dasein*. Certainly, portrait shots are often self-consciously staged, but the staging on Wendt's cover is a collage of six photos of the author and his family in their worlds superimposed by a Tuffery collage. This layering, and multiplication of worlds, quite simply emphasises that there is more than the eye can see. In one of the black and white photos, I can see Wendt whose face is partly obscured by the stalk shape. He is a grandfather in that image, holding a very young grandchild. In the lower-right corner of the cover he is a father, though yet again his image is partly obscured by a frangipani shape. In the top right photo, he is a sibling, and a cousin and uncle, but again, as with all of the other images of Wendt on this cover, his face is in some way obscured. What does this lack of seeing the author's face mean? The poems are personal, and so what is to be gained by concealing the face? Perhaps this encourages a collective rather than individually focussed reading of the work? That is in keeping with Wendt's identity assertions centred on family and indigenous community. Some of the family members are wearing sweatshirts with transnational

logos in a disarming reminder of the reach of global corporations into our most personal relationships, but also how relationships transform power into the familiar, ordinary, social aspects of everyday life. The emphasis on family and loving relationships on the cover also marks a turning point in the author's life in that the end of his marriage is chronicled in the seven pages of poetry titled "A Sequence." The poem is voiced in the second-person, as if the author has separated from the person, and it has three settings: Maungawhau or Mt Eden where the author used to live with his former wife, Whatuwhiwhi Bay in the far north, and Honolulu's Waikiki Beach. The multiple settings on the cover hence reflect the multiple places backgrounding and informing the poetry. The multiple positions of the cover both enhance and amplify the multiple positions and voices of the texts:

Is it post-modernist? the more literary and with-it-avant-gardish among you may ask. I don't know. All I know is, post-modernism isn't new if you look at the oral literature of Polynesia, wherein the teller and her personality become the story, and so forth. (Wendt, "Pacific Maps" 59)

The quote above is from his revised inaugural lecture as Professor of Pacific Literature first delivered at the University of Auckland in 1987, "Pacific Maps and Fictions", which has been reprinted in several publications. As well as examining the creative process, Wendt provides a useful definition of fiction by which we might measure not only the storytelling in *The Adventures of Vela*, but also of the longer poems:

I wanted to give, or should I say, the title wanted two meanings: Fiction as a branch of literature concerned with stories/ novels/ romances; and Fictions as things invented and imagined by 'untrue', false, not true of the realities of a place, a people, and so on. It is through fiction that we create a lot of fictions and maps . . . // Those maps and fictions are all in the spiral which encompasses the stories of us, in the ever-moving present, in the Va, the Space-Between-All-Things which defines us and makes us part of the Unity-that-is-ALL. (61)

Here I should mention my personal regard for Wendt who has encouraged and mentored my own writing from before I began publishing my work. His continuous support and advice enabled me to achieve a life in both literary and academic fields. This means that my analysis of his work is strongly inflected by my personal knowledge of his alofa and his deep regard for his immediate and extended family.

To gain some distance, I will quote Sharrad (230):

A feature of Wendt's writing is his framing and underpinning of narratives with powerful images that resonate with mythic overtones. Symbols unsettle the surfaces of Wendt's social realism, pointing to something deeper and more timelessly resonant in life than shallow material display and opportunistic adaptation to historical change. Images are at once physical sites, indications of personal states of mind and signs of connection to cultural tradition. The mountain is one such multivalent sign.

I have already discussed the mountains of Ta'u/Ta'ū, but Mount Taranaki also features large in the author's biography. He boarded as a teenager at New Plymouth Boys High where the mountain is the greatest geographical feature. Wendt describes his arrival in 1953:

On our way, I met a Mountain. Yes, that's the most apt way of describing it—
I *met* It. I stopped. It stopped. It gazed down at me, and I shuddered. I'd
never seen such a mountain before, but we shared the same feeling, the
immense sadness of the lava fields. For all my time at that school It was
to watch me, even in my sleep. And its predominant feeling was that of
sadness; a wise, patient sadness. (Wendt, "Pacific Maps" 74)

The lava fields of Savai'i also have resonances for the author. Sharrad's multivalency of the mountain sign also encompasses the speaking crater of Haleakala on Maui which is referenced on the cover of *The Adventures of Vela*. Part of the mountain sign is the vertical assertion of the earth itself. It interrupts the horizon. One is reminded of one's relationship to the earth by the mountain's immense presence. The mountain sign reaches into the sky so it has cosmicity similar to Tuwhare's tree sign in that both remain earthed. The cover of *Photographs* has a mountain sign that crosses three family-photos with a core shaped by a young plant with twelve new leaves and a bud.

They are
the rising high of sight propped up by stone
earth and sky

They can't be
any other thing (and they know it)
They are
the eyes of the earth gazing out
gazing inwards contemplating the future
on the horizon line and in the depths
of the whirling retina (*Photographs 17*)

The above passage in the opening stanza of "The Mountains of Ta'ū" contributes to the mountain as symbol and verb, it is a "whirling retina" moving inwards and outwards like a lens; the mountain is also a projection of an intellectual and emotional state, given the status of sentience, "contemplating the future" and of being which "they know". The projection of this author's inner consciousness on the world again enables a reading into the world informed by that cultural psyche. The author's biographical data is the material focus for the shorter lyrics, and it contributes in the verse-novel to the weaving of divine and ancestral and contemporary voices. Does it matter that the subjective narration is reliable? Probably not. The sustained *fictional* verse narrative underscores the trickiness of reliability or truth as a core value for a text (*Photographs 8-9*):

Tonight you again net Frame's small
but dangerous words: *and if but however...*
the conjunctions which determine choice
and the excuses for what our lives are
She decided there was no return

despite your *ifs buts* and pleading
She told your daughters
she and the fatman were *compatible*:
he isn't sexist
loves cooking and classical music
shares domestic chores
brings her cups of tea in bed
and she hoped your suffering
would make you a better person!

Sharrad praises the honesty of the text. We see Wendt warts and all. Clearly this passage was written in the wake of much suffering; there is sufficient distance here to be self-critical through the reported critique of his former wife. The reference to the author Janet Frame reminds me of Wendt's gift to the author Anne Kennedy of an artwork featuring this quote by Frame: "I was not yet civilized; I traded my safety for the glass beads of fantasy." The quote comes from Frame's autobiographical novel *Faces in the Water* (31). Perhaps the Frame reference represents the ultimate powerlessness of both the author and the person to use language to heal a failed relationship, that no number of conjunctions would bind husband and wife together, that actions are more powerful than words. This comes out of the silence following Wendt's marital separation, where silence cannot be bound by joining words since there is nothing left to join. Authorship depends on fantasy, but sometimes everyday reality intrudes into the literary sphere (*Photographs* 9):

Since she left
your dreaming has taught you the nature
of drowning repeatedly
You didn't ask for that or deserve
the bristling aitu which brim up out
of the floor and engulfing you
in their arms drag you down
into the airless pool of your bed

Eight pages later the extract from *The Adventures of Vela* begins. In the life-story of the poet, then, the verse-novel represents an overcoming of personal adversity even though that is only visible with hindsight. The poem's title, "A Sequence", appears once more in Wendt's work, this time in *The Adventures of Vela* (209-219) published some fourteen years later. It incorporates the earlier text with a three page preface. In it Vela arrives at the chronicler Alapati's Mt Eden house and restores the past (211):

Throughout the house he'd removed all evidence of Jenny
I loved him for all that but how do you erase over twenty years
of a life together? How do you remove it from your eyes
nose heart and memory? I returned to my study and until
dawn removed all visible evidence of Jenny from it

Elsewhere in this opening section, he blames Vela for deserting him (210):

I'm only the gullible chronicler you need to record your self-love
What bloody use are your useless stories anyway!

After *Photographs*, the next book was a visual feast of image and text, *The Book of the Black Star*. The pages are not numbered in this large-format paperback. The line drawings are black and white, sometimes smudged. Four pages from the end, there is a tribute to the Cook Islands Māori poet Kauraka Kauraka. The text “for Kauraka” is characteristic of the collection: it traverses divine and earthly realms, uses traditional or poeticised Moanan place-names, animates objects such as stars with the powers of speech and consciousness, and it refers to the work of another poet, in this case the prolific Kauraka. There are images of birds and stars in the marginalia, and of a flying fox. Le Fetu uliuli (black star) is written beside three black stars to the right of Kauraka’s name. The two k’s in the name are in large white, emerging out of a white skyline, or a white mountain-peak and hills. Other texts in the collection are spiral shapes, semi-circles, a text conforming with the Vaiepe river, in the shape of a birth-sac, and the arms of a spiral galaxy sucked into a black hole.

As well as the title sequence, Wendt’s first collection *Inside Us the Dead* has shorter lyrics. “Conch Shell” (76) appears to describe the summoning instrument of a taulaaitu or shaman/ priest:

Once, in the time of omens, this conch shell
dangled from a sinnet thread

in the miraculous light of a palm grove
to snare the Void and give it word
in the dreaming hands of a priest

The conch has the ability in skilled hands and lips to cross unknown time and space. Sharrad offers us a quotation from a 1992 interview with Wendt's friend and colleague Michael Neill:

That is linked to the concept of *va*, which means the space that relates all things. For example, the *va* between you and me is our relationship The concept of *va* is also related to outer-space: our name of outer-space is Va-nimo-nimo, 'the space that appears and disappears' – and that's the whole space that holds us together as a group, and gives meaning to all of us as individuals. It defines us. What we think of as the empty space between us is what links us. (qtd in Sharrad 19)

In the same passage, Sharrad notes the following:

Other ideas, such as *itu* (sides—the co-existing clashing and complementary aspects of phenomena) and the *tatau* (tattoo—sign of belonging, identity, textuality, sexuality, performance, cultural renovation) are brought into play, all within the long-standing frame of shamanic vision: the artist-priest-

compulsive *taulaaitu*, the isolate sacrifice to the gods who dreams
on behalf of readers and their world.

It appears then that through much of Wendt's imaginary, the figure of the *taulaaitu* occupies a central mediating space: the poet as seer or priest. In *The Adventures of Vela* the *taulaaitu* is also a trickster politician engaged in the intrigues of court. Here in Wendt's first 1976 collection, the figure is romanticised though rendered in human terms by the presence of the poet's daughter in "The Conch Shell" (stanza 2): "She skips to me, / feet like hypnotic wings I can't escape, / and asks me to blow it." It is the tempering presence of family which is the author's strength here. The poetry is grounded in affirming relationships. After his separation and divorce, the poetry and clearly the poet reworked and re-energized new ways of seeing family and love. Wendt's latest collection was published by Auckland University Press in 2012. *From Mānoa to a Ponsonby Garden* contains tributes to friends, and meditations on Wendt's retirement as a Professor of English. The realist cover art is a contrast to the two previous collections:

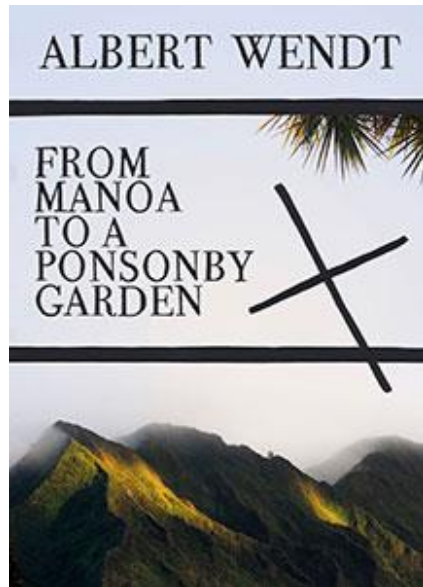


Figure 7 Cover of *From Manoa to a Ponsonby Garden*

Here the cross occupies the position of the black star in *The Adventures of Vela* cover art. The photo is of the Mānoa valley which is part of the Koʻolau mountain range running the length of Oʻahu. Cabbage tree leaves decorate the area above the cross. The frame in the centre looks like a window frame so that the cross and the frame might be referencing the artist Ralph Hotere's series of windows called the Black Windows.

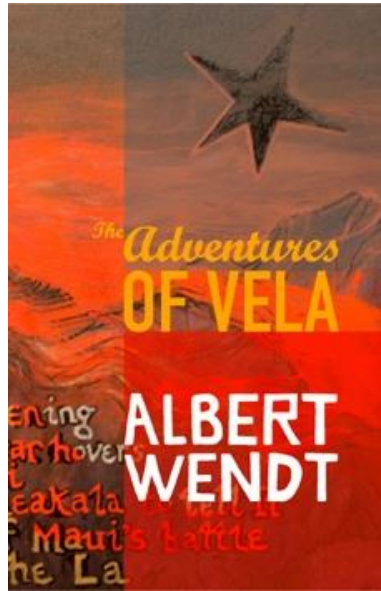


Figure 8 Cover of *The Adventures of Vela*

The Ko'olau Mountains belong to the same range of volcanic sea-mounts as those on Maui, so essentially both book-covers feature the same volcanic chain. The material in the new collection covers the many homes that the author has known, including Samoa in the wake of the 2009 tsunami, meditations in the garden poem sequence set in Ponsonby, and Hawai'i. "I am a pelagic fish on permanent migration—or is it seasonal migration?" (Wendt, "Pacific Maps" 59) There are also a number of tributes to friends who have passed on, including Hone Tuwhare and Epeli Hau'ofa. It appears to me that Wendt is an embodiment of Hau'ofa's sea of islands inhabitant, literally inhabiting different Pacific spaces, and then returning, and then imagining them so that his world encompasses parts of Fiji, Hawai'i, Aotearoa. The cultural travelling is united by the ocean, but also by the normalcy of such travel between the islands which Hau'ofa's seminal essay

describes. I use the term 'ritenga tangata' to remind me of the kind of dwelling or meditational thought that comes with casting the mind over the familiar objects of home and culture—the mind/heart complex returns again and again to these things imbued with minor and great events of family and friends. These so-called things have emotional resonances that are raised up in poetry—tapped by a poet's consciousness precisely because of these emotional energies and so are called to the page. I now turn this discussion of Wendt with a poem from *Shaman of Visions*, "Parents & Children" also available online at the New Zealand Electronic Poetry Centre.

In the first stanza emotional truths are represented as entrances with implied thresholds that alter their very memories of one another and themselves. To me "doors" suggests domesticity and a family home that is full of the gamut of experience including Western house construction: this is not an idealised life-affirming fable, but a space that sieves to "rags and bones". It is a construction that deconstructs its inhabitants. In stanza two, the narrator shows his son fixing his bike, and his daughter "locked into Captain America". Here is the third stanza:

I've left believing in God,
my children are starting towards Him.
I carry willingly the heritage of my Dead,
my children have yet to recognise theirs.
Someday before they leave our house
forever I'll tell them: 'Our Dead
are the splendid robes our souls wear.'

This theme of inheritances from the manifold pasts of ancestors is a graceful reminder that our children have many choices about which narratives to raise up and embrace from the past. In the poem “My Mother Dances” on the facing page of the collection (26), Wendt describes his mother who died when he was boarding at high school in Taranaki:

For my mother dances
in the Golden Pavilion
of my heart.

How she can dance.
Even the moon is spellbound
with her grace.

The moving tribute flows into “Parents & Children”, and then into the first stanza of the following poem for Wendt’s son (28):

Son, come let’s build a house of good dreams
in our hearts
and clear a bright path to it
through flame trees
as healing as your mother’s smile
And when I die you can walk
the path to that house

and find me sitting
at my desk writing
this poem.

This poem folds and unfolds self, makes claims similar to Shakespeare's "So long as men can breathe and eyes can see . . ." about the immortalizing effect of poetry, although this one seems to mean that the poet will live on through the son's memories of the father rather than the actual poem. My point about folding and unfolding is related to the fragmented lenses applied in *The Adventures* and wherever the taulaaitu or a reflection of the author appears. There are multiple versions of Wendt in the poetry, and multiple spokespeople or voices highlighted in the texts, and many members of the family and friends, and characters from mythological, cultural, political, and travelled places. Heterogeneity in all its manifestations has become a celebrated and multifaceted feature of Wendt's immensely significant and oceanic-scale oeuvre. To return to "Parents & Children" (27), doors are likened to "wounds / in my thoughts . . ." (lines 24-27) through which the narrator goes to meet his children. The private sphere of emotions is revealed consistently throughout the oeuvre. This emotional self-reflexivity, whatever the nature of the self, generates a realistic ground of being for the poetry. The vā is not so vast when its relationships are outlined and named.

Reflections from an image-world require stillness and refraction—occasionally this is a Moanan rhythm--if the circulatory motion is rapid then the reflections fragment, if the liquid is lagooned, the surface imagery sharpens, and the ecology below the surface becomes more apparent as well. Perhaps the poems are tidal pools, or tears, or vessels traversing spaces seen as relational.

In an unpublished conference paper, Tusitala Marsh uses the term “slack water” to describe the meeting point of two bodies of water which is a stillness created by encounter. This fecund, tidal space—remembering its ties to the planet’s known atmospheric and gravitational influences—has a procreative aspect, as well as other life-cycle aspects. The biological and relational alchemies in such a space recall a meditational stillness that privileges being in life, an “I and Thou” where the I/You relationship possesses collective, multiple selving. It draws sustenance as well as orientation and relationships from te ao mārama, also framed by DeLoughrey and Diaz as aforementioned by “routes and roots” to express a circulation between deep ocean voyaging and grounded, autochthonous modes rather than emphasizing the linear-narrative contradictions between vesseled diasporas and whenua-based indigeneity. This last description is archipelagic: territories containing islands also “contain” the sea which streams into or refreshes or pollutes other maritime states. The last paragraph of the anthropologist and author Epeli Hau’ofa’s essay, “Our Sea of Islands,” emphasises the decolonising, interventionist nature of a Moanan way of being (Hereniko and Wilson 37):

We are the sea, we are the ocean. We must wake up to this ancient truth and together use it to overturn all hegemonic views that aim ultimately to confine us again, physically and psychologically, in the tiny spaces that we have resisted accepting as our sole appointed places and from which we have recently liberated ourselves. We must not allow anyone to belittle us again and take away our freedom.

Just as Wendt relates to the ocean as a mother in his essay “Towards a New Oceania”, Hau’ofa personifies, collectivises the Moana. In an oceanic context, to “overturn” is a natural process when one is riding currents, but it is far more difficult to overturn internalised hegemonies. There are many shared currents between “Our Sea of Islands” and Wendt’s “Towards a New Oceania.”

So vast, so fabulously varied a scatter of islands, nations, cultures,
mythologies and myths, so dazzling a creature, Oceania deserves more
than an attempt at mundane fact; only the imagination in free flight can
hope—if not to contain her—to grasp some of her shape, plumage, and
pain (Sharrad, *Readings* 9).

Wendt’s poem “Maui” appears in his 2012 collection *From Mānoa to a Ponsonby Garden* (6). It addresses an invisible force, the Samoan cognate term ‘mauli’ for the Māori term ‘mauri’. I say it is a cognate term based on the nineteenth century ethnographer and linguist Edward Tregear’s dictionary which says it is also cognate with Tahitian, Hawaiian and Tongan versions of the word. The Pollex lexical database adds Tongarevan to the languages which use ‘mauri’ where it is defined as “spirit, psyche, soul, heart”. These comparative uses of mauli emphasise it as the emotional centre. Milner’s *Samoan Dictionary* notes also that it is the seat of the emotions in the solar plexus with a cross-reference to ‘moa’ which as noted above in this chapter is the emotional core. The term also reminds me of the unzipping and zipping with surgical stitches of Vela’s moa in the opening of *The Adventures of Vela* (4). This mauli ranges across high and low aspects of culture:

Is it like the thin sliver of light I will remember

after the last sunset slips off the Ko'olau? (lines 3-4)

Can you smoke it like pakalōlō and talk the air

into giving up its secret elixirs? And is it 10 dollars a joint? (lines 17-18)

It is of course a life principle, a type of touchstone which centres the poet's experiences, whether he makes love, or munches on hotdogs, or deals as a child with his grandmother's discipline, or encounters Marmite...

Yes this centre thing that holds even river stones to their shape and shine

that holds the owl aloft in the dark as it targets the hunger in its stride

that is the rage and sparkle in my grandchildren's eyes

holds me true and upright to the path of my life

I did not buy or ask for it

It came with me and won't let me forget it

until it runs out

This greater sense of self as expressed in the grandchildren's eyes, or the protective owl-figure/family deity which features in Wendt's play *The Songmaker's Chair*, speaks of an identity beyond consciously individual assertions relating to culture. In the poem, there is only one gap used as punctuation in a similar manner to *The Adventures of Vela*, which is in the first line of the above

last stanza. In that verse-novel I took the gap to represent the vā, and again it is an appropriate context:

If you can touch it what do you prefer it to feel like?
The long slick clinging feel of the black Vaipē mud
out of which you have eased? (stanza 5)

The whole poem crosses time and space, and touches on moments in relationships so that it concretises them in experiences. The life principle or maui is essentially invisible, but it is rendered visible through symbols and experiences.

There are many references to birth in the poem: “Is it the blood odour of the amniotic tide that cauled you?” (line 2, 4th stanza) “Is it the memory of the sea womb out of which you surfaced into the despair of light?” (lines 3-4, stanza 3) and “What is this centre thing that holds me to my life?” (line 1). The idea of centre as womb is simply amazing. The life principle thrives and grows there.

CHAPTER 3. ALISTAIR TE ARIKI CAMPBELL AND AUTHORIAL INTENTIONS

In this chapter I explore the folding and unfolding, constant and circulatory influences in the work of Alistair Te Ariki Campbell with a further goal of understanding cultural identity formations as they manifest in his poetry. Similar to my comparison of changes to his littoral poem, “The Return” in chapter one, I will compare changes Campbell made to poems in his final unpublished manuscript, and over the years in various republished versions, taking into account the social dimensions of literary production, such as the influences of editors and other advisers, and not solely resting my interpretations on authorial intentions (McGann 37-80). This attention to textual production seeks the origins of the text’s indigeneity, whether that is framed as Tongarevan, Moanan, or the other possible nominalisations previously noted and discussed in Chapter 1. Is it reasonable to claim that a text, if it is created collaboratively, also bears the identity of the sole-author creator? There is a difference in the poem as signifier of the signified poet (if we can take the unusual step of making the poem represent, as a typographical sign, a poet) since if a poem’s textual production involves others then its identity assertions ought to incorporate or bear identifying traces of those others involved in its production, thus potentially destabilising the indigenous identity (Moanan, Tongarevan) claim if those others are non-indigenous (Western, Pākehā). Perhaps this slippery claim is staked on who is in charge of creating the text prior to publication.

Who has the mana?⁴⁹ Clearly, the indigenous identity implications are for individual texts. I am assuming that they are also significant for the overall body of work of an author since, at least in Campbell's case, the advisors and publishers have changed over the decades, while the author has remained the only constant. The implication that it is the author of a text who is the sole source of autochthony might also appeal to an essentialising and stable purity of indigenous reference, but only if the notion of indigeneity is itself homogenous and singular, when I am asserting, rather, that indigeneity is heterogeneous and has plural signs. Indigeneity in Campbell's context plays out with the changing nature of his relationship to indigeneity over time: Campbell repressed his Moanan identity in the 1940s, gradually shifted toward it in the 1950s when he began writing about Te Rauparaha, and then leaped outward in the 1980s to a reunion with his family in Tongareva. There is also the overlapping interplay between indigeneity and other themes expressed in the poetry, such as the high-cultural, literary European referencing—Rochefoucauld, for instance, is quoted when the author sees Allen Curnow for the last time (*Poets in Our Youth* 43)—or the many romances and many friendships described in *Poets in our Youth* so that Tongarevan identity is embodied in the poet's presence at the social events he describes, but indigeneity is not always voiced (even though it is present in the poet's mind/heart, spirit and body), and it too encompasses many modes which might be seen as metropolitan or masculine or literary if one wished to stereotype indigeneity along with the other nominalised identities. The indigenous referencing here

⁴⁹ There are also echoes here of Roland Barthes's well-known formulation of the death of the author and the birth of the reader.

defers, micro-pauses, between these holding and sliding differences of language in circulation. I say language here, remembering that it combines, especially in the context of a poem, phonetical and typographical elements, so that the differences between the same unvoiced but read poem compared to the same poem read out loud and/or performed must also contribute to the recursive flows of meaning.⁵⁰ Another way to say this is through the concept of a writer's voice, where voice is partly the unique stylistic qualities that a writer brings to their writing. Whether a text is literally spoken/voiced, or literally unvoiced/read silently, a writer's voice suggests an identity-concept and so the *idea* of the phonetical voice will also contribute to the mobile back and forth interplay of differences that yield meanings for the texts to hand.⁵¹ The voice retains a trace of authenticity.

⁵⁰ I am indebted for this description of difference to the 1973 translation of Jacques Derrida's essay "Differance." I do not use *différance* as a term in this thesis, however, as I do not wish to adopt a deconstructionist methodology.

⁵¹ There are many categorical differences between the names Moanan/Tongarevan/Pacific Islander just as there are further differences generated by coupling such terms with others such as poet/author/writer or Scottish/New Zealander/Pakeha; each term in different combinations (almost synonymous with strategies) might contribute to a multivalent reading of the written works of Cook Islands Māori and New Zealand poet Alistair Te Ariki Campbell.

Looking Back on 'Elegy'

In this section of the chapter I will reflect on the circulation of amendments and revisions made to one of Campbell's most prominent early poems, the sequence first composed in 1949, "Elegy," written for his friend Roy Dickson, who died in a mountain-climbing accident aged 20. Among many things, this history, based on biographical data, illustrates the problem of authorship, where attaching identifiers to Campbell's work based solely on his family, or cultural or psychological background might downplay the roles of other individuals, and even publishing houses or movements, in any claims for authenticity or even indigeneity. In addition to its connections with traditional tangi and orature, I have chosen to examine this poetic sequence because its pre-published and published versions are both extraordinarily well-documented and traceable. In addition, I am aware that these accounts are "texted pasts" (Thomas 34-35). The record enables us to ride some of the different waves that contributed to the final text.

Historical anthropologist Nicholas Thomas questions the validity of a mere multiplicity of histories being the endpoint of historical inquiry, and says, rather, that histories are "culturally and politically interested, and thus must be exposed to commentary and debate" (36):

A historical poetics of this kind, which delights in the diversity and contrivances of textured pasts, must underspecify the cultural sense of particular texts unless these are situated in their historical and political motivations. Histories do not merely differ and enrich knowledge through complementary diversity. Rather they reflect interests in practical projects, in legitimizing or destabilizing; they

entertain, and perhaps they form some symbolic violence with respect to those who are spoken about but whose own voices are absent. (35)

Dealing with the fortunately extensive materials on Campbell to hand, there are multiplicities or diversities of cultural (i.e. poetic or literary) approaches, diverse patterns of represented voices, divergences of indigenous and European modes both within and between texts written by Campbell, as well as multiple references to his cultural, personal, and group relationships. This spectrum of patterns is not unusual in the highly referential and rhythmical text-objects also known as poems. The interpretive project I am pursuing is indeed concerned with “the cultural sense of particular texts” and so Thomas’s description above encourages me to situate them in view of “their historical and political motivations.”

To clarify a point of genre here, while it is beyond the intention of Campbell’s oeuvre-as-poetry to claim that his poems constitute oeuvre-as-histories in the fullest sense, as partial texts that involve themselves in historical narratives, especially the Te Rauparaha sequences, I find it productive to deploy Thomas’s historical and anthropological approach here. Anthropology concerns itself with otherness, while histories are in part dependent on authorship/authority and indigenous histories contest that ground.

Turning our attention to “Elegy,” Campbell, in his autobiography *Island to Island*, describes his correspondence with the Dunedin-based editor of *Landfall* Charles Brasch:

I was then revising sections of my 'Elegy' preparatory to sending it to Charles Brasch whose tactful and discerning comments were to help me with the final polishing before he published it in *Landfall* 11 (117).

The poem was indeed published in the September 1949 issue.⁵²

In his letter dated 18th May 1949, Brasch recommended that sections 3, 4, and 6 be "left out". The manuscript submitted to *Landfall* contained seven sections. Campbell agreed to take out two of the sections, three and six. I include them here (Appendix A) as they are unpublished. For convenience, I have also appended the original 1949 *Landfall* version of "Elegy" and the latest unpublished 2009 version (Appendix A).

In the emended typescript sent to Brasch, it is apparent that Campbell was still composing the poem; note the awkward repetition of the phrase "some sea-torn promontory" in the penultimate and final stanzas of section 3, "His Terrible Mistress," as an example of draft-work. The edits are in Campbell's handwriting. Literary merit aside, omitting "His Terrible Mistress" from the final version of the poem has an effect of perhaps over-emphasizing the affection between the two

⁵² I was unable to access the Turnbull Library's collection of Campbell's papers (MS Group 1232) due to that library's extensive refurbishment, but I do have access to his son Andrew Campbell's personal copies of diaries held at the Turnbull which I have read. I was also fortunate to be able to access The Hocken Library Collection of Brasch's *Landfall* papers (MS-996-2/55) which reveal Brasch's extensive editorial recommendations.

friends, Dickson and Campbell. Perhaps this can be traced back to the original figuration of nature as a blonde girl with a “bright head.” To return to the question, what makes this poem in English Moanan? One must note the large influence of Brasch on its creation to the extent that a romantic theme of the poem has been removed by the erasure of “His Terrible Mistress” from the sequence. Another lost connection due to that erasure is the “wild bird” (line 3) imagery that also appears elsewhere in “Elegy” as hawks and pigeons, and the phrase is repeated in the third section of the *Landfall* version, and as “some wild bird’s ecstasy” in the “Farewell” section. The bird reference is closely associated with the blonde girl in the unpublished typescript, and so this too bears on interpretations of the poem. In the “Driftwood” section a girl appears as “a mad girl dancing.” It is worth noting that all the sections are numbered, as in the *Landfall* version, but that all book and anthology editions from 1950 onwards also subtitle each section.⁵³

Below are Brasch’s first comments on the submitted version of “Elegy”:

31 Royal Terrace
Dunedin C.2
18.5.49

⁵³ In a 2002 article, Jack Body notes that Campbell’s “Elegy” draws on a tradition of “erotic vocabulary to present mystical experience” which might be closer to Campbell’s intentions, although of course Body might not have been aware of Brasch’s editorial involvement which perhaps altered the original nature of the erotic references. In the 4th line of section V “Reverie,” the phrase “love brimmed” has been replaced by “troubled”.

Dear Mr Campbell,

I was so glad to see some of your work at last, for several of your friends had spoken to me about it.

Much of this elegy seems to me very good, particularly sections 1, 2, 5 and 7. I don't think the other sections are on the same level. 6 repeats themes similar to those that have gone before but with much less intensity. 3 does not convince one that the girl described could be a 'terrible mistress'; and the last two lines, with that rather prosy 'some stunted trees', surely a sad falling off. 4, again, is similar in theme to but lacks the intensity of the best sections; whereas 1 set the mood of the whole, although pure description, 4 seems to add nothing fresh, and after 1 and 2 is no longer evocative. These three sections weaken the effect of the whole, which would be much stronger without them. Would you consider leaving them out? – unless you preferred to alter them, or replace them by others. I do not think it would be a pity for whole elegy not to sustain the level of its best parts.

Please let me know how you feel about this.

Yours sincerely,

Clearly Campbell agreed about the third section as that has never appeared in his publications. I have appended the original sixth section which was sent to Brasch (Appendix A). Again, to suspend aesthetic value statements, there are a number of elements in this lost section which might also be interpreted as thematic or motif connections rather than Brasch's generally accurate statement that it "repeats themes". The phrase "my love's shattered breast" suggests a strongly affectionate relationship, but this is an early unpublished draft. "And the cry of wild birds that pleased him best . . ." seems to me of sufficient personal significance that the line could well have been reprised and inserted elsewhere in "Elegy." As discussed earlier, the wild bird imagery was associated with the young woman in the omitted third section, while this extra piece of information, "wild birds that

pleased him best" (line 4), shows his friend Roy Dickson's enjoyment of the creatures. That Campbell also deleted this section shows his open-minded acceptance of a renowned editor's input. However, he did not entirely accept Brasch's advice as he successfully argued for the fourth section. Here is an extract from Campbell's reply, dated May 26th 1949:

Section 4 you condemn for two reasons. It lacks intensity. The theme was more convincingly handled in sections 1 and 2, and is no longer evocative. It fails to bring anything fresh to the series. I am inclined to disagree on both points. Something fresh has been added. The particular image—an image of desolation; and a dramatic element wholly lacking in the first two sections. The question of intensity is more difficult. For one, on that point, criticism can only rest, in the final analysis, on personal reaction. I think one can say that intensity is quantitative. If any two poems differ in intensity, then that difference can only be one of pitch. If not, one of them must be bad, or at least inferior to the other.

My purpose was to set section 4 on a lower pitch of intensity. You say I failed in intensity. How can I answer that but by replying 'I don't think so, and there are others whose criticism I value highly who don't think so'?

I am replacing sections 3 and 6 by four new sections. I have rearranged the elegy thus. 1 and 2 are unchanged; 4 is now 3; 5 is now 8. And the new sections which I will send along with this letter become 4, 5, 6, 7 respectively. The original 7 becomes 9. I think that's all to tell. I do think that the additions have added much to the series.

Will you write me that I might know your mind on that matter.

Yours sincerely

Alistair Campbell.

It is remarkable how the 1949 *Landfall* version of “Elegy” has been altered in its circulating reprints in *Mine Eyes Dazzle* (1950, 51, 53), *Wild Honey* (1964), *Kapiti: Selected Poems* (1972, 73), *Collected Poems* (1981), *Pocket Collected Poems* (1996), and *The Dark Lord of Savaiki: Collected Poems* (2005). Some of the changes over the decades amount to light punctuation changes and word-choices. The May 26th 1949 correspondence above is illustrative as it concerns the insertion of new sections, and the changing of “A Dead Thorn Tree Stands” from the original section four to the *Landfall* section three. However, that third section (“A Dead Thorn-Tree Stands”) is omitted in 1950 in *Mine Eyes Dazzle* from “Elegy” and appears as a stand-alone poem as “The Thorn-Tree” (28). In 1964 it does not appear at all in *Wild Honey*. It is worth noting here that in Douglas Lilburn’s 1965 musical setting of “Elegy,” “The Thorn-Tree” section is also missing as it follows the eight-section version in *Wild Honey*. The section neither appears in the 1972 *Selected*, nor in the 1981 *Collected*, both of which have seven sections, but makes a reappearance in the 1996 *Pocket Collected* as a stand-alone poem called “Fable” (18) directly following the eight-section “Elegy.” In the most recent *Collected* (2005) it is once again included in “Elegy” and restored as the third of nine sections!

This movement of the thorn tree section from inclusion in 1949 to exclusion from the 1950 and subsequent “Elegy” sequences for some *fifty-five years* to inclusion in 2005 is perhaps due to Brasch’s early critique (18.5.49) that it “lacks some of the intensity of the best”, and “seems to add

nothing fresh”, which might have left Campbell doubtful about its value to the sequence. In Campbell’s final unpublished 2009 manuscript, the third section and the overall nine-part length remains intact. There are minor changes in section three’s fourth stanza, line 2: “Nor sheep, nor goat comes near” becomes in 2005/2009 “No sheep or goats come near”, which is how it appears in the 1996 *Pocket Collected*. It also reveals Campbell’s control of the text from the inclusion of previously omitted sections to the aforementioned minor editing. The psychology of the poems, the emotional resonances, the relationship between the deceased Dickson and the poet are essentially all Campbell’s to tell in this powerful sequence. Rather than expressing the death of the author, this last point expresses Roland Barthes’s lesser-known formulation, the “friendly return of the author” (cited in Gallop 5).

Tongarevan haka-papa or genealogy retains its relevance here. The image-world of the published text refers to a mountaineering tragedy, the death of a cherished friend by a poet in his youth, while te ao mārama of the poet directs us to the oratory of Moanan tangi. Rather than a challenge to a Moanan or Cook Islands Māori or Tongarevan interpretative current for the texts, a current ferrying blood as well as soil and ocean, the involvement of others in the creation of the texts—as literary influences, or editors, or publishers—can be read as deeply Moanan, relational, collaborative, mana enhancing, and circulatory, encompassing the rhythms of the poet’s entire life as a poet.

The rhythms of recursion, drafting and redrafting, because of new insights, exploring and travelling between layers and over surfaces, structuring and restructuring story-lines or stanzas, is a writerly process. This redrafting process means a folding over or vanishing of entire sections at times only made available to us in archives such as the Hocken’s collection. The correspondence

between the poets reveals another unpublished section, written by Campbell after the other sections and mailed to Brasch on 9th June 1949. It is numbered the seventh section, bringing the intended sequence to ten poems (see Appendix A). Again, there is a reference to “my love”. The passage “I cried ‘What is wrong?’ / And over and over shouted out his name . . .” suggests an intensely-felt relationship. There are other notable changes first advised by the editor and poet Brasch: in 2005 section IV the term “now sleeps” is sensibly used instead of “he sleeps,” thus avoiding a “disconcerting” (Campbell’s term) usage such as “he sleeps the gorge”; and in line 9 of that section, the word “swarming” replaces “glittering,” which is also prompted by Brasch’s editorial commentary. The first stanza of the passage above also reminds me of Byron’s poem “She walks in beauty like the night,” or Yeats’s “He wishes for the cloths of heaven,” “I have spread my dreams under your feet / Tread softly for you tread on my dreams.” Indeed, in *Island to Island* the poet says, “I was then [Summer of 1948/49] working on my “Elegy” in which Yeats was a dominant influence. Most of the difficult lyrics of this sequence I composed in my head, while picking apricots in the Cromwell Gorge” (115). Another influence was Federico García Lorca. The Kiwi Records cover of “The Return” and “Elegy” cites “Lament for Ignacio Sanchez Mejias.” While the repetitive-phrasing of the Lorca is very different stylistically, it does share features such as numbered sections, a section subtitled “The Laid Out Body” and at-times erotic vocabulary.

Campbell’s first wife, the poet Fleur Adcock, references other sections of “Elegy,” in this extract from her “Letter to Alistair Campbell” (122), written during her visit to Cumbria near the Lake District, England in 1979.

Those thorn trees in your poems, Alistair,
we have them here. Also, the white cauldron,

the basin of your waterfall. I stare
at Stock Ghyll Force and can't escape your words.
You'd love this place: it's your Central Otago
in English dress—the bony land's the same;
and if the Cromwell Gorge is doomed to go
under a lake, submerging its brave orchards
for cheap electric power, this is where
you'd find a subtly altered image of it,
its cousin in another hemisphere:
the rivers gentler, hills more widely splayed
but craggy enough.

The “white cauldron” comes from section two of “Elegy,” while the “basin” is in section three, which also has the thorn trees. The Cromwell Gorge is the title of a poem that immediately precedes “Elegy,” except in *Mine Eyes Dazzle* and *Wild Honey*, while Central Otago is the regional setting. The generally iambic meter perhaps mimics the cadences in “Elegy.” Adcock’s tone is very relaxed, lacking any intensity, so that it indeed offers an “altered image” (line 10) of the gorge. Adcock recalls later in the poem that Central Otago was “where you and I / did our first timid courting” (lines 32-33). This aside in Adcock’s poem provides a possible source for the romantic imagery in “Elegy,” but Adcock couldn’t be the blonde woman of the deleted third section originally sent to Brasch. They began courting after “Elegy” was already published in *Mine Eyes Dazzle* (Wattie 32). The assertion of two world-views, two approaches to similar geographies but separate cultural

locations, is neatly turned on its postcolonial head by the assertion of New Zealandness in the English location, “it’s your Central Otago” (line 5). Campbell’s Moanan identity is not acknowledged in the poem, however. This subdued identity suggests an earlier time, which fits with the Otago location where Campbell was raised in an orphanage and tried to pass as white at Otago Boys High School, and slightly later perhaps at Victoria University. He says this about his anger at another boy’s racial slur against him:

To be honest, there was a deeper reason for my fury which I never admitted, even to myself. I was passing myself off as a white person—as I was to do for many years—and this boy had contemptuously exposed me. (*Island to Island* 93)

To put this in a psychological context, Adcock’s relationship with Campbell took place during the end of this period of uncertain identity, so it makes sense that Adcock would emphasise a New Zealand rather than a Pacific cultural identity. Their marriage lasted from 1952-57 (Wilson ix). In a 2001 newspaper interview, Adcock describes Campbell as “broodingly handsome, half-Polynesian” (*Sunday Star Times* F2) which shows at least her later awareness of his Moanan identity. In a letter to Brasch dated 6 April 1956, Campbell does talk of his intentions to take Fleur Adcock and their son Gregory to Tongareva, indicating Adcock was aware of his cultural identity from the start: “Later in the year I am taking Fleur and Gregory to the Islands. We’ll be going to Tongareva where my maternal grandfather was a chief and where my family has lived for centuries.” To me the reference to Tongareva, seven years after completing the “Elegy” sequence, signals the reality of Campbell’s everyday lived Moanan identity, part of many identity contexts, such as the sequence’s

Otago-centred, latently Lake District (a la Wordsworth or English Romantic) setting, or non-literary ones such as parenthood and transmission of cultural identity to their son.

