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Mana Moana
Understanding the Place of Moana in Aotearoa's Architecture

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Article abstract

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MANA MOANA: UNDERSTANDING THE PLACE OF MOANA IN AOTEAROA'S ARCHITECTURE

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Abstract: Our article is an investigation of the architectural meanings of Moana when located in Aotearoa, as Pacific practitioners, designers, and academics. This article will traverse sensitive topics, such as how Aotearoa's Pacific peoples relate to Tangata Whenua today and how this is expressed in the built space. How can we navigate Te Tiriti o Waitangi through our voyaging histories, moving beyond the muddy relations within urban conditions in Aotearoa? The phrase Mana Moana is used to refer to the ancestral relationships between Tangata Whenua and the wider Moana, or vast Pacific region, as a positioning framework for our discussions. Mana Moana reinforces

connected genealogies of Māori and Pacific peoples across deep time and space beyond the shores of Aotearoa, New Zealand. The article draws on architectural case studies from Aotearoa that investigate placemaking concepts and praxes that provoke, educate, and inspire current and future built environments of Aotearoa, New Zealand.

Keywords: Aotearoa New Zealand; Indigenous architectural practice; Mana Moana; Pacific architects/designers/academics; Tiriti o Waitangi (Treaty of Waitangi)

Opening Talanoa

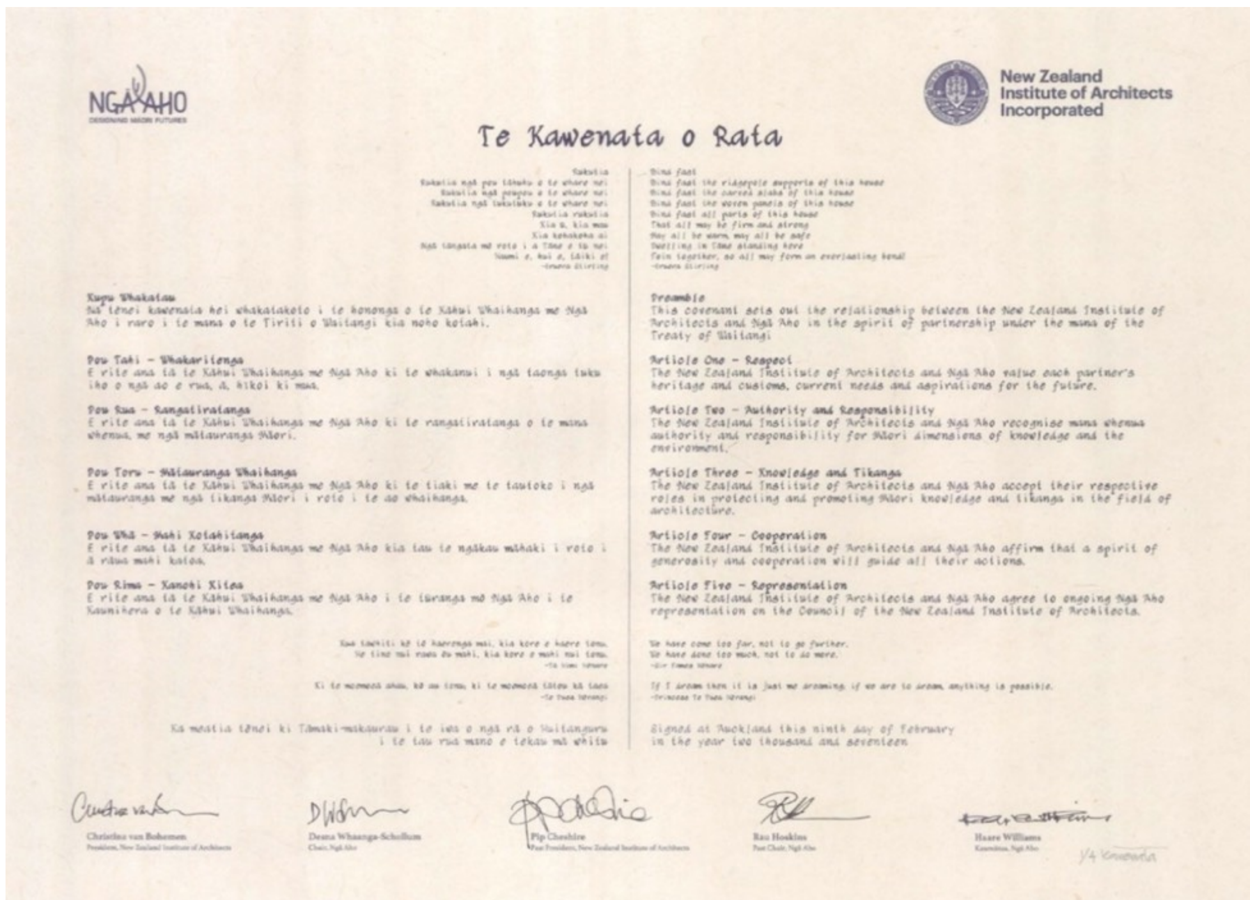
As Pacific architects, designers, and academics, we are putting our necks on the line. Why? It is time for this conversation. What is the place of the Moana, the vast Pacific Ocean region, in Aotearoa New Zealand[1], across its cultural identity-scape, across the architectural-scape, and across Pacific Ocean peoples, including Māori? Moana, as a term, is applied because the authors are of Polynesian descent and are utilizing our own languages for the Pacific region; we recognize the nameless ocean, or moana, it always was before colonialisation (ʻIlaiū Talei, 2023a). If ethnic and political identities of Pacific and Māori are evolving, intermingling, and overlapping in Aotearoa, then what does this look like in our built environments? In the 21st century, it is more widely acknowledged now that Aotearoa New Zealand is an Island in the Pacific, but is it accepted? To some, it is, to others, it is not. Varied relations continue to exist between Māori and Pacific peoples in Aotearoa (Anae, 2021). Lama Tone (2008), one of the authors of this article, argues that Māori are Pacific people because New Zealand is an Island group of Polynesia, and Māori are indeed Polynesians within the wider context of the Pacific. But colonization has affected this deep ancestral connection and politicized our ethnicities and Islands of origin (Enari & Haua, 2021). Also, New Zealand's emphasis on biculturalism has inadvertently dimmed down the ancestral connections between Māori and Pacific peoples to focus on the New Zealand nation-state (Te Punga Somerville, 2012).

