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Research Notes

New Zealand's Multiculturalism as seen at Auckland War Memorial Museum

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Translated into English by Nina Whittaker

Abstract:

This article studies the extent of the realisation of multiculturalism in New Zealand though an examination of its museums, as made possible through the cooperation of Auckland War Memorial Museum. By creating a detailed report on observations and interviews with 20 museum staff conducted over the course of two days, I analyse how the museum uses a pivotal relationship to Maori culture to engage with the many cultures of the Pacific, and how the museum is using this experience to try to open up further.

Keywords: *Museum, biculturalism, multiculturalism, Maori, Pacific, accessibility*

This article is part of ongoing research into "The development and theoretical evolution of methods for analysing museums in a multicultural age".[1] It is a research report on observations made at Auckland War Memorial Museum Tāmaki Paenga Hira, where I spent two days observing and interviewing 20 museum staff[2] to examine diverse aspects of the museum. Through this I analyse how the museum uses a pivotal relationship to Maori culture to engage with the many cultures of the Pacific, and how the museum is using this experience to try to open up further. Finally, I conclude with some considerations from the perspective of the theme of this body of research - *museums and multiculturalism*.

1. Overview of research objectives

1.1 Background to the Museum

[1] This research was conducted in Japan to explore how the word "Multicultural Coexistence", which was brought into Japan by foreigners 90 years ago, has been translated into museum practice. Particularly in light of the 2020 Tokyo Olympics/Paralympics, concepts of diversity have risen in profile, but are only beginning to be concretely applied to the cultural sector. This research took place across number of museums in England, Australia and New Zealand to observe the methods "traditional" museums in these countries use to navigate multiculturalism. By analysing this data we can deduce some approaches Japanese museums can take to addressing multiculturalism.

[2] 2-3 November 2018. The three researchers were Tanigawa Ryūichi (Kanazawa University), Miyata Masako (Aichi Shukutoku University), and Murata Mariko (Kansai University). The interviews were made possible through introductions by JICA's Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteer Corps / Museum of Samoa curator Keino Yuka.

New Zealand, next to Australia, is a nation in Oceania - a region known for its diverse cultures and ethnicities. With its modern origins as a settler nation, it is founded on an 1840 Treaty[3] between the English and the indigenous Māori people. As such, society was for a lengthy period formed upon the Western values of British immigrants, with the advancement of assimilationist policies against Māori. Museums were brought to New Zealand at an early stage as part of the import of British culture, increasing in number over time. In the postwar period, New Zealand's museums were positioned as "bases for continuing education, functioning primarily for the propagation and teaching of British culture and language" (Ichikawa, 2005:99).

From the latter half of the 1960s there was a growing movement to demand the reclamation of indigenous rights, and from around 1980 national policies began to advance the agenda of biculturalism. In principle, the aim was to progress towards the coexistence and equal treatment of Māori and English/European settler (Pākehā)[4] cultures. With the dramatic review of immigration laws in 1974 and 1987, however, people from Asian countries like Korea and China, along with the Pacific Islands, immigrated to New Zealand in large numbers seeking work (Nishikawa, 2006). As such, New Zealand inevitably moved towards becoming a multicultural nation.[5] This evolving situation reflected in educational systems, which moved towards more plural representation. In museums, there was an increasing awareness not only of the representation and treatment of Māori cultural collections and exhibitions, but also of the many non-Māori cultures of the Pacific as well.

The subject of this research, Auckland War Memorial Museum (photographs 1, 2)[6], began as The Auckland Institute.[7] This was one of four museums established in the latter half of the 19th century, early in the development of New Zealand as a nation – one each in Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin. As the earliest to open even among New Zealand's museums, it is a museum that is tied to New Zealand's early history. The museum developed with a strong foundation in the research and study of natural history, and in particular geology (McCarthy 2014.10.22). The museum's collections and prospects were significantly enriched by the enthusiastic collecting of botanist Thomas Cheeseman (1845-1923), who immigrated from England and became a curator at the museum in 1874. In 1890 the

[3] The Treaty of Waitangi. Although it is the basis of the founding of the country, the English and Māori language versions were different, even having been called two different treaties. It could be said that New Zealand history in the post-Treaty era has been a history of the reconciliation of these two versions, above all the restoration of rights including Māori rights to land.

[4] Pākehā: Settlers to New Zealand and their descendants; also known as 'white people'.

[5] It is not that New Zealand differs from Australia and Canada in promoting multiculturalism as a national policy. Rather, multiculturalism is promoted and understood at a regional level - for example the Auckland Plan (Auckland's guiding plan) states that Auckland is home to people who identify with over 120 different ethnicities, thus forming a 'Diverse Auckland'.

[6] For the photographs, the photographers (respectively) were: Murata Mariko (ph. 1, 4, 5, 8, 13, 17, 18, 20), Miyata Masako (ph. 5, 10, 12, 15, 22, 26, 29), and Tanigawa Ryūichi (ph. 2, 3, 6, 7, 9, 11, 14, 19, 21, 23-25, 27, 28). Colour corrections and editing were done by Miyata Masako. Photographs relating to Māori and Pacific in this article were supplied through the Museum's cultural permission process.

