The Festivalisation of Pacific Cultures in New Zealand: Diasporic Flow and Identity within ‘a Sea of Islands’

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Abstract

In the second half of the twentieth century, New Zealand witnessed a period of significant change, a period that resulted in dramatic demographic shifts. As a result of economic diversification, the New Zealand government looked to the Pacific (and to the at the time predominantly rural Māori population) to fill increasing labour shortages. Pacific Peoples began to migrate to New Zealand in large numbers from the mid-1960s and continued to do so until the mid-1970s, by which time changing economic conditions had impacted the country’s migration needs. At around this time, in 1976, the first major moment of the festivalisation of Pacific cultures occurred. As the communities continued to grow and become entrenched, more festivals were initiated across the country. By 2010, with Pacific peoples making up approximately 7% of the population, there were twenty-five annual festivals held from the northernmost towns to the bottom of the South Island.

By comparing the history of Pacific festivals and peoples in New Zealand, I argue that festivals reflect how Pacific communities have been transformed from small communities of migrants to large communities of largely New Zealand-born Pacific peoples. Uncovering the meanings of festivals and the musical performances presented within festival spaces, I show how notions of place, culture and identity have been changed in the process. Conceiving of the Pacific as a vast interconnected ‘Sea of Islands’ kinship network (Hau’ofa 1994), where people, trade, arts and customs have circulated across millennia, I propose that Pacific festivals represent the most highly visible public manifestations of this network operating within New Zealand, and of New Zealand’s place within it.

Pacific festivals are spaces through which a range of Pacific identities are (re)affirmed, and through which connections to belonging elsewhere, or to other cultural realities, are asserted and communicated. Concurrently, and through a process of territorialisation (Duffy 1999a, 2000), Pacific festivals also recode and alter the places in which they take place, situating New Zealand as
a Pacific nation and allowing Pacific peoples to stake a claim and assert a belonging to the New Zealand nation. Finally, these processes are interrelated, creating ‘mooring posts’ around which dynamic, fluid and evolving urban diasporic Pacific identities can be created, negotiated and celebrated. These displays of ‘polycultural capital’ (Mila-Schaaf 2010) are critical in the process of creating diasporic identities, often conceived of as belonging to neither here nor there. Through the Pacific festival space, these identities are stabilised, representing and asserting a belonging to both here and there.
Acknowledgements

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Terminology

There are two terms used throughout this thesis that are contested and require some explanation as to the usage I have adopted.

**New Zealand/Aotearoa:** The Māori name for New Zealand, Aotearoa (or together as Aotearoa New Zealand), has become increasingly used in both academic and non-academic contexts since the introduction of Government policies of biculturalism from the 1980s, and the impacts of the Māori cultural and political renaissance continued. This is not however uniform. For the purposes of consistency I have adopted to use only New Zealand throughout, highlighting the central role of ‘New Zealand’ as a political entity in the construction and creation of the Pacific diaspora, from the 1960s.

**Pasifika/Pacific/Pacifica/Pasefika:** The term by which the diasporic Pacific peoples and cultures of New Zealand is referred to as a group, is far more contested and has been widely debated (see for example Mara et al. 1994; Wendt-Samu 1998 & 2006; Manu’atu 2000a, 2000b; Manu’atu and Kēpa 2002; Ferguson et al. 2008; Cotterall et al. 2009; Mila-Schaaf 2010). It is important to highlight that this is a debate that is occurring within Pacific communities and there is currently no unanimous agreement, something demonstrated by the variety of names various festivals have adopted. As with New Zealand, I have employed Pacific peoples and cultures throughout to remain consistent. Significantly, I emphasise plurality in that Pacific does not refer to an homogenous group and, in this respect, I have purposely moved away from the term Pacific Islanders, an early institutional and statistical term that carries these connotations. This term also appears however, when spoken by participants (reflecting the ongoing nature of the label debate) and, infrequently, in statistic-like discussion.
Orthography note: Several words from Pacific languages appear in this thesis, such as kāinga, talanoa and tauhi va. These terms are adapted from and used as they appear in their original quoted sources, namely the journals The Contemporary Pacific and the Waikato Journal of Education.

Glossary of other non-English terms not otherwise explained within the text:

**Bure** (Fijian), also **Fale** (Sāmoan): Open-style house/meeting place common throughout the Pacific.

**Fatale**: The particular style of music most associated with Tuvalu and Tokelau (see Thomas 1988).

**Hongi**: Māori greeting by which two people press noses and foreheads together, indicating a sharing of ha (breath of life).

**Iwi** (Māori): Tribe.

**Kapa Haka**: term that describes particular structured performances of Māori song and dance, including haka, poi songs, and waiata-ā-ringa (action songs).

**Kava** (Tongan): A crop, the roots of which are used to make a sedating drink, often used for ceremonial purposes and known throughout the Pacific.

**Lavalava** (Sāmoan): Rectangular fabric worn, formally or informally, wrapped around the waist. Common across the Pacific.

**Lei(s)** (Hawaiian): Flower garland or wreath worn around the neck.

**Mana** (Māori): of having particular prestige, standing or character.

**Marae** (Māori): A complex containing the meeting house, courtyards and related buildings of an Iwi.

**Pākehā** (Māori), also **Palagi(s)** (Sāmoan): usually refers to European-New Zealanders, but can be used for Europeans in general.

**Pātē** (Multiple): Slit drum, part of idiophone family of instruments.

**Pōwhiri**: A Māori welcoming ceremony, traditionally used when guests are welcomed onto Marae.


**Tapa** (Multiple): A method of printing cloth made from the bark of trees.

**Tivaevae**: A style of quilting particularly associated with the Cook Islands.

**Umu, Hāngi, Lovo** (Polynesian, Māori and Fijian respectively): A style of earth oven common throughout the Pacific with varying techniques.

**Waiata** (Māori): Song.
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Publication Arising from Research

‘The Festivalisation of Pasifika Cultures in New Zealand: Diasporic Flow and Identity within Transcultural Contact Zones’, Musicology Australia (special issue), to be published in 2012 (currently under review).
The Pacific festival space is a dynamic and evolving space, a reflection of the fluid and evolving nature of both the Pacific diaspora and Pacific communities in New Zealand. In 2012, the festivalisation of Pacific cultures will reach a significant milestone. The first example of festivalisation, a highly public staging of Pacific cultures through the site of a festival, occurred forty years earlier at the inaugural 1972 Polynesian Festival. The largest Pacific festival in the world, Auckland’s annual Pasifika Festival, will also celebrate its twentieth anniversary. In spite of their growing presence – there are now upwards of twenty annual Pacific festivals held across New Zealand – and of the growing significance of festivals in general, the festivalisation of society (Gibson and Connell 2005; Ryan 2006), there exists only a small body of work addressing them, and none that attempts to trace and explain their development or theorise meanings of the Pacific festival space. No prior work about Pacific festivals in New Zealand is grounded in ethnomusicology. This is an area then that requires investigation and discussion.

Ethnomusicological studies of festivals in New Zealand constitute a very small body of work (Johnson and Figgins 2005; Bendrups and Johnson 2007; Johnson 2007, 2008c & 2010a; Milosavljevic 2009; Brunt 2010), and, with no research on Pacific festivals in New Zealand having yet been rooted in ethnomusicology, my aim in undertaking this study is to begin a process of filling in this ethnomusicological knowledge gap. I began with a research question: Do Pacific festivals reflect the ways in which the Pacific diaspora is situated, imagined, and has evolved in New Zealand, and how are music and musical performances implicated in these processes? To undertake the task of answering it, I adopted an ethnographic method involving fieldwork and interviews. The fieldwork was carried out at two festivals in cities that represent key sites in the creation and display of Pacific cultures and identities: Auckland’s Pasifika Festival and Wellington’s Positively Pasifika Festival. These cities are home to the largest Pacific communities in New Zealand. Representing both one of the oldest and one of the newest festivals,
fieldwork provided an opportunity to chart their histories and evolution, as well as observe the colossal size and organisation of a long-established event alongside a festival in its early stages of development. Outside of the festivals, a substantial number of interviews were conducted with those most centrally involved in each festival’s history and operation, as well as with festival performers. The organisation, role and function of music and performance was discussed at length in these interviews. Following this multi-faceted research method has allowed for the weaving together of ethnographic observations and participant reflections, in order to draw out the themes and construct an argument.

This thesis is grounded in ethnomusicology and, as Timothy Cooley (2005, p. 237) reminds us, ‘a basic premise of many ethnomusicological theories is that the music people engage in and create, informs us about their identity’ (also Rice 2010). Identity is thus, from the outset, a central tenet. This thesis is also situated within a diaspora and festival studies framework. Ethnomusicology and festival studies represent an important meeting point:

Music, dance, festivals, and other public expressive cultural practices are a primary way that people articulate the collective identities that are fundamental to forming and sustaining social groups, which are, in turn, basic to survival (Turino 2007, p. 2).

Festivals represent fertile ground for dialogues about and the negotiation of contemporary identities and belonging for both communities and the individual (Duffy 2005, p. 679). As an important component of festivals, music is central to these dialogues. To most effectively theorise about music within the festival space therefore requires a comprehensive and holistic approach to understanding the spaces in which the music takes place.

Pacific festivals in New Zealand are, at their most fundamental, a result of diaspora, of Pacific peoples having migrated to New Zealand in large numbers from the 1960s, peaking in the 1970s, and growing into communities in which the majority are now New Zealand-born. Understanding the Pacific diaspora and diasporic condition is therefore another central component of this thesis; understanding that,
[for] those of us who are far from traditional roots, and via routes, are raised in diasporic spaces, attempting to tell our stories (of trying to figure out who we are) forces us to reckon with not having a legitimate place from which to stand and speak from... We must also deal with the textual conditions of erasure and over-inscription wrought not only by colonisation but by migration. The migration story is another powerful narrative shaping the contemporary dynamics of who we are (Mila-Schaaf 2010, pp. 16-17).

It should be noted that this is not an ethnomusicological study of festivals, but rather an ethnomusicological study of diaspora situated within the site of festivals, an important distinction. This diaspora, the Pacific diaspora, is not comprised of a singular dispersal from homeland to adopted homeland. Rather, it is multi-local, multi-directional, and understood within both historical and contemporary contexts of a continuous circulation and movement of people, trade, ideas, arts and cultures, which have crisscrossed the vast Pacific for centuries (Hau’ofa 1994; Barcham et al. 2009). These concepts are the principal elements that shape Pacific music and festivals in New Zealand.

**An Overview of the Pasifika Festivals**

This thesis describes and provides in great detail the histories, logistics and organisation involved in the two Pasifika festivals at which fieldwork was carried out. I begin here by providing a brief description of the basic structural components of each, highlighting the vast differences between the two events and drawing for the reader a quick overview of these two festivals, before the more detailed histories and ethnographic accounts of later chapters.

The Positively Pasifika Festival is held annually around the end of January/start of February. The long Wellington anniversary weekend towards the end of January and the Waitangi Day holiday on February 6 often provide two weekends around which the festival can be organised. It is currently held at Waitangi Park along Wellington’s waterfront and is set up as an enclosed village space. The main stage is placed at one end of the park. Rows of food stalls, art and craft stalls, and areas for VIPs and social agencies encircle the space in front of the stage. At the opposite side of the park from the main stage a youth activities area completes the festival boundary, and
features a second smaller stage where workshops, displays and performances aimed more specifically at youth are held. Performances on the main stage are a mix of traditional and contemporary, and feature at least one group from each of the seven main Pacific communities in Wellington: Sāmoa, Tonga, the Cook Islands, Tokelau, Tuvalu, Niue and Fiji. The festival is constructed as a singular space around which the Pacific community, or communities, congregate in celebration of themselves and each other, as well as providing for other festival attendees a small glimpse of various Pacific cultures, as displayed through food, art and crafts, people and performances.

In Auckland, the Pasifika Festival is held at Western Springs Park on the second Saturday in March. It is also set up with village-like spaces, but replicated on a much larger scale. Strategically located at different points around the park, ten separate villages represent the nine most populous Pacific communities of Auckland – Sāmoa, Tonga, the Cook Islands, Niue, Fiji, Tuvalu, Tokelau, Kiribati, and Tahiti – with the final Aotearoa village representing indigenous Māori. Each village has its own stage around which a number of food and art and craft stalls are set up. Located in the spaces between the villages are other business and social agency stalls, an emerging artists’ stage and a small stage operated by a radio station. Just outside the park, in the playing fields, the international village and stage (from which the headline acts perform) provides another space encircled by stalls, agencies and other businesses. Each village is designed to provide a point around which that community congregates and celebrates. It also provides for festival attendees an idea, manifested in the food, the crafts, the art, the people and the performances, of what constitutes that particular Pacific culture/community/nation. The villages are thus targeted at both communities and visitors, insider and outsider alike. As well as the festival day, the Pasifika Festival features a number of other events. An opening night concert officially opens the festival, and is held on the Thursday night before the festival day in the area that becomes the Sāmoa village. At the 2010 festival a series of night concerts, called the Best of Auditions, was also held in the week leading up to the festival day, as well as Niuean and Cook Island art exhibitions, a fakakaukau debate series, and workshops for up-and-coming writers.
Thesis Structure

This thesis is broadly constructed in two halves. The first contains the necessary overview of relevant literature, construction of a theoretical base for the research, and a discussion of method and research process. These comprise chapters one and two. Chapter three presents the history of Pacific peoples in New Zealand, from early migrations to entrenched communities, demonstrating how New Zealand has become a significant centre of the fluid Pacific diaspora. To compliment this, I couple the diasporic history with the history of Pacific festivals, drawing them together to show how the festivals have developed as a result of the changes to, and needs of, Pacific communities. I also use this diasporic history as the basis for a multidimensional argument that particular socio-cultural and historical factors created the environments in which the majority of Pacific festivals were initiated, something that has occurred since the Pasifika Festival began in 1993. Because this study focuses specifically on the Pasifika Festival, as well as Wellington’s Positively Pasifika Festival, the particular histories of these events are contained within their own chapter, chapter four. This also serves to frame and provide a context for the four discussion chapters that follow.

Many themes arose during the course of the fieldwork carried out and interviews conducted. Predominantly, these themes were repeated often and by many participants during the interview process. After careful transcription and analysis of interviews, these themes coalesced around certain larger, more broad themes, and finally, around four key issues. Based on this analysis I constructed a model for Pacific festivals, with these issues representing its four components (see figure 1, p. 6). These components represent the four discussion chapters. The issues and themes they discuss are important, and matter, because they represent the themes identified by those most centrally involved in the festivals, either organisationally or in the context of a performer. In terms of issues of representation and of the underpinning principle that has driven this research, to present people’s own voices, this model evolved as the best collective rendering of these multiple views. Additionally, they were supported by observations made during the
lead-up to and on the days of the festivals. Ethnographic observations from field notes are therefore interwoven throughout these discussion chapters.

Figure 1: A proposed model of the key issues of Pacific festivals

The construction of my model for Pacific festivals presents three interconnected and overlapping surface-level, or foreground themes sitting atop a foundation, or background, based upon logistics, leadership and development. The graphic that surrounds and is woven through these four issues represents the Pacific world, its cultures, people and resources, all of which are integral to and visible in all aspects of the festivals, from organisation to presentation. It provides the impetus for festivalisation, the place from which the festivals evolved and continue to do so.

The foundation of Pacific festivals provides the structure upon which the events are constructed, and revolves around the logistics of festivals, the
importance of particular types of leadership and networks, and the role of festivals as development tools. These background, organisational themes are discussed in chapter five. The first of my surface-level presentation themes is festival performances, meaning and space, and is presented as chapter six. This includes discussions about festival performances and what they mean, showing how traditional and contemporary musics function in distinct ways and arguing for a reconsideration of how traditional is viewed, and ending by addressing the interactions between music and space and offering some reflections on how they influence each other. The second, presented as chapter seven, is festivals and community, and here I discuss the importance of community, the differing types of interactions between communities, the importance of festival spaces in the presentation of both the unity and diversity of the diasporic communities, and the importance of Māori inclusion. This is situated within a view of the Pacific diaspora as an interconnected ‘sea of islands’, and contextualised by arguing that the Pacific festival space represents both a complex contact zone and the site of modern-day collective ritual, something characterised by the practice of tauhi vā, the maintenance of socio-cultural relationships across time and space. This establishes the basis for my theory of the Pacific festival space, which is then fully realised in the final discussion chapter.

This chapter, chapter eight, presents the final foreground issue of festivals, place and identity, how festivals (and music performances) create notions of Pacific identities and negotiate ideas of home and place. Incorporating themes from the other discussion chapters, I argue here that Pacific festivals are the most highly visible public manifestations of both the central place of New Zealand within the Pacific diaspora and of the place of Pacific peoples in New Zealand. Reflecting both roots and routes, I argue that the festivals create ‘mooring posts’ around which stable notions of diasporic identity can be formed, offering a plethora of identity possibilities. Creating opportunities through which people connect with Island homelands or with notions of Pacific cultures, the Pacific festival space simultaneously territorialises place and allows participants to assert a belonging to New Zealand and New Zealand as a Pacific nation.
Limitations

This thesis does not consider music repertoire, and does not analyse musical performances staged at Pacific festivals. Rather, it is a study of the cultural processes of the Pacific diaspora in New Zealand, as embedded in the spaces of Pacific festivals. There are many types of performances that take place at festivals. They are varied and they are unique dependant on their own specific contexts. Considering the performances of hip hop dance alongside the Tongan brass band tradition, Tokelauan and Tuvaluan fatale, and reggae, for example, their particular histories and meanings being multiple and separate, falls outside the scope of a single thesis to discuss in detail. This is not my intention. Some discussion of music and musical performance is necessary however, in describing the Pacific festival space, and this comes in the ethnographic accounts and reflections of chapter six.

The variety of possible angles from which this study could have been approached, in terms of research participants, is also well beyond the limits of a single thesis. This work is informed by the voices of people in positions of authority within the histories and current organisation of Pacific festivals, by culture bearers and community leaders of the various Pacific communities, and by performers. This is the ethnographic perspective. The scope of my argument does not extend, for example, to discussing the viewpoints of stallholders, sound technicians, or other people involved in the festivals, other members of Pacific communities who participate through their attendance, or Pākehā or non-Pacific perceptions of the festivals and what they mean.

These limitations, as well as the further areas for research identified in the concluding chapter, provide the basis for future ethnomusicological work that can extend beyond where this thesis ends. Festivals are a pertinent area for inquiry, as the next chapter indicates, and much room exists to expand ethnomusicological knowledge of both Pacific festivals and New Zealand-based festivals in general.
This opening chapter presents a cursory overview of the most pertinent literature surveyed throughout the course of my research. This literature falls into two focused disciplinary areas, ethnomusicology and festival studies, and one broad concern, that of the issues involved in representation. I start in the discipline in which this study is situated: ethnomusicology. Here, the notion that identity is central in much ethnomusicological work has been influential, as well as how diaspora and diasporic music cultures have been theorised and represented. Existing texts discussing the Pacific diaspora are especially pertinent in both contexts. Secondly I move into the multi and inter-disciplinary field of festival studies, identifying three key areas that have established large bodies of research, offering a broad overview of how festivals are conceived in the social sciences, and concluding with a survey of existent literature on Pacific festivals, both in the Pacific and in New Zealand. My theoretical approach to festivals expands on this, and is discussed in the following chapter. Finally, two specific issues that relate to the process of carrying out research have also been influential, and so I outline them here. They are concerned with issues of representation: the representation of ‘others’ and the problematic insider/outsider dichotomy.

1.1 Ethnomusicology

Within the broad body of ethnomusicological writing, two areas outside of festivals that have been influential throughout this research have been the intersections where ethnomusicology meets issues of diaspora and identity. Often the literature is a triangulation of all three.

Identity and Ethnomusicology

According to a recent position offered by Timothy Rice (2010), the discipline of ethnomusicology has not engaged in creating and developing its own theories of identity, but rather, has relied on the grand theories from other
social sciences or implied an implicit understanding. This is despite his central point that music and identity is a primary theme around which ethnomusicological work is based. Rice’s discussion paper prompted many responses, with most in some form of agreement (Reily 2010; Scruggs 2010; Slobin 2010; Stokes 2010; Sugarman 2010). Kofi Agawu critiques Rice’s call to create a meta-theory of music and identity as trying to forge an homogenous position where heterogeneity exists, and possibly from a hegemonic position (2010, and also Reily 2010). Mark Slobin wonders how far a ‘master term’ rubber band can be stretched to encapsulate studies before it frays and snaps. Sometimes, he notes, ‘it’s better to reach for a fresh rubber band’ (2010, p. 339). And Martin Stokes also takes this position, arguing for ‘keeping our theoretical conversations loose, flexible, and decentered’, and questioning whether a central theory is even possible (2010, p. 341). This debate serves to highlight that within Ethnomusicology alone, let alone other disciplines, the issue of identity is contested and multifaceted. Suzel Ana Reily notes that ‘music provides an ‘aesthetic sphere’ through which identity/ies can be expressed, experienced, socialised’, but that we do not know how these processes take place, or whether they are culturally-specific or linked to universal factors (2010, p. 332). Stokes’ point, meanwhile, is that ‘identity is a diverse and complex topic, constantly on the move’ and, in creating grand theories of music and identity, we may not have much to gain; by ‘attempting to pin it down’, we may actually have more to lose (2010, p. 345).

Despite the absence of a ‘grand theory’ of music and identity, the notion of identities as complex constructions, shifting and multi-layered, is increasingly common within ethnomusicological literature (Slobin 1993; Stokes 1994a; Duffy 1999, 2000, 2005; Izumi 2001; Connell and Gibson 2003; Biddle and Knights 2007b; Turino 2007 for example). The national is still important (Crouch 2006; Biddle and Knights 2007a; Shuker 2007; Zuberi 2007), but a growing body of literature is moving away from notions of national identities as central (O’Flynn 2007), focusing instead on ideas of ‘micromusics’ (Slobin 1993), more localised musical identities and cultures (Gibson and Connell 2003 & 2007; Gibson and Davidson 2004; Bendlups and Johnson 2007; Breault 2010), or borders, contact zones, fusions and hybridities (Lipsitz 1994; Stokes 2004; Simonett 2007; Margolies 2009). And in this shift, music, identity and
diaspora have come under increasing attention (Negus 1996; Izumi 2001; Lau 2001; Alexeyeff 2004; Ramnarine 2004; Johnson 2005; Turino 2007). Tom Turino views music and dance, and the arts in general, as central to the socialisation of groups and group identity in society, making it a pertinent area for inquiry (2007). Music is ‘at the heart of individual, group, and national identity’, says Slobin (1993, p. 11); while Stokes (1994a, p. 6) suggests that we not try to find and define traces of identity in music, but rather what music does and how it is used to create identity. Cooley (2005) completes the reflexive circle by implicating researchers (as well as tourists) in that process, noting their positions within the creation of identities.

The above literature provided the key directions from which I drew my understandings of how music informs and creates identity. Identity is increasingly complex: it is multi-layered and multi-faceted, changeable and constantly changing, evolving, a result of processes, histories, memories, and imaginations. Identity is influenced and informed by a number of factors – family, immediate environment, ethnicity, gender, nationality, the media, and so forth – and is also created in response to those forces. Moreover, identity is not fixed in the sense that it is constantly being (re)performed; identity is a performative process (Goffman 1973 (1959)). Music is an influential and important component of this performance.

**Diaspora and Ethnomusicology**

There now exists a large body of work that explores musics of diasporic peoples or of music in diaspora (see for example Gilroy 1993, pp. 72-110; Slobin 1993; Lipsitz 1994; Moulin 1996; Negus 1996, pp. 100-122; Taylor 1997, pp. 147-172; Shelemay 1998; Knudsen 2001; Mitchell 2001c; Ramnarine 2004; Stokes 2004; George 2007; Simonett 2007; Turino 2007, pp. 93-122; Margolies 2009). Slobin provides a pertinent overview and summary of diaspora within music studies, noting that it first entered ethnomusicological discourse in the 1990s, as the academic atmosphere drifted toward a greater emphasis on identity and interest in deterritorialisation, and the aim was to showcase the importance of music to non-music diaspora scholars (2003, p. 285). By 1994, he was editing a series of essays for the newly established *Diasporas* journal to try and demonstrate this.
Slobin notes a lack of exploration or definition of ‘diaspora’, with a ‘yawning elliptical space between...assumptions and explanatory power’ (2003, p. 286). Even a more nuanced study, he outlines, fails to illuminate the nature of diaspora, as a parallel study of musical groups not living in diaspora bear the same conclusions and processes. As a term, diaspora has been ‘stretched to breaking point’ (ibid, p. 288). Affective additions, terms like ‘diasporic intimacy’ and ‘diasporic consciousness’ further confuse the situation, as it is not clear whether this is something encountered or achieved. Furthermore, studies also began to include those located within the diasporic ‘homelands’, claiming that diaspora represented not just conditions of dispersion and exile (ibid, p. 289). Hip hop, he notes, ‘brings us to the intersection of diaspora and globalisation’, as a globalised example of ‘intercultural traffic’, a music that ‘domesticates differently in each localisation, while remaining recognisably itself’ (ibid, p. 292). Rap, it appears, has a way of ‘bringing diaspora to consciousness’ (ibid).

In summary, Slobin argues that diaspora is a term that refuses to be standardised in its reach or resonance, highlighting the complexities involved in studies of diaspora that move beyond simple demographics into such areas as notions of culture and identity. He states that unpacking the notion of diaspora within diaspora, or the unity of diaspora, ‘forces the ethnomusicologist further and further into the thickets of history and aesthetics’ (2003, p. 289). The music of diaspora is a symbol of diaspora, a symbolic aspect of material culture around which identity is formed: ‘the music itself becomes a kind of homeland to the musician’s compounded sense of diaspora’ (ibid, p. 290). The ethnomusicologist’s task is to identify the complexity of diaspora, but not to let it overwhelm their accounts.

**Diaspora and Ethnomusicology in New Zealand**

Ethnomusicological writing around diaspora in New Zealand centres around the two largest and broadly defined diasporic populations – Asian and Pacific – although a recent study by Daniel Milosavljevic considers the notion of identity within New Zealand’s pipe band culture and Scottish diaspora (2009). A key writer on the Asian diaspora in New Zealand has been Henry Johnson, who has written about Indonesian gamelan (2006 & 2008b), Japanese...
taiko (2008c & 2010c) and issues of music and identity for Chinese-New Zealanders (2005). In festival-specific contexts, he has also written about the Indian diaspora through a critical approach to Diwali festivals (Johnson and Figgins 2005; Johnson 2007 & 2010a), noting that, while ‘where you’re from becomes an important narrative in identity construction and self-identification’ (Johnson 2007, p. 74), Diwali can be viewed as a process of ‘othering’ the Indian diaspora, their music and dance, and therefore ‘actually helps construct diaspora identity through its imagining of South Asian homogeneity’ (ibid, p. 89).

In terms of the Pacific diaspora the majority of work conducted has been concerned with identity and popular music forms, with Tania Kopytko first noting the strong links between hip hop culture and African-American musical forms and New Zealand’s Māori and Pacific communities (1986). Beyond this, Richard Moyle focuses on the performance of traditional song and dance within communities (2002), and I have elsewhere discussed the use of Pacific musics, both traditional and popular, to create notions of identity and motivate students to achieve better educational outcomes (Mackley-Crump 2011). Other work has been concerned with specific communities within the diaspora, such as Tonga (Hebert 2008), and the Cook Islands (Goldsworthy 2001; Alexeyeff 2004).