In this section of the chapter, the tide shifts from the influence of individuals to the influence of groups. Campbell's statement about Brasch's "tactful and discerning comments" (*Island to Island* 117) in revisions of "Elegy" must have been early in the piece as it belies his involvement in the Wellington Group which produced *Hilltop*:

Hilltop was to be an alternative to *Landfall*, which we considered stuffy and academic, favouring the work of the so-called Caxton group – Curnow, Glover, Fairburn and the rest – whose preoccupation with what Curnow was to describe as 'the New Zealand, the real thing' struck us as provincial and narrow. To us, the international scene was just as real as the local scene, and to exclude it from our work could only diminish us as writers. (*Island to Island* 116)

As Campbell states, the Wellington Group was a counter-movement to the normative literary nationalism embodied by Brasch's group. The reality of course was more complicated. For a time at least, Campbell befriended Brasch; he and his future wife Fleur Adcock stayed with Brasch in

Dunedin in 1949⁵⁴ during the correspondence about “Elegy.” He and Brasch must have discussed the poem during the stay, which would have occurred in late June or early July. Also pointing away from entirely individual authorship, a throw-away comment at the end of a letter to Brasch about the unpublished seventh section reveals Campbell’s reliance on his Wellington Group friends for feedback: “I’m sorry it’s crumpled, I’ve been testing it on my friends” (9.6.49).

Undoubtedly the correspondence reveals Charles Brasch as a hard-working and attentive literary editor who focused on developing the strongest elements of the poetic sequence, and also on encouraging the poet. After the poem was published in *Landfall*, Brasch sent a letter telling Campbell of the very positive feedback he had received, “More People / have spoken to me about it, with genuine / feeling & delight . . . than about any / poem in *Lf*” (*Poets in our Youth* 23). Brasch also included the sequence in the 1962 anthology *Landfall Country*. The correspondence also reveals a commitment to revision on Campbell’s part to the extent that he is prepared to expand and reduce the length of the sequence, and to shuffle sections to achieve a range of imagistic (in the Poundian sense), rhythmical and structural effects, as well as making subtler changes such as word-selection during this intensive period in 1949. Initially the revision involved collaboration with Brasch and his Wellington friends. Ultimately the editing decisions rested with the poet, both then and in subsequent versions. It is Campbell’s controlling influence that convinces me that te ao mārama of

⁵⁴ I have been unable to explain the discrepancy of dates between his courting of Fleur Adcock in 1951 and their stay with Brasch in 1949. If it is true that they were courting in 1949, then it could suggest that she is the woman in the unpublished version of “Elegy.”

the texts on visible and invisible levels is Moanan. Of course a major life identity for the poetry is that of the poet as artist, as poet, and the sense of excellent writing shown by Campbell's enduring impulse for revision, which remains for the next sixty years. In the unpublished 2009 version, line three of the third stanza of "IV Now Sleeps the Gorge" has been modified to "Embalms such glory, there's not a creature" from the 2005 version "Dreams of godhead, and there's not a creature." It reflects on Campbell's sense of the mana of words. Similarly, this identity as a poet of mana is reflected in his youthful membership of the Wellington Group which features in his mid-career autobiography *Island to Island*, and his late poetry collection *Poets in Our Youth*, so it is a life-long association for the poet. Nevertheless, for him the Group as a poetry theme does not equal the sustained and at times intense attention to "the Polynesian strain."

The other group identity potentially in play here in the "Elegy" sequence is Moanan, or specifically, Tongarevan. The lament features in the traditional mourning rituals or sukai of Tongareva, "which consisted of a combination of chanting and dancing by men and women" (Vini 368). However, this potential identifier is submerged in "Elegy." There are some general similarities between the traditional ritual and the poem. The first similarity is the section "The laid-out body." While it is most likely that this refers to the body in its coffin, it could also very generally refer to a viewing of the body which is central to the traditional funeral rites of Tongareva and the Moana. The other general similarity is the notion of elevation (bird images, climbing and falling images). In traditional mourning, the deceased and a living companion would be wrapped in a pandanus leaf mat and suspended from the roof of the house for 24 hours. At other times during the ritual the corpse would be lowered, elevated and suspended. A further similarity is an intensity of grief. Mourners would slash themselves until they bled. Perhaps some of the intensity of "Elegy" owes

something to this tradition of focused and extended mourning? After the initial period, a chief mourner for instance would be expected to live secluded with the corpse for three to six months (Vini 370). The poem's literal extent, over the years numbering between seven and nine sections, does feel like a mourning rite as it moves toward the final section, "The laid-out body." As noted before, perhaps the title "The Laid Out Body" comes from Lorca's "Lament for Ignachio Sanchez Mejias," which does not refute a Tongarevan reading but rather enlarges its horizon of interpretative possibilities, just as Yeats's acknowledged influence encourages a pluralistic reading. In *Islands to Islands*, Campbell quotes his older sister Margaret:

Life in the Islands had its solemn occasions, as Margaret remembers: 'When anyone died there was a big feast. The body was laid out on a bed & the little kids, mostly girls, took turns to sit there & fan the flies away from the face.' (67)

Admittedly, Moanan identity assertions are quite deep in "Elegy" as they are not at the surface of the poem. "Elegy," for instance, is not included in Campbell's 1992 collection *Stone Rain: the Polynesian Strain*. The front dust jacket says the collection "covers the range of his work on Māori and Polynesian themes and values . . .", and cites works from 1949 to 1991. One sequence which is included is "Sanctuary of Spirits." Before I leave this discussion of "Elegy," it is pertinent that "Sanctuary of Spirits" directly references Moanan (Maori) mourning rites in its first part, "Kapiti," while "Elegy" does not. I will discuss Charles Brasch and John O'Connor's influence on later iterations of "Sanctuary of Spirits" later in this chapter. In the forthcoming *Collected Poems* edited

by Andrew Campbell, the “Elegy” suite is included in a section named “Of Wild Places.” The phrase is drawn from the second line of section two.

To reiterate, Campbell constantly revisits the texts in this sequence over his entire career as a writer. The constant modifications belie the romantic position of a poet who allows surges of spontaneous feeling to flow onto the page as they appear to in “The Return” and even “Elegy.” This constant recursion over a lifetime suggests meticulous craft. Campbell’s official biographer, Nelson Wattie, notes this in a 2005 essay. Wattie also highlights the community of readers to whom Campbell belonged, contrasting this with the temptations of drawing solely on biographical data to interpret the poetry:

In any case, however much justification there may be for the biographical approach, there is also room for a complete re-reading of Campbell’s oeuvre from a different point of view—the work of the imagination being used in the service of a community. Readers’ hopes and expectations (no matter what they know of the poet) can also be seen to shape the poems and to lend them some significance. (90)

Personal Sonnets 1960 Correspondence with Brasch

The only time Brasch rejected a submission by Campbell is of “Personal Sonnets,” which he refers to as the Porirua poems in his letter dated 27th January 1962. They are indeed personal. The Porirua reference is to the hospital where Campbell spent time recovering from a nervous breakdown. They are technically fine poems, ranging from Italian to Shakespearian sonnet schemes. It perhaps

reveals more about Brasch's distaste for revelatory or confessional poems than for their quality. The second sonnet, for instance, is set in the hospital. Brasch is still as ever encouraging, writing a very kind rejection note. Here is the letter in its entirety dated 15 October 1960:

It's a great pleasure to see these new poems of yours; they are very moving ones; and Douglas [Lilburn] in sending them on said that there might be others to come. I'd very much like to see any others, if I may. Of course they are extremely personal, and possibly you will want to work on them here and there, in time; but the main thing is that they're there, alive. I do hope you're finding the hospital of some help; the poems suggest that you are, which would be splendid.

Sanctuary of Spirits 1963 Correspondence with Brasch

A period of two years elapses before they correspond again, prompted by a request from Brasch for permission to republish "Elegy" in *Landfall Country*. He also enquires about the Porirua poems, which, as well as "Personal Sonnets," include the unpublished poem "White Flower," and the love poem for Meg Campbell, "Bon Voyage." Campbell has clearly moved on from the rejection:

About the Porirua poems: I did make a number of changes, but as I assumed that you weren't really interested in them I hawked them round a bit & got them accepted by Bill Oliver (Poetry Programme), Louis Johnson (Yearbook), and Monte Holcroft (1st and last sonnets). I hope you are not disappointed. Incidentally, many people told me that they were read most movingly. (15.1.62)

The acceptances are no small feats, hence the slight triumphalism in the last sentence. The poetry programme was a National Radio broadcast in the heyday of wireless service, Johnson's was the *New Zealand Poetry Yearbook*, and Holcroft of course referred to the *New Zealand Listener*, which was one of the most popular weekly periodicals in the country.

At any rate, the correspondence resumed with Campbell offering a new poem, part of the sequence that marked his full emergence as a significant Pacific writer, "Sanctuary of Spirits," which was first published as a sixteen-page limited edition of 150 copies by the Wai-Te-Ata Press in 1963. It had nine unnumbered and subtitled parts. In 1964's *Wild Honey* (Oxford U P) and subsequent publications the parts included Roman numbering, and the subtitle "A Pattern of Voices" appears directly below the title. The dialogical element is repeated in a letter to Brasch (8.4.63), "It's what I call a 'tone poem for voices' and the title is to be "Sanctuary of Spirits"." Additionally, the sequence begins the *Oxford* collection, thus emphasizing a Moanan rather than a Romantic poetics. Like "Elegy" it was a public poem, which, according to a letter to Brasch (30.9.63), was "broadcast from 4YC at 9.17pm on Friday October 11th [1963]." I return to the influence on the sequence of Charles Brasch, who published the final poem of the sequence "Against Te Rauparaha" in the June 1963 issue of *Landfall* (Letter 13.1.63). Characteristic of Brasch, his comments were unfailingly supportive, helpful and insightful. After receiving "Letter to Te Rauparaha" in January 1963 he writes:

I admire your Te Rauparaha poem, it is fresh and strong. But is the title right?
a letter? this sounds rather too domestic for the poem, which is rather in the

nature of an exorcism, isn't it? One possible alternative occurs to me—'Against Te R.', but you might find a better title.

Indeed Campbell changed the title as per Brasch's suggestion. In a follow-up letter, dated 3 February, 1963, Brasch writes:

I think the poem breaks new ground, so that everyone should be grateful for it. I'm sure it's valuable too that it should be a public poem, although growing out of personal experience. Large bold public poems are what we need most at present, and this one of yours might well catch the general imagination in the way that your Elegy did earlier—may it be so! Certainly it encourages me greatly: thank you, my dear Alistair.

It also reveals the help of the *Te Ao Hou* Department of Māori Affairs magazine and *Education* editor Eric Schwimmer, to whom Campbell had first promised the poem in an issue of *Education*. As compensation, he dedicated the poem in *Landfall* to Schwimmer, who was also a member of the Wellington Group. The dedication does not appear in subsequent publications. The correspondence related to "Sanctuary of Spirits" over a period of five months from January to May 1963 is a process of patient line-by-line editing by Brasch on word-choice, line ordering, and phrasing. In comparison with the earlier correspondence over "Elegy," there are more changes being initiated by Campbell and a greater show of confidence. He asks that all references to the name "Tamai" be switched to "Tama," asks to italicise the line "But why deceive myself . . . most intimate terrors," requests that

initial letters in each line be placed in lower case except for the beginning of sentences, locates the poem at “Pukerua Bay” at the end, and happily says he is delighted with the poem: “I am quite excited about the poem, for I feel it gives a new dimension to my work” (Letter 8.4.63). With similar confidence, in reply to Brasch’s suggestion that he rework these original lines, “Slaughtered on his marae, / Pehi and forty others, / All great chiefs!” to “Pehi and forty others / All great chiefs, / Slaughtered on his marae”, Campbell rephrases the section thus: “Pehi and forty others, / All great chiefs, / Impiously butchered in their sleep!” My point about confidence is that it marks a personal recovery from institutionalisation for the poet.

On April 29th, after most of the line-editing on “Against Te Rauparaha” has finished, he reveals his intention for the entire series:

I’m sending you a copy of the whole Te Rauparaha series in a few days & I’d be grateful if you’d look at it & give me your opinion. They’re a loose knit series & they’re intended to present a ‘portrait’ of Te Rauparaha, as well as some of the attitudes of the ancient Māori to violence & war. What impresses me about them was their ability to live with, what to us would be, the warring elements of their nature and not be insane. They were able to do that by making a ritual of murder & violence. The lines beginning, ‘Tama & Hiko too were of your kin’, are on this theme.

While revealing the author's psychology here, the quote also shows a direct concern with indigenous wellbeing in the face of tremendous provocation. Here is the full stanza Campbell refers to above in the 1963 Wai Te Ata Press version:

Tama and Hiko too were of your kin,
and vengeful Hakitara—violent men
crazed with a lust for blood!
Who would have guessed that they were also
dutiful sons, affectionate fathers?
or that, decorous on their *maraes*,
they entertained their guests
with courtly ease?

Campbell's depiction of the chiefs is accurate. While singling out their martial prowess as "crazed," the poem moves onto contexts of whanaungatanga and manaakitanga, which Manuka Henare glosses as "ethic of belonging, reverence for the human person" and "ethic of care and support, reverence for humanity" (214), respectively.

The term *against* in the poem's title ("Against Te Rauparaha") suggests opposition, an identity assertion or position taken in relation to Te Rauparaha, remembering that the chief was also the composer of the country's most famous poem, the *ngeri* "Ka mate." This poetic attribute of the chief relates or juxtaposes Campbell's reference to an indigenous poetic tradition. Rather than being oppositional, however, I suggest the term *against* is appositional in this context since we are

privity to the correspondence with Brasch. Originally the poem was merely a “Letter to Te Rauparaha,” a posthumous communication or one-way correspondence with the poet-chief. The proximity is of traditions of culture and artform.

The next significant poem to be published in *Landfall* under Brash’s editorial scrutiny is “Nobby Clark,” which, like “Sanctuary of Spirits” and “Personal Sonnets,” appears in *Stone Rain: the Polynesian Strain*. Originally the sequence had ten parts, but Brasch successfully recommended merging parts eight and nine, and cutting part ten (Letter 3 August 1966). I include the deleted part of “Nobby Clark” in Appendix A. While I must admit that I agree with Brasch’s editorial judgement for much of this section, the last five lines appear to me worth reworking. Campbell has an admirable history of reworking his material. For instance, lines in part three were revised from the following:

What did you hear,
as you lay assaulted by fear,
in your smoke-filled shack
by the murderous sea
in the man-eating dark?

To the 1966 *Landfall* version:

What did you hear,
as you sweltered with fear

in the head-shrinking dark
of your smoke-filled shack?

There are further adjustments in the 2005 *Collected Poems* where the comma is removed after “hear,” and “with fear” is changed to “in fear.” While Brasch is indeed a thorough editor, sometimes I feel that a less intrusive approach would have resulted in further unexpected developments in Campbell’s poetry.

My motivation for exploring the Brasch correspondence has been to demonstrate that outside influences played a very large part in significantly Moanan sequences in Campbell’s oeuvre. To ask a simple question, does this make the poems less Moanan? Again, Campbell is the controlling influence over the final text before and after publication. It was common practice, and to a certain extent it still remains part of many writers’ practices, to involve others—friends, editors, publishers, colleagues and peers—in the drafting process. This community of readers, to borrow Nelson Wattie’s phrase again, endures emotionally in Campbell’s oeuvre. The late sequence published in 2002, *Poets in Our Youth*, is filled with references to these friends. Their importance to the elder poet looking back, the poet who reunited with his Tongarevan family in the late 1970s, is personal, biographical, and is wrapped up in the identity of Campbell as a person who has reclaimed his Pacific identity and who expresses that in his writing. The threads of friendship are not merely juxtaposed alongside the poet’s Moanan identity as they are interwoven, commingling, part of the whole person, and not to be isolated and removed from the context of the poet’s community. This is a self-knowledge that the older poet gained through experience, which he collectively projects as “our youth.” The others in that community included writers and artists such

as Pat Wilson, Harry Orsman, James K. Baxter, W.H. (Bill) Oliver, and Douglas Lilburn. Knowing them does not make the poet less Moanan.

To persist with the third part of the “Nobby Clark” sequence, Brasch had no hand in these lines:

Did you see at your door
the tattooed face
of a long-dead Chief
with a mind
like a slaughter-house floor?

The chief in mind (with the mind) is most probably Te Rauparaha, the iconic resistance figure and poet. The world of the poetry remains with Moanan figures and customs, even if there is a cross-cultural dynamic operating in the texts. As an instance of this cross-cultural referencing, a slaughter-house is an agricultural settler term, belonging to a system that has replaced previous systems of food production yet that is the term deployed to describe the chief whose people for a brief time in history threatened the settler capital. There are resonances of course with the history of warfare between Ngāti Toa and Ngāi Tahu iwi. The slaughter house is a fearsome place, where animal butchery is conducted on an industrial scale; it is easy to see in this context why the fifth line phrase “man-eating dark” was originally written before being replaced by “head-shrinking dark”.

To ask another simple question, was Nobby Clark Māori or Polynesian? We know from the Brasch correspondence that he was “a well known character to the other residents” of Pukerua Bay (Letter to Brasch 15 August 1966). We can deduce from the poem that he was a war veteran since

there is a reference to “shrapnel spray” in the first part. The second part might describe a scene at Gallipoli, “They straggle up the cliff face / to the top, / like cripples still within reach / of some terror hunting them down / until they drop.” Since the poem was written in 1966, Clark was probably a World War I vet: old-age seems to have caught up with him and he has been placed in a rest-home instead of the rusted tin shack he previously occupied. Part five says he lies at Karori Hill. I checked the cemetery database and it is possible. Possibly the more salient identity question is that the Clark persona or character of the poem is deeply affected by the past, which includes “the tattooed face of a long dead chief,” and this remembrance for all its trouble is Māori.

Textual Criticism and the Manuscript of *The Dark Lord of Savaiki: Collected Poems*

Campbell’s September and October 2003 diary entries refer to editorial correspondence with John O’Connor who was compiling and editing the 2005 *The Dark Lord of Savaiki: Collected Poems* published by Hazard Press. I raise these diary references here in the light of Brasch’s much earlier influence as further evidence of outsider influences on the texts, even though, as the poet himself notes on September 15, “These poems are now in the public domain and can’t be changed—except by me”.

I have retyped the relevant handwritten diary entries; references to the collection are to the then-to-be finalised manuscript of the 2005 *Collected Poems*; where entries are extracts they are marked with ‘. . .’; illegible words are indicated in square brackets:

Wednesday, September 3, 2003

Meg’s room has been repainted, my collection has been finalised and I’m

waiting to hear from John O’C whether any touch-ups are needed. Meg tells me to trust my own judgement. Why do you have to ask John his opinion? Quite right of course. I’m satisfied with the collection, and if any doubts existing I can attend to those at a later stage . . .

Saturday, September 13, 2003

Received a passionate letter from John O’Connor today. He began: ‘Before I start let me say I get more joy from reading your poetry than from reading anyone else’s. Lord knows why, there are many major poets. But that’s how I find it. Even the most [trashy?] of your verses has its elements of joy.’ Then he gets stuck in. He argues that the new Sanctuary of Spirits new extra poems is a mistake. I should have stuck to the Pocket Collected version which was much better. He also attacks the changes in ‘Kaiapoi’ and ‘Tina’, originally ‘Reflections on Some Great Chiefs’. Actually these so-called changes were errors of omission. I didn’t transfer the changes. I got mixed up. Meg says I work too hard and long and get tired and confused. She’s right. Anyway, back to John’s letter. I’ve had my doubts about adding poems to Sanctuary and now John’s comments—he doesn’t pull his punches—confirm them, and I have spent the afternoon restoring the status quo. He should be pleased that I have. I’ve had to do a scissors and paste job and now I’ll have to change the Contents to accommodate the changes. Of course it made it easier because John called Sanctuary ‘a work of genius’. He also signs off most flatteringly by writing that ‘your poems are among the greatest ever written’.

Sunday, 14 September, 2003

God help me! I worked all day restoring the status quo of Sanctuary of Spirits and frequently got confused, with so many drafts lying about. Felt like chucking the lot out the window. But John is right, it's much better as it was in Pocket Collected Poems, with some changes I have made since. I must have worked on an earlier draft of the sequence, because later changes I made, and which John noticed and approved of, were not included. I was able to include "Mihi ia Tangaroa" at the end of the section "Dislocations". So that will please John. Glad he liked it and I made a mistake excluding it. I have also dropped "The [Burning?] [Bay?]" which he has reservations about. He thought it might be [confused/compared?] with Auden's "Musee des Beaux Arts", to its disadvantage. I didn't think it mattered, but dropped it all the same and replaced it with a poem I have always liked, but wasn't sure about its [sic] "Three Young Women". I've dropped the "second woman" and did some editing, and decided to use the revised version now "Two Young Women". Of course the women are Pat Raven and Anne Berney whom I return to in *Poets in our Youth* [24]. Very windy day, and cold, but my efforts kept me warm. At one stage I [could?] take off one of my jerseys. Tomorrow I'll photocopy the new copy.

Monday September 15 2003

What a day! what a day! To Porirua to photocopy the pages I had spent nearly all weekend on and posted them off to John. Told him among other things that the nice things that he said about me and my verse nearly had me blushing. I just hope he doesn't think he has my approval to look at the rest of my poems with the same hard analytical eye. These poems are now in the public domain and can't be changed—except by me . . .

Tuesday, September 16, 2003

Last night when I was checking my MS of the first draft of *The Dark Lord* I heard Meg calling out, 'I'm very happy, very happy!' . . . Worked a bit on the *Rhapsodies* and tidied up in particular the last poem . . .

Friday, September 26, 2003

Letter from John O'C today. He's so much on the ball, he's amazing. Doesn't like "Two Young Women", which I had doubts about, so it will go. Admired "A Poem About Nothing" and "A Dwarf Queen in Mourning", which I had dropped reluctantly, so I'll restore them. He also thought that there should be poems between "Reflections" and "Sanctuary", and between "Poets" and "Letter to John Kelly", and of course he's right. It means more work for me. I have had a close look at the poems of 'CIR' [Cook Islands Rhapsodies] and I've taken to it,

tightening and making it sharper in a way, but more mysterious too. I'll type them out tomorrow....

...I'm not satisfied with my new sequence and [being?] not surprising I haven't yet heard from John O'C about it. He's a shrewdie. He takes his time. He never rushes to give his judgement, unlike me.

Saturday, September 27, 2003

I have been working very hard on my new sequence and I think I'm making considerable improvements in [nearly?] all the poems. It was really a question of tightening the structures and sharpening the language. I'm pretty pleased and I hope JOC will approve. Bloody awful pen this. I've mislaid my lovely pen with the extra fine tip. Received another letter from JO'C making a number of judgements of most of which I agree. He agrees that I should drop "A Woman in Love", "To Rid Myself of You", and "The Sirens Cave". Doesn't like "Two Young Women" and I've dropped it, replacing it with "That Thing". He regrets my dropping "The Dwarf Queen in Mourning" and "A Poem about Nothing". I've restored them and put them in the gap left by moving "That Thing". He's a close reader, and in a class of his own. I don't always agree with him, but I always take his judgements very seriously and when I disagree and say so he never takes offence. Quite an admirable person in many ways. I'm now confident enough in *Cook Island Rhapsodies* to want to read it during the festival at the reading at the Marae in Te Papa.

Wednesday, October 1, 2003

...I was thinking today you don't have to understand a poem to engage. I enjoyed TS Eliot's poems before I understood them, and when I understood them I was disappointed. Some of the magic disappeared with the understanding. Strange that. But poetry is magic. If it's not magic, what is it?

...JOC has done it again. He's cast his eye over some poems I wasn't altogether happy about and made some comments on them, confirming my doubts about them, so out they go [meanwhile?], [?] "A Poem in Negatives", "End of the Universe". I regard them as B poems. They read very well at public readings, but I don't rate them highly. I will also remove "Changeover". They and others will be among unpublished poems at my death.

The diary entries reveal the considerable influence of John O'Connor on the final *Collected Poems* edition published in the author's lifetime. I doubt that the Hazard Press *CP* constitutes an unintentional edition, however, since the poet remains in control throughout the process even if the poet does not entirely recall which manuscript versions are the correct ones for inclusion, referring to the "many drafts lying about" (14 September 2003) of the sequence "Sanctuary of Spirits" for instance.

The published Hazard Press copy-text that is available does appear to constitute a polygenous edition where the author draws on various previous versions of available texts. In *A Critique of Modern Textual Criticism*, Jerome McGann draws attention to the problem of an author's

final intentions. McGann cites Byron's *The Giaour* as a well-known example of "multiple manuscripts, multiple corrected and uncorrected proofs" (31) where it is difficult to settle on a final version. Given the longevity of Campbell's writing career, it is highly likely that the variations account for different circumstances, or even different "publics" (McGann 32). Additionally, the sheer number of reprinted poems in different editions allows for accidentals to creep into a text such as the errors of omission to which Campbell's September 13, 2003, diary entry refers. Finally, consideration of authorial intentions ought to take into account the creative collaborations between editors, proofreaders, and printers during the publication process. It has lead McGann to claim:

Authority is a social nexus, not a personal possession; and if the authority for specific literary works is initiated anew for each new work by some specific artist, its initiation takes place in a necessary and integral historical environment of great complexity. . . it takes place within the conventions and enabling limits that are accepted by the prevailing institutions of literary production (48)

Beyond this field of production, to paraphrase McGann's description of Tennyson's writing process (48-9), Campbell clearly responded to the views of friends, editors, publishers, reviewers, such that the texts did not entirely emerge from an individual *fons et origo*.

Below is a list of the changes approved by Campbell recommended by John O'Connor in 2003 from September 14th to October 1st regarding the Hazard Press *Collected Poems*:

1. Remove changes to “Sanctuary of Spirits”. Doesn’t like changes in “Kaiapoi” and “Reflections On Some Great Chiefs”.
2. O’Connor approves of including “Mihi ia Tangaroa”. It appears in the section “Tongareva, 1980-94”.
3. Drops a poem called “The Burning [Bay?]” which O’Connor had reservations about.
4. Doesn’t like the poem “Two Young Women” so it is dropped.
5. Drops “A Woman in Love”, “To Rid Myself of You”, “The Sirens’ Cave”.
6. Restores “The Dwarf Queen in Mourning” and “A Poem About Nothing”.
7. Drops “A Poem in Negation”, “End of the Universe”, “[meanwhile?]”.

To emphasise O’Connor’s editorial influence, I include in Appendix A a copy of the text omitted from the 2005 *CP* for “The Sirens’ Cave” (1967), first published in *Landfall* 23 (1969), as it appears in *Kapiti: Selected Poems* (Pegasus Press, 1972), *Collected Poems 1947-1981* published by Alister Taylor in 1981, and *Pocket Collected Poems* by Hazard in 1996. From its publication history alone, it is a significant poem. There are approximately three stresses per line in this eight tercet-stanza’d poem. It is a son’s meditation on the life of his father, tempted by sirens as a member of Odysseus’s crew. The Greek referencing is appropriate given Jock Campbell’s service in the Gallipoli campaign. On a 2012 visit, I could see the French and British memorials on the Gallipoli peninsula across the water from my vantage point at the ruins of Troy. The word “bladed” suggests a Turkish bath, as well as the more obvious knife or bayonet image; in the Turkish hamams the skin is scraped in the bathing ritual, so the word bladed approximates that meaning as does the “soaping” in line 4. When

the sirens stretch out like seals, that could also be the part of the bathing ritual where bathers stretch out on a marble slab. The rock pools could refer to the final part of the rite when bathers dip in a cool pool. The last line must be a reference to tropical Tongareva, "in the palm of the wind..." The sirens' cave may also be a reference to the trenches that the British, Commonwealth and Turkish forces dug themselves into, and hence the shrilling in line 7 could be of shells or victims in agony, and he is "unmanned" (line 14) at the shock of war. His father ran off to the Pacific after the war, hence the terms "mocked" and "blessed" (line 15), where he recovered from trauma until the death of the poet's mother. "Palm of the wind" also reminds me of "Soul Traps", where bodies are elevated during Tongarevan mourning rites. The sexual references in the poem might refer to the father's romantic relationship with the children's nanny after the death of his wife. The imagery associated with small-change, where "rock pools open out// their pockets...", suggests that the islanders took pity on the veteran who sleeps alone, but in his delusions finds a human touch in the wind.

I highlight the omission of this text from the final 2005 *Collected Poems* as an example where authorial intentions are not entirely consistent; this will be a major issue for any future critical edition of the poems. Clearly the author agreed to remove it from the manuscript. In the unpublished 'Collected Poems 1947-2007' MS dated 13 September, 2008, the poem is once again included, along with two other poems that O'Connor recommended omitting in 2005, "A Poem in Negatives" and "To Rid Myself of You." The other poems O'Connor recommended removing remain deleted. Of those poems, there are no published versions in the record of "Changeover," "End of the Universe," "[Meanwhile?]." and "Two Young Women," although it is likely the archive will yield copies.

What are the broader implications for this analysis of Campbell's literary production? In terms of the possible horizon of interpretations, it remains reasonable to assume that the world of the texts written by Campbell are at least informed by the poet's Moanan world-view through the texts' named encounters with people, objects, places, revealing personal and broader relationships, and cultural attachments and signs. Campbell the published poet, however, it has been shown, worked in collaboration with a number of editors and publishers, as well as friends, each of whom influenced to varying degrees the published texts. This social nexus that constitutes literary production does have a bearing on this interpretative project in that any identity formations asserted for any of the poets in this research project must recognize the collaborative nature of published authorship. Undoubtedly, there are clearly marked poems that address Tongarevan and Māori issues from a personal point of view, and we are encouraged to frame Campbell's oeuvre in that light by Moanan-named anthology titles such as *The Dark Lord of Savaiki: Collected Poems*, or *Kapiti: Selected Poems*, or *Stone Rain: The Polynesian Strain*. Are all these poems written in English, however, Moanan? If blood-descent of the author is a determining factor, then they meet the criteria. As well as blood descent, we might include world-view, making an argument that no matter what the subject-matter, somehow the author's nexus of personal relationships will reveal a Moanan or Tongarevan horizon of interpretative possibilities. While it would be possible to do that, to argue on a basis of psyche and attitudes to the people and things of everyday life revealed by closely reading the poems that these are Moanan texts in English, it would be very difficult to make exclusive generalizations about the texts to qualify them as Moanan. It feels nonsensical to even assert that the things of everyday life are common to people everywhere since it is a commonplace. I am more comfortable in stating that certain texts by the poet are strategically or significantly

Moanan, while other texts emphasise other identity formations. These shifting emphases are closer to everyday life, where a person moves from context to context, addressing each context in a different way. The poetry of *Soul Traps* is devoted to his grandfather Bosini's traditional lyrics by populating the poems with family members, myths and legends and their associated symbols, celebrating the immersion into a Tongarevan worldview; the poems of *Mine Eyes Dazzle* are a young man's focus on love and its dazzling nuances, the recent death of a friend and a brother, and just the glimmers of a Tongarevan family-tree in "The Return." The continuous rope of Campbell's poetry has colourful strands which have been skilfully twisted together. Sometimes the author has asked for advice and guidance from others in the making of the taura/rope,⁵⁵ but his hands have been the controlling and making ones, and so Campbell's te ao mārama or figured-world can be expected to inform the individual poems, perceivably or not.

At this point in the chapter, I turn from the history of Campbell's textual production and its identity implications, to consider broader Moanan approaches to poetry.⁵⁶ I will attempt to find Moanan ways via the poems themselves. The frontispiece of the 1985 collection *Soul Traps: A Lyric Sequence*, describes the poems there as having origins "in certain ancient chants of Tongareva (Penrhyn Island), recorded by his grandfather Bosini." The author note (6) says, "I have taken the

⁵⁵ The Pollex comparative linguistic database glosses taura in Tongarevan as "rope; string; thread; cotton". The term is commonly understood in Polynesia.

⁵⁶ I speculated on these approaches to a large extent in my Masters thesis, "Savaiki Regained".

odd phrase and image from Nihi, but mostly it was the atmosphere created by his translations that excited my imagination and led to the writing of this sequence.” Nihi Vini is the poet’s cousin who was responsible for translating the chants in Bosini’s book. Since *Soul Traps* is in large part inspired by the feats of Tongarevan gods and ancestors I will compare information available in Te Rangihiroa’s (Sir Peter Buck’s) *Ethnography of Tongareva* with accounts as they appear in the poems, Nihi Vini’s account in *The Journal of the Polynesian Society*, S.Percy Smith’s summary of earlier accounts in the *Transactions and Proceedings of the New Zealand Institute*, and the MPhil thesis work of Andrew R.T. Campbell (the poet’s son) published in his 1985 book *Society and Warfare in Ancient Tongareva*.

Nicholas Thomas describes “processes of explication provoked by cross-cultural contact and contest” (189), posing a question of relevance to indigenous and oceanic scholarship:

If conceptions of identity and tradition are part of a broader field of oppositional naming and categorization, the question that emerges is not how are traditions invented? but instead *Against what* is this tradition invented?

To apply Thomas’s comparative approach, rather than conceiving culturally of Campbell’s poetic tropes, meanings, behavioural and mythological references to be interpreted as parts of a totality, they are rather informed by the resonances of the parts with the whole. This resonating relationship is “a dialectical process whereby the group and the particular practices are redefined as they come to connote each other” (189). *Soul Traps* is an interpretation in English language poetry of an English translation of ancient Tongarevan “chants in my grandfather Bosini’s *Buka*”

(6). A reader begins the book crossing that threshold of understanding with the poet's introductory note on the left page, and the first poem "A Stranger from Rakahanga," on the right. Rather than approaching the poem as a part of a whole, I will examine the text to seek out resonances where "objectified practices and social totalities can be seen to be manifest in each other" (Thomas 189). Rather than claiming Thomas's "dialectical process", I suggest that a tidalectical process provides the resonant energies and patterns. In that first poem the title refers to the neighbouring island of Rakahanga, some 230 miles south-south-west which S. Percy Smith identifies as the original island for the ancestors Mahuta and Okura, "who were expelled from Rakahanga for some misdeeds, and found their way to this solitary island. From this pair the present inhabitants trace their descent" (87). That is one resonance. Another is the practical fact that the ship *Mataora* sails from Rarotonga to Manihiki and then on to Rakahanga and then on to the final leg of Tongareva which takes 24 hours. Most strangers would indeed arrive from Rakahanga, yet there is still conjecture in the question *why* here since *everyone* these days arrives via Rakahanga. The implication is myth, genealogy, history:

On one thing, though, all are agreed:

he is a traveller from Rakahanga—

but why Rakahanga, they can't say.

The mystery of origins broods in this text. Something within the locals identifies the stranger with Rakahanga, but a kind of forgetting prevents them from rationalizing their

unanimous agreement. This amnesia of rational detail does not stop them from recognizing his literal closeness, which is that of the closest neighbouring island to Tongareva:

Nobody remembers a single thing—
the look on his face (if he has a face),
his size, or if he is young or old.

This erasure of any emphatic identity assertions, apart from the narrator's telling us that everyone agreed the stranger was from Rakahanga, has a sensory as well as a memory element. There is a Māori proverb, "he kanohi i kitenga, he hokinga mahara", or "a face seen brings back memories." The ship-name, *Mataora*, in Māori refers to the living face. If the face cannot be recalled, then the ground (or its ocean) of being, which in a Moanan context relies on kinship, is always uncertain. Uncertainty is a feature of Campbell's entire oeuvre.

He arrived, some say, a few hours ago,
others claim it is more than a week,
since he was first seen at Omoka.

As well as uncertainty of place, and face, there is a manipulation of time in the mytho-genealogical resonances of the island name Rakahanga so that time is shaken up by pasts measured in an uncertain variety of hours, weeks, foundational myths. There is a deliberate uncertainty of scale, if scale can be regarded in this context as measure, in this first poem of the sequence, ranging from

the nautical distance to Rakahanga to the confines of the tiny village of Omoka, to the height of the stranger. Related to this series of uncertainties, the rapid shifting between the scales opens spaces in the narrative for conjecture, increasing the text's porosity to external symbolic influences such as the aforementioned Rakahanga, or the suggestion that the stranger was not truly flesh and blood by a description that erases human details, that provides us with a series of silences rather than dialogue so that the conjecture is driven back to origins, and the first poem's narrative centres on first contact. This last point about contact associates the narrative with historical encounters, and by association with memories of otherness; some of these many first-contact memories are first encounters with Europeans, and others with islanders from elsewhere. This preoccupation with origins in the text resonates with or channels or swims into cosmogonic or religious contexts:

They stand around in silent groups, expecting

the worst—but not a thing happens.

No deaths or accidents are reported.

One possible worldview of the poem believes in significant portents, but the expectation of the portentous arrival is not satisfied:

They will turn soon to urgent tasks, repair

the storm damage, but strangely empty

as if nursing a disappointment.

The penultimate line of the poem names a storm, which throws light on the earlier lines 4-6:

none could survive in such a sea

Our villages are awash, and our dead groan
as they sit up to the chin in water.

In eastern Polynesia, geographically distant yet culturally related to Tongareva, Tahitians would make sacrifices to the god 'Oro at temples called Taputapuatea, which Greg Dening translates as "Sacrifices from Abroad":

The rituals at Taputapuatea always focused on canoes and their arrival with sacrificial victims. Tahitians, like all Polynesian peoples, had some preoccupation with the origins and voyages of their ancestors and with strangers who came from beyond the sky. (113-114)

The sacrifice here has already happened. The stranger arrives *after or as a result of* the storm. The dead sit as if they are part of an audience, yet the groaning is either ghostly, or literally groaning from the weight of death. The imagery of heads up to their chins in water perhaps refers to burial grounds that have been inundated along with the villages. If that is the case, literally the past has been drowned, which fits the forgetful description of the stranger, and in the forgetting the rest of the sequence will proceed with a remaking of the past.

Most of the sequence is a remarkable referencing of ancestral exploits with individual poems often bearing the name of a prominent forebear. I draw our attention to the final poem in the sequence, “XX Tangaroa.” The oceanic god Tangaroa is one of eleven offspring of Hakahotu and Aatea (the primary deities earthmother and skyfather) in Tongarevan mythology (Buck 86). In that sense, unlike the first poem of the sequence which cannot properly identify the stranger, it knows the identity of its subject. It is similarly unlike the opening of “The Dark Lord of Savaiki” which asks, “Who, who and who. Who is the dark Lord of Savaiki?” That earlier sequence directly names the genealogical chant “The Ara of Tumu” as an inspiration. This last poem of the latter Tongarevan sequence also references that Ara by naming the foundational figure of Tangaroa who has oceanic as well as personal and local referents. It connects Campbell’s poetry to his descent lines, his Ara, and to oceanic discourses peopled by texts such as Hau’ofa’s “We Are The Ocean” or Wendt’s “Towards a New Oceania.” It represents renewal in the past, “within the ancient navel of Tongareva.” Campbell’s brave quest for origins has coiled back to the beginning and found new life there.