[7] The Auckland Philosophical Society opened in a temporary structure in 1852, and following two moves it settled into a designated building in 1867. Here, it became The Auckland Institute, and in 1880 was renamed The Auckland Institute and Museum. Following an increase in collections, in 1929 it combined with the war memorial for World War One to become the Auckland War Memorial Museum, in its current location (Museum HP).

museum also held the largest Māori collection at the time (ibid). Of course, Māori cultural collections at this time were very much seen as objects of curiosity for the European gaze.

[Photograph 1: Museum from the outside. The crosses on the grass are a memorial exhibition commemorating New Zealand soldiers killed during World War One.]

[Photograph 2: The lobby. The impressive neoclassical architecture is shown by the Ionic columns.]

1.2 Composition of the Museum

In its present form the Museum is a comprehensive institution covering the three themes of Māori and Pacific cultures, New Zealand's natural history, and New Zealand at war.

[Photograph 3: Hall of Memories. The stained glass on the ceiling shows coats of arms of the British dominions and colonies that fought during World War One.]

[Photograph 4: Exterior of the atrium, a semi-circular extension that was added behind the original building in 1960.]

The museum is operated primarily through budget from the City Council.[8] The museum building combines the 1929 War Memorial, built to commemorate the fallen soldiers from World War One (photograph 3), and the 1960 semi-circular extension, which was added behind the original building (photograph 4). After thirty years without refurbishment, the aged building finally underwent large-scale renovation from 1994-1999.[9] This renovated area is the base for current exhibitions. Further large-scale refurbishments took place from 2003-2006, and at the time of our visit in November 2018 a third stage of renovation had begun, based on the 20-year 'Future Vision' plan created in 2012, and the 5-year plan for 2017-2022.[10]

The museum spans 3 floors, broadly divided into "Pacific People" on the ground floor, "Natural History" on the first floor, and "Scars of the Heart" on the second floor.

In "Pacific People" on the ground floor, Māori and Pacific culture is on display (fig. 1, photographs 5-8). The Māori Court (Māori exhibition hall) holds over a thousand items dating back to the early first settlements of New Zealand. This area includes a marae (meeting area), war canoes, storage huts, and other large items as well as cabinets displaying everyday household and hunting tools. Further information on the Treaty of Waitangi (see note 3) and Māori portraits are also displayed here.

[Figure 1: Floorplan of "Pacific Peoples", ground floor. Reprinted from the Auckland Museum Guide.]

[Photograph 5: The Māori Court exhibition.]

[Photograph 6: The Māori Court exhibition. At the front is a canoe, and behind it a storage hut is visible.]

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[8] The museum receives some project-based national subsidies, however they operate as a municipal organisation. The current 5-year plan lists increasing local accessibility to the museum as one of its goals.

[9] According to McCarthy, 1990-200 was the "museum boom" era in New Zealand (McCarthy 2014.10.22), coinciding with the museum's large-scale renovation.

[10] The new gallery, Tāmaki Herenga Waka: Stories of Auckland, is scheduled to open in the latter half of 2020 (source: Museum HP).

[Photograph 7: Pacific collections.]

[Photograph 8: Pacific collections.]

[Photograph 9: Natural History floor (Origins gallery).]

[Photograph 10: A kiwi on the Natural History floor]

[Photograph 11: Māori Natural History area.]

[Photograph 12: Māori Natural History exhibition.]

[Photograph 13: Exhibition on World War Two.]

[Photograph 14: Exhibition on the New Zealand Wars.]

[Photograph 15: Māori Cultural Performance.]

In the Natural History galleries on the first floor, New Zealand's geology and natural environment, as well as some of New Zealand's unique creatures (moa, kiwi, tuatara etc.) are on display. This floor echoes the early foundations of the museum in its natural history collections (photographs 9, 10). Within this is an exhibition called *Te Ao Tūroa - Māori Natural History*, where Māori science and knowledge about the natural world (Mātauranga / Māori wisdom) is showcased (photographs 11, 12).

Scars of the Heart on the second floor is a War Memorial to commemorate the two World Wars, with further exhibitions and memorials on New Zealand's domestic wars, the Boer war, and other conflicts that New Zealand has been involved in (photographs 13, 14). Further, the museum has been working to strengthen its demonstration of Māori intangible cultural knowledge, and regularly holds a "Māori Cultural Performance" (photograph 15).[11] According to the Museum's website, over the past five years, around 864,000 visitors each year have been greeted with this performance.

2. Museum Observations: Report

On the first day of research (2 November 2018), we were indebted to Senior Manager (Teu Le Vā Manager)[12] Olivia Taouma, supervisor of Pacific-related activities at the museum, who organised the below observation schedule (fig. 1). We were able to hear about diverse aspects of the Museum's Māori and Pacific-related programming. On the second day of research (3 November) we used the museum open hours of 10am-5pm to confirm details, observe how staff policies were reflected in the museum itself, and study and photograph the whole museum.

[Figure 1: Interview and observation schedule (2 November 2018)]

[11] An official video is available via YouTube (search *Māori cultural performance at Auckland Museum*).