April Henderson and Sarina Pearson have worked more broadly in the area of diaspora, researching hip hop and the Sāmoan diaspora (2006 & 2010 and 2004 respectively). In her work, Henderson discusses how hip hop culture spread throughout the Sāmoan diaspora, from its home in the United States to American and then Western Sāmoa, and then to New Zealand, and incorporated elements of Sāmoan dancing in the process (2006). More recently, she has argued hip hop creates a space through which Sāmoan hip hop artists bring the aesthetics of the urban street to the performing spaces of ‘high art’ (2010). Pearson, meanwhile, argues that hip hop presents a medium through which Sāmoan diasporics can create an indigenous identity based on a concerted effort to maintain the skills that make them Sāmoan, while also reflecting their urban multi-local realities (2004).
Kopytko’s early work was followed by that of Tony Mitchell, who provided a more historical account of Pacific (and Māori musicians) up to the early 1990s (Mitchell 1998a), and also wrote about emergence of an ‘Otara sound’ in the mid-1990s, based around a project whose aim was to ‘create music that was distinctly local and reflected Polynesian musical traditions and influences’, while expressing a strong urban Polynesian perspective (Mitchell 1998b, p. 160). Later, he argued that Māori and Pacific hip hop musicians had substituted Māori and Pacific cultural expressions for the African-American rhetoric of hip hop, while continuing to borrow freely from the musical styles of the genre (Mitchell 2000, p. 50). Most recently he concluded that Pacific hip hop remained ‘a marginal, fragile phenomenon in commercial and industrial terms due to its limited accessibility with Aotearoa-New Zealand and almost total inaccessibility outside the country’ (2001b, p. 301).

The major contribution to work in this area has come from Kirsten Zemke, beginning with her PhD, Rap Music in Aotearoa (Zemke-White 2000), and continuing into several subsequent chapters (Zemke-White 2001, 2002, 2004, 2005a, 2005b and 2007; Zemke-White and Televave 2007). With the benefit of writing during the time in which Pacific hip hop moved to the centre of New Zealand’s music industry and achieved a degree of international success, Zemke takes a less marginal, fragile view of Pacific hip hop, demonstrating its significant commercial appeal and industry successes (Zemke-White and Televave 2007). Zemke argues that it is Pacific youth, inclusive of Māori, who have embraced hip hop in New Zealand, from breakdancing in the early 1980s through to a recognisably distinct Pasifika hip hop at the turn of the twenty-first century (Zemke-White 2000).

This distinctly Pasifika hip hop style has emerged because the genre’s musical flexibility allows for the integration of Pacific languages, beats, dances, calls and music (Zemke-White 2001, p. 234). Added to this, hip hop artists have used rap to assert distinctly local urban Pacific identities through their lyrics, persona and imagery, and furthermore view it as a fundamental aspect of their lives and identity creation (Zemke-White 2004, 2005b & 2007). The

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1 And he especially notes the predominant absence of the misogynist aspects of American hardcore rap as a reflection of the traditionally strong positions held by women in Māori and Pacific societies.
significant Pacific owned and oriented music industry that emerged during the early 2000s is also implicated, as ‘notions of an urban Pacific contemporary identity shape the very instigation, motivation, and production of the music’, resulting in ‘ethnic-based production, creation and marketing strategies’ (Zemke-White and Televave 2007, p. 109). Discussing several key tropes of hip hop music, Zemke shows how they are trans-located and translated into specific New Zealand-Pacific contexts. The notion of ‘keeping it real’, for example, usually a frank discussion of the realities of sex, violence, drugs and poverty, in the New Zealand context means ‘keeping it real local’, and hip hop artists use rap to promote messages of cultural retention and pride, reinforcing the importance of language and knowing and respecting ancestral history (2004 & 2005a).

In summary, Zemke views hip hop in New Zealand as ‘no mere composite, mixing of forms, connecting the traditional with the modern’, but as an ‘undiminished refraction of the essence of rap from a disparate yet aligned source’ (Zemke-White 2001, p. 365). It does not represent ‘rootless postmodern musical borrowing’, but rather a ‘root restoration’ assertion and maintenance (ibid), and, although rap music is not based on Polynesian oral traditions, it allows Pacific youth to participate in a practice similar to that of their ancestors, linking themselves to their Pacific pasts and identities (ibid, p. 372).

1.2 Festival Studies

That festivals are a ubiquitous feature of human societies throughout the ages needs little establishing. Notions of ritualistic and collective celebrations of harvests and seasonal cycles, religions and Gods, family or important tribal events, and life-cycle ceremonies represent the origins and hallmarks of festivals as they are historically understood (Ehrenreich 2006; Young et al. 2011).

The focused study of festivals is one of the more recent academic turns, coming under increasing and multi-disciplinary attention from the late-

2 And see Bennett (2002) for another significant, although non-ethnomusicological, text about hip hop and identity for Pacific and Māori peoples.
twentieth century. With the advent of Festival Studies, a central early problem for this cross- and inter-disciplinary area of inquiry was the lack of ‘explicit theoretical effort...devoted to the nomenclature of festival events or to the definition of the term’ (Falassi 1987b, p. 1). Alessandro Falassi proposed an early social science definition of a festival as a

periodically recurrent, social occasion in which, through a multiplicity of forms and a series of coordinated events, participate directly or indirectly and to various degrees, all members of a whole community, united by ethnic, linguistic, religious, historical bonds, and sharing a worldview (1987b, p. 2).

While providing a useful starting point, this definition requires broadening, especially in light of the phenomenal growth of festivals that has occurred across the world, where many elements, from food, to flowers, art-forms, lifestyles and hobbies, and unique aspects of cities and towns, have all become festivalised (Jones 1993; Janiskee 1996; Gibson and Connell 2005; Ryan 2006). The increasing movement of peoples throughout the world has also led to a range of ‘cultural’ festivals, such as diaspora-specific events or multicultural celebrations. A contemporary understanding must also account for commercial festivals, an integral part of the modern ‘experience economy’ (Pine and Gilmore 1999), where commodities can be ‘experiential’ (Abrahams 1983; Santos 1996). Indeed, in a more recent entry on music festivals, it is festivals in terms of commodified culture that takes primary and sole focus (Willett 2003). Falassi recognises the complexities involved in festivals when he states that a 'complete or even extensive morphology of festivals' will mirror very few, if any, actual events: ‘real-life festivals will not present all the ritual components listed’ (1987b, p. 6, see also Waterman 1998). More recently, Donald Getz has noted that no widely employed typology of festivals has emerged (2010, p. 2).

A Multi-Disciplinary Field
The broad interest in festivals as a site of study can be seen as a reflection of the broad range of festivals and types of festivalisation that now exist. As a result of the inherently multi-disciplinary nature of festival studies, there exists a complexity in the theoretical, methodological and ethical issues surrounding their study (Getz 2002; Silvers et al 2006). Getz (2010) provides a
recent and comprehensive overview of festival studies literature in which he notes that studies are well established in sociology and anthropology, while management and tourism are more recent and less mature. In the broad humanities area, studies encompass music and anthropology and different fields of geography, as discussed below, as well as various other disciplines including gender and sexuality studies (Lewis and Pile 1996; Frohlick 2005; Hughes 2006; Waitt and Gorman-Murray 2008; Browne 2009), history (Ozouf 1991; White 1994; Curcio 2004), media studies (Roth and Frank 2000; de Valck 2007), and theatre studies (Yeganeh 2005; Hauptfleisch 2006).

My own review of festival-oriented literature found similar to Getz in that, outside of humanities, there are three clear streams that have directed much focus towards the study of festivals. These areas are located around:

1. Event management (Frisby and Getz 1989; Cai 2002; Quinn 2003 & 2005; Bowen and Daniels 2005; Bowden and Allen 2006; Stokes 2006; Spiropoulos et al. 2006; Barlow and Shibli 2008; Cela et al. 2008; Delbosc 2008; Hede and Rentschler 2008; McClinchey 2008; Huand et al. 2009);
2. Economics (Long and Perdue 1990; Getz 1991; Frey 1994; Santino 1996; Crompton et al. 2001; Tyrrell and Johnston 2001; Rusher 2003; Dwyer et al. 2004; Gibson and Davidson 2004; Gursoy et al. 2004; Snowball 2004; Crompton 2005; Moscardo 2008; Curtis 2010); and

Many studies overlap into more than one area (see for example Auld and McArthur 2003; Marschall 2006; Everett and Aitchison 2007; Foley and McPherson 2008; Getz and Andersson 2008; Huang et al. 2009; Moscardo et al 2009).

From a humanities perspective, festival studies frequently demonstrate how festivals create and promote diverse notions of both community and cultural identities (Farber 1983; Lavenda 1983; Hall 1997; Duffy 1999b, 2000 and 2005; Rusher 2003; Frost 2007; Turino 2007; Bowmile 2009) as well as national identities (Mathews-Salazar 2006; Thompson et al. 2006; Jarman 2007; Matheson 2008). Michelle Duffy notes, of multicultural community festivals, that they are ‘sites for on-going dialogues and negotiations within
communities as individuals and groups attempt to define meaningful concepts of identity and belonging' (2005, p. 679). By contrast, in focusing on specifically nationalistic events, Sally Marston notes that ethnic and national identities are highly contested, and boundaries, both rigid and unwavering as well as more permeable, are constructed along a number of different and competing axes (2002).

The importance of festivals as spaces of community, collectivity and identity mean that they are not merely incidental, but are connected to, and reflect, the larger societies and social orders of which they are a part (Cohen 1980; Waterman 1998; Marston 2002; Harnish 2006). In recent times, then, festivals have thus been conceived, in various ways, as creating spaces of identity and belonging, and of reflecting the intertwined nature of the two (Duffy 1999a and 2000; Derrett 2003; Sinn and Wong 2005; Selberg 2006; Gorman-Murray 2009; Curtis 2010). As Duffy notes, festivals are not simply something separate from the everyday, but rather are performative, affective events that heighten everyday behaviour, knowledge and interactions, with all their contradictions, in which place and belonging are negotiated and (re)constituted (Duffy 2008, p. 101).

The creation of collective identities is achieved in different ways: by focusing symbolic systems of continuity to the past, whether real or imagined (McCabe 2006; Azara and Crouch 2006; Misetic and Sabotic 2006; Chappel and Loades 2006; Picard 2006), through the adoption of wholly new, sometimes organically-created, imagined identities (Gibson and Davidson 2004; Bendrups and Johnson 2007; Curtis 2010), and notions of collective identities arising where old traditions are re-imagined anew or have been contemporised (Kuutma 1998; Selberg 2006; Johnson 2008a; Eberhardt 2009). In a similar fashion, festivals have also been noted as important sites for the maintenance and/or passing on of cultural practices in both indigenous and migrant communities (Crocker 1982; Turino 1993; Howard 2004; Harnish 2006), with the interest of outside visitors sometimes providing the impetus for their continuation and thus contributing to the creation of unique, local identities (Cooley 2005; McCabe 2006; Azara and Crouch 2006).
Ideas of community, place and identity are also prevalent in festival studies that focus on diasporic communities, where festivals can be seen as opening up spaces through which notions of identity and of belonging to the ‘host’ country can be explored (Bramadat 2001; Kurashige 2002; Avieli 2005; Carnegie and Smith 2006), as well as for community cohesion and maintaining links with homelands (Arenson 1998; Louie 2000; Lau 2004; Leal 2005; Sinn and Wong 2005). Diasporic festivals can also be seen as reflecting social and demographic change in new homelands (Nurse 1999; Margolies 2009), and providing spaces for displays of ‘strategic essentialism’ among related but heterogeneous groups (Bramadat 2001, p. 6, see also Cruikshank 1997; Nurse 1999; Mathews-Salazar 2006; Regis and Walton 2008). And a final important theme within diasporic festivals discusses the incorporation of aspects of popular and Western culture, and the perceived need to balance this with the preservation, maintenance and ‘authenticity’ of cultural traditions and practices (Cohen 1980; Davila 1997; Leal 2005; Azara and Crouch 2006; Carnegie and Smith 2006; Eberhardt 2009).

Top-Down or Bottom-Up: Who Controls Festivals?
One theme that emerges in much literature on festivals, across disciplines, is the issue of control, of whether festivals are managed from the top-down by institutions, or are the result of a bottom-up movement of communities (see, for example, Cohen 1980; Cruikshank 1997; Davila 1997; Hall 1997; Duffy 1999b and 2005; Marston 2002; Quinn 2003 and 2005; Ryan and Richards 2004; Gotham 2005 and 2007; Azara and Crouch 2006; Belghazi 2006; Ryan 2006; Johnson 2007; Regis and Walton 2008). M Paiola (2008) sees three types of festival models: top-down, which can be vulnerable to political change, bottom-up, which, as others have shown (Quinn 2005; Fjell 2007; Lennart 2007), can have issues around sustainability, and a third, ‘ad-hoc’, which is a mixture of top-down and bottom-up. Although ultimately favouring a bottom-up approach, seeing it at the best way to stimulate local cultural production and ensure that both the management of and resulting event are shared, Paiola notes that the ‘ad-hoc’ model has a strategic advantage in that it shares with the top-down model a greater stability but maintains a strategy of adaptation to local social and economic contexts. This incorporation of a variety of local actors makes festivals increasingly rooted organisations,
spreading its beneficial effects by exerting a strategic influence on the local actors involved, increasing their visibility and contractual power, and, moreover, the network structure leads to the reinforcement of stability (Paiola 2008, pp. 525-527). This model thus works because key people are ‘embedded in extensive networks and behave as bridges between organisations’ (ibid, pp. 527).

Malcolm Foley and Gayle McPherson also take up the dichotomy of top-down versus bottom-up (2008). They consider festivals as both. From the top-down, they are politically pragmatic moves to achieve economic benefits, civic boosterism and behavioural control through commodifying cultural contexts towards those ends. From the bottom-up, they are collective negotiations and shared conceptions of the role and nature of culture in meeting the aspirations of citizens. While they argue similar to Paiola – that leadership in the first can lead to the benefits of the latter – Foley and McPherson conclude that festivals are more conducive to top-down objectives of income generation and post-modern spectacle with political benefits.

**Pacific Festivals**

In terms of festivity in Pacific cultures, it is known that colonial forces largely suppressed indigenous forms of festivity as they expanded and brought Christianity with them (Ehrenreich 2006, pp. 155-172). That festivals existed is unquestionable, especially in light of the noted central role of music and dance in Pacific cultures generally (see for example Burrows 1940; Moyle 1991; McLean 1999). Dan Bendrups notes that festivals, celebrations and performance competitions are deeply ingrained in the histories of Pacific cultures, with some known to have existed since pre-European times surviving in various forms into the twenty-first century (2008, p. 17). Furthermore, the dates of July 4 and 14 are significant in parts of the Pacific as a result of colonial administrations encouraging colonised populations to transform festivities into celebrations of their new nations’ national days. The scant information about pre-contact festivals that survives suggests they existed in much the same way as in other societies, for religious, seasonal and lifecycle observance (McLean 1999, pp. 16-18), however, ‘professional interest came too late for much information to be salvaged’ (ibid, p. 18).
Many of the themes highlighted with regards to identity and community, tourism and economics, are also themes reflected in the small body of literature about Pacific festivals, both in New Zealand and the Pacific. Most of the literature about festivals in the Pacific is written with a focus on festivals as sites of identity construction and maintenance of cultural traditions in the face of tourism and the impacts of modernity (Stillman 1999; Bossen 2000; Bendrups 2008; Phipps 2010). These themes are also prevalent in much of the literature written about the largest and most important Pacific festival in the Pacific, the quadrennial Festival of Pacific Arts, first held in 1972 (Kaeppler 1987; Simons 1989; Hereniko 1994; Brown 2001; Moulin 2005; Kuwahara 2006; Glowczewski and Henry 2007). Adrienne Kaeppler believes that the festivals have been an avenue through which peoples of the Pacific have come to feel a sense of shared cultural identity, stating that ‘these feelings of brotherhood are not trivial or manufactured for the occasion…but constitute real concerns as these societies face their separate futures’ (1987, p. 164). Furthermore, she notes that the festival is a ‘celebration of island brotherhood but separate ethnic identity carried out in an atmosphere of sharing’ (ibid, p. 165), something Barbara Glowczewski and Rosita Henry’s study of the festival some twenty years later reaffirms (2007).

Pacific festivals in New Zealand are under-researched, and what exists is largely cursory. Chris Ryan and Parehau Richards have constructed a history of the earliest public Pacific Festival in New Zealand, what was original called the Polynesian Festival, and is now the solely Māori ‘Te Matatini’ kapa haka festival (2004). Outside of this, a small body of work has focused on the next and more important festival to be established, the Auckland Secondary Schools Māori and Pacific Islands Festival, better known as Polyfest (Manu’atu 2000b; Manu’atu and Kēpa 2002; Taouma 2002; Kēpa and Manu’atu 2008). Two further studies offer problematic conclusions.

Illana Gershon and Solonaima Collins compare how diasporic Sāmoan and indigenous Māori high school students use performances of traditional song and dance, to explore their relationships to the New Zealand nation (2007).

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3 Most articles written about the Festival of Pacific Arts are generally written around a specific incarnation of the festival, and address certain issues within that event (see also Cochrane 2002; Zeplin 2003; Yamamoto 2006; Yasui 2006).
They conclude that Sāmoan students see themselves as more aligned to Sāmoa as a homeland, feeling out of place in New Zealand, and so perform a sense of dislocation (ibid, p. 1798). Aside from at-times confusing Polyfest with the aforementioned Polynesian Festival, suggesting unreliability, the study is problematic because it makes conclusions about how students use music based solely on observations and interviews with ten tutors and teachers, without addressing the fact of the ideologies of the older generations that inform the study. It is perhaps they who felt, or feel, a sense of dislocation to the New Zealand nation, and Gershon and Collins’ study thus propagates the continued idea of diasporic peoples as at home neither here nor there, and of diasporic identity as an unstable notion, where younger generations may not necessarily feel this to be so. The absence of their voices means we are unable to know.

A PhD thesis completed by Sharon Kornell is also problematic (2008). Entitled *Dancing Culture, Culture Dancing: Celebrating Pasifika in Aotearoa/New Zealand*, Kornelly states that Polyfest creates a space in which it is possible to see the ‘multiple and overlapping structures involved in building a New Zealand-born Pasifika experience’, while allowing the festival performers to be ‘active participants in creating shared experiences which shape their identities in an urban New Zealand context’ (2008, iv-v). Worryingly, however, is that her study simplistically concludes that the cultural symbols and meanings visible and performed at Polyfest reflect a contemporary pan-Pacific identity and that this is representative of most festival participants. Certainly, as others note, the notion of varying degrees of pan-Pacific identities, based on cultural similarities and experiences, is true (Anae 2001; Macpherson 2001b, 2006; Mila-Schaaf 2010). The problem is that the cultural symbols and meanings presented at Polyfest are designed to showcase the exact opposite, of the diversity within the unity of the Pacific communities. The very separation of the event into Sāmoan, Cook Island, Niuean, Tongan and Diversity stages demonstrates this. At best, Polyfest achieves multiple identity formations, locating performers at a micro level within and reinforcing notions of the specific Pacific culture they are representing, while within an environment that champions a meta-level pan-Pacificness at the same time. Kornelly’s study fails to adequately and properly take these
nuances into account, reducing the multiple into one singular instead of highlighting both as primary determinants.

More nuanced is Ruth Talo’s Masters’ thesis on the Pasifika Festival, the central festival studied here, and currently only other academic text that discusses it (2008). Entitled *Festival of Fusion: the celebration, representation and identification of Pacific cultures at Auckland’s Pasifika Festival*, Talo’s work situates music as one facet in a cultural geography landscape that includes food, crafts, festival villages, stages, and sponsors, and encompasses multiple diverse and collective Pacific identities, in what she calls a ‘grand arena of Pacific-ness’ (2008, p. 128). Of music, Talo notes that it caters to a variety of different audiences and tastes and demonstrates the diversity of musics of the Pacific communities (ibid, pp. 71-75). Furthermore, the presence of popular Pasifika hip hop artists establishes the genre as a ‘true Pacific art form, and cements the cultural representations and identities it is used to express, into popular consciousness’ (ibid, p. 131).

On the issue of identity, Talo concludes that the festival can be seen to perpetuate and encourage the maintenance of Pasifika cultures (2008, p. 130). She also summarises that, while the villages clearly showcase distinct and singular Pacific cultures, the overall dynamic is one of Pasifika:

> Pacific culture, in New Zealand, can be considered to have evolved into a hybrid culture whereby it has become infused with cultural elements and influences representative of the diversity of New Zealand’s ethnic environment (ibid, p. 81).

Falassi offers an explanation for the continued importance and central role of festivals in human societies. Despite the effects of the past century’s rapid globalisation, where previous notions of community have largely been replaced by transnational, multicultural and multi-local realities, festivals have retained their primary importance because human beings, as social animals, have not established a more significant way to feel ‘in tune with the world’. Therefore we continue to value and participate in the ‘special reality’ of festivals, to celebrate life in its ‘time out of time’ (1987b, p. 7).
1.3 Other Research Considerations

The final pieces of literature I wish to draw attention to, influential throughout the course of this research in considering participants, community and researcher interactions and in how the research is presented, discuss two specific areas implicated in issues of representation: the role of the researcher in representing others and the notion insider/outsider positions.

Representing Others

Turino calls for ethnomusicologists to question the overly systematic ways in which other peoples’ realities are constructed in our studies, privileging what ‘can be said or shown rather than dealing with the variability and fluidity of actual practice’ (1990, p. 403). Edward Said, however, challenges whether this is possible. He believes anthropological work bears as much on the representer’s world as on those being represented, and questions whether anthropologists can really break free from the imperialism and representations of the ‘Other’ in the discipline’s history (1989, p. 225). The problem is one of gaze, when ‘a gaze from nowhere becomes a gaze from somewhere’ without realising how problematic that somewhere can be (Pile and Keith 1993c, p. 31).

The notion of gaze highlights the ethics and morals of representation. Said (1989), along with bell hooks (1990) and Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999) are among some of the diverse range of scholars who have written about the complexities involved in representing others, and problematise how these representations transpire in research outcomes. As Said notes, to represent someone has become an endeavour ‘as complex and as problematic as an asympote, with consequences for certainty and decidability as fraught with difficulties as can be imagined’ (1989, p. 206). Part of this complexity revolves around tensions between essentialisation and postmodernism. Both hooks and Smith note the paradox of essentialising representations, being detrimental in the sense of an ‘authentic’ otherness imposing cultural boundaries and limits, while also being promoted from within and used in affirmative action (1990, p. 6 and 1999, p. 72-73 respectively). Postmodernism, with its critique of essentialisation and promotion of multiple subject positions, can however, deny essential characteristics, identities and
experiences, and ‘at exactly the point it is coming to voice for the very first time’ (hooks 1990, p. 6).

From an indigenous perspective, Smith notes that research is a powerful intervention that has traditionally benefited the researcher and the knowledge base of the dominant group in society (1999, p. 176). She calls for researchers to recognise this power dynamic embedded within relationships with participants, and that their approach should consider the ‘cultural ground rules’ of respect, working with communities, and of sharing processes and knowledge (ibid, p. 191). The challenge and goal should always be to demystify, ‘to decolonise’ (ibid, p. 16). In a Pacific context, Timote Vaioleti similarly notes that when people give *kolua* (time and knowledge), ‘they will expect it to be respected and honoured…the *kakala* (the new knowledge) is expected to be passed on so that others can benefit from it’ (2006, p. 26-27). Houston Wood, meanwhile, argues for a focus not on what researchers report but how they conduct their lives, and how they perceive themselves in regard to the communities they study (2003). The overall inference is that, with strong personal research ethics, the ethnographer should not be problematically implicated in a politics of difference in the research that follows.

**On Insider/Outsider Positions**

The way in which people are represented by researchers, and the politics involved in such actions, highlights the positioning of the researcher in relation to participants. Rice notes that the familiar insider/outsider dichotomy is one rooted in the concept of culture and accompanying notion of cultural boundaries: ‘it is cultures with boundaries that define the positioning of insiders and outsiders’ (2008, p. 54). Deborah Wong calls this dichotomy a ‘false binary’ (2008, p. 77), believing that today’s postcolonial and transnational world means that ‘insiders are both anyone and everyone, and the field is everywhere and nowhere’ (ibid, p. 83). For Wong, ethnographers are always outsiders because research crafts new relationships and changes relationships that already exist; even when we work at home, we are outsiders, translating one culture for another. For Marcia Herndon the dichotomy is also meaningless, but because she sees researchers as neither: ‘I
speak as myself; neither fully insider nor outsider, neither fully emic nor fully etic’ (1993, p. 77). Rice posits that, rather than being insider or outsider ways of knowing, knowledge is a process, and all those who ‘place themselves in front of a tradition use the hermeneutic arc to move from pre-understandings to explanation to new understandings’ (2008, p. 58). Therefore all individuals, researcher or participant, continually give cultural practices new meanings and create continually evolving senses of self, identity and community.

Considered as a dichotomy, the notion of insider/outside, or emic/etic positions proves meaningless. Using the terms to explore a researcher’s positionality, where they represent a continuum, is more fruitful. Kirin Narayan finds so when she argues that,

> at this historical moment we might more profitably view each anthropologist in terms of shifting identification amid a field of interpenetrating communities and power relations. The loci along which we are aligned with or set apart from those whom we study are multiple and in flux (1993, pp. 671–672).

Being an insider or not, or partially, all present their own issues and complications: ‘as insiders or partial insiders, in some contexts we are drawn closer, in others we are thrust apart’ (ibid, p. 676). In researching her own community, Smith found the same. Although an insider to her community, she was also an outsider and found barriers were sometimes erected, creating space between her as a researcher and friends as participants (1999, p. 138). Smith points out that, in indigenous contexts, ‘insiders have to live with the consequences of their processes on a day-to-day basis for ever more, and so do their families and communities’ (ibid, p. 137).

In conclusion, for Clifford (1997, p. 77), structuring oppositions should be displaced. Further, the relations of insider/outsider, same and different, as relations that have organised the spatial practices of fieldwork, should be rethought. Narayan thinks likewise. For her, rather than a researcher’s position within the field, the focus should be on the quality of relations with the people who are being represented in the texts:

> Are they viewed as mere fodder for professional self-serving statements about a generalised Other, or are they accepted as subjects
with voices, and dilemmas – people to whom we are bonded through ties of reciprocity and who may even be critical of our professional enterprise? (1993, p. 672).