Campbell’s poem “A Childhood in the Islands” appears in his last collection, *Just Poetry*, published in 2008. It is a fictional letter written by the ghost of his brother Stuart or Tuati from his resting place at Faenza military cemetery in Italy. This poem subtly conveys service to the nation, and service to one’s home identity through this ironically European location. Stuart speaks lovingly of their childhood in Penrhyn, of large and small events as if they were yesterday, their beloved parents who died young, admiration for their handsome father by noting the girls on the company schooner who feted him, their mother’s switch on the girls’ legs for chasing him, the taste of green coconuts, pearl diving, the verandah of their father’s store and the guitar songs there. These happy

memories remain in Tongareva for the poet. This is the opening poem of Campbell's final collection, so it has significance beyond itself.

We had a wonderful childhood
in the islands, and it ended
when our parents died... (8)

It is strange for a ghost to be saying life goes on, but that is how the poem appears to end, with roosters about to crow announcing dawn and so Stuart and the other spirits need to depart before the sun rises so that they can go about their ordinary business. The last line, "My dear poetic brother, goodbye" echoes Fleur Adcock's own farewell in the poem "Elegy for Alistair" (*New Zealand Books* 13), "Beautiful poet, goodbye."

The centrality of the poet's biography is a feature of Campbell's overall work. The significant events of childhood are drawn upon and returned to throughout his sixty year oeuvre with the exception of the poems of his early adulthood or "youth". It so happens that Campbell's fondest family memories are set in Tongareva, and that the sense of palpable loss in much of his autobiographical work comes from an orphan's longing. I say this in the light of his entire oeuvre, as "A Childhood in the Islands" represents the happy circumstances of his early childhood. Without reference to his entire corpus, on reading this individual poem one could accept an intact extended family with Cook Islands and Pākehā friends. This is a late poem, so it does indeed represent a full-turn of the wheel in which the poet has himself established a large family of children and grandchildren, and reconnected with Tongareva. Perhaps it is my own emotional inflection on the oeuvre rather than a fair account of the individual text which could be telling us that the ghosts of the past have moved on. This cautions me that an emphasis on accumulation of signs, or previous

texts constituting an overall oeuvre, might obscure the message in an individual text. There is seasonality in an individual's life, and so a poetics centred on one's life would similarly have different phases. To return to this text, I find it interesting that the imagined world of his brother's ghost remains in the past while subject to the afterlife rule that ghosts must roam at night and disappear in daylight. This strong sense of boundaries appears to be centred on time itself yet we know that Stuart's ghost cannot age like his younger brother who has now reached old age. I suggest that the boundary between light and dark is the essence, and that it is a similar boundary to conscious and subconscious thought. The conscious mind sometimes has access to subconscious information through symbolism, but it does not have control over that area of life. In this first poem in his final published collection, *Just Poetry* (7), Campbell subtitles it, "A Letter from Faenza Military Cemetery." The subtitle has changed in his unpublished manuscript called "Complete Poems, 1947-2007"; the subtitle simply reads "A Letter" (331). This might be a subconscious oversight or it might be a softening of the loss so that the voice of the poem speaks more clearly without the context of his brother's tragic death in World War 2 Italy and any accompanying overlay of nationalism. Its removal also emphasizes his brother's life, and Campbell's personal relationship. Of course, it is a family relationship expressed in Moanan hakapapa. Stuart (Tuati) Campbell reminds Alistair (Arita) of a busy extended family life in Tongareva with grandparents, parents, friends, and siblings. These accounts flow into the following eleven part sequence, "Cook Islands Rhapsodies" (9-16). The last poem of that sequence, "At the Farewell Dinner, Rarotonga," is temporally liminal. The setting is both ancestral and contemporary. Corpses or tupapaku make their presence felt amongst the dinner guests. The poet turns to his 'Cousin Tangaroa' who recalls their first meeting (quote marks are Campbell's):

'When I kissed you,
our ancestors passed before my
eyes. My wife was scared when I
told her. Now here they are,
summoned by your poems. Don't be
afraid. They come to honour you.' (16)

The shamanistic summoning, and the composite identity of the cousin as both his relative and the god Tangaroa, brings genealogy into sharp relief in this final Cook Islands poem. As a rhapsody, it is an exuberant celebration, which is indeed how the poem ends with laughter and good company. The guests are spirits of ancestors as well as living family. Rather than the brooding ghost of Te Rauparaha, these spirits bring well-being centred on the poet's culture, and the wellspring of his Moanan identity, and they are summoned through his poetry.

CHAPTER 4. HONE TUWHARE AND REPRESENTATION

In this chapter I 'read' two major cover portraits to highlight the Moanan world of the poet and his poems. This is situated in time as well as the poet's biography which is a representation of his being. I then recursively return to a close reading of "No Ordinary Sun" following on or reflecting the close reading of that poem in Chapter 1. I also closely focus on political aspects of his poetry, and the silenced voices his poems highlight within the contexts of identity and indigeneity.

The cover of Hone Tuwhare's first posthumous collected works (*CW*), *Small Holes in the Silence*, has a black and white portrait photo of the poet. Art critic John Berger, in his essay on photographer Paul Strand, refers to the duration of the human subjects' lives as the exposure time for their photographs (47). The black and white cover of the Tuwhare collection features a side profile of Tuwhare taken by his friend, the poet Jan Kemp. The monochromatic cover recalls many portraits of international authors, such as the classic *Paris Review Interviews* of the 1950s to the present decade, underlining his iconic status in New Zealand letters. It also recalls the history of Māori portraiture and photography.

The side profile of the poet's right head and shoulder is softly focused. Tuwhare's forehead is bathed in diffuse light while in the distant background to the immediate right of his face there is a large promontory or headland or sand dune so that it is hard to distinguish the land form's features except for its whiteness. Another black and white portrait of the poet which is on the 1998

biography by Janet Hunt captures the sensibilities of the face, but there is no background matter. What is clear here is the physical personage of the poet who happens to be Māori. His photographic portrait partly reminds me of his identity as the first Māori poet to publish a book. John Berger notes that “photography, because it preserves the appearance of an event or a person, has always been closely associated with the idea of the historical” (47). His portrait, then, in a sense of Māori literature, is historical. At this juncture, I would like to follow two paths—an historical one to discuss the history of Maori portraiture, and secondly, one to discuss the figure of the poet as perhaps being influential on the interpretation of the poems.

A significant portrait artist of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was Charles F. Goldie. His colour oil paintings of Māori are known for their realism, nostalgia, and as part of the European orientalisng tradition (Blackley 57). Art historian and author Ngahuia Te Awekotuku, while noting “their gravely inappropriate titles and often highly disturbing arrangement or aspect” (Blackley 112), claims an importance for them as images of elder women who bear the kauae moko, and men who bear the full-facial moko. Hone Tuwhare’s photographic portrait may be viewed with a trace of this context. Goldie himself distinguished between two types of portrait, the “straight” or full frontal portrait which was entitled with the model’s name, and the “subject” portrait which tended to be three quarter or profile views and had contentious titles like *A Noble Relic of a Noble Race* (Blackley 57). Goldie would often take photographs of his subjects to assist with his realist paintings. The Orientalist aspect is not present in the Tuwhare *Collected Works* photograph, especially since the poet’s photo is taken by a friend and hence it is taken in a vernacular mode, and yet the whiteness in the image to the right of the face has a ghostly, time saturated, archival quality. The subject portrait aspect is present in that the camera angle is in profile akin to Goldie’s idea.

Alongside the painted tradition of Maori portraits by the best-known artists Goldie, and earlier on, Gottfried Lindauer, there is a history of the photographic representation of Māori. Like the Tuwhare portraits in both the biography and *Collected Works*, these photos were in black and white. Art historian Michael Graham-Stewart points out that many details were omitted by the photographers, including historical events such as the Land Wars, and multiple epidemics, and even living conditions (16). Photographers tended to romanticise their subjects' lives—Maori would be portrayed wearing kiwi cloaks or holding other taonga, or in touristic poses for postcard images which would be reproduced for decades to follow (13-17). The cover portrait of Hone Tuwhare, then, is not simply an innocent image.⁵⁷ Artists such as Andy Warhol have highlighted the commercial reproduction of images through repetition, causing a viewer to question the veracity of an image that can be repeated for multiple purposes and audiences. A series of Marilyn Monroe portraits, such as the *Marilyn Diptych*, for instance, can proliferate as often as a picture of a soup can, or a brillo soap box (Phillips 41). This idea of serial reproducibility is reflected in Maori images placed on *cartes de visite*, and also the notion of book covers. Arguably, the cover of *Small Holes in the Silence* is of Tuwhare in costume, the poet on tour, photographed by a fellow poet on tour, Jan Kemp. The portrait bears the trace of a relationship to authorial celebrity, as well as a trace to a history of Maori portraits and photographs, and also ripples with the age of mechanical, serial reproduction.

⁵⁷ Barry Barclay is also quoted in Graham-Stewart and Gow, "...no image is born innocent" (13).

The second part of this junction in the thesis focuses on the narration of the poems, that is, the voice of the poems contributes significantly to possible interpretations of the poems themselves. The claim here is that the cover portrait, as a figurative relief of Tuwhare, contributes to the verisimilitude of the voice. It reminds a reader of the flesh and blood poet. The interpretive project, or figured-Moanan-world here is that it is the voice of the poet, as well as the ritenga tangata⁵⁸ of the poet, that leads to cultural identifications for the poetry produced or, to place this in other words, the argument recognises a poet's oeuvre as comprising many stylistically voiced texts written by a culturally-centred person among many identity-assertions. The argument is that the ethno-cultural aspect of the poetry overall can be traced and emphasised. Individual poems may fall outside this ethno-cultural rippling, but it is the inflections of the poet's voice as well as the language and the emotional content and the poet's familial descent that encourages identity assertions even if they are not supported by the textual evidence. This last point belongs to poetics. The interpretive gap between the reader and the poet's voice is a space where some readers will be sparked into the necessary translation of text into charged poetry, while others will fail to feel the waves: they will not be moved by a text, will not generate the energy necessary to break through a wave into a new way of seeing the poem's situation, whether that way of seeing belongs to culture or some other form of identity or libidinal insight. To interpellate the photographed figure of the poet is to recognise the possibilities for subversion of dominant discourses through the use of sense-based figurative writing, and also the possibilities for influencing dominant discourses

⁵⁸ For a definition see chapter 1 of this thesis (20-21).

through poetic approaches expressed through the Marxist figure of Tuwhare.⁵⁹ I do not wish to overplay the counter-hegemonic nature of Tuwhare's writing however, as he remained committed to New Zealand society and its values. Beyond the personal poems, the themes of his counter-narratives focused on human rights and social justice rather than revolution. These values and Tuwhare's cover portraits remind me of Levinas's deep engagement with ethics, described figurally through the face:

The face is the presence of the word. Between it and me who listens to it lies not the thickness of the sensory, but absolute openness, absolute imbalance, true irreversibility where are to be found not objects and my gaze (as Claudel believed), but the infinite and the finite. This suffering is said to be good if it hears the infinite in the face. (Lyotard 5)

Te Kawehau Hoskins' doctoral thesis in education frames Levinas in a Māori context (10):

In a similar, but different, way to Levinas, Māori thinking always centres the face-to-face relationship. That is, every Māori account of the world is always told through whakapapa, that is, in terms of a relation/encounter/struggle between two elements/ideas/people/things. All is produced through encounter—and

⁵⁹ This last point is itself influenced by Lyotard's early work *Discours, figur* which argues for the importance of figural elements to create "new discourses that employ transgressive literary strategies" (Best and Kellner 152).

the encounter is only positively productive when the mana (unique power/force) of the Other is maintained. Therefore, the acknowledgement of the other's alterity is necessary to all ethical sociality (including the political).

Hoskins makes the point that without an acknowledgement of the other, human relations depend to a certain extent on violence, or as she describes Levinas' position, war, whether actual or not. The representation of a face (such as a book cover) invites a respect for alterity, a pre-existing condition leading up to an encounter, rather than claims for totalizing sameness designed to diminish difference and agency. In Hoskins' account, this represents heteronomy which is grounded in the mana of others as it is encountered and acknowledged in everyday intersubjectivity, and incidentally, moves Māori beyond the rhetoric of sovereignty (82). A number of Tuwhare collections have cover portraits: 1982's *Year of the Dog* features the poet seated with a book in his lap and a labrador, the 1978 edition of *Making a Fist of It* features a cover portrait sketched in black and grey water colours by Joanna Paul—there is a horizon line near the poet's head so that the land and the poet are again closely associated—while the 1997 collection *Shape-Shifter* features an idealised image of the poet, a painting entitled "The Geometry of Intimacy", making love as a young man to the painter and his partner Shirley Grace. In a brief November 1964 review of *No Ordinary Sun*, James K. Baxter also draws the figure of the poet into his reading of the poetry (56):

Tuwhare's verse could be admired for reasons outside the value of the poems themselves—because he is Māori (a reason for the keen racist); because he is a man who works with his hands (a reason for the romantic Leftist)—but these things are in the long run irrelevant. It is certainly true

that he uses the English language with a new slant, a new emotional element, from a Māori point of view; and his occupation may deliver him from the academic vices. But the best poems stand beyond this, on their own merits, as authentic personal intuitions of the meaning of life and death.

It is problematic of Baxter to even suggest there is admiration for the poems on the grounds of ethnicity; I am sure this is unintentional given Baxter's own embrace of taha Māori and biculturalism.⁶⁰ He might have meant that the wellspring of metaphors and associations in the poems are enriched by the poet's Māori heritage.

⁶⁰ As well as John Newton's *The Double Rainbow*, the memorial volume published by Alister Taylor after Baxter's death in 1972 is a rich testament.

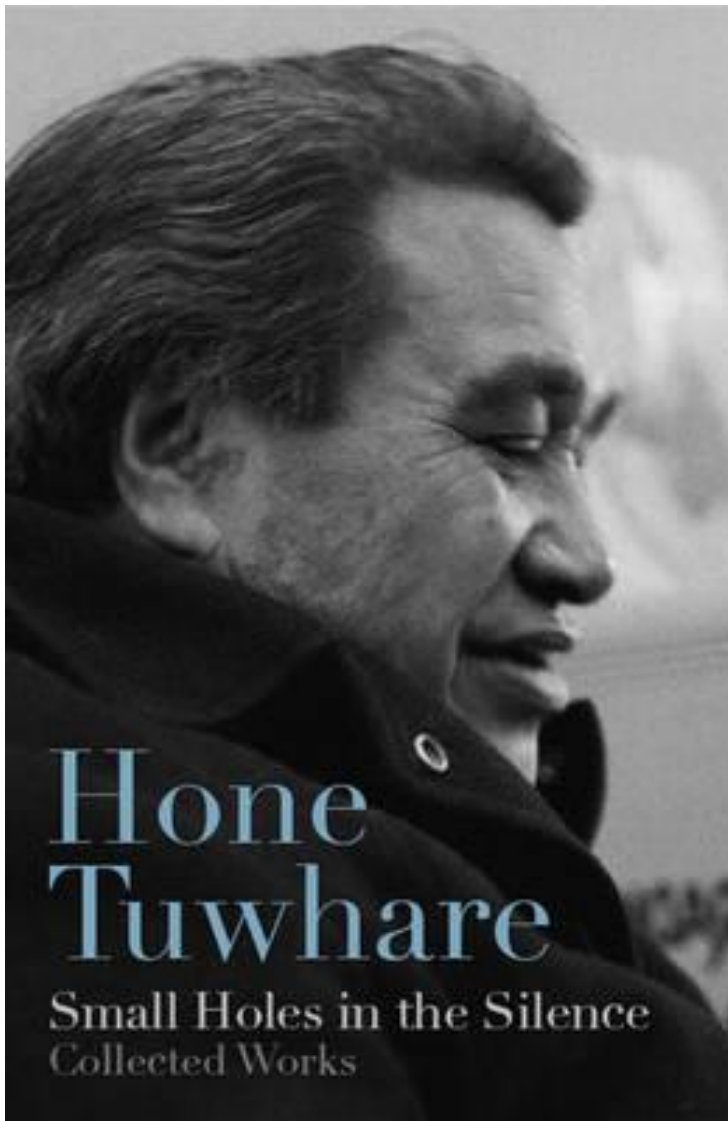


Figure 9 Cover of *Small Holes in the Silence: Collected Works*

Tuwhare's countenance is smiling and introspective. He could be standing or sitting—the body position is hard to read because he is wearing a heavy winter coat. The photo was taken

during a national reading tour in 1979 with poets Alistair Te Ariki Campbell, Sam Hunt, and Jan Kemp (Sutherland personal communication), so the poet would have been in his mid-fifties. Clearly the cover portrait foregrounds the body of the poet. It suggests a worldview in the way the landform background seems to emanate from the upper portion of Tuwhare's face. The whiteness of the landform suggests wairua, or spirits, thus conjuring up the presence in the past of that worldview. Below the landform I am tempted to claim there is a body of water with tide lines stretching parallel like elongated ripples, but there is a signature or sign-writing below the ripples so it must be a wall or a fence. Despite the writing, which is painted to resemble handwriting, the image is of a man in communion with land and water elements. In that the cover is the poet's *face*, it is also an emotional introduction. Neuropsychiatrist Iain McGilchrist makes the point that the right side of the face (or hemiface) is crossculturally easier to read:

The left half of the face (or 'hemiface') which is controlled by the right hemisphere, is more involved in emotional expression. Emotions are also more strongly perceived when expressed by the left hemiface: and, intriguingly, the left hemiface is also larger than the right in right-handers. Although facial expression of emotion is a human universal, there are, inevitably, differences in facial expression across cultures; and because of the very fact that the left hemiface displays more complex emotional information, being able to convey mixed feelings, it seems that it may be easier in cross-cultural situations for people to read the relatively simple information conveyed by the *right* hemiface. (Location 1706 in the Kindle Edition)

Elsewhere, McGilchrist reminds us that the face conjures up the gestalt or wholeness of a person. In a sense then, these cover portraits are life-masks, encouraging a reader to see the poet in the poetry. The effect is one of personal closeness rather than authorial distance.

One other thing about the cover: the poet's gaze is averted and his mouth is slightly open as if he is speaking to a third person, not the viewer which implicitly means not the reader. While a number of poems use the pronoun 'you', they often address another entity, such as 'rain' or a friend or relative the poem concerns. To return to the ripples, in Tuwhare's now-famous formulation for poetry:

A poem is
a ripple of words
on water wind-huffed

But still water
is a poem winded: a
mirrored distortion
of sky
and mountain
trees: and a drowned

face waiting
for a second wind
(a second coming?)

rain

oblivion

Ripple of words

on water

(“Wind Song and Rain,” *CW* 108.)

Indeed, it is as if the poem was composed for the cover-portrait, but it first appeared in a 1972 collection *Sap-wood and Milk*. It is a significant poem in the oeuvre; for example, it was the title-poem for a 1975 tape and LP recording of a selection of poems. “Wind Song and Rain” does not quite capture the geniality of the Tuwhare portrait, the good-humour of the man. The blue text on the cover though does capture the water-element.

Agathe Thornton, in her book *Māori Oral Literature: As Seen by a Classicist*, says “the ‘brow’ was the seat of a man’s mana...” (17, 23). Indeed the entire head was sacred: “It must be remembered that in Māori thought a person’s head is the most tapu part of the body” (12). The front-cover, in its focus on the poet’s head and not face, carries this mana with it, and also foregrounds the poet’s āhua or physical presence in the poetry.

The title of the collected works comes from “Rain” which is one of his best-known poems, featuring for instance on the New Zealand Arts Laureates website. It is also a title borrowed by Patricia Grace who uses it to title a collection of her short stories, *Small Holes in the Silence* (2006). Grace dedicated the book to Tuwhare. The first thing to notice about the 2011 collection is that a large number of poems have been translated into Māori by prominent language experts: the artist

and broadcaster Selwyn Muru, former Māori language commissioner Patu Hohepa, and a former member of the commission who was also a broadcaster, Waihoroi Shortland. It is tempting to speculate on reasons for the translations. Perhaps the poems spoke to a core Māori set of values that were readily translatable into te reo. Perhaps they were great material to bring into the Māori language so that they would provide language learner resources just as there were earlier translations of Shakespeare by other leading language proponents. Tuwhare's first language was Māori, although he lost his fluency still in childhood. He has composed a little in Māori, but no more than one or two poems.

To return to the poem "Rain" (CW 88) perhaps it would be useful to begin with its five-senses aesthetic. I use the text to teach writing students about the difference between concrete and abstract, 'show don't tell' modes of writing. This concentration on organic senses in the poem, auditory, tactile, olfactory, taste, but not visual ("if I were blind" line 12) points to a being in the world that relies on intimate evidence—one can be far sighted, but not far-tactile; unlike sight, the other senses have closer limits such as the direction of the breeze for smell, while the sounds evoked rely on a sound-scape of silence so they are intimate sounds, "small holes". This kind of revealing of the poem's world draws us close to the poet's or speaker's own body. Embodied presence here refers to the relationship between the narrator and the literal world. Cultural references are slender in the text: the personification of rain, in that it is an entity which is able to be addressed by the poet and assigned the second personal pronoun 'you', suggests a sentience enlarged by its relationship to the sun and the earth, "the something/ special smell of you/ when the sun cakes/ the ground", yet downplayed by the accessible register nevertheless given cadence by the brief line-lengths and micro-pauses at the ends of lines resembling 'drum-rolls'. The

accessibility, or quietude, is again synonymous with intimacy. The sensory data brings us into the atmospheric psychology of the speaker's being, or even humanity, if not the actual psychology. The poem reveals a momentary state of a mind in reverie about rain. The final stanza focuses on the poem's uttered ontology: "you would still/ define me/ disperse me/ wash over me/ rain". That is, rain would perform these functions for the poet/narrator ('me' repeated three times) even if no senses were available. The rain is interior: in Māori terms, this interior rain belongs to the kare-a-roto, or literally in translation "the waves within." Kare-a-roto is the Māori term for emotion. If the interpretive project is to reveal a variety of Moanan signifiers in the texts examined, then to claim that this interior rain makes the poem Māori is a stretch, however. It does suggest a relationship with a Māori epistemology where the entire world, objects, natural features, flora, fauna, is imbued with life essences, and experienced through the senses, and that very sensory data are seen as projections of inner states. As with my research on Campbell, weather features in Romantic poetry generally where the weather conditions reflect the range of the poet's emotional dispositions. "Small holes in the silence", taken as a title, might refer to the minor revival (still framed as negative spaces, as gaps or "small holes") from the general silencing of a Māori worldview. The small holes, or rain drops, are poems that are likened to rain which like poems makes sounds. These sound-makers (rain, poems) imply a past worldview where silence was not the norm—where the whole apparatus of senses was once fully engaged in a world that was alive with resonant meaning, and not void of sensations akin to a vacuum. What caused the silence? Ngūgĩ wa Thiong'o's well known comparison of colonisation as a cultural bomb is a potential candidate. Of course the silence is unspoken by the poem. The endurance is the speaker's presence, their 'being-there', and the narrator's fragmentary memories of rain.

The whakapapa of this English language poem is connected through the poet to Māori language poetry which richly references the natural world. Every reference that connects a text to the world of the writer, where relevant to an interpretation of the text, on a sliding scale either overtly or subliminally reveals the world *of care* or the matters at hand within the text. It hence contributes to the worlding of individual texts within the overall body of work of a writer and then larger identity formations such as the world of Māori poetry in English, or the world of Moanan poetry in English. Certain poems and even poets may mark horizons or landmarks within these worlds. Naturally the poet's genealogy informs this, but also a critical practice which seeks to understand a body of poetry that represents the Moana in its polyvocal and polysemous being.

The first poem in the collection, "Time and the Child" (33) from *No Ordinary Sun* (1964), has a similarity to the cover portrait in that a human being is enfolded into an image encompassing the external world (lines 1-4): "Tree earth and sky/ reel to the noontide beat/ of sun and the old man/ hobbling down the road." The old man has passed his peak, contrasted with the presence of a child who calls after him "funny man funny man// funny old man funny/" (lines 18-19). The old man is a figure of time which is indicated by the title, and the association with the sun: "His eyes burn to a distant point/ where all roads converge... (lines 14-15)." It isn't the only Tuwhare poem featuring the sun. The 1992 poem "Grand-daughter Polly Peaches" has a grandfather with grand-daughter and the orb, while "Sun O (1)" and "Sun O (2)" are obvious references. The poem "With all things and with all beings we are as relative," also from the 1992 collection *Short Back and Sideways*, encourages an enlarged world-view precisely because of the simplified, globalised set of references in a context of self-deprecatory humour turning on the poet's mortality and the eternal subject of cyclic existence:

I will sing to it—chat it up.

I will give it porridge-water to drink

“

thin and cloudy. And today I might even

celebrate its birth with an aria

flamboyant and breathy.

If I am as constant as the sun

the moon and tide, the flower will die

and I shall will it to bud again.

Ten thousand times live to die; die

and live again. And this is normal, quite

acceptable; timely.

The term ‘relative’ sets up a comparative relationship perhaps, and also a familial one. In the Māori cosmogonic cycle of many tribes, Māori are descendants of the deity Tāne and Hineahuone. Tāne is a child of Ranginui and Papatūānuku, that is, the heavens and the earth. Hineahuone was the first woman, formed by Tāne from earth or sand (Orbell, *Encyclopedia* 54). There are strong celestial and earth elements in the poem reflecting the relative familial position of the narrator in this nexus. Yet personal, emotional existence trumps here the macro, cosmic scale:

But who accepts as easily
his own brief life as ebb and flow?
As part of waxing and waning?
As part of the coming and going away
Of sun and flower, moon and tide?

This turn in the argument for recurrent cyclical existence is also evident in “Granddaughter Polly Peaches” which is another poem in a family context (of grandfather and granddaughter)—the poem has a reassuring, jolly tone, as if it is speaking to a mokopuna and showing that mokopuna how it’s done—but undercutting the tone with the message that one need not age gracefully as there remains a lot of living to do. No need to be a role model. No need for Polly Peaches to sit on the grandfather’s knees (lines 13-17): “you may NOT sit on my knees./ You don’t know how swiftly/ they grow numb when blood / flow is cut off.”

Affective Significance and Socialist Politics in the Moana

Michelle Keown’s⁶¹ discussion of Tuwhare’s Marxist aesthetics through his deep reading of Christopher Caudwell’s 1937 work, *Illusion and Reality*, deals with the concept of ‘affective

⁶¹ Keown’s article appears in the Tuwhare tribute issue which I guest-edited in January 2008, *Ka Mate, Ka Ora* 6. It was a collection of critical explorations, biographical essays, poems and photographic portraits. It reflected Tuwhare’s mana within New Zealand’s literary and artistic circles, or in other words, it reflected well on the healthiness of his relationships in the vā.

significance' in his poetry. According to his biography, Tuwhare was introduced to Caudwell's work sometime between 1950 and 1952 when he lived in Wellington (Hunt 58). Keown's essay is the first sustained inquiry into that aspect of Tuwhare's writing. Caudwell's work may be read phenomenologically which makes Tuwhare the only one of the five selected poets in this thesis to have read phenomenological texts. In section two of Chapter VIII, "The World and I," Caudwell discusses 'The Word' :

Objective reality thus separates itself out by social means from a vague humming chaos on the threshold of consciousness. The more complex our social world, the more the individual phenomenon becomes an intersection of a number of concepts and therefore the more individual and unique it is. Once again we must repeat: society is the means of realising individuality and therefore the road of freedom. Keeping the perception on the social rails is merely keeping it conscious.

(161)

Keown's article, however, emphasises the political aspects of the poetics: "Tuwhare's identity as Māori is indeed central to his poetics, but a reading of his political poetry can be enriched through an awareness of the degree to which his writing was also informed by his lifelong engagement with the ethics of socialism." Throughout his career as a writer Tuwhare returns again and again to the political.

Another way of saying this is the foregrounded working class consciousness:

Blue hiss and crackle
of the welding rod,
compressed sigh of air
and the whump and whoof
fuse to the rising clamour
of the rivet gun.

(“The Sea, To the Mountains, To the River” *CW* 30)

I like working near a door. I like to have my work-bench
close by, with a locker handy.

(“Monologue” *CW* 54)

This emphasis on the worker’s tools, and the smoko-time camaraderie behind the term ‘locker door’, appeals to working class sensibilities of an existence grounded in the breathy joy of work, ‘rising clamour’, ‘whump and whoof’, ‘compressed sigh’, and of the shared understanding that workers have in literal collaborations of making something bigger than the individual. During the memorial reading for Tuwhare at the 2012 Auckland Writers and Readers Festival, poet laureate Ian Wedde read “Monologue” as his example of essential Tuwhare:

I am the first to greet strangers who drift in through the
open doors looking for work. I give them as much information
as they require, direct them to the offices, and
acknowledge the casual recognition that one worker

signs to another.

It is a compassionate poem written from the point of view of a 'lucky' (line 33) worker who feels for those out of work looking for employment. In an early 1970s recording, Tuwhare performs the poem with a Scottish accent. Yet the inflection does not, in my opinion, alter the Māori nature of the working class references given that Māori were in the main, working class (Schwimmer 288-310). In a mid-1990s Going West Writers Festival Sound Archive recording, the Scottish accent is still there as if to emphasise this connection with the common man in that it is a persona poem. Janet Hunt's biography reveals that the Scotsman is a workmate, Tommy Knapman, who read aloud the first draft of the poem behind one of the welding screens at their workplace: "From that moment Tommy's accent became part of the poem: in performance..." (35). In the *Collected Works* (55), there is a mid-1950s photograph of the Mangakino plant repair depot where Tuwhare worked as a boilermaker from 1953 to 1961 (Hunt 61). The depot serviced the hydroelectric dams on the Waikato. Tuwhare wears a broad-brimmed hat and checked workingman's shirt with about seventy other men ranging from workers to managers. There is one woman in the shot. While mainly a Pākehā group, there appears to be a significant number of Māori in the photo. The voice in "Monologue" suggests concerns from a workmate's point of view—worries about tenure, cheaper immigrant labourers, even health and safety. That Tuwhare chooses to voice it in a Scottish accent suggests it belongs to a set of concerns that crosses ethnic boundaries. To return to an earlier point, this does not exclude Māori from the frame.

It was about this time that Tuwhare renounced his membership of the Communist Party due to the 1956 Hungarian uprising and subsequent Soviet military oppression, although he maintained his membership of the New Zealand Workers' Union (Hunt 62). The concern for the

working man remained with Tuwhare throughout his career. In the previously uncollected poem “Song 2” (CW 322-323), he calls on the collective ethos of workers to overthrow a world of limousines, factory owners and bank managers. Here is an extract from the last stanza of the two-page poem:

We will turn the arc-light of
Leninism
on the darkness we call ignorance
The sound is deafening.
But listen again.
Can you make out?
It’s your voice mate—and
my voice—
and
It’s Our Voice!

This class consciousness is also influenced by harsh experience in youth, but the poet is never self-pitying, and rather looks to these experiences as lessons in “Never Look Back,” also from *No Ordinary Sun* like the previous two poems, even though the final stanza frames it with a self-deprecating summing up:

Tastes were sharper then;
sandwich spread was dripping fat
on a dry old crust
saliva’d exaltation...

...and blessed hot the soup
from Salvation's army-kitchen.

Of those lean days

I cannot rouse myself to rave
with equal heat
nor filch from Time a morsel
of hard wisdom
knowing already and too late
Time's answer shall be final,
sure, and just.

("Never Look Back" CW 56)

He was a friend of the poet and publisher of *In Print* and *People's Voice* R.A.K. Mason who mentored Tuwhare from the mid-1940s in poetry. Tuwhare's father wrote the column in Māori for *In Print* (Barrowman 284) from September 1942. Mason's biographer, Rachel Barrowman, says the younger Tuwhare took a few years to discover that Mason was himself a poet too, "and in time became his literary mentor as well as a good friend" (284). As well as Marxist writers, *In Print* featured work by Lenin for which Mason wrote the introduction. Barrowman notes the involvement of Mason and other New Zealand poets such as Robin Hyde and A.R.D. Fairburn in

resisting the Orakei land clearances of the 1940s that culminated in the destruction of the marae at Okahu Bay. Tuwhare's relationship with Mason stretches to the publication of *No Ordinary Sun* published by Blackwood and Janet Paul:

For the past several years Mason had been reading and commenting on the poems Tuwhare sent him from Mangakino, and had insisted that it was '*quite time* you started to publish' when the Pauls approached Tuwhare, who had demurred (Barrowman 375).

Indeed, there are features of R.A.K. Mason's poetry that occur in Tuwhare's, which I will discuss later in this chapter.

The political poems were *overt*. His tribute poem to "Martin Luther King" (CW 116) brings it to the man:

Let's face it King: when news of your death
came through, lovers all over the World
turned each other on, rolled over, and turned
the radio off.

But you were hip. And you never did fancy
fancy-names like, Uncle Tom, or Handkerchief-head.
You really dug the scene, man. From Birmingham
on you stuck your neck out: opened your big
black beautiful mouth to protest about the high

cost of dying in Vietnam.

His poem “Rain-maker’s Song for Whina” (*CW* 180), one of three he wrote for the Māori leader Dame Whina Cooper, reveals his own involvement in the land-rights movements which culminated in the 1975 Land March to Parliament:

I’ll not forget your joints creaking as you climbed into
the bus at Victoria Park to bless the journey.
When you broke down in the middle of the Lord’s Prayer,
I thought that what you left unsaid hung more tangibly
uncertain above us all than some intangible certainty
that we would all get a comfortable berth in the
hereafter.

It is a humorous piece, though. The narrator quotes Cooper’s statement in Māori that the land march wasn’t about massaging the balls of Bill Rowling who was the Prime Minister in 1975. The testicle imagery is present throughout the text as various types of baubles, and even “grenades” which Cooper has thrown. The humour in the poems is designed to move readers rather than confront them with their or their forbears’ shortcomings, and yet voices what needs to be politically said. Michelle Keown (*Ka Mate Ka Ora* 6) reminds us that Tuwhare was deeply political. He was uniquely placed, due to his career as a boilermaker, to observe the workings of capitalism in the wider Pacific such as Bougainville, and Samoa, as well as New Zealand. Keown says Tuwhare was troubled that his wages were higher than local Bougainville and Samoan workers, and also disturbed by the environmental damage wrought by large hydroelectric schemes at Mangakino and the Bay of Plenty.

Anti-nuclear Politics

Wider human and ecological devastation in the Pacific also ought to be noted here as a notable concern from his position in the Moana. The anti-nuclear stance he adopted must have been influenced by his tour of duty in post-war Japan; Tuwhare travelled through Hiroshima in 1946 (Hunt 49), although literary critic Elizabeth DeLoughrey's article (*Ka Mate Ka Ora* 6) more accurately pinpoints the source material for the poem in H-Bomb testing in the 1950s. DeLoughrey says that by 1959, when "No Ordinary Sun" first appeared in print in *Northland* magazine and later that year in *Te Ao Hou*, over 250 atomic weapons had been detonated in and around the Pacific. She makes the powerful point that the poem clearly opposes a discourse of naturalisation of nuclear weaponry, where the weapons are likened to natural cosmic features such as the sun, or to religious events—the first atomic bomb was called 'Trinity.' DeLoughrey goes on to discuss the word 'Ordinary', which invites a comparison with what might be termed extraordinary, in the context of the sun, and of other comparable or ordinary stars; the poem introduces an extraordinary star, "the monstrous sun", in its third stanza:

This key figure of alterity is placed in the center of the poem, deemed 'monstrous', a word closely associated with irregularity of form, with the unnatural, and often with the unacceptable product of the merger between humans and nature.

To return to the cover portrait, Tuwhare says this to his biographer Janet Hunt about his time in Hiroshima (Hunt 49):

I wandered around there, quite innocently. This was '46, a year or so

after the bomb, so there must have been some damage [to the New Zealanders]...I get these damn things on my eyebrow, you know—it breaks out now and again, this damn thing just on here...Never had it before, eh.

I raise this point because Hiroshima clearly had a physical personal impact on the poet (the growths on his eyebrow), and not just an emotional one. If we look at the physicality of the poem “No Ordinary Sun,” the call is to surrender—“let your arms fall”—in lines one, and seventeen. “Let your arms lack toughness and/ resilience for this is no mere axe/ to blunt...” (lines four and five) also suggests a lowering of resistance. At least on a subconscious level, the idea of surrender in a context of struggle is embedded in the text. The tree itself is a figure of humanity, in that it represents the tree of life, a family-tree, so that it is not only its own end that is written (line 29), but also that of life, and of human-kind in that we are dependent on an ordinary sun, to return to DeLoughrey’s point, and not a ‘monstrous’ (line sixteen) one. I could be allowing the biographical data to project here, but I do feel that Japan is present in this text that speaks of surrender, even if it was published some thirteen years after Tuwhare visited Hiroshima. I entirely agree with DeLoughrey that the H-Bomb was most likely to the fore of the 1950s poem. I am suggesting that there is an additional layer of ash in the text. In the light of that addition, lines 21-24 take on a new significance, in that the dropping of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki ushered in a new era:

The fading green of your magic
emanations shall not make pure again
these polluted skies...for this

is no ordinary sun

The word 'emanations', as well as a synonym for radiation, invokes the homonym 'son.'

Here is the *OED* definition:

The process of flowing forth, issuing, or proceeding from anything as a source. *lit.* and *fig.* Often applied to the origination of created beings from God; chiefly with reference to the theories that regard either the universe as a whole, or the spiritual part of it, as deriving its existence from the essence of God, and not from an act of creation out of nothing. Also, in Theology, used to denote the 'generation' of the Son, and the 'procession' of the Holy Ghost, as distinguished from the origination of merely created beings.

This harking back to origins through the term 'magic emanations', and the punning of sun with a messianic son, and the end-world biblical revelation of the ultimate line, "your end at last is written..." confronts the immediacy, the no-time left in the use of the word 'no', and the absolute rejection this poem has for nuclear weaponry even as it is couched in the language, symbolism and revelatory cadences of God. I say absolute rejection, and disavowal of the bomb, because the word 'no' is repeated five times in its twenty-nine lines, coupled with 'nor' four times, and 'not' four times. The last stanza is after the event. It is a description after apocalypse, which Tuwhare himself witnessed a year after the detonation at Hiroshima.

O tree

in the shadowless mountains

the white plains and

the drab sea-floor

your end at last is written.

There are unfortunate new resonances within this reading of the poem given the 2009 earthquake and tsunami, resulting in the Fukushima atomic powerplant disaster, and its continuous spilling of radioactive coolant into the Pacific.

To continue with the religious aspects of the poem, or the divine aspects of mana, the tree's supplication, raising its arms, recalls the tree of the cross, *arbor infelix*, or "unhappy tree" which was an early form of crucifixion according to *The Catholic Encyclopedia*. The tree was known as a *crux* or cross. I say that the tree's arms are raised because the instruction is to "let your arms fall." The sacrificial element is of course accompanied by punishment as that was the purpose of the cross. Perhaps the sun, in this alternate reading of punishment, symbolizes a monstrous god who will not yield to any amount of supplication. In any case, the tree is the crux of the poem, symbolizing, among an array of signifiers, nature, sentient creation, the glorious mystery of life, victimhood, and the punished. I note that the term "entreaties" is a synonym for supplication: "A humble plea; an earnest request or entreaty, *esp.* one made deferentially to a person in a position of power or authority" (*OED*). In that sense, there is a faint trace of the Treaty of Waitangi here in the word "entreat" which has implications for an alternative reading of the poem based on an imperial and British sun. I am more convinced though by the associations with atomic testing, and so the trace of the Treaty in "entreaties" is a resonance reserved for either a New Zealand or a Māori audience. A further direct reference is the verb 'entreat' in New Zealand's national anthem.