[12]All staff positions are from the time of research. Teu Le Vā is Sāmoan, meaning *nurture the relationship*, and is a concept that sits within the promotion of Pacific, multicultural education in New Zealand. Auckland War Memorial Museum introduced this lead concept in 2017, as a challenge to promote the Pacific Dimension of the museum, as framed in 2012.

Auckland War Memorial Museum houses comprehensive exhibits on various New Zealand peoples' cultures, natural history, and military history. We began trying to undersand the position and direction of the museum by talking to the staff members and teams, who embody the spirit and worldviews of Māori and the Pacific. Although we were only three researchers who came from overseas to visit and observe the museum, we were welcomed without reservation by 20 staff, over the course of a full day. These people, regardless of their departments, embody the hospitality of *Teu Le Vā* (nurture the relationship). Therefore, we would like to retrace the careful schedule that our hosts provided to us (fig.1), and in doing so capture many key concepts of the museum. By doing so, we believe one can visualise the overarching messages that Olivia conveyed to us through the multifaceted interview programme that she assembled.

Before doing so, it is important to know the concept of "dimensions" that the museum uses. There are two broad areas, the Māori Dimension and the Pacific Dimension. These dimensions express the idea of reassembling and building relationships with Māori and Pacific peoples through Māori and Pacific worldviews. These concepts permeate the organisation as a whole, and the guidelines for this approach are written in the Concept Paper series issued by the museum.[13] Figure 2 is an illustration from the 20-year Future Vision plan. It shows the museum's foundation firstly in respect for Māori culture (biculturalism), and then in the promotion of the diversity of the Pacific Islands through the Pacific Dimension. Finally, beyond and within these two frameworks, the cultures of Asian immigrants, as well as those of European colonists and immigrants, is represented.

Launched in 2007, the Māori Dimension draws on He Korahi Māori (Māori thought and philosophy) as its guide.[14] This is further based on the concepts of partnership and goodwill as originally described in the Treaty of Waitangi (see footnote 3). From our interviews we found these concepts woven into the full breadth of museum activities. The Pacific Dimension, launched in 2012, uses Teu Le Vā for its guidelines, with He Korahi Māori and Teu Le Vā mutually complementing, affecting and reinforcing each other.[15]

2.1 Māori Dimension

(10:00am – Mihi welcome and cup of tea)

We began our visit when the museum first opened for the day, and were first surprised to find that seven of the Museum staff had lined up next to each other at the reception, waiting to receive the three of us. Thus prompted, we lined up facing them, at which point one of the Māori staff members (Robert Newson) greeted us with a Māori language greeting and welcome song. We were therefore prompted to offer something in return right off the bat, and so offered our greetings in Japanese and English before singing *Red Dragonfly*, which somehow came to mind. We finished by distributing some gifts which we had prepared from Japan, and as such concluded our "response". After this both parties approached and touched noses one at a time in a Māori greeting. By greeting guests in a Māori way the museum both conveys respect for its guests, and communicates the spirit of the museum at a physical level. This spirit of the museum was in the background of all our later interviews, but the fact that we were able to

[13] See reference list.
[14] In Figure 2 this is written as Te Korahi Māori, but from hereon this article uses the spelling He Korahi Māori.
[15] In terms of this relationship, the museum concept paper writes: "The Pacific dimension is based on a strong relationship with iwi and He Korahi Māori" (Auckland War Memorial Museum 2013:13).

physically experience this dimension in our first interaction with the museum played a large role in our understanding of its meaning.

Once this first set of customs ended, we were guided to the dining room where the whole staff hosted us for 30 minutes, over tea and cookies (which may be English style?). After hearing about the history and architectural features of the museum, the current Five-Year Plan (2017-2022), and other details, our next interviewee came to pick us up.

(10:45 – He Korahi Māori introduction talk and tour)

The Māori Dimension was established in 2007, and according to the tour by coordinator Nicola Railton,[16] began from a conversation about the land upon which the museum was built. Instead of starting the tour inside the museum, we first went outside the entrance and spent 20 minutes walking around the perimeter of the museum, learning about the features of the land (photograph 16). The museum lies within one of New Zealand's oldest parks, Auckland Domain (photograph 17). Created by volcanic activity, this land was originally Māori land, and was called Pukekawa (the land of bitter memories) due to the intertribal wars that took place upon it. In the latter half of the 19th century, this land saw the New Zealand Wars unfold between settlers and Māori.

Reflecting on this history of invasion, in 1996 the Auckland War Memorial Museum Act was created, which established an Advisory Committee constituting the three iwi of this land. Known as the Taumata-ā-Iwi and consisting of Ngāti Whātua, Ngāti Pāoa, and Tainui, this committee has the right to advise on protocols for all activities relating to the museum's relationships with Māori peoples. From every corner of Nicola's words we could sense the powerful voice that this committee has within the museum.

Once we entered the museum, we were guided to the marae (meeting place) in the Māori Court on the first floor (fig.1, ph.5, 6). Within the context of the colonial gaze at the museum's establishment, marae, storage huts and canoes were three of the top items that museums at that time desired to collect. Beyond that, other objects were displayed according to Western classifications and interpretations, lacking the perspective of iwi.