Conclusion
The purpose of this literature review has been to provide the reader with an overview of the texts that, while not underpinning its theoretical direction, have nonetheless been influential in steering its course. Primary amongst these have been the areas in which this research is most centrally located: firstly within ethnomusicology, where issues of identity are frequently a defining feature and where notions of diaspora and diasporic musics have been well explored, and secondly within the broad and multidisciplinary area of festival studies. Festivals have come under increasing attention in the past two decades, especially in terms of festival management, the economics of festivals and festivals and tourism. The study of festival within anthropological-oriented fields has been longer established (Getz 2010), and themes of community, collectivity, place and identity resonate throughout these texts. Finally, the notions of how others are represented within our studies and the problematic nature of insider/outsider positioning have also been influential, and so were briefly discussed. The next chapter, theory and method, builds on these tentative beginnings. It provides a more detailed discussion of the theory that grounds the research, the method by which it was undertaken, and an exploration of my own research processes.
Chapter Two

Theory and Method

This chapter presents a discussion of the theories and research methods that ground my research, as well as an outline of the research process. I begin by building on the previous chapter’s literature review, outlining the two key theoretical areas that underpin this thesis: festivals and diaspora. Writings that discuss Pacific cultures and identities within New Zealand also inform my conception of the Pacific diaspora and so are included within this section. Next I turn to method. The primary method employed was ethnography, and a key consideration was the notion of fieldwork at home. After discussing these, I also outline a research method that has been proposed for working with Pacific communities: the notion of talanoa. Although not employed directly, this method was nonetheless informative and influential in considering fieldwork interactions. This leads into a description of my research process: how I prepared for the field, met and interviewed participants. The importance of reciprocity incorporates a discussion of the secondary research method employed – applied ethnomusicology – and here I outline steps taken to achieve applied outcomes. The chapter ends with some reflections on the research and fieldwork process.

2.1 Conceptualising and Theorising the Pacific Diaspora

The theorising of diaspora is now richly endowed (see for example Anzaldúa 1987; Gilroy 1987 and 1993; Appadurai 1990, 1991 and 1996; Gupta and Ferguson 1992; Hall 1991 and 1992; Keith and Pile 1993b and 1993c; Dayal 1996; Pieterse 1997; Balme and Cartensen 2001; Izumi 2001; Franklin 2003; Axel 2004; Chapman 2004; Lam 2004; Johnson and Moloughney 2006; Lopes 2007; Wickberg 2007; Kostogriz and Tsolidis 2008). William Safran attempted an early definition of diaspora and he arrived at a list of characteristics he argued could be used as a heuristic method for categorisation:

- Dispersal from a centre to two or more peripheries, or foreign regions
- Retention of collective memory, vision or myth
• The belief that full acceptance by the host country is not possible, with consequent alienation and insult
• Regard for the ancestral homeland as the true or ideal home and place of eventual return
• Commitment to the maintenance of restoration of the homeland and to its safety and prosperity
• And personal or vicarious relation to the homeland in an ethno-communal consciousness (1991, pp. 83-84).

This approach was both praised and also critiqued by Clifford, who states that we must be wary about ‘constructing our working definition…by recourse to an ‘ideal type’, with the consequence that groups become identified as less or more diasporic’ (1994, p. 306). Instead he shows how diasporas can be seen to ‘wax and wane’ over time, depending on changing possibilities, and calls for an approach that focuses on the boarders of diaspora (ibid, pp. 304 – 306, see also Gupta and Ferguson’s repudiation of ‘static culture maps’ (1992)). Diasporas, Clifford notes, are caught up with and defined against the norms of nation-states and indigenous claims by ‘tribal’ peoples (1994, p. 307). Concurrently, where modern transport, communication methods and labour migration all reduce distance, diasporic forms of longing, memory, and (dis)identification create ‘border relations with the old country’, (ibid, p. 304). This overlap of diaspora and border relations therefore makes maintaining exclusivist paradigms in accounting for transnational identity formations difficult, and we should not impose strict meanings or authenticity tests.

Clifford’s approach also calls into question the notion of dispersal from a presupposed diasporic centre. Associating a diasporic centre with national territories devalues the ‘lateral axes of diaspora’, networks through which communication, travel, trade, and kinship takes place (Clifford 1994, pp. 321-322; and see Axel 2004). These connections across multiple spaces, and the corresponding links made between places and people, unite diverse diasporic communities through broad spacialisations that displace dispersion from geographic centres as a key characteristic (Keith and Pile 1993b). This focus on connections however, presents a danger of condensing the experiences of diasporic communities into a single ‘space-time rubic’, something that ignores particular histories and localised spacialities. Therefore the plurality within diaspora must also be acknowledged (ibid, p. 17, and see, pointedly, hooks 1990). This raises the possibility for a multiplicity of spacialisations to be
simultaneously present, although this should be balanced with the realisation that ‘such a celebration cannot be unqualified’ or absent of a political economy reading (Pile and Keith 1993c, p. 25), or that over-riding collectivities will be present (hooks 1990).

A multiplicity of spacialisations within an over-riding collectivity is facilitated by two things. Clifford is concerned with the ‘diverse practices of crossing, tactics of translation, experiences of double or multiple attachment’ that reflect the complex regional and trans-regional histories so profoundly changed in the latter half of the twentieth century (1997, pp. 6-7). He emphasises that ‘roots always precede routes’ (ibid, p. 3). The cultural centres and discrete regions and territories are sustained through contact, ‘appropriating and disciplining the restless movement of people and things’ (ibid). Culture travels and is translated in the process, taking on new meanings, and transmorphing into new concepts and objects (ibid. p. 30). Diasporic collectivity is thus a result of roots, while the routes of diaspora create the multiplicity of spacialisations. This highlights fluidity, movement and circulation, and, in a Pacific context, leads to the work of Tongan scholar Epeli Hau’ofa.

**Hau’ofa and a ‘Sea of Islands’**

Hau’ofa’s seminal work issues a challenge. Confronting popular (mis)conceptions of the Pacific, where nations are seen as ‘too poorly endowed with resources, and too isolated from the centres of economic growth’ for Pacific peoples to rise above the dependence on larger, wealthier nations (1994, p. 151), he proposes an alternative. Hau’ofa claims that this conception overlooks culture, history and the contemporary processes of what he calls ‘world enlargement’, where tens of thousands of Pacific peoples crisscross an ocean that had for centuries been boundless (ibid, p. 153). He asks: do people in most of Oceania live in tiny confined spaces? The answer, he proposes, depends on how we measure space:

If we look at the myths, legends and oral traditions, and the cosmologies of the peoples of Oceania, it will become evident that they did not conceive of their world in such microscopic proportions. Their universe comprised not only land surfaces, but the surrounding ocean as far as they could traverse and exploit it...and the heavens above with...stars

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[^4]: See also Hall’s notion of diasporic peoples as ‘translators’ (1992).
and constellations that people could count on to guide their ways across the seas. Their world was anything but tiny (ibid).

And thus he made his famous pronouncement. Instead of viewing the Pacific as islands dispersed within a faraway sea, emphasising small land surfaces and remoteness, Oceania, connoting a grand world, is in fact ‘a sea of islands’, ‘a more holistic perspective in which things are seen in the totality of their relationships’ (ibid, p. 154).

Hau’ofa asserts that prior to colonisation, the Pacific was an interconnected network where wealth, people, skills and arts circulated endlessly. Fiji, Samoa, Tonga, Niue, Rotuma, Tokelau, Tuvalu, and Wallis and Futuna formed a large exchange community from which voyagers ventured into Kiribati, the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and New Caledonia, an outer arc of less intensive exchange. Moreover, these connections, despite imposed borders, remain intact. This presents an image of the Pacific as far more intimate than maps and nation-state borders suggest. And, in the ‘world enlargement’ that occurred after the Second World War, these connections have been further extended, as Pacific peoples ‘shake off their confinement…doing what their ancestors had done before them: enlarging their world as they go, but on a scale not possible before’ (ibid, p. 157).

For Hau’ofa then, the Pacific represents a kinship network through which Pacific peoples, their families, material goods, and culture travel and are endlessly circulated. This highlights similarity over difference, giving priority to historical and cultural commonalities, something Hau’ofa would later use to call for the recognition of a regional Pacific identity, ‘anchored in our common inheritance of a very substantial portion of Earth’s largest body of water’ (2000, p. 113). Furthermore, Island homes and new adopted homelands are the nodes through which this circulation flows, through which this network connects, and are the points through which Pacific peoples travel, holiday, live, and maintain relationships. Where Pacific peoples travel, they take these connections with them, connections that tie them to other places and people, and become new posts of Pacific-ness in the metaphorical ‘sea of islands’.

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3 This notion has been given related but alternative and more localised renderings by Bedford (2007, pp. 71-72), whose notion of ‘effective populations’ includes not just those who reside within national borders, but those in diaspora who
Conceiving of the Pacific diaspora in these terms highlights the roots and routes of Clifford’s work, and the interconnectedness of the two. The constantly evolving multidirectional nature of the network acts ‘towards the reclamation of the ocean as a conduit and source of connection and movement for Pacific peoples’ (Barcham et al. 2009, p. 335). The Pacific diaspora in New Zealand is thus fluid and dynamic, constantly changing and in flux. This is facilitated by ongoing migrations and reverse migrations, both temporary and permanent (Tagata Pasifika 2002b; Macpherson and Macpherson 2009), and opportunities for travel and exchange that reasonably close and accessible proximities allow. The result is that diasporic transnational links have been strongly maintained (Spoonley and Macpherson 2004). As a consequence, New Zealand represents the centre of the diaspora outside of the home Islands, and a key site of cultural production and diasporic (re)imaginings and identities. Festivals, as I will argue, can be seen as spaces in which this dynamism is displayed, temporarily halted in time for the purposes of ritualised collective celebration.

**Ka’ili and the Practice of ‘tauhi vā’**

Hau’ofa’s conception of the Pacific highlights the notion of space, and specifically the spaces (routes) in between the nodes (roots) that connect the diaspora. The work of Tongan scholar Tevita Ka’ili, who writes about the importance and interface between space and social relationships, compliments and extends the ‘sea of islands’. Ka’ili begun after reflecting on how the mythical God Maui, common throughout Pacific cultures, had ‘sustained relationships with many of his relatives who were dispersed yet connected across distant physical spaces’ (2005, p. 84). Noting that Pacific peoples achieved one of the great spatial movements of human history, he asserts that we are however only beginning to unravel the complexity of sociospatial ties that connect Pacific peoples to one another ‘across such a great expanse of physical space’ (ibid, p. 86).

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6 It is noted however that this is not universal across the diaspora, and what Doreen Massey calls the ‘power geometry of time-space compression’, where different social groups are situated in differing ways to modern-day flows and interconnections (1994, p. 149), is very much evident. For example diasporic Pacific peoples whose ancestral homelands are Kiribati, Tokelau or Tuvalu are far less likely to be able to afford travel to these places than those from Samoa, Tonga, Niue or the Cook Islands, where travel services are more frequent and cost effective. The heterogeneity within the diaspora is also implicated here, where the cost of travel to the Pacific may be unaffordable for those constrained by socio-economic position, or even geographic position within the New Zealand nation, given that the majority of services depart from Auckland only.
Ka’ili proposes the Tongan concept of *tauhi vā* to explain this, a concept that has pan-Pacific equivalents. *Vā* literally means space but emphasises spaces in-between. Within human contexts, *vā* means the experiences of social and sociospatial relations, and the space between people: ‘Since *vā* is the social space between individuals or groups, it also relates and connects individuals and groups to one another’ (Ka’ili 2005, p. 90). *Tauhi* means to take care, tend, or nurture. *Tauhi vā* is thus the practice of ‘reinforcing people’s connection in space’, nurturing ties through the reciprocal exchange of economic and social goods (ibid, p. 92). *Tauhi vā* is a practice that takes place not only among kāinga (kin), but also in kāinga-like relationships with ‘friends, schoolmates, coworkers, kāingalotu (fellow church members), and so on’ (ibid). In addition, *tauhi vā* operates across generations:

> past history of *tauhi vā* from other spaces and places…continues to be the foundation for organising my sociospatial ties…affirm[ing] and reaffirm[ing] the sociospatial bonds across generations. In this context children are born into multiple, pre-existing social spaces (ibid, p. 93).

In transnational diasporic contexts, Ka’ili asserts that the practice of *tauhi vā* is a key principle in caring for sociospatial relations. Transnational reciprocal exchange nurtures relations with kin or kin-like members separated by vast distance and is crucial to the diasporic framework, especially as ‘*tauhi vā* has been acknowledged by many Tongan elders as one of the fundamental cultural values of Tongan society’ (Ka’ili 2005, p. 89). Part of this reciprocity is seen in the performance of fatongia (community duties), which create the flow and circulation of goods and services between social spaces while simultaneously reinforcing and affirming sociospatial ties. Therefore, for transnational communities, ‘no matter how far apart they are dispersed in physical space, they can still be sociospatially connected to one another’ (ibid, p. 92).

As well as kāinga, the practice of *tauhi vā* also reinforces the unity and connections between people and land (Ka’ili 2005, p. 94). As a result, identity is determined by genealogical connections to both fonua (land) and to kāinga, and the practice of tracing hohoko (genealogy) is a cultural practice of positioning

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7 Hau’ofa (1994, p. 157) also reinforced the notion of reciprocity as central to Pacific cultures, in that relatives in diaspora remit money and goods to relatives in homelands and they, in turn, reciprocate with goods from home they produce and grow. ‘In addition, these relatives maintain ancestral homes and lands, which remain available and ready for people to return ‘home’ either permanently or temporarily before moving on again.'
oneself within a genealogical line in order to organise a vā (sociospatial tie) (ibid, p. 91). In diaspora, this takes on an added significance because biological kāinga may not always be available (ibid, p. 101). In addition, tauhi vā was a practice Ka’ili discovered had expanded inter-diasporically:

I came to the realisation that Tongans and Native Hawaiians are recreating a vā for themselves based on their belief that all Moanans originate from common ancestors. By linking themselves to common ancestors, Tongan and Native Hawaiians locate their genealogical connections, which create (reestablish) a vā/wā between them (ibid, p. 103).

This notion of inter-diasporic connection between Pacific peoples is one of the defining themes in literature that discusses Pacific cultures and identities within New Zealand, a final important area in conceptualising diaspora.

**Pacific Cultures and Identities within New Zealand**

Much debate has occurred around the notion of identity and culture in the Pacific (Keesing 1989; Linnekin 1990, 1992 and 1997; Linnekin and Poyer 1990; Jolly 1992 and 2007; Norton 1993; Hereniko 1994; Lawson 1997; Inoue 2000; Franklin 2003; Thaman 2003; Wood 2003; Ohnuma 2008). While there are unquestionably pertinent parallels to Pacific peoples in New Zealand within these works, especially in discussions around notions of ‘authenticity’ and ‘traditions’, invented or otherwise, and the (lasting) impacts of Western contact and influence, they are nonetheless the result of quite specific histories. Furthermore, notions of a regional Pacific identity or series of identities – the so-called ‘Pacific Way’ (Kaeppler 1987) – implicates New Zealand and its Pacific communities. To create clarity in my discussion though, I limit my exploration of sources to those that discuss Pacific peoples in New Zealand, something that provides a better contextual situatedness as well as framing the discussion purely within the context of diaspora. Jocelyn Linnekin however summarises well the notion of Pacific identities as being formed through a combination of factors. She argues that identities emerge and change historically in the context of social and political moments, and cannot be decided a priori (1990, p. 169). This is because interactions with social others, political environments and

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8 Ka’ili’s term for Pacific peoples.
9 The Native Hawaiian equivalent term for the Tongan concept vā.
prevailing categorical distinctions, ‘horizontal factors’, are matched in importance by those she labels as ‘vertical’: putative ancestry, territorial origin, and parentage (ibid, p. 170, and see Bedford and Didham (2001)).

‘Identity journeys’ is the term Melani Anae gives to the process of working through these factors to establish identities that capture the multiple realities of Pacific peoples in New Zealand (1998). She identifies a number of factors that work against the establishment of strong Island-based identities (2001): Western-style educations (also critiqued by Nakhid (2003) and Kedell (2006), among others), more cosmopolitan personal networks, the diluting effects of intermarriage (Bedford and Didham (2001) and Macpherson (2004) outline the particularly strong presence of this), language loss leading to cultural alienation (Mailei 1999; Hunkin-Tuiletufuga 2001), and family links put under strain by geographical dispersal. The result is that the worldviews and lifestyles of Pacific people raised in New Zealand reflect, to varying degrees, the urban, capitalist, humanist, individualist and consumerist environment to which they were exposed, and the pedagogies and curricula of the institutions in which they were formally educated (Macpherson 2004, p. 142).

Creating intergenerational tension, the identities of the first New Zealand-raised Pacific peoples moved away from those of their elders, the original adult migrants. Their social networks differed, having more in common with the other Pacific children who shared similar experiences of growing up in extended families, living in similar homes in the same suburbs, attending the same schools and churches, competing in the same sports teams and competitions, hanging out at the same malls, and listening to the same music (Macpherson 2004, p. 143, see also Tagata Pasifika 2002a).

Out of these contexts, two concurrent developments emerged. Firstly, as communities grew, and their children adapted and diversified in lifestyles and interests, a multitude of Sāmoan identities, Tongan identities, and so forth, were created (Macpherson 2001b; Spoonley 2001). Secondly, a common Pacific identity became apparent, one that embodied the common experiences of growing up as a person of Pacific descent and reflected the ‘dynamic reality’ of being so in a modern and complex society (Macpherson 2001b, p. 67). The new
generations were able to ‘combine’ as Pacific people more easily than their migrant parents, for whom the label ‘Pacific Islander’ made little sense (Macpherson 2006, p. 112). They were able to see themselves as ‘Pacific people’ with a ‘Pacific culture’ and ‘Pacific interests’, understood the political reality and were able to appreciate the benefits that co-operation and presentation of a united Pacific front could bring (Macpherson 2001b, p. 71).

These identities work in parallel, not contradictorily. A sense of shared identity did not create an unawareness of or disinterest in specific ancestral Island cultures, rather it simply reflected a ‘higher level identity’ that created connections with larger, more diverse social networks (Macpherson 2004, p. 143). Furthermore, the new generations selectively incorporate elements of their ancestral Pacific cultures to create their identities, and increasingly question and criticise those elements they feel oppressive or unacceptable, something especially noticeable through the arts (Macpherson 2006, p. 120-122). As Anae notes, the children of migrants adopted a generic ‘PI identity’ in which elements of their parents’ cultures were combined with local influences to produce a ‘new patois, new music, new fashion, new customs and practices which mark[ed] their distinction’ (2001, p. 111). Through these mediums, new social spaces became available to (re)define, (re)negotiate and remake what it meant to be a New Zealand-Pacific person, allowing challenge to ‘traditions’ and institutions, and to offer alternative viewpoints (Macpherson 2001b, p. 76, see also Pearson 2004; Spoonley and Macpherson 2004). Two newer terms describing these processes, arising from more recent theoretical work, are ‘edgewalking’ (Tupuola 2004), and ‘polycultural capital’ (Mila-Schaaf 2010).

New Directions: ‘Edgewalking’ and ‘Polycultural Capital’
Anne-Marie Tupuola states that Pacific youth in New Zealand are commonly perceived as a contradictory and ambiguous group, with multiple socio-cultural and political commitments and implying that they struggle to forge an identity; that they are neither at home in their parents’ world, nor in their country of birth. Contradicting this, her doctoral research uncovered an ability to weave within and between multiple cultures with relative ease. She calls this process ‘edgewalking’, denoting people who, in the same persona, walk between cultures, an action that promotes cultural shifting (2004, p. 90).
Further, rather than conflictual, this is instead a healthy process of the postmodern world. Those youth who are able to weave in between both the collective and personal, local and global cultures, have ‘holistic and integrative identities’, where social and cultural identities are considered integral components of the personal identity (ibid, p. 96, see also Kedell 2006).

Tupuola’s research also addresses the growing number of Pacific youth emulating or borrowing from African-American lifestyles as a tool to express their own Polynesian or Pasifika music, styles and fashion, a reality she notes cannot be ignored (2004, p. 90). Rather than negatively, she sees this as a positive ‘edgewalking’ process, although adding that those who purely emulate the ‘ghettoised’ portrayals of their American peers are those who have not yet mastered their own identity journeys (ibid, p. 96). Based on the varying and diverse identities uncovered in her research, Tupuola concludes by calling on researchers to move beyond viewing Pacific youth in New Zealand within rigid parameters. That Pacific youth are walking between cultures and adapting identifications far removed from their genealogy and local geography also means that studies need to account for these factors to avoid narrow and essentialised representations.

Finally, a recent PhD by Karlo Mila-Schaaf adds to the body of work in this area, specifically focusing on how the second generations of Pacific people negotiate spaces of competing narratives about who they ought to be (2010, p. 2). Adopting a positive deviance approach she focuses on successful Pacific people, covering a cross-section of workplaces and communities. She found that participants’ identities are characterised by multiplicity and flexibility, that they employ a range of identity strategies that change in relation to ‘audience, context and across modes of power’ (ibid, p. 265). From this, the term ‘polycultural capital’ was coined, referring to an accumulation of distinctive cultural resources; intertextual skills (a sense of how these relate to each other), the power to negotiate between them and the ability to deploy these cross-cultural resources strategically in different contexts...It reflects a rich, purposeful, and multidimensional cultural way of operating (ibid, p. 270).
Mila-Schaaf argues that having multiple forms of culturally-derived capital situates her second-generation participants in positions where they were able to ‘strongly reap the possible advantages of cross-cultural movement’ (2010, p. 274). Furthermore, drawing on polycultural capital allows them to ‘adopt, adapt, communicate and establish connections across discrepant audiences in order to meet their needs in different contexts’ (ibid). Although they clearly separate between Pacific and Pākehā/Other ways of being, they negotiate their identities by not aligning to particular reified notions of these, but by existing in an ‘intercultural in-between’ (ibid, p. 278).

The work of Hau’ofa and Ka’ili, as well as those writing about Pacific cultures and identities in New Zealand, provide the basis for my understanding of the Pacific diaspora. I will argue that diasporic Pacific communities in New Zealand operate as if in a ‘sea of islands’, maintaining connections to Island homelands as part of an interconnected multi-local network, employing the practice of tauhi vā to maintain and create socio-cultural relations through space, but all the while within a specific New Zealand context. This context has significant bearing in the creation of identities because ‘polycultural capital’ successfully facilitates the ‘edgewalking’ practices between cultural worlds. These processes are all in evidence within the festivalised Pacific space, which the later discussion chapters will demonstrate.

2.2 Theorising Festival Spaces

With the concept of diaspora explored, attention now turns to these festivalised Pacific spaces and, following on from my discussion of festival literature in the previous chapter, the theories that underpin my understanding of them. This understanding centres on three key ideas: festivals as modern day collective rituals, festival as contact zones, and finally as spaces of territorialisation. Firstly however, a recent text by David Harnish provides an ethnomusicological approach to festivals that has been closely modelled in my research.

**Harnish: ‘Bridges to the Ancestors’**

Harnish’s study of the Lingsar Festival, on the Indonesian island of Lombok, is a broad ethnographic study. It addresses the multiple facets that comprise the ‘enormous and evolving multidimensional text’, where ‘each element of its
realisation...contains multidimensional subtexts’ and participants are drawn to experience its ‘multiple realms’ (2006, p. 187). Harnish’s ethnomusicological approach is to examine ‘how musical systems interlock with other sets of symbolism or symbolic texts’ (ibid, p. 164). This is because the festival music is ‘multimedial – something fully contextualised that the whole body experiences’; it is the festival’s entire ‘symbolic packaging’ that is the ‘force for realising personal and collective identities’ (ibid, p. 165). Music is therefore primary within Harnish’s work to the degree that he is an ethnomusicologist. He focuses on a broad (social) history of the festival, its key people and components, and uses music to contextualise the major theme of change and illuminate meaning. Significantly, he also focuses on multiplicity, important given the range of actors present at the festival.

The festival, Harnish notes, is a site of ‘intraethnic and interethnic union’, and the performing arts provide the means for self and group engagement, and identity formation, as participants ‘negotiate notions of ethnicity, history and modernity, and locate themselves and their party within the event’ (2006, p. 207). The mixing together of sound worlds ‘symbolise this union’ (ibid, p. 210). He proposes that ‘content, context, and function synergise to create meaning in music’, and that these meanings ‘derive from both acknowledged homologies…and from musically constructed frameworks’ (ibid, p. 121). Music directs and generates these understandings and experiential dimensions. It ‘attracts, affects and reflects the participants’ because of its power to ‘mobilise the sentiments and actions of people’ (ibid, p. 162). In short, music transforms time and space, it is the ‘mechanism that generates the festival, marks its stages, and provides the spiritual soundscape’ (ibid, p. 187).

Harnish’s approach has been influential to my practice because, like him, I incorporate music as part of the festival and argue that it is best understood by contextualising it as such. Although there is description of music and performance, and repertoire, they are the not the central focus; the majority of my discussion is concerned with understanding what happens off the stage. Like Harnish, mine is a broad ethnographic study, and I provide a social history of how and why Pacific festivals have developed, the key players, components and themes. In doing so, I present a comprehensive view of festival spaces so
that the role of music within them and how music is implicated in the meanings generated can be better understood.

**Festivals as Collective Ritual**

The first theoretical area that guides my approach to festival spaces is one that Harnish discusses in his work: the notion of festivals as ritual. Harnish asserts that festivals provide the opportunity for a culture to define itself, with participants becoming bonded as a unit, grounded in a shared history and ideology and, in general, ‘come to know themselves better as a result of their experience and encounter’ (2006, p. 2). He argues that particular festival behaviours and experiences become associated with particular musical experiences, providing foreknowledge and expectations for the next encounter, and develop ritualistic behaviours, meaningful associations and contextual simultaneities (ibid, p. 121-122). Music and dance are therefore central in understanding festivals as ritual.

The notion of festivals as collective ritual is primarily drawn from Turner’s discussion of ritual and festivity (1982), and Cooley’s assertion of festivals as the new modern-day collective rituals (2005). Turner focuses on the ritualistic nature of celebrations and festivity, as well as on the objects used in such festivity. He notes that people in all cultures recognise the need for and set aside times and space for celebratory use, for a number of ‘expectable culturally shared events’ such as life experiences, work, seasons of the year, religious beliefs, and shared community celebrations (1982, p. 11-12). Further, group stylistic traditions develop in ritual or festival frameworks. Turner equates the celebration of ritual and festival with a vivacity generated by crowds of people with shared purposes and common values. When a social group celebrates a particular event, ‘it also ‘celebrates itself’; in other words, it attempts to manifest, in symbolic form, what it conceives to be its essential life’ (ibid, p. 15). Those who create the objects used in ritual and festivity are ‘inevitably informed by lively memories of that effervescence’ and,

in a way, such ‘makers’ become the articulators of the otherwise inchoate celebratory ‘spirit’, and the ephemeral signs they choreograph...become a kind of shining language in which a society formulates its conception of the universe and its cultural philosophy (ibid).
As with Harnish (2006, pp. 165-166), Turner argues that the objects that ritual or festival come to be coupled with – special types of attire, music, dance, food and drink, modes of staging, and physical and cultural environments – are only properly understood within the context of their celebration, and when their meanings are also understood (1982, p. 15). Objects of celebration are ‘the product, centre, and soul of a social group’s self-manifestation’, created to ‘speak’ to the members of the culture they embody and manifest (ibid, p. 19). Turner believes there is no need to attempt to render into words what these objects say,

for they transmit their messages in a number of sensory codes simultaneously. Moreover, we are seldom dealing with separate symbols but clusters made up of objects…each unity, act, or thing, at once itself and standing for more than itself, the ensemble making up more than the sum of its parts (ibid).

In the ritualistic nature of festivity, then, ‘private space is thus socialized, enculturated; social space is correspondingly made private’ (Turner 1982, p. 19). And finally, within ritual festivity, much of what is normally bound by social structure is liberated, notably a sense of comradeship and communion; and concurrently, much of what is ‘dispersed’ over various domains of ‘culture and social structure’ becomes ‘bound or cathected in the complex semantic systems of pivotal, multivocal symbols and myths’ (ibid, p. 29).