The poem's word-selection is of interest. For example, the lines: "Tree let your naked arms fall/ nor extend vain entreaties to the radiant ball..." could also be phrased, "Tree let your naked

arms fall/ and do not extend vain entreaties to the radiant ball.” But the substitution of “do not” for “nor” removes the religious cadence. The term “neither” is possibly elided from some of the sentences where “nor” occurs. I raise this possibility given the regular occurrence in English of “neither...nor” correlative conjunctions—the “nor” usage will bear this trace of the other, unvoiced “neither” whether the usage is correct or not.⁶² This grammatically incorrect possibility of twisting, eliding, and restructuring of syntax is also in line with a tree, and indeed an entire world, undergoing the effects of radiation. The last line of the poem, referencing a written end, in this context of irradiated language has a supreme irony. “Your end at last is written” might also refer to Christ’s last words on the cross, “*consummatum est* / it is finished.”

There is an additional point about whakapapa. If we read into the pun of sun/son, and extend our interpretation to the genetic alterations as well as the fatalities caused by nuclear weaponry, then the poem’s title has a chilling effect, “No Ordinary Sun” (read son) will emerge from the family tree. As alluded to in the introductory chapter to this thesis, the tree possesses other universal life-symbolism worth referencing here, such as *Genesis 2:9* with its trees of life and knowledge of good and evil. This point about trees and whakapapa is a reminder that the author’s iwi, Ngā Puhi, still has extraordinary forests within its territory with massive kauri bearing names such as Tāne Mahuta and Te Matua o te Ngahere. This tree comes from within our tribal memories and knowledge. Its divine aspects, expressed in the religious tone, reflect its mana.

⁶² Virginia Tufte makes the point that correlative sentence structures have the effect of suspending an idea until it is resolved by the conjunction (132).

We, Who Live in Darkness and Mythology

The poem “We, Who Live in Darkness” was first published in the 1987 Penguin collection *Mihi: Collected Poems* (57). At the end of the second stanza there is a face image: “forcing me to hide my face in the earth.” It is a son’s response to the appearance of light which symbolises the father deity, or sky, by hiding the face in the mother deity, or earth. A footnote informs us, “This poem refers to the rebellion by the children of Rangi and Papa.” The interpellation hence removes a potent political reading which would refer to a patriarchal hegemony or even a violent souring of race relations between dominant and dominated groups. The last line reads, “Brothers, let us kill him—push him off.” That the reference to Māori mythology is clarified suggests that there is at least one alternative interpretation present in the text. As with other poems discussed in this chapter, there is also a sun image, but it is diffuse: “It was light, my brothers. Light./ A most beautiful sight infiltrated past/ the armpit hairs of the father.”

Like the tree in “No Ordinary Sun”, there are roots here as well. Among the children of Rangi and Papa, skyfather and earthmother, is Tāne Te Toko o Te Rangi (Tāne the prop of the sky), also known as Tāne Mahuta, the deity responsible for the forests and related creatures. This deity separated his parents by thrusting his legs up against the sky (Orbell, *Encyclopedia* 179-181). He is also the progenitor deity of human beings. I suggest that the imperial interpretation is softened or decoyed by the footnote, but that it is still present. The sun is also commonly associated with Victorian accounts of the British Empire on which the sun never sets. It is similar to the occurrence of the word “entreat” in “No Ordinary Sun” in that there is a resonance with the idea of sovereignty.

In the 2011 *Collected Works*, which also has a translation into Māori by the former Māori Language Commissioner Patu Hohepa, “We, Who Live in Darkness” does not have the authorial footnote from the 1987 version directing a mythological interpretation. This opens up the possible interpretation of a political hegemony mentioned earlier. In the translated version, however, the mythological interpretation is enriched. There are some resonant terms in the translation which closely connect the poem in te reo to the Māori and Moanan cosmogonic cycle (CW 215). The first term is “Pō” and its variants “pōuriuri”, “pō tangotango”, “pō kerekere” which refers to the nights listed in the creation chants. In the English version, the word “black” is used, but in the Māori version the variant terms indicating gradients of darkness during the nights are used (Alpers 15). In Hohepa’s translation, he used the relational term “tēina” indicating that the sibling who is speaking to his siblings is the older one. This indicates that it is likely to be Tāne Mahuta who is the narrator as he is the oldest of the siblings who are named in the handed down accounts (Paraone 109). Yet that cannot be correct since in the standardised myth by Te Rangikāheke it is the war god Tūmatauenga who wishes to kill the parents (Curnow 126) and it is Tāne who opposes the plan. In terms of the characterisation of Tū as the most aggressive sibling, then the word “tēina” could be interpreted as a put-down of the other siblings which would be in keeping with his character traits of aggressive assertiveness (Orbell, *Encyclopedia* 221-222). Finally, it is worth noting that if it is the warlike Tūmatauenga who is narrating the poem in both the English and te reo Māori versions, then this also strengthens the hegemonic interpretation. “Brothers, let us kill him—push him off” is indeed a call for rebellion against higher authority.

The deities referenced are themselves aspects of the natural world. Among many things, they represent a connectedness to the ecosphere. Mason Durie (265) makes the following point in regard to the indigenous ethics of eco-connectedness in a research context:

In a Māori world view it is not possible to understand the human situation without recourse to the wider ecological environment. The impacts of research on humans cannot be considered in isolation of intended or unintended consequential impacts on the environment.

Durie also relates human encounters in a context of the environment, where the land “provides a basis for protocols which guide relationships between groups” (264) through the powhiri process. Similar to Wendt’s spirals in the *Book of the Black Star*, and Tuwhare’s multiple nature references, Durie makes the following powerful claim:

Underlying the world view of indigenous peoples and at the heart of indigeneity, is an ‘ecological synergy spiral’. Basically about connecting relationships that are complementary and mutually reinforcing, the spiral moves from the small to the large, from individuals to groups, and from people, plants, fish and animals to the earth and the sky. It is based on an outward flow of energy, away from microscopic minutia, and towards an ever-expanding environment. Ultimately the spiral moves towards the cosmos so that all objects, species, planets and stars can be incorporated in an interacting system that gives meaning and insight to existence. (263)

Tuwhare's oeuvre-long impulse to include natural referents in his poetry, then, can be seen to stem from this indigenous and Moanan frame of reference.

Poetry of Resistance

Additionally, poetry of resistance contributes to the indigenous frame. "O Africa" is a shorter poem two pages on in the 1965 reprint of *No Ordinary Sun*. This poem is also republished in the 1978 collection *Making a Fist of It*. Janet Hunt's biography (143) notes that the poem takes an anti-apartheid stance, which is not apparent without knowing the context of its making. Her book also shows an image of the artist Ralph Hotere's painting "O Africa" (93) which incorporates the entire text stencilled onto a South African flag while the title is spray-painted. The artwork was created during the Springbok Tour of 1981 according to Elizabeth Rankin (23) which she describes as a form of anti-apartheid desecration of the flag. There are other versions by Hotere, such as the one below:



Figure 10 Ralph Hotere's "O Africa"

Similar to Hotere's multiple takes on the issue, there is another anti-Apartheid poem, called "New Zealand Rugby Union" (CW 113):

What's in a game?

Apartheid would smell as sweet

If Rugby be thy name.

This poem from *Sap-wood & Milk* (1972) is a humorous rewrite of famous lines from the balcony scene in *Romeo and Juliet* (II, ii, lines 45-46) and of course very prescient given the sectarian violence of the 1981 Springbok Tour. To briefly return to our previous close reading of “No Ordinary Sun,” Shakespeare’s balcony scene also features the word ‘nor’ (II, ii, 42-44):

What's Montague? it is nor hand, nor foot,
Nor arm, nor face, nor any other part
Belonging to a man. O, be some other name!

I raise Shakespeare’s usage to enrich, lengthen and shift Tuwhare’s literary or imaginative whakapapa to remind that it is not solely confined to the indigenous frame of reference, but rather that his writing is informed by multiple frames including globalised as well as local referents. Some of these global concerns manifest in poems focused on anti-nuclear issues, or socialist/labour issues, or human rights.

After Tuwhare’s death, his biographer Janet Hunt presented a eulogy traversing the eight decades of Tuwhare’s life, “His Own True Voice”, first delivered to a meeting of the Auckland Labour Historians Group in 2008 (*Ka Mate Ka Ora* 6). The essay devotes considerable attention to the anti-Apartheid poem, “Making a Fist of It” (*CW* 174-175), the title-poem of the 1978 collection. It is set in 1976 Soweto, Alice, and Alexandra townships as well as Johannesburg, in the minutes after a police-shooting. A black baby girl is looking to “lock onto a nose-cone nipple” (line 8), but “untidily, and in abandonment her mother lies in the dusty/ sealed street, a police-bullet buried hungrily/ between her breasts” (lines 10-12). Yet the outrage expressed in the poem is by diamond mine-owners who use one of the harshest swear words in the Dutch language, “Godverdomme!” in lines 27 and 30

because of their workers' absence and the affect on profits. This was a period of great unrest within South Africa, underlined by the 1977 death of Stephen Biko, the liberation political organiser, at the hands of South African police. "Making a Fist of It" combines Tuwhare's Marxist class-consciousness as well as his own liberation politics. This highly politicised material is deftly handled. Tuwhare does not make any gestures towards a New Zealand context except that the following poem in the collection is "The New Zealand Land March on Wellington, Hepetema 14 – Oketopa 17, 1975" (27-28). The nine pages following that poem are devoted to protests mostly about Māori land rights (29-35), a street march (36), and the 1951 water-side workers strike (37).

How does this South African material filter through a Moanan lens? On the surface, the connecting currents are not obvious. If one examines the historical connections of the former British Empire, then one can claim an association as one of the four self-governing Dominions: South Africa, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. New Zealanders also fought in the Boer War of 1899-1902. The contemporaneous currents of 1970s televised news perhaps brought an immediacy that called for action. There was other activity caused by the anti-Vietnam War movements, Ngā Tama Toa sovereignty action, the Polynesian Panthers, and associated counter-cultural empowerment. The roots and routes of such poetry are multifarious.

A possible connection is through the poet's friend, James K. Baxter, who had founded a contemplative community at Jerusalem on the Whanganui River in 1970. Its roots, according to the ground-breaking history of the commune and its off-shoots by John Newton, were grounded in Catholic, and Maori values, and its concerns, driven by young hippies mentored by Ngāti Hau kuia and kaumatua, included social justice for the destitute and the mentally ill, as well as biculturalism. Baxter had died in 1972, but the community continued to be self-supporting until 1975 (Newton

91). This direct knowledge of poetic action, and social intervention, might have influenced Tuwhare's poetry written in the 1970s. His 1974 collection *Something Nothing* includes the poem "Heemi" dedicated to Baxter after his death; the poem was first published in the *NZ Listener* in early 1973 (Hunt 105).

Through a juxtaposition of subject material in the collection, *Making a Fist of It* perhaps associates the anti-apartheid struggles of the 1970s with the Māori land rights struggles of the same era. This could constitute a mis-reading, of course, in that the material was precisely in the same era so the poems could have serendipitously been arranged, but this is unlikely to be a coincidence since Tuwhare had written other political poems partly informed by the Marxist critic Christopher Caudwell, and other socialist writers since the 1950s (Hunt 58): "I thought it was great. I was much influenced at the time by people like Pablo Neruda and Louis Aragon, the poets that the left sort of claimed." It is clear that Tuwhare regarded himself as a poet of the left, which does not exclude a Māori or Moanan identity. Indeed, the first two poems in the 1978 collection *Making a Fist of It* reference taniwha (9) and the sand of Karirikura (10) at the southern end of Ninety Mile Beach which is part of the spirits pathway to Cape Reinga. Other poems featuring Māori language and culture can be found on pages 13, 14, 15, 19, and 20. "Lament" on page 14 is a creative translation of a waiata tangi or lament by Tamati Hone. An author's note on page 15, accompanied by the first stanzas of the tangi in Māori, says it is intended as a salute to a fine poet and to the Taranaki people in their struggles. The original tangi is about the attack on Sentry Hill during the Taranaki Wars. Among the list of people killed were two sons of the Ngāti Ruanui poet Tamati Hone, Tiopira and Hapeta (Cowan 26). The tangi was a lament for these sons and the many others lost. I am indeed ascribing a cultural value to the text by highlighting its Māori-centred heritage, yet

Tuwhare could be referencing the poem because it has tremendous poetic value, except to say that the Taranaki Wars were a huge part of the Māori struggle for human rights in Aotearoa.

Māori Roots and Routes

The 1970s is a groundbreaking period in Tuwhare's oeuvre in that it marks the rise of his Māori rights centred poetry. His socialism and human-rights politics were always a part of his poetry, but Tuwhare's Maori land-rights and Treaty centred work did not appear in his poems so readily until the 1970s collections published after his second book, *Come Rain Hail*. For instance the political poem "O Africa" appears in 1964's *No Ordinary Sun* (25), "Monologue" which is narrated by the Scottish boilermaker who Tuwhare worked with at Mangakino (Hunt 35), and "Lament" in the same collection (13) references a moteatea about a battle but focuses on personal rather than collective or political loss, but there are no poems centred on Māori politics in the 1964 collection. An additional point here is that the moteatea reference reveals the world of the poet as being Māori: the subject matter has a Māori focus, and the literary poetic precedents are established in the Māori oral tradition in addition to other literary influences. "Letter /poem to Josephine Cooper" (later Dame Whina Cooper) in the 1964 collection does not refer to political struggle yet Cooper had by then become known nationally as President of the Māori Women's Welfare League and had long been associated with political leaders such as Sir Apirana Ngata, Princess Te Puea Herangi, and Walter Nash (King 148-187), while later poems published in the 1970s about her are undoubtedly political. To calibrate the term 'political', in Tuwhare's context I mean it to refer to human rights, Māori social and economic rights and aspirations, labour rights, anti-colonialism, biculturalism in

Aotearoa. To reiterate, it is the second kind of politics, that concerning Maori rights and aspirations, which emerges fully in the 1970s. The other kinds of politics are present throughout his oeuvre.

The consciousness of the poet speaks through the poems, and so the identity of the figurative or photographed poet might have a bearing (albeit as small traces) on the interpretative identity of each and every poem. In this sense, the political is always present. It is a major achievement by Tuwhare to be a widely admired, best selling poet who happens to be Māori. As well as a personal and a social world centred in a manifestation of the body, via the cover portrait, this is the vis à vis of Lyotard, the face to face engagement of Levinas, the sociability of the vā, and the Māori value of *kanohi ki te kanohi* all achieved without the mediating presence of language:

For one needn't be immersed in language [langage] in order to be able to speak; the "absolute" object, the language-system [langue], does not speak. What speaks is something that must remain outside of language as system and must continue to remain there even when it speaks. Silence is the opposite of discourse, simultaneously violence and beauty; but silence is the very condition of discourse since it is also on the side of the things of which one must speak, that one must express. There can be no discourse without this opacity in trying to undo and restore this inexhaustible thickness. Silence is the result of the ripping-apart that allows discourse and its object to stand vis-à-vis each other, and the work of signification to begin; it is the result of the tear, integral to language, where the work of expression occurs (Lyotard 8).

Lyotard uses language to describe the contemplative depths gained through silent meditation on a given object. In this part of the thesis, my references to silence are themselves “small holes” which provide insights into the silence “on the side of the things which one must speak, that one must express.” Here the “small” and the “silence” refer to the trace in the face of the poet’s photo. We gain a little information by encountering this face, a little meaning, before we open the book to read the poems. The poems themselves, in that they are texts, are two-dimensional representations of a three-dimensional reality, or as Lyotard distinguishes “the *seen*, the visual and three-dimensional (the ‘figural’), and the *read*, the textual and two-dimensional (the ‘discursive’)” (Selden 204). I would like to borrow Lyotard’s term, interworld, as a space for readers to grapple with their contingent or temporary understanding of poems which have a lived three-dimensional existence as well in their spoken rather than textual form. The inter-worlds echo the fragmentary spaces similarly opened up by Wendt’s use of the term *vā* which also engages with time and interconnectedness, and also the rippling, wave-gapped, pelagic moana. “Small holes”, inter-worlds, and the variety of the multifarious *vā* are interpretive spaces that do not claim to interpret or ‘read’ totality. Lyotard’s thought was influenced by the phenomenologist Maurice Merleau-Ponty whose unfinished work *The Visible and Invisible* draws attention to the embodied nature of existence, and away from Cartesian duality privileging the ego and intellectualism over contexts of sensation. The relevant point here in a very complex work is the possibility of touch: Tuwhare’s cover- portraits suggest the possibility that we might reach out and touch, or have reached out and touched, the poet, and that he might return the experience. This idea of the flesh is central to Merleau-Ponty’s last work. Judith Butler (186) puts it so:

In fact, touch – understood neither simply as touching or being touched – not only is the animating condition of sentience, but continues as the actively animating principle of feeling and knowing. What is at least first modeled as a bodily impression turns out to be the condition for cognitive knowing, and in this way the body comes to animate the soul.

This animating condition, in other words, is otherness, the touch of an other. In the opening paragraph of her chapter on Merleau-Ponty, Butler refers to the romance of an originating touch. She then cites the medieval philosopher and theologian Malebranche who she argues influenced Merleau-Ponty, by explicating this line, “I can only feel that which touches me” (186). Cover portraits are of course a form of marketing. They are designed to sell books. Taking that into consideration, the corporeal book-cover images of Tuwhare promise a “latent content” as well as a “manifest content” (Merleau-Ponty 81) in that within the reader’s consciousness there is the “small” suggestion of touch. This also reminds me of a facial touch: the child’s face, in “We, Who Live in Darkness”, face-down, snuggling into the earth, as an invitation to see this face and this person as close to the earth, or tangata whenua.

To return to Wendt’s explication of the *vā* in his seminal essay “Tatauing the Postcolonial Body” is to be reminded that this cultured space of time and place is relational. Wendt alights from the Samoan *vā* to the Māori *wā* as well as the Japanese *wa*, I think to emphasise the term’s reach within the Pacific and hence the term’s own set of relationships within the languages of the region. Tuwhare’s photographic presence on his book-covers invites us to relate to him perhaps, on a personal level, that is, to establish a relational space or *vā*. If the interpretive project is to locate Moanan poetics at work within the poems, or within the originating environs of the poems, then

demonstrating the writer's intended enduring relationship with the reader through the poems as vehicles for this communication might be a reasonable route, as well as a subconscious one in that the subconscious is not controlled by reason. The poems themselves rely on the reticulation of imagery from the worlds and the imaginaries of the poets; the poems' success depends on their resonant believability to readers as well as their formal qualities. As a reader at times I am inclined to accept that Tuwhare is captain of a great waka, and that I am a member of the crew on routes watching for signs of roots. DeLoughrey usefully highlights that the presence of the waka as metaphor makes visible the many currents, atmospheric shifts, cosmic and natural referents, on which such a journey depends: "A focus on the vessel renders tidalectics visible—it is the principal way in which roots are connected to routes and islands connected to the sea" (108-109).

I am perhaps asserting an ethno-cultural identity for the poems *despite* the many visible semantic layers that might assert non-cultural identity formulations simply because there are so many invisible, unspoken, silent layers which nevertheless can be made available to a reader by, for instance, looking at the author's portrait. There are other ways of making visible what is usually invisible to a reader. It is standard close-reading practice to reveal such signs and symbols in a text. It strikes me that this practice of close reading has an indigenous parallel in the encounter; as mentioned before, the face to face meeting is very important in Māori culture. This encounter is to gauge another's intentions, that is, to read them emotionally, and to share knowledge in a holistic situation rather than a two-dimensional format. Formulations such as the ritenga tangata, the vā, or

inter-worlds, and *kanohi ki te kanohi*⁶³ are used in this chapter as elaborations of this central encountering principle which I deploy in particularly personal and broadly cultural terms. I am also aware that there is a rich set of mythological allusions in the poetry which directly whakapapa to the routes (Tangaroa, for instance, deity of the ocean) and roots (Papatūānuku and Tāne Mahuta, for instance). These crucial myth and accompanying whakapapa allusions circulate and refresh the currents within Tuwhare's body of poems.

Hone Tuwhare's previously uncollected poem "Pupurangi (Kauri Snail Shell)" focuses on a creature (*CW* 328). It is voiced by the ghost of the snail who tells us that it once thrived in a felled kauri forest:

The Kauri forest
is gone. It is no more.
But you may yet chance
upon my spiral-conical
house, intact, untenanted
unshattered and unshat-upon
by carefree, fourfooted cattle. (Stanza 2)

There is albeit a humorous association with Māori through the spiral-conical house, in that carved houses feature spiral carvings. The idea of tenancy resonates with possession and ownership, while

⁶³ See also Te Kawehau Hoskins (2): "Such an orientation centres *kanohi-ki-te-kanohi* (face to face) relationships as the basis of sociality."

the cattle reference clearly refers to poor farming practices—the excrement reference and the adjective ‘careless’ emphasises despoliation—and perhaps ambiguously to the national culture associated with it.

The carvorous snail is depicted as a traveler in the poem carrying delusions of grandeur and purpose:

I travel toward my target [fallen fledglings]
with great elan and swish. Moments like this
do not find me glummily glum. There is a special
lift to the turbulence of air flowing over the dome
of my house, as I lift my speed just a wee bit
over familiar terrain.

This over-riding sense of happiness is an abiding characteristic of Tuwhare’s oeuvre. The laughter in the snail’s journey as it follows a trail is drawn from the poet’s own familiar discussions of the environment and the accompanying political terrain. The wonder of this happy poem is that it centres on the destruction of world heritage forests throughout Northland, so its happiness is quite disarmingly sad in the final stanza:

And now, if you should hold me up to your ear
you may yet hear (painfully) the rising, agonised
shriek of the rip-saw biting—the thump-bump
of the hammer on the nail—driven.

The last term, ‘driven’, in the snail’s vocabulary is akin to swearing, an unaccustomed speedy end, and a shock. In human terms, something that is driven has intentionality, a focused purpose, a plan.

This last term belongs to strategy and to the developers' carpentry. By voicing this tiny creature, we as readers are confronted with the true violence of taking out an ecosystem. By extension, and this is speculative, the parallel destruction via colonisation and its settlement patterns has wrought similar destruction. The snail is depicted as a carnivore that eats fledglings just as Māori were depicted as warriors in order to justify military actions. According to the Department of Conservation website ("Kauri Snail / Pupurangi") the pupurangi's main diet was earthworms, so the snail's diet in the poem is perhaps an intentional mistake which aligns it with intentionally misleading colonial accounts of Māori life. The snail witnessed colonial rip-saws and hammers, the "agonised shriek" of trees and, I suggest though not conclusively, other natives. Ironically, especially in a Moanan context, this delusional ghost is also a tourist. The hidden reference in the tale of this tiny creature is to the largest creature of the ecosystem, the kauri or Tāne Mahuta, whose offspring are fashioned into waka that traverse the moana. It is not the literal reference to waka that makes this poem Moanan, but rather the interconnected and holistic frame of reference. While this snail was a terrestrial creature, I imagine holding its empty shell up to my ear to hear the moana.

CHAPTER 5 HAUNANI-KAY TRASK: CULTURAL KĪPUKA IN THE VĀ

Surprisingly, the invisible is to the fore in this most publicly visible of poets. Trask derives Moanan poetics from another kind of liquid, lava, through the mythology of the Pele clan deities. On the island of Hawai'i, lava flows like a river to the ocean where the contact slows and solidifies it accompanied by boiling saltwater and massive plumes of steam. Tourists watch the plumes and the glowing river at night, roped off about a kilometer away for safety. For Trask, Pele is ever-present in her poetry. At times the narration of her poems appears to posit the narrator as the goddess, accompanied by Pele's favoured younger sister, Hi'iakaikapoliopole, just as Trask and her younger sister Mililani are very publicly visible political figures in the sovereignty movement. These mythological and sibling relationships represent key driving forces in this poetics of empowerment. Also related to Moanan navigation, I take Vicente Diaz's point that the islands are moving tectonically, and that the target is literally expanding through volcanic activity symbolized by the goddesses.

The kaona of place-names and their locations historically and culturally provide hidden depths to this poet's work, as well as the symbols of sovereignty. These references exist within the physical frame of the islands, and the subaqueous connections between them through lava plumes travelling upward through the ocean's depths to the surface. I say that Trask is publicly visible due to her immense political activism on behalf of Kanaka Maoli or Native Hawaiians. I first met Professor Trask at the University of Hawai'i directly after the events of September 11, 2001. She spoke of the raids on her university office by the FBI, and the wiretapping of her telephone. Trask

was targeted as a potential terrorist by the authorities because of her history of leading public protests regarding indigenous sovereignty and land rights both within the State of Hawai‘i and the continental United States, as well as attending international gatherings such as the 1984 United Nations convention in Geneva to discuss the draft international indigenous declaration on indigenous rights. It was as if the FBI recognized the potential for political eruptions through her activist work. While obviously I was not there, strategically, by concerted effort there is a strong video record of this activism through the monthly television show *First Friday* which aired on the Native Hawaiian Television Channel ‘Olelo. I viewed all the available videotapes which aired from January 1997 to June 1999. Trask was a regular guest expert commentator on the show which was hosted by the poet’s sister, Mililani Trask, who herself is a noted indigenous leader of the sovereignty movement, and hosted at other times by her husband, the historian David Stannard. The range of issues discussed in the videos include anti-Hawaiian racism on the campus of the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa; the Kamehameha Schools Trust Board scandal regarding excessive Trustee salaries; a running dispute with a journalist at *The Honolulu Advertiser*; gender equity at the University; the controversial naming of Porteous Hall, named after an allegedly racist former professor at UH Mānoa; elections for the Hawaiian Sovereignty Election Council and a boycott by sixty percent of native electors; guests such as Patu Hohepa from Aotearoa and Ngūgi Wa Thiong’o from Kenya; the ceded lands where the University is located and the need for a Hawaiian tuition waiver; seafood gathering rights and shoreline access; water rights in the wake of the diminishing sugar industry; international human rights and the 27,000 native Hawaiians waiting for Hawaiian homesteads; geothermal projects and pollution; a university sports mascot who is a caricature of a Hawaiian ali‘i; Senator Daniel Inouye’s system of ‘patronage’; the March 1998 visit of Angela Davis

to the campus and a presentation, which included a tribute to Trask, about the prison industrial complex; disturbance of ancestral burial sites; the agricultural and aquacultural systems of ancestors; the challenge of decolonisation and resistance to American imperialism. These issues were all described with amazing vigour and engagement by Trask. I have listed these issues partly to contextualise Trask's two collections of poems within a busy life of political and academic leadership—she also has two scholarly book publications, *From a Native Daughter*, and *Eros and Power*—and to signal that this tremendous amount of work informs her deceptively layered poetic.

One of Trask's favourite stories to me was her account of meeting the Māori actor Anzac Wallace, who played the character Te Wheke in Barry Barclay's movie *Utū*. We saw each other sporadically over the seven years I lived in Hawai'i, so from time to time she would repeat the anecdote as if to encourage me to emulate the masculinity of this Māori warrior. Wallace was wearing leathers and saw Haunani-Kay across the street. He shouted her name with his leather-jacketed arms thrown out and crossed the street as if he was doing a haka. I could tell she admired the warrior aspect of Māori culture. She loved the haka. She also loved the fierce debates inside marae. She wished her people were ferocious fighters like Māori were reputed to be. Of course these are stereotypes, but the passionate belief in resistance to colonial domination drove her statements. Trask strengthens everyone around her. She is a powerful intellectual warrior who speaks from her whole being, and as a sovereignty leader, about the injustices of annexation and colonisation by the United States. Her grounding in the praxis of feminist theory enables her to articulate her struggle against sexism in view of male members of the sovereignty movement. I believe her account in *Fighting the Battle of Double Colonisation* of the organisational dynamics of the Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana:

While involvement in the Movement narrowed the tensions between thinking and doing, it brought new tensions between my feminist politics and 'Ohana style, between my arguments and visions (always perceived as those of a woman), and the arguments of men, whether leaders or not. Slowly but resolutely, patterns of male domination and conscious exclusion of women from policy-making emerged out of the 'Ohana. (12)

Trask joined the movement in 1978 to protect the island of Kaho'olawe from regular military practice bombings by the US Navy. It was centred on the twin concepts of aloha 'āina and aloha ka po'e, "love, care and nurturance of the land" and "love and care for the people of the land" respectively (Trask, *Fighting* 9). Trask's essay contrasts the Hawaiian relationship with the land with Western commodification and "ceaseless destruction of the human and physical environment" (10).

Ty Kawika Tengan's 2008 work *Native Men Remade* raises questions about Trask's account of the Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana (PKO):

Trask's polarities and dichotomies that describe men as collaborators and women as decolonisers contribute to an oppositional discourse on gender in the movement. (59)

Tengan may be technically correct in his account of the men within the movement and their leadership roles, and correct again in noting the dynamic that emerges from speaking out against sexism, but he does not address Trask's major concerns about misogyny within the PKO. ⁶⁴

Trask's first collection, *Light in the Crevice Never Seen*, is divided into three sections: "Chant of Lamentation" (3-40); "Raw, Swift and Deadly" (43-68); and "Light in the Crevice Never Seen" (71-96). There is also a Hawaiian pronunciation key (100), a glossary of Hawaiian terms (101-106), and a biographical page (107). The first poetry section laments external encroachment on the mana and self-determination of Hawaiians (37):

E Pele e, fire-eater

from Kahiki.

Breath of Papa's life

miraculously becomes

Energy, stink with

sulfurous sores. Hi'iaka

wilting in her wild home:

⁶⁴ The public controversies surrounding Trask's politics are extensively covered in Selina Tusitala Marsh's 2004 PhD thesis, "Ancient Banyans, Flying Foxes and White Ginger: Five Pacific Women Writers" through local media sources.

black *lehua*, shriveled

pūkiawe, unborn *a'ali'i*.

The author's note explains the significance of geothermal development on the Island of Hawai'i as this is the home of the Hawaiian Goddess Pele who continues to be venerated and even ceremonially worshipped by some Hawaiians. In 1991 the Puna Geothermal Venture Company suffered two well blow-outs which gave off poisonous effluent (April, 1998, screening of "First Friday"). According to the company website, the facility is located on thirty acres along the Lower East Rift Zone of Kilauea Volcano in the Puna district of Hawai'i Island. Here is an image taken from the "Air Quality and Noise Management" section of the website:



The company website admits the following in regard to an experimental well that preceded the current commercial facility:

The project revealed that geothermal resources on Hawai'i Island are robust, reliable and sustainable. It also showed that the byproducts—excess fluids and gas—needed to be better handled and disposed.

The company does not mention any blow-out, which indicates the importance of Trask's exposing critique of corporate environmental mismanagement. In a brief item on June 15 1991, *The Los Angeles Times* reported the following:

Hawai'i state officials ordered a geothermal company to halt all drilling Friday after a well blowout spewed toxic gas and routed 75 people from their homes on the island of Hawai'i.

Opponents of geothermal drilling near the nation's last remaining tropical rain forest claimed the accident shows Hawai'i's volcanic resource may be unmanageable.

White sulfuric steam roared uncontrolled for more than 30 hours from the Puna Geothermal Venture well before the company managed to cap it at shortly after dawn Friday.

The accident took place in rural Pohoiki, about 10 miles from the Wao Keleo Puna rain forest, where drilling by another firm has triggered an international outcry from environmentalists.

There is a major disconnection between the idealised presentation of the 'āina (glossed as land, earth) in Trask's texts, or aloha 'āina (which is glossed as love of the land, patriotism), and the actual despoliation of the land captured in the company's own representative photograph of their venture. Apparently the situation has improved since 1994 when the poem was published. The last stanza ends:

And what do we know

of them, these foreigners
these Americans?

Nothing. We know
nothing.

Except a foul stench
among our children

and a long hollow
of mourning
in our *ma'i*.

The last comment refers to genitalia, and reminds us of the sexual potency of the term “crevice.” The cover of *Light in the Crevice Never Seen* features a lava flow emerging from the earth’s crust, possibly just as it hits the sea as there are plumes of steam nearby. Marsh notes that “the creviced cliff face also possesses distinctively female sexual characteristics—resembling the clitoris” (346). The “hollow” could refer to the bore-hole, and of course the stench refers to the sulphur dioxide emanating from the venture. By juxtaposing the geothermal well next to children, and the sexually reproductive organs, the poem sees a future terribly altered by abuses of the land and power. To the poet and many of her people, the Goddess Pele is a sacred embodied representation of “the volcano itself” (105). The company borehole into the Kilauea caldera is a violation of the goddess.

Davianna Pōmaika'i McGregor describes the significance of the Puna district on several fronts in her major work *Nā Kua'āina: Living Hawaiian Culture*:

Throughout all of the folklore for Puna, Pelehonuamea and her family of deities emerge as the natural primal elements that dominate and shape the lives of the chiefs and people of Puna. (147)

McGregor also notes (145) that Puna is the site in the Pele and Hi'iaka mo'olelo where the first hula is performed. It is performed by Hi'iaka "to please her older sister, Pelehonuamea. The hula was performed at Ha'ena and represented the birth of the hula sacred to Pele." Its name is "Ke Ha'a La Puna". I believe that Trask's reiterative referencing of the Pele narratives leads her to the sites important to the deity. The importance of the area's natural elements in the traditional chant translated by Pualani Kanahale underscores the devastation that the poet must feel about geothermal development and other ecological scarring in the area:

I kai o Nanahuki	At the sea of Nanahuki
Hula le'a wale	The voice of Puna resounds
I kai o Nanahuki	The voice of the sea is carried
'O Puna kai kuwa i ka hala	While the lehua blossoms are
Pae i ka leo o ke kai	being scattered
Ke lu la, i na pua lehua	

Marsh also makes this point (349):

Pele provides a foundational myth from which Trask's poetry stems. It assumes knowledge of the narratives and legends surrounding Pele, and of the folklore, religion and the awesome geographical landscape that bears witness to her fearsome power and beauty. Pele is an intensely political and highly poetic symbol. (349)

Trask's poem moves on to another deity (37): "Far down her eastern flank / the gourd of Lono dries / broken on the temple wall." Here the island of Hawai'i is depicted as the Goddess herself. The deified chief Lono's remains, also known as Lonoikamakahiki, were also located there, in the ka'ai or woven sennit casket that used to be in the great heiau or temple called Pakaalana within the Hale o Liloa inner sanctum (McGregor 51, 55-56). The remains of this deity were relocated in 1829, with those of five other deities, by Queen Ka'ahumanu to stop their use in worship and to encourage Christianity. The Queen was acting regent for King Kamehameha III. So this reference to Lono in Trask's poem speaks of the processes of colonisation and how they are internalised. The gourd is used to satisfy the god and the people. Because the gourd contains liquid, it represents internal sustenance to quench the thirst, so to speak; it additionally represents ceremonies in that the gourd was also used as a drum, so it has a celebratory aspect, and yet the ceremonial gourd is broken.

Makua Kāne (4-7) is written for the poet's father who died in 1977. Some of the poems in the collection have brief contextualizing notes written by the poet. For example, "He, like his father and grandfather before him, lived in a white world that controlled our Native land, Hawai'i. Both were long-time fighters for our people" (7):

for a month I wake
to find you
in the stomach of
my sleep

shark's tooth
overhead
turtle guarding
out at sea

I bring you
pa'akai, lū'au leaves
a bowl of sour *poi*

the wind blows cool
from Ko'olau

The stomach is close to the na'au or seat of emotions in Hawaiian conceptions of the self. The turtle is an ancestor god or 'aumakua. Trask's uses of the pa'akai or sea-salt, and the lu'au leaves, according to her explanation, "denote ritual substances at the time of death" (7). Without the explanation, I doubt if a person unfamiliar with the details of Hawaiian culture would be able to work out the symbolism. The author very generously reveals these significances in order to

communicate in a deeper way with readers. The sourness of the mashed taro dish called poi takes away the affirming sweetness of life. Similarly, the winds have cooled. The shark's tooth could also have a significance belonging to 'aumakua. The month of dreams brings back her father and the need to lay him to rest through ritual offerings, with this poem constituting part of the ritual meditations. The poem speaks of the need for her father's care, and that the political life is perhaps taking a great toll on the poet. Imbued within the objects is the ever-present Moana of relationships. In the fourth section of the poem Trask says, "me, I fight / for the land but / we feel there is / no hope ..." (5). The explanatory note highlights the portentous nature of dream visitations by ancestors as being "in need of careful attention" (7). The father's presence in the daughter's stomach is a kind of reversal of parenthood where the daughter also wears the father's "oldness / as a cloak" (6). Here the cultural references make more specific the grief that the poet must feel for her father; this grief is also connected to the struggle for Hawaiian sovereignty. Her leadership role and its accompanying burden is not directly referenced in the poem, but her role does provide a backdrop. The injustices are overtly referenced in the third section:

in town, politicians
carve up land:
shoreline for hotels, valleys
for houses, underground for bunkers, sewers
miles of wire (5)

The very brief description above illustrates the all-reaching arms of the industrial-military colonial complex and the hopelessness that the poet and leader must feel. Perhaps the birds are similes for

her feelings, or symbols of the smallness she and her people must feel in the wake of such gigantic changes:

little doves

dart in and out

startled from

their banyan

by screeching cars

people throw cans

cigarette butts

plastic (5)

At the end of section IV, instead of a bird chorus, “no hope / only sounds / diminishing / at dawn” (5). There are other voices though. The book features praise from a number of prominent native writers, including Linda Hogan, and Joy Harjo. Trask’s poem “Sisters” is anthologised in the collection of native women’s writing from North America, *Reinventing the Enemy’s Language*, co-edited by Harjo. The poem is dedicated to her sister Mililani. There appears to be a connection between the poem for their father Bernard and this one in the doves:

doves in the rain

mornings above Kāne’ohe Bay blue

sheen stillness

across long waters gliding
to Coconut Island

The island is the largest of five in the Bay, which is also a suburb of Honolulu on the north-east coast of the city. Ironically the poem speaks of ecological catastrophe in the second section: “smell of dead / fish dead / *limu* dead/ reef.” The environmental mess is juxtaposed next to real estate and townhouse prices. I say this is ironic because Coconut Island is the site of a marine research facility operated by the University of Hawai‘i. The lyrical elements of the poem seem to be suspended here for the directly polemical statement (59): “clever / *haole* culture / killing as it goes.” The polemic seems to anthropomorphise American culture into an undescribed creature that has “destruction as a way / of life” (59). Mililani and Haunani-Kay are described in the last stanza as “defending life / with the spear / of memory” (59). It is telling that the author’s autobiographical account of the sisters places the environment to the fore. The destruction is caused by “greedy foreigners” and real estate speculators. The sisters are “driven by the sound / of doves.” This desire for peace, which comes from respect for environmental concerns, is also strongly connected to anti-colonialism: to remove the sources of pollution requires the removal of the colonial culture that pollutes. Memory is the weapon that defends life. This life is a qualitative one filled with flora and fauna rather than geothermal wells, golf courses, freeways, tourism, and sewerage. It gets quite racialised. In “A Day at the Beach” Trask says she wants to write about the land, “but all the *haole* / drifted out / clotted on the beach / in tourist shirts / and white pants” (45). The poet’s memory asserts another way of being at the end of the poem:

in the distance

mountains float

dark and hot

women carry

baskets of shrimp

upland to the moon

The above stanzas could describe a setting in a utopia with floating mountains and ascendant working people. Trask often juxtaposes the brute ugliness of colonialism with the terrible beauty of indigenous pasts. The collection never yields to the sovereign assertions of the United States, and constantly enlivens the text with Hawaiian ways of being. This indigenous utopia counters touristic heterotopias which are also described in Michel Foucault's *Of Other Spaces*. Foucault claims that societies create idealised counter-sites within the physical world which enable members of a society to deal with their realities. These spaces are unlike imaginary utopias in that they do actually exist in the real world. These idealised spaces, such as gardens, theatres, cinemas, cemeteries, motels, also incorporate crisis spaces such as hospitals, prisons, rest-homes. Tourist spaces are represented as heterotopias that sever time, unlike museums or libraries where the accumulation of time is foregrounded. In this tourist context, Foucault encapsulates Moanan culture:

Quite recently, a new kind of temporal heterotopia has been invented: vacation villages, such as those Polynesian villages that offer a compact three weeks of primitive and eternal nudity to the inhabitants of the cities. You see, moreover, that through the two forms of heterotopias that come together here, the heterotopia of the festival and that of the eternity of accumulating time, the huts of Djerba are in a sense relatives of libraries and museums. For the rediscovery of Polynesian life abolishes time; yet the experience is just as much the rediscovery of time, it is as if the entire history of humanity reaching back to its origin were accessible in a sort of immediate knowledge. (26)

This is not to negate the indigenous sustenance provided by utopian metaphors, such as cultural kīpuka—McGregor’s term which I explicate later in this chapter as an oasis of undamaged native culture—although it does make me wonder if the kīpuka is a utopia at all given that the kīpuka exists in the real world and survives, despite encroachment by neo-colonial interests, whereas a true utopia is purely imaginary. Foucault includes cemeteries in his examples of heterotopias:

As an example I shall take the strange heterotopia of the cemetery. The cemetery is certainly a place unlike ordinary cultural spaces. It is a space that is however connected with all the sites of the citystate or society or village, etc., since each individual, each family has relatives in the cemetery. (25)

He then provides a brief history of the cemetery in the West, noting that the role of cemeteries has changed in the modern age, closely linked with changes in religion and other social structures. Crucially, the cemetery represents an idealised social space, an account of the past. Haunani-Kay Trask chooses to re-read this account in the poem “Missionary Graveyard,” dedicated to the poet’s father, Bernard Trask. Like another cemetery poem dedicated to her father, “Pu’owaina Flag Day” discussed earlier in the thesis, it addresses sovereignty:

IV

No Hawaiian Homes here

just barren earth

blowing dust, dry

muliwai

and in Lili’u’s house

a smiling Hawaiian

shaking hands with

money-men, eating

rice and drinking *sake* (14)

At the time of writing, John Waihe’e was the State Governor. He was the first native Hawaiian to hold the office since Statehood. The governor’s official residence is the former home of the deposed monarch Queen Lili’uokalani. Trask clearly sees him as complicit with the ruling Democratic Party elites. The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) is the official body set up by the state to advocate

broadly for Hawaiians, especially on legislative matters. It has nine elected trustees through a state-wide vote. Mililani Trask succeeded in being elected for one term from 1998 to 2000. An editorial note about the line “no Hawaiian homes here” (16) makes sure that we understand this to refer to the Department of Hawaiian Homelands who administers the allotment of former Crown lands as Hawaiian homesteads. From 2003 to 2010, when I lived in Hawai‘i, about once a year there would be a television news item where some Hawaiians were given their homesteads, which they could lease at a reduced rate. It was a propaganda exercise, staged to maximise the media impact of the homesteads to a few indigenous families. “Of the two hundred thousand acres available,” says Trask’s note (16), “less than sixty thousand are presently used by native Hawaiians. The remainder is controlled by non-Natives, including the US military” (16). The Hawaiian Homes Commission Act (1921) is still in force. Trask’s claim is substantiated by the 1991 Hawaiian advisory committee report to the United States Commission on Civil Rights, *A Broken Trust: The Hawaiian Homelands Program. Seventy Years of Failure of the Federal and State Governments to Protect the Civil Rights of Native Hawaiians*. The report estimates that the amount of land was originally 203,500 acres, but that this was not properly mapped and that it is more likely to be 187,561 acres (32). It also notes that the Federal government continues to occupy large amounts of the Trust lands primarily for military purposes. The Parker Ranch on Hawai‘i Island alone leases 33,000 acres of Hawaiian Homes land, while there is a waiting list of aged Hawaiians who have been waiting for their allotments on that island since 1952 (Tatibouet 29). In 1979, according to the former Chairman of the Hawaiian Homes Commission, only 12.5 percent (25,000 acres) had been leased to beneficiaries, while 61% (122,000 acres) was being used by non-beneficiaries (Tatibouet 22). This is also noted in the letter of transmittal to the US Commission on Civil Rights (iii). The Federal

Government paid an average of 45 cents annual rental per acre, the State Government paid 12 cents per acre rental, and counties paid \$3.10 per acre in 1976/77 (3). Mililani Trask's submissions to the advisory committee were cited at significant moments of the report, including the last page (Tatibouet 42) before the findings section. The Department of Hawaiian Homelands website lists the number of applications for homesteads. On December 31st 2012 there were a total of 41,573 applications. Eighteen months previously, there were 42,794: a difference of 1,221 divided among the six islands. On the island of O'ahu, the first ranked applicant on the waiting list has been waiting for a homestead since 1979.