Although the 1929 building was built to accommodate this marae, the marae itself is problematic in that it does not belong to any of the three aforementioned iwi. This is because at the time of collection, understandings of Māori culture were inadequate, and there was little understanding of the differences between tribes. As such, even within this marae's regular use there are subtle differences in the observance of different customs/rituals. Furthermore the museum, in its desire to exhibit the "Māori-ness" of this conventional marae, once painted the entrance and sculptures. At the time of painting, stereotypes equated Māori with red, without recognition of the range of colours Māori used. It took over 30 years to restore the marae.

While the restoration of the marae has now taken place, the exhibition hall itself has been largely unaltered since the large-scale renovations in 1999. Even now the exhibition remains lacking in Māori points of view.

[Photograph 16: Outside the museum, Nicola explains the meanings of the land.]

[16] Māori Partnership and Development Coordinator, who has been at the museum since 2002.

[Photograph 17: The Museum stands inside a park called Auckland Domain.]

[Photograph 18]: The exhibition corner "The Treaty of Waitangi" (an exhibition about the Treaty of Waitangi).

[Photograph 19: Māori patterns on the railings in the atrium.]

[Photograph 20: The meanings of Māori patterns like these are explained in Archey's 1960 handbook (referenced in footnote 19).]

[Photograph 21: The title of this urn is "Whaowhia" (2016).]

However, albeit in a small corner, three new exhibitions - "Treaty of Waitangi" (an exhibition about the Treaty of Waitangi, ph.18), "Not One More Acre!" (an exhibition about land confiscation), and "160 Years of Kiingitanga" (an exhibition on the Māori monarchy) - have been created. These exhibitions reflect a strong Māori voice. With the coming refurbishments, there is a desire to comprehensively reflect these viewpoints moving forward.

Following this we were guided to the *Te Ao Tūroa: Māori Natural History* room on the first floor. This exhibition is structured not around Western classifications, but rather around Māori science and knowledge of the natural world, also known as Mātauranga (Māori wisdom). In Māori genealogy, for example, the modern, Western, scientific classification of a stone does not make sense. When we pointed out that it must have been significant for an exhibition like this to have been created in 1999, we were told that at the time of the renovation, one of the three iwi had had maintained a strong voice. However, Nicola pointed out that this point of view was not conveyed very well in the exhibition, and often did not come across to the visitors. With the coming refurbishment, while continuing to express these ideas, they hope to better explain it and make it more accessible.

We then returned to the ground floor, and passing through the 1960 atrium extension were able to reflect on the architectural features that Chris Smith[17] had explained at the morning gathering. Gilbert Archey,[18] who took a strong interest in Māori art, had Māori designs incorporated throughout the entire building in the 1960 refurbishments (photographs 19, 20). By incorporating Māori designs into the museum building itself, rather than treating Māori culture as a distant target to aim towards, Nicola explains that Archey was very progressive for a Pākeha zoologist at that time.

Strengthening the Māori dimensions was an aim in the 2003-2006 refurbishment. However, ultimately this resulted in the installation of an vase symbolising Māori by the atrium entrance (photograph 21), and the Māori saying posted at the entrance. The vase, called "Whaowhia" (to fulfil, to carve), is a piece carved by Brett Graham in 2006. This word was seen as the museum's motto (and at the same time, the title of one of Archey's publications[19]). It demonstrates the Museum's role as a repository of cultural,

[17] Head of Major Works. Coordinates the museum's physical plant, from architecture to equipment.
[18] 1890-1974. Director of the Museum from 1924. Although a zoologist, he took a strong interest in Māori art from the 1930s, publishing up to 30 publications in this area (Morton, 1998).
[19] Titled *Whaowhia: Māori Art and its Artists*, it was Archey's final publication, completed just before his death (Morton, 1998). Archey's *Handbook of the Auckland War Memorial Museum, 2nd edition: Sculpture and Design – An Outline of Māori Art,* which he wrote in 1960 as Director of the museum, is published here: (https://www.knowledge-basket.co.nz/kete/taonga/contents/taonga/text/archey/archey.html). Date viewed: 15 July, 2020).

historical and scientific material, as well as its role as their guardian. As such the Māori Dimension of the museum, which began in 2007, took this motto and strategically reshaped it into its work.

Nicola points out that these many Māori narratives are not known to the public, nor very visible in the construction of the physical space. Even within the museum staff there are few who know these aspects of the history of the museum. At the very least, she says, they have ensured that all people involved in the current refurbishments know this information and use it as a basis for their work.

2.2 Remains Return Room

(11:45am – Human Remain Repatriation)

Next, we had an interview with the Human Remains Repatriation staff (photograph 22). Our interviewee was Coralie O'Hara, who coordinates research into these returns.[20] She, alongside Robert Newson[21] (Bobby) who performed our morning greeting, work in partnership to lead the remains return work.