In the time between this writing and Cooley’s 2005 text, others have mirrored and added to Turner’s work. Ronald Grimes calls rituals the ‘lifeblood of culture’, circulating and keeping in process ‘what is immensely destructive if spilled in society at large and left exposed to dry’ (1982, p. 281). In this sense, collective rituals are, and have always been, a vital facet of human societies, and participating in them an essential component of the human experience (LaChapelle 1995; Ehrenreich 2006). Frank E Manning suggests that festivals are rituals that provide essential disruptions to the everyday, as ‘time out of time’ (1983a). He argues that there is a ‘tenuous, subjunctive, paradoxical character’ of festivals and celebrations because they encompass both order and disorder and resonate ‘powerfully with the polarities of the human condition’

[10] And Turner notes that because festivals and celebrations bring members of a society into a single socio-cultural space, it also brings into close proximity persons and groups who may have ‘endemic or transitory antagonisms’; ‘celebration may be said partly to bring about a temporary reconciliation among conflicting members of a single community. Conflict is held in abeyance during the period of ritualised action’ (1982, p. 21).
The embracing of these two contrastive as well as complimentary modes is what gives festivals their piquancy and power, that they are both play and ritual (see also Turner 1982, pp. 19-21, and Chaney’s festivals as a ‘symbolic mirror’ of society (1983)). And Roger Abrahams sees the ritualistic nature of modern festivals as tied to the notion of festivity in historical terms, that we have carried over the same language and practices of making fun festival style (1983). Where festivals were historically the ritual coming together to celebrate renewal and abundance, so modern-day celebrations, re-enacted each year in ritual fashion, have become the ‘high points of our collective lives’, as events planned and looked forward to (ibid, p. 177).

Cooley’s argument about festivals represents a change of opinion. He states that, initially, he was inclined to devalue festivals and seek out private performances by culture bearers for culture bearers, believing that they would be more ‘authentic’ representations of ‘culture’ (2005, p. 10, see also MacCannell 1973). His opinion changed, however, after witnessing the cultural melange of these private performances and contrasting them with the level of preparation taken, and the importance given by festival participants, to festival performances. As a result, he argues that festivals are modern day collective rituals that help to define a people and replace more traditionally recognised rituals that acted in the same manner. In this sense, festivals ‘re-invent’ the collective rituals of old, being accorded meaning through the ways in which they are incorporated into peoples’ lives, and promoting new forms of cultural expression, exchange and identity creation.

Cooley’s assertion that festivals are consistent with ritual in that they are symbolic representations of beliefs, but are also effective or transformative, is highly relevant to Pacific festivals. Where rituals of old were performed to secure the success of crops, he states, festivals as new rituals can be performed to define an ethnic place in a changing world (ibid, p. 10). Cooley also believes

11 Grimes, overall, takes a critical stance, asserting that festivals as collective rituals function as a ‘goal and criterion’ and therefore there is a need to judge to what extent they are ‘creative fictive deeds’ (1983, p. 282). He concludes that festivals can contain the ‘lifeblood of a group, city, or culture’ and, if they do, then such festivity ‘simultaneously and symbolically makes of the many, one blood, and spills symbolic blood in doing so’ (ibid, p. 280). Rather than simple and unproblematised collectivity, public festivals can therefore be seen as a ‘paradox of tragic isolation and festival integration’, making us symbolic kinspeople and enforcing our separation (ibid, see also Waitt 2008).

12 Similarly, Laopodi views festivals as having a fundamental role in their contribution to modern everyday life, which she otherwise sees as isolating, alienating and anti-communal (2002, see also Misetic and Sabotic 2006).
that viewing festivals as modern-day rituals helps to understand the position of ‘traditional’ or ‘cultural’ music in the context of all the other music that is performed and consumed. By periodically performing their music, he states, festival participants (re)create and preserve it until the next performance:

Once ritually preserved before the very audience that threatens to obliterate [their] cultural practice by absorbing them, [they] are free to go into the world and behave as [Western] or as non-[Western] as they please (ibid, 134).

This situates festivals as responses to the challenges faced by traditional societies, emerging in response to threats posed by large-scale social and economic changes to ‘traditional lifeways’ (Cooley 2005, p. 134, and Harnish 2006, p. 216). It also draws attention to the festival space, and specifically the interaction between festival participants and audiences. The notion of contact zones is a useful model that I use and apply in identifying and understanding these interactions.

Festivals as Contact Zones
The term ‘contact zone’ is taken from Mary Pratt’s employment of the term to describe the space of colonial encounters, where peoples geographically and historically separated ‘come into contact with each other and establish ongoing relations, usually involving conditions of coercion, radical inequality, and intractable conflict’ (1992, p. 6). This was later expanded by Clifford, who asserted that contact zones could include ‘cultural relations within the same state, region or city’, implying distance in social terms (1997, p. 204). Situating the museum as a contact zone to discuss issues surrounding the commodification of culture, he views them organisationally as an ‘ongoing historical, political, moral relationship – a power-charged set of exchanges’ (ibid, p. 192).

Bendrups has further extended this idea, proposing that, like museums, festivals are contact zones in which culture is on display (2008). Unlike museums though, where knowledgeable staff construct displays for visitors, festivals contain ‘multiple layers of display’, and ‘boundaries between curator and visitor, or performer and audience, are sometimes blurred’ (ibid, p. 17). While audiences play an important role in the maintenance and development of
performances, there are a number of other ‘contact parties’ for whom the encounter of a festival is equally as important; the festival as a contact zone can be ‘just as meaningful for insider participants as it is for outsiders’ (ibid). With this, and using Rapanui (Easter Island)’s Tapati Rapa Nui festival as a case study, a model is proposed for understanding the festival as a contact zone made up of different contact parties. Bendrups identifies four key contact parties – international contact with tourists from beyond the Pacific region; intra-national contact with tourists, authorities and functionaries from mainland Chile; inter-clan contact between traditional kinship groups on Rapanui; and intergenerational contact between Rapanui elders and young people – and concludes that ‘these complex interactions demonstrate that an expanded contact zone framework is useful beyond the binary discourses of coloniser/colonised, performer/audience and host/guest’ (2008, p. 17).

The model of festivals as contact zones and the idea of festivals as collective ritual are two key theories that I apply to Pacific festivals in New Zealand, as a way to understand the overarching themes extrapolated from the festival spaces observed during fieldwork, and from participant interviews. Pacific festivals are complex contact zones where a number of parties interact in the creation and/or maintenance of notions of Pacific cultures and cultural traditions. This concept is most fruitfully employed in the discussion on festivals and community that comprises chapter seven. The over-riding theme of why the festivals are held and what they mean is that they provide a space through which the Pacific communities collectively come together in highly public, symbolic celebrations of diasporic cultures and identities, generating significant notions of community and feelings of both unity and diversity, of various layers of collectivity, to celebrate both themselves and each other, as Pacific peoples. The notion of collective ritual is employed to understand this coming together, as a way to understand more generally what the themes of the discussion chapters cumulatively imply. The final theoretical area I apply in this thesis is the notion of festivals as territorialising spaces. Like the notion of ritual, it is employed broadly, as a way to understand festival spaces and to situate the development of festivals as an indicator of social change in New Zealand.
Festivals as Territorialising Spaces

The notion of festivals as territorialising spaces has been theorised by Michelle Duffy, and is based on an interpretation of the work of French philosophers Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, who proposed a theory of music as something that territorialises space (1987). For Deleuze and Guattari, musical sounds are refrains, and the role of the refrain is territorial: ‘the bird sings to mark its territory. The Greek modes and Hindu rhythms are themselves territorial, provincial, regional’ (ibid, p. 312). The refrains that create the territorialising sounds are comprised of what Deleuze and Guattari call ‘rhythm’, created by traces of encounters between different milieus, where milieus are blocks of ‘space-time constituted by the periodic repetition of the component’ and something of which every living thing is comprised (ibid, p. 313). The interacting milieus and resulting rhythms thus territorialise space; territory becomes when the rhythm becomes expressive. In musical terms, ‘the refrain remains a formula evoking a character or landscape, instead of constituting a rhythmic character or melodic landscape’ (ibid, p. 349).13

As well as music territorialising space, Duffy asserts that the reverse is also true, that the territories that contain festivals affect milieus, rhythms and refrains. She notes that festival spaces can be seen as ethnosapes, a ‘fluid and shifting landscape of tourists, immigrants, exiles and other moving groups and persons’ (1999b, p. 2, from Appadurai 1991), and the significance of looking at music within geographical spaces, is that it offers a ‘productive means to interrogate the complexity and heterogeneity of identity, place and belonging’ (2005, p. 678). The site of a festival is not a space waiting to be filled, it is already in the process of becoming, and affects the music that is thereafter produced (Wood et al. 2007, p. 871). The venue is thus a material influence on how performances are staged and heard: ‘the material spaces of music – their fabric, their economy, their sociality – are also what music is’ (ibid, pp. 871-872).14 Therefore, purely visually- or textually-based frameworks and

13 In simpler terms, Ronald Bogue has explained that Deleuze and Guattari believed that art, as the manifestation of human expressive qualities, is the active agent in the formation of territory and the establishment of its occupants’ proprietary identity (2003, p. 20). For Bogue, a milieu is a physical or social space in which something occurs. Bogue also notes that there is an assumption of a binary opposition between the aesthetics and functions of a refrain, something that Deleuze and Guattari want reoriented towards an understanding that allows for the mutual interpenetration of both (Bogue 2003, pp. 69-70). It is important to acknowledge these notions when considering music and festivals as territorialising spaces, for although, as a sonic experience, music territorialises literally, it is more importantly the function of that territorialisation that is relevant here.

14 Matheson (2008) offers an example of how the space in which Celtic festivals are held are important in evoking
methodologies ignore the reality of agency in the production of meaning that is inherent in both audiences and the places of performance (see also Small 1998).

Taking Deleuze and Guattari’s theory and applying it to festivals, Duffy argues that participants use music to create, explore and (re)connect to notions of place, and to others within festival spaces (1999a, 1999b, 2000, 2005). She states that music is a metaphor for the processes involved in marking out one’s place in the world, and that space is territorialised and ownership of place is established through periodic and recognisable signs (rhythms) in music (1999a, p. 1). Rhythm thus becomes the ‘lived’ experience of music, where performers inhabit and give life to the music, and rhythm becomes a sign, a symbol of ownership, and a response to potentially threatening, outside influences (ibid, p. 4).

The interrelatedness of place and identity, though, is problematic; identity and place are not fixed and unchanging but are multiple and shifting. Festivals, however, can be seen as sites of intensification, as representing the dynamism of this changing landscape, where connections are made within and beyond the locality in which they are held (Duffy 2000, pp. 51-52). In her research of a rural Australian festival, Duffy finds that participants hear performances framed by images of geographic location, something that is reinforced on stage: ‘festival participants are constantly reminded and located within this Top Half space’ (ibid, p. 54). Participating in the festival creates and asserts one’s identity as being part of the north and the festival space reaffirms participants’ membership in this ‘far-flung group’. The festival thus becomes a site for an intensification of connections, musical and social, which resonate with notions such as ‘northern Australia’, and expanses of distance across empty space (ibid).

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15 Turino provides a straightforward localised example of how music as a territorialising force could work at the level of festival(s). In outlining the battle over the radio dial, as fought among his children, he notes: ‘controlling the sonic space was a way to assert this individual identity and sense of self within the family…controlling the sonic space was literally one way to project oneself throughout the house’ (2007, p. 93).

16 As well as a rural festival, where notions of identity and place are more singular, Duffy also studies the site of a multicultural festival, where ‘relationships between communal identity and place are complicated by the various sets of connections people have to often multiple notions of ‘place and ‘home’” (2005, p. 679). These festivals are mediums through which dialogues and negotiations take place, within communities, as individuals and groups define concepts of identity and belonging. In this context, performers become representative of ethnic and cultural groups, even as they
In musical terms, Duffy outlines how performances at the festival are heard through a certain music aesthetic and ideology, which participants utilise to create and reconnect to their sense of place and to others within the same scene. There are, she notes, ‘common musical and historical vocabularies’ that enable participants to frame and delineate space with a particular identity (2000, p. 59). This is because music, like language, is socially constructed, and what a performance means is dependant on the social and cultural contexts attributed to its sounds (Duffy 2005, p. 681). Within a festival, music ‘marks the individual as belonging or not belonging to categories of spatially defined identities’ (ibid). Thus, certain ways of understanding performances are suggested through the festival framework and spaces of performances, and are assisted by other ‘framing strategies’ employed, which serve to further localise the event and give meaning to the ways in which it operates and is interpreted (Duffy 2000, p. 63 and 2005, p. 681).

In conclusion, Duffy asserts that festivals become performance spaces through which the identity of the places in which they take place is acted out, through displays and celebrations of official, imagined communities. Music provides an ‘aural signature’, helping to constitute and affirm the identities being celebrated as well as legitimising temporary claims over the space as belonging to the participants (Duffy et al. 2007, p. 7). Thus, participant engagement with festivals is ‘shaped, understood and influenced’ by the musical structuring of space, and this engagement constitutes the self and community spaces (ibid, p. 17). Festivals also act to bridge individuals and their communities, with music creating the interface. Where feelings of belonging are created and exist, Duffy argues that these can spill out into peoples’ everyday lives (2008). These individual and communal processes are therefore ‘significant in creating our connections to place’ (ibid, p. 105).

I argue that Duffy’s work can be used as a way to read Pacific festivals and their performances as simultaneously being and belonging of both the Pacific and to New Zealand. The notion of festivals as territorialising space legitimises temporary claims to ownership of place, or, as I will argue, to the belonging of

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*enact difference and displacement: ‘a sense of place and a series of musical practices are drawn on that articulate the relationship to place/s and identity/ies’; although Duffy also notes that cross-cultural or hybrid forms present opportunities for self-identity, the remaking or rearticulating of the self (ibid, p. 683-684).*
Pacific peoples to New Zealand. This is especially pertinent when considered alongside the development of Pacific festivals, which have grown in number and scope as diasporic communities have likewise grown, spread geographically, and become entrenched within new towns and cities. The festivals can thus be seen as representative of this social change. Combined with Hau'ofa’s conception of the Pacific diaspora, festivals can also be seen as spaces through which the idea of belonging becomes multi-local, where an assertion to simultaneously belonging elsewhere is also performed. The identities and connections to place thus become multidimensional, rooted in both Pacific homelands and New Zealand, with festivals providing the spaces through which the routes are illuminated.

2.3 Method
The primary method employed for this research was ethnography grounded in fieldwork, and a key consideration in undertaking this was the notion of fieldwork at home. The method of applied ethnomusicology was also incorporated as a central tenant of the research outcome. This section begins by discussing ethnography and fieldwork at home, incorporating a discussion of the process of *talanoa*, before detailing my own research process and how applied ethnomusicology was incorporated into the project.

**Ethnography**
A large body of anthropological and ethnomusicological texts inform and guide the ethnographer as to the particulars of employing this method, theorising, problematising and posing questions for those who, as Sara Cohen (1993, p. 132) describes, wish to bridge the gap between theory and the real world, and come into contact with social reality in a way that no reading of secondary sources or ‘armchair theorising’ can accomplish (see for example Geertz 1973; Van Maanen 1988; Turino 1990; Society for Ethnomusicology 1994; Clifford 1997; D’Amico-Samuels 1997; Harrison 1997b; Jordan 1997; Nettl 2005; Barz and Cooley 2008b; Kippen 2008; Kisliuk 2008; Stock and Chiener 2008; Titon 2008; Wong 2008; Fetterman 2010).

Gregory Barz and Timothy Cooley’s *Shadows in the Field: New Perspectives for Fieldwork in Ethnomusicology* provide a theoretical model for thinking about the
relationships between ethnographer, field and ethnography (2008). They describe ethnography as ‘the observation of and the description (and representation) of cultural practices’, with fieldwork being the ‘observational and experiential portion of the ethnographic process’, and a time during which ‘the ethnographer engages living individuals as a means toward learning about a given musical-cultural practice’ (2008b, p. 4). Fieldwork is a process that ‘positions scholars as social actors within the very cultural phenomenon they study’ and requires ‘meaningful face-to-face interaction with other individuals’ (ibid). Within this lies both the promise and challenge of ethnographic work. In contrast to John Van Maneen, who argued that ethnographies should represent ‘the culture’ and not the fieldwork itself (1988, p. 3), Barz and Cooley argue that fieldwork is experiential, and that therefore the experience of people making music is at the centre of ethnographic method (2008b, p. 14), a notion taken up by others in their book (see for example Barz 2008; Kisliuk 2008; Stock and Chiener 2008; Titon 2008; Wong 2008).

The Field and Fieldwork at Home

Scholars have noted that the notion of ‘the field’ is becoming increasingly difficult to contextualise. The rise of globalisation and the deterritorialisation of peoples worldwide have problematised notions of what the field constitutes. Clifford views the field as ‘less a matter of localised dwelling and more a series of travel encounters’, an itinerary, ‘a series of encounters and translations’ (1997, pp. 2 and 11). This ties in with Arjun Appadurai’s concept of ethnoscapes, a fluid conception of the field that comprises

the landscape of persons who make up the shifting world in which we live: tourists, immigrants, refugees, exiles, guest-workers, and other moving groups and persons constitute an essential feature of the world and appear to affect the politics of and between national to a hitherto unprecedented degree (1991, p. 192; see also Giddens 1990; Hall 1992).

The challenge in constructing a field, and the resulting ethnographies, is that to do so without an analysis of the transnational cultural flows in which new cosmopolitanisms ‘thrive, compete, and feed off one another’, is both impossible, and ‘fruitless’ (Appadurai 1991, p. 193). Barz and Cooley, almost two decades later, note the same issue (2008b, p. 15).
A key methodological consideration for this research is the notion of fieldwork at home, something that has been noted as one of the more striking and increasing recent developments in social sciences, as a consequence of political, lifestyle, economic and environmental factors (Stock and Chiener 2008).

Home as field represents an inverse of the anthropological process. Instead of learning conceptual categories that are then, through fieldwork, applied and contextualised, ‘those of us who study societies in which we have pre-existing experience absorb analytic categories that rename and reframe that which is already known’ (Narayan 1993, p. 678). Researching at home also represents a situation where issues around the politics of representation and issues of power and exploitation, are, ‘if not entirely eliminated, at least more fully understood’, and also goes hand in hand with the notion that researchers should do more to affect positive social change (Stock and Chiener 2008, p. 110). This raises a further question though, about the nature of the field in contrast to home: where does one begin and the other end? (D’Amico-Samuels 1997; Stock and Chiener 2008).

Jonathan Stock and Chou Chiener believe the notion of home is based on ideas of shared cultural traits and geographical spaces, and is changeable as our own lives progress (2008, p. 113). Thus, the separation becomes all but impossible: ‘it may be particularly difficult to complete the study and leave a field which has become so integral’ (ibid, p. 116). Working within a home environment or culture can be also be problematic, in terms of observations, as ‘sometimes a setting is too familiar…and the researcher takes events for granted…and the researcher takes events for granted, leaving important data unnoticed or unrecorded’ (Fetterman 2010, p. 39). From a different perspective, Deborah D’Amico-Samuels views the separation of field and home as intertwined with issues of ethnicity and Western privilege, of the inequality and power dynamics between researcher and researched (1997). Therefore, for her, anthropology needs to be decolonised, and to do so, it must start by situating itself, its practitioners and the subjects of its research projects ‘within the same planetary space and time, and with reference to the same world political, economic and cultural hierarchy’ (ibid, pp. 68-69). In short, there is ideally no separation between field and non-field.
Situating the Researcher

The rise of fieldwork conducted at home has accompanied an increasing focus on reflexivity, and the place of ethnographers within their studies (Cooley 2005). Reflecting on how this has changed the discipline, Harnish argues that ethnomusicology has been transformed from a positivist and objective perspective – where the researcher unquestionably takes copious notes...and in general aspires to act like a scientist in the field – to the researcher’s becoming a more reflexive and interacting player – where s/he admittedly affects the environment, becomes part of the proceedings, scrutinises biases, and prioritises local voices (2006, p. 12).

Ethnographers are inherently biased. Even the most basic ingredient of their research – the choice of topic – reveals bias; they cannot be avoided (Fetterman 2010, p. 2). More than this, ethnographers are not ahistorical: ‘as individual fieldworkers, our shadows join with others, past and present, in a web of histories: personal histories, the histories of our academic field, and the histories of those we study’ (Barz and Cooley 2008b, p. 5). Recognising and reflecting on these factors provides a model for ethnographers to ‘better understand the impact of their actions on those they study’ (Cooley 2005, p. 8).

The above discussion frames the need to situate myself within my own field of study. I am placed by the fact of my being a Pākehā-New Zealander. I am also situated by having spent my formative years in the particularly strongly Māori and Pacific-populated Porirua, and by my long-standing connections with and family ties to the Pacific communities there, especially the Tokelauan community. I explain this as neither a claim to a special status or as justification for my study of Pacific peoples. Rather, I state this up-front to make clear the position from which I write, one that was shaped and is informed by the experiences and personal ideologies created as a result of this history, and therefore from which I have approached my research. I also state this to show that, rather than as a problematic binary, the notion of insider/outsider should be viewed as points on a continuum. Ethnicity in terms of ancestry is not all-important, but exists alongside formative environments and experiences in delineating a position, and I am located somewhere in between.
My research is an example of fieldwork conducted at home. This is slightly complicated by the fact that it was partly conducted within my home city of Wellington, of which I am very familiar, and Auckland, which, while a familiar home environment in one sense, was also unfamiliar in terms of its particular rhythms and urban culture. In this sense, the notion of the field is complex and difficult to delineate definitively. The research was carried out with a self-awareness of the place of the researcher in the field and the impact of my presence there, and with a central belief that fieldwork is experiential and centred on the experience of the people making music through the festival space. Alongside this awareness, particular attention was also directed towards the participants whose knowledge and time would be central to the research conclusions. In considering the specific context of working with Pacific peoples and within Pacific communities, the notion of talanoa has proved influential.

**Talanoa: Talking Long**

Vaioleti (2006) has called for a change in how researchers approach research within Pacific communities. He states that hypotheses and institution-approved questionnaires have historically driven research, things that do not require personal relationships between the researcher and participants in order to obtain the information (ibid, p. 22). Guided by approved ethics, these interactions are based on different thinking than that of Pacific people: ‘there is a danger in assuming that all Western, Eastern and Pacific knowledges have the same origins and construction so that, by implication, the same instruments may be used for collecting and analysing data and constructing new knowledge’ (ibid).

He proposes the concept of talanoa as a way of bridging this gap. Tala means ‘to inform, tell, relate and command, as well as to ask or apply’, while Noa means ‘of any kind, ordinary, nothing in particular, purely imaginary or void’ (Vaioleti 2006, p. 23). Talanoa, then, ‘literally means talking about nothing in particular and interacting without a rigid framework’, and can be referred to as ‘a conversation, a talk, an exchange of ideas or thinking, whether formal or informal’, and is almost always carried out face-to-face (ibid). In a meaningful Talanoa, ‘noa creates the space and conditions, tala holistically intermingles researchers’ and participants’ emotions, knowing and experiences. It requires
researchers to partake deeply in the research experience rather than stand back and analyse. Successful Talanoa is thus a ‘personal encounter where people story their issues, their realities and aspirations’ and allows for more mo’oni (pure, real, authentic) information to be gathered than data derived from other research methods (ibid, p. 21).

More than this, talanoa incorporates notions such as reciprocity, respect, humility, generosity, empathy and love, and the maintenance of social relationships, notions that are central, important facets of Pacific cultures (Vaioleti 2006, pp. 26-33). It removes distance between researcher and participant, providing research participants with a human face they can relate to, therefore being an ideal research method because relationships are the foundation on which most Pacific activities are built (ibid, p. 25). In Talanoa, Vaioleti notes, ‘an open technique is employed, where the precise nature of questions has not been determined in advance, but will depend on the way in which the talanoa develops…it is a respectful, reciprocating interaction’ (ibid, p. 26).

In order to contextualise Talanoa as a complete research method, Vaioleti employs the metaphor of kakala, the weaving together of fragrant flowers and leaves in special ways according to the need of the occasion and who they are woven for (2006, p. 27). Known by other terms throughout the Pacific, there is a special mythology and etiquette associated with kakala, involving three processes, that Vaioleti associates with different stages of the research process: Toli, the selecting and picking of the different flowers and leaves equates with the stage where participants are chosen and data collected and analysed; Tui, the process of making or weaving the kakala, mirrors the integration, synthesis and weaving of knowledge made available by talanoa, or the writing process; and finally Luva, the giving away of the kakala to the wearer, an important moment in the context of values of ‘ofa (love, compassion), faka’apa’apa (respect) and fetokoni’aki (reciprocity and responsibility for each other). In relation to research, luva is the point at which the research is given over for the benefit of the community. For the researcher and her or his institution, the kakala (the new knowledge) is expected to be passed on so that others can benefit from it (ibid, p. 27).
Talanoa was not employed directly during the interviewing process so does not form a central part of the research method. It is however an important concept to outline because, although not employed directly, it is nonetheless a concept that was crucial in imagining the fieldwork and interview process, and therefore influenced interactions with research participants. The concept of talanoa was also used as a basis to gain ethics approval for interviews where release forms were not required and questions were not set before they began, but evolved during the course of discussions. This approach is one that, I believe, allowed for more informal, personal and ultimately successful interactions.

2.4 Research Process
My research process was broadly divided into three stages, each roughly representing one year of the project: the first year, in Dunedin, collating preliminary data and secondary sources, and preparing for fieldwork, which constituted the second year, conducting ethnographic observations and interviews, and finally the third year, in which the project was brought to a conclusion.

The first year included a period of ‘virtual fieldwork’. As part of understanding how the process of festivalisation has occurred and developed across New Zealand, I started compiling a database of festivals. I contacted and spoke with festival organisers from the top of the North Island, working my way through numerous cities and towns to reach the bottom of the South Island. This process begun with a broad approach, encompassing overtly Pacific festivals as well as other events such as multicultural festivals, before narrowing the focus to festivals that were solely Pacific-oriented. These defining parameters are not, however, impenetrable or unmalleable. The presence of multicultural festivals is noted as a significant way through which people can experience Pacific cultures within festival spaces, especially in towns and cities where specific highly public Pacific festivals are not held. Festivals held in the two main Pacific cities of New Zealand – Manukau, in South Auckland, and Porirua, outside of Wellington – also challenge these boundaries. Festivals held there that are neither ‘Pacific’ nor ‘Multicultural’ in nature are nevertheless, by pure virtue of their demographics and therefore primary audience and participants,
largely Pacific (and Māori) events. There are also the celebrations of specific Island nations – Fiji days, Niue constitution day, Sāmoan and Kiribati independence celebrations for example – which are largely held within those communities. Cook Island communities across New Zealand hold dance competitions and celebrations to coincide with the annual Maeva Nui festival (literally ‘great celebration’), held in July on Rarotonga. These provide avenues for future research. The parameters I have drawn for this research encompass those festivals initiated in the wake of, and which follow the model of, the two most important moments of festivalisation: the inaugural Auckland Secondary Schools Māori and Pacific Islands Festival of 1976, better known as Polyfest, and the Pasifika Festival, first held in 1993. This narrows the focus to festivals that are representative the Pacific diaspora, in keeping with the overall focus of the research.