The tone of Trask's poem "Missionary Graveyard" highlights corruption, cheap constructions, and disease:

II.

graveyard Hawai'i Nei:

coffin buildings, concrete parking

lots, maggot freeways

smell of death

smear across the land

killing in the heart

The H-3 controversy had been raging throughout the 1980s, and into the 90s. It was a freeway that provided easy access to Pearl Harbor from the marine base at Kane'ōhe on the north-west side of the island. The main controversy was not its military purpose, but rather that it bulldozed through a number of sacred sites and ancestral burials. The last stanza masterfully sums up the intensity of feeling:

at 40, it's the hopelessness.

how did you live

till nearly 70? (50)

Even though it is a question that despairs, there is a sense of gathering strength from her father's experiences as a Hawaiian. Other touchstone poems which feature the father also reference his strength, including two poems I have discussed above, "Pu'owaina Flag Day" and "Makua Kāne." Again, children feature in the poem to show an idealised indigenous past:

down by Waikīkī

– it was Kālia, then—

old folks and kids

a meandering beach

no tourists

and up the road

taro and running water (4)

These simple, non-materialistic things brought joy to the poet. This is not characteristic of the collection itself, however, as there is much despondency, which, it must be surmised, is caused by the political situation of Kanaka Maoli. The poem "Refusal," dedicated to a Kamehameha Schools classmate, is written on a personal rather than public level, and concerns his drug-related homicide. The opening lines begin with his shooting through the chest as he opened his front door and held his young son's hand:

didn't you stop, dear one
just a second in time
holding sweet life
in your eager young hands
and wonder:

why our men beautiful
and strong on their running
feet, sun in their earth-dark eyes
why these lean, soft-lined men

go carelessly down
to nothingness
one after another, a whole nation
of men, Hawaiian brothers? (26)

The beautiful description of the men, and the words “dear” and “sweet” in the above passage speak of the care needed for these “brothers” in contrast to their carelessness in the face of life itself.

I can't believe
a nation of men, a whole nation
of Hawaiian men, lean, handsome

and dead (28)

Trask cites the influence on her work of the philosopher and psychologist Franz Fanon, whose work is centred on colonised conceptions of identity, and the psychological as well as physical oppression by colonisers:

The evolution of my thinking owes a great debt to some of the most
creative intellectuals and revolutionaries of the twentieth century: Frantz
Fanon, Malcolm X, and Ngũgi wa Thiong'o. (*From a Native Daughter* x)

Trask's book of essays *From a Native Daughter: Colonialism and Sovereignty in Hawai'i* in many respects mirrors Fanon's thinking about colonial subjects and the psychological damage caused by colonial processes that are imbued in all spheres of everyday and official life. The ideology of the colonial State is expressed through the state apparatuses of the media, educational institutions, the health system, and churches, to name just a few. These combine, to continue following Althusserian terms, the repressive state apparatuses of the prison system, law enforcement, and the military, to create in a colonised person a sense of inadequacy in the face of the State. Fanon's analysis goes

deeper, as this inadequacy of the individual is internalised. Without saying it, the poem “Refusal” in a sense then refuses to accept the messages of the state and its colonial society that are internalised by indigenous men, not only in a public sense, but also out of a sense of self-preservation. To acquiesce to such ways of thinking, where indigeneity is not seen for its inherent mana and beauty, means death. The text does not say this, but the implied message is there for all to see in the use of the word “nation.” The poem does assert a kind of necessary activism. The man concerned needs to stop and think about it:

didn't you pause, my honey
on that threshold of death
glance back at your child
hesitate for life

before flinging it away? (27)

Again, it is only implied, but the deep message is to decolonise the mind. The child in the poem represents the generations, and also something greater than the individual. This poem is moving precisely because the need for decolonisation provides a backdrop—there are no hectoring loud-hailer assertions about oppression. The responsibility lies with the young man who has been shot in the chest, and who dealt in drugs. The poem's simplicity is its complexity.

In the title chapter of *From a Native Daughter*, Trask relates her time on a conference panel where another panelist was a historian who refused to accept the evidence Trask cited about widespread opposition to annexation by Hawaiians. I am not so much interested in the facts as these have been indisputably revealed by historian Noenoe Silva's research in the Library of

Congress, which holds the 1897 Petition signed by 21,269 people, according to the United States National Archives' website. That, at the time, is more than half of the entire native population opposing the illegal annexation. Noenoe Silva adds more numbers to that already impressive statistic:

When all the work was done, there was a total of over 21,000 signatures—men's and women's in about equal numbers. The Hui Kālai'āina also had a substantial membership, and they conducted their own petition drive at the same time, collecting over 17,000 signatures. Together, the two groups collected over 38,000 signatures. Even considering the likelihood that some people signed both petitions, the total number of signatures is impressive given that the population of Kanaka Maoli at the time was around 40,000. (151)

Here is an image of the petition from the National Archives and Record Administration's website:

PALAPALA HOOHU KUE HOOHUAINA.

I ka Mea Mahaloia WILLIAM MCKINLEY, Peresidena,
a me ka Aha Senate, o Amerika Huipuaia.

ME KA MAHALO :-

NO KA MEA, ua waihoia aku imua o ka Aha Senate
o Amerika Huipuaia he Kuikahi no ka Hoohui aku ia
Hawaii nei ia Amerika Huipuaia i oleloia, no ka noonoia
ma koma kau maui hiko o Dekemaha, M. H. 1897; nolaila,
O MAKOU, na poe no lakou na inoa malalo iho, he
poe makaainana a poe noho oiwi Hawaii hoi no ka
Apana o Honolulu, Moku-puni o
Oahu, he poe lala no ka
AHAHUI HAWAII ALOHA AINA O KO HAWAII PAE-
AINA, a me na poe e ae i like ka manao makee me ko
ka Ahahui i oleloia, ke kua aku hei me ka manao ikaika
loa i ka hoohuina aku o ko Hawaii Paaina i oleloia ia
Amerika Huipuaia i oleloia ma kekahi ano a loina paha.

IKAA-ATTEST:

Ernest Johnson,
Sept. 11, 1897, Kahuolelo - Secretary.

PETITION AGAINST ANNEXATION.

To His Excellency WILLIAM MCKINLEY, President,
and the Senate, of the United States of America.

GREETING :-

WHEREAS, there has been submitted to the Senate of
the United States of America a Treaty for the Annexation
of the Hawaiian Islands to the said United States of
America, for consideration at its regular session in Decem-
ber, A. D. 1897; therefore,

WE, the undersigned, native Hawaiian citizens and
residents of the District of Honolulu,
Island of Oahu, who are members
of the HAWAIIAN PATRIOTIC LEAGUE OF THE HAWAII-
AN ISLANDS, and others who are in sympathy with the
said League, earnestly protest against the annexation of
the said Hawaiian Islands to the said United States of
America in any form or shape.

James Heaulima Kaula
President - President.

	INOA—NAME.	AGE.	INOA—NAME.	AGE.
1	Manuel	25	Kawakaulana	17
2	W. B. Pihana	32	E. Iikai	62
3	D. W. Peha	61	Saca	60
4	Kalauoke	31	Kaahamui	30
5	Pope	25	L. Kaimuehi	64
6	John Kalua	28	Lawsonao	37
7	George Makulima	28	J. B. Polikua	38
8	Levi	35	Kivi	17
9	Joe Kahi	35	Joe	25
10	S. M. Kaula	40	Samuel Lanchall (Amie)	2
11	John Kooia A. A.	28	Maamuel Pereira (Portugal)	
12	John Kahi	8	George Lishman (Amie)	19
13	Panahi	14		
14	Witake	70		
15	Mailama	20		
16	Joe Kahi	46		
17	Joseph Kamai	19		
18	Hianase	35		
19	Kalaua	30		
20	Joe Peha	22		
21	Joe Peha	64		
22	H. Mamahi	25		
23	Sara Luahiwa	18		
24	Kumana	30		

Figure 11 Petition against annexation

My focus here is not the *actual* resistance by Kanaka Maoli. Rather, I am interested in the *nature* of the evidence *Trask* used to refute the un-named historian’s claim, which occurred before Silva’s unearthing of the petition as crucial proof of widespread opposition. Trask cites the song “Kaulana na pua o Hawai‘i” written in 1893 directly after the overthrow. She also cites a story handed down from her grandmother to her mother and then to Trask: “a great wailing went up throughout the islands, a wailing of weeks, a wailing of impenetrable grief, a wailing of death” (120). The nature of the refutation then rests in oral literature, the song poem which continues to be performed at political gatherings “with great dignity” (119), and in the oral account of the aftermath of the overthrow. Trask’s point of view is located entirely within a worldview centred on the land in that the song poem features the regions of the Hawaiian lands and the people who are embodiments of the land and their opposition:

<i>Kaulana na pua a’o</i>	Famous are the children of
<i>Hawai‘i</i>	Hawai‘i
<i>Kupa’a mahope o</i>	who cling steadfastly to
<i>ka ‘āina</i>	the land

The song-poem speaks of children as flowers, *na pua*, reminding me of the multiple flower-references in Trask’s work. It also reminds me that there are many hidden referents within traditional Hawaiian poetics, many which are not accessible to non-Hawaiians. The obvious referents in this song-poem are to places and leading ancestors: “Hawai‘i, island of Keawe, / answers. The bays of Pi’ilani help. / Kaua‘i of Mano assists / Firmly together with the sands of/

Kakuhihewa” (119). Later in the poem, the Queen is crowned again. Trask uses the song in her poem “Kaulana Na Pua.” In her poem, three young Hawaiian children are out surfing. A “passing tourist / florid in his prints” asks them for directions but the children “little fists / raised in a mimic of power” slash his eye with a blade (48). As the tourist bleeds on the beach, the children sing “Kaulana Na Pua”: “a tune / out of time, time past // when their tribe / was a nation / and their nation, the great / lava mother, Hawai‘i.” The lava may be a reference to the goddess Pele.

Poet and scholar Brandy Nālani McDougall discusses kaona in her 2011 doctoral dissertation. She devotes a chapter to the kaona involving Haunani-Kay Trask’s poetry and the mo’olelo (literature and histories) and mo’okuauhau (genealogies) relating to Pele and Hi’iaka. As a non-Hawaiian, I do not have comfortable access to this knowledge. I might have worked this out with patient genealogical explication, but it would have been intellectual, not the embodied knowledge that belongs to everyday existence. McDougall reveals the kaona reference through her passionate knowledge of the Pele and Hi’iaka mo’olelo which is handed down to her, and, as well, has been explored with academic research methods.

Trask’s poem “Long Term Strategies” denounces rape by making it unimaginable in the minds of women, but then reminds men of empowered female justice with the overarching view of Pele and her own women followers who “learn castration / as an art.” The poem appears to shift from the contemporary into an idealised space where Pele reigns:

We can’t rape men
put anything in them
against their will (stanza 1)

But in Pele's hills
beneath a bloody moon
young women dancers
learn castration
as an art. (stanzas 7 & 8) (57)

Marsh also notes that the poem offers “a radical solution to male oppression (rape), and by extension, to cultural prostitution . . .” (353). In “Ka Hana ‘Ino iā Pele / Pele Raped,” Nathaniel Emerson’s translation of the Pele and Hi’iaka chant sounds similar to many of the anguished accounts of the aftermath of colonisation in Trask’s work. Here is Emerson’s translation of the beginning of the mo’olelo:

Dark clouds blasted, rain slashed
the face of the sky. Earth turned black
at the birth of princely children. (Pukui & Korn 180)

To my ear it resembles Trask’s style.

Near the estuary mouth
heiau stones lie crushed
beneath purple resort (36)

Potentially, there is one other kaona reference to Pele and Hi’iaka in the collection, the poem “Sisters” (58), which ostensibly describes Mililani and Haunani-Kay Trask, but could, subconsciously perhaps, describe the sisters Pele and Hi’iaka.

In every Native
place a pair
of sisters
driven by the sound of
doves

The phrase “every Native/ place” suggests Pele and Hi‘iaka to me in that they have travelled throughout the island chain, which in its entirety is volcanic; I have searched for the significance of ‘doves’ to the mo‘olelo but cannot find a reason—perhaps they are doves of peace. The “spear of memory” in the final stanza might also refer to Pele’s staff called Paoa (Handy and Pukui 68). If it is a kaona reference to the goddess sisters, then it is an apt phrase as the staff was used to dig places for Pele’s eternal fires. The Pele and Hi‘iaka kaona also act as markers of Moanan activism, or “light in the crevice never seen.”

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, McGregor describes Hawaiian sacred sites or wāhi pana as kīpuka, small oases similar to small stands of intact forest isolated by lava flows. I note this because McGregor uses the kīpuka metaphor to describe communities in the Hawaiian archipelago which have majority indigenous populations in the Pele context:

Even as Pele claims and reconstructs the forest landscape, she leaves intact whole sections of the forest, with tall old-growth ‘ōhi‘a trees, tree ferns, creeping vines, and mosses. These oases are called kīpuka. The beauty

of these natural kīpuka is not only their ability to resist and withstand destructive forces of change, but also their ability to regenerate life on the barren lava that surrounds them. For from those kīpuka come the seeds and spores carried by birds and blown by the wind to sprout upon and regenerate the forest on the new lava, sparking a dynamic new cycle of coming into and passing out of life. (7-8)

The reference to doves in Trask's poem might then speak to regeneration as well as elevation and the cross-cultural symbolism of peace. In a sense, poetry is a haven, a kīpuka for the poet herself, away from the burdens of political life. It speaks the language of her soul. Throughout the Moana there is a tradition of high leaders who compose traditional poetry. Poetry must have performed a role as a haven away from the burdens of leadership. The deposed monarch, Queen Lili'uokalani, is famous for her song-compositions and translation of *The Kumulipo*, for instance. The Queen's translation was itself a kīpuka, a seed carrying the creation and regeneration of her people.

Any discussion of contemporary Hawaiian poetry must consider the considerable contribution made by ku'ualoha ho'omanawanui's survey article of form and techniques, encompassing indigenous language and English language Hawaiian poetry, "He Leo Ho'ohenoheno no na kau a kau: language, performance and form in Hawaiian poetry". She summarises the major features of traditional oli and mele as well as some of the major poets. Her discussion (ho'omanawanui 46) of Trask's "Chant of Lamentation" (23) connects it in spirit if not form to the kanikau or dirge:

The refrain "I lament ..." is featured in every other stanza, each one recounting a different loss suffered by Kanaka Maoli in the onslaught of colonisation. The intermediate stanzas imply a second voice--reflecting a communal stance, with two separate but related voices woven together into one poem. Trask's poem references the past through allusions to traditional practices of taro farming (abandoned terraces and shattered waters, stones and [sun]light). Line 195 of the Kumulipo, "'O ke Akua ke komo, 'a'oe komo kanaka" (God[s] enters, man cannot enter), which is repeated throughout the first four epochs represented in that chant, is evoked in Trask's poem through the lines, "the god enters/not as a man but as a god."

ho'omanawanui's discussion of the poem reveals a kaona to *The Kumulipo*, which in the minds of many Hawaiians is a direct connection to their last reigning monarch Queen Lili'uokalani who translated the cosmogonic text. Elsewhere, ho'omanawanui discusses the pairing of natural elements within the ancient creation chant. This pairing evokes balance. So Trask's text evokes imbalance, the destruction through colonial processes of the work of Hawaiians over possibly two thousand years of settlement and cultivation. Trask's fourth stanza reads:

I lament the flowers
'a'ole pua, without
issue on the stained
and dying earth

who parts the trembling
legs, enters where
the god enters, not
as a man but as a god? (23-24)

Remembering the discussion of “Kaulana Na Pua” earlier in this chapter, we are aware of the role of flowers as children. The kanikau/lament also refers to the wailing that went up throughout the islands after the overthrow of the Queen. These are handed-down memories which might have a personal nature, but because they have been articulated in her collection of polemical essays *From a Native Daughter*, the references are still accessible to people who are invested in Trask’s politics. Hence these kaona references are addresses to those people, that is, addresses to her followers.

I discussed the H-3 Freeway earlier in this chapter in my reading of “Missionary Graveyard.” I would like to return to the issue in the poem “Ha’iku” (86-87) in that its author-note (88) directly names the freeway. The poem is dedicated to Trask’s colleague, the scholar activist Lilikalā Kame’eleihiwa who fought to prevent construction of the elevated freeway through the Ha’iku Valley due to the many sacred sites along the freeway route:

There is nothing
like this beauty
scarred by wires
from peak to valley floor

The text quickly moves onto the workings of power framed as haole and missionary. The H-3 freeway is a very controversial development. Marjorie Kelly's article in *Museum Archaeology*, for instance, outlines a photographic exhibition by Kapulani Landgraf and Mark Hamasaki. The two photographers recorded the environmental devastation caused by the construction of twenty-three pairs of pylons ranging up to one hundred feet high:

Over and over, nature's lushness is contrasted with the rawness of construction activity. The landscape is slashed, trenches gash the earth, and traditional Hawaiian rock walls and foundations are exposed and crumbling. Water flows not in clear streams but from drain pipes or —worse yet—lies stagnant in polluted pools. Heavy equipment rises above the vegetation like science-fiction monsters. The fact that the gentleness and beauty of the Hawaiian landscape are dimly visible in the background makes the photos all the more evocative and their implicit condemnation of the highway all the more damning.(60)

The freeway was both military and political. It enabled direct road access between the Kane'ohe Marine Corps Air Station and the naval base of Pearl Harbor. Since the route went through conservation land, Senator Daniel Inouye wrote the federal legislation that exempted the project from most environmental laws. Amendments SP 3116 and SP 2886 were passed in September and October 1986 exempting it from the relevant section 4(f) of the Federal Aid Highway Act, which directed highway developers to preserve the natural beauty of refuges and conservation areas.

According to Kelly, the un-built H-3 Freeway route was occupied by Hawaiians for five months, alongside other protests which included public hearings, and marches (60):

How long did those
ancestors plant
in each sacred place?

How many terraces
constructed, fishponds tended?

What chants
commemorated
the goddess and her god?
(Trask 86)

The technique of rhetorical questioning evokes liturgy, even though there is an unspoken response to the questions. The reference to terraces and fishponds speaks of pono between earth and sea as the 'ahupu'a'a system of intensive agriculture and aquaculture reached from the height of mountain valleys with ancient terracing down into the lagoons with walled ponds. This pono or balance stands in grave contrast to the construction practices captured in the photographs. On Trask's website, she notes that during a concrete pour, a women's temple was discovered, but the destruction went ahead despite a sit-in organised by her sister Mililani Trask.

The poet appeared in a video called *Na Iwi Kupuna* which outlined protections afforded for unmarked native burial sites. The 1990 Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act set up five island burial councils consisting of regional community representatives and land owners. As an example of the personal regard the poet has for these processes, while Chair of the Department of Hawaiian Studies at UH Mānoa she and her Department oversaw the relocation of fourteen unmarked burials that were unearthed during street and water line improvements on campus. This took place during the construction of the new Centre for Hawaiian Studies, and so as part of the construction a special burial vault was built in the central courtyard of the Centre called Kamakakūokalani. A traditional dry stack platform was made around the vault. According to Trask, the relocation was seen as a seal of approval by the ancestors for the new building, which was completed in 1996. Trask says:

If our purpose is to transmit the culture and the knowledge that we
as native people have, how could we not do our best if we have
the iwi here, our kupuna here. (*Na Iwi Kupuna* video)

This process followed by many years the suspension of environmental laws for the H-3 Freeway construction, and so in some small way is perhaps an exemplary outcome of what is pono, and how the sacred needs to be acknowledged and incorporated into modern life, rather than destroyed as the terraced taro plantations were, or as the poem “Chant of Lamentation” says, from “ground up”:

I lament my own

long, furious lamentation

flung down

into the bitter stomachs

into the blood-filled streams

into the far

and scattered graves

who tells of those

disinterred, their

ground-up bones, their

poisoned eyes? (24)

Mindful of the tapu status of the subject of this discussion, and as my own personal mark of respect, I recall the heiau at Kamakakūokalani, and the ceremonies I have witnessed there, and the lei I have placed there as an offering of aloha/aroha for the many waewae tapu who have been before and who will follow, to paraphrase Tuwhare's poem "Papatūānuku," for those massaging the earth mother's back with their sore and ever loving feet. Aloha 'āina, love for the land, is in a sense restorative. The experience of Haunani-Kay Trask's rhetoric is one of native empowerment. She speaks the truth until it hurts. She admired the Russian poets Marina Tsvetayeva and Anna Akhmatova who suffered under Stalin's dehumanizing regime. The intense suffering of deeply-felt oppression is a major point of connection between the Russian poets and Trask: Tsvetayeva did not

survive the darkest days of Soviet imperialism during the German invasion, and Ahkmatova endured the fear of the Russian state apparatus, while Trask is alive at the height of American imperialism which uses soft-power to great effect. Should a writer not feel oppressed because they are not imprisoned automatically for speaking their truth? Trask describes herself as a writer in captivity in the influential essay containing the phrase “writing in captivity”:

I was born into captivity, a Native person in a non-Native world, a Hawaiian in an American colony. Because of the long dominance of American imperialism here - including the banning of the Hawaiian language in 1896, a forced change in citizenship from Hawaiian to American with U.S. annexation of Hawai'i in 1898, and the near-total imposition of foreign ways and thoughts - our traditions, our Native voices, literatures, and oratures have been silenced or extinguished altogether. (42)

I find most telling in the essay her use of the term *tangible loss*:

Tangible loss, rather than some amorphous sense of loss, is what I am speaking about, as a mother laments the loss of a child, as a Native person utters the eternal pain of the loss of homeland, of familial places where the bones of our ancient dead are ground up for the mechanical pathways of a modern and twisted culture. This is not the personal loss of immigrants displaced in a foreign country. No, this is the collective loss of a Native woman dishonoured, along with

our people, in our own Native country. Out of this ferocious suffering comes rage
and an insistent desire to tell the cruel truths about Hawai'i. (47)

“Writing in Captivity: Poetry in a Time of De-Colonisation” describes Trask’s approach to poetry. She chooses to emphasise the political, and cites a number of authors who inspire her politically motivated poetry. I suggest also that the poems are not solely political. They speak of the “cruel truths” and so the emotions generated by these insights are actually quite personal, private, and not necessarily conducted on a public or political level. Clearly the private and the public intersect in the poems, but I suggest that it is too easy to dismiss Trask as just a political poet, even given my belief that political literature is not inferior to other literary labels. She is a human being who has seen her family stories re-written or erased, and replaced by versions that are comfortable for government or corporate ears, ones that fulfill the desires of master narrators. She makes the point herself: “In my work, writing is both de-colonisation and re-creation. It is *creativity against the American grain and in the Hawaiian grain*” (47). By political, I mean the poetry of resistance to American military-industrial hegemony inflected for wide consumption. By private, I mean those poems whose essence is the emotional support system for the writer that also provides the psychic, familial, social, environmental and spiritual necessities for the poet’s wellbeing. These aspects are not entirely distinct. They are degrees of emphasis.

Trask’s second collection of poetry, *Night is a Sharkskin Drum*, was published by the University of Hawai‘i Press in 2002, some eight years after *Light in the Crevice Never Seen*. Both titles reference the ocean. The sharkskin is sourced from the Moanan creature, while the crevice is submerged by ocean where the chain of seamounts rises. There are eight pages in its Hawaiian glossary compared to six for the earlier book. The number of Hawaiian terms is noteworthy

because the first collection is 35 pages longer, and so the density of linguistic Hawaiian referents has increased markedly in the new work. In “Writing in Captivity”, the author promises this renewed emphasis on Hawaiian language:

And this leads me to a last, personal evolution: the growing determination to write in my Native language, to use our names and our sounds and our cadences to translate the metaphors of our land and its beauty into the printed word. (47)

The inset or foregrounded cover image is a photograph of what is presumably a sharkskin drum on a shoreline at night. The photo is by Kapulani Landgraf and Mark Hamasaki, who were the photographers that recorded the environmental devastation of the H-3 Freeway construction. The drum is foregrounded and lit. A full moon is half suspended on the horizon, so that it appears that the moon lights the drum. It is the Pō Mahina, the night of the full moon, glossed by Trask as a “night for lovers” (69), and of course, it is a tidal event. There is also a kaona reference to Pele in the cover image as the title-poem ends with a chant, “*E, Pele e, / E, Pele e, / E Pele, e.*” (5). Note how “E” is conventionally italicized, perhaps to emphasise the Hawaiian-ness of the chant, its ritualistic worshipful nature. Another kaona reference to Pele is the background image of the cover. To my eye the grey imagery appears to be billowing smoke from a volcanic eruption. It could also be a black and white photo of treetops taken from above. The only unnatural element on the cover is the drum itself even though it in itself is a composite of natural elements: shark skin stretched over carved wood. It appears to be a pahu heiau or temple drum (Te Rangihiroa 396) made for religious ceremonies as its height suggests a standing drummer. The pahu or drums used in hula were

designed for seated drummers and were much shorter in height than the one depicted on the cover. This may have significance for Pele, but that is speculation. There is another kaona reference to Pele. Herb Kawainui Kane notes that the goddess was guided from Tahiti to Hawai'i "by her elder brother Kamohoali'i in the form of a great shark" (71). As well as being a reference to Pele, the drum is most certainly a reference to Hawaiian sovereignty. Stacy Kamehiro's *The Arts of Kingship: Hawaiian Art and National Culture of the Kalakāua Era* describes the Bishop Museum's pahu heiau named Naniuaola:

Pahu heiau are traditionally associated with religious practices and chiefly power. They signaled major events in temple rites (e.g., the beginning and end of a kapu period and rituals of human sacrifice) and in the lives of the chiefs (e.g., birth, cutting the umbilical cord, circumcision, marriage, death, the return of a longabsent chiefly relative). Naniuaola's possession of a personal name suggests it enjoyed an elevated status; this name likely signaled its sacred purpose and association with chiefly genealogies. When played, the drum called the gods to enter the temple complex and to speak through the drum; sounds emanating from the instrument issued divine mana into the human realm. (115)

Divine heritage and chiefly mana (or sovereignty) are key themes within Trask's poetics. The cover image is particularly attuned to these resonances. The drum was lent to the photographers by renowned Hawaiian musician Robert Cazimero. I have been unable to find a subsequent image of this particular drum as I am interested in its original dimensions and hence its role, so my

discussion is speculative. Like the image of Tuwhare in *Small Holes in the Silence*, there is a headland or land form to the upper right of the photo, yet this one is silhouetted in the night. To the left of the drum, lit by the moon, there is a section of surf hitting the coastline. This could easily have been arranged as a romantic image, but the use of darkness, and the phallic or assertive drum (it is after all upright), prevents such a reading. The energy of this cover has latency, a power yet to be released by the summoning of gods through the drumming hands of an as yet invisible drummer. Perhaps this drummer is the poet herself, using her poetic and worldly knowledge to slap out rhythms and to chant? The title of course spreads the shark skin across dark horizons for it is *night* that is a sharkskin drum, as if some larger entity is beating an immense pahu, one which has an overview on the scale of the night sky (comparable to an oceanic scale which bears its celestial reflection) or of sovereign justice. The title might also mean each night there is a sharkskin drum to play. It might also refer to the ferocity of sharks, and of course their aumakua or guardian status. The sharkskin here then would represent the extended family protected by the shark, and the drum would poetically represent the voice of the family god. The other thing to notice about the title is the encultured nature of its night, which cords it to the series of nights listed in the Kumulipo, and hence genealogically to the great pan-Moanan nights of creation. There is a further kaona reference to sovereignty in the term shark. Pukui and Korn (4-8) describe the significance of the “Shark Hula for Kalani’ōpu’u.” The high born chief Kalani’ōpu’u was the uncle of the first Hawaiian king, Kamehameha I who was called “Lion of the Pacific”:

A more apt emblem for him and for his uncle and other warrior-relatives would be the shark, as in this sacred chant naming various ancestors of

Kalani'ōpu'u who had acquired authority over shark-gods, or over other chiefs who could claim the gods' magical services. Not only the shark but also the cowry, squid, eel, wild goose, and the frigate bird (*'iwa*) were sometimes regarded by the early Hawaiians as *'aumakua*, beings half human and half divine who were bound by obedience to their keepers. Their assistance could become a precious family possession of a line of ruling chiefs, a restrictive right dependent on supernatural agency and power, a kapu. (4)

It is worth noting that the shark hula refers to the Puna district of Hawai'i, which is the site of the geothermal venture discussed earlier in this chapter: Kepanilā is the shark-god of Puna (7) constituting a kaona Moanan reference. Elsewhere in Pukui and Korn (26), the authors describe the night and the moment when the moon shines its brightest as a metaphor for the moment an ali'i is born in the birth chant composed for King Kamehameha III. Clearly then, the cover imagery is associative, and well within the bounds of multi-valent kaona referencing. The multiple kaona references in the cover imagery pile waves on waves pointing to sovereignty.

“Hi'iaka Chanting” builds on the natural references as signs of the goddess. Birds, blossoms, mist, wind, tree snails, moss, are seen as “Hi'iaka chanting// on the wind” (6). The dancer in the last tercets is urged twice to “look up,” as if one look is not enough, and as if there is another meaning here. The dance is most likely a hula since the goddess is chanting “in Pele's uplands.” Pukui and Korn describe Hi'iaka as “a seer gifted with powers of prophecy . . .” (57) and so the emphasis on higher thought as well as vision is appropriate here. The reference to “Elegant hāpu'u” (line 5) might be a kaona reference to “Hi'iaka's Song at Waialua” (Pukui and Korn 62-63) which is set on the

north-east coast of 'Oahu. The translation of this five-line chant also uses the word “upland”. Marsh notes that Trask was raised in this area, “on the Ko'olau side of the island of O'ahu in Kaneohe which foreground the Ko'olau mountains and ridges” (317).

My purpose in revealing these kaona references is to underscore the sovereign importance of Hawaiian and Moanan culture and Hawaiian justice for this poet. The divinities represented do not merely stand in for natural elements. They are at the apex of a justice system whose first human representative is the Hawaiian monarch. Marsh is far more direct in her powerful summation of a series of politicised and racialised responses to Trask's poetry by a range of Americans from the Mainland and Hawai'i:

In exploring the question of what happens when poetry is written by a powerful, influential, and politically uncompromising Native woman in a predominantly colonised and colonial public space, I see Crowell and supporters of his argument against Trask, as representative of mainstream colonial America. Their refusal to read Trask's poetry in the context of native dispossession is an act of ethnocentric arrogance, and possibly racism. (330)

Marsh argues for a reading within a socio-political context (331) rather than just a purely emotional context. I wish to contribute to this argument for holistic contextualisation by adding the multi-referential kaona as forms of culturally safe messaging within Trask's poems, away from fast-reflex critiques by critics who lack distance from and who even privilege colonial ideologies.

The poem “Sovereignty” reminds us of McGregor’s concept of kīpuka discussed earlier (Night 25):

No shadow falls across
those volcanic labia
of fern and spongy
cliff, flooded
by the sun
of revelation.

Nā wahi pana:

the sacred places.

This four part poem directly precedes the poem “Pū'owaina: Flag Day”. It describes in part two the worst atrocities of Western colonisation, the conquistadores and their barbaric slaughter of innocents. In part three, she mercilessly likens former Governor Waihe'e to the Aztec emperor Montezuma II who colluded with the Spanish conquerors (Britannica):

Now, our own Montezuma
goes pandering: Waihe'e,
“runny squid water”

slithering across
the land, slime and

pestilence in his wake.

Plunder

and monstrosities:

snaking freeways...

In part four (*Night 27*), Trask lists three other prominent Hawaiians: “Kamali‘i, / Kamau‘u, Akaka . . .,” and describes them in inverted speechmarks as “Hawaiians”. Kina‘u Boyd Kamali‘i was Chairwoman of the 1980 Native Hawaiian Study Commission which recommended that the US formally apologize for the 1893 overthrow. She was also an OHA Board trustee and so ran an election campaign competing against Mililani Trask. Mahealani Kamau‘u is executive director of the Native Hawaiian Legal Corporation. She was also a member of the Native Hawaiian Working Group set up to listen to Hawaiian opinions about the Akaka Bill before the US Senate which would redefine the formal relationship between the United States and Native Hawaiians (*Starbulletin* 2000). Kamau‘u also happens to be a leading poet. Trask was strongly opposed to Senator Daniel Akaka’s proposed legislation (S1011/HR2314) establishing a Hawaiian self-governing entity which could negotiate with the State and the United States about management and ownership of former Crown resources. Section 7(B) of the first bill that went before the Senate in 2000 would have established an Interim Native Hawaiian Governing Council (Bill Text S.2899). In practice, it would undermine claims by Native Hawaiians for independent sovereign status for Hawai‘i. In 2014 former Senator Akaka’s legislation has still not passed. By strongly denouncing these prominent Hawaiians, Trask takes great personal risks. The close network of relationships within the Islands means that at the very least she undermines personal support for her views from within the

Hawaiian community. When she criticises the late Senator Inouye along with Governor Waihe'e, she also in some way takes on their network of supporters which includes members of the local media. This of course points to her immense personal strength and courage and creates fierce loyalty among her own supporters. Several scholars cited in this chapter were mentored by Professor Trask including ho'omanawanui and McDougall. Trask's poetry is a form of personal kīpuka, a site of strength rather than a haven within the melee of public resistance struggles. Part four of the poem also strongly critiques the Apology Resolution of 1993. The named prominent Hawaiians (27) are described as "...promising/ deliverance// with the whine/ of betrayal." Waihe'e was State Governor during the passage of the Apology Resolution of the US Congress (United States Public Law 103-150). On the surface, an apology for overthrow and annexation by the United States seems in order. The poem, however, points out that the United States continues to celebrate its presence with "helicopters and jets: // metal raptors/ come to feast/ on our dead" (27). There has been little practical effect from the apology except the "gargantuan blades" (25) of the American military. Trask's creation of a poetic stronghold is similar to a volcanic creation. Like Pelehonuamea, she provides a place to stand for future generations of Hawaiians where there was previously no place to stand.