Pākehā is a historical term that, during the early 1800s, referred to anyone non-Māori, or a foreigner or alien. Pākehā can now mean any "other" in relation to Māori, but Pacific peoples can feel more like the other in the politicization of the Treaty of Waitangi, as explained below. There is a current move towards cultural specificity whilst maintaining unified diversity in Islander communities (McGavin, 2014), or ethnic specificities that are mature self-conceptions of Pacific identities (Anae, 1998). There is also, however, a need to reflect on the ancestral connections of Mana Moana[2], beyond the complicated labels of *Māori* and *Pacific Islander* perpetuated post-colonization, and for Pacific peoples upon arrival at New Zealand ports (McRae, 2021). This article reviews Mana Moana linkages in the existing architecture around us, after presenting the authors' positions on being Moana in Aotearoa. We also present a discussion of Mana Moana from our architectural perspectives. But first, one must understand Aotearoa New Zealand's Treaty of Waitangi and its part in creating the nation-state.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi of Aotearoa, or the Treaty of Waitangi of New Zealand, is the founding document that established this bicultural nation on 6 February 1840. The acknowledgement and enactment of Te Tiriti o Waitangi has become an impetus to categorise who should be considered Tangata Whenua[3], people of the land, and who

should be considered Tangata Tiriti, or people of the Treaty of Waitangi. The Indigenization of practices is an inevitable trend for New Zealand's architectural industry, as Aotearoa continues to endorse Te Tiriti o Waitangi in all facets of New Zealand's society and major institutions. Charmaine 'Ilaiū Talei, one of the authors of this article, and her co-author Paul Memmott (submitted for publication) have written about the Indigenizing legacy of architectural practice, research, and education in Aotearoa New Zealand, which began more than 50 years ago. Te Kāhui Whaihanga New Zealand Institute of Architects (NZIA) is a membership-based professional organisation that represents the architectural industry and promotes architecture in Aotearoa New Zealand. The NZIA endorsed Te Tiriti o Waitangi in their own way by signing an agreement called Te Kawenata o Rata on 8 February 2017 (Figure 1). The signing ceremony included representatives of NZIA and Ngā Aho, the society of Māori design professionals, as a covenant that formalised an ongoing relationship of co-operation between the two groups. Such initiatives are part of the Indigenizing of architectural practice in Aotearoa, but the relationships with the Moana are not evident. In 2023, in response to this gap, Pacific practitioners are coming together to generate a collective named Moana Loa, a network of built and design professionals representing Tangata Moana, or people of the Moana.

Figure 1
Te Kawenata O Rata


NGĀ AHO
DESIGNING MĀORI FUTURES

New Zealand Institute of Architects Incorporated

Te Kawenata o Rata

Bind fast
Bind fast the ridgepole supports of this house
Bind fast the carved slabs of this house
Bind fast the woven panels of this house
Bind fast all parts of this house
That all may be firm and strong
May all be warm, may all be safe
Dwelling in Tāne standing here
Join together, so all may form an everlasting bond!

Kupu Whakataki
Nā tēnei kawenata hei whakatakoto i te hononga o te Kāhui Whaihanga me Ngā Aho i raro i te mana o te Tiriti o Waitangi kia noho kotahi.

Preamble
This covenant sets out the relationship between the New Zealand Institute of Architects and Ngā Aho in the spirit of partnership under the mana of the Treaty of Waitangi

Pou Tahi – Whakaritenga
E rite ana tā te Kāhui Whaihanga me Ngā Aho ki te whakanui i ngā taonga tuku iho o ngā ao e rua, ā, hikoi ki mua.

Article One – Respect
The New Zealand Institute of Architects and Ngā Aho value each partner's heritage and customs, current needs and aspirations for the future.

Pou Rua – Rangatiratanga
E rite ana tā te Kāhui Whaihanga me Ngā Aho ki te rangatiratanga o te mana whenua, me ngā mātauranga Māori.

Article Two – Authority and Responsibility
The New Zealand Institute of Architects and Ngā Aho recognise mana whenua authority and responsibility for Māori dimensions of knowledge and the environment.

Pou Toru – Mātauranga Whaihanga
E rite ana tā te Kāhui Whaihanga me Ngā Aho ki te tiaki me te tautoko i ngā mātauranga me ngā tikanga Māori i roto i te ao whaihanga.

Article Three – Knowledge and Tikanga
The New Zealand Institute of Architects and Ngā Aho accept their respective roles in protecting and promoting Māori knowledge and tikanga in the field of architecture.

Pou Whā – Mahi Kotahitanga
E rite ana tā te Kāhui Whaihanga me Ngā Aho kia tau te ngākau māhaki i roto i ā rāua mahi katoa.

Article Four – Cooperation
The New Zealand Institute of Architects and Ngā Aho affirm that a spirit of generosity and cooperation will guide all their actions.

Pou Rima – Kanohi Kitea
E rite ana tā te Kāhui Whaihanga me Ngā Aho i te tūranga mō Ngā Aho i te Kaunihera o te Kāhui Whaihanga.

Article Five – Representation
The New Zealand Institute of Architects and Ngā Aho agree to ongoing Ngā Aho representation on the Council of the New Zealand Institute of Architects.

We have come too far, not to go further.
We have done too much, not to do more.
-Sir James Hēnare

If I dream then it is just me dreaming; if we are to dream, anything is possible.
-Princess Te Puea Hērangi

Ka mealia tēnei ki Tāmaki-makaurau i te iwa o ngā rā o Huitanguru i te tau rua mano e tekau mā whitu

Signed at Auckland this ninth day of February in the year two thousand and seventeen

Christina van Bohemen — President, New Zealand Institute of Architects
Deana Whaanga-Schollum — Chair, Ngā Aho
Pip Cheshire — Past President, New Zealand Institute of Architects
Rau Hoskins — Past Chair, Ngā Aho
Haare Williams — Kaumātua, Ngā Aho

Note: signed by Ngā Aho and New Zealand Institute of Architects Incorporated, 9th February 2017.

Our contribution to creative criticality comes from a self-evaluation as co-authors of our Moana positions within Aotearoa. We are careful to not overclaim our own self-evaluation, as we do not represent all Pacific peoples' perspectives, but these ideas are ours. We come from a few, yes privileged, Moana Indigenous architectural researchers and practitioners involved in the placemaking practices of our built environments in Aotearoa. We bring creative criticality to the unsettling aspects of this article by utilizing tofā mamao[4] and fakakaukau lōloa[5] as ways of thinking about the meaning of our context, the terms we use, and who we are as Pacific creatives. Our creative criticality also maximizes our service and research outputs as academics at Te Pare School of Architecture and Planning, by writing, engaging, speaking, hosting, and reflecting about Mana Moana. We have facilitated three Fast Forward[6] public lectures in late 2023, sponsored by our industry and hosted at our school (Figures 2 & 3).[7] The talanoa

sessions have been organized thematically, providing dialogue forums and an opportunity to test out our views and hear from Indigenous (Māori, Pacific, and Australian Aboriginal) colleagues. In these sessions, significant Indigenous perceptions of cultural placemaking and the architectural considerations of deep ancestral time of Mana Moana have been voiced. To creatively process our own ideas, we employed four co-writing sessions together via online meeting platforms to: talanoa out, or talk out, our recent and previous experiences, story tell, trigger memories, and utilize our devices of oral cultural knowledge to reflect on our ways of being as Pacific researchers whilst writing (Faʻavae et al., 2022).