During this initial data collection, I also approached staff at the Pasifika Festival in Auckland, to raise the possibility of working with them in 2010. Shortly afterwards I repeated the process with Bessie Fepulea’i, one of the organisers of the Positively Pasifika Festival in Wellington, who was also receptive to the idea of my working with them in 2010.

The Tsunami
The process of work in my ‘virtual field’ was temporarily disrupted when a significant earthquake struck the South Pacific on September 29, creating a tsunami that devastated Sāmoa’s southern coast, as well damaging neighbouring American Sāmoa and Tonga. The majority of the deaths, estimated at 189, occurred in Sāmoa. The scale of destruction created a national fundraising and humanitarian response, especially through music. In Dunedin for example, a city with only small numbers of Pacific peoples, four large community concerts raised a combined $52,000, while the University of Otago Sāmoan Students’ Association organised a goods collection that saw the flat of a group of Sāmoan students literally overflow with donations, and fill two shipping containers.

The most significant response, on a nationwide scale, was the I Love The Islands concert series, something that demonstrated a central research theme
that there is a network of connected people across the country, working together to further the cause of Pacific peoples, arts and cultures. The concerts were organised and began within three weeks of the disaster, starting in Auckland, before proceeding through Christchurch, Dunedin, New Plymouth and Wellington, and brought together a substantial number of popular Pacific musicians, as well as local acts from each centre. All associated costs were donated and the concerts, priced to be affordable, raised in excess of $300,000.

In 2010, while in the field, I learnt why the concerts had been organised so quickly. Once preparations for the Auckland concert were underway, people in each of the other centres, with whom organisers and performers had long-standing professional and personal relationships, were able to be called on to organise local concerts and thus create a tour. Because of the relationships and trust that had been established between these groups over many years, each knew that the other concerts would be implemented successfully. In Christchurch, for example, the concert was organised by Tanya Muagututia and Pacific Underground. Otago Polyfest organiser and childhood friend of Tanya’s, on account of their mothers being from the same Sāmoan village, Pip Laufiso, was able to quickly put together a group and lead planning for the Dunedin concert. Both Pip and Tanya, their respective husbands and other associates, had all volunteered with the Parihaka Peace Festival over many years; they were able to call on those organisers to arrange the New Plymouth concert. Finally, in Wellington, both Bessie and her co-worker, Marie Retimanu-Pule, who had previously managed at the community centre where Pacific Underground is based, were able to assist in the Wellington concert.

After approximately six weeks of pause, allowing for some time to pass after the tsunami, I recommenced contacting festival organisers and making fieldwork plans. The festival dates in Auckland and Wellington were going to be complimentary in allowing me undertake ethnographies in each centre; first in Wellington, where the festival was to be held on February 13, and then in Auckland, where the festival was exactly a month later. Thus, as the end of 2009 approached, the arrangements later realised were in place to work with the Positively Pasifika festival one week prior to the festival, observe the festival and conduct a small number of interviews afterwards, and then make my way
to Auckland by the end of February, to start work on March 3, two weeks prior to the Pasifika Festival.

**Finding and Interviewing Participants**

The majority of participants who contributed did so by virtue of their positions and/or histories within the festivals, and they represent positions of authority within the organisational structures or are culture bearers for their communities. It is therefore importantly noted that this is the position of the ethnographic perspective. No interviews were conducted with a set list of questions, however some questions and areas that I wanted to cover were noted, and used as a springboard to conversation. Although I ultimately ended up leading conversations, I was flexible in allowing discussions to move with participants, taking care to be sensitive to information being offered, and not intervening when the exchange was (seemingly) irrelevant or moving away from the topic. As I learnt quickly, allowing this level of flexibility often led to more revealing insights than I would have otherwise been gifted.

In Wellington, working with Bessie and Marie in the city communities unit of the city council provided me with access to the other participants interviewed. They introduced me to the Pacific Advisory Group’s chair, Ida Faiumu-Isaako, who invited me to call and establish a time to talk, and Deputy Mayor Ian McKinnon, identified as a strong advocate for Pacific communities and therefore the festival, and who offered to speak to me when we met. Marie was also going to introduce me to Tala Cleverley, who inaugurated an early Pacific festival in the 1980s. Unfortunately, due to the ultimate cancellation of the festival, where Tala would have attended as a VIP guest, this meeting did not occur. Afterwards though, I was able to call and explain that Marie had intended to introduce us, and organise to meet then. The cancellation also meant that I was not able to discuss the experience of performing at the festival with any community groups or performers. During my time in Auckland however, I approached the headlining acts, who performed at the alternative ‘festival’ that eventuated, and I was able to interview one of them, Cindy of Sāmoa. This was another introduction that occurred through Marie, who knew Cindy from her time living in Sāmoa. I have included our discussion in my work as she has performed at similar festivals, including Auckland’s North
Shore Pasefika Festival in 2009 and West Auckland’s Pacific in the Park 2010, and was able to draw upon those experiences.

In Auckland, a more methodical approach was adopted. Having worked with the festival team, I first interviewed key staff members: Ole Maiava, festival director, Rebecca Knox, operations manager, Tanya Muagututia, communications co-ordinator and Leehane Stowers, artistic co-ordinator. Speaking with them set into motion a sequence of interviews that provided much of the history of the festival, as well as providing me with a key formal introduction to the village co-ordinators.

Ole, the current festival director, gave me the name and whereabouts of Alister Martin, who was involved with the original organising group, the South Pacific Island Nations Development Agency (SPINDA). Alister, in turn, told me the best person to speak with would be Roy Vaughan, whose original idea was transformed by SPINDA into what became Pasifika, and also Bill Te Ariki, former Cook Islands Consular and SPINDA chair. Roy provided me archival material he had retained, including the original document from which Pasifika was developed, and from these I was able to track down the third event co-ordinator, Nancy Sandhoy (1995-1997). I also came across the name of Michelle Khan, the fifth festival director (2000 and ’01), while reading archival material, and I was able to locate her and organise an interview. Both Michelle and Nancy, as well as Rebecca, provided me with the name of the final missing director, Pitsch Leiser (1998 and ’99). In addition to these participants, several people advised me to speak with two community leaders who held significant mana within the Pacific communities, and who had been variously involved with the festival since its inauguration: Will ‘Ilolahia, who I met at the festival’s opening night concert, which he stage-managed, and the Reverend Mua Strickson-Pua. Both had been members of the festival’s advisory committee, established by Pitsch Leiser in 1997.

The other vital element of the festival’s organisation is the village co-ordinators. As a group, they are community leaders and culture bearers, heavily involved in processes of cultural transmission outside of the festival. Many are involved in media, in either paid or voluntary positions, hosting radio shows for their
communities on community radio stations, for example. Others are employed more broadly in other aspects of social services, such as education and health providers. All play an active role in the range of activities held within and for their communities.

Of the ten villages, I excluded the Aotearoa (Māori) village in line with my focus on diasporic Pacific communities. While interviewing Rebecca and Tanya, they invited me to attend the village co-ordinator meeting that happened to be taking place immediately afterwards. At the meeting, Ole introduced me formally (I had met a couple beforehand and at the festival) and talked about my project, and then allowed me the opportunity to elaborate and ask permission to contact them for interviews. This resulted in eight successful meetings after one village co-ordinator chose not to participate. At the meeting he had raised concerns around the mining of knowledge from Pacific communities and lack of reciprocity and respect shown in some research areas (Smith 1999 and Vaioleti 2006 discuss the nature of these concerns). Despite acknowledging these valid concerns, and stating that I was happy to outline my research and my own motivations in depth when I made contact, he remained ‘too busy’ to participate when I did so.

**Interviewing Performers**

In addition to Cindy of Sāmoa, I conducted a further fourteen performer interviews: eight village performers and six other contemporary-oriented acts. Again, other participants were crucial assisting in this process. I asked each village co-ordinator to recommend someone I could speak with, someone who they thought would be comfortable speaking about the experience of performing and what it meant for them. This process also ensured that I interviewed one act per participating village, a conscious effort to ensure a diverse representation of the different Pacific communities that make up Pasifika.

Locating contemporary performers was a less methodical process, except for the fact that I wanted to encompass a range of performers, from up-and-coming, to established, to iconic. I also wanted to incorporate performers beyond contemporary as meaning popular music, and within that, the R&B and
hip hop styles for which Pacific musicians are well known. I approached a number of contemporary performers on the day of the festival and then followed up each of these introductions with further contact. This resulted, disappointingly, in only one meeting, with the rock band TribalState. Further interviews, besides Ardijah’s Ryan Monga, came about as a result of being introduced through others, participants in most cases. The relatively small and inter-connected nature of Pacific communities, and especially of its artistic community, means that, in general, locating someone particular can usually be achieved relatively easily, even when that person is a so-called ‘celebrity’. These interviews, as well as the input from Cindy of Sāmoa, present a group of opinions from performers that fall outside the familiar contemporary/traditional dichotomy that prevails over much discussion about cultural festivals.

Apart from one interview conducted via telephone, and followed up with an in-person meeting at the Pasifika festival in 2011, interviews were conducted in person and took place in three different types of locations: participants’ homes, places of work, or at public eateries. Of primary importance, in facilitating successful engagements, was that spaces were comfortable and conducive to participants being able to speak freely, and that the location was convenient. This meant that, at all times, I travelled to participants, and that I acknowledged and showed appreciation of the voluntary nature in which they were giving their time.

Overall, the performers represent a range of opinions based on a diverse range of subject positions. There is a mix of ethnic make-ups and genders, including sexual identity. Located all over Auckland (as well as beyond), the group represents a range of ages and experiences. Although slanted towards younger New Zealand-born Pacific peoples, this is representative of the fact that the Pacific communities are, overwhelmingly, of this demographic (Macpherson 2006). Most crucially, the group is representative of the multiple localities available within the Pacific diaspora: from New Zealand-born and raised, to Pacific-born and raised, Pacific-born, New Zealand-raised, and migrants, temporary and permanent.
Reciprocity and Applied Ethnomusicology

Despite the possible tensions and conflicts, in terms of different positions occupied by researcher in relation to participants (Adams 1998, Huisman 2008, Fetterman 2010), the notion of reciprocity was an important fieldwork consideration. In practice, while the distance between researcher and participant can be difficult to collapse, and being aware of accepted protocols within Pacific communities, I used food and drink as a method of creating shared socio-cultural space, to establish relationships and collapse distance, and create situations in which an easy discussion would be (hopefully) forthcoming. Where interviews were held in eateries and cafes I purchased food and/or drink; where they were held in workplaces or homes, I took with me baking. This was both to acknowledge their volunteering time, and also to act as a way to establish a socio-cultural bond. Vaioleti (2006) discusses the gifting of food and reciprocity in a Pacific context, noting that it should be done respectfully and in a way that neither offends nor creates issues of dependency. Repeatedly I emphasised that, almost as justification, I was in fact using the interview process to teach myself how to bake, and was therefore thankful for the opportunity; at public eateries, it was ‘the least I could do’.

Outside of the interview context, a number of opportunities arose where I was able to reciprocate participants’ time through a number of actions, as a way to continue the relationships that had been established. These opportunities included attending participants’ shows, assisting a participant by providing content for a website they were creating, purchasing calendars for one participant’s fundraising effort, a book about the history of an organisation another participant belonged to, and in general maintaining several relationships that transformed into friendships. I also attended a heritage fashion show that one of the village co-ordinators created and, afterwards, was able to provide written feedback as part of the conditions of the funding received from Creative New Zealand. Most importantly though, will be the opportunities that have arisen and been identified to move beyond simply reciprocating time and knowledge into measured and longer-lasting applied outcomes, returning the research to the communities from where it came and incorporating the notion of applied ethnomusicology.
Daniel Sheehy asserts that, despite being considered a more recent ethnomusicological practice, all ethnomusicologists have at one time or another been engaged in applied methods, although largely in an ad-hoc fashion (1992, p. 323). Applied ethnomusicology moves beyond this, into a conscious practice. This conscious practice comes from ‘a conviction that knowledge should be used for practical purposes, as well as to produce more knowledge’, where theory and practice strengthen one another and are improved through their mutual application to each other (Seeger 2008, p. 271). It suggests that ‘our work can make a difference, that it can intersect both the world outside and the university in more challenging and constructive ways’ (Keil 1982, p. 407). Applied ethnomusicology can be seen as ‘practical projects in cultural conservation’, responses to situations where the ‘products of thousands of years of musical evolution are in danger of extinction or of undergoing significant change’, although this has been criticised as interventionist (David 1992, pp. 361-362). Sheehy dismisses this, however, ‘ethnomusicologists intervene’, he states (quoted in Titon 1992, p. 316). The issue is not one of intervention but of purpose and worthiness.

With this in mind, Sheehy (1992) posits that an applied ethnomusicological approach should contain four key areas: a purpose that seeks to do more than simply advance the body of ethnomusicological knowledge, strategies and techniques, and the means, to solve a particular problem, and an evaluation, a process more difficult than it would outwardly appear (Lomax Hawes 1992). Given the nature of ethnomusicological work shaped by public action, the methods and subsequent strategies employed cannot be ‘predetermined by an absolute idea of what these actions should be’ (Sheehy 1992, p. 324), however they are most likely to have one of four basic qualities:

1. Developing new ‘frames’ for musical performance
2. ‘Feeding back’ musical models to the communities that created them
3. Providing community members access to strategic models and conservation techniques
4. Developing broad, structural solutions to broad problems, a quality that transcends and includes all the others (ibid, pp. 331-331).

More recently, a working group of the International Council for Traditional Music proposed that applied ethnomusicology is an approach
guided by principles of social responsibility, which extends the usual academic goal of broadening and deepening knowledge and understanding toward solving concrete problems and toward working both inside and beyond typical academic contexts (Harrison and Pettan 2010, p. 1).

In their edited volume, Harrison and Pettan (2010) identify three main streams of applied ethnomusicology work to date – endangered music cultures and ethnomusicological responses and responsibilities, music therapy and healing, and music in conflict and peace-making – which the collected case studies variously outline (e.g. Bleibinger 2010; Hemetek 2010; Jovanović 2010; Kartomi 2010; Reigersberg 2010). Other recent applied work, apart from theorising, also generally aligns with these three themes (see for example Keil 1998; Impey 2002; Alviso 2003; van Buren 2003; Hemetek 2006; Font 2007; Newsome 2008; Mackinlay 2010; Pettan 2010; Sweers 2010; van Buren 2010; Veršnik 2010).

working towards applied outcomes
the essence of the applied method comes from the belief that ethnomusicological research undertaken engages and is meaningful to both the communities involved as well as others. applied outcomes demonstrate this importance. the course of this research has resulted in two specific possibilities being developed into tangible realisations.

To date, little has been written and published about Pacific festivals, and nowhere have they been brought together to show the progression of the last forty years. Many participants in fact had little knowledge of the fact that there were festivals held across the country. In addition, I had wondered whether creating a way that made the history of Pacific festivals in New Zealand easily accessible, and in an informative and entertaining way, could provide an impetus for further research or be used as resource, increase interest in festivals, and, in highlighting the place of each within a whole, strengthen the case for their continued support.

With this in mind, I arrived at the idea of creating a publicly available resource about Pacific festivals in New Zealand, with the internet being the obvious portal through which an ease of public accessibility could be achieved.
Utilising multimedia possibilities, the resource would be able to carry text as well as photos and videos, and also be update-able, something important in what is a dynamic and evolving environment. The resource would contain profiles of each festival as well as discussion about festivals in general. In creating profiles and collating information for the various events, the resource would also engage festival organisers across the country in a collaborative project.

To be successful in achieving wide dissemination, the resource would need a widely recognised and reputable internet portal to publish the resource. The Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs, established in 1990 to be the voice of Pacific peoples in New Zealand, was an obvious location. During my fieldwork, I heard through the ‘Pacific grapevine’ that the Ministry were actively endeavouring to increase their online presence and make their website more interactive. After presenting a proposal and receiving feedback that the Ministry would be interested in the work as an important piece of social history, especially in light of the central role they expect to play in the development of festivals over the coming decade, the project will be completed post-doctorally. On this basis, an application has been made to Creative New Zealand for a small amount of funding. This will cover a three-month project during which time I will re-contact and interview festival organisers, prepare complete profiles, collate and create the content, and build the resource online.

To ensure that the communities will be aware of its existence, various media channels, including the television programme Tagata Pasifika, the community and commercial radio stations that form the Pacific Media Network, and the Ministry’s own communication channels, will be approached and presented with information to help publicise the completion of the project. This is because these channels proved throughout the research to be significant mediums through which news and information is disseminated.

The second applied outcome arose from being in the field, in Auckland, and after having gone through the interviewing process. Although I expected that people would be interested in the research findings, I was (pleasantly) surprised by the degree to which participants wanted to see the final work.
Participants would eagerly inquire as to progress and when results were going to be available. Although easily satisfied through the provision of electronic copies of the thesis, this would hardly constitute a meaningful and valued reciprocation, and, although widely used, the internet is not necessarily the preferred communication device for some who had contributed most directly. Furthermore, the full story of the Pasifika Festival is unable to be placed in this thesis; it is too large. This does not mean that it is neither valuable, nor valued.

I concluded that I needed to present my research in a more lasting and permanent way. The village co-ordinators especially, far from being reposing cultural repositories or elders, are dynamically active in their careers, communities, arts and civic pursuits. Providing a tangible record provides an account of an event that they have played a significant role in shaping. It also means that the work can be more widely disseminated within those communities from where the knowledge came, provoking further discussion and maybe interest in further research. To this end, I am presenting printed copies of the unedited story of the festival, as told to me, and including the thesis conclusion, re-written where necessary to make it more easily digestible. This takes into account that, for some, English is a second language and, for most, thesis jargon is not everyday language. This is not to assume a level of comprehension, but rather to ensure that the outcome is meaningful. As is necessary to remember: ‘unless the researcher couches the research findings in a language the audience understands, the most enlightening findings will fall on deaf ears’ (Fetterman 2010, p. 11).

The creation of an freely available online resource, as well as gifting ‘mini theses’, constitute the applied outcomes of this research, my attempt to reciprocate the generosity with which time and knowledge was provided to me, and to disseminate the work beyond typical academic contexts. They develop new frames for the dissemination of information about Pacific festivals and provide it to anyone with internet access or to whom the printed texts are made available. They highlight and acknowledge the importance and uniqueness of festivals and, more generally, the impact of Pacific cultures upon New Zealand. In early 2011, as part of recessionary cutbacks, the future of Wellington’s Polyfest, Tu Tāngata, became unclear. One of the immediate responses from
within the communities was that the council needed to understand the importance of the event. The resource, when complete, will demonstrate this. In future, it could be used to strengthen applications for festival funding, providing information and immediate impact about the importance of not just festivals, but of community arts projects in general.

Reflections on Fieldwork

The field and fieldwork are central to this research. They provided the experiences, the data, and the relationships that sustain the work. The experience of being in the field was transformative; it was awakening, exhilarating and altered the course of the resulting conclusions completely. Hypotheses were challenged and complicated by the experience.

Reflecting on the fieldwork process, I am drawn to consider the reverse: how I impacted the field. In a number of demonstratable ways, I did. A number of occasions made me realise I did so simply through the process of interviewing. Former event co-ordinators Nancy Sandhoy and Michelle Khan both told me they had enjoyed revisiting and reflecting on Pasifika, which they told me occurred not just during the interview, but after I had called and arranged to meet. A number of participants became visibly emotional when talking about their connections to homelands elsewhere and the pride their felt in representing their culture and their people. One participant, a young dancer who expressed surprise, as ‘you don’t look like what I would expect a researcher to look like’, was also a budding anthropologist and trying to decide whether to pursue dancing or anthropology. We were able to talk at length about the different possible options, and I was able to offer advice about the realities of study in the discipline and where a combination of both could lead. There is no doubt that I had, and will likely continue to have, an impact on the field. I provided participants with a reason to pause and reflect about the nature and importance of festivals, and what they represent. Some participants have perhaps reflected further since and reconsidered the festival environment, according it with new meaning and importance.

\[17\] I later met up with this participant, in passing, a number of times. She was eventually offered a scholarship to study dance, so decided to pursue this first, and keep anthropology as a later option.
In considering the field and fieldwork it is hoped that my impact, that my interventions, have been positive. Throughout my time with the festival teams, despite a degree of objective distance maintained by taking myself aside to note reflections and thoughts, I remained as much as possible a part of the fabric of the workplaces, helping out wherever possible and making a conscious effort to fit in. This was, of course, never actually completely possible as, in spite of any and all efforts, I was there first and foremost as a researcher. What I attempted to do though was minimise any distance that may have been created as a result. Likewise, while interviewing there was no avoiding my being a researcher conducting research. For this, I attempted to minimise distance and make the intervention positive by demonstrating respect for the time and knowledge given, and by reciprocating this generosity. I have tried to reinforce that relationships should not be viewed as temporary, and I not as someone who gained the necessary data, retreated, and will not be seen again. The field has established relationships that are embedded in trust and mutual reciprocity, relationships that have not ended simply because the research is complete, but are now ongoing into the future.

Conclusion
This chapter has served to outline the theories and methods that are central to this work. I discussed the key theoretical areas of diaspora and festivals. My application of diaspora is characterised by Hau’ofa’s concept of the Pacific as an interconnected ‘sea of islands’, of which New Zealand is a part, a kinship network defined by fluidity, exchange and movement. Ka’ili’s notion of tauhi vā explains how these connections are created and maintained, even over the vast distances that separate nodes of this network. Notions of Pacific cultures and identities in New Zealand contextualise the specific place occupied by diasporic Pacific peoples in this particular locale, ‘edgewalking’ between cultural worlds and acquiring ‘polycultural capital’ to negotiate this process. Festival spaces are understood in three ways. Notions of Pacific festivals as collective rituals and as contact zones offer ways to conceptualise festivalised spaces. In addition, the idea of festivals as territorialising spaces provides a way to theorise how place and belonging plays out at Pacific festivals, as being simultaneously of the Pacific and of New Zealand, as well as being demonstrative of social change.
I also discussed method. This research is grounded in ethnography, highlighting fieldwork carried out ‘at home’, and applied ethnomusicology. The applied outcomes of this project include the creation of an online festival resource and presentation of printed mini-theses to participants, representing a return of the research to the communities and people from which it came. Finally, this notion of reciprocity is part of the research process, and here I outlined the steps taken to prepare for fieldwork, and to find and interview participants.

The next two chapters now turn to the centre of the research process, first highlighting how New Zealand has become a centre of the Pacific diaspora and situating the history and evolution of Pacific festivals within this context, and then combining the voices of participants and source material in constructing the particular histories of the two festivals at which fieldwork was carried out.
Chapter Three

Pacific Peoples and Festivals in New Zealand

This chapter is in three parts. In the first, I present a brief history of Pacific peoples in New Zealand, tracing the story of how groups of migrants have been transformed into primarily New Zealand-born communities. Secondly, I present the history of Pacific festivals in New Zealand, beginning with the inaugural Polynesian Festival of 1972, through the emergence of two important and main types of festivalisation—Polyfests and Pasifika festivals—and ending with the most recent festival established, the Moana Pasifika festival, in 2010. Finally, I offer an interconnected argument and explanation that demonstrates the inter-relatedness of the two stories, how the former influenced and shaped the latter, how the history of Pacific peoples in New Zealand created the environments in which festivals began and have prospered.

3.1 How New Zealand Became a Centre of the Pacific Diaspora

The Pacific has long been characterised by successive waves of migration. Indeed, New Zealand’s first settlement by Māori was the result of one such exploration. These waves of migration include not only journeys of discovery, but also continuous migration and exchange of people, ideas, and material culture back and forth between Islands across centuries and generations (Hau’ofa 1994). The Pacific has therefore been, and continues to be, a place where migration is experienced widely and constitutes a significant lifestyle pattern.

The migration story of Pacific peoples to New Zealand has been recorded in detail elsewhere, in scholarly texts, personal accounts, and visual media, so I do not attempt a re-telling here but rather offer an overview. It is important to note that the period of migration that represents the starting point of this research was preceded by small amounts of earlier migration coupled with New Zealand’s long interest in establishing an empire in the Pacific,
something that dates to the 1840s (Fairbairn-Dunlop 2003, p. 21). At the turn of the twentieth century, Prime Minister Richard Seddon took a party to Tonga, Niue, Fiji and the Cook Islands, with the purpose of soliciting agreement to New Zealand annexation. This was successful in the case of Niue and the Cook Islands (ibid, p. 22). Furthermore, the three-atoll nation of Tokelau, after a period as a British protectorate, was declared part of New Zealand in 1949. These three nations represent those with the closest constitutional ties and, to this day, the residents of these states are citizens of New Zealand, with full and free citizenship rights.

As fellow colonies of the British Empire, close links also existed between Fiji and New Zealand, and New Zealand helped to uphold colonial rule in Fiji (Leckie 2009a). More formally, New Zealand also had a constitutional relationship with (Western) Sāmoa, after taking responsibility for its government from Germany with the outbreak of the First World War, a situation that remained until Sāmoa gained independence 1962. The relationship between the New Zealand administration and Sāmoans was not, however, always harmonious. The introduction of the influenza epidemic to Western Sāmoa in 1918 via an Auckland-originated vessel, the galvanisation of dissent into the Mau independence movement in 1926, and the subsequent and fatal firing upon a peaceful independence march in 1929 by New Zealand officers, are pertinent examples (see for example Eteuati 1982; Meleisea 1987; Field 1991).

New Zealand also looked to the Pacific for its war efforts during the First World War. Six-hundred men from Rarotonga, Niue and the Gilbert Islands (now Kiribati) were enlisted by the New Zealand Armed Forces and two soldiers from the Cook Islands joined members of the first contingent of the 1915 Maori Battalion (Fairbairn-Dunlop 2003, p. 26). During this time, young Cook Island women were also recruited as home help and domestic workers on Canterbury farms, and Sāmoan girls were trained for domestic duties in

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19 Tokelau was administered from Wellington until 1994, when this power was transferred to a General Fono (Council), which is comprised of elders from each of the three atolls. Although several attempts have been made to have Tokelau officially declared a self-governing state in free association with New Zealand, as in the cases of Niue and the Cook Islands, it remains a non-self-governing territory and is part of New Zealand, with the last two independence referendums in 2006 and 2007 narrowly falling short of the required two-thirds majority.
New Zealand’s Catholic missions. By 1916, eighteen Melanesians, forty-nine Fijians and 151 ‘other and undefined’ Polynesians had settled in New Zealand (Walrond 2009). This number grew with the early 1940s arrival of scholarship students from Sāmoa, as part of New Zealand’s mission to prepare Sāmoa for self-government (Fairbairn-Dunlop 2003, p. 26), and, after the end of the Second World War, with groups of students from Tuvalu, Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands (Walrond 2009). These groups represent some of the very first Pacific Island migrants to New Zealand, numbering only 988 in 1935, but more than doubling to over 2,000 by census night ten years later (Macpherson 2006, p. 99). With a population of 1,700,000 though, this represented only 0.1% of the people of New Zealand (Cook et al. 2001, p. 45). It was not until after the Second World War that large-scale migration from the Pacific began proper, as a concentrated and calculated move by the New Zealand government, resulting in this figure rising by around 2,500%, to 50,000 by 1971, and as a percentage of the population, to 2% (ibid).