Trask's poem, "Into Our Light I Will Go Forever" (60), to me represents a kīpuka. Its idealised assertions of a sovereign space occupying the past and the future but not the now are "sanctuaries / of hushed bamboo, / awash in amber." Its form is 18 tercets, where the second and third lines are indented, in a series of statements preceded by the term "Into". McDougall (261) also notes they are movements in space. Additionally, I suggest that these are movements in time, and that since the motion is forward or anterior then it is a movement into the past, and hence that

movement could indeed be “forever.” Locationally, Hawaiian and Moanan conceptions of time have the past before the speaker, or “mua,” and the future as posterior to the speaker or “muri”. In this poem, ahupua‘a are named, such as Ka‘a‘awa which is listed in the glossary as being in the Ko‘olaupua area of O‘ahu (64), Punalu‘u, Kahana, Waiāhole, Kualoa, He‘eia, Mālaekahana are all land divisions as well. In a sense then, rather than being a reconstruction of the past, it is the poet’s present, similar to Patricia Grace’s representation of spiral time in her novel *Potiki*, the now-time where values do not change. Miriam Fuchs and Elizabeth DeLoughrey have both written extensively on Grace’s deployment of time. Trask’s use of spiral time enables her to see more clearly the degradation and devastation of American and capitalist colonialism. She has constantly before her the past where there were cultivations using the ahupua'a system that fed one million people state-wide before Western contact (Stannard 1). These are the symbols of the nation. Taro is described as “spangled, blue-leafed” (61) akin to an American flag. The poem is an anthem of Hawaiian achievement and vision. The possessive pronoun “our” emphasises the collectivity of the achievement. The ocean itself is the deified ancestor Kanaloa. The listing of places and achievements builds to the final stanza:

Into our sovereign suns,
drunk on the *mana*
of Hawai‘i (62)

The description of the passage of past time as “suns” and “sovereign” that one moves into contrasts with the moon imagery in the collection describing the present. This is not a binary of light and

dark but a difference, most likely a difference to provide balance or malama pono. This system of checks and balances is referenced throughout the poem in the ahupua'a which depended on collective environmental management from the mountains into the lagoons, into the poet's Hawaiian empathy for the voices and immense beauty of the land, and the poem's own occupation of land ("our parted Ko'olau"), air ("our light") and sea ("corals"). These markers of pono in some way explain the powerful/empowering anti-colonial rhetoric of the poet. The term "drunk" can be read in two ways: as a kind of Bacchanalian joy, or as an expression of heady revelry not completely in control of one's senses and hence not completely pono. The statements express the enormous imbalances created by colonial and corporate power.

To return to the concept of utopia as freedom, connected as we see to cultural concepts such as kīpuka, and political concepts such as sovereignty, it is worth noting the early influence of Herbert Marcuse on Trask's early theoretical work *Eros and Power*. Marcuse, in Trask's account, fails to identify a dialectics of sexual repression as the source of Western dominance in the world which is described as the dominance of culture over nature, and the repression of Eros (1-14). Trask highlights women's association with concepts of 'nature' and the hidden sexual understructures of society that are designed to dominate women in principle through normative expectations of mothering and tasks that stem from this such as domestic labour. This makes the natural symbolism of Pele more apt for an interpretation of her poetry as it strategically removes passivity while retaining nature imagery as an expression of female power. This relationship is also retained in McGregor's conception of the kīpuka in that they are the result of volcanic activity. It also demonstrates Trask's thinking, which strongly relates misogyny to social domination.

Trask's poem 'Returning to Waimānalo' has only appeared in the anthology *Mālama: Hawaiian Land and Water* (142) edited by Hawaiian poet and environmental activist Dana Naone Hall. It is an early poem, written before both collections, and so it does not feature the poet's characteristic indented tercets, but more regular stanzas:

between two worlds
shorelines of meaning form
edging closer, farther
marking the one space
where all my selves
cease transforming

The poem marks a pause in possibly the poet's own life, expressed here as the shorelines of Waimānalo beach. Note the plural shorelines: one is the visible, while the other is the invisible shoreline, the *tua-uri* referred to by Māori Marsden as the deeper reality. The poet speaks of the world wars, and also two worlds in the second stanza. Consciously the poet makes a statement about this indigenous space, Waimānalo, in the third stanza:

but here, there is a moment
a fall of light along
the shore, gleaming
a changing shoreline
this is not peace, or
solitude. i am too
unseasoned for that

This between-ness is 'told' to us by the narrator; it is terrain travelled by Wendt and Hulme as well. Hulme's between-ness is shown rather than told, while Wendt's is a mixture. Trask is quite bold in her assertions about space, quite conscious in the fourth stanza:

it is something strange:
intelligible space
in a bitter universe
rhythm amidst terrifying noise
human need that does not
suffer

it is my experience
when struggle wanes

The poet reaches into creative energies beyond the darkness, into te tua-uri, through her lived experience of the aronui, the world of perception:

myself, and my people
absorbing sounds
near a silent sea
forming ancient
contours of meaning

It is a highly philosophical poem that grounds itself in place, rather than the struggles of transformation. It recognises "human need" beyond the "terrifying noise" most likely rendered by weapons or immense machinery. In contrast to the noise, Hawaiians are represented as "absorbing

sounds” so that they have insights into realities beyond the world of sense-perception. In this representation, the kīpuka is the shoreline. It is meaningful to the poet, but it is also a vulnerable space, not fertile, in between the nourishment of the land and the fecundity of the ocean, yet it is “the one space/ where all my selves/ cease transforming.” In a sense, the moana itself is an enlarged kīpuka with enormous folding and unfolding waves and currents of influence that connect over vast distances and at many levels. In that sense, the kīpuka does not represent confinement of cultural activity and expression, but rather highlights the ongoing discursive forces of tidalectics through, for example, Trask’s powerful Pele referencing as the goddess and her accompanying mo’olelo emerge from the waves. In her poems, the discourse ranges in scale from a flower up to an entire military-industrial complex.

CHAPTER 6. KERI HULME AND MANA WĀHINE

Like Wendt, Keri Hulme is also known as a significant fiction writer, primarily for her Booker Prize winning novel *The Bone People*. Her poems have been anthologised in New Zealand for decades beginning with Witi Ihimaera's collection *Into the World of Light* in 1982. Her collections of poetry include *Lost Possessions* (VUP 1985), *The Silences Between (Moeraki Conversations)* (AUP and Oxford 1982), and *Strands* (AUP 1992). Her short fiction collections *Stonefish* (Huia 2004) and *Te Kaihau: the Windeater* (VUP 2006) also contain some poems. Several of her book titles visualize a Moanan frame of reference in that they either name non-human others, or environmental elements, suggesting a relationship to be articulated inside the covers. In this chapter, in addition to non-human nature, the assertion of mana wāhine emerges as a core element of this Moanan frame. Of Hulme's books, I will focus on *Strands*, *Lost Possessions*, and *The Silences Between* as they are intended to be organised as poetry collections. *Lost Possessions* is a persona poem about a fictional academic character, Dr Harold Wittie, who is kidnapped and tortured. Since Hulme has published more personally voiced poetry I will read this collection as a contrast to the other two poetry collections where the voice feels more autobiographical. In a 1988 interview with Gregory O'Brien, Hulme comments on her approach to writing:

Telling stories, playing with words, is for me a way of reaching beyond my narrow life, reaching out beyond my narrow earth—it uncrowds my head, pacifies the ghosts, and (in a very small way) makes my life worth

my while. So does fishing and drinking and painting and walking beaches
and all other forms of dreaming. (26)

The comment reveals a bio-centred approach where word-play is part of a larger biological, environmental and spiritual sphere. A literal grounding in fishing and beaches is a physical embodiment of the Moanan world, but it is its recursive or perception-altering elements expressed as drinking and painting and walking, or uncrowding, or reaching out, that qualitatively defines a Moanan te ao mārama of threshold returns, as in wave actions that in their crossings change or reshape surfaces.

The first thing to notice about Hulme's collection title *The Silences Between (Moeraki Conversations)* is its similarity to Hone Tuwhare's *Small Holes in the Silence*. While I do not claim that the use of silence here is the same in both titles, I can see that Hulme's title opens up a space within the flow of words inside spoken sentences. *Silences Between* references the littoral, while *Small Holes* references a source of water, rain, in that the line is borrowed from the poem "Rain". Moeraki invites a visual kind of semantics in that the famous boulders on the beach resemble full-stops in a text, so that the "conversations" are actually the spaces between the full-stops or boulders. The cover image is a photograph by Robin Morrison, who is also known for his portraits of New Zealand writers. There are no boulders visible in the photo, yet that is why the beach is famous. It is an image of silence, a gap between boulders. We are at the foreshore with white surf and a headland at the far end of the beach. The composition of the photo gives equal weight to sky and shore so that they are separated by a sliver of land stretching out from the headland. Another way of seeing this is that the land is *between* the foreshore and the sky. The cover has a sepia tone

to it but the quality of the light emphasises the whiteness of the surf and the clouds in the sky, while the sand on the beach is dark and the headland is in silhouette.

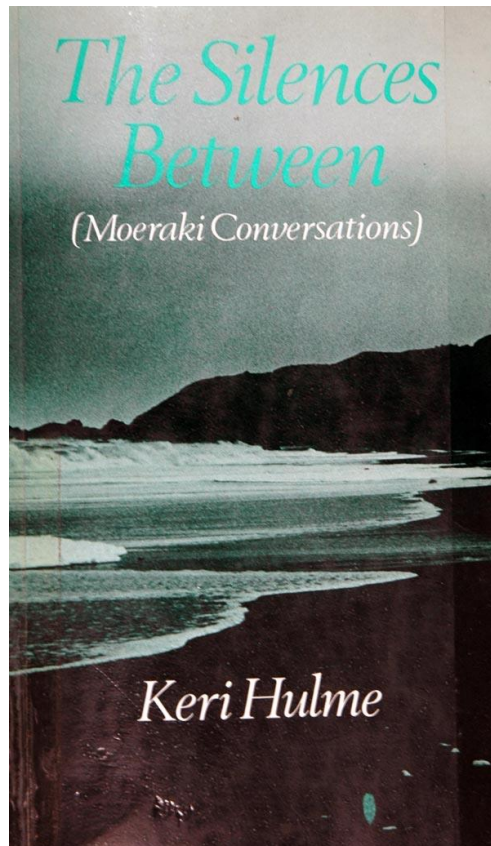


Figure 12 Cover of *The Silences Between*

The physical Moanan energy represented in the photo comes from the surf which roars in and then reaches out in long smooth stretches of sand flecked with foam. The light shimmers in the foam and the cloud so that the cover speaks of natural power. The title font of *The Silences Between* is light green, while *(Moeraki Conversations)* is white, perhaps indicating surf and sky. The brackets

around *Moeraki Conversations* are an enclosure emphasizing the silence of this internal dialogue where brackets create the literal between-ness, that is, the subtitle is between the brackets. It is the text here that provides the qualitative Moana poetics: “Keri Hulme” is a biological caption in this cover world; “conversations” are enclosed within this Moanan te ao mārama. Some of the poems with bracketed statements and ellipses include “(Mō Rore)” (13), “Silence . . . moons & self” (18), “Silence . . . on another marae” (25), “Moeraki Conversations 4” (29), “Silence . . . overseas” (32), “Silence . . . on the other coast” (47), or the tidalectal title “Ki te uta, ki te tai” (53) meaning to the sea and to the shore. In this list alone there is a plurality of silences between the covers, and six numbered Moeraki conversations. The six conversations appear to be sections. Here is the structure of the collection in table-form. There is no table of contents in the book so it is necessary for me to create one here:

<i>Pa mai tō reo aroha</i>		5
<i>Aue, te aroha me te mamae</i>		8
<i>Moeraki Conversations 1</i>	Untitled	9
	Silence...in a city	10
	<i>Wine Song 1</i>	11
	Hate takes forms the heart can't answer	12
	(Mō rore)	13
	<i>He moemoea</i>	14
<i>Moeraki Conversations 2</i>	He Wahi Tapu: <i>Shell Knife</i>	15
	<i>Kehua Trap</i>	16
	Silence...moons & self	18
<i>Moeraki Conversations 3</i>	Three Songs For The Ghosts	22
	<i>Returning</i>	23
	<i>Hokioi</i>	24
	Silence...on another marae	25
	<i>Nga kehua</i>	27
	<i>First sleep in Te Rangiita</i>	28
<i>Moeraki Conversations 4</i>	(<i>dream fragment, Seaweed Hair Climbing</i>)	29
	<i>Knowing</i>	30

	Silence...overseas	32
	<i>Leaving my bones behind (Tahi – Rua tekau ma tahi)</i>	32-40
	<i>Spotlight</i>	41
Moeraki Conversations 5	<i>Searching for clear water</i>	45
	Silence...on the other coast	47
	<i>Getting to the coast</i>	
	<i>Okarito Tuhituhia</i>	49
	<i>He namu pea au?</i>	50
	<i>October</i>	51
	<i>Ends and beginnings</i>	52
	<i>Ki te uta, Ki te tai</i>	53
Moeraki Conversations 6	Untitled	54

I retained italics in titles above as they seem to have significance, perhaps a dialogical one as in a pattern of voices. The “silence” poems are not italicised. This could possibly indicate that they are the unspoken sections, while the spoken or voiced sections are in italics. In the poems “Kehua Trap” (16), “Three Songs for the Ghosts” (22), “Knowing” (30), and “Searching for Clear Water” (45), the dialogue is marked by speechmarks and italics, but elsewhere in the collection it is in regular font. In a sense, attempting to sift deeper meanings from the collection is like catching kehuas or spirits. The world of the writer is the world of the poems here. On the back cover there is an introductory biography by Hulme. “I am not a traveler, but I make journeys.” She lists the following as material for her writing, “words and colours and forms and sounds; stars; possibilities; myths; fantasies; dreams. Not to mention food and fishing, drinking, gambling & driving and a good sleep. I love puzzles too. And particular kinds of jokes.” So the poet claims an eclectic approach to poetry, or te ao mārama of many parts.

The opening poem of the collection, “Pa mai tō reo aroha” (5-7), has the same title as a well-known waiata of welcome often sung at formal and informal gatherings. The title translates as “Your voice of love touches (or reaches) [me or us].” At first the greetings here in this poem appear to be between the land, sky and ocean (all Moanan) elements:

At each end of the kaik’ bay the cliff goes
down in humps to stand blunt-nosed
against the sea. But the rocks creep further
out, black arms, reefs. They are full of
secret pools. The unblinking eyes of octopi
at night.

The stanza above is an accurate description of the cover photo which must be of one end of the bay. As an afterthought to my reading of the cover at the beginning of this chapter, it occurs to me that the boulders are on the beach to the north of this site, but then a reader who is not very familiar with the area would still expect the renowned boulders to be nearby. The word kaik’ is a Māori loan-word from the Kai Tahu dialect word kaika (kainga in standard Māori) which means small settlement. The Kai Tahu *Natural Resource Management Plan 2005* thus describes places of significance at the harbor (32): “Onekakara is the name of Moeraki harbour; the second kaik’ was called “Moeraki” and “Koraritahuri.” Koraritahuri was also a traditional urunga waka and Matuatiki is the place often referred to as the first kaik.” The “shattered black rocks” in stanza two of the poem hence refer to the first settlement or kaik’ at Matuatiki, that is, the Māori settlement that is no

longer located there. On the facing page to the poem there is a tercet (4): “I asked for riches / you gave me / scavenging rights on a far beach”:

On the beach, the apricot and gold gravel
turns rusty orange at wave-edge.
There is a long streak of iron dark sand
where Matuatiki runs out to the sea.
There are shattered black rocks round all
the arc of bay.

References to rust, iron, gold, and gravel remind me of the encroachment of Western industry, perhaps mining. The shattered nature of rocks suggests an explosive process. The first *kaik'*, Matuatiki, is depicted in ruins. Yet this is a subtext. The surface is “a cloud of midges [that] weaves and / dances through the evening sun. / There are mysterious glassy tracks on the / sea.” The fifth stanza presents the bay as “calm as untroubled sleep,” which to me suggests that there have been troubles, indicated here by the constant references to damage (5): “shaved and trimmed and wounded by the / wind.” Non-human nature is as ever present as the Moana. Local geography and cultural geography reckon large in the poem. Even with a map it is not possible to locate all the references:



Figure 13 Map of Moeraki
<http://www.ngaitahu.iwi.nz>

The kaik' bay in stanza four is most likely the Kaika next to Tawhiroko point on longitude 33 of the map above. Maukiekie Island and Tikoraki are referenced on page 7 of the collection. Given this information, one can infer that Matuatiki is near the current place called Kaika if it isn't actually the Kaika. Two rocks are named, Tutimakohu and Te Karipi (7), which "stand / on tiptoe, each suffocating pillar dreading / hightide in this lash and swirl of storm-/driven sea. / I crouch against the claystone, like a child / huddling close to its mother. / I watch the waves wage their long war / against the land, the land her long / resistance." The poet speaks of her relationship with the land, which is depicted as her mother. The other children in this passage are perhaps the pillars on tiptoe. The resistance referenced here combines Moanan mythologies and politics. The myth reminds us of the war between the land-based god Tane and the oceanic deity Tangaroa, but here Hulme emphasises the mana wāhine aspect by removing Tane in the poem and making it the land (deified as the female god Papatūānuku) that resists. The political reference is perhaps to the former Māori settlement and its resistance to colonisation. Taylor's *Lore and History of the South Island Māoris* reveals more information about Moeraki:

There are five old burial-places on Moeraki Peninsula: Khipuku, Kawa, Tikoraki, Uhi mataitai and Tawhiroko. Wai whero whero is a stream on Hampden Beach near the Nugget Rock (Pukemata) towards Hillgrove. Port Moeraki is One kakara. Poutaiki is a hill over towards the Moeraki Light-house [south at Katiki point]. Koekohe is a beach to the north of Moeraki. Tarere-kautuku is the first

bay and point reached coming from Hillgrove. The reef near the lighthouse is Taki a maru, and like the names Oamaru and Punaomaru further north honour an ancestor. Islets off the Moeraki Peninsula are Tokatara, Amira and Tutemakohu—the latter named after a famous chief. Beaches are Maukaika, Matua tiki and Kawa kawa. (106)

The “old ghosts from / Khipuku” (6) then are from the old burial ground. In contrast to Taylor’s historical account, the poem provides more than place-names and some of the stories. It provides details of the abundant creatures living on and around the peninsula including “caa’ing whales out in / the woman sea” (6), an earwig, a cat, a dog, seaweed, kelp-flies, shags, penguins, octopi, midges, so that by association the peninsula and its surrounding islands are shown to be alive too:

On another day, the sea smashes in
against twin-armed Tikoraki. The
blowhole booms.
The elephant-black rocks rumble back and
forward in a murderous herd. (7)

This site is far from the ‘silences’ in the collection-title. It is “full of roaring” (7), booms and exploding waves: these too may be expressions of mana wāhine from the “woman sea.” As the opening poem of the collection, it is perhaps a sonic bracket, one where the

silences follow, or even a soundscape like a headland that juts out into the sea so that the ocean generates noise. The word “reo” in the title means voice as well as language. Does the closing poem of the collection work like a headland / soundscape, and a bracket too? “Moeraki Conversations 6” is set at New Year, while “Pa Mai To Reo Aroha” feels wintry with rain and rough weather. I suggest that the last poem does close the collection like a bracket: the first poem begins in Maori (its title) while the last poem ends in Maori (a farewell to the dead). To return to the first poem, as well as the “woman sea,” there are multiple references to weaving, which is mainly practiced by women. There are instances in the fifth stanza in “Pa mai tō reo aroha” (5) where midges weave and dance, as well as the penultimate stanza’s “lash and swirl” (7), while the first line shows seaweed in a weaver’s loom as it “floats in a brown tangled rack” (5). Its “fall and rise” in the water could be a description of the warp and weft of a weaver. “Pa Mai To Reo Aroha” has been published in many anthologies including the third volume of Witi Ihimaera’s *Te Ao Mārama* series (266-268), the women’s poetry anthology *Yellow Pencils* edited by Lydia Wevers (123-124), and *The Caxton Press Anthology of New Zealand Poetry* edited by Mark Williams (146-148). Such a wide circulation indicates its success at evoking “the speaker’s wonder at the vitality and vigour of the scene” (Underhill 475).

Bones and burial places feature in several poems, especially the first of the Moeraki Conversations:

I said, ‘*Hope they grow*,
and he answered

*'She must have been a stone-collector
on the beach. Couldn't reach her.'*
'What beach?'
'Where we found that skull last Christmas.'
'By Maukiekie?'
*'Yeah...well, she lay there
and didn't see the shells I showed her.'*
'She was breathing?'
*'O, the sand moved by her face
from time to time. That would be
a very strange wind.'* (9)

The answer seems off-topic, dragged out from the speaker's subconscious. The two people in the conversation are planting seeds in the hills above the beach. The bones are of course reminders of those who lived there previously. The seeds are cast in this afterlife light: "ochre and golden husks / hard as the hobs of hell" (9). Their planting is described as patting "an earthcover over" as if it were a burial. The stone-collector reference in the extract could be to the author, whose character Kerewin in *The Bone People* collects many stones. In *Moeraki Conversations 2* (15) the setting is "He Wahi Tapu," a sacred place, possibly a cemetery, or at least some kind of midden where the narrator discovers a shell knife, "a flake of flint chipped in deliberate small notches / long as my finger. Don't touch! / Hey it's sharp!" (15) This is no prehistoric discovery

given the stone's sharpness. Again, there is a bone simile, this time involving the narrator's finger. Overleaf, the next poem, "Kehua Trap" or ghost trap, is in a graveyard:

'Who's down there?'

Just bones I answer, just bones...I
watch a new headstone tilt as the flesh
melts a little more and he goes
hopping over the mounds (17)

There is a hint that the conversation is with ghosts: "The stones had dropped, careless asides . . ." (17). A cat is "yowling deep in her throat." The male speaker in the poem says:

'Someone!'

his voice pitched to bat-squeak,
shaking on his kneebones "*No no I never!*"
hung your thing in the window
stretched the knots out over the door (16)

The narrator had been playing with strips of dyed and scraped flax, "making knots in the muka in the sun / and I dropped the tangle . . ." (16) The presence of the dead here intrudes on the living. The kehua hung the tangle of knots over the boat-shed window. The poem swiftly leaps to the relocation of the original church building to Moeraki port

where the main settlement is located. The re-siting of the church meant the emptying out of the community presumably at Matuatiki (17): “*it took ten days a truck and all the men.*” ‘Moeraki Conversations 3’ (22) references the myth of the Te Araiteuru Waka whose petrified gourds are regarded as the Moeraki boulders. The waka itself lies as a stone reef, while “*Her crew caught by sunlight / became boulders and hills by this beach . . .*” The narrator makes love to an incubus in the following stanza. The central voice of the poem thus inhabits multiple worlds and at the very least claims to engage with the inhabitants of each world on an intimate basis. There is a sense that the poet is closely reading the tideline, the land, the middens and graves, the unearthed human remains, the disappeared buildings, and interprets natural elements as if deciphering a range of creature and weather-generated languages. In a 1995 interview, Hulme addresses Anton Sarti’s question about “silences in communication between the living and the dead” by beginning to talk about ghost tales from her Scottish Nana:

It was naturally assumed when I was growing up that the dead were around us—at Moeraki (which was near a cemetery) it used to be a joke, but a loaded joke: “Oh, one of the old fellas has come in because one of the family animals was behaving a bit peculiar.” (64)

The writer has connected her Celtic and Māori inheritance in the charming remark through the recently intermingled heritage of the kaik’.

Remembering this interpretive project's focus on culture and Moanan identity as revealed by the closely read texts, one is struck by the sensory emphasis, the embodiment of the poet's world. These poems draw their virility from the air, wind, rain, and sun being expressed in the rocky land and sea of the Moeraki peninsula. As with Haunani-Kay Trask's Hawaiian poems, the names of geographical features often reference significant deities, communal achievements, sacred sites and dwellings, as well as ancestors and their burial places, so that these ostensibly non-human references nearly always bear a trace of the people in Moanan community. The structure of the "Silence" sequences, built between the six Moeraki conversations, encourages an intertextual sensibility where poems inter-relate to one another through their Moeraki locations or their non-Moeraki locations, such as the poems set in a Dunedin flat, or the poems located in Hawai'i during a poetry festival. To fully grasp the poems it is necessary to immerse oneself in the stories and histories of Moeraki and to swim or surf from there. In a 1987 essay, "Okārīto and Moeraki", Hulme likens her coming of age as learning to fish in relationship to Moeraki:

The important bits of land became those you took your points from, lining up Puketapu above Katiki beach, and Fish Reef with Tawhiroko, the hill above the kaik'. It was that year I learned about sequences of names too, because Fish Reef had been Takiamaru before it was Fish Reef, and the beach I'd always thought of as King and Queen was originally Paitu, and doubtless called something else again by Kati Mamoe who'd had the area before Kai Tahu arrived. And much earlier, Waitaha must've recognized the beaches and reefs and rocks

and islands by still other names, most of them now lost. Layers of peoples, layers of names, lost... (2)

The 21 poem sequence “Leaving My Bones Behind” (32-40) follows “Silence . . . Overseas” (32) and “Moeraki Conversations 4” (29). The “Silence” poem reveals a general understanding of Hawaiian culture, relating the heiau to marae, and noting that their highborn wore feather cloaks. Nevertheless in section five, “Rima,” the narrator expresses a sense of alienation:

You take your lie
from the land
and I am landless,
my fire gone out.
Mauka, matai—chopped words to
my mother’s tongue
and these sea-trees
full of odd birds—
E, Pipiwharaua,
where are you? (34)

The pipiwharaua or shining cuckoo is a migratory bird used by navigators to find land. The lack of fire refers to ahi kā or the right to land through maintaining residence, or

home fires, while mauka refers to inland directions given to tourists in order to help them find their way around the islands, and matai is really a typo for makai, meaning the direction towards the shore. The narrator is eager to compare Hawaiian and Māori elements, as if encountering a new although related culture. There is a hidden meaning in pīpīwharau: “*Te Pīpīwharau* means a child born out of wedlock, and also the bird that is the herald of spring, the shining cuckoo” (Hulme, “Mauri” 308). Hulme also sees the same things that Trask and other Hawaiian poets do, such as Wayne Kaumualii Westlake. In the tenth poem, “Tekau,” she encounters a drunk woman at Waikiki named Te Kau. From the description, the woman is suffering from mental illness, and is possibly one of the many houseless people in the city. Wayne Westlake’s sequence, “Down on the Sidewalks of Waikiki,” is written from the perspective of a homeless person. Hulme’s poem captures some of that flavor:

Jesus, she first ranted
and kicked a Coke can on the road
O I’ll lick his arse until it bleeds
--smile, and I’ll
punch your face in, faggot
A spindrift of violence
sprayed over careless tourists (35)

There is no aloha spirit expressed here. The romance of Coke advertizing is kicked, while sex is sordid, and human interaction is quickly reduced to blows. The anger also reminds me of Trask's poetry, and the anger of native Hawaiians towards a culture that introduced prostitution as tourism. Waikiki beach is a world-famous tourist spot. Its "allure" is promoted by posters and postcards, American television shows, and also in counter-hegemonic poems by Hawaiians such as Westlake. Here is an example by Westlake 1:

down on the sidewalk

in waikiki

I

SEE

EVERYTHING

passing me:

lost souls

girls with nice asses,

businessmen

with dirty assholes

and shiny suits,

bums pimps whores

freaks junkies gigolos
and burnt out Amerikans . . . (141)

Westlake worked as a janitor in the area between 1972-1973 so his collection is an accumulation of observations, literally from the street, over a sustained period; Hulme's poetry, set in the same location some ten years later, contains echoes of Westlake's frank and sometimes sordid style. One difference from Westlake, and other Hawaiian poets, is that her poems set there deliberately eschew details of the tangata whenua presence except through general references to language. Indeed, the sequence emphasises the narrator's non-indigenous status in the introductory "Silence . . . overseas": "and the only thing I know about these / coming islands / their highborn wore feather cloaks and tall / helmets shaped like wave-crests" (32). I mention these lines again because in this context the narrator is *removing* possibilities for kaona. There are no claims to understand the significance of Hawaiian place names. Every detail is represented in a Māori context. The poems are numbered in Māori, and alphabeticised: Tahī, rua, toru . . . Each poem in this Hawai'i sequence measures its experience against an unstated ideal:

Do all poets tire?
Tire of questing after
the numinous surprising power?

Tangled in their wordnets

where once they sought to hold
the oceanic fire? (32)

“Numinous” has two significant meanings according to the *OED*. The first comes from psychology: “Relating to the experience of the divine as awesome or terrifying; designating that which governs the subject outside his or her own will.” In art, it describes “a sense of the spiritually transcendent.” The narrator thus presents the journey to Hawai’i as a quest and an escape from entanglements:

I shall seek the safety of new waves
I shall go swimming in unknown seas,
I shall face the sharks of dawn. (32)

This reminds me of Janet Frame’s “I was not yet civilized. I traded my safety for the glass beads of fantasy.” The ‘wordnets’ also reminds me of the earlier poem “Kehua Trap”(16), where the poet weaves muka knots and finds them stretched across the door. In a 1981 essay, “Mauri: An Introduction to Bicultural Poetry in New Zealand,” Hulme raises the term numinous once more, while defining mauri in three ways as life principle, emotional source, and a material talisman:

In the following pages, would you keep the idea of *mauri* in mind? You may just see sticks and stones, things sometimes interesting to look at. You may see godholders, but not feel the power of the indwelling spirits.
Or you may find yourself in the presence of the numinous. (290)

The first poem, "Tahi," is entitled "Leaving My Bones Behind" (32). As well as a reference to the narrator's sacred places, where the bones of her ancestors are interred, one could literally describe the title as a leaving of one's support structures – literally the supporting frame of one's body, and one's understanding of the land and sea as expressed in the many Moeraki poems. The second poem, "Rua," is set on the flight to Auckland and then to Honolulu:

my narrow land
is rawspined, naked at the foothills
where once the green skin grew;
then slender veins,
Waimakariri, Rakaia (33)

In the above extract one sees the embodiment of the land and also the environmental devastation of deforestation above South Island rivers bleeding into the Pacific. The ocean is described as "the greater dark." Perhaps this returns us to numinosity, a sense of awe as the poet flies into a great unknown? In the Hawai'i sequence, Hulme rapidly comes to the conclusion that she does not wish to stay: "I CANNOT LOVE SHARKS AND IT IS DARK" (38). The sequence ends with drink, "skincells, dung, sweat, / and ghosts of dreams" (40). The following poem, "Spotlight," is set at a poetry reading and a Honolulu stripclub so that the poet likens her poetry reading to a pornographic strip (41). It is an extraordinarily unhappy poem. The narrator fails to engage with the other poets from Korea and the Phillipines:

They are poets in a conference of poets: I am
a pair of stark eyes on the fringes.

The narrative appears to blank out at this point, and the poem shifts to the strip club where a young woman performs games with sex toys on a stage, including “a distress / flare or a small stick of napalm” (42), as if to emphasise the military’s use of Waikiki as a rest and recreation centre during the Vietnam War. Fort deRussy is on the shoreline of the beach as well as the Hawai’i Army Museum:

When I stepped off the stage earlier this
evening, my paper poems were limp with
sweat.

The lights are hard.

They drain souls. (43)

The poem concludes, “I came home / hollow” (44). The hollowness could have come about because of the crass dehumanizing effects of capitalist colonialism, as well as the lack of connection with the international poets who participated in the 1979 East-West Center conference she attended.

I look for familiar smiles
in the shifting tide

but eyes here lie.

--If I had brown skin

--If my eyes weren't blue

--If my hair was darker

In these eyes, I am haole (37)

Having lived in Honolulu for seven years, I agree that people's racial ethnicity is a point of interest in that society and talked about in a manner that would be unusual in New Zealand. If Hulme had actually lived there, she would have discovered that the majority population in that State consists of a multi-ethnic local culture who are descendants of plantation workers from many locations, including Puerto Rico, Japan, China, Korea, and the Philippines, as well as Samoan, indigenous Hawaiian, and Micronesian groups. White Americans or Haoles who have not intermarried are a minority group. Hulme might have been pleasantly surprised to know that she might have been recognised as a person who has Moanan ancestry as there is considerable ethnic intermingling. What this poem reveals is the narrator's social situation and the horizon that is visible to her from her point of view. To return to the idea of conversations named in the book title, clearly the narrator was dissatisfied with the brief interactions outlined at the conference. Ideally, there would have been more engagement, more of a dialectics (a term related to dialogue), or reciprocal tidalectics. Instead, this sequence of poems feels very internal with little dialogue, and so the voice of the sequence is on its own in the silence. "There is not one but many silences, and they are an integral part of the strategies that underlie and permeate discourses" (Foucault, *History of Sexuality* 27). Here silence is not merely an absence of speech. Hulme's voice represents a series of

reservations being recorded so that she can share them with a reading audience later. It is a strategic pause for reflection, to be shared after contextualizing thoughts within a collection of poems that highlight silences and conversations in and perhaps even with an ancestral place, Moeraki. We are shown some of the entertainments of industrial and military capitalism to highlight their alcoholic and distractive natures: crudely put, they are designed to make soldiers and tourists forget their hard daily lives. Hulme's depictions might be unfair caricatures of the local culture, but the setting is a global centre for a tourist culture which specialises in escapist forgetting. To be fair to Hulme, as already noted she highlights her visitor status, almost declaring that she cannot be expected to articulate a nuanced engagement with the present let alone the past. She still leaves a space for an indigenous, Moanan presence by highlighting the workings of power through the abused and abusive presence of the "drunk lady" Te Kau in Waikiki (35), and then by her own degradation on stage as she compares her poetry reading with a stripper act in "Spotlight" (41). I say indigenous because the only return to health in the collection centres on Moeraki and other ancestral places which are figured as indigenous through the names that represent their knowledge systems. The second poem after the poet's return, "Silence . . . on the other coast," dwells on a symbol of indigenous presence, a tohu which literally means "sign":

I am polishing my grand-dad's tohu. It is a
small piece of pounamu, translucent and
shaped like an elongated tear. Or a mere.
His father was a traveler, a refugee from this
coast.

I have brought his tohu back home, but I don't
know whether I have come home. (47)

Hulme herself notes: "Greenstone—pounamu or jade—was the most valued material for ornaments and some weapons in the past" (Hulme, "Mauri" 307).

The setting here is the West Coast of the South Island at Greymouth. The first meaningful conversation occurs in the collection since the start of the Hawai'i sequence. The poet has caught only three whitebait. Two men walk by:

'You catch much with that early start?'
'Aw, enough to crack an egg at.'
'Lucky bugger! I've got about a Christchurch pattie.' (48)

It augurs well. By the end of the poem, the narrator has decided to relocate to this coast:

I think, I think, I think I will leave this barren
north and go south to the top of the world. (49)

The reference to the north is interesting here because earlier in the poem she quotes a northern love song or tau:

E raro rawa-kore
e runga, tini-hanga. (48)

I translate this to mean that below, or north, there is nothing, while above, or south, there is plenty. The very next poem is set at Okārito, near Fiordland National Park (49), which is where the poet built a home.

Hulme's 1981 essay on biculturalism also talks about her dual heritage, which "is both pain and advantage. Hulme introduces herself as Scots, English and Ngai Tahu, in discussing some of her own poetry. She also introduces work by Apirana Taylor, Brian Potiki, Michael Stevens, Hone Tuwhare, Rowley Habib, Haare Williams, Rangī Faith, and others who she sees as mixed-race writers. Despite the European heritage, the essay focuses on Māori elements, and makes some assertions about worldview:

Death, for the old people, was the beginning of a journey. The body died,
but everyone knew humans were composed of several bodies, or qualities of life
(*Mauri*, *Manawa ora*, *hau* and *wairua*, for example), some of which survived the
physical body's death. Some of the surviving "bodies"—*kehua* and *wairua*—could
be dangerous to the living, and had to be guarded against. (305)

According to the Māori theologian Māori Marsden, *hau* or breath is the life force applied to animate objects, while *mauri* is the life principle applied to the inanimate (44). *Manawa ora* refers to emotional wellbeing, while *wairua* is the spiritual side. A person in this world-view constitutes an assemblage of different qualities or to use Hulme's term, "bodies." The latter term denotes

independence, so that the wairua might travel independently of the earthly body. These points are worth noting because Hulme's poetry is saturated with spirituality, and an additional range of related and strategically essentialised qualities which evoke a large assemblage of different viewpoints within a single consciousness. In a sense, emotions, spirit, life principle, life force, behave as alternate consciousnesses in this woven universe (to refer to Māori Marsden's book title), at least as expressed in Hulme's poetry. Her poem "Nga Kehua" makes concrete these essay assertions (the text in bold is Hulme's):

I carry my ghosts on my shoulders

wet-eyed and tight with teeth:

I am immune to cooked charms

Motoitōi, who joined with a sailor
until her bruises broke her heart;
Emma who drew a plough
where a horse should be;
Tommy Rangakino shoveling coal
until the dust throttled him
with canker of the throat

I carry my ghosts on my shoulders

though some have never been born

--did I have a silent cousin?

--did I know tears?

In grief, seaweed

in grief, bleeding

in grief, obsidian knives (27)

The four-stanza extract above has elements of kaona too. In her 1981 essay discussion of this poem, Hulme points out that widows at a tangi would wear wreaths of seaweed, “and obsidian knives were used to gash flesh of mourners, so to express their grief” (305). The second-stanza reveals a hard working life for Emma, who ploughed fields in the stead of a horse, Motoitōi who was beaten by her sailor-husband or lover, and Tommy Rangakino inhaling coal dust on a west coast mine. These are some of the poet’s ancestors. The line “wet eyed and tight with teeth,” which describes their ghosts, emphasises their grim situations: the “tight with teeth” might mean silence as well as an unsmiling disposition. In her essay, Hulme notes that “carrying cooked food was thought to be a sure antidote for ghosts...” (305), so in the first stanza she notes that she is “immune to cooked charms.” The poem also has the effect of undoing doubts about racial identity. These ghosts are Māori in the majority, with the possible exception of Emma. The poem also invites deeper, nuanced readings of Hulme’s poetic. For instance, in the 1981 essay, written before she achieved global success with *The Bone People*, Hulme describes a taniwha as “a water monster, a personified current or whirlpool, and also a figurative term for a chief, a prodigy, or the human body corporate” (309). Reading this reminds me of the “lash and swirl of storm- / driven sea” (7) in

the first poem of the collection, "Pa mai tō reo aroha". Ghosts also feature in that first poem, the ones that sneak in from the cemetery called Kihipuku; it is unclear whether the conversation is with ghosts or people (6): "We eat and talk and read until the / lamps flicker. Then we go to sleep in / the narrow cupboard bunks, and the / sea has all our dreams." Of course it is probable that the conversation is with at least one other living person, but their unannounced anonymity (they are not named), while the ghosts are announced, creates this uncertainty of the presence of living or dead. In the poet's explorations of the bay, in this poem, all the discoveries are narrated in the first person singular voice. It is only in the passage with the ghosts that first person plural pronouns are used, and then a further "we" five lines down the text when talking about "caa'ing whales." I draw attention to the first poem partly as a return, a deferential spiral of reading, as the poems encourage one to curve thought in and out of conscious and subconscious, animate and inanimate, concrete and abstract experience. Also, by way of return, I recall Foucault's inclusion of cemeteries as heterotopias of time representing idealised accounts of the past. Hulme resurrects the cemetery itself so as to at least restore the idealised account.

There is a second, more shadowy spiral. Although published only three years after *The Silences Between*, and seven years before *Strands*, her 1985 collection *Lost Possessions* does not seem connected thematically in terms of the mused spaces or personae of her other two collections. It feels more like a non-space along the lines of Marc Augé in his book *Non Places*, occupying a temporary room that could be anywhere in the West, strangely connected to the rest of the world by the presence of nondescript objects such as a toilet bucket, a ceiling light, a door, a linoleum floor (6-7). The pages are unnumbered as if to emphasise the lack of location in time as well as space. The protagonist is Dr Harold Wittie, who states that he is a university lecturer of English who has

been kidnapped, beaten, stripped and imprisoned in a room 12 feet long, 8 feet wide, 10 feet tall. He can only rely on his own Circadian rhythms for a sense of time. The 'lost possessions' then could literally be a number of personal items like the wristwatch taken from Wittie, as well as intangibles such as human dignity and freedom. He is left with pen and paper, and so records his experiences for an unknown reader. His captors are nondescript: one is perhaps a woman, and another is a man with a crowbar.