This duality in interpretations of both Tiriti o Waitangi (Māori version) and Treaty of Waitangi (Pākehā version) (Morrison & Huygens, 2019) can be confusing, and, at times, misinterpreted. It is a very sensitive, linguistic nightmare to decipher or unpack, being one document with bicultural worldviews. We have to ask, which of the two versions of the Treaty of Waitangi (Pākehā and Māori) were used for the Te Kawenata o Rata agreement, or was it a mixture of the two? It seems more confusing if it was the Pākeha version. This can make design processes— for us Pacific living in Aotearoa New Zealand—tokenistic, and, most of the time, misappropriating, assuming this uncertain inbetweenness is where most people are forcibly aligned or inevitably located, including Pacific architects, designers, and academics.

Moving on, it is also a mark of celebration for Māori to have a Te Kawenata o Rata covenant stemming from the Treaty of Waitangi. This development celebrates architecture with their Treaty partners, especially after years of disconnection and lack of dialogue. It is still early days, but the question remains, where do Pacific architects, designers, and even academics fit into this equation? If the translation of *Te Kawenata o Rata* to *The Covenant of Rata* is correct—Rata being an ancestor from the Pacific known as Lata—is this a complete translation of the meaning, incorporating us, too, as Pacific living in Aotearoa New Zealand? If so, does this enable a “humble” positionality with equal mana as Pacific peoples, to design with Pacific ideas on the whenua (land)?

It is soothing to think that, rather than a covenant that formally binds our relationship, at least until we are part of these formal discussions as Pacific peoples, the vā[8] and whakawhanaungatanga[9] are our covenants. Standing face to face with Mana Whenua[10] or Tangata Whenua through korero/talanoa/dialogue is key and binding. In Hawaiʻi, Fiji, Rarotonga, Sāmoa, or Tonga, each Indigenous group within their own Islands, districts, villages, communities, and families has their own version of a covenant, usually formalised by an ʻava/kava[11] ceremony or similar. In the academic space, bringing together our traditional practices and knowledges is making a powerful presence in the lecture theatres and studio spaces, and demonstrates how we can evolve and adapt these traditions to the modern era.

It can be stated here that it is difficult for Pacific people to support Māori meaningfully at times, due to this binary relationship with Treaty partners. A Māori professor once admitted that “Māori have whenua issues, while Pacific have housing issues” (personal communication). These issues seem to be inextricably linked. But, in order to progress, Moana peoples may need to unbind themselves from the “shared burden” of biculturalism—for some, carried without recognition—and not worry about loyalties to a colonial treaty. As noble as it sounds, upholding a Māori objective in exchange for our own Pacific growth can be a very weighted transaction for Pacific peoples. Perhaps it is safer for all Moana peoples, including Māori, not to have a covenant with any other partner, as these relationships are hard to maintain and regulate. At the crux of this article, we advise that our positioning and authority as Pacific peoples in Aotearoa is diverse, and there is no one-size-fits-all answer—especially in light of the Treaty of Waitangi that inadvertently creates binaries and a focus on biculturalism, Māori and others.

Figures 2 & 3
Photographs of Fast Forward events, 2023.

Note: Figure 2, Photo by H. Zhang. Figure 3, Photo by I. Tiseli.

Positionality: Tofā Mamao, Fakakaukau Lōloa

We position ourselves from our elders’ tofā mamao and fakakaukau lōloa, meaning their deep wisdom and knowledges, that frame our own positions today but also soften our words. We are mindful also, writing as Pacific academics and practitioners, when translating our thoughts and feelings into the colonial language for the purpose of this article, some of the essence and emotional content of the words and the descriptions used towards certain issues can be seen to some as disrespectful or

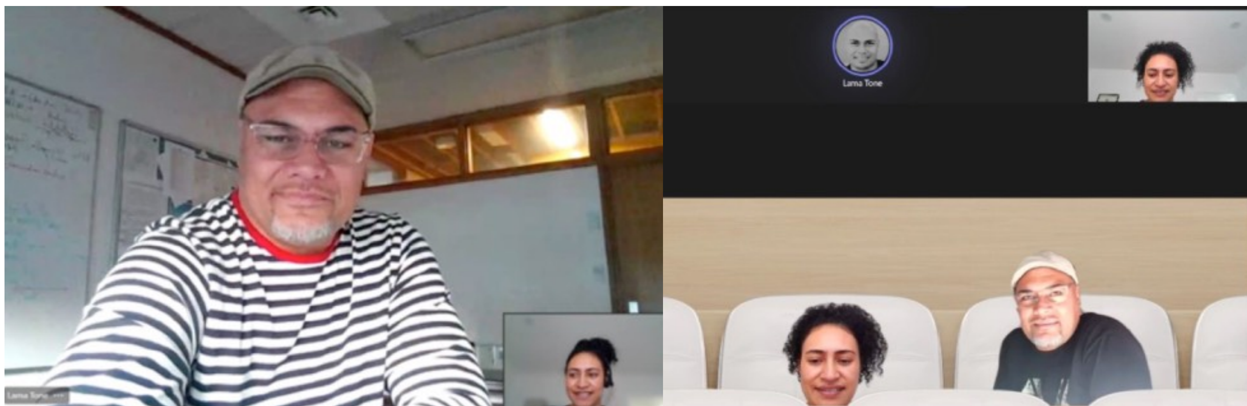
annoying. In this article, we have determined to be as vulnerable, humble, honest, and plain as possible in communicating the issues we experience as Pacific practitioners. In co-writing this article, we took a page out of our ancestors' iPad (eye-Bad) in adopting their use of proverbs to generate our meaning and sense making, and to provide contexts. So, during this time of co-writing (Figure 4; Figure 5), we asked ourselves what we could see literally outside our windows—a type of view beyond our minds—to create our own proverbs to further communicate our individual positions. These proverbs came to us during our first co-writing (Session 1):

"Blinded, withstanding heat, but standing" as my window blinds were down in my home office on a sunny Auckland afternoon. Charmaine generated a meaning from this proverb as "I inhabit the space of here, but my heart is elsewhere."

"The changing hues of autumn, everyone has a time" as he looked upon deciduous trees from his lofty institutional office window. Lama generated a meaning that one day I will justify why I, as a Pacific practitioner, can design here.

Figures 4 & 5

Co-writing sessions online between co-authors.



Note: Images by C. ʻIlaiū Talei, 2023.

". . . bread and butter"

Lama Tone. I was born and raised in Ōtara, Ōtāhuhu, and Māngere in the heart of South Auckland. Being of Pacific descent, the protected sack of the placenta/ whenua/fanua[12] that wrapped me from my mother's womb is buried here in Tamaki Makaurau, Aotearoa. A Pacific tradition that is evidently a common practice today. My mum and dad migrated from Sāmoa to Aotearoa New Zealand

in the 1960s, and met in Ōtara, where they got married. Both parents stayed with their own separate families prior to moving in together,first in a rental property in Ōtara, then a flat in Ōtāhuhu. I was born in Middlemore hospital in 1971 with severe asthma which left me hospitalized for most of my early childhood.