During the 19th century, many Western museums and universities collected human remains. The museum was no exception, with this type of collection happening from before the museum's opening in 1852 and indeed continuing up until the 1990s. Initially people would dig up Māori graves and bring remains into the museum to buy and sell, and some remains were even exhumed at the Director's instructions. Besides grave robbery, some remains were brought in by locals after being washed away during storms. These bones were also used in exchanges with other museums, and are now scattered in both domestically and overseas museums. Even Thomas Cheeseman, who gathered together the foundations of the museum's collections, obtained collections from across the world through the exchange of Māori remains (re-quoted from Hole 2007; Tapsell 2003[22]).

Auckland War Memorial Museum began to return these remains during the 1980s. At that stage, the museum's policy was to respond to requests. It was only in 2003 that the Museum policy changed to take an active role in their return, beginning with disclosing the presence of remains. Because the Museum holds objects not just from within New Zealand but around the world, a database was created in 2006 and through outreach to communities, a number of returns were completed. In 2011 the leader of the programme passed away and work came to a halt, restarting in 2016 with Coralie and Bobbie as leaders. Coralie states that her work is around organising and releasing information (due to a large number of insufficient records, a lot of work goes into organising current records). Bobby takes this information out into the community. As of now, there has been one successful returns procedure through this work, with others in negotiation. However, in order to fully acknowledge the existence of human remains, apologise, and organise their returns, care, perseverance, strength, and time are

[20] Kotuitui Rangahau Repatriation Coordinator and Researcher, with the museum since 2016. After interning with Te Papa Tongarewa- The Museum of New Zealand's Karanga Aotearoa Repatriation Programme (begun in 2003 from a Government grant), O'Hara toook this theme into a Masters' Degree at Victoria University of Wellington. This thesis is available in the reference list. Initially beginning at Auckland War Memorial Museum in 2016 with information collection and interpretation, they have gotten to the point where they can finally begin negotiations – which she feels to be very worthwhile work.

[21] Tumu Here Iwi Relationships Manager.

[22] Tapsell, Paul. 'Afterword: beyond the frame'. In Peers, L. and AK Brown (Eds) *Museums and Source Communities*, Routledge, 2003.

necessary. Their work can be seen as building a foundation of openness, which cannot be done overnight.

New Zealand's national museum (Te Papa Tongarewa – The Museum of New Zealand)[23] received a government trust to return human remains from overseas back to New Zealand. In contrast, Auckland War Memorial Museum specifically handles remains that already exist within the collection. Within this remit, however, the cooperation of other museums, as well as the relationships between the museum and communities, is vital, in order to ensure that communities do not have to endure numerous visits to different museums. Although cooperation between domestic museums is smooth, trying to return remains from overseas back to their communities can involve difficult negotiations, with many complicated and unclear circumstances. In 2006 the team tried to return some remains to a Pacific Island, which ultimately did not happen. At the time the project was discontinued as premature, and currently the team is considering a suitable approach to move forward again. The ultimate goal is to return all of the human remains held at the museum[24].

The New Zealand government does not currently impose any obligations on museums to return human remains, nor does it provide any strict protocols (the interviewees say these systems are currently being created)[25]. However, because the New Zealand public widely understand that remains belong to their respective communities, the involvement of museums directly with the community is sufficient, and there is little disagreement from anthropologists or scientists about the returns. The museum occasionally calls upon expertise from the University of Auckland, but is not required to involve scientists in the returns process. If the University is involved in examinations of remains, it is first necessary to get permission from the community.

If we were to add some thoughts about the problem of returning human remains, archaeology in New Zealand has a better foundation for relationships with indigenous people than other Western countries. Even within that, Auckland War Memorial Museum is one of the museums that is genuinely working to further the returns of remains (Hole, 2007). This is because relationships with iwi have been stipulated in the aforementioned Museum Act, leading to the world's only provision (at this time) for a Māori Advisory Committee (ibid). Although work stopped in 2011, at the time of the interview in 2016 it has restarted again. Hole further compares Auckland Museum with Te Papa Tongarewa (see footnote 17), saying that Te Papa, although obtaining a government trust to negotiate the returns of overseas remains, has struggled to build relationships with local Māori communities. Because of this, the return of remains in New Zealand has remained difficult (ibid), demonstrating the complexity of the negotiation process.

The return of indigenous remains has become an increasingly important issue in research institutes during recent years[26], and through this current research we have begun to raise more frequently the

[23] One of the four earliest museums in New Zealand. Its predecessor is the Colonial Museum (1865), and in 1998 it reopened as a large-scale, comprehensive museum.

[24] Incidentally, the museum also holds the skulls of Japanese soldiers, brought in by American soldiers. A the time of the interview, negotiations were ongoing with the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

[25] In July 2020, New Zealand's museums association, Museums Aotearoa, incorporated procedures for the return of remains into their Code of Ethics (Museums Aotearoa, 2020.7.7).

[26] In March 2020, Routledge released a collection of research related to returns, *The Routledge Companion to Indigenous Repatriation: Return, Reconcile, Renew* (Cressida Fforde, C. Timothy McKeown, Honor Keeler (eds)), to which Coralie has contributed a paper.

question of the remains of Ainu and Ryūkyū people, held in Japanese universities and university museums.

