

# Māori Landscapes

NADA TOUEIR

Globally and across disciplines, a focus on Indigenous knowledge is rapidly evolving. For landscape architecture, this trend is of particular interest, as our discipline works at the intersection of people and land, a rich and fertile zone of Indigenous knowledge. For Aotearoa New Zealand, it is te ao Māori, the Māori world, that embodies the Indigenous presence, and within which landscape architecture is immersed. This special issue of *Landscape Review* – consisting of research papers, reflections and a book review – is dedicated to Māori landscapes.

The topic of Māori landscapes should be at the heart of landscape architecture because of the intrinsic relationship that people have with the whenua (land). Māori settlers turned Aotearoa into a place immersed in rich and meaningful stories that percolate from and through the whenua, and are expressed in pūrākau (myths and stories). In those years, the whenua was rich in placenames and trails that embedded the narratives in place. When Europeans arrived, they altered the landscape to fit their needs and they used their own knowledge instead of learning from Indigenous communities about how to live with the land. Not only did colonisation transform the landscape into a model based on European standards; it also renamed many of the places, erasing connections to cultural stories and traditions.

To the naked eye, many places explored in this issue are stripped of their original stories and meaning. Driving by Te Waihora | *Lake Ellesmere* in Waitaha | *Canterbury*, for example, one can no longer see the rich layers of the whenua and how it was once used as mahinga kai (a food-gathering place) for tangata whenua (local people). Walking through Kaikōura, other than a kūwaha (gate) to lead the way to the peninsula walk and the few posts along the way, very few landmarks tell the rich story of the abundance of food that these waters gave the early explorers. Usually it is not until the stories are told that one starts to appreciate the landscape and everything it has to offer. Yet every now and then some landscapes still do speak for themselves. Pātea | *Doubtful Sound* in Fiordland is a whenua that tells its own story, a story of silence. In te reo Māori (the Māori language), Pātea means ‘unencumbered, freed from burdens, free’ (Moorfield, 2003) and one can sense this freedom while surrounded by the silence that is exacerbated by the steeply sloping landscape.

Whether entering a site that is considered tapu (sacred), witnessing a karanga (ceremonial call of welcome) or stepping on to a marae (where formal greetings take place), it is clear that the overwhelming richness of Māori culture is everywhere. Every mihi (speech of greeting), where an individual tells of their whakapapa (genealogy) and their belonging to the whenua, maunga (mountain),

*Nada Toueir is Lecturer, School of Landscape Architecture, Lincoln University, PO Box 80854, Christchurch 7647, Canterbury, Aotearoa New Zealand.*  
*Telephone: +64 22 681 0258*  
*Email: nada.toueir@lincoln.ac.nz*

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roto (lake) and awa (river), gives a clear sign of the integral relationship between tikanga Māori (customary Māori) values and landscape architecture.

In the first paper, 'Leaving Marks and Names on the Land: The Deeds of Tama Ki Te Rangi, Tamatea-Pōkai-Whenua, Te Rakiwhakaputa and Rākaihautū', Lloyd Carpenter flies over Te Waipounamu, gives an overview of some key landscapes and tells the story behind the naming of these areas. While stating the historical facts behind the naming process, he reveals the layers of the cultural landscape behind the whenua in Te Waipounamu and how this reflects the culture of Aotearoa. From the mountains to the sea, 'ki uta ki tai', he follows the journeys of Tama Ki Te Rangi, Tamatea, Te Rakiwhakaputa and Rākaihautū, reciting the narratives behind these legendary explorers and how they related to each whenua. He finally points out that the names of the landscape 'establish tūrangawaewae' and a sense of belonging for tangata whenua. These names are at the core of the identity of Indigenous people in Aotearoa.

The second paper, 'Huaki: Cultural Landscape Recognition Needed for Māori to Flourish in Housing', brings together authors Diane Menzies, Matt Rout, John Reid and Angus Macfarlane. They discuss the importance of the cultural landscape for Māori in defining their relationship with the whenua and how it shapes their identity by looking at state housing in three Auckland neighbourhoods: Glen Innes, Ōtara and Māngere. The focus is on how urban design and planning policies can encompass Māori culture and values through co-design to reinforce cultural connections between people and place while promoting residents' wellbeing.

In 'Karanga: Connecting to Papatūānuku', Lynda Toki, Te Mamaeroa Cowie, Diane Menzies, Rangi Joseph and Rowena Fonoti portray the importance of karanga in bridging between old traditions and new ones. As the authors explain, this custom is more than a call: it is an 'expression of culture' that brings together the multiple layers that make Māori culture and traditions incredibly rich and engrained in the whenua and beyond. Karanga celebrates the importance of wāhine (women) within the iwi (tribe), the use of te reo Māori (the Māori language) and the culmination of natural forces within the environment. Karanga carries the cultural values of the past to the present to promote a more sustainable and equitable future to live with Papatūānuku.

Shannon Davis uncovers the complexity of landscape narratives and how one landscape can hold multiple stories in 'Stories from the Land: Revealing Plural Narratives within One Landscape'. The geological formation, topography and landform of Maungakiekie | *One Tree Hill* played an important role for Māori and the former presence of a pā there reflects its cultural significance. Alongside this maunga (mountain) is Cornwall Park, with a narrative that clearly designates it as a public park for all New Zealanders. Naming the landscape is one way of reflecting its stories and celebrating its past; but ultimately it is necessary to unravel the layers (of oral and written history) at the vertical and horizontal levels to fully understand the richness of Maungakiekie and Cornwall Park, where 'multiple narratives entwine through space and time'.

Showcasing the negative impacts of overtourism and colonisation on the landscape, Ben Carpenter, Rebecca Kiddle and Mark Southcombe propose a series of architectural interventions as a solution in 'Overtourism and Colonisation on Tongariro National Park'. The intense popularity of the Tongariro Alpine

Crossing has had devastating cultural and ecological impacts on the maunga. Concurrently, the ongoing influence of colonisation has prevented local iwi from acting as guardians (kaitiaki) of the maunga, stripping the whenua of its identity. The paper uses a ‘design research’ methodology to respond to overtourism with appropriate architectural structures modelled on a pōwhiri (traditional Māori welcome): waharoa (entrance), waiata (bridge), kai (the kai space), wharenuī (the hut), wharepaku (toilets) and poroporoaki (farewell). These structures play a dual role of conserving and protecting the maunga and helping restore its sense of place.

Finally, Matthew Wynyard presents a review of the book *Kia Whakanuia Te Whenua – People, Place, Landscape* edited by Carolyn Hill. He states that the ‘umbilical connection of Māori to whenua’ is the unifying thread of the book. The book holds a hopeful look towards the future where te ao Māori is celebrated and is located at the heart of Aotearoa.

The intention of this issue is to highlight the importance of Māori landscapes and to incorporate a wide range of approaches and ideas. Its diverse papers showcase the strong connection between tikanga Māori and landscape architecture, as well as reflecting the need to publish more on the topic. Thank you to all the authors and reviewers who contributed to this special issue, and especially for your patience while waiting for it to be published. So many obstacles came our way in the process that at times it seemed like an impossible mission to accomplish. A special thanks to Jacky Bowring for her continuous support and encouragement, and to Lloyd Carpenter without whom this issue would not exist.

## REFERENCE

Moorfield, JC (2003) *Te Aka Online Māori Dictionary*. Accessed 8 October 2022, <https://maoridictionary.co.nz>.