My family took their first vacation to Sāmoa when I was around four years old, and I ended up staying behind due to improvement of health, whilst my parents returned for work. During this time, I was raised by grandparents and introduced to the Sāmoan culture at a very young age. I later moved back to Aotearoa New Zealand when I was nine years old for schooling. We continued living in Ōtāhuhu with mum, dad, a younger brother, and an uncle, until 1980, we moved to a three-bedroom state house in Māngere. The neighbourhoods, throughout my life in South Auckland, provided communal playgrounds for kids; spaces where families looked out for each other despite of ethnic backgrounds. I grew up with predominantly Sāmoan, Tongan, Pākehā, and Māori families. The fences on our housing boundaries were part of the playground and not seen as barriers or dividers. It wasn't until mum and dad were able to afford their own house in 1984, that we moved to another part of Māngere. So, I have experiences of living in fale (house) structures in both Sāmoa and Aotearoa, as well as social housing and our current family-owned home in South Auckland.

With a sporting background that allowed me to travel and explore various parts of the architectural world, this fuelled my interests and aspirations to pursue a career in architecture. It was also a time of self-discovery. Graduating with three degrees at the height of the Global Recession in 2008, I could not find employment here in Aotearoa New Zealand, Australia and the Pacific, and so formed New Pacific Architecture Ltd (NPA) following on from my postgraduate research thesis *Designing with Pacific Concepts*. The philosophy and approaches taken from this research provided a niche for NPA, focusing on evolving cultural concepts to design contemporary Pacific architecture in mainly Aotearoa New Zealand. It was rewarding to also look into the personal lives of clients, mainly of Pacific descent in low-socio economic areas who were attempting to adapt their homes to combat cultural and modern lifestyles living in the diaspora, and in low-socio-economic places like South Auckland. This was the bread and butter of NPA combined with co-design, build and consultation work. My work experience in the community informed my teaching pedagogies at university, just as academia had, in turn, assisted my practice and consultation in the Pacific community. It is also rewarding to know that, more recently, our Te Pare School of Architecture and Planning is continuously directing some of its path towards the local region, by supporting study tours and field trips for

students across the Moana and promoting Pacific kaupapa to the school's broad architectural discourse.

Our Sāmoan familial and communal relations are maintained, managed, and, at times, enhanced by ancestral titles that are guardians of specific families and community genealogies (gafa/whakapapa). Our ancestral titles are all about service —tautua —depending on what a person does with it or demonstrates by way of service to their families, communities and churches. In my view, this responsibility of service is adopted to my whenua too, my new home in Aotearoa New Zealand. Being in solo practice is very challenging, but the rewards was helping my communities in South Auckland in my chosen field of work.

". . . back to the Islands"

Charmaine 'Ilaiū Talei. As a Tongan architect, trained and practiced in Aotearoa, New Zealand, Republic of Fiji Islands, and Australia (Te Whenua Moemoeā), I became more attuned with my own culture's architectural heritage—Tongan architecture—in my final years of architecture school when my own questions sought cultural meaning in my Western-heavy architectural education. My postgraduate research led to an earnest search to know what my own Tongan people built and what constitutes Tonga's architectural histories. Self-determining a return to my own architectural origins became a pursuit and point of difference for me, as I began my research and practice career.

On my return to Auckland in 2022, after living abroad for over a decade, I noted that the architectural scene had changed. Currently, there is a cultural revival and strengthening of Tangata Whenua and their sovereignty in Aotearoa as Indigenous peoples. As a "Pacific Islander" (yes, I am re-labelled again, upon entering Auckland airport) I am reminded of how landless I am, and that the whenua of Aotearoa is certainly not mine, and that, as a first-generation New Zealand-born Pacific person from Tongan migrant parents, I realize it never was mine, nor will it ever be. I can moan in the political rhetoric of second-class citizens but rather, I accept the deep connections back to my own Islands and choose an architectural belonging elsewhere. Since I am a descendent of migrants who worked most of their abled lives to build up this nation through sweat, discrimination, and many sacrifices, I do feel emboldened to claim some of Aotearoa as my home—especially that patch called 197 Bairds Road, Ōtara—so, I am proudly "274[13]." But on the other hand, Australia has

taught me that we need to stand by our Indigenous communities to ensure they thrive, and that their concerns are first heard.

Coming back to Aotearoa with that experience of Indigeneity, where my position as an Indigenous Tongan is not in competition/comparison to that of Indigenous Australians, I can relate and empathise with the Māori struggle for rangitiratanga, or sovereignty. So, I step back to let Māori lead. But what happens when Māori do not want to lead, or choose not to? Here it gets tricky when the cultural load is picked up by Pacific peoples, including myself. Particularly so, as I am not Māori and will never fully understand the tikanga, or protocols and values, of being Māori. I feel hesitant to occupy Māori spaces in teaching, research, or practice because, if I truly emphasize with "by Māori, for Māori" then it is best to move out of the way, enable Māori knowledge holders in these spaces, and educate others to support Māori rangatiratanga. I want Māori to lead their own affairs. As we wait for Māori to work out themselves and their futures, I agree that the rest of us should be allies and only hold tentatively and temporarily those spaces for Māori on Māori architectural, teaching and research projects. But for our Māori colleagues, I must emphasise the word "temporary" because in time I, too, must return to my own fonua/[14]whenua to uplift my own peoples' priorities, since collectively across the Moana we all want self-determination. Today, I am back to where I started my architectural journey: I must return to the Islands of my forebears to grow the architecture of my own archipelago in the Moana.

Mana Moana is Our Identity

Given the loaded meanings of terms around Pacific and Māori identities in Aotearoa, it is prudent to provide our tofā mamao and fakakaukau lōloa on the terms of Mana and Moana as it relates to whenua and fonua. Mana is often confused with power and authority that exists without a deep sense of responsibility and reciprocity. The phrase appeared vividly in the work by Tongan/ Sāmoan/ Pākeha poet, creative artists, health advocate Dr Karlo Mila, in her postdoctoral work *Mana Moana* (2016). She says (Mila, n.d.):

Moana, meaning 'ocean', is a Polynesian word that can be found in 35 contemporary Pasifika languages. While Pasifika cultures are diverse, it is the sea, philosopher and writer Epeli Hauʻofa points out, that all of the distinctive cultures of Pasifika have in common, shaped by a continuous engagement with, and adaptation to, the largest ocean in the world (Hauʻofa, 2008). The ocean connects us all.

Mana is an Oceanic word that can be found in 26 Pasifika languages. It refers to power, energy, abundance, authority, miracles—the ability to manifest the energy, flow, and fortune of the intangible with grace and efficacy so that it is recognised and impactful in the tangible world.