In this way, we completed a morning of exploring the Māori dimension, and had lunch with the staff.

2.3 Pacific Dimension

(1:15am – Pacific Collections Access Project and Pacific Curators talk/tour)

We began the afternoon with an observation of the Pacific Collection Access Project (PCAP)[27], photographs 23-26.

[Photograph 23: Jami and Dave talk about the work involved in the Pacific Collection Access Project (PCAP).]

[Photograph 24: Taonga (treasures) made using modern materials can also be seen.]

[Photograph 25: Siobhan demonstrates repair work on an object.]

[Photograph 26: Jennifer explains the photography procedures.]

To begin, Jami Williams (Project Manager) who supervises the project, explained the whole picture. Auckland has a large number of people with roots in the Pacific Islands. This project strengthens cooperation with Auckland's Pacific communities, while increasing access to the museum's Pacific collections. As a 3-year project (2016-2019) it is part of the 'increasing access' branch of the museum's 20-year plan (Future Museum).

Of the relevant 30,000 or so collections, around 5,500 were selected which had strong relations to Auckland's communities. These 13 communities, which included the Cook Islands, Fiji, French Polynesia, Hawai'i, Kiribati, Niue, Samoa, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, and the Easter Islands,[28] were drawn upon as part of this research. Connecting these Pacific communities with the collections was Community Engagement Facilitator Miriam Tuitupou Kutu-Asolupe, who coordinated the communities that needed to be accessed for each stage.

The project involved listening to the cultural knowledge holders of the different communities, and then re-embedding the 'voice' of the source communities into the records for items by supplementing information that had been separated. This was done using Community Days, which brought both knowledge-holding elders, and the children and future of these communities, to the collections. To the museum, these visitors are in many ways be a priority.

Collection Technicians are responsible for documenting the information provided for each item brought out for Community Days, and then updating the database. At the time of our visit Ruby Satele and Sonya

[27] The project overview can be seen here: https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/discover/research/research-projects/pacific-collection-access-project.

[28] The concept paper lists Samoa, the Cook Islands, Tonga, Niue, Fiji, Tokelau, Tuvalu, Kiribati, Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu, the Solomon Islands and Micronesia.

Withers were in these roles. Their work is complicated, due to the importance of attaching correct indigenous names to objects, for example when multiple communities have different names for the same materials and techniques. A number of items have remained in storage without update since the 19th century, and through PCAP the museum aims to make these more accessible. Returning these often dusty items to storage in a stable state is another priority, and is the work of Storage Technician Valerie Noiret-Leblanc. Further repairing and conserving the collections is Project Conservator Siobhan O'Donovan, who not only repairs and cleans objects that have begun to show signs of damage, but also records the state, location of repair, and method of repair for each treatment (photograph 25).

After this, we moved to the photography room next door (photograph 26). There to talk with us were Project Leader Dave Sanderson (Project Leader for the Collection Imaging Team) and one of the five photographers, Jennifer Carol (Museum Photographer). This team of six works to photograph the full extent of museum collections, from Pacific and Māori collections through to natural history and documentary heritage. In the past 3 years they have created over 215,000 collection images. The size and physical makeup of each object is different, from crafts, to musical instruments, to natural science specimens. The photographers work closely with respective curators to understand the purpose of each photograph. Features on objects that appear to be the same can vary in technique or material depending on each island, so the photographers work by collection, carefully considering how to capture each object, and then shooting the whole collection at once. For some photographs community permission is necessary, for example with Kiribati items made of made of bone.

Emphasised by Dave is the position "open by default, closed by exception", which involves using Creative Commons to release all images online, for free. Photographs are not processed using methods like Photoshop. The museum's website widely these publishes beautiful images of the collections,[29] demonstrating that the museum's position of open access is not just empty words. However, there is a cultural permission policy which uses limits and permits to control the use of Pacific and Māori images. This is not to restrict their use, but rather to confirm that these images will be used in a respectful manner. In this, the spirit of Teu le Vā is also reflected.

2.4 Gallery Renewal and Documentary Heritage

(2:15pm - Gallery Renewal visit/talk)

Next we went to hear about the Gallery Renewal Project, part of the museum's Five Year Plan (photograph 27).

[Photograph 27: We gain an overview of Gallery Renewal from the team.]

Four people from the team came to speak with us - leader and curator Rachael Davies (Head of Content and Interpretation), Project Curator Māori Tharron Bloomfield, Senior Content and Interpretation Developer Kate Woodall, who considers visitor needs and experience during exhibition development, and Head of Major Works Chris Smith, who maintains an overall handle on the physical building.

The new exhibition has been designed with He Korahi Māori at its core, so that it is based upon and steeped in Māori philosophy, as part of the process of updating the colonial museum for the 21st

[29] https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/discover/collections-online.

century.[30] In practice, it aims to emphasise the diverse range of Māori values, folklore, points of view, and voices, increase access to Māori collections, and respect and utilise the Māori language. In order to do so, the gallery is designed not around Western chronologies, but rather embodying Māori values. Land (whenua) and people (tangata) are central themes which aim to showcase a range of Māori values and understandings. The graphic design for the exhibition uses Māori designs, motifs and colours among other details. As a whole, the exhibition is built around how the museum can better symbolically reflect Māori folklore and history in the exhibition space and building itself.