The Post-Second World War Migrations
From the New Zealand perspective, Cluny Macpherson situates Pacific migration a consequence of historically specific moments: the loss of male population as a consequence of the Second World War, and the New Zealand government’s post-war decision to diversify the national economy (2006, pp. 99-100). As a result, citizens of former and current New Zealand territories (as well as from further afield) were encouraged to migrate to New Zealand to meet post-war labour shortages. Rapid development in New Zealand resulted in new settlements being built to house the growing workforce, especially in South Auckland where Otara was established in 1966 and was largely populated by formerly rural Māori, and Pacific migrants (Stevenson and Stevenson 2006, p. 53). Significant numbers, especially from Tokelau, which was suffering the effects of overpopulation, were also strategically settled in the Wellington cities of Porirua and Lower Hutt, and throughout the central North Island’s forestry belt. During this time, the New Zealand economy underwent two periods of significant economic growth, between 1964 and ‘67, and 1970 and ‘74, separated by a recession during the years.

Until the mid-1970s, job and educational opportunities, and higher incomes, meant that an increasing number of Pacific peoples moved to New Zealand, and the migrant population grew rapidly. Migration occurred primarily from Sāmoa, the Cook Islands, Niue and Tokelau. Large numbers of migrants also came from Tonga and Fiji, and smaller numbers from Kiribati, Tuvalu and French Polynesia, Island nations geographically close but with no historic or formal constitutional linkages with New Zealand. Work permit statistics show that the main source of official migration during the 1960s expansion came from Fiji, followed by Sāmoa, with smaller numbers from Tonga, Niue and the Cook Islands (de Bres and Campbell 1975, p. 447). During the 1970s expansion, while Sāmoa and Fiji were still the source of large numbers, Tonga became a dominant supply nation.

A body of literature outlines the migration patterns and specific circumstances of various feeder and combined Pacific nations (de Bres and Campbell 1975; Levick and Bedford 1988; Bedford 1989; Loomis 1990; Macpherson 1990, 2001a, 2004 and 2006; Appleyard and Stahl 1995; Lay 1996; Chandra 1997; Rolls 2004; Chand and Clemens 2008; Leckie 2009b). The method by which migration most commonly occurred however is chain migration (Macpherson 2006). Initial migrants secured housing and employment, and also became socially and economically settled. Establishing reputations as conscientious workers and gainfully employed tenants, these migrants were then able to secure the required work and accommodation guarantees for other family members. Later arrivals, in turn, established themselves and their reputations and, following the same pattern, then secured work and accommodation for other kin. This process was replicated over and over, with the 'chains' of migration extending further and into more and more families and villages throughout the Pacific. In the New Zealand context, this type of migratory pattern worked effectively as it matched labour supply to demand effectively (ibid, p. 100). A consequence of this method of

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20 De Bres and Campbell maintain that a truer representation of the number of Pacific peoples migrating to New Zealand is seen in the combined figures of people arriving on both temporary work permits as well as tourists and people in New Zealand on business and working holiday visas, thus ‘unofficial’ migration.
migration was the concentration of Pacific migrants in particular industrial sectors and residential areas, a consequence that would later cause significant and long-lasting negative effects. In most cases, as Grahame Lay points out, migrants undertook employment that most 'Pākehā New Zealanders no longer wished to do or were educated beyond: shift work, factory work, assembly-line production, processing, cleaning, work that involved long hours and often unpleasant conditions (1996, p. 13). Women worked too, with some employers, like hospital laundries, becoming quite dependant on the labour of Pacific Islanders (ibid). Initially though, this enclave served migrants well, creating insulated communities where early settlers replicated central features of their Island social structures and organisations (Macpherson 1997, 2002 and 2006). Within these largely transplanted societies, the role of the churches took on an added importance and became even more central, as they ‘replaced the Pacific Island village as both the locus and focus for social events’ (Leota-Ete 2007, p. 68).

The Socio-cultural Reality of Living in the ‘Land of Milk and Honey’

Early migrants lived in vulnerable and marginalised socioeconomic conditions, and were often the victims of hostility and racism (Spoonley 1987 and 1990; Macpherson 1997 and 2002; Macpherson and Macpherson 2000; Anae et al. 2006; Stevenson and Stevenson 2006). Previously, New Zealand had long created an identity based on being the ‘Britain of the South’ (Skilling 2008, p. 57; Smith 2003, p. 25, and see Metge 1967) and, in the late-1960s, was only just starting to address issues of biculturalism in attempting to find resolution with Māori.

Many anecdotes give voice to the experiences and struggles of early migrants and their children (Tiatia 1998; Mulitalo 2001; Fairbairn-Dunlop and Makisi 2003; Anae et al. 2006). The documentary Children of the Migration (Rolls 2004) provides insight into the received image of New Zealand that was common in the Pacific, as the 'land of opportunity' and of 'milk and honey', and also of the completely foreign culture into which migrants arrived. For example, interviewee Eddy Lee thought airplanes were a 'big iron bird', having never seen anything not-living fly before (quoted in Rolls 2004). These feelings of complete alien-ness continued once New Zealand was reached:
Trousers and Bata Bullets, shoes that matched, yellow skivvies. The lights, as we didn’t have electricity back home, and sheep and green farms everywhere...When we arrived in Wellington, it was so cold. We didn’t have any overcoats. We couldn’t believe that people were living inside fences in suburbs and houses so close to each other. In New Zealand you have to look after yourself; I didn’t understand that (ibid).

Mua Strickson-Pua, whose parents were among the earliest post-War migrants, told me about his experience growing up as one of the first New Zealand-born Pacific peoples:

_We didn’t realise that the rest of New Zealand was quite different. We thought everyone had a Tongan, a Niuean, an Indian, a Chinese, and some Croatian that worked in the factory with your parents, and were in-built as part of your extended family. We assumed that the rest of New Zealand was brown. So you can imagine my shock when I went to Mount Albert Grammar and realised the rest of New Zealand was Pākehā._

‘It’s hard for a Polynesian to keep his identity’, an activist commented in 1976, ‘it’s almost impossible to buy my daughter a nursery rhyme book with Polynesian characters that a Polynesian child can relate to and identify with’ (Anonymous, quoted in The Islanders 1976, p. 20). And Jakki Leota-Ete, has written of her mother:

_She worked hard for someone else’s profit, for a government that was largely antagonistic to her presence. The ‘overstayer’ amongst neighbours from a white majority who grew to resent her unwillingness to integrate or assimilate in the ‘whilst in Rome do as the Romans do’ ideology they perpetuated, while they themselves denigrated the indigenous peoples whose ‘Rome’ lay in ashes at their feet...[her life] has been one of eternal struggle (2007 p. 38)._

Especially in the case of Otara, facilities and services for a largely youthful population were inadequate, and friction was created by the fact that a range of immigrants from different religious, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds were transplanted into, and forced to live within, the same neighbourhoods (Stevenson and Stevenson 2006, p. 53). In 1971, the Polynesian Panthers Party was formed as a response and attempted to deal with the racism, discrimination, and social inequalities and injustices experienced by especially young Pacific peoples and their families in Auckland. Associated with numerous causes, such as the Ngā Tamatoa Māori political movement,
anti-Apartheid protestors, the Auckland Committee on Racism and Discrimination (ACORD) and C.A.R.E (Citizens’ Association for Racial Equality), the party was based on the Black Panther movement in America. Panther Wayne Toleafoa recalls:

It was not until I attended secondary school that I began to notice the racist jibes – ‘Black bastards’, ‘nig nogs’ and so on – that all Islanders and Māori are familiar with...New Zealand in the 1970s was...not the harmonious society that many older Pākehā wanted to believe it was. If you were Māori, or a Pacific Islander, you soon learned that you were not regarded as an equal...Economically, numerically and in almost every statistic Pacific Islanders were shown as the most vulnerable group in New Zealand society. This is not where we wanted to be (quoted in Anae et al. 2006, p. 61)

The ‘Dawn Raids’ and ‘Rogernomics’

As the economic boom continued into the mid-1970s demand exceeded official supply, and this led to a steadily rising number of Pacific people on temporary visas illegally living in New Zealand. As migrants arrived to a strong demand for labour, they were able to find work and remain relatively invisible; employers enjoyed the oversupply that kept wages in check, and the government conveniently ignored the issue (Macpherson 2006, p 101).

As the 1970s progressed, New Zealand’s economy suffered a significant reversal of fortunes, a situation that impacted the Pacific communities in two profound ways. Firstly a significant contraction of the labour market and rising unemployment in the sectors in which Pacific Islanders had become concentrated occurred (Macpherson 2006). Secondly, seeking to ‘explain’ the economic deterioration for electoral advantage, politicians focused public attention on the Pacific migrant presence and suggested that they were responsible for the country’s economic and social woes (Spoonley 1987 and 1990; Kelsey 1993; Fepulea’i 2005; Macpherson 2006). This resulted in a crackdown on immigration and the period known as the ‘Dawn Raids’, where homes of suspected overstayers were raided in the middle of the night, and which saw thousands of Pacific peoples, many in the country legally, systematically deported. This is an era that remains in the political consciousness for many and has been well documented (see for example Liava’a 1998; Rolls 2004; Fepulea’i 2005; Anae et al. 2006).
The Polynesian Panthers played a central role in protesting against and eventually stopping the raids. As well as supplying the *Auckland Star* newspaper with one hundred examples of people who were illegitimately detained (Dennett et al. 2009), they also carried out their own ‘Dawn Raids’ at the homes of government ministers and, along with other civil rights groups, established ‘PIG patrols’ that followed the Police Investigation Group taskforce patrol, providing legal advice to those being checked (Fepulea‘i 2005; Anae et al. 2006). Shortly after these events, in 1976, and with increasing media attention and public outcry, the Dawn Raids stopped.21

With a stagnant economy continuing into the 1980s, and the failure of the National government’s ‘Think Big’ strategy, the newly elected Labour government of 1984 introduced a dramatic programme of neo-liberal economic reforms known as ‘Rogernomics’, which were among the most sweeping of any undertaken in the industrialised world during that time (Blaiklock et al 2002). Significant numbers of jobs in areas of the private sector where Pacific peoples had become concentrated were disestablished and, as New Zealand markets were opened to imports from lower cost producers, and capital was allowed to move offshore, significant amounts of the local manufacturing industry followed. The public sector was also impacted, as the size of government was reduced and its structures reformed, through sell-offs and the introduction of commercial practices. Although taxes were reduced, many services previously provided for free, moved to user-pays models, making them more expensive and less accessible for those on lower incomes. These changes, furthered under a new government in the early 1990s, and combined with the effects of a recession, had a profoundly detrimental and lasting effect on already marginalised Māori and Pacific communities (Kelsey 1993; Krishnan et al. 1994; Friesen et al 2000; Johnston et al. 2003; Macpherson 2001a and 2006; Ongley 2004).22

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21 That Pacific people has been purposely and politically targeted during the Dawn Raids era was highlighted in 1986, when an expose by journalist David McLoughlin appeared in the Sunday Star Times. Titled ‘Immigration – the Big White Lie’, it showed that the majority of overstayers throughout the 1970s and ‘80s had been from Europe and North America. In fact, while they comprised 66% of overstayers, 66% of people convicted of overstaying were Pacific Islanders (Spoonley, quoted in Fepulea‘i 2005). The Minister of Immigration at the time complained to the Race Relations Office, who investigated, and conceded that McLoughlin was correct (Kelsey 1993, p. 307).

22 The recent Global Financial Crisis has again impacted negatively on New Zealand’s Pacific communities, with unemployment trends similar to those of the 1980s/early 1990s again being witnessed. At the end of 2009, unemployment among Pacific peoples stood at 13.4%, more than double the national average, while among youth, 27.8% of Pacific peoples aged 15–24 were unemployed, as opposed to the 14.1% average (Ministry of Social Development 2010). The full social impact, however, has yet to be measured.
More Recent Migration and Demographic Changes
Along with the economic reforms, a review of New Zealand’s immigration requirements was conducted. A new immigration policy was introduced that linked eligibility for migration to national labour demand. In light of the economic circumstances of the day, this policy effectively eliminated the demand for semi- and un-skilled labour, and limited migration from Pacific states to those able to qualify on a skills basis, or under family re-unification provisions (Macpherson 2006, p. 102). Further policy changes introduced by a new National government in 1991 made it even more difficult for unskilled migrants to enter New Zealand. The result of this was that more Tongans and Sāmoans left than arrived during the years 1991-1994 (Appleyard and Stahl 1995, p. 19). Despite these limitations, new generations Pacific people were coming of age, marrying and giving birth to the next. Over the next decade, to 2001, while the overall New Zealand population grew by more than 10%, the Pacific population increased by almost 40% (Johnston et al. 2003, p. 109). A significant feature of the newer generations has been the levels of intermarriage within and between the different Pacific ethnicities, as well as with Māori and Pākehā (Bedford and Didham 2001).

The most recent change to impact Pacific migration was the introduction of a Seasonal Work Permit pilot at the end of 2005, which became the Recognised Seasonal Employer programme from 2007.23 Under this scheme, several thousand temporary visas are available annually in the horticulture and viticulture industries, where labour shortages exist and cannot be filled domestically, and preference is given to workers from Kiribati, Sāmoa, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands. Aside from this scheme, the immigration changes of the 1990s remain, with no special preference given to Pacific migrants apart from the quotas and provisions for family repatriation, which remain in place.

The Māori/Pacific ‘Axis of Equivalence’: Situating Pacific Cousins
A final important facet of the story of Pacific peoples in New Zealand is the relationship with tāngata whenua, the indigenous and culturally Polynesian

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Māori people.²⁴ Beyond the historical and cultural connections that exist external to New Zealand, and apart from the place of New Zealand and Māori people as one corner of the ‘Polynesian Triangle’ (Su‘apa‘ia 1962), there are other important socio-cultural factors resulting from the migrations that have further connected and established a kinship between Māori and other Pacific peoples (Tagata Pasifika 1993; Teaiwa and Mallon 2005).

The timing of the migrations and resulting demographic geographies are important factors. As Richard Hill notes, ‘large-scale Pasifika migration to New Zealand...coincided with the renewed assertion of indigeneity within Māoridom’ (2010, p. 294). Further, aspirations for socioeconomic betterment, and the experiences of shared living and working spaces, urban drift and marginalisation also created bonds between communities (ibid, pp. 296-297, see also McIntosh 2001). In the sense that Pacific migrants became the Pacific diaspora, Māori were also becoming diasporic, in being displaced from rural homelands and drawn into urban centres. Together Māori and Pacific migrants shared the socioeconomic constraints, as ‘racialised sojourners’, that Clifford refers to as a ‘mobility hourglass’, where the development of a post-Fordist, non-union, low-wage sector offered limited opportunities for advancement and not only depended upon but also created diasporic populations (1994, p. 312).²⁵

This process of racial and economic marginalisation created new coalitions, alliances that were consolidated with the first generations of young urban Māori and New Zealand-born/raised Pacific peoples, especially as young radicals organised in ways that went against the more cautious approaches of many elder Māori and Pacific migrants, who, in attempting to establish lives in their new surroundings, largely avoided creating political noise (Hill 2010, p. 298, see also Greenland 1991). Increasing intermarriage between Māori and other Pacific peoples also meant the intermixing of Māori and other Pacific cultures within family units (Bedford and Didham 2001). Belinda Borrell shows that Māori in South Auckland have created a unique ‘Southside’

²⁴ And see Anae (2001), Gray (2001) and Macpherson (2004, 2006) for a discussion of how Pacific peoples have formed an axis of equivalence among themselves, in part, to further social and political concerns.

²⁵ Importantly, in light of the discussion below, Ongley discusses the economic and labour market participation of Pacific migrants and notes that the experiences of Pacific peoples mirrors that of ethnic minorities elsewhere, especially in Britain and Western Europe, and with Māori as well (1991, p. 180).

It is important to note that this kind of relationship is not unique to Māori and Pacific peoples, and several examples from other diasporic and indigenous communities from around the world demonstrate an identifiable pattern of social and economic marginalisation leading to relationships that emphasise commonalities (see Cohen 1980; Hall 1992; hooks 1992; Gilroy 1993; Spickhard and Burroughs 2000a). These examples of ‘axes of equivalence’ (Hall 1992, p. 308), or ‘strategic essentialisms’ (Turino 2007, p. 104), are also relevant to the new generations of Pacific peoples in New Zealand. Anne-Marie Tupuola (2003, p. 93) found that Pacific youth considered ‘ethnic labels’ as a way of connecting with other ‘minority’ groups in the world and/or of maintaining a status quo with their peers, despite the apparent lack of ‘cultural knowledge’ evident in some. This was especially visible in the association and affiliation with African-American cultural forms, and the ‘Black Atlantic’ more broadly (Gilroy 1987 and 1993), an association demonstrated in many ethnomusicological studies (Zemke-White 2000, 2001, 2002, 2005a and 2005b; Bennett 2002; Cattermole 2004).

3.2 The Festivalisation of Pacific Cultures in New Zealand

The next part of this chapter traces the development of Pacific festivals across New Zealand, from the Polynesian Festival of 1972 to 2010’s Moana Pasifika Festival, in order that the two histories can be linked and explained in the following section. I argue that Pacific festivals in New Zealand have the same essential function: celebrating both the place of Pacific cultures and peoples in New Zealand, situating New Zealand as a Pacific nation, and of enduring connections to other homelands. They celebrate this through tangible concepts of material culture, for what is otherwise an intangible notion. Each festival, through the specificity of its particular locality and make-up of its particular communities, achieves this in different ways. Broadly, however, I

26 Williams (1989, p. 405) argues the same when he notes that ‘interest groups whose organisational strategies are limited by structural conditions find it necessary to organise along the less efficient and effective informal bases available to them. In order to articulate the organisation of their grouping, they make use of available cultural mechanisms’ (and also see Cohen’s ‘political ethnicity’ (1978)).

27 The particular way in which each festival is set up and run, as well as specific aspects of their localities, also affects the degree to which Māori are incorporated into the events. Generally, most festivals feature at least an
identify two types of festivals that have evolved, with a differentiation based primarily on the way in which the festivals are set up and how this affects the focus and goals of its participants. The results, while the same, carry different meanings.

The first festivals to develop came out secondary schools and are known as Polyfests (an abbreviation of Polynesian festival). They celebrate the maintenance and place of Pacific cultures in New Zealand primarily through competitive and non-competitive music performance (and in some cases other artistic practices too). While some Polyfests, and especially the original and largest festival in Auckland, contain a number of craft, social agency and food stalls, these remain on the periphery of the festivalised space, coming into focus more during performance breaks. Some Polyfests have also incorporated other elements, like art exhibitions, fashion shows, and speech competitions, to showcase cultural maintenance. Performance though, remains central. Ultimately, Polyfests celebrate Pacific cultures through performances that highlight maintenance and the passing of cultural traditions and practices from culture bearers to next generations. In this sense, the audience are primarily focused on the ways in which this is achieved, and particular attention is given to standards and quality. The result, even where Polyfests are participation-only, is that they can become heightened, competitive environments, especially at the secondary school-aged level and larger festivals.28

Pasifika festivals, by contrast, celebrate Pacific cultures via multi-faceted and sensory consumption. Festival spaces are designed to encourage participants to walk around, look at and buy arts and crafts, smell, look at and buy food and drink, engage with other stalls, meet, talk and socialise with family, friends and acquaintances, and to watch and be entertained by performances. In other words, performers and performances are not the singular focus of attention. They provide the soundtrack to the event and one of the key

acknowledgement of Māori as tangata whenua in the official opening and welcome. While some are specifically set up as festivals celebrating migrant Pacific cultures only, others incorporate Māori as Pacific ‘cousins’, and most Polyfests are specifically combined events. The localities can affect this to the degree that some places also have specifically Māori kapa haka events, or schools that choose to focus on other Māori festivals, such as Te Matatini.

28 It should be highlighted, however, that where primary school-aged children are involved, and especially at festivals where the performers are not necessarily, or in fact are more likely to be, non-Māori and/or Pacific, participation is highlighted as opposed to competition.
ingredients in the festival’s success, but they are not the sole reason for their existence. Everything within the festivalised space is to be consumed by the audience, and they, in turn, are able to pick and choose from the potpourri of material culture offered up for consumption. Talo’s human geography of the Pasifika Festival demonstrates this well, outlining the multiple overlapping elements that combine within the particular geographical space to create the ‘grand arena of Pacific-ness’ (2008, p. 128). In short, at Pasifika your attention is primarily everywhere-at-once.

Although both types of festivals highlight collectivity, meeting, socialisation and celebration, the differing nature of Pasifika festivals and Polyfests festivalise their respective spaces in different ways, and result in different festival atmospheres. Existing scholarly texts highlight this difference, where Polyfest is presented through the serious nature of the performances, notions of cultural maintenance and the degree of preparations undertaken in the lead up to the event (Gershon and Collins 2007; Kornelly 2008), something that contrasts to the more overtly consumption-based cultural celebration of Pasifika, as presented by Talo (2008). It should also be pointed out that, in highlighting this difference, I am not placing any less importance on the performances contained within Pasifika festival spaces, but merely noting the difference in the ways that audiences interact with those performances.

Before the development of either Polyfests or Pasifika festivals, however, the inaugural Polynesian Festival of 1972 marked the first time Pacific cultures were festivalised in a highly public context.

The Polynesian Festival
Given the close ties between the Māori and Pacific communities, it is unsurprising that the earliest festivalisation of Pacific cultures came through a festival originally designed to celebrate Māori culture.29 Primarily established as a competitive Māori performance event, and solely so from around 1990 (small numbers of Pacific performance groups were featured in a non-competitive section), the festival is now known as Te Matatini, the national kapa haka festival. In spite of this, the festival represents an important and

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early display of the close connections – socially, politically and culturally – between Māori and their other Pacific cousins.

The festival can be traced to a decision by the Māori Purposes Funding Board, on 11 August 1964, that ‘a committee be appointed to consider...a proposal that the Board sponsor and grant prizes for a National Māori Cultural Competition’ (Richards and Ryan 2004, p. 99). Later, in 1969, a national development conference made a number of recommendations that were adopted and became the responsibility of the Tourist Publicity Department, the Māori and Pacific Island Affairs Department and the New Zealand Māori Arts and Crafts Institute. One of these was to support Polynesian entertainers to compete in district and national competitions. The next year, a Polynesian Entertainment sub-committee of the Tourism Development Council was established and proposed 'that the Minister of Maori and Island Affairs be recommended to set up a committee to inaugurate annual Polynesian Festivals on a regional and national basis' (ibid, p. 101).

With these developments, the Maori Purposes Fund Board granted $5,000 to fund an inaugural festival, and a Polynesian Festival Committee was established. After eighteen months of preparations, the first festival was held at Whakarewarewa Marae, Rotorua, in March 1972, and comprised seventeen Māori and five Pacific groups, representing Sāmoa, Tonga, Tokelau, Niue and the Cook Islands. After a second festival in 1973, also held in Rotorua, the festival became biannual, due to the demanding workload and costs involved in staging the event, and began to be held in different locations. In 1981, a change of name to the New Zealand Festival of Māori and Pacific Island Arts was suggested, after discussions had taken place about the meaning of the word ‘Polynesian’ and the lack of participation of Pacific groups. A number of individuals noted that participation by Pacific groups had been consistently low when considered to their growing presence within the population, and the festival committee had been criticised by Pacific communities as not being representative of the diversity of Pacific cultures. The issues were compounded by the fact that the festival committee was a part of the Māori Purposes Funding Board and had no impetus to fund or organise events for Pacific peoples. It was therefore suggested that the...
festival committee should become a sub-committee of the Māori and South Pacific Arts Council. The festival continued unchanged throughout the 1980s but by 1991, the festival had become the responsibility of the Aotearoa Māori Traditional Performing Arts Society, and involvement by Pacific groups appears to have stopped.

**Polyfest**

Confusion over the involvement of Pacific groups was clear from the outset at the next, and more important, moment of festivalisation, with the inauguration of the Auckland Secondary Schools Māori and Pacific Islands Cultural Festival in 1976, now better known as Polyfest. A group of teachers and students at Hilary College felt that the performance of Polynesian song and dance among young people would foster an environment that helped to preserve, or in some cases establish, identity, as well as provide a venue through which youth could demonstrate pride in their cultural heritage (Lay 2002). The inaugural festival was held at Hillary College, South Auckland, and three other schools – Seddon High School, and Mangere and Aorere Colleges – took part in an event featuring Māori, Sāmoan and Cook Island competitions. From this beginning the festival grew quickly, with twenty-six schools taking part when the festival returned to Hilary College five years later, and thirty-eight when it returned for a third time in 1991. Within three years of this, Polyfest had grown beyond the capabilities of a single school to host within its own grounds. Therefore it moved to its current venue, the Manukau Valedrome, where it now features over 9,000 students from over sixty schools performing on seven stages – Māori, Sāmoan, Cook Island, Tongan, Niuean and participation-only diversity and contemporary stages – across a four-day event that attracts around 100,000 spectators. The size of the festival means that it now attracts significant levels of corporate support and sponsorship, as well as social agency involvement, and is professionally produced in conjunction with the host school.30

Within a short time after the successful launch of Polyfest, the concept of a festival for students, celebrating Māori and migrant Pacific cultures through music and dance, spread to other centres. The inaugural Tu Tāngata festival

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30 Historical information provided by email from current Polyfest director, Tania Karauria, 29 September 2009.
was held in Wellington in 1979, spearheaded by Kara Puketapu of the Department of Māori Affairs and led by a committee made up of students from local colleges, with input from teachers and parents. Two years later, in 1981, the Christchurch Primary Schools Cultural Festival began, which was a predominantly Māori and Pacific event until 2000, when a decision was made to expand and grow the festival and encompass a more broad representation of cultures. A few years later, in the mid-1980s, another Polyfest began in Porirua, a particularly strong Māori and Pacific-flavoured city just north of Wellington.

Since this time a number of other Polyfests have been initiated, and events now cover all major urban areas in New Zealand that are home to sufficient numbers of Pacific peoples (see table 1, p. 86). In the North Island, a primary schools-oriented event, the Pacifica Living Arts Festival, was established in West Auckland, in 1994, by Cook Island elder Mary Ama. During the 1990s, Polyfests were also established in Tokoroa and Rotorua, two significant Central Plateau sites of Pacific migration due to its forestry and agricultural industries. A second Polyfest was also initiated in Wellington by its Catholic secondary schools. In Hamilton, a secondary schools’ Polyfest, Pacific by Nature, started in 2001, while a companion primary schools’ event, Pepe Pasifika, began in 2009. As a result of the Ministry of Education’s SPacifically Pacific initiative, a week-long event of the same name started in the Hawkes Bay, in 2003, and in Wellington the year before. This event, Pacifically Wellington, has struggled to find its identity as it essentially competes with Tu Tāngata, and it has not run consecutively across all years. Finally, in Palmerston North, a group of teachers and members of the Pacific communities initiated Pasifika Fusion in 2004, as a forum for bringing Pacific youth together and encouraging academic success.