Within the text, we are immersed in this tiniest of worlds, where Wittie finds company in a mouse, or fingers through a knot in the wall. He is forced to review his own biography (15): his mother died when he was four, his father couldn't cope raising him, regularly beating the four year old child, and he was then raised by an Aunt who died when he was fourteen. At the boarding school he went to subsequently, his English teacher abused him sexually (16), but encouraged him into university studies. We can also deduce that his father was a war veteran who had fought in North Africa as there is a mention of the battle at Sidi Rigez in Libya (17) near the Egyptian border. His wrist watch came from Sidi Rigez so it represents a connection with his father, and also with New Zealand's participation in World War 2. That the wrist watch was taken away by his captors underscores this de-historicising, deconstruction of the academic. We also learn that he is "a bachelor gay" (11) whose love-interest is a woman and linguist called Jaban (32) who he implicates in the kidnapping: "Fact 1 = kidnapped for unknown reasons / by unknown people / Fact 2 = unknown black people / Fact 3 = the only black I've ever known / in all senses of the word / is Jaban." (31) So the academic has only truly encountered one black person in his life.

There is perhaps a parallel in Hulme's own biography. In the early reception of her novel *The Bone People* by literary critics, the prominent academic and author C.K. Stead famously (it is

cited on her online New Zealand Book Council author entry as an issue) queried Hulme's identification as Māori. Does *Lost Possessions* represent a reciprocal moment, where Hulme erases the identity of an academic? Here is an extract from Stead's lengthy letter to the December 5th 1985 issue of *The London Review of Books*, which is a revised version of a review published in *Ariel* (volume 16) earlier that year:

And finally, what is 'a Māori writer'? Of Keri Hulme's eight great-grandparents one only was Māori. Hulme was not brought up speaking Māori, though like many Pākehā New Zealanders she has acquired some in adult life. She claims to identify with the Māori part of her inheritance – not a disadvantageous identification at the present time: but it seems to me that some essential Māori elements in her novel are unconvincing. Her uses of Māori language and mythology strike me as willed, self-conscious, not inevitable, not entirely authentic. Insofar as she is an observer of things outside herself, Hulme has observed Māoris and identified with them. If that is what constitutes a 'Māori' writer, then Pākehā writers like James K. Baxter and Roderick Finlayson (to name two obvious cases) could be said to have been more successfully 'Māori' than Keri Hulme. *The Bone People*, I would be inclined to argue, is a novel by a Pākehā which has won an award intended for a Māori. The fault is not Keri Hulme's. It is in the conception of such an award, which is thoroughly confused, and is in any case patronising, suggesting that Māori writers can't compete openly with Europeans.

That Hulme is a blood descendant, and self-identifies as Māori, is sufficient evidence for the ethnic and cultural identity of the author. I will not respond to the charges of inauthenticity except to say it sets up rather narrow definitional parameters for a human culture. I provide this extract as evidence of the *ad hominem* nature of a prominent academic reviewer and noted writer. Rather than providing an analysis grounded in biographical data, the reviewer chooses to *exclusively* select identity formations that the author herself has not abandoned but has rather included with her tribal family background. Perhaps *Lost Possessions* is a reply, dealing with a literary academic in a similar manner: Hulme creates Dr Harold Wittie as a straw-man who she can tear apart piece by piece within a context of mental and physical domination. The narrator feeds us pages through a knot hole in his prison.

Appended to the end of the 1985 collection is a photocopy of a lost property record card at New Brighton Central police station. A child's plastic purse and 47 handwritten sheets of newsprint were found near the Central Mall in New Brighton, Christchurch. This is the provenance of the book which is indeed 47 leaves in length. The lost property card also tells us that the owner of the manuscript, Dr Harold Wittie, is from the anthropology department, "not English dept" (last page), and that he is on a year's sabbatical overseas. Clearly the account in the book "by" Harold Wittie is one written under tremendous duress, which results in an unraveling of his personal and professional identity. His last farewell is to the mouse (47).

By stripping the narrative of authorial emplacement, Hulme forces the reader to explore the humanity of a would-be critic, albeit in a context of human degradation and suffering. Beyond the suggested standard authorial dislike of critics as a motivation behind writing this book, I would suggest also that this is a deliberate attempt to produce a work that is devoid of obvious cultural

elements for which the author is better known. The achievement of *Lost Possessions* is its sustained narrative drive embodied in the pained voice of Wittie. In my reading of the text, I have only found one reference to Moanan culture, “Our Mautikitiki / fishing for islands with his grandma’s jawbone” (32), but this is on a page where Jaban claims that “our society” lacks rites of passage. Wittie suggests that driver’s licences and 21st birthdays are such rites but Jaban claims they are “faded examples, futile, / no virtue because no mystery and no pain” (32). The abusive English teacher also used the phrase to explain his own sick behaviour, “Boy, consider these as rites of passage” (16). The extraordinary regulation of Wittie’s final days, meals of nightly apples and water, the contemplation of a knot hole, marks the passage of an unhappy, over-intellectualised life. This portrait of the anthropologist / academic sits in vast contrast to the wealth of dreams, ghostly visions, indigenous associations with people and places in times before and now, everyday appreciation of the bounties of the natural world that the author presents in the rest of her highly charged and very beautiful oeuvre. Clearly, if there is a strong connection to a Moanan poetics beyond the lineage of the author, then it is as an expression of mana wāhine. Huia Tomlins Jahnke defines the term as one not depending on “relations between men and women of gendered hierarchies of power that privileged men over women” (qtd in Wood “Mana Wāhine and Ecocriticism”, 109) but rather one of interdependence between the sexes. Mana wāhine provides a Moanan motivation for a further reading of the text.

There is another candidate on whom the figure of Wittie is potentially based, and that is the playwright and University of Auckland drama lecturer Mervyn Thompson, who was humiliated in February 1984 by a group of six women who assaulted him, and then chained him to a tree in Auckland’s Western Springs park, spraypainting “rapist” on his car (Evans 2005, Coddington,

Thompson, Edmond, Rankine, Lamb). Their motivation was the “rumour” (Thompson’s term in the *Listener* article that he wrote about his mugging) about “his sexual activity with his students” (Rankine 10), which is how one *Broadsheet* article describes it. It was widely reported in the media at the time and subsequently. The feminist publication *Broadsheet* ran several stories over May and June 1984 about the incident prior to the publication of Hulme’s *Lost Possessions* in 1985. The July/August 1984 issue of *Broadsheet* contains an extensive interview with Hulme, so she is familiar with the feminist publication and it is likely that she was very aware of the Thompson controversy. The assault had a literary dimension as well, as the group of six women who humiliated Thompson seemed to base their attack on a mock castration depicted in the Maori playwright Renée Taylor’s play *Setting the Table* (Lamb 32). Mervyn Thompson had assisted with workshopping that original script before its first production in 1981, while its second production “was directed and acted by his Drama Diploma students at the University” (Lamb 41). Thompson’s former colleague, Jonathan Lamb, also notes that the second staging, which Thompson again helped to produce was in October 1983, just four months before Thompson was assaulted. Once more relating this article by Lamb to Keri Hulme, in the same 1985 issue of the experimental literary journal *And*, there is a homage to Hulme’s novel *The Bone People* by Susan Davis and Anne Maxwell.

On the second, unnumbered page of *Lost Possessions*, the fictional voice of Wittie narrates the events leading up to his incarceration:

Let me get it down factually.

I was walking from my office in the main faculty
building to the carpark.

I know it was just after six because I had
glanced at my watch a moment before.

I was carrying my briefcase.

The evening was mild, windless.

I don't recall seeing anyone.

I was watching the swing of my briefcase, matching
my pace. Something I often do. A kind of meditative
unwinding.

I don't know what was thrown round my neck—

It felt hard, rough. Maybe a thick leather belt.

I grasped at it with my right hand, then dropped

My briefcase. I was gagging. I blacked out.

In comparison, here is Thompson's description of the February 1984 event published in the *NZ Listener* in April that year (22). The setting is the Western Springs carpark near the Auckland Zoo:

Before I know where I am the car seems to be full of people of murderous intent. Something is thrown over my head and my upper body is pulled into the back seat. My legs are still in front, trapped in the seat belt.//I fight back as best I can but have no room to manoeuvre. Someone is trying to throttle me. I am short of breath and threatening to pass out, but manage to cry out to my attackers to take my car and such money as I have.

There is a general similarity to the Thompson event. Something is thrown over Thompson's head while a belt⁶⁵ is placed round the neck of Wittie. In the actual event the playwright almost blacks out, while in *Lost Possessions* Wittie does pass out. In *Lost Possessions* the central figure identifies himself as an English Department lecturer (7), "Who on earth would want to kidnap a university/lecturer of English?"⁶⁶ Mervyn Thompson was employed at the time as a drama lecturer in the University of Auckland English Department. The romantic relationship in *Lost Possessions* between Wittie and Jaban seems to have a power imbalance of age, and academic status—the anthropologist is in a sexual relationship with Jaban who is from Niu Guinea. Poet and academic Briar Wood's article, "Mana Wāhine and Ecocriticism: some Post-80s Writing by Māori Women" defines the indigenous term as "a specifically Māori form of women's activism with links to feminism, anti-colonialism, and ecocriticism" (108). *Lost Possessions* marks a feminist connection to mana wāhine activism on the part of Hulme.

To return to the first spiral, *Strands* was published ten years after *The Silences Between (Moeraki Conversations)*. In the 1984 *Broadsheet* interview, interestingly, Hulme describes her family thus: "I would say we were like glue—you know—you pull it apart and there's all these strands" (18). Its cover art has a similar composition to the 1982 collection. There is a charcoal

⁶⁵ In the Thompson account a reference is made to the seatbelt as opposed to a belt.

⁶⁶ The last page of the book identifies him as an anthropology lecturer.

grey shore line with a body of water. The sky is red, shaded diagonally from a band of white sky.

The watercolour art is by Hulme herself. On the back cover is a full-colour author portrait by Robin Morrison standing on a beach. The blurb on the back is written by Hulme: “I am a strand-dweller in reality, a strand-loper of sorts—nau mai! Come share a land, a lagoon, a mind, a glass . . .”

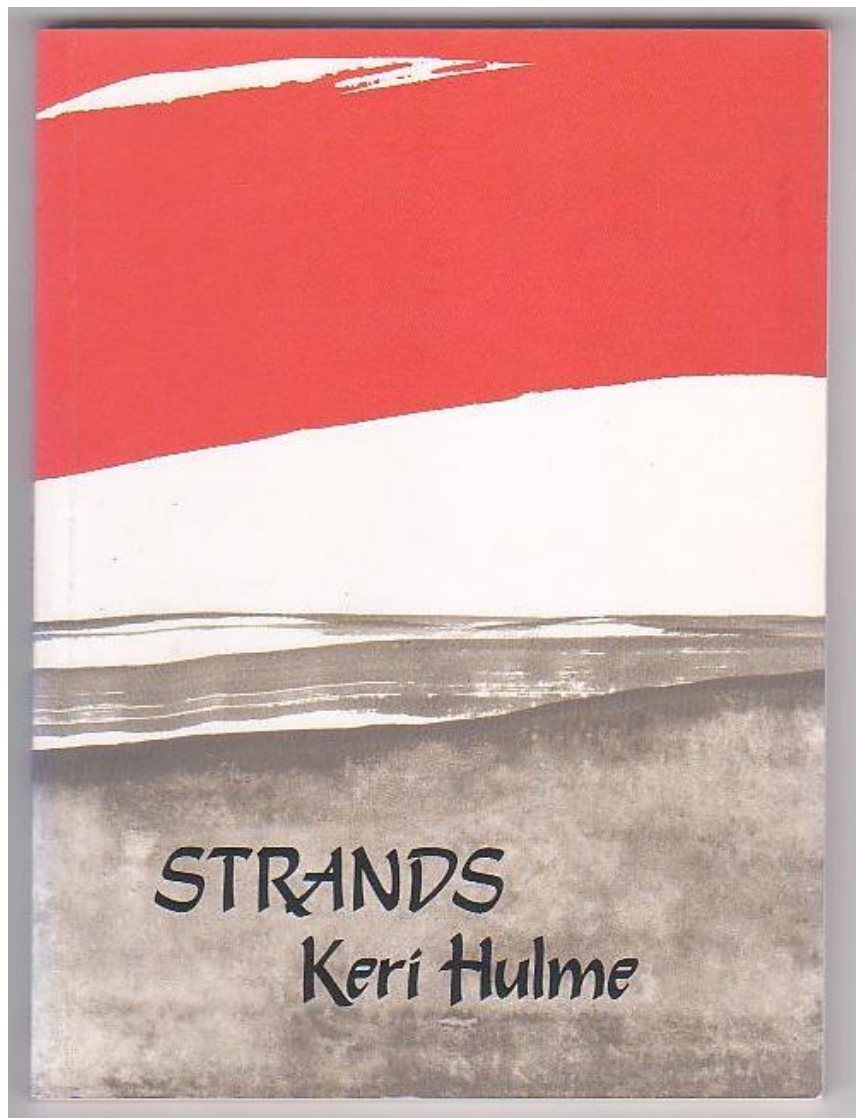


Figure 14 Cover of *Strands*

Much of the poetry in this collection leaves off from the earlier work. It once again features the “cuckoo child” (43), which is most likely the character Simon from *The Bone People* as he is named in the Moeraki collection, but also Pīpīwharauoa, the shining cuckoo:

I am a map of Orion scattered in moles across this
firmament of body;
I am the black hole, the den where katipo are busy spinning
deadhavens,
and he won't go, the cuckoo child.

As with the Moeraki poems, the *Strands* collection is a Moanan assemblage of sense impressions of landscape, climate, flora and fauna, ocean, shore, interspersed with spirit, philosophy, life-principles, and mana wāhine in the ecological sense:

See me,
I have skilled fingers with minimal scars, broad feet that
caress beaches,
ears that catch the music of ghosts, eyes that see the
landlight, a pristine womb
untouched except by years of bleeding, a tame unsteady heart. (41)

The 'me' of this poem, "He Hoha," feels like a collective, Moanan self rather than an ego-driven identity. The association with the land, "See me, / I am my earth's child," and all creation ensures that the poet's natural body processes sound earthy. "I am a swamp, a boozy brain with stinking breath, a sour / sweetened flesh; / I am riddled with kidneyrot, brainburn, torn gut, liverfat, / scaled with wrinkles . . ." (41) The poem brings us to the earth deity Papatūānuku, and also to other collective, Moanan explanations of natural forces such as the ocean deity Tangaroa. The Pipiwharau image, as aforementioned, refers to a child born out of wedlock (Hulme, "Mauri" 308). The bird imagery in 'He Hoha' is numerous: "birds of morning" (42), keeping and crooning sounds, "mewling gulls," "I am as fat rich as a titi chick" (41), a calling rainbird, as well as whistles and cries. While perhaps not being harbingers of death, this accumulation of birds and their signs at the very least indicates a threshold in the presence of death. In Māori mythology, a flock of birds accompanied the demigod Maui on his quest to defeat the death goddess, Hine-nui-i-te-po. Yet Hulme's birds are not the particular species that caused Maui's death, the fantail whose twittering woke the goddess, so in Hulme's poems we are at the threshold with glimpses of the other world:

and she, humming

considers her cuts and scars, and debates our death.

Mean the land's breast, hard her spine when turned against you;

jade her heart. (41)

The jade at the emotional centre of the land is of course the talismanic mauri stone pounamu, but here it represents hardness and reminds us that the stone was also used as a striking and cutting weapon. There is an ecological consciousness to the poetry here, as there is throughout both collections, yet this follows the classic “show don’t tell” mode of writing where the eco-politics is never named. Pounamu is associated with people as it is used to fashion objects of adornment, and so this has a double-effect of personifying the land through the earth mother figure of Papatūānuku. This parental consciousness is both nurturing and also guiding through limits. Our wellbeing depends on boundaries so that the ecosphere does not become funneled into resource management paradigms. Death’s presence speaks out of this context. Briar Wood adopts a cautionary tone here. In her 2007 description of ecocritical practice, she notes that European and American ecocritical histories are privileged over non-Western accounts so that seductive accounts of an idealized, harmonious nature and indigenuity have been foregrounded:

What is significant for the writing of the 1980s and 1990s by Māori women is that through debate and discussion, Māori relationships with the environment have been reworked to explain enculturation in Māori terms (ranging from destructive to nurturing) rather than denoting an emotional but unarticulated and unsymbolized relationship to a location they were often assigned as stereotyped natural "other" in European discourses. (110)

“He Hoha” is defined in *The Reed Dictionary of Modern Māori* as bored, humdrum, monotony, and a pest (54). The title probably refers to the poet’s state of mind and feelings when

she was composing the work. The poem has the quality of daydream musings but with undercurrents:

In the lottery of dreams, she gained prize of a
nightmare, a singular dark. (42)

Or on the following page:

And Papatūānuku is beginning her ngeri, her anger is growing
thrumming in quakes and tsunami (43)

The plaiting and weaving of individual and collective consciousness means an interweaving of concerns. One can only guess at hinted personal crises such as the presence of the cuckoo child, but the immensity of the ecological, and by connection cultural concerns, at the very least indicates the importance of the hidden personal references. Perhaps the cuckoo child is a pestering spirit? A pest in the sense that the child is a persistent presence:

He turned full to face me, with a cry to come home—
do you know the language of silence, can you read eyes?

In the end silence gives way to music/song: “tune the bones, the body sings” (43). The flight at the end of the poem is not one into understanding, as in an epiphany, but rather a flight from this series of concerns raised by the poet on multiple levels:

flies this hoha, this buzz and fright,
this wave and sweat and flood,
this life. (43)

The term hōhā is defined in the Williams dictionary as “wearisome” or “wearied with expectation, importunity, anxiety etc” (55). The act of escape from difficult circumstances is embodied in the “shining cuckoo” in flight. This suggests that the cuckoo-child is part of this escape. The proverb “Pēnei me he pīpīwharauoa: like the shining long-tailed cuckoo” (Mead & Grove 344), refers to a man who abandons his offspring just like the cuckoo which lays its eggs in another bird’s nest for it to rear. If this reveals an authorial intention, the flight in the poem is not of the poet, as I first thought, but rather of a father-figure of the abandoned child. It is at the very least a double meaning. This sheds light on the description of “Tutara-kauika, you father of whales” which serves the male deity Tangaroa (43). This is the only patriarchal presence in the text, arriving two stanzas before the matriarchal Papatūānuku whose “anger is growing / thrumming in quakes and tsunami”. On one level, as noted previously, it is a Gaia consciousness, warning humanity about its lack of environmental care; on another level it is a mother’s concern for a child abandoned by its father. The whale has a “little rolling eye” which could be seen as a roving eye perhaps. The child isn’t assigned a gender in parts of the text, referred to as “it” four times in the penultimate stanza and once in the final stanza, and only referred to as “he” four times on the whole page (43). In the first stanza, the cuckoo (read maternal parent) has possibly hit a window with a “sudden thud and shatter” and it is wounded. The flight in the final stanza could represent a remarkable recovery on

the bird's part, which has "a barred breast broken" after all, or it could be an imaginary flight of the bird's spirit "among the blood and dark." A further sense of "spreads its wings" centres on the child again, where personal development enables such a flight, so perhaps "a long way from here," also in the last stanza, refers to time and ensuing growth. It is perhaps this last interpretation which is most salient. The last stanza on the first page of this poem figures the poet as "a rainbird calling . . ." and is even more apparent: "See me, / I am my earth's child" so that the poem is seen as the poet's creation; the bird and the poet are associated through proximity in the text. The idea of potential is expressed through circadian and menstrual cycles: "it is truth that cramp and clot and tender breast beset—but then / it is the tide of potency, another chance to walk through the / crack between worlds." The crack is the birth canal: "When I think of my other bones, I bleed inside, / and he won't go, the cuckoo-child" (43). Structurally the poem moves like a prose poem and like a song. There are many associative leaps, but they are threaded by a series of refrains: "But picture me . . .," or "But picture her," or "O picture me . . .," are repeated refrains, while "See me, I . . ." is often repeated. The phrase "and he won't go, the cuckoo-child" is repeated also. The first line "bones tuned, the body sings" is modified intermittently to "waves tuned, the mind-deep sings" (42) and "tune the bones, the body sings" (last stanza) as well as the following line, "quiet the mind, the spirit hums" (43) as its semantic structure echoes the former. This is an ambitious poem. It grounds the poet in a Gaia consciousness cognizant of environmental devastation which is only hinted at in Papatūānuku's anger expressed as a *ngeri*, which is a form of *haka*, "thrumming in quakes and tsunami" (43); it also births a child, an orphaned changeling, who is the embodiment of the narrator's "hates and hurts and hopes"; it also revolves around the narrator as a gendered creature in communion with other creatures, the biosphere, and cosmos; the poem centres well-being

around true engagement with nature, rather than urban dwelling with its “flats full of dust and / spider-kibbled flies” where the narrator “forgot self” (42). As noted, gender is sometimes neutralised in the text, such as the impersonal pronoun for the cuckoo child, while elsewhere the world itself is gendered through the naming of gods: the ocean is masculine, Tangaroa, and the earth is female, Papatūānuku. Yet the overwhelming gender is female in this text, from “the moon stalks through my body” (42), which is a stanza centred on female menstrual renewal, to the earth herself sitting in judgement:

and she, humming

considers her cuts and scars, and debates our death. (41)

There is humming throughout the text, reminding us of the earth-mother’s deliberations, until it becomes an angry “thrumming” (43). The narrator is an “untuned spirit” that keens and croons (42) in the presence of the humming. This reminds me of a mother humming lullabies and soothing sounds to a young child. It also connects to the previous poem in the collection, “Lullaby for a Stone Doll” (39-40), which is based on a patero by the Ngati Rangiwewehi aristocrat Hine-i-Turama, who was falsely accused of being pregnant when she was a virgin, according to a note by Hulme (40). Hine-i-Turama made a stone baby, so there is a strong connection with “He Hoha” in that the cuckoo child is a similar substitute tamaiti:

I’ll charge you with so much love

that you’ll laugh

and cry real tears

and I will hear your heartbeat

ticking away like a small cicada (39)

The description of the doll above has an emotional equivalence to the description of the cuckoo child. It also introduces the concept of love for the literal material of the land, that is stone, so that the emotion carries over into the next poem, “He Hoha”; take for instance the rocky “mean the land’s breast, hard her spine” (41); we are prepared to love the land by this chiefly woman’s love for her stone doll.

To return to the pātere form of Māori language poetic composition, since it introduces the long and complex poem “He Hoha”—three pages of margin to margin free-form text—I draw our attention to its similarities with the form. Jane McRae and Hēni Jacob’s book-length introduction to *Ngā Mōteatea*, the most recent addition to the multi-volume collection of song-chants envisioned by Sir Apirana Ngata, says the pātere are “often very long and strongly worded responses to accusations or mocking by others” (53). While describing other forms, they add, “they too are concerned with distress or reply or appeal” (55, 57). On page 43 of “He Hoha,” Papatūānuku begins a ngeri, a form of haka or defiant chant, which Kāretu (referencing Shakespeare’s *Henry V*) glosses as a “short haka to stiffen the sinews, summon up the blood, but, unlike haka taparahi, have no set movements, thereby giving the performers free rein to express themselves as they deem appropriate” (41). Although the ngeri is not the same as the pātere, they are both forms of oral poetics associated with anger and resistance. The frustrations expressed might be those of someone singing to a stone doll, in effect, an inanimate shape incapable of returning affection except symbolically. Discussing the two poems in this way reminds me of the weaving between poems in *Moeraki Conversations*, and not the “silences” sequence also within that earlier collection. This casts light on the title *Strands*. Strands are for weaving, and also for tying off once weaving is

finished, and for dyeing in the muka process after the flax is scraped with shells so that they appear as fine strands. Strands are also flyaway hairs, bits of seaweed, and also boulevards along beachfronts. The imagery is ripe for connection: "I am as fat-rich as a titi chick, ready for the far ocean flight" (41). By highlighting individual strands, however, it is an image of solitude. The ngeri is a free-styling individual's haka. Again, the pātere answers an individual slight. There is potential here for communal art in that the art must be received on the collectively understood terms of pātere and ngeri, just as Haunani-Kay Trask references the cultural practices of hula composition and performance. Yet for Hulme the voice is existential. The descriptions exist in the narrator's world. There is also a sense of incompleteness in the term strands. It is interesting that 'strands' highlights a lack of unity, or even a unity that has been lost:

See me,

I am a swamp, a boozy brain with stinking breath, a sour
sweetened flesh;

I am riddled with kidneyrot, brainburn, torn gut, liverfat,
scaled with wrinkles,

day by day I am leached, even between smiles, of that
strange water, electricity. (41)

There are echoes of Whitman's "I sing the body electric" here but on a negative current. Whitman's connection of the body and soul is present in Hulme's text, except this soul has "a tame unsteady heart." For me, the invocation of Whitman's extraordinarily positive praise poem about the human

body as a home for the soul has caused a silence in the extraordinary detailing of Hulme's text where the home of the soul is not just the individual human body, which is shown in a negative light, but also all creation within a positive context of an ancestral home.

There is another kind of silence, which Lesley Wheeler highlights in her book *Voicing American Poetry*:

The dream of intense, directly personal contact is an essential part of the experience of reading literature. It is what drew us in the first place towards the books we chose to read, the subjects we chose to study, the work we chose to pursue, the lives we chose to live. Somewhere in the midst of all the frenzied activity that occupies us . . . is a silent moment, constantly renewed, in which we feel that someone—often someone long vanished into dust, someone who could not conceivably have known our names or conjured our existence or spoken our language—is sending us a message. (Stephen Greenblatt, "MLA Presidential Address 2002", cited in Wheeler 58)

In Greenblatt's formulation, poems or literature serve to silence the frenzy of our lives causing us to reflect on a given topic, casting us into a time capsule as if receiving a message in a bottle written in this case by Keri Hulme. The author could not have known that someone would be poring over Google maps on street view, looking up local Moeraki history, seeking connections in her text that might possibly be subconscious to the author. The poems' complex interweaving of animate biology and geography with inanimate symbols creates highly nuanced, parallel threads throughout "He

Hoha.” In a way, I feel almost hoha attempting to untangle each strand. Perhaps that is the purpose of the text: To encourage the sense of being thrown into the world through hoha, that the rational, smooth discourses of multiple ideological apparatuses simply will not apply here because this text cannot manipulate truth, as truth belongs to deities, or the supranatural organisms of the biosphere. For an individual’s context to provide meaning is nigh impossible in such a setting for it is the setting itself which provides meaning: this is not an egocentric world view, it is an autochthonous one dealing in multiple strategically placed essences:

do you know the language of silence—can you read eyes? (43)

The essences are “a long way from there [the city]” (42), found in wilderness areas such as the constellation Orion (43), or in a katipo spider’s spinning, or a “father of whales” (43). These life principle essences are life-affirming in a mode similar to Trask’s strategy of kīpuka and kaona: they are spiritual energy. The principles remain even in Hulme’s evocation of death, “Deity Considered as Mother Death,” about the goddess Hine-nui-i-te-po:

She
guards over our dreams of living, soothes our songs our whimpering
waits for the blooming of that instinct
that draws us into traps of flame like light
sends us out moths again
waits
never smiles (44)

The great questions of life beyond death are left here as questions for the deity. They also feel like philosophy: “why death after being? why being? why death?” (45). The question is called “unanswerable” (45), partly because of the mysterious nature of life and death. The other part of the answer lies in the mythology behind the death goddess as she was originally the dawn maiden, or “the Girdle Dawn” in the poem. In the myth the dawn maiden grows up not knowing her father, Tane Mahuta, so that she is tricked into marrying him. She asks her mother eventually if it is true that her husband is her father, and on discovery, flees into the underworld to care for the souls of the beloved. Hulme has a specific image of the deity: privates “bladed with flakes of blackstone”, eyes made of jade, hair of flowing seaweed, and skin of the Girdle Dawn but distorted by death. In a sense, by altering the conventional descriptions of the goddess, Hulme has personalised Hine-nui-te-po, that is, she has a relationship with the deity as if she is a friend. The nickname Girdle Dawn reveals this. The final stanza might be an address to the reader, or to the goddess:

Did you not often ask
the unanswerable questions of your mother?
And did she not
answer you? (45)

The following poem, “Pauashell Gods,” digresses, makes multiple asides, reveals, conceals, moves through personal and historical time, plays Gulliver and then sci fi and prophecy, so that coherent meaning is never on offer, only shadows, subtexts, strands tracing back to other poems such as

“Pipi” (51), the cuckoo-child in “He Hoha” to whom the poem is dedicated, and the familiar geography of Moeraki/Maukiekie Island features in the second stanza of this wide and visual poem:

Pauashell gods have no names
they take a lot of finding:
when you set them up
do not seek answers.
All they do is listen
and, occasionally,
shake your world. (47)

I must admit that it is difficult to discuss this poem. It does not want to relinquish its layers, as if the paua shell polish is all there is to see. This surface quality is unlike the other poems with their hidden depths, yet it is set in childhood which one would think encourages subconscious readings:

An earshell, listening...
we dreamed of towers and powers and lightnings
so, children being rats in the adult world,
we stole in and stole glue and stole out (48)

The children build with broken paua shells their ideas of gods: “The more holes, / the more ears—mine’s the wisest” (48). It is a similar theme to Golding’s *Lord of the Flies* with a childhood pecking order away from adults who “are glad of our absence” (49). They battle with another tribe of

children who had a cult of “crab godlets” so they “ambush and kidnap and inquisition.” Poet Gregory O’Brien notes that Hulme’s self-mythologizing voice has Baxter’s tone. It occurs to me that the couplet:

and an abyss
when our strange prophet vanished (49)

might be a reference to James K. Baxter. The childhood setting has the marvelous effect of grounding the rhetoric. The gift to Pipi at the end of the poem of three paua is quite charming: it lacks the strain of some of Baxter’s prophetic poetry:

anyway, for Pipi
who never trusted his own shadow
here is one
and
here is one
and
here is one (51)

The final poem of section 2 of the collection, “Waiting on the Laughing Owl” (52), which I discuss in the opening chapter, is a similar move to lighter verse. The word “horripilation” (line 11) might come straight out of a Margaret Mahy book. The *OED* defines it as “goose-flesh,” and its etymology

comes from medical practice. In the opening chapter, I talk about the history of hunting and museum specimens in colonial New Zealand. Perhaps it is timely to recall the colony's colloquial name, Māoriland, at this point. The "Last Laughing Owl" (line 6) could be a cipher for the last Māori person, especially since its shriek, "Whekau! Whekau!" (line 25) is in te reo Māori. The description of its call is akin to the description of haka, "a scream to raise/ horripilation" –remember the defining purpose of the ngeri? "To stiffen the sinews, summon up the blood" (Karetu 41). This owl has fearsome cries, but ones also associated with great suffering: "a kicked dog, a whipped pup" (line 9) for instance. If it is a lightly encoded reference to Māori, despite its humour, one can see a cycle of nightly struggle and daily peace, darkness and light, far away from civilization as its observers are waiting "huddled under a blanket" around a fire (lines 13-15). This owl comes out of natural history books, "hear old authors / longdead listeners talk back..." (line 7), and so it belongs to the records of a dominant discourse. Sir Walter Buller's *A History of the Birds of New Zealand* gives the colonists' name as "Laughing Jackass" and its native names as Whekau, Ruru-Whekau and Kakaha. Its scientific name is *Sceloglaux Albifacies*. The specimens he used were held in the British Museum, the Colonial Museum in Wellington, the Canterbury Museum, the Dunedin Museum, the Norwich Museum, the Leiden Museum, and private collections.



Figure 15 Morepork (left) and Laughing Owl. Plate from *Buller's Birds* (nzetc)

According to *Te Ara: The Encyclopedia of New Zealand*, the last confirmed sighting was in South Canterbury in 1914. In this museum context, and the cultural context, there is a double-meaning in the poem's last lines:

but as soon as dawn has wrung its neck
we will regain peace and light will come
waiting on the laughing owl

The dawn refers perhaps to Hine-Titama, the dawn maiden, who became the great woman of the night, Hine-nui-i-te-po, who cares for the dead in the underworld. The peace comes with pacification brought about by a Treaty whose famous purpose was to “amuse and pacify savages,” while the “light” comes not only from daylight, but also from museum lighting, and the colourists of colonial book-plates. Finally, this last poem under discussion in this spiral lineage has perhaps the fewest overt references to the actual moana, although it has the tidal influence of the moon in the second line, and a body of water, “lake mirroring light.” This is a general point about the nature of Moanan referencing, in that it is the poem or its constituent parts which move tidalectally. The references are accumulations that might be elsewhere labelled as non-human nature, or effigies, or moving objects. The accumulation constitutes a cognitive moving island, or an expanded reef towards which a navigator may draw their attention.

If you are a coast dweller, you will know that the sea sounds differently in different areas. It’s the shape of the land what it is composed of, I suppose, together with the nature and the intensity of the waves. To me, however, it is the land and the sea working against one another, warring and singing while they do it...e te hoariri, kei te pai. And the seasong at Okārito harmonises perfectly with the seasong of my heartplace, Moeraki. It brought instant tears to my eyes when I first heard it. It is still comfort and cheer and reassurance.

(Hulme “Okārito and Moeraki,” 8)

Hulme's poem "Telling How the Stonefish Swims" appears in her most recent book, *Stonefish* (231). Like Wendt's poem, "Maui," it also features a number of questions and ranges from the light-hearted to the serious. In response to the title, the poet writes a dialogue (lines 1-4):

-Really slowly!

-Um, with a lifebelt? Can fishes have lifebelts?

Do they got shoulders?

-Fast! Straight to the bottom.

The poem's subject also appears to be about mauri, but unlike Wendt's poem, it is tied to a specific object or creature, the stonefish. This is made explicit by the Māori terms poenamū and Poutini which reference the Kai Tahu taonga, greenstone. The spelling of poenamū is a subtle dig at nineteenth century anthropologists as the current conventional spelling is pounamū. A particularly beautiful form of the stone with milky veins running throughout is called inanga, which is also a term for whitebait. Whitebait are the juvenile forms of several fish species. So the name stonefish at the very least conjures up pounamū. It also emphasises its liveliness, its mauri aspects. This particular stonefish was bought by the poet in Canada, but it is likely to be Roman:

Carvings for instance: a stone fish spouting water

aleap from a shallow basin that has grooves worn deep

on the left side from the fingers of fifty generations

of grateful drinkers quenching Italian summer thirst (lines 2-5 stanza 2)

The Canadian location nevertheless connects with other indigenous groups who have a similar history of British colonisation and erasure. The poem continues:

And older than humans of our kind, this fish swam

unimaginable waters crowded with nightmares of teeth
and tentacles: survived them all to sink at last
in final sleep and now looks to be strange varnish
on buff sandstone. I bought it in Canada, in the deadlands.

The region referred to is in Alberta, Canada, which is also famous for its oil sands. In a poetics of connection, the poem describes the fish in scientific terms, examining its acidity and toxicity, making the creature come to life as if the poet is a paleontologist examining a fossil as she walks over similar fossils, and then makes a leap to a new stanza talking about Kai Tahu mythology centred on Poutini:

I knew how thin the thong soles were
against spines honed and hardened over millennia.
all is strange, mutable
when you can't see/ a death in waiting

did the women realize
they would live forever?
Changed, o yes, and less human
than their captor who was—
well, Poutini: that's what he was,
one and only, with a charm peculiarly his own:
a far swimmer, Hawaiki to Piopiotahi an easy haul... (stanzas 8-9).

Here life is suspended for the fish, but instead of water it is a stone suspension which prevents death. The poem refers to petrification which reminds me of Moeraki's boulders known as the gourds of the Araiteuru crew whose members were also petrified in the hills and nearby mountains. Poutini himself remains in the land in this poem, nursing grievances on behalf of oceanic beings, so that the poem may be read as recognition of ecological devastation as well as the bomb known as colonisation:

and Poutini? Some say he still swims the wild man-sea
kaitiaki of all seabeings as well as greenstone guardian
but I fear he has hauled inland and now
supposedly fossil, he pauses in the strata
wanting utu brooding with centuryslow grief
alone alone alone
(last stanza)

The pause after 'utu' echoes Wendt's vā punctuation. The term 'century' references colonial time. New Zealand asserted itself as a national entity in this period. Poutini's marginalisation is emblematic of the colonial subject, and is also a connection with Trask's account of the Pele deity, and Wendt's associative work about mountains. There is commonality through such colonial and indigenous experiences, and there is individuality expressed in loneliness. The idea of the guardian or kaitiaki in line 2 of the extract above also reminds me of the taniwha. The stonefish species, in their warty reef-dwelling guises, and their extraordinary forms of toxicity delivered through the spines on the dorsal fin, is perhaps the ideal biological simile for a taniwha. The accumulation of signs continues to expand as a target reef in the moana.

CHAPTER 7.)OPENINGS(

This thesis began as a quest to decipher major features of a Moanan poetics grouped within English language poems by five Moanans. I imagined that it would be possible to list the features as if they were a table of contents or index, and then populate them with examples by the five poets. It soon transpired that I should allow the texts to speak for themselves. Rather than impose Moanan identity assertions on the text, I ought to find them there without overt manipulation, but rather through discursive rhythms akin to natural forces such as reticulation and the tides. Identifying and creating relationality within a highlighted cultural context was the quest. Relationships within the formulation known as the *vā* reticulated from the Moanan close-readings.

I realised that my selection process for the five authors emerged out of the capillaries, the interwoven nexus of relationships amongst their literary worlds. I was a reader, scholar-poet, and mentored *teina* in the *vā*. The selection of poets came out of an ethics of relationship with each of these first and second wave generations of book-published poets. I had met and shared poetry with four of the poets, while I corresponded with Campbell, and I am a friend of his son, Andrew. Sturm, Helu Thaman and Wineera, for instance, have written highly respected collections, and there would have been an abundance of primary material to explore, but I believe the decisive factors of selection for me were my relationships with Wendt, Tuwhare, Campbell, Trask and Hulme. In the latter instance, I have only met Hulme three times, so the relationship is not a deeply personal one

except to say that as a much younger writer our interactions probably affected me a great deal more than Hulme. In the introduction I mention that they are each tuakana to me, and I am a teina, and so in a sense the quest is one where they have been the guides and mentors.

Their work also speaks of the worlds they inhabit(ed), so in a manner I ought to reciprocate by revealing some of my world as the poets selectively reveal their worlds. I write this with the front door open, birds chirruping in the Arch Hill sunshine, flowers on the magnolia in full bloom, warmth returning after a full winter. In this warmth, I am reminded of a common critique of places outside Hawai'i for being "cold". The climate here in Aotearoa is definitely harsher. There is probably a concomitant harshness in the poetry from this area when describing the weather, so that it is seen as Romantic, when actually the weather *is* much harder. This is relevant to Campbell's poetics where weather features symbolically. Of course, the lack of a tropical climate does not make the poetry less Moanan! I say this in half-jest and in the joy of an early spring day. This loose-talk, lacking the tension of charged poetry or the dance of the intellect, is also the stuff of the everyday material wants and emotional centrifuges of the poets. It causes me to wonder if the tight-wire acrobat's specially webbed shoes, the carved balancing pole, and the audience below near the waterfall, is an apt description of an indigenous scholar attempting to describe if not explain the world of indigenous poets. Highly distilled terms belonging to academic traditions may fail to embrace indigenous caring. Yet we can and must indigenise the academy with our languages and the range of climates within the horizons we inhabit. There are antecedents. Witi Ihimaera's extraordinary multi-volume anthology *Te Ao Marama* includes nearly every Māori writer who was published up to the early 1990s. I would have wished to follow a similar path with this thesis, but

received the very good advice that it would have been impracticable to survey every single book-published poet in the Moana.

Along with speech, one of the things I discovered in this quest is silence. Homi Bhabha describes it thus: “my subject today has been the nest of the phoenix, not its fire” (Lentricchia 379). Bhabha’s context is a lecture at Princeton about fiction entitled “The World and The Home.” Our context is a thesis about the saliency of Moanan identity assertions across five oeuvres by Māori, Samoan, Tongarevan, and Hawaiian poets, each with differing assertions about their indigenous as well as their European whakapapa/ gafa/ haka-papa/ mo’okū’auhau respectively. One argument advanced is that literal attention through Moanan close reading of the visible and invisible worlds of the poets, as expressed in their poetry, reveals a cultural formation that begins with each poet’s own ritenga tangata. Is it enough to argue that the worldview within its horizons constitutes a Moanan poetics? It suffices only if the horizons are seen as plural just as in the real world horizons shift according to an observer’s position and time as well as the number of observers. If the world is singular, with a single horizon-line, and a single observer, then it risks the surges of one’s essentialist mistakes. By acknowledging the heterogeneity of the five poets’ worlds, given the wide range of cultural references, one may still strategically claim familial or Moanan similarities between the five bodies of poetry.