Curator Māori Tharron emphasises that the creation of the exhibition required a departure from historic representations of Māori, towards a reflection of contemporary realities of Māori culture. "Although many people [non-Maori, tourists etc] enjoy these [historic] representations, Māori people have a more complex reaction to them. We need young Māori visitors to feel connected to, and proud of, the gallery." In other words, this thinking centres around how to avoid 'primitivist' or outdated representations which are uncomfortable to Māori, and instead bring modern Māoridom into the exhibition space. Further, the gallery aims to offer many different interpretations and raise diverse questions, to avoid imposing specific viewpoints upon visitors.

It was impressive to see how the ideas surrounding this refurbishment were grounded in, and moved forward with, the central mindsets of the museum. For each question we had, the answer began with a thorough explanation of the worldview that stood behind it, and we imagine that this philosophical approach also drew from elements of Māori culture.

(3:30pm - Documentary Heritage visit/talk)

Following from Gallery Renewal, we went to hear about the museum's documentation, from the library team (photograph 28).

[Photograph 28: Interview with Paula, Adam, Nina and Zoe in the library.]

Paula Legel (Collection Manager Serials & Acquisitions), Curator Manuscripts Nina Finigan (the curator of letters, diaries and other original documents), Image Orders and Permissions Manager Zoe Richardson (in charge of image rights and image order processing) and Head of Information, Library and Enquiry Services Adam Moriarty (who manages the Collections Online database) were there to talk to us.

The library responds to a large volume of requests to use images for various purposes such as publication or exhibition. Although the procedures are well defined, there have been cases where the process of working with iwi to process requests has taken up to nine months. There was no set procedure for image order processing until 2014, and images were processed according to rule of thumb and/or various personal relationships. In 2014 the Māori cultural permissions process was introduced, which was based on He Korahi Māori and required permissions from Māori. In 2016 this approach extended out to Pacific Collections with Teu Le Vā (the staff joke, "these two strategies will follow you everywhere!"). Although relationships had been built up with Māori communities, relationships with Pacific communities had not progressed. However by working alongside PCAP, for example through

[30] The gallery will be reconstituted around the three principles of Mana Whenua (land rights), Kaitiakitanga (guardianship) and Manaakitanga (hospitality).

showing documents during Community Days, the team is connecting with participating knowledge holders as a starting point to build these relationships. Old photographs and newspaper articles have had strong reactions during Community Days, as they were linked to the ancestors of those present. Modern histories are also starting to be investigated, through the many individual letters and other manuscripts held at the library.

The Museum also actively releases its own photographs - these are currently provided to 22 different websites, one of which includes over 10,000 images provided to Wikipedia across 86 languages. The goal is to reach out to as many audiences as possible.

Although the work of the library and photography teams (see section 2.3) appears simple, through performing and writing this research we got to really understand how the museum works to progress the release of information. The images and information available on the museum website are multi-layered and vast, and all freely available on the internet. The museum has emphasised work in digitalisation and access, and the results of that labour were clearly visible here.

2.5 Teu Le Vā (Nurture the Relationship)

(2:00pm – Teu le vā talk and how it works in the museum)

(4:00pm – Cup of tea to review)

Running throughout the afternoon's interviews on the Pacific Dimension was the concept of Teu le vā. This concept, alongside the Maori dimension, is expressed in the hospitality of the museum. Olivia, who coordinated our research visit to the museum, is its first Teu le Vā manager.[31] We were originally meant to have a deeper introduction to Teu le Vā in the morning, but as other interviews went overtime we used intermissions between meetings to discuss these (photograph 29).

Teu le Vā means to nurture the relationship, but and this applies not only to relationships between people but also between people and the land, place, and things. The aforementioned PCAP project (see section 2.3) is seen as a realisation of Teu le Vā. That is, communities connected to the collections were able to visit the museum, and not only did the museum obtain valuable information, but the taonga were also able to connect with the communities to which they belonged. Among the taonga are objects that are no longer made by the communities, and so by visiting the museum they were able to connect with this part of their past. Instead of being a transaction, the emphasis of the museum opening its doors is on building relationships, Olivia says, reinforcing what we had heard in all of our interviews.

Our intense run of interviews ran from 10am until past 4pm, after which we moved to the museum café with Olivia, who had also attended most of our interviews with us. We stayed until the museum closed at 5pm for a period of reflection. Bobby was able to stop by, and these two staff members hosted us until the very end. Surely that is another embodiment of Teu le Vā.

[31] See footnote 12. This role is part of the Pacific Advisory Group (2013), which advises on matters relating to the Pacific. Although the Māori Advisory Council Taumata-ā-Iwi and the Museum Trust Board are stipulated in the Museum Act, the Pacific Advisory Group is not a legal requirement.