In the less densely populated South Island, especially in terms of Pacific peoples, there are three Polyfests that run in conjunction with the Primary Schools Cultural Festival in Christchurch. During the early 1990s, a Polyfest was established in Dunedin, which incorporates the Otago region, while most recently, in 2009, a Polyfest started in Invercargill, at the bottom the South Island, representing the southern-most festival of Pacific cultures in the
Both of these events incorporate both primary and secondary schools. In 2001, the secondary schools SPacifically Pacific festival was started in Christchurch as a result of Ministry of Education staff member Kose Seinafo’s initiative of the same name. This initiative was created as a model for looking at and addressing the needs of Pacific students, and was adopted nationwide by the ministry, but implemented regionally to meet specific regional needs.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Auckland Secondary Schools Māori and Pacific Islands Cultural Festival ('Polyfest')</td>
<td>1976</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tu Tāngata Festival, Wellington</td>
<td>1979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Schools Cultural Festival, Christchurch</td>
<td>1981</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Schools Polyfest, Porirua</td>
<td>mid-1980s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otago Early Childhood and Schools Māori and Pacific Island Festival, Dunedin</td>
<td>Early 1990s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacifica Living Arts Festival, West Auckland</td>
<td>1994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tokoroa Polyfest</td>
<td>mid-1990s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rotorua Polyfest (now ended/incorporated into Pacific by Nature, Hamilton)</td>
<td>1990s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic Schools Polyfest, Wellington</td>
<td>1990s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific by Nature, Hamilton</td>
<td>2001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPacifically Pacific, Christchurch</td>
<td>2001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacifically Wellington</td>
<td>2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPacifically Pacific, Hawkes Bay</td>
<td>2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pasifika Fusion, Palmerston North</td>
<td>2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pepe Pasifika, Hamilton</td>
<td>2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murihiku Early Childhood Education and Schools Cultural Festival, Invercargill</td>
<td>2009</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Pasifika Festivals
The evolution of Pasifika festivals is less straightforward. The Pasifika Festival, held annually at Auckland’s Western Springs since 1993, is celebrated as the largest event of its kind in the world. As such, popular history would have it that this festival acts as the starting point for the Pasifika festivals that have followed since. While this is somewhat true, its colossal size and popularity influencing those who have established festivals in its aftermath, the roots of this type of festival lie in the 1980s. At this time, the first Pacific person elected to a New Zealand local government jurisdiction, Tala Cleverley, sat on the Wellington City Council and developed a Pacific festival as part of the city’s long-running Summer City programme. Echoing the way many other festivals operate, Tala involved the Pacific churches and various other groups to ensure community buy-in. As to why she wanted to start a festival, Tala told me:

I felt that it was time for Pacific Islanders to participate in community activities, but also display our culture [and be] a place for people to come and meet each other. I felt that Māori and Pacific Islands people were backwards in coming forwards to participate and I pushed the council to celebrate all the ethnic groups in New Zealand.

While unable to remember the exact timeframe over which these festivals took place, a search of the Wellington City Council archives shows that they had started by 1982, and continued until at least 1990. With no set identified moniker, the name of the festival changed a number of times (see figures 1 and 2, p. 134).

The festivals incorporated what are the familiar basic components of not only Pasifika festivals, as well as some Polyfests, but also cultural, multi-cultural and community festivals in general: programmed entertainment alongside food, information/social agency and art and craft stalls, in the creation of complete, contained festival environments. Importantly, as photos and posters demonstrate, these festivals moved away from the Polyfest focus on the transmission of cultural traditions only, and incorporated contemporary music performances as well (see figures 1-4, pp. 134-135).
By the early 1990s, however, these festivals had stopped and there were no public festivals of Pacific cultures outside of the few Polyfests. Into this void came Pasifika, and what started as a community day as part of a week-long festival, featuring three stages, a number of stalls, and an estimated audience of 30,000, has grown into the biggest Pacific festival in the world, incorporating ten villages, twelve stages, sports, approximately 360 stalls, and upwards of 200,000 festival-goers, and acts as a significant vehicle for a range of development opportunities. As one of the two central festivals that inform this study, the history of this festival is discussed further in the next chapter.

Despite this type of festivalisation beginning in Wellington, the initiation of other Pasifika festivals has occurred within the last ten years, long after the festivals in Wellington ceased, and well after the Pasifika Festival had become well-established as the leading event of its kind. In talking to the organisers of the other festivals, Pasifika was clearly acknowledged as an event that they were all aware of and, if not directly, acted as an influence for many. Indeed, some made direct contact with the organisers of the Pasifika Festival in order to obtain advice. Two further festivals – the West Auckland primary schools’ Polyfest, Pacifica Living Arts Festival, and Wellington’s multi-artform Tu Fa’atasi Festival – were both established in 1994 as direct reactions to the first Pasifika.

Tu Fa’atasi, along with Christchurch’s Pacific Arts Festival and South Auckland’s Southside Arts Festival, exist as the only examples of Pacific festivals based on what can be called a ‘festival of the arts’ format, a festival that is held over a period of time and features a number of events, some ticketed, others free, and which cover a range of artforms. Indeed, Tu Fa’atasi came about as a result of Michael Tuffery’s appointment as resident artist to the New Zealand Festival of the Arts. Unhappy with the absence of Pacific art and artists, he approached producer/directors Makerita Urale and David Sa’ena, and together they created a programme of events – including lunchtime concerts of traditional music and dance and an art exhibition at

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31 In talking to people involved with the establishment of the Pasifika Festival in 1993, and others, about why it appeared that the first festivals of this kind should have started in Wellington, as opposed to Auckland, it was highlighted by many that this was in fact not surprising given the large numbers of Pacific peoples spread across a large area and throughout many communities in Auckland. By comparison, to bring the as-diverse but smaller numbers of Pacific peoples together in Wellington for a festival was much more easily achieved without the significant council support and resources that would be required to start Pasifika in the early 1990s.
Wellington’s town hall – that ran during and as part of the larger Festival of the Arts. The centrepiece of Tu Fa’atasi was a multimedia concert that featured a variety of up-and-coming musicians, across multiple genres, and a fashion show.

After its successful debut, Tu Fa’atasi, meaning ‘stand together’, took place two more times, in 1996 and 1998, after which time the organisers became involved in other projects. In 1996 the multimedia concert was held again, as well as the play *A Frigate Bird Sings*, written by David Fane and Oscar Kightley of Christchurch’s Pacific Underground, which was nominated for multiple Chapman Tripp theatre awards and became the third highest grossing play in New Zealand that year. The centrepiece of the final Tu Fa’atasi was *Classical Polynesia*, a large-scale operatic work and the first Polynesian opera staged in New Zealand. The show featured many emerging voices who are now well known figures in the opera world, such as Jonathan Lemalu, Ben Makisi, and Aivale Cole. After a successful debut in Wellington, and in keeping with the original intention of the festival’s community focus, a second performance was staged at the Cook Islands community hall in Porirua with tickets charged at accessible prices. As with *A Frigate Bird Sings*, the success of *Classical Polynesia* resulted in a later re-staging in Auckland.

The other Pasifika festivals were all established in the first decade of the twenty-first century (see table 2, p. 91). When Christchurch’s Pacific Arts Festival was set up in 2001, a family day, which followed a similar format to Pasifika, was included among its events as the finale. Three years later, Tai Tokerau Pasifika, the first Pacific festival was established in the Northland region, taking its name from the Māori name for the area. The following year, in 2005, two further festivals in the Auckland region began. Pacifica HeARTbeat is a central Auckland offshoot of the West Auckland-based Pacifica Living Arts Centre’s schools programme (and Pacifica Living Arts Festival), but has expanded to include workshops for adults, evening markets and weekend concerts, bringing a festival atmosphere annually to the central city’s Aotea Centre. Also in West Auckland, the Pacific in the Park festival grew out of a road safety campaign created by a local policeman, Fagaesea Siaki, and run through a local Sāmoan church. The family-oriented event
provides a predominantly contemporary entertainment programme during
the course of an evening, while a number of social agencies are invited to
engage with the Pacific communities through stalls.

In 2006, two further festivals started: a second Pasifika festival in the
Northland area, in Kaitaia, and Auckland’s North Shore Pasefika Festival.
Both of these events have chosen to include a specific sports focus, to promote
healthy lifestyles and team competition. Two years later, an at-present one-
off and health-focused Pasifika festival was held for the Wairarapa region’s
small Pacific communities, and Wellington’s Positively Pasifika commenced.
As the other central festival that informs this study, the history of this festival
is also discussed further in the next chapter. In 2009, another two festivals
began – Hamilton’s Nesian Festival and Rotorua’s biannual Mini Pasifika –
and, finally, in 2010, another two. The currently one-off Enua Ola festival was
held in the West Auckland in March, and based around the health and fitness
programme of the same name, while in December, in South Auckland, and
loosely based around the village-concept of Pasifika, the Moana Pasifika
festival was held for the first time.
Table 2: List of current, former and one-off Pasifika Festivals, and year of inauguration (approximate if unknown)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Festival Name</th>
<th>Year(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South Pacific Festival, Wellington</td>
<td>approx. 1982-1990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Pasifika Festival, Auckland</td>
<td>1993</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tu Fa’atasi Festival, Wellington</td>
<td>1994-1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific Arts Festival, Christchurch</td>
<td>2001-2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tai Tokerau Pasifika, Whangarei</td>
<td>2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific in the Park, West Auckland</td>
<td>2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacifica HeARTbeat, Auckland</td>
<td>2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Shore Pasifika Festival, North Shore, Auckland</td>
<td>2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pasifika Festival, Kaitaia</td>
<td>2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positively Pasifika Festival, Wellington</td>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pasifika Festival (one-off), Wairarapa</td>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nesian Festival, Hamilton</td>
<td>2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mini Pasifika, Rotorua</td>
<td>2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enua Ola Festival (one-off), West Auckland</td>
<td>2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moana Pasifika Festival, South Auckland</td>
<td>2010</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Multicultural/Community Festivals
As well as Polyfests and Pasifika festivals, there are another group of events in which the diasporic Pacific communities have played a key role: the multicultural and community festivals that have been initiated across New Zealand (see table 3, p. 94, for a demonstrative example). Many of these revolve around the annual Race Relations Day held in March, initiated in 1998 after a successful Bahai’i community-led ‘Unity in Diversity’ rally, which took place in Auckland’s Aotea Square on Human Rights Day, 10 December 1997. The degree of representation and involvement of Pacific communities at these events relates directly to the size of the communities in the locations where they take place. For example, at the largest, Auckland’s International Cultural Festival, which initially started in the 1990s to mark World Refugee Day, and later extended to incorporate migrant groups as well, one quarter of the approximately 120 performance groups that participated in 2009, represented Pacific cultures. Like this event, other large festivals, such as Palmerston North’s Festival of Cultures and Taranaki’s Multi-Ethnic Extravaganza, also started prior to 1998 but have since become associated with the day. The International Cultures Day, held in Hastings since 1999, started out as a festival celebrating the area’s Asian communities as part of a sister-city programme, but has since become the region’s primary cultural festival, incorporating both the resident Pacific communities as well as temporary residents on seasonal worker visas, who come from several Pacific nations to work in the agricultural industries. Smaller Race Relations Day-related multicultural festivals and events are also held in various other towns and cities across New Zealand, and even the smallest events held in small rural towns of the South Island tend to have some representation of Pacific cultures if they are present in the community. Often it is only a small number of families that comprise the entire ‘Pacific community’ of the town.

As well as events that revolve around Race Relations Day, there are a number of other festivals that, by virtue of the size of the Pacific communities in those locations, can be seen as important spaces of Pacific festivalisation. Rotorua’s Globalfest, which originated as a small-scale cultural festival in 1998, was relaunched in 2007 as a large-scale event, overseen by a multi-ethnic governing body with assistance from the local council, and features a central
stage surrounded by a number of ‘cultural villages’ and community spaces. Held biannually from 2008, it is designed to take place on the year the newly-initiated Mini Pasifika festival, which started in 2009, does not. Two large-scale community festivals held in Porirua feature significant representations of Pacific (and Māori) cultures. The Festival of the Elements, held every Waitangi Day since 1992, was established as a way to commemorate a day that was seen by organisers as becoming overshadowed by negativity instead of celebrating cultural diversity. From small beginnings, the festival has grown to encompass a number of indoor and outdoor venues and attract crowds of around 35,000, making it the country’s largest Waitangi Day event. Similarly, the healthy lifestyles-oriented Creekfest, which started in 2003 in a small car-park in the suburb of Cannon’s Creek, soon moved to a local park, where it now spans four fields and attracts around 30,000 people. Finally, and again because of local demographics, the annual Manukau Festival of the Arts, now Southside Arts Festival, which started in 2008, cannot be anything other than a ‘Pacific-flavoured extravaganza of dance, music, fashion and art’ (Ihaka 2009).
Table 3: Demonstrative list of Multicultural/Community Festivals featuring Pacific representation, held across New Zealand during March 2009.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>International Cultural Festival, Auckland</td>
<td>Auckland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Franklin Multicultural Festival, Manukau, Auckland</td>
<td>Manukau, Auckland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mangere East Cultural Festival, Manukau, Auckland</td>
<td>Manukau, Auckland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigo Festival, Hamilton</td>
<td>Hamilton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Globalfest, Rotorua</td>
<td>Rotorua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tauranga Regional Multicultural Festival, Tauranga</td>
<td>Tauranga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Cultures Day, Hastings</td>
<td>Hastings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-Ethnic Extravaganza, New Plymouth</td>
<td>New Plymouth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Festival of Cultures, Palmerston North</td>
<td>Palmerston North</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Festival of the Elements, Porirua</td>
<td>Porirua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creekfest, Porirua</td>
<td>Porirua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Festival of Cultures, Upper Hutt, Wellington</td>
<td>Upper Hutt, Wellington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race Unity Day, Lower Hutt, Wellington</td>
<td>Lower Hutt, Wellington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Globalfest, Wellington</td>
<td>Wellington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newtown Festival, Newtown, Wellington</td>
<td>Newtown, Wellington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marlborough Multicultural Festival, Blenheim</td>
<td>Blenheim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race Unity Day, Nelson</td>
<td>Nelson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture Galore, Christchurch</td>
<td>Christchurch</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Current Pacific Festivalscape of New Zealand

Although the inaugural Polynesian Festival of 1972 is the earliest example of the festivalisation of Pacific cultures in New Zealand, one that acted as an important and symbolic precursor, the initiation of Polyfest in 1976 represents the most important first moment of festivalisation. Although not known absolutely, it is highly possible that the Polynesian Festival influenced the initiation of Polyfest, given that it had been staged three times before 1976, including the year before, in Whangarei, north of Auckland. The regional Festival of Pacific Arts, first held in 1972, in Fiji, was also staged in New Zealand, in early March 1976, and may also have been an influencing factor. Regardless, it is unquestionably Polyfest that started the trend towards festivalisation, with three further festivals – in Wellington, Christchurch and Porirua – initiated within the first decade, five during the 1990s – in Otago, West Auckland, Tokoroa, Rotorua and a second in Wellington – and seven in the first decade of the twenty-first century. With the inauguration of a Polyfest in Invercargill, in 2009, there are now fifteen annual school-driven Pacific festivals.

During this time, a second type of festival has also developed, based around the Pasifika Festival, which has been held since 1993 at Western Springs, Auckland. In spite of this, the roots of this type of festivalisation date back to Wellington, in the 1980s, and the Māori and Pacific Islands Festivals that had started by at least 1982. Following the successful launch of Pasifika, the Tu Fa’atasì Festival was held in Wellington, in 1994, 1996 and 1998. As with the Polyfests, the proliferation of other Pasifika festivals has occurred in the first decade of the twenty-first century, with Christchurch’s Pacific Arts Festival running between 2001 and 2010, the currently one-off events held in the Wairarapa, in 2008, and West Auckland, in 2010, and festivals established in Hamilton, Rotorua, the Northland region, further festivals in Auckland and, once again, in Wellington.

3.3 Understanding the Festivalisation of Pacific Cultures

In drawing together the history of Pacific peoples in New Zealand and the festivalisation of Pacific cultures, there are a number of reasons that explain how the latter is a result of the former, how festivals have developed as a
response to the changing needs and positions of Pacific peoples and communities. This section outlines these reasons.

The major and important moments of festivalisation, the moments that influenced and created the spread of festivals throughout New Zealand, occurred in Auckland. The fact that Auckland was the first port of entry for most Pacific migrants and the main area in which the labour shortages existed, explains this. Large communities of Pacific migrants were first established in Central Auckland suburbs and then in South and West Auckland. In addition, Pacific communities were also formed elsewhere, most prominently in Wellington and neighbouring Porirua and Lower Hutt cities, in towns throughout the central North Island plateau, like Rotorua and Tokoroa, where agricultural and forestry labour shortages existed, and in Christchurch and smaller pockets in other South Island centres. As the communities grew, through both further migration and the births of the New Zealand-born generations, these communities became entrenched in these towns and cities, as well as in other places.\textsuperscript{32}

The growth of Pacific festivals largely mirrors this movement of people and establishing of Pacific communities across New Zealand. The first festivals were initiated in places where the largest communities and numbers of people existed to be able to support festivals, socially, culturally and politically. As the communities have spread, grown and become entrenched in new homes, sufficient numbers were able to support the development of new festivals where a need was established. Festivalisation in Auckland, beginning in 1976, was thus followed by festivals in Wellington and Christchurch, Porirua in the 1980s, Tokoroa, Rotorua, and Otago in the 1990s, and then Northland, Waikato, Hawkes Bay, Palmerston North, Wairarapa and Invercargill in the first decade of the twenty-first century.\textsuperscript{33}

\textsuperscript{32} Census records demonstrate these patterns. The census of 1971, for example, shows the largest communities in the greater Auckland and Wellington regions, as well as in Christchurch and parts of the central North Island (New Zealand Dept. of Statistics 1972). These communities had consolidated and grown by the 1976 census, with larger numbers starting to emerge in the other South Island regions of Otago and Southland, as well as in Waikato and Hawkes Bay, which neighbour the central plateau towns of the North Island, and in Manawatu, north of Wellington (New Zealand Dept. of Statistics 1977). Finally, ten years later, in the 1986 census, Pacific communities had stabilised and grown in these areas, and further communities were spreading just north of Wellington into Wairarapa, and also Horowhenua, which sits between Wellington and Manawatu (New Zealand Dept. of Statistics 1988).

\textsuperscript{33} An extension of this trend can also be seen by the fact that Pacific festivals are starting to become a more regular occurrence in Australia, especially in the East coast cities of Sydney and Brisbane, where communities of Pacific peoples have been growing for some time.
The 1990s and a ‘Pacific Renaissance’: A Confluence of Forces

The largest period of growth of Pacific festivals overall has occurred since the inaugural Pasifika Festival at Western Springs, Auckland, in 1993. In August 2009, when interviewing prominent musician, composer and chorister Igelese Ete, whose single ‘Groovilation’ contained the line from which the Tu Fa’atasi Festival took its name, he spoke of the vibrancy of the 1990s as a period in which Pacific art across multiple artforms experienced a surge of creativity. He called it a ‘Pacific renaissance’. Given that the Pasifika Festival started in 1993, the same year that Pacific Underground was also formed in Christchurch, and the 1990s in general saw Pacific musicians and artists come to prominence in greater numbers than ever before (Spoonley 2001), the idea that the decade was something of a watershed time for Pacific arts was already apparent, and something that other participants, such as Makerita Urale and King Kapisi, spoke of too. The question is then, why the 1990s?

There are three separate but intertwined forces that I believe provide the answers. They are directly related to the migration history of Pacific peoples in New Zealand, and can be seen as not only bringing about the significant growth of Pacific festivals witnessed during and after this time, but of also transforming the place of Pacific cultures and communities in New Zealand. They are based around a socio-political argument, a response to the marginalisation of the initial decades after migration; a socio-cultural argument, a generational ‘coming-of-age’, where Pacific peoples were positioned to broadly influence the direction of arts, culture and the public sphere for the first time; and an international argument, where global changes can be seen to have influenced the development of Pacific politics and festivals.

**The Socio-Political Argument**

As discussed above, the 1970s economic recession led to the vilification of Pacific migrants as ‘overstayers’, a period during which ‘self-serving tolerance gave way to a vicious racism’ (Kelsey 1993, p. 306, see also Spoonley 1987). The early 1980s protectionist policies of the Robert Muldoon-led government failed to revive an ailing economy, and the 1984 ‘snap’ election ushered in a new government and the period known as ‘Rogernomics’, a radical
A significant body of research demonstrates the specific detrimental outcomes that these changes brought about. These cover areas such as housing and living conditions (Cheer et al. 2002; Johnston, Poulson and Forrest 2002; Butler et al. 2003), general health and wellbeing (Pernice and Brook 1991; Brewis et al. 1998; Metcalf et al. 2000; Ministry of Health 2003; Gray 2004; Jefferys et al. 2005; Packman et al. 2005; Bean et al. 2007; Rush 2009; Sammour et al. 2009), media representation (Spoonley 1990; Pearson 1999; Pulotu-Endemann and Peteru 2001; Spoonley and Macpherson 2004; Loto et al. 2006; St John and Tasi-Mulitalo 2006; Loto 2007), and especially education (Waslander and Thrupp 1995; Wendt-Samu 1998 and 2006; Ladd and Fiske 2001; Thaman 2002 and 2003; Nakhid 2003; Henderson 2003; Kedell 2006; Otunuku and Brown 2007; Ferguson et al. 2008; Kēpa and Manu’atu 2009; Siteine 2010; Amituanai-Toloa et al. 2010). In short, by the early 1990s, Pacific peoples were disproportionately more likely to be living in poor housing conditions and be unemployed, leading to a range of poor health outcomes that themselves were a result of having less money for adequate housing, heating, clothing and food. Poor educational outcomes, often resulting from poor health and housing, resulted in higher unemployment or lower paying, lower skilled work. Ignoring causative factors of social and economic marginalisation, representations of Pacific people in the media over this time created and largely reinforced and perpetuated prevalent negative stereotypes.

Fortunately, some recent studies have shown small shifts, as Pacific peoples have become more attractive as a consumer group and moved into position where they can control their own media representations (Franklin 2003; Spoonley and Macpherson 2004; Pearson 2005; Lustyik and Smith 2010). The criticised absence of Pacific representation is visible in several texts that purport to discuss ‘New Zealand music’, or the ‘New Zealand music industry’, in which they are located as either sitting outside the mainstream as a kind of ‘cultural other’, or are simply absent (Davey and Puschmann 1996; Schieff 2002; Eggerton 2003; Larson 2003). Gareth Shute has written two books on New Zealand music, one on hip hop (2004) and one on ‘rock’ (2008). The hip hop title features Pacific (and Māori) artists predominantly. John Dix displays a more balanced approach in his updated version of Stranded in Paradise (2005), where he outlines the dramatic change between the first and second editions, 1988 and 2005, as being the growth of Pacific artists. Furthermore, texts covering New Zealand music ‘traditions’ from either a Western Art/classical or ‘World’ music/encyclopedia viewpoint, are almost devoid of anything outside a bicultural European/Māori focus (Thomson 1991; Bolwell and Kaa 1998; Psathas 1998; McLean et al. 2009), with the exception of a few offerings (Thomas 1998; Broughton et al. 2000; Mitchell and Shuker 2005).
In considering the policy changes of the 1970s through to the early 1990s, and the disproportionate effect that they had on Pacific communities, I argue that the development of festivals can, in part, be viewed as a response to these marginalising forces, a self-conscious assertion of pride and place in the face of continued adversity. Indeed, the marginal position of Pacific communities by the early 1990s necessitated that something be done. In discussing the origins of the Pasifika festival and the particular socio-cultural moment in which it was initiated, I asked SPINDA founder Roy Vaughan to reflect on why, he thought, it was in the early 1990s that the ‘time was right’:

In 1991, there was something like 30% unemployment, and Pacific peoples were the worst affected by it, especially amongst men. So, I think, within the Island community there was, not shame, but you know, men who worked hard at the freezing works and places that had all gone, there was a lot of frustration, a feeling of uselessness. I felt it coming back from the Islands. Although they are much more hard up than New Zealand, even in urbanised Suva people could go and dig a garden and have food and retain dignity and take stuff down to the market. But you come back to Auckland and it’s so crassly materialistic and money-driven. Without money you are nothing, and it’s very hard to retain dignity when you’re made unemployed. So, in a sociological sense, there was a need to create something which put some pride into the communities.  

In terms of economic development, there was a whole lot of money going into the Islands at a grass roots level, and a whole lot of stuff coming back from the Islands at the grass roots, so we thought, why don’t we try and emphasise that a bit more. That helps families. If they have stuff they can introduce at Pasifika, then there is the Otara market...So Pasifika is a once a year focus on the Pacific and what it does, but then you have other little events and shops around the place. I think the unemployment and the social change that people had to go through, myself included, made people think, well shouldn’t we try to do something?

...Also, the first generations came in the ‘70s, and suddenly in the ‘90s you have first generations born here in New Zealand coming of age. And those who were born here were different people, they were educated here and you could see the difference, their outlooks were different. They were striving for different things, wanted to achieve in education and so forth. So I wanted Pasifika to be a forward-looking festival so it would evolve and not be locked in time.

Roy’s comments support the argument of response to marginalisation. The success of Pasifika provided an impetus towards positive (re)affirmations of

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35 This same opinion was offered by Rosanna Raymond, who, as a Pacific Sista, co-ordinated the fashion show at the first Pasifika Festival, in a debate about the nature of Pacific festivals, at The 2011 Pasifika Festival fakakaukau debate series, 9 March 2011.
cultural pride through the site of public festivalisation. By this time, as Roy also points out, new generations of Pacific peoples, born and raised in New Zealand, were coming of age, and they were able to assist in this creative response.

**The Socio-Cultural Argument: Key People and Social Agencies**

In spite of the statistics, by the early 1990s increasing numbers of New Zealand born and/or raised Pacific peoples were coming of age, entering the workforce, receiving higher educations and moving into positions where they were able to influence and affect change for Pacific concerns and communities. These new generations were vastly different than their migrant elders, with different worldviews, cultural experiences, aspirations and expectations, and many worked hard to better the position of Pacific peoples (Anae 2001; Macpherson 2001a, 2001b, 2004 and 2006; Spoonley 2001; Fairbairn-Dunlop and Makisi 2003). Some of these changes are reflected in developments like the establishment of the Pacific Business Development Trust and the Tautai Contemporary Pacific Arts Trust, both in 1985, the weekly television news and current affairs show, *Tagata Pasifika*, in 1987, the Ministry for Pacific Island Affairs in 1990, the Pacific community radio station Radio 531pi in 1993, the Pacific Arts Committee as part of Creative New Zealand in 1994 and their annual Arts Pasifika Awards in 1996.

Part of the reason for the development of Pacific festivals is therefore generational, occurring once the first generations of New Zealand-born and/or raised Pacific peoples began to assert themselves politically and culturally, and were in positions to enact change. Part of the explanation for this movement thus revolves around key people and agencies.36

When interviewing current Pasifika Festival director, Ole Maiava, he was adamant that infrastructural changes along with strong key personnel provided the impetus for the renaissance of Pacific arts in the 1990s:

> *Growing up, in the early days, there was always this negative…and any negative press around the Pacific community affected all Pacific people so, in*

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36 A parallel for this occurs in the development of Carnival in London in the 1970s, as the first generations of locally-born West Indian migrants began to politically and culturally assert themselves (Cohen 1980).
some ways, the Pacific Business Development Trust [established in 1985 as a charitable trust] were not only trying to develop business but were also trying to find ways of trying to find the positives in what Pacific people could do rather than how our media used to concentrate on the negative...I think it goes back to MASPAC [the Māori and South Pacific Arts Council, part of the Queen Elizabeth Arts Council, now Creative New Zealand] and the council having a Pacific Arts Committee wanting to do stuff. There was a lot more aid for new scholarships; it was physically noticeable that there was more help for [Pacific peoples] to do things. So we all gravitated towards each other, especially in the arts...The thing that really made a difference was those PEP schemes [Project Employment Schemes of the 1980s], like Summer City for example. They offered another way for artists to access some sort of money to do projects.