Mana Moana, then, is about the power, energy, vitality sourced to being from the moana and indigenous to the South Pacific region and connected to that unique cultural legacy of knowing and being. (para. 13-15)

Like Mila, who is stitching our sameness, our connectedness together, which gives us all mana, Mana Moana edifies our ancestral connections between Māori and Pacific peoples in Aotearoa. We look to our elders—our mātua/ matuʻa/ pou tu toa—like ʻEpeli Hauʻofa (1993), who through his tofā mamao and fakakaukau lōloa explained the mauri, or essence, of what is Mana Moana. Mana for us, yes, identifies Mana Whenua's connection to the whenua of Aotearoa. But, as we add Moana to it, we draw on the ancestral linkages that Hauʻofa (1993) describes as the "sea of islands" (p. 2) and the Moana that connects us all. Mana Moana, therefore, does not separate us Pacific and Māori, as our urban conditioning might cause us to believe but, rather, connects us all as the same peoples. There are other contexts beyond architecture where Mana Moana must negotiate this ancestral vā: sports, language, cultural rituals, and so on. Tone describes in his book chapter that New Zealand's multiculturalism is not felt or expressed until one is watching "an Auckland Blues game," but after that we return to our own bubbles (Tone, in press). So, are we seeing this collective and collegial setting only in sports stadiums and at educational institutions? So how about our built environments?

Exploring Mana Moana in the Buildings of Aotearoa

Some of Aotearoa New Zealand's current premier architects of non-Pacific descent have had an impact with creating architecture that, in some way or other, have used Pacific concepts and themes. This includes architects such as Andrew Patterson, Pip Cheshire, Julie Stout, the late Ivan Mercep, and the late Sir Ian Athfield, and, of course, Māori practitioners such as the late Rewi Thompsom, Rau Hoskins, Nick Dalton, and Perry Royal. In this next section, we discuss our own review of Mana Moana and how it is reflected in the buildings located in Aotearoa (at the time of writing) and includes our own projects as we contribute to this discussion.

An early wave of Mana Moana architecture occurred from the 1940s to the 1980s. More recent examples we describe as a *later wave* of similar ideas; some continue to perpetuate earlier Pacific forms of architecture, while others push new

perspectives. These changed perspectives of architecture started with Pacific artists in the diaspora, navigating our new Pacific identities against the backdrop of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and its complexities. In the later wave, we also see the emergence of references to the deep time and space, ancestral connections we have with Māori.

Puketutu Island Fale—1940

This faletele (round meeting house) was built in Sāmoa in 1940 (another was sent to England, for the Wembley exhibition in 1924—see Refiti 2002) and shipped for an exhibition in Wellington in the same year. It never made its way back to its ancestral homeland and, instead, was adopted on its new whenua on Puketutu Island in the Manukau Harbour, south of Auckland. It was purchased by Sir Henry Kelliher, the founder of DB Breweries and owner of the island; it became an idyllic structure that nestled in the landscaped garden, entertaining the wealthy family. Over the years, the Kelliher estate would see the property rented out for community functions such as weddings and the fale would often provide backdrops for photo opportunities. In the last two years, a neighbouring pohutukawa tree branch fell on the fale roof causing damage which required restoration from a tufuga fau fale (traditional fale carpenter). Local Māori disapproved of restoring the structure to its former self, however, and the faletele, dismantled, is kept by the local council at a facility storage. According to Refiti (2002), this "quaint primitive hut" (p. 543) made its appearance in Aotearoa before the high flux migration of Pacific peoples, during the post-war period when they left their Islands in search of opportunities and a better life.

Rewi Thompson's Ōtara Fish—1987

This deconstructed fish sculpture stands in the Ōtara shopping mall (Figure 4). The steel space frames of the canopy for the fish's body is reminiscent of the architectural members of the Sāmoan Fale Tele and the off-centred posts from the wall are like the structural pou (post/s) of the Tongan fale. The body of the fish gives the appearance of fish scales, and was considered by architectural theorist Refiti as the "most modern fale" (personal communication) with its glass and steel work, and minimal connection points of canopy to beams. This is akin to an example of a modernistic approach to Pacific fale by a Māori architect, demonstrating that fluidity of representation and ideation by someone with ancestral connections to the Pacific; being not quite from that community and yet sourcing its ideas. In this case, however, it is an example of a reverse scenario where a Pacific architect designs something for a Māori community. Such fluidity may not be as easily accepted today with the development of cultural appropriation and cultural authority discourses and on-flow effects of rigidity around tikanga Māori.

Figure 6
Rewi Thompson's Fish Canopy at Ōtara Town Centre.

Note: Image by C. ʻIlaiū Talei, 2023

Sāmoa House, Karangahape Road—1977

The brief for the Sāmoa House, also known as Maota Sāmoa, was to house the Sāmoan Consulate General and became a community focal point for the Sāmoan community in Aotearoa. Built in 1977–1978—at a time where many Polynesian migrants resided in local metropolitan areas like Ponsonby and Grey Lynn—Ivan Mercep, a founder of the then JasMad (now Jasmax) designed and built this fale, wedged in an awkward corner of the local commercial architecture of Karangahape Road. In contrast, the fale loses its openness due to its setting; it has become closed off and sandwiched by its surroundings. The rear elevation of this community building provides a hint of a fale due to its curved roof however the whole building is closed off with herringbone timber weatherboard, mimicking triangulation motifs often found on the arts and crafts of Pacific and Sāmoan pattern making. On the side and rear wall above the back entrance

walkway, the fale has its only fenestration of windows for light and ventilation. The interior roof is lined with gauged radiata pine timber.

The need to comply with the New Zealand Building Code meant that angled timber struts with steel brackets and nuts and bolts were necessary to translocate this Pacific architectural form to Aotearoa New Zealand.

Free Wesleyan Church Fale, Ōtara—1980s

Perhaps unknown to most Tēvita Moala, father of Tongan architect Siaosi Moala, was asked by the Free Wesleyan Church of Ōtara to come from Tonga with his construction team to build a fale. In conversation with the author Charmaine ʻIlaiū Talei in 2022, Tēvita—a well-known and well connected tufunga— explained that he was entrusted with building this church fale.His son Siaosi, also known as George, was a young architect at the time and had also became involved in the documentation, most likely for building permit reasons. The fale in Ōtara is perhaps one of the very first architectural projects to realise a Polynesian presence within Aotearoa during the 1980s. This fale represents self-determination in a new fonua for Tongan communities, asserting their cultural identity through the built and sacred realm of their churches.