If as critical readers we accept that the notion of the world is itself plural, then we are on higher ground(s). The world constitutes the imaginary sublime as well as the dystopic realities of everyday lives; the world is multiple, interlaced with globalised non-places, as well as the everyday, and the idealised heterotopic spaces created by cultures, while inhabiting internal as well as external realities. Each of the poets refers to oral statements about the origins and continuation of

their peoples, and so of course a Moanan identity assertion must take into account the immensity of distances across time, land and aqua-space involving the Moana. Leading philosophers of our region have agreed that we belong to a sea of islands, and our writers have gathered under such banners as the New Oceania and the Sea of Islands.

The subjects of the poems have varied across family themes, deaths, orature, the land, the sea, relationships with the colonial other, and the poetry is set in metropolises, islands, volcanoes, military installations, mythic and fictional realms and vehicles in the past, present and future. The poems are voiced in the first person, in voices of prophets, gods, historical figures, tourists, and other personae. In short, one can see the impossibility of assigning one or even many identity features; rather, this thesis uses Moanan wayfinding tools to create a reef of signs to expand our understanding across vā time and space. This deep-sea navigation technique, known as “expanding the target” (Howe 105) or “expanding the islands” (Diaz, “Sacred Tensions” 59), uses features of geography (some mountains reach 4000 metres above the sea), cloud shapes, migrating birds associated with islands, swell patterns or absences, drift objects, sea colour and salinity, smell, light patterns or loom in order to reveal an area where an atoll or land mass is situated. By gathering in a combination of signs, senses, celestial guides, and ocean-going technology and learning, it is/was possible to translate these into a broad direction. Such a principle of sign gathering, symbolism, ancestral and current knowledge, geographies, climates, mythic and poetic narratives, belong to a set of Moanan identity assertions that cross the wide gamut of the vā in this world and others including bodies of poetry. My argument is that this Moanan wayfinding technique better reveals a variety of cultural strands than a conventional close reading, based on text alone, or historical context alone. Moanan wayfinding is itself an expression of the ever-moving and ever-connecting

relationships within indigenous frames of reference. An oceanic lens creates a more complete view of the complexity, the heterogeneity, of the bodies of work. This remains a debatable proposition on the level of a single poem, even if that poem is long. Identity intentions become clearer across a poet's entire oeuvre, remembering that a sense of the Moanan might rest alongside gender, tribal, village, city, suburb, family, class, and sexuality assertions, or to use a gentler term, representations.

Moanan wayfinding makes visible the hidden but present. Scanning the horizon, to use a wayfinding metaphor, enables one to look at the breadth of a body of poems for Moanan identity, and then to connect that body with others within an indigenous frame. To choose an example of hidden but present Moanan identity from each of the five poets, if one were to read Keri Hulme's extended fictional poem *Lost Possessions* in isolation, one could not draw any reliable conclusions about the author's identity or culture as it is entirely concealed behind the persona mask of its central character. Yet most of Hulme's other poetry is rich in culture and storied topography: the land, ocean, graves, climate, spirits, deities, plants, creatures, which speak in her work. *Lost Possessions* is literally written in the voice of an academic hostage. By looking across the broad expanse of poems, many of the poet's intentions are revealed—among these intentions is a cultural identity. If one were to read Alistair Te Ariki Campbell's poem 'The Return', discussed in Chapter 1, it is entirely possible to mistake its range of referents as belonging to Graeco-Roman mythology or even to a similar poem by D.H. Lawrence. By scanning the horizon across the body of his poetics, Moanan wayfinding identifies the possibility of Moanan referents in this littoral, voyaging poem. Tuwhare's 'No Ordinary Sun' also contains, within the bounds of the tree-sign, the potential reference to Tāne Mahuta, and its use of the term "entreat" a reference to both the national anthem and to the Treaty of Waitangi signifying a key governance relationship for Māori and non-Māori, so

the scope of the poem's key subjects is indigenous as well as anti-nuclear. The Moanan wayfinding technique better supports a worldview that can relate to both indigenous and political communities. Trask's work tends to be overtly Moanan, yet even in this body of poems there are hidden references such as the flowers symbolic of sovereignty in 'Pūowaina: Flag Day', the temple complex, and the fortress used during the Hawaiian monarchy as discussed in Chapter 1. These floral signs are again an example of the foregrounding Moanan wayfinding method which interweaves various relationships. Wendt also foregrounds indigeneity in his poetics, and this too is revealed through wayfinding hierarchical relationships in the gafa genealogy of gods and titles within *The Adventures of Vela* and the complex history behind the goddess and ancestral warrior, Nafanua. As discussed in Chapter 2, the novel in verse becomes in part science fiction through the mind-linking inhabitants of the 'Nei' section, and in part travel-writing in the Guangzhou based 'Night-Flight' section, as well as relying in part on world and Hollywood cinema. Its multi-genre nature, delivered through the narration by Alapati, the chronicler of Vela who is the spokesperson for Nafanua, reinforces collectivity, intertextuality, globalization, intermingled with Samoan traditions of the divine, of extended family, and of sovereign spaces. The Moanan wayfinding techniques make possible discursive spaces to enhance scholarly conversations about Oceanic literature.

EXPANDING THE TARGET

I borrow the idea of expanding the target from wayfinding as it aligns with oceanic poetics⁶⁷. Its reductive signage is capable of a poetics of two and three dimensional space. Latitude and longitude provide flattened coordinates, while collective signs from the world and the cosmos provide rounded experience. The history of Pacific wayfinding stretches into mythic, contemporary, and futuristic time so the temporality as an approach is appealing. The convergence of multiple technologies and systems, as well as personal experience on the part of expert navigators, reveals a plurality of approaches in different skins and vehicles across time. My own collection, *Star Waka* (1999), draws energy from this convergence.

The tohunga and theologian Rev. Māori Marsden describes the construction of knowledge in similar terms from a holistic Māori perspective. He describes the traditional house of learning where an initiate is put through a number of trials. The first trial was to place a white stone, called *Hukatai* (sea foam) in the initiate's mouth, and then symbolically to swallow it (58). On graduation, the student would symbolically swallow a red stone called *Rehutai* (seaspray):

How is the transition made from knowledge, *per se*, to wisdom? The swallowing of Rehutai is symbolic of how this state may be achieved. Hukatai (sea foam) and Rehutai (sea spray) are metaphors taken from a canoe *en passage*

⁶⁷ As noted in Chapter 1, Vicente Diaz uses the Carolinian term, "pookof", to describe this technique ("Sacred Tensions" 59).

on the sea. The sea foam or wake generated by the canoe in motion symbolizes the pursuit of knowledge as an accumulation of facts picked up along the way. Of itself, such facts constitute an unorganised set of ideas unrelated to his centre.//The centre is where he must create for himself an orderly system of ideas about himself and the world in order to regulate the direction of his life. (59)

This last point about centredness relates to the individual poets' own truths rather than universals. Each writer has embarked on their own journeys and has achieved the state of Rehutai, which "depicts a canoe heading into the sunrise", a state of revelation (59).

Reading five poets' work has gathered in the following floating signs. Each of the signs is in a Moanan context. I tabulate the following list to separate the signs out from the discursive flow of the thesis, yet the borders of the table are not sealed purposefully—I have made the horizontal borders in ripples, with porous vertical ones. The list of signs are not categories as that would defeat the intentions of a Moanan Poetics in English which emphasizes porosity, folding and unfolding metaphors, traces of signs that are visible and invisible, and interdiscursive, intertextual modes. I invite readers to view the table below as a reef of signs, open sentences moving tidalectically, which expands a number of target (also moving) islands.

Native names and concepts, words and phrases embedded in English language texts

Indigenous language poetics in English texts

Hidden cultural references (kaona) so that poems are indigenous shelters (kīpuka) for

precious stories

Overt and hidden colonial, neocolonial, postcolonial trauma in specific places and times
so that their expression is medicinal

Engagement with Western economic ideologies and their entities including cities,
industrialisation, normative practices, alienation from the land, ocean, cosmos

Wars and their legacy of affected relationships and ongoing resistance

Holistic environments as setting and voice

Sovereignty and independence issues on overt and/or hidden levels

Indigenous funeral practices

Indigenous customs

Indigenous deities

Ancestors

Cosmogony

Cultural and economic and language revitalization

Cultural and economic loss

Survival art

Pre and post contact referencing

Moving beyond survival art

References to other indigenous writers

Indigeneity in multiple environments and times

Humour, and emotions expressed regarding all or some of the above

Family, extended family, tribes and/or nation couched in all of the above

settings and techniques

The above list indicates some Moanan signs, themes, approaches, as there are those personal, emotional features indicative of a broader humanity which emotionally fuels the poetry, or to put it in Caudwell's terms, affective significances will attach symbolically to certain objects which include cultural objects. As well as the listed approaches, supposedly non-Moanan approaches deriving from the sciences and humanities could nonetheless contain resonances caused by Moanan identity assertions. The resonances are caused by literal semantic proximity. Reading Moeraki Beach with Keri Hulme is a very different activity from reading the same location with a real estate agent, or with a tourist. Viewing tourists with Haunani-Kay Trask is very different from viewing tourist activities with a resort operator. Mountains represented by Albert Wendt are completely different from those represented by an alpine club or other people who have invested in the idea of mountains. Hone Tuwhare's account of nuclear testing varies greatly from most history narratives. Alistair Te Ariki Campbell's account of Te Rauparaha belongs to his own psyche as well

as to the public idea of the warrior-chief. This collection of overt signs and hidden meanings (or resonances) to be translated into meaning is a broad interpretative strategy that one uses in everyday life. For me, “expanding the target” is a practical navigational device borrowed from deep-ocean (Moanan) voyaging methods. Another investigator might deploy a different metaphor to describe their interpretive project so that it speaks to their own position in the vā. As an example of this, official biographer Nelson Wattie’s useful introduction to Campbell’s life and work, *Scribbling in the Dark*, provides four broad interpretive headings for his oeuvre (7): “landscape poems, warrior poems, family poems, and love poems”. Elsewhere, Wattie says the Polynesian strain was always present (27, 56).

The political, cultural, chronological contexts of the poems invite readings centred on their terms. Some of these areas have not yet been discursively addressed in the academy as equal speakers: they remain in subaltern positions, and as such, their speech remains highly encoded in the languages of deference, and defence. I include Trask in the latter, where her political positions are in response to multiple aggravations by individuals and agencies. The irony here is that Moanan cultures value speech. There is a tremendous range of handed down oral literature, for instance. These values are not fully reciprocated in that many non-indigenous critics have not attempted to enter the worlds of the writers. To paraphrase Joan Metge, writers and critics continue to talk past each other. There are some excellent interviews and documentaries that ameliorate this situation to an extent. Close reading using a Moanan wayfinding lens has revealed a plurality of observations, images and narratives by five respected writers who have shared relationships with their cultural communities. To summarize at this point in a chapter labeled ‘conclusions’ does not do justice to the tremendous range of experiences and identities within the lives of the five poets and their

poetry oeuvres, hence this chapter's title between open brackets, 'Openings'. By relying on close-reading guided by Moanan wayfinding techniques as a principal method of enquiry, and on a range of theories of language, class, culture, self, and gender, I hope I have enlivened a major aspect of the poets' work, their sense of indigenous Moanan identity as expressed through their poetry, and shown the contribution such a heterogeneous identity makes to other identity assertions. The metaphors I use each whakapapa to Moanan reading strategies described variously here as the kīpuka, the wayfinder, kaona, the house or fono or marae, horizons and verticality, ecologies of the ocean and land and shore, the vā, tatau, and the face. The indigenous nouns I use have a similar whakapapa and agency: mana, mana wahine, whakapapa, ritenga tangata, named deities, ancestral names, practices, events, place names, schools of knowledge, being examples.

I re-present some terms here as reminders of the nature of complex inter-relations between human beings and their worlds, and also as reminders that to a certain extent the world is a product of the mind. Iain McGilchrist explores this in *The Master and His Emissary*. According to McGilchrist, the very structure of the brain leads us to fundamentally different versions of the world we live in. He makes the point that “the words that relate us to the world at large—‘know’, ‘believe’, ‘trust’, ‘want’, ‘grasp’, ‘see’, [sic] both describe and, if we are not careful, prescribe the relationship we have with it” (location 256 of Kindle edition). This thesis is not concerned with neuroscience, however. The connection is with the attentiveness of the mind. My thesis is partly that a poet's ritenga tangata, or habitual behaviour (in its meditative attention as well as living in the world meanings), reveals itself in the texts through Moanan reading methods. To return to Marsden's Māori-centred philosophy as well as a range of other thinkers, the world has visible (available to the senses) and invisible layers. Marsden expresses this through the traditional terms of the

baskets of knowledge, Tua-uri, Aronui, and Tua-ātea (60) which he also describes as worlds. To the three baskets he adds the world of symbolism. Tua-uri translates as 'beyond the world of darkness' and constitutes "the real world behind the world of sense perception of the natural world" (60); Aronui "is the natural world around us as apprehended by the senses" (61); Te Ao Tua-ātea "is the world beyond space and time (61) ...For the Māori, Tua-ātea, the transcendent eternal world of the spirit, is ultimate reality" (62). Marsden's additional world of symbol:

... is a deliberate creation of the human mind. Man creates symbols to depict, represent and illustrate some other perceived reality. Words, formulae, forms, ritualistic ceremonies, legend and myth are created by the human mind as maps, models, prototypes and paradigms by which the mind can grasp, understand and reconcile the worlds of sense perception and the real world behind that. (62)

The poets in this thesis have each attempted to translate their lived experiences and thoughts into some form of knowledge or wisdom. Marsden's four-layered conception of knowledge (led to via close reading as wayfinding), and phenomenological assertions of that symbolic world through extended initiation in the customs and traditions relevant to each poet everyday (including those of book-culture), shows insights into the poets' ongoing journeys toward wisdom. Wisdom is described by Marsden as a centredness which again reminds me of the Moanan emotional core, the ngākau, or na'au, mauri⁶⁸, maui, or moa, of each person's being (59):

⁶⁸ The Tongarevan sense here of 'heart' as defined in the comparative linguistic database Pollex.

All things, no matter how specialised must be connected to a centre. This centre is constituted of our most basic convictions—ideas that transcend the world of facts. This does not mean that they are purely subjective or relative, or even mere convention. But they must approximate reality whether in the world of sense perception or the real world behind that.

While I have chosen to emphasise Marsden's ideas at this stage of the thesis, I do not wish to give the impression that a Māori-centric view of the poets' work is an entirely sufficient lens for analysis of their multifaceted oeuvres. It is, however, the optics of this entire thesis in that it is the self-reflexive work of a Māori academic who reaches out via Moanan reading strategies for assistance in revealing indigenous assertions of lives being lived, and the wisdom derived from those widely diverse experiences of indigeneity. The close readings of this thesis are intended to do tikanga (justice) to this diversity, and to the worlds revealed and not revealed partly via the proximity of five writers who speak to us and to each other.

In this thesis, I have been reading culture as imbued in its book forms through the accounts of poets, but actually, on reflection, I have been reading the poetry looking for inflections of culture in the work. Occasionally I have had the opportunity to look into the archive, behind the layer of book production, but generally this layer has not been available to me except as hinted through interviews. It has been in some instances, such as for the water poet Tuwhare, akin to wading through alluvial soil looking for nuggets of gold, or in the case of Hulme, looking for stones flecked with greenstone, or in the case of Wendt, looking into the forests on the banks of the river where flying foxes and owls dwell, or in the case of Campbell, into memories of a life around a lagoon while

sitting in a windswept home overlooking the sea and bleak Kapiti, or in Trask's case, finding the poem as a forest haven amidst lava flows. Is this eclecticism, this plurality of approaches to the *vā*, lacking a centre? A sea of islands approach has many centres. Each individual accounts for oneself with the body, the *moa* or *na'au* or *ngākau* as one's emotional centre. An embodied sense of self is an accumulation of organs and tissues and psychological and neurological connections. Is this thesis merely a collection of symbols suggestive of story fragments or fragmented selves belonging to past grand narratives? I have consciously avoided categories while acknowledging their potential. There is complexity in an ocean, and in the mirroring of a wink.

The signs of this collection of five poets are selected by me, but encouraged toward that selection (or target) in that each poet has made claims about their cultural backgrounds. In a sense, as a wayfinding navigator, I read, reveal, and interpret the five bodies of poems to confirm or discover culturally significant claims. I have attempted to decouple these readings from national narratives, even in the case of Trask's political roles, to untangle at least some of the strands from the braided leis of poetry. In this untangling of concrete and abstract language expressions called poems, this thesis attempts to retain the original energy of the cultural strands I have identified, as frizzy, or curly, or straight, as braided, short, long or missing⁶⁹. Yet that is not to deny the sincerity of these poets. One abiding characteristic of the five poets' approach to their work is their strong

⁶⁹ Salmond notes that "a man's hair was linked quite literally with his descent lines (*kaka*—single hair, fibre, stalk; stock, line, lineage; main lines in tattooing)" and then discusses *mana* and *tikanga* around preserving *mana* (1985 241).

sense of ethos. Their ethos is part of the message. In my discussion of their oeuvres, I have privileged discussions of the pathos elements, and connected these emotional centres with the logos elements of the mind. Yet now as I approach the end of the thesis, it is clear to me that each poet's authorial commitment to their message is part of the being of each poem. This in a large way contributes to the broad sense of culture in their oeuvre. Discussions of cover portraits do not rest just in their conjuring up the presence in body of the poet, or the face does not merely demand an emotional engagement with the poet, it speaks of the commitment, the bodily signed imprimatur of each poet, or in other words, their abiding sincerity.

This thesis strategically explores each poet's Moanan influences, and brings the poets together via the vā relationships first made possible by the ocean. That is ultimately a political stance. I have not articulated the dimensions of Moanan space as these belong to the horizons of the poets except to say that it is not a synonym for Polynesia. I bounded the thesis in the genre of poetry, and remind us that everyday poetics articulates the hidden and the visible. Te Punga Somerville's work, *Once Were Pacific: Māori Connections to Oceania*, explores collaborations and relationships across the whole field of literary production by Māori writers based outside of Aotearoa to discern Pacific identity beyond national discourses. She reminds us that we dwell in Anglophone indigenous literary studies. Crucially, her book's central thesis is that Māori were *once* Pacific, but after our initial settlement we became indigenous and that other Pacific migrant communities who arrived many hundreds of years later were colloquially regarded as from elsewhere (xvii). The purpose of Te Punga Somerville's book is much broader than the scope of this thesis, and covers many genres and artforms. My concern has been the interpretation of poems across five oeuvres and whether or not they reveal signs that constitute a Moanan poetics. Te Punga

Somerville also reminds us that the term 'Polynesia' enables inclusion of Māori and Hawaiian writing, as the history of literary anthologies of the 'Pacific' has excluded those two writing communities. For example, she notes that the term 'Polynesia' allows for the inclusion of Hawaiian and Māori poets in the anthologies *Mauri Ola* and *Whetu Moana*. Regional anthologies based on nation-states tend to either diminish the number or entirely exclude the same indigenous writers. Similarly, by focusing on poets, and not other genre writers, the thesis's currents converge on the symbolic freight carried and filtered by poetries.

The wayfinding journey for this thesis is very nearly ended. I have followed five stars: two have set beyond the horizon, over Hawaiki Pāmamao⁷⁰. Four of the stars have used Aotearoa as a locus partly because of its flourishing publishing culture, its support for the arts, its historical relationship as a colonial Pacific power, and that it provided a home. These biases seem clearer to me at the end of the journey, as if I am a navigator reconstructing an oceanic pathway with mnemonic devices such as shells to enable further journeys. Yet to recount the voyage in its entirety would take just that, another voyage. I have not arrived at a formula that states x number of references leads to Moanan-ness. Multiple references suggest it, certainly, but often a poet's reputation no matter their background culture is what draws a reader to the bodies of work. The great topics of love, hate, and death and their many variants draw a readership. The manner of expression comes from both the people and the person. In that sense this tension between the collective and the personal voice is irresolvable. This interpretative, cultural layer is present

⁷⁰ 'Distant Hawaiki' is known to Māori as the ancestral and mythic homeland.

throughout the text, both invisibly and visibly. Bhabha calls this “psychic identification” (Lentricchia 31-32). While his essay focuses on historicism, and the power of literature to disturb the public face of history, I argue that the five poets have each stilled the march of great narrative histories by countering the nature of their political and personal situations through suspension of time, or reasserting cultural worlds in transcendent and also in everyday ways. They achieve this most often through personal contemporary and historical lyrics, as well as occasionally through caricature, satire, hyper-reality, and mythic alterity. In this sense, I am an impure phenomenologist, not entirely concerned with historicisms since the personal layer is the one to the fore for all of the poets in the thesis. Wendt, Hulme and Campbell regularly deploy personae, but they are often voiced in the first-person and so belong to the broad sweep of lyrical or personal poetry. Both Wendt and Campbell have epic sequences, while Campbell has a dramatic sequence, but nevertheless the predominant form is the personal lyric.

This closeness to the person is what draws me to strategies of phenomenology and its accumulation of signs, beliefs and practices amounting to culture(s). None of these signs follow a syntactical flow as in a grammar. They amount to suggestions, and a broad direction. In this sense, apart from Moanan identity assertions, one could accumulate over an oeuvre a number of alternate identities concerning the same poet’s work. I have chosen to follow the identity messages in the poems, but selected for Moanan referents. That in a sense reflects my own dispositions and relationships. Finally, I employ a phenomenology using close reading because of its acceptance of collective and individual differences or otherness. I cannot attempt to uncover the entire set of events and relationships that led to each individual poem’s creation, as I am of course other, and not privy to the conscious approaches of the poet. It is in part the craft of the poet to communicate

those emotions as symbolic relationships, or even overtly. One's attentiveness to possibilities, to the horizons of the poet's lived experience, is an important attribute here. In my view, to delimit as horizons the world of the poet does not restrict the poet's range: there are many portals to multiple alterities in the tightest poem. The horizons, along with vertical heights and depths, enable a spatial inhabiting of the poet's then existence. The Samoan archipelago as a structure for Wendt's *Vela*, or similarly the Hawaiian seamounts as energy sources for Trask's mytho-political poems, or Hulme's wild coastlines of Moeraki to the east and the South Island West Coast, or Campbell's warm Tongareva of Grandfather Bosini and the bleak Kapiti haunted by Te Rauparaha, or Tuwhare's generalised poetic canvases, each feature strong spatial and temporal elements. That is the nature of being. That the poets choose in their beingness to frequently reflect Moanan words, Moanan figures, concepts of spirit, death rituals, forms of poetry, forms of family organization, as well as myths, legends, culture-heroes, amounts to an extensive gathering together of indigenous referents that are recognized by outsiders as Polynesian, and by insiders as Hawaiian, Māori, Samoan, Tongarevan. So I return to the ambivalent term Polynesia to remind that it is an outsider term. The English term Moanan retains usefulness as recognition of blood kinship, and of cultural descent relations. I enjoy the term because of its relational heritage, but also its liquidity and Anglo-Moanan nature defies rigid categorisation so that it is suggestive of poetics. My reflex is to remove the last sentence due to potential misinterpretation as romanticising the region and its cultures, but that is a legacy of 'romanticism' as a term and set of practices, rather than a legacy of the terms 'Moana' and 'Moanan'.

Part of the appeal of the term Moana is that it resists normative and nationalist influences. I trust that the distancing effect from my home cultures (New Zealand and iwi Māori) of using a

Moanan poetics also discourages essentialist idealism. Fortunately, the cultures of each poet are interconnected and so identity assertions are diffused in such a context. Further diffusions could happen with terms such as 'Pacific' or 'Oceania' or 'Asia-Pacific'. The last-term is so broad it is almost meaningless as India and China alone constitute almost half of humanity. Similarly, the Moanan relationship is a closer blood-relationship than the pan-Pacific ones, but looking at the cross-fertilisation of literatures from Guam to Papua New Guinea to Fiji with Moanan writing, it is clear that the identity assertion could, given its oceanic nature, express a wider relationship with the rest of the Pacific. Where then does its value lie? Is it helpful to distill a worldview as Moanan? I hope the thesis does not give a misleading impression that that is the intention. The value lies in the identity's endurance, despite the polysemies of encounters, the tangledness and the smoothness of local and global, the many voices. There is value also in demonstrating its adaptations rather than its disappearance. At the very least, it often represents a visible and material layer in each of the poets' work although I feel that the poets make very different claims about identity as to be expected of any group of people.

The stability of focused identities such as Hawaiian, Māori, Tongarevan, Samoan are in contrast to Polynesian which is a wider term that arose after first encounters between Europeans and Pacific Islanders similar to Māori. The latter term means ordinary, which suggests that Europeans were seen as not ordinary or at the very least, as other. The terms Tongarevan, Hawaiian, and Samoan are grounded in actual place-names. The terms Māori and Polynesian have arisen directly out of encounters with Europeans and so are in a sense always dependent on this relationship with the other. The colonial layer came much later. Initially, these terms distinguished the groups of people. Similarly, this thesis nominally identifies or distinguishes indigenous Moanan

contributions within Anglophone literature; to reach that goal, it listens to the poets' voices, and immerses itself in the accounts of everyday and extraordinary lives. These accounts do not smoothly point the way, but the cumulative symbolic effect gives me the impetus to say there are indeed Moanan markers across the poetics of five important poets. I do not wish to re-accumulate these signs, symbols, referents, as that would not do the poems justice. I would need an inscribing technology that gave me access to the air they breathed, the sunlight or the rain they experienced, the sequence of emotional moments (love, joy, injustice, hate, anger, theft, celebration) that led to the poem. We do not have that being-and-time machine yet. These indicators rest within the languages and the material objects and their purposes and the philosophical traditions of each culture. Rather than summarise at this point, I wish to expand the targets. Just as each poem can be closely read by a person, so can each culture closely read the poem through its members. I do not wish to labour this point as there are always exceptions.

Expansion of the target implies a widening of multiple gaps, or an increase in porosity, or a greater occupancy of a horizon for one to steer one's journey toward in one's socially constructed vehicle. Yet this increase on the lateral plane is matched by vertical referencing within waka navigation in order to maintain the original trope. Stars and planetary bodies including the sun and moon have navigational significances: their cultural significances are sometimes named in the poetics as a tie-in for the theoretical trope and the actual poetry. Other vertical beings include birds. There are depths too in the oceanic creatures and flora used by navigators. The navigational systems are also suggestive of an indigenous ecological system that is referenced by the poets whether through descriptions of damage or its ideal manifestations in the poems. In short, Moanan wayfinding poetics is not a theory of the world. It is a strategic understanding of the world as

handed down by star navigators, or shamans, or high priests, or experts of esoteric and practical knowledges, as well as through ordinary living. This is not to say that this amounts to a singular, transmitted epistemology: that is part of the reasoning behind the multiple Moanan reading strategies of this thesis, to expand the episteme beyond singular essentialism so that the sets of Moanan relations rise to the surface despite their (in the West) subaltern status. Just as the moving ocean can disguise and reveal the presence of creatures, or immerse and then withdraw from land, there are visible and invisible layers within the works of the poets: some of these layers may be called Moanan. The accumulation of poems of this latter type across oeuvres has been the purpose of this thesis: that it is possible to read and interpret a Moana of shared relationships and qualities in the bodies of work of these five poets using Moanan wayfinding strategies.

Aa, tōia mai—te waka!

ki te urunga—te waka!

ki te moenga—te waka!

Ki te takotoranga i takoto ai—te waka!⁷¹

⁷¹ A Māori waka hauling chant indicating collective achievement and ancient relationships derived from deep-ocean waka journeys. It is often used in welcome.

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APPENDIX A: POEMS CITED IN CHAPTER 3.

(Emended unpublished typescript of 'His Terrible Mistress' by Alistair Te Ariki Campbell)

3

HIS TERRIBLE MISTRESS

This blonde girl is be^utiful enough,
The body tall, ~~the~~ bright head arrogant;
She looks to me like some wild bird ~~caught~~
~~or~~ ^{snared or} snared out of its true element.

The eyes are cold as mist in a stone valley;
The brilliant hands are almost predatory;
But the harshness of the mouth is beautiful
As a hawk on some sea-torn promontory.

Some sea-torn promontory where the wind
Lifts the ~~wild~~ ^{white} spray, and seagulls scream
Heard by wild ears; nearby, some stunted trees
And a steady downpouring mountain stream.

(Landfall 3 no.3 (1949) version of 'Elegy' by Alistair Te Ariki Campbell)

Elegy

I.M.

R.M. Dickson, killed in the Alps, 1 January 1947, aged 20

I

THE HOLLYFORD VALLEY

STORM. Storm in the trees;
Everywhere the hidden sound
Of water, like hives of bees
Up-tilted deep underground.

The shattered cliff's sheer
Face spurts myriads
Of waterfalls, like tears
From some deep-bowed head

Whose colossal grief is stone.
Great trees rooted fast
In ice, nightlong moan

Down the gleaming pass.

II

NOW he is dead, who talked
Of wild places and skies
Inhabited by the hawk;

Of the hunted hare that flies
Down bare parapets of stone,
And there closes its eyes;

Of trees rooted fast in stone
Winds bend but cannot break;
Of the low terrible moan

That dead thorn-trees make
On a windy desolate knoll;
Of the storm-blackened lake,

Where heavy breakers roll
Out of the snow-bred mist,
When the glittering air is cold;

Of the Lion Rock that lifts
Out of the whale-backed waves
Its black sky-battering cliffs;

Of the waterfall that raves
Down the dark mountain side,
And into a white cauldron dives.

III.

A dead thorn-tree stands
Halfway up a dark mountain;
Goats and sheep sheltered there
From sun and wind; a spring

Wells out of its roots forming
A cool basin, moss-lined
And overflowing. The musterer's
Dog drinks there, or did once.

In these dusty branches
No birds build; but once

A tui lighted there, sang
A few bars, until wind moaned.

The bird fell dead. Now
Nor sheep, nor goat comes near
That spot. But when wind moans,
High over it, the wild birds cry.

IV

Now sleeps the gorge, the pale moon's steaming disk
Desolate and glimmering through the gusty mist;
The storm that through the wind-cropt tussocks
Screams and screams where the great hawks rest

Upon comfortless stone their arrogant hearts;
Now sleeps the mist whose tumbling woods unroll
Upon gullied hills, and with the dawn depart;
The streaming woods, the pigeon-moaning knoll,

And swarming under cliffs like smoking swords,
The rock-torn Clutha. O this bare place
Embalms such glory, beast nor bird of day
Walks or flies but in its living grace.

V

SLEEP on, restless heart,
In the wild fruit-tree;
Be growth and all things sweet
Your love-brimmed reverie.

Sweetness at the root,
May the tree climb high;
Close against the sun
Let all its branches sigh;

Pride and glory lost
When hill-streams are dry:
--O lay to your wild breast
Wind's disconsolate cry.

VI

DRIFTWOOD

IN a sun-rinsed rock-pool,
An intensity of weathered wood
Caught and dazzled my eyes.

Water had carved out intricacies

Of violence and wild grace:

A mad girl dancing; men

Wrestling, caught up, twisted

Together like gigantic roots;

And someone fleeing

From what might be death,

So terrible its beauty seemed;

And one, smaller than the rest,

Had so piteous a form

Being warped by sun and wind,

I could not gaze upon it:

It was his form, his face.

VII

WIND AND RAIN

RAIN on the roof; darkness of rain

In the orchard, where boughs break,

And crash amid great winds;

And all night I've lain awake

Listening to the storm-wind howl

Upon the hill, and waters race

Beside the house, and could not sleep

Remembering a storm-begotten grace,

And a great gentleness that seemed

More wonderful in one so young;

And all night long I have tried

To still the heart-ache, and give tongue

To his memory, and have failed;

And will fail, as long as the wind

Moans through the trees, and rain

Brings its agony to my mind.

VIII

DEAR head, struck down; bright flesh

That made my black night sweet,

All bruised and bleeding; fond feet

Twisted in death's hideous mesh;

What mountain climbed, what rock,

What dead thorn-tree that drips

With mist, what fall that slips

Into a fiery gorge, but mock

Your memory and my wild tears?

For you, still glimmering hand,

No hand through death's blind land

To guide you, no heart-wrung prayers

For your journeying forth avails

The piteous groping, the drag

Of hesitant feet. What brag

Has death not fulfilled? What fails

But hope, pride, and majesty

Like the sun setting, when head

Moans and slumps back like lead

Amid some wild bird's ecstasy?

IX

THE LAID-OUT BODY

NOW grace, strength and pride

Have flown like the hawk;

The mind like the spring tide,

Beautiful and calm; the talk;

The brilliance of eye and hand;

The feet that no longer walk.

All is new and all is strange,

Terrible as a dusty gorge

Where a great river sang.

(Unpublished 2009 Manuscript version of 'Elegy' by Alistair Te Ariki Campbell based on galleys of the 2005 *Collected Poems*)

Elegy

For Roy M Dickson

Killed in the Alps, 1 January 1947, aged 20

I The Hollyford Valley

Storm. Storm in the trees;
Everywhere the hidden sound
Of water, like hives of bees
Up-tilted deep underground.

The shattered cliff's sheer
Face spurts a myriad
Waterfalls, like tears
From some deep-bowed head

Whose colossal grief is stone.

Great trees, rooted fast

In ice, nightlong moan
Down the gleaming pass.

II Now He is Dead

Now he is dead, who talked
Of wild places and skies
Inhabited by the hawk;

Of the hunted hare that flies
Down bare parapets of stone,
And there closes its eyes;

Of trees rooted fast in stone
Winds bend but cannot break;
Of the low terrible moan

That dead thorn-trees make
On a windy desolate knoll;
Of the storm-blackened lake,

Where heavy breakers roll

Out of the snow-bred mist,
When the glittering air is cold;

Of the Lion Rock that lifts
Out of the whale-backed waves
Its black sky-battering cliffs;

Of the waterfall that raves
Down the dark mountain side,
And into a white cauldron dives.

III.

A dead thorn-tree stands
Half-way up a dark mountain;
Goats and sheep sheltered there
From sun and wind; a spring

Wells out of its roots forming
A cool basin, moss-lined
And overflowing. The musterer's
Dog drinks there, or did once.

In these dusty branches
No birds build; but once
A tui lighted there, sang
A few bars, until wind moaned.

The bird fell dead. Now
No sheep or goats come near
That spot. But when wind moans
High over it the wild birds cry.

IV Now Sleeps the Gorge

Now sleeps the gorge, the pale moon's steaming disc
Desolate and glimmering through the gusty mist;
The storm that through the wind-cropped tussock
Screams, and screams where the great hawks rest

Upon comfortless stone their arrogant hearts;
Now sleeps the mist whose tumbling woods unroll
Upon gullied hills, and with the dawn depart;
The streaming woods, the pigeon-moaning knoll,

And swarming under cliffs like smoking swords,
The rock-torn Clutha. O this bare place
Embalms such glory, there's not a creature
Walks or flies but in its living grace.

V Reverie

Sleep on, restless heart,
In the wild fruit-tree;
May quiet windfalls ease
Your troubled reverie.

Sweetness at the root,
May the tree climb high;
Close against the sun
Let all its branches sigh.

Leaf and blossom lost
When hill streams are dry—
O lay to your wild breast
Wind's disconsolate cry.

VI Driftwood

In a sun-rinsed rock-pool,
An intensity of weathered wood
Caught and dazzled my eyes.
Water had carved out intricacies

Of violence and wild grace:
A nude girl dancing; men
Wrestling, flung back, twisted
Together like gigantic roots;

And someone fleeing
From what might be death,
So terrible its beauty seemed.
And one smaller than the rest,

Had so piteous a form,
Being warped by sun and wind,
I couldn't look at it:
It was his form, his face.

VII Wind and Rain

Rain on the roof, darkness of rain
In the orchard where boughs break,
And crash amid great winds;
And all night I've lain awake

Listening to the thunder tread
Upon the hill, and waters race
Above the house, and could not sleep
Remembering a storm-delighting grace,

And a rare gentleness that seemed
More wonderful in one so young;
And all night long I have tried
To still the heartache, and give tongue

To his memory, and have failed,
And will fail, as long as the wind
Moans through the trees, and rain
Brings its agony to my mind.

VIII Farewell

Dear head, struck down; bright flesh
That made my dark night sweet,
All bruised and bleeding; fond feet
Twisted in Death's hideous mesh;

What mountain climbed, what rock,
What dead thorn-bush that drips
With mist, what fall that slips
Into a fiery gorge, but mock

Your memory and my despair?
For you, still glimmering hand,
No hand through Death's blind land
To guide you, no heart-wrung prayer

For your journeying forth avails
The piteous groping, the drag
Of hesitant feet. What brag
Has Death not fulfilled? What fails

But hope, pride, and majesty
Like the sun setting, when head
Moans and slumps back like lead
Amid some wild bird's ecstasy?

IX The Laid-Out Body

Now grace, strength and pride
Have flown like the hawk;
The mind like the spring tide,

Beautiful and calm; the talk;
The brilliance of eye and hand;
The feet that no longer walk.

All is new and all is strange,
Terrible as a dusty gorge
Where a great river sang.

(Unpublished 6th section of 'Elegy' sent by Campbell to Charles Brasch)

6

Wind that blows cold from the pouring hill,
Breathe softly upon my love's shattered breast;
Bring odour of moss, of ice-dropping trees,
And the cry of wild-birds that pleased him best.

Sounds of rain, and cold mist in the valley;
The black waters foamless in the loud gorge;
Moaning of spray through bird-filled branches
On a sea-hammered coast where storms are forged.

Blow, wind, blow across the blackened lake
The storm-clouds threatening his naked head:
His grave's a gorge, his shroud the drizzling mist
Upon wind-bared ramparts where thunder treads.

(Unpublished seventh section of 'Elegy' by Alistair Te Ariki Campbell)

7.

1. I have walked where my love has walked,
2. And I have stayed for hours, and have heard
3. The moon-flooded river slide in foam
4. Upon a dark mirror, and where a bird
5. Upon a thorny stick sang all night
6. To a star-lit gorge, and had not stirred

7. But that a rabbiter upon early rounds
8. Passed by with dogs, and flighted that song;
9. And under gleaming battlements, where the wind
10. Moaned so sadly, that I cried 'What is wrong?'
11. And over and over shouted out his name
12. While back the echoes vollied throng on throng.

(Unpublished tenth section of 'Nobby Clark' by Alistair Te Ariki Campbell sent to Charles
Brasch)

10

The sun slips out of sight
stretching the sea until
it is taut and quivering.
Suffused with a luminous light,
serenely beautiful,
the evening seems to deny
the terrors I descry.
What reason then for alarm?
A fish leaps at a fly,
and across the darkening Straits
the black South Island hills
extend a protecting arm.

The Sirens' Cave

(by Alistair Te Ariki Campbell. Omitted from *The Dark Lord of Savaiki: Collected Poems*)

He has never been the same,
my father, since he blundered
into a sirens' cave as they

were soaping each other's
crotches joyfully, their voices
linked in harmony.

Insidiously they shrilled
at him, but his innocence
simply bladed off their spell.

Then unabashed the sirens
let down their hair, stretched out
like seals and barked at him,

which caused him to run off,
unmanned by laughter that
mocked him as it blessed...

He has been running since,
my father, hoping to repeat
that blunder and find again

the sirens' cave, not once
suspecting why for him alone
the rock pools open out

their pockets, or why
each night he falls asleep
in the palm of the wind.

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