Bobby spoke a bit about his personal history. Raised by grandparents who only spoke Māori, he spoke only Māori as a child. From being in the army during the Malayan Emergency and Vietnam War, he joined the museum on contract after retiring from the City Council. Currently employed full-time by the museum, he works to nurture the relationship between museums and Māori, whether through connecting with iwi or working on the customs and protocols of the museum. The remains repatriation process, above all, is about negotiating a respectful return. While some communities want the museum to deliver the remains to them, yet others want to come to the museum to bring them home themselves. Bobby reflected that crucial in all of this is to handle the spiritual aspects of the process, as well as the dignity of the deceased, with respect, which further helps to keep the people of the museum safe.

In this final conversation with Bobby we saw how the museum, although a very modern facility with increasingly modernised processes and systems, continues to embody a unique, New Zealand way of being. That is to say, one that embodies the worldview of Māori and the Pacific, and allows those who visit to experience it too.

At 5pm the doors of the museum closed, and we humbly said our goodbyes.

3. Analysis

If we may at the end, we would like to review the research undertaken from a comprehensive perspective.

Firstly, we must examine the stance that our object of study, the Auckland War Memorial Museum, aims for regarding multiculturalism in New Zealand.

As we reviewed in the beginning, the basis of the founding of New Zealand is the Treaty of Waitangi. Through this treaty, signed in 1840 between the indigenous people and the British Crown, a settler nation was created. However, there was a significant difference between the Māori and English versions of the text, particularly in relation to the meaning of sovereignty, and in the latter half of the 1960s Māori began to come together and raise their voices, bringing these tensions between Māori and Pākehā (English/European settlers) to the surface (Naitō 2008:383). The postwar wave of Māori urbanisation, as well as the influx of immigrants due to the relaxation of immigration policies, introduced a multiculturalism that blurred this complex history between Māori and Pākehā. Māori therefore held a wary view of this change towards multiculturalism (ibid). And whereas traditional Māori society was organised in units consisting of whānau, hapū, iwi and waka, urban Māori sought a broader pan-Māori identity, dramatically altering conditions and perspectives towards Māori. Further, in the latter half of the 2000s, Pākehā dissatisfaction with preferential treatment towards Māori led to the rebound of policies and attitudes claiming “All New Zealanders” or “Uniform Citizenship” (Naitō 2008).

In this way, New Zealand has a complex identity in the nexus of biculturalism and multiculturalism, with the tensions between these playing out in its education policies (Matsumoto 2006). As institutions founded in European/Pākehā values, New Zealand museums must negotiate exactly how to capture, exhibit and activate the country’s histories and cultures.

Although not current, according to 2012 statistics New Zealand has at least 471 museums, of which 60% are local museums operated by volunteers, 30% are small-scale museums with 1-5 permanent staff, and 10% large-scale museums like Auckland War Memorial Museum (McCarthy 2014.10.22). These large-scale museums, particularly with their long histories, embody much of the complex history of New Zealand. As such they work not only to address this history through respect for Māori and Pacific Island cultures, but also to function in symbiosis with these communities. Museum management cannot be entirely devoted to negotiating the many small tensions that arise between biculturalism and multicuturalism, Māori and Pākehā, and urban and traditionally-based Māori. However, Auckland War Memorial Museum is unequivocal in its relationship with the three iwi of the land, upon which it has built its Māori Dimension, as stipulated in the 1996 Museum Act.

During our two days of research at the museum, we felt there was a significant misalignment between the "soft" museum – seen for example in the worldviews and perspectives of the staff – and the “hard” museum, embodied in the physical building and exhibitions. This misalignment is surely an indicator of an initially colonial museum attempting to move beyond this history over the course of many years. In this way the museum’s foundation in Western settler colonialism might be said to steer the museum strongly towards the non-Western side of its bicultural stance. As staff pointed out, the exhibition space has remained unchanged since 1999, and does not reflect the current position of the museum – for example, while being a war memorial, the important history of the wars between Māori and settlers is not sufficiently displayed. The 5-year plan announced in 2017 is gradually aiming to correct these shortcomings.

By wrapping up the museum’s “hard” colonial aspects in the “soft” dialogue, presence, and efforts of staff embodying Māori and Pacific worldviews and values, the museum aims to weave deeper relationships with indigenous communities and neighbouring islands. In this way it is a broad cultural strategy which aims to deconstruct the stories of the building and its exhibitions. In the future, we would like to investigate how this change will be reflected in the “hard” elements of the newly refurbished spaces of the museum. However, the museum has made a significant investment in the “soft” strategies of relationship-building with communities, and it is evident how crucial these are to overcoming the legacy of the “hard” elements of the museum.

Finally, to add in the perspective of multiculturalism, the museum’s new 5-Year Plan states that “in accordance with the new Auckland Plan,[32] we will cultivate an inclusive Auckland to which anyone can feel a sense of belonging, and further cultivate the wellbeing of Auckland’s Māori and Pacific identities”. As we have seen in this article, at the heart of this strategy is the museum’s relationships with Māori, and its relationships with the neighbouring Pacific Islands. In other words, the inclusion of other diverse immigrant identities - including those of Asia - lies beyond this biculturalism, and even further beyond Pacific multiculturalism.

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[32] See Footnote 5.

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