Fale Pasifika, The University of Auckland—2004

Fale Pasifika, a derivative of a Sāmoan/Tongan fale afolau, was designed by the late Ivan Mercep, a Croatian Kiwi architect. This would be Mercep's second fale (as mentioned earlier, his first was the 1977 Samoa House fale on Karangahape Road). Local Waipapa marae gave their blessing for the fale to be built on the university grounds and it is now the focal point of the Pacific faculty and community. There was also a community of consultants used to assist the architects, such as Leali'ifano Albert Refiti, faculty members, and others. This included various Pacific artists who grounded the fale and malae (open arena) design, such as lalava expert Filipe Tohi, John Pule, Fatu Feu'u, Jim Vivieaere, and others. This fale can seat 300 people, and is currently used as a multi-purpose space for a variety of functions such as conferences and symposiums, exhibitions, classes, book launches, cultural performances, rituals, and protocols, to name a few. The main thoroughfare to the fale is a paved malae that is inextricably linked to the structure's interior. There are auxiliary buildings that sit round the fale such as classrooms, offices, and amenities. The structure sits above the university carparks, so the treated timber posts are not embedded in the whenua but sits inside steel sleeves which are encased in the concrete floor. The primary structure of the fale includes steel section members and radiata rounded timber. It has bi-folding doors right around the perimeter of the fale with the roof cladded in asphalt shingles.

Sāmoa Consulate Fale Complex, Māngere—2016

Walker Architects were commissioned by the Sāmoan government to build the Sāmoa Consulate Fale Complex on a small patch of green near a very busy arterial route at the Māngere Town Centre, located only a stone's throw from the shopping mall. The consulate fale complex is conveniently situated in between a Bermuda triangle of global food chains, KFC, McDonalds, and Burger King! According to one local Mana Whenua group, there was no consultation with Tāmaki Makaurau—Ihumātao, but only with Manukau City Council and possibly their Māori consultants through pre-application meetings and countless correspondences. Once again, the ridgepole was absent due to clerestory windows on the ridge for air circulation and possibly natural light. The structure is predominantly steel sections with timber veneer cladding to provide a natural wood feel, coupled with sennit lashing décor. It incorporates a commercial kitchen to one side and a stage and side rooms on the other. There are also subsidiary consulate buildings adjacent to the fale which houses the administrative offices, as well as a Sāmoa gift and bookshop, on the ground floor. The building functions well and is widely used for various functions. Essentially, it lacks a malae; instead, there is a small courtyard area squeezed in-between the fale and its adjacent building. This courtyard does not provide sufficient space, although it does provide accessways directly to the car parking area, but through some stairs.

Glen Eden Primary School Fale—2023

Glen Eden Primary School Fale is, arguably, the only fale in Aotearoa to physically gift and gesture part of the structure to a local Mana Whenua group—Te Kawerau a Maki—thus not only making them part of the structure, but of the storytelling. A common Pacific practice of respectful giving is to receive something and to reciprocate or give something back. If the blessings from local Mana Whenua, Te Kawerau a Maki, was not given to build this fale, then the tufuga, Lama Tone, would opt out of designing and building it. As part of this gifting and reciprocating of the vā or whakawhanaungatanga, Mana Whenua was offered a pou to be carved and painted red with the above rafter/heke also painted red, and with the lashing of stones to form the Matariki[15] constellations on the curved end portion of the fale roof. Expert carver David Maruariki (Rarotongan) was commissioned by Mana Whenua to carve the pou, so it became an architectural "umbilical cord" for both the fale and the whenua. The fale was constructed using materials such as concrete, steel, gauged and laminated timber, plywood, asphalt shingles and galvanised nuts and bolts. Coconut sennit fibre from Sāmoa was used to lash the timber junctions (predominately completed by lalava expert Sopolemalama Filipe Tohi (Tongan)). Although arguably, the form of the homogeneous

roof is of a Sāmoan/Tongan derivative fale, the spatial response is multi-functional, multi-dimensional, multi-national, and multi-representational through the narratives of the lashings, pou, and the Matariki (Matali'i – Sāmoan) lashed stones on the fale roof.

The opening (umusaga - Sāmoan) of the fale was formalized with a powhiri[16] and an 'ava/kava ceremony (Figure 5). This was where the vā was activated and the architecture became the custodian to those present. Local Mana Whenua sat for the first time in their rightful seated area of the red pou (Figure 6) and opposite, Deputy Prime Minister Carmel Sepuloni with Māngere Member of Parliament, Honourable Aupito William Sio sat with the client, school Principal, and guests who were invited to sit between the fale's posts. Along one of the sides was the tanoa[17] and maiden of the 'ava ritual, along with the orator who facilitated the process. The ritual of the 'ava ceremony attempted to enhance the Mana Moana essence. The exchanges of cultural oratories and dances from the staff and students, presented to the school community, further highlighted the spirit of the fale opening.

Figures 7 & 8

Glen Eden Primary School Fale.

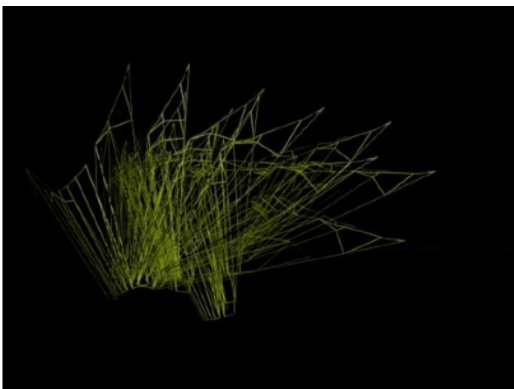
Note: (Left) Students of Glen Eden Primary preparing to perform. (Right) Carved pou, including red pou—seat of local Mana Whenua—and heke stones lashed on the roof to form the constellation of Matariki/Matali'i. Images by L. Tone.

Manukau Institute of Technology, Cultural Gateway Project, Ōtara—Designed in 2007 (Unbuilt)

Fresh out of university, co-author Charmaine embarked on a project on her own. Charmaine's mentor Stuart Middleton, an educational executive at Manukau Institute of Technology, was at the helm of an exciting Pacific cultural centre for their tertiary institution. It was known as the Gateway project: a space where Pacific and Māori would greet visitors onto the campus, with the centre providing a focal point for Pacific community and educational spaces. Collectively, the buildings reflected the historical cultural groupings of Aotearoa: the Māori Arts and Craft school shaped in a hook (time of literal architectural translation) on the left and at its centre was a whare tīpuna, or meeting house. Beside this building was the historical arts and craft brick administrative building. To its right, the new Pasifika cultural centre was to be situated. Through this design, as a young Pacific architectural graduate, Charmaine was navigating not only the diversity of Pacific-ness, but also navigating the urbanised identity politics of Aotearoa-Māori faced off with Pacific. Finding a common story for Pacific peoples was Charmaine's design approach to navigating these socio-political spaces within an institution, and she drew upon a common migration story. The movement of the ancestral lā, the overlapping woven sails, demonstrates our migration journey as Pacific peoples which has never stopped over millennia and continues to our current locations in Aotearoa (see ʻIlaiū Talei, 2023a). The building's form translated this metaphor of the lā and refers to our various challenging but aspirational trials and tales as Pacific peoples across the Moana to Aotearoa.

Figures 9 & 10

Inspirational forms for the Manukau Institute Cultural Gateway building.