In terms of key people in key positions, he continued:

There was also a whole movement in the health area as well. Again, it’s pivotal around certain groups, certain people, and those people are still pivotal. It may not be them anymore, but it’s their offspring. It’s like-minded people who understood that it wasn’t easy but who wouldn’t lie down. If someone said, ‘no you can’t do that’, they’d find another way of doing it. The system in those days, the interface wasn’t very good. There were all these staggered steps to get from A to B. We could only influence from the outside, and every now and then we would go inside the animal, like when we got together and voted Ete onto MASPAC.

As a demonstration of the connected nature of the Pacific arts community, the fashion show of the inaugural Pasifika Festival was co-ordinated by the Pacific Sistas. Ole, along with one of his students, David Sa’ena, assisted. The next year, both became part of the Tu Fa’atasi Festival in Wellington, and the Pacific Sistas co-ordinated the fashion show that was part of the multimedia concert. This concert brought together many artists who became influential in their fields, such as hip hop musicians King Kapisi and Tha Feelstyle, dancer Neil Ieremia, violinist Sam Konise and opera singer Iosefa Enari. An accompanying art exhibition was run by Eric Ngan, a student of artist and festival producer Michael Tuffrey. Eric went on to manage Auckland City Council’s events department, under which Pasifika sits. By this time, performing arts collective Pacific Underground had been formed in Christchurch, and members Oscar Kightley and Dave Fane wrote the play A Frigate Bird Sings, which became the centrepiece of the 1996 Tu Fa’atasi festival. For the 1998 festival, composer Igelese Ete, whose elder brother had been a member of MASPAC, created the musical Classical Polynesia, produced by Makerita and featuring Iosefa Enari alongside emerging Pacific talent.
Jonathan Lemalu, Ben Makisi, and Aivale Cole, who have all become established opera singers. Members of Pacific Underground also performed several times at the Pasifika Festival over the years, before member Tanya Muagututia was hired as a member of the Pasifika team in 2007, working alongside Ole. As well as these familiar artists, names of other people were frequently mentioned as pivotal during the course of my fieldwork. Many, like Eric Ngan, act behind-the-scenes, having worked over the years within various councils and arts organisations to promote, support, and advocate for Pacific arts and festivals.

In a similar fashion, the majority of people who have had central roles in the initiation or the running of other Pacific festivals around the country are what Tupuola calls ‘edgewalkers’ (2004), or have what Mila-Schaaf terms ‘polycultural capital’ (2010). They frequently work within education, health or other social or (local) government agencies and are able to negotiate the interface between this institutionalised world and the needs of their communities. They have also been able to utilise their positions and networks to bring together other community leaders and find the necessary means and resources to make festivals happen. This was pertinently demonstrated during the fieldwork carried out at the Auckland and Wellington Pasifika festivals, where the ability to met community expectations and needs within the frameworks of local government policy and procedure, called ‘cultural competencies’ in Wellington and ‘community capabilities’ in Auckland, was paramount.

In Wellington, Marie Retimanu-Pule and Bessie Fepulea’i were the key council staff who interacted between the communities, via the Pacific Advisory Group, and the events team, who were ultimately responsible for the festival. Bessie, also heavily involved with the Tu Tāngata Wellington Polyfest, and Marie, were both able to utilise their own (community) networks to assist in the staging of the event, key contacts (or cultural competencies) that the events team did not possess. In Auckland, with much larger operational staff requirements, key people were intricately connected through all aspects of the festival. In a similar fashion to Marie and Bessie and the Pacific Advisory Group in Wellington, the village co-ordinators are
ultimately the interface between their respective communities and the Pasifika team. The Pasifika team, as representatives of the Council, interacted on a daily basis with community members who were performers, stallholders, volunteers, or otherwise involved, and again had to negotiate the space between community needs and expectations and council procedure.

**Social Agencies and Businesses**

As well as key people, the support of a wide range of agencies, institutions, government departments and non-governmental organisations has been crucial in the success of festivals. Significant and mutually beneficial relationships have been established between organisers and agencies, where agencies use festivals as opportunities to engage with Pacific communities. In return the festivals are supported in a range of ways, such as through the stallholder fees they pay, which, being significantly higher than for community groups, provide an important source of revenue, and through general sponsorship, whether financial or through the provision of in-kind support, such as services or goods that act as competition prizes or giveaways.

In terms of businesses, support is largely confined to Auckland and to the larger festivals. For craft, clothing and especially food stallholders, the number of festivals in Auckland (in general) can provide smaller, Pacific-oriented commercial operations with significant, semi-regular revenue opportunities. The most highly visible of these that I saw during my fieldwork were the very popular pineapple or watermelon with ice-cream stalls that appear at a range of festivals. The largest Pacific festivals, the original Polyfest and Pasifika, with audiences of upwards of 100,000 and 200,000 respectively, now attract significant large-scale commercial sponsorship. For these businesses, being associated with the festivals provides them with visibility as well as being seen as supportive of Pacific communities (Talo 2008). Air New Zealand, for example, has been a sponsor of the Pasifika Festival for a number of years, while new mobile phone company, 2Degrees, sponsored the 2010 festival, providing free ten minute calls into the Pacific and handing out cardboard fans, where their logo had
been modified to incorporate the frangipani flower, one of that year’s festival icons.

More consistent, across festivals large and small, is the involvement of non-commercial enterprises, which use festivals as opportunities to disseminate key information and messages, and engage with the Pacific communities. This was evident at not only the two central festivals observed, but also, to varying degrees, at other Pacific festivals attended during the course of this research and something discussed with all festival organisers. Again, support provides agencies with a high level of visibility, and where they are seen as supportive of Pacific communities. More importantly though, festivals provide a medium through which culturally-specific methods of delivering key information can be adopted and targeted at a specific audience. In a discussion with the (former) Pacific Manager of a large government organisation, who support and are present at a number of festivals, this was identified as a key reason why they attend (T Fiso, interview, 27 July 2009, see also Talo 2008, pp. 106-107). The agencies present at festivals differ from festival to festival, and from city to city, but they generally fall into three categories:

- Government departments and agencies, such as Departments of Labour, Internal Affairs and Immigration, Ministries of Social Development and Pacific Island Affairs, the Office of Ethnic Affairs, Electoral Enrolment Centre, Police and Fire Service, Career Services, Accident Compensation Corporation, and Creative New Zealand. In addition, political parties sometimes have stalls.
- Health and wellbeing organisations, either nationally-recognised bodies such as Breastscreen Aotearoa, Heart Foundation, or Smokefree, or local health agencies and trusts, which are often Pacific-oriented. As a method of engagement, these agencies frequently offer a range of free health checks on the day.
- Educational institutions such as universities and polytechs.

The success of festivals as engagement methods is judged anecdotally as well as by evaluations carried out by several festivals, as festival organisers and stallholder agencies I spoke with told me. The scale of agency involvement in festivals across the country, at both Pacific and non-Pacific events, indicate that the mutually beneficial relationship is successful. This concept has been so successful that a small number of Pacific festivals were developed
specifically for this purpose: the currently one-off festivals held in the Wairarapa in 2008, and West Auckland’s Enua Ola Festival in 2010, and the annual Pacific in the Park festival, also held in West Auckland. Porirua’s Creekfest also falls into this category.

As with key people, this support in the staging of Pacific festivals can also be situated within a generational argument. As the size of Pacific communities have grown in size and have become entrenched not only have Pacific peoples come into positions where they have been able to influence and affect change, but organisations, businesses and services have developed specific Pacific strategies in recognition of the importance of engaging with Pacific communities in a manner that is culturally appropriate, and that mainstream methods of engagement do not always achieve.

*Top-Down or Bottom-Up: Who Controls Pacific Festivals?*

The themes of key people, networks and social agencies are closely related to the issue of control of Pacific festivals. This issue is best understood as being situated within a broad middle ground. They are neither solely top-down nor bottom-up, and perception and reality are, more often that not, the same thing. All festivals exist with a degree of institutional support, whether in terms of sponsorship, monetary or in-kind, collecting stallholder fees, or through personnel. Within this support is the role of the city councils in the localities in which festivals are held. While local councils run the largest of the festivals, in Auckland and Wellington, with significant buy in from the local communities, and the overall responsibility for the delivering of Auckland’s Polyfest sits with a contracted events company (although in conjunction with the host school), the remaining festivals are run from the communities with buy-in from local councils, trusts and organisations.

More importantly, over all the festivals, the people in charge of running the events, from the largest to the smallest, are people with significant networks into their respective communities and are able to negotiate the interface between them and the institutional needs of running publicly-funded events. As the majority of people organising the smaller festivals work in the public service, whether it be education, health, or other government departments or
community organisations, they are versed in working within institutional frameworks. The two Pasifika festivals run through local councils are organised by individuals well-known within local Pacific communities, although more direct connections and communications are made through the Pacific Advisory Group in the case of Wellington, and through the village co-ordinators for Pasifika Western Springs. Again, many of these people are educators, health workers, and community leaders.

This presents an overall picture of Pacific festivals as primarily run by Pacific people through a controlled combination of both top-down and bottom-up approaches. This image is, in fact, largely true, due to the fact that, to operate successfully, the festivals necessarily involve large numbers of Pacific peoples. All festivals are necessarily dependent, to some degree, on top-down institutional support. The success of festivals however, is just as dependent on the successful engagement of Pacific communities in organising their directions. Therefore, of key importance, are the relationships between the people who run the festivals and the communities from which Pacific peoples come.

Those who could be seen to represent top-down control (in terms of institutions and funding) are people who are a part of the communities from which festival participants and attendees are drawn. The bottom-up approach can only prove successful to the point at which outside (or top-down) assistance becomes necessary, and to become a sustainable event this does become necessary. Just as crucially however, the top-down approach can only succeed by the degree to which the communities are involved in the process. More so, it is a truism of any community-oriented festival that without the support and involvement of the community at all levels, success is unlikely. One thing that is certainly true is that all Pacific festivals, with the exception of the very first, the Polynesian Festival, started at the grassroots level, when people from within the Pacific communities came together and decided to create them.
The International Argument

Appadurai has noted a complexity in undertaking cultural studies is the transnational and transcultural flows in which people now live (1991, p. 192). As a result, he calls ‘fruitless’ any study that does not take into consideration a broad understanding of these transculturalisms. With this in mind, the final factor in understanding the festivalisation of Pacific cultures is to situate this festivalisation within the broad international context in which this development can also be understood.

As the literature review noted, an international move towards the festivalisation of society has occurred since the end of the Second World War, as festivals have come to be viewed as tools for economic and tourism development, the regeneration of urban spaces, and symbols of community and collective identity (Gibson and Connell 2005; Ryan 2006). As a result of the unprecedented global migration of people that has occurred since this time, an especially visible aspect of this festivalisation has been the development of diasporic, migrant and other ‘multicultural’ festivals. As a result, many aspects of contemporary societies have been festivalised. In line with Appadurai’s conception of the ‘global cultural economy’ as a series of five landscapes (1990, 1991), the growth and symbolic importance of festivals is such that I propose a sixth, a festivalscape, can be used to help understand the cultural geographies of particular localities.

In this sense, the festivalisation of Pacific cultures in New Zealand can be understood within a globalised festivalscape, or move towards festivalisation, as a particular manifestation of the position of Pacific peoples and cultures within New Zealand’s multicultural ethnoscape. In a similar fashion, this also explains why the other predominant ‘cultural’ festivals in New Zealand’s festivalscape, meaning they are prominently mediated and staged throughout the country in many towns and cities, are the Chinese New Year/Lantern, Diwali and Matariki: Māori New Year festivals. This is because, alongside Pacific peoples, the other significant diasporic demographics are the equally broad Asian and Indian diasporic communities, while the Matariki festivals represent a more recent addition to the event calendars of many localities and celebrated on a wider and public scale. On a more localised level, it also
explains why the Pacific festivals developed in areas where there were significant Pacific communities first and then, as the Pacific diaspora spread and settled throughout New Zealand, other festivals were established to reflect the changing cultural geographies of those localities. This notion can also be applied, for example, to the spread of Carnival throughout the Caribbean diaspora (Cohen 1980; Nurse 1999), the importance of the Nisei Week festival for Japanese Americans (Kurashige 2002), St Patrick’s Day parades for Irish Americans (Marston 2002), as well as the spread of Chinese New Year/Lantern and Diwali festivals both in New Zealand (Johnson 2007; Voci 2008) and internationally (Lau 2004; Garg 2006; Nadeau, Lee and Nadeau 2010).

Political change can also be situated within this frame. The so-called ‘Pacific renaissance’ of the 1990s I have proposed, followed the ‘Māori renaissance’ of the 1980s (Webster 1998). Many participants involved in Pacific arts and festivals have been active in their support of Māori, in line with the ‘axis of equivalence’ outlined above. The words of two – ‘we knew that for Pacific Islanders to make headway in New Zealand, we needed to make sure that Māori got theirs [rights]’ and ‘it’s important to align ourselves with Māoridom…to let that path go first, and then we follow’ – summarise the feelings of many well (respectively, W ‘Ilolahia and J Leota-Ete, interviews, 31 May 2010 and 7 August 2009). The Ngā Tamatoa political movement were key drivers of the Māori renaissance, and were active at the same time and had close affiliations with the Polynesian Panthers. The Panthers demonstrated their solidarity with Ngā Tamatoa by frequently supporting and standing alongside them in protest, and provided security for their landmark 1978 occupation of Bastion Point (Anae et al. 2006).

As well as domestic events, there were a number of international movements that also influenced this politicisation of both Māori and Pacific peoples. Paramount to these were the civil rights movement in America and the Black Panther Movement, as well as wider societal influences of the anti-Vietnam

37 And see Smith 1999, pp. 108-115, who similarly situates the Māori renaissance within a broader global context of the post-Second World War world and post-colonial independence movements.

38 Balme and Carstensen (2001, p. 38) notes a similar pattern in theatre arts, where Māori began to explore issues of politics, identity and culture in the 1970s, with Pacific peoples following in more recent years, as the new generations of New Zealand-borns came of age.
War protests, the independence movements throughout Africa and the Pacific, the American Indian movement, the campaign for nuclear disarmament, and opposition to sporting contact with the apartheid-era South Africa (Harris 2004; Anae et al. 2006).

While these events are far removed from the notion of Pacific festivals, this globalised context is important in understanding the ‘transcultural flows’ that influenced both changes to society in general, and specific people who have been influential in advocating for the advancement of Pacific peoples, arts and culture and, in turn, creating the socio-cultural space in which the festivalisation of Pacific cultures has occurred.

**Conclusion**

This chapter has presented two chronological histories – of Pacific peoples in New Zealand and the subsequent festivalisation of Pacific cultures – in order to demonstrate how the former shaped the latter. The story of how Pacific peoples migrated to New Zealand in large numbers and established communities across the country influenced and created the environments in which festivals later developed and flourished. The first important festivals – the Polyfests – started to be established in the decade in which migration peaked, the 1970s. This spread across into the 1980s, when further Polyfests began and the first example of the Pasifika model started in Wellington. The major period of festival development though, has occurred since the Pasifika Festival was first held, in 1993.

By this time, the initial marginalisation that migrants faced, and subsequent policy changes throughout the 1980s and early 1990s that disproportionately affected Pacific peoples, had reached a point at which a response was needed. At the same time, the first generations of New Zealand-born and/or raised Pacific peoples were coming of age. A growing number began to attain positions in which they could influence the direction of policy and support with respect to Pacific communities. At the same time, as a result of these changes, Pacific arts experienced a ‘renaissance’. Part of this flourishing came in the form of festivals, the development of which grew especially in the first decade of the twenty-first century. In a broader context, international societal
changes – a general move towards festivalisation and the politicisation and assertion of indigenous and diasporic communities, identities and cultures – were also influential.

Before moving on to the discussion chapters, the history of Pacific festivals in New Zealand requires one further exploration, that of the two main festivals at which ethnographic observations were carried out. These edited stories, especially in the case of the nineteen-year old Pasifika Festival, are presented in the next chapter.
This chapter focuses on the histories of the festivals at which ethnographic fieldwork was carried out in early 2010. I present the history of Wellington’s Positively Pasifika festival first because, as a more recent addition to the Pacific festivalscape, its history is shorter and more easily told. The story of Auckland’s Pasifika Festival, recounted to me through many of those most centrally involved in its almost-twenty year history, follows. Because of the differing ways in which these histories were recorded – Positively Pasifika predominantly through written records, Pasifika Auckland through personal reflections – I have adopted different writing styles to reflect this.

4.1 Wellington’s Positively Pasifika Festival

The origins of the Positively Pasifika Festival can be traced to a September 2001 Wellington City Council decision to create a ‘Pacific Islands stakeholder group’ (WCC 2003). A draft proposal for the establishment of the Pacific Advisory Group was presented at a community forum in November 2002. A revised proposal was presented at a second forum, in May 2003, which was then adopted by council, and the Pacific Advisory Group (hereafter PAG) was officially established in December 2003 (WCC 2010). The group is comprised two representatives from each of the seven most populous Pacific communities in Wellington – Sāmoa, the Cook Islands, Tonga, Niue, Tokelau, Fiji, and Tuvalu – with an additional Sāmoan representative elected in consideration of the community’s larger size and diversity. Each incarnation of the group sits for a term of three years, with the first PAG running between 2004 and 2007. Partly to facilitate the relationship between PAG and the council, a Pacific Advisor role was established in 2004.

39 Throughout 2001, the council had been working with various communities to develop an Intercultural Relationships Framework, designed to promote access to council services, improving communication with communities and involvement in Council decision making processes. This was adopted in September 2001.
Tala Cleverly was involved with the first PAG. Although initially reluctant due to her age and because of a belief that others should ‘have their turn’, she stood because her name was put forward and, in her own words, so she could be there when it started. Although not remaining with the group for the full term, Tala raised and pushed the idea of a festival, which was quickly supported by the group. Part of the reason why the group wanted a festival was that there had previously been Pacific festivals, and because the Chinese New Year and Diwali festivals had already been established in Wellington. Tala lobbied the manager of the city communities unit under which the Pacific Advisor position sits. A significant period occurred during which the PAG discussed ideas and planned for a festival, and also made approaches to the council for funding; or, as PAG chairperson Ida Faiumu-Isa’ako stated in her speech at the inaugural festival, ‘kept on knocking at Wellington City Council’s doors until approval was given’. Part of the success in gaining approval for the festival was also attributed to a new manager within the city communities unit, who was supportive of the notion of a Pasifika Festival and who helped oversee the idea come to fruition.

The Inaugural Festival

By March 2007, the approval had been given for a festival in early 2008 (PAG 2007a). Initially it was mooted that the festival be held after the major Pasifika and Polyfest festivals in Auckland in March, in order to target visitors to Auckland, however this was abandoned after the date was set for mid-February to fit in with the council’s ‘Summer City’ events calendar. By June, initial planning was underway, involving the development of a working relationship between the council’s events team, the Pacific Advisor, and PAG, but the ‘colossal task’ that lay ahead was noted, especially as the end of the first three-year term was approaching with the election of a new PAG and review needing to be completed before the festival became a reality (PAG 2007b).

The first PAG suffered from an absence of clear direction and expectations about its role, resulting in some disillusionment among members. As a
consequence, the festival took a long time to come to fruition. The PAG meeting minutes from September 2007, less than five months before the festival, demonstrate this, with many of the basic components of the event still needing to be finalised (PAG 2007c). The festival’s organisation further suffered in that the key person from the council’s events team, an American with little previous contact with Pacific peoples, left the council after this time. In order to ensure that the festival went ahead as planned, Chris Morley-Hall, the director of the popular Cuba Street Carnival, was brought in to oversee the remainder of the organisation. In order to maximise exposure and ensure success, the festival was branded under the council’s successful Summer City programme.

Despite the ‘teething problems’ experienced, Morley-Hall reported that, despite intermittent wind and rain, the festival attracted a ‘staggering’ 6,000 people, with the eleven food stalls selling out. As well as highlighting areas for future improvements, the report also made references to an issue that was very much evident during my time with the festival in 2010. The report shows that there were some problems and tensions that arose due to the nature of the festival being funded through various council departments and that the running of the event, likewise, involved not just events staff, but also the input of city communities staff, and PAG members.

2009: A Successful Follow Up

The success of the inaugural festival was such that funding for the 2009 festival was increased by 50%. Giving the event some sense of security and permanency, the festival also became a fixed part of the council’s annual budget, removing the need to submit annual applications. In order to assist with cost minimisation, the festival was ‘piggy-backed’ to the Waitangi Day celebrations held a week later, moving from Frank Kitts Park to the nearby and larger Waitangi Park, and meaning that the infrastructure, park and park set-up were identical, and remained in place during the week between events. The festival was again marketed under the ‘Summer City’ banner, receiving exposure through its generic campaigns, as well as specific strategies that

41 Absolutely Positively Pasifika Festival 2008 Event Report provided by Wellington City Council City Communities division.
were developed to target Pacific communities. The most important of these were a naming-rights sponsorship deal with the national Pacific radio station Niu FM, which included on-air presence and promotion on-site on festival day, and a strategy of word-of-mouth (WOM) promotion. Word-of-mouth was noted as a ‘key strategy’ in disseminating information to communities and, as such, a schedule of ‘wom opportunities’ was developed by the council’s Pacific Advisor and included ethnic forums and seminars, social gatherings and the churches, as well as through the PAG members themselves.

A second successful festival masked continuing questions surrounding who was ultimately responsible for the event, and also the fact that the majority of the preparations occurred in the four weeks before festival day. This situation occurred due to a number of factors largely revolving around a miscommunication between the events team, the council’s Pacific Advisor and the PAG members, around expectations and what could be delivered. The situation was brought to light when Bessie Fepulea’i, who would take over the Pacific Advisor position and who had previously been involved with the running of the Tu Tāngata Polyfest, attended the October 2008 PAG meeting and, realising the disconnection, raised her concerns. By the time the situation had been unravelled and assessed, by the beginning of December, it became apparent that many preparations had not been completed. Examples of the problems uncovered included that there were nineteen food stalls where space only allowed for twelve, that no stallholders had been charged for their spaces, despite this being in the festival plan, and that no records had been kept of which VIPs had confirmed their attendance. Despite these setbacks, resources were pulled together and the festival was another success. Featuring on the television show Tagata Pasifika, Wellington’s mayor, Kerry Prendergast, stated that it had already become an ‘iconic event’ on the council’s event calendar and its future was ‘secure’ (Tagata Pasifika 2009). The festival de-brief again noted the tensions around managing the differing expectations between council and PAG members, and the wider communities, and suggested that the roles of the various business units who contributed to the event needed to be defined, and clarification around who managed and was responsible for which parts was undertaken.
The 2010 Festival
A final important point to the festival’s story occurred in 2010, the year at which ethnographic observations were to be undertaken. After several months preparations and one hectic week in the lead up to the festival, the event was cancelled on the day due to severe weather conditions. An alternative ‘festival’ was staged at a local church hall, thanks to the efforts of the PAG chair, and gave those able to attend and the stallholders the chance to buy and sell food and crafts, as well as see the two advertised headlining performers.\textsuperscript{42} An alternative venue or the ability to hold the festival under a giant marquee, to combat Wellington’s infamously changeable weather, therefore became the main priority for the advisory group in planning for future festivals, as well as continuing to improve the relationship between the council, PAG and the communities.

4.2 The Pasifika Festival
The history, or more appropriately, the story of the Pasifika Festival was recounted to me primarily through the stories of a number of key people who provided personal insight into its development; from the original idea for a ‘South Pacific Week’ festival, through to its inception as a week-long series of events, its consolidation into two key events – the festival day and what has become Westfield Style Pasifika – and the rapid growth since the late-1990s that has seen Pasifika become celebrated as the biggest event of its kind in the world. This story has been recounted to me primarily by those most centrally involved in its almost-twenty year life. Because of the nature in which this information was given to me, informal narrative-driven interview situations, I find it appropriate to record the story of Pasifika in much the same manner. As Smith (1999, p. 143) asserts, storytelling should be seen as a valuable research method in approaching research with indigenous peoples and issues, and it is in this manner that the story of Pasifika is told through these voices.

Roy Vaughan is the former New Zealand Herald journalist whose original concept led to the creation of the South Pacific Island Nations Development Association (hereafter SPINDA), who then developed his concept into a

\textsuperscript{42} Events around the 2010 festival, its cancellation and alternative staging, are discussed further in the next chapter, Festival Logistics, Leadership and Development.
working model. A key member of this group was Bill Te Ariki, the Cook Islands Consular General at the time. Of the seven current and former festival directors, I was able to speak with four: Nancy Sandhoy (1995-1997), Pitsch Leiser (1998 and ‘99), Michelle Khan (2000 and ‘01), and Ole Maiava (since 2007). Two festival directors, Nancy Sheehan (1994) and Mere Lomaloma Elliot (2002-2006), both sadly passed away during 2009. Their central roles within the Pasifika festival, as well as their long service to and advocacy for the Pacific communities, are acknowledged here; Nancy as central to the early years, and Mere, who oversaw the festival’s largest period of growth. Other key Pasifika staff were also interviewed: Rebecca Knox, operations manager (part of the festival team since late 2004); Tanya Muagututi’a, entertainment director/communications co-ordinator (since the 2008 festival); and Leehane Stowers, artistic co-ordinator (part of the festival team since late 2007). Finally, this story is also informed by the voices of community leaders Will ‘Ilolahia and the Reverend Mua Strickson-Pua.

The festival’s longevity and the number of people interviewed, each voice an important addition to the tale, has resulted in a story unable to be included in its entirety within this thesis. Here I can only offer a summary, an abridged version that focuses primarily on how and why the festival was brought into existence, providing the socio-cultural background and situating the research historically. Beyond this, I (very) briefly trace the main themes of the festival’s development, from its early years through to today’s colossal celebration.

How Pasifika Came to be a Festival
Roy Vauhgan, a Briton and originally a seafarer in the navy, migrated to New Zealand in 1964. Turning to journalism, he became a reporter for the New Zealand Herald and held two portfolios: Maritime and Pacific Island affairs, the latter for which he travelled widely throughout the Pacific over the course of twenty years. In the late 1980s, Roy was approached by then-Auckland mayor Cath Tizard, who asked him to become involved in a sister city relationship with Fukuoka and to organise Japan Week expos. These were, he told me, ‘an embryonic Pasifika…when I later came round to thinking about
Pasifika, I looked to my experience with Japan weeks, and the main thing I learnt was that if you have a good community project, it basically runs itself.

After this time, Roy took up a position with the South Pacific Forum Secretariat and was based out of Fiji for two years. During this engagement he spent a lot of time travelling around various Island nations, and his work involved staying for a number of weeks at a time, with various friends and their families. Towards the end of the assignment, attending a Pacific Islands News