Note: Digital studies of overlapping lā, or sails, as they move through the wind reflecting Pacific people's migratory journeys to Aotearoa. The final Manukau Institute Cultural Gateway building form was inspired by these forms. Images by C. ʻIlaiū Talei, 2009.

Fale Mālae, Wellington; In Progress and Unbuilt

In our interpretation, the Fale Mālae attempts to be the epitome of Mana Moana. It is a fale created by a New Zealand premier architectural firm Jasmax under the strong guidance of Leali'ifano Albert Refiti, placing a Pacific building on the edge of New Zealand's capital city and creating a medium between whenua and the moana. The fale represents the Pacific identities of Aotearoa and locates Aotearoa within the greater Pacific region, or Moana.

This building arguably questions the importance of the ridge beam and pou for Pacific architecture, which is a common feature across buildings of the Pacific and Māori whare interpretations of the fale. For example, the Sāmoa Consulate fale in Māngere also manipulated this ridge beam, replacing it with clerestory windows for air circulation and ventilation, which the architects have protruded almost a metre from the top ridge of the fale roof. Now, with Refiti's pivotal design role on this project yet to be built, the Fale Malae interrogates this same irregularity but the fundamental ridgepole is completely absent—invisible yet distinctly reflected in the line of light that separates the roof structures. There is homage here to the creation story of Māori of Te Ao Mārama, blurring Pacific and Māori ideas.

In conversation with the late Tongan professor Futa Helu in 2007, Charmaine was told that the tauolunga/taualuga, or ridge beam of the fale Tonga, literally means "to strike the highest point" (ʻauʻau in Sāmoan). Helu further explained that the tauolunga/taualuga is also the ridge of the fale roof in the Sāmoan context, and described the Sāmoan chief's daughter (or today can be a person or group of people of important stature) dancing towards the end of a significant event. The tauolunga/taualuga/ridge beam that is missing in the fale malae, speaks of its actual presence but now through the ephemeral light. Perhaps Pacific peoples in the diaspora are looking towards lagi/langi/rangi/the heavens for cosmological and ancestral connections as part of their navigational rediscoveries of self. Historically, Pacific people have gazed across horizons and into the skies towards ancestors, in quest for navigation feats, seeking and giving blessings to gods. A prime example is the celebration of Matariki/Matali'i (likened to Pleiades in Western astrology or Subaru in Japanese) in Aotearoa in the month of June when these cluster of stars are at its brightest and most visible, marking new harvests and growth (Māori).

A few cross-cutting themes have emerged from this study of buildings that celebrate Mana Moana, and, in particular, the ideas of whenua/fonua/fanua and Indigenous agency have been highlighted. Let us discuss these further.

Whenua/Fonua/Fanua

Whenua, fonua, or fanua locates one's identity. But, when one's fonua/fanua is located elsewhere, or the placenta of one's birthplace is one's fonua/fanua in a new whenua, then identity to place comes into question—whether place is really the place of our identities or it is located elsewhere, like our imagined and re-imagined places of whenua/fonua/fanua.

A common saying or proverb, when respectfully quoting one's genealogy in Sāmoan (similarly in practices in Tonga and other Island groups) communities and family contexts when sitting opposite, the orators often quote "…malae tauʻave, māota tauʻave" as part of his/her further acknowledgements to the other orator and their community of family. This is reciprocated. This also tells us that, whenever/wherever one is located away from their place of origin, they carry their fale and malae (as ancestors) names with them as a deep time and space identity marker.

The coupling of whenua and moana in Aotearoa, that moment of being in-between, within a place of contact and flux, suggests a metaphor fitting of the very concerns raised in this article. The mana of the whenua and the mana of the moana—what happens when they touch, feel, or overlap? Are they distorted? Harmonious? Unstable? Conflicting? Can the vā, or genealogy and relations, be a custodian bridging the two? No perspective is better than another; all perspectives have validity and have meaning as they emerge from similar and dissimilar lived experiences of place, space, and identity. Architecture, we suggest, can be part of creating that vā, that bridging of multifaceted ideas of who we are and what Mana Moana is in the 21st century.

Indigenous (or not) Agency

Being Pacific persons in Oceania, and not considered as Indigenous people in this land of Aotearoa, but, at the same time, considered ancestors of its people, is a conflicting space to inhabit when practicing architecture. When do we lead and when do we step aside? Supporting rangatiratanga has many versions of praxis, and, it is clear that, amongst Māori and Pacific practitioners, we are still discovering our own positions and finding our own ways of expressing and enabling Indigenous sovereignty. Or, is it that we know what our positions are, but, out of respect for the Indigenous Māori, we do not challenge this sovereignty? Perhaps our Pacific cultures have evolved to where one of our pillar stones is to take the humble road and not talk about or challenge the status quo. Possibly, Pākehā may be in denial of these values, feeling threatened or left out; pressing this relationship to evolve further—creating more deficit mindsets for Pacific,

and Māori. Some Māori have accepted this, while others have not. An empathy for each other is needed to ease the cultural loads and move out of each other's paths.

Taking part in the "Oppression Olympics" (Hancock, 2011, p. 22) is often how we Māori and Pacific peoples are portrayed within systemic structures that are set up to perpetuate this parade. As Indigenous peoples, we should act smarter and rise above oppression that is not of our own making, and just be. Should we drop the name tag and let Pacific peoples go undistinguished, like in Australia? Is the tag the limiting factor? Possibly, the blurring of Māori and Pacific could avoid the unnecessary segregation, moving towards an equal clustering. If that were our today, could it perhaps resolve and remove the problematic Pacific and Māori addendum? As practitioners of whakawhanaungatanga, can this be the time we choose to become more vulnerable, where our relations go back to our initial vā, and to where our architecture first began (ʻIlaiū Talei, 2023b).

This is particularly relevant when we accept that part of Indigenizing Aotearoa's architectural practices and education often means drawing on other Indigenous (i.e., not from that land) expertise to support and frame the Indigenous sovereignty at stake. This is often not spoken about, particularly, how Pacific Islanders are called in to help non-Indigenous people understand the actual Indigenous groups of a place. From experience, it is an uncomfortable position for us being Indigenous but not Indigenous to that land. Charmaine ʻIlaiū Talei remembers being asked by a Pākehā during a pōwhiri for an architectural symposium, "What do we do again?" In a surprised voice she responded, "I do not know, I am not Māori" (she had been living away from New Zealand for almost 10 years by that point, so was more manuhiri[18] than he was!). On another occasion, at an architectural practice in Australia, ʻIlaiū Talei was inaptly asked by a non-Aboriginal staff member, to present at an event for the Aboriginal National Reconciliation Day, on Aboriginal Architecture. These examples highlight the unconscious bias and work needed by those engaged in the bicultural Treaty of Waitangi or other similar national agreements to be authentic partners with First Nations peoples and not pass it off to others, including Indigenous peoples from other places. As Pacific peoples, when do we get to refer to our own ancestral connections in deep time and space in such contexts? Although far across the Moana, for many of us it is important that we do. We embrace that we are where we are today by acknowledging our unique differences in these new contexts, providing us with opportunities to appropriately connect with one another, across our trans-indigeneity.

Concluding Talanoa

In this article we discuss the challenges and possibilities when acknowledging the ancestral links of Mana Moana in the architecture of Aotearoa. Recent built and unbuilt projects highlighted in this article, reveal the move by Moana practitioners towards recognizing deep connections beyond the binaries presented by the Treaty of Waitangi. Pacific scholar Melani Anae (2021) discusses the vā, or relations, between Māori and Pacific peoples and she explains the tuakana/teina dynamic since the Treaty of Waitangi. The ideology of *tuakana*, meaning older sibling, can enhance and acknowledge the early genealogical links between Māori and Pacific peoples, whilst the ideology of *teina*, younger sibling, can reinforce Māori as Tangata Whenua—people of the land—and Pacific migrants are manuhiri, or visitors to Aotearoa. Within this relational vā dynamic, as Pacific architects working on projects as cultural advisors, and often for Māori and with Māori stakeholders, we can either be treated as tuakana or teina. Māori scholar Alice Te Punga Somerville (2012; p.xx) likens this deep and historical relationship to an underwater volcano, whereby the tip is what we know of Māori, but its connections to the Pacific are obscured. Recent architectural projects reflect the obscuring of Mana Moana in Aotearoa due to the new urban conditions we find ourselves in, the binaries created by the Treaty of Waitangi, but we echo Somerville's words that the onus is now on both Māori and Pacific design professionals for built environments to "re-remember" (p. xix). But how can we continue to re-remember our Mana Moana deep connections? Interestingly, results from our poll at our Fast Forward public lectures has highlighted that more than 90 percent of our multi-cultural audience believe that placemaking in Aotearoa needs to acknowledge our place in the wider Moana, so this question is relevant to many beyond just Māori and Pacific.

The architectural case studies discussed here, show common values and technical fundamentals of architecture across the Moana, as identified in the ridge beam and post relationships, the ridge beam or tauolunga/taualuga of the roof, the open green space of the marae/malae, paepae, yavu, ʻesi or earthen/stone platforms, lashings or lalava to name a few. Our Moana architectures also reflect an intangible and tangible socio-political hierarchical space between people and things. The middle post of early Sāmoan architecture had once been a marker for burying a person of high status such as a chief or a tohunga/tufuga, with the aim that their mana can be transferred and passed through the post and out and across the roof of the fale. This idea is also evident across the early architecture of Fiji (ʻIlaiū Talei, 2011) and right through to Aotearoa— the last island to be settled in the Pacific— with the poutokomanawa[19].

Our Mana Moana genealogies, if acknowledged and celebrated, show how interconnected we actually are as Māori and Pacific peoples. Placemaking lies with

cultural identity, which is also about understanding one's actual or re-imagined sense of place and acknowledging all its layered histories including that of the non-Indigenous. Once, as architectural Pacific students more than a decade ago, we needed to bring our Pacific-ness to our education. Now, as teachers of Pacific architecture, we are empowered to give our Pacific-ness, which is anchored in understanding our deep connections to this whenua of Aotearoa in time and space, whilst keeping an eye on our own horizons ahead. Educating the next generation of Pacific and non-Pacific architects starts from acknowledging this deep time and space to better position Aotearoa, against its Moana histories. Vā does not exist on its own, it needs to be maintained, looked after, and nurtured; we suggest as architectural educators and practitioners that Mana Moana must be the same, moving forward.

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We would like to acknowledge our own ancestral elders and mentors who inspire us to remember who we are and where we have come from to determine our futures as Pacific practitioners and academics. Thank you to our Fast Forward 2023 Mana Moana speakers and audiences for your engagement during the writing of this article.

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ENDNOTES

[1] Note that the term Aotearoa is the Māori term for their country, also known as New Zealand. The two nouns are used interchangeably throughout this article.

[2] Moana means *ocean* and is a word commonly used in the Polynesian languages of the Oceanic realm. Mana Moana is a concept that encompasses the power, energy, and vitality of those who are Indigenous Pacific, maintaining their relations to the Moana as the source of this *mana* (empowerment of Oceanian Indigenous peoples).

[3] Whenua is the Māori term for land; similarly, fanua in Sāmoan language, and fonua in lea faka-Tonga.

[4] Source: https://www.nzia.co.nz/media/5562039/kawenata-pdf-of-signed-a2-doc.pdf, accessed December 8, 2022

[5] Tofā mamao is a Sāmoan term that refers to *the deep wisdom and knowledge of elders* within Sāmoan frameworks (see following section on positionality).

[6] Fakakaukau lōloa is a Tongan term that refers to *the deep wisdom and knowledge of elders* within Tongan frameworks (see following section on positionality).

[7] A link to Fast Forward lecture series: Andrew Tu'inukuafe and Dr Alayna Pakinui Rā: Mana Moana placemaking in Aotearoa – Fast Forward 2023 https://youtu.be/qnrkuWguzHM?si=LT-QIVDHhuSsV0Vd

[8] LinkedIn post by author Charmaine 'Ilaiu Talei advertising the Fast Forward lecture series: https://www.linkedin.com/posts/charmaineilaiu_fast-forward-lecture-series-activity-7114745155567439872-3uTO?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_desktop

[9] Vā is both a Sāmoan and Tongan term that refers to the spaces between people, or people and objects, and places—it has become a shortened form of Pacific academic speak on the practices/protocols of building and maintaining good/positive sociospatial sociocultural relations.

[10] Whakawhanaungatanga is a Māori term that refers to the process of establishing good relations, similar to the Tongan concept of tauhi vā, or the Sāmoan concept of tausi le vā.

[11] Mana Whenua is a Māori term that refers to the historical and territorial rights that they have over the land as Indigenous people of Aotearoa New Zealand.

[12] Kava or ‘ava is a plant-based drink created by the mixing of dehydrated and powdered kava/’ava plant material. This special brew is used in ceremonial events across the Pacific, including Sāmoa, Tonga and Fiji.

[13] Fanua is the Sāmoan term for land/placenta/place of belonging; similar to Tongan term fonua, or Māori term whenua.

[14] Ōtara area code number

[15] Fonua is the lea faka-Tongan term for land, placenta, or place and people to which one belongs.

[16] Matariki is a Māori concept that is connected to health and wellbeing. The cluster of stars and the Matariki star are identified by Māori oral traditions as a sign of wellbeing, peace, and good luck for observers.

[17] A pōwhiri is a Māori welcoming ceremony.

[18] Tanoa is the Sāmoan term for kava drinking bowl—the complete term is *tanoa fai’ava*.

[19] Manuhiri—a Māori term for visitor or guest, especially given to someone visiting a meeting house on a marae (Māori meeting grounds of a particular family or tribe).

[20] Poutokomanawa is a Māori term meaning the pole (pou) that supports (toko) a marae (meeting house) structure, at the heart (manawa) of the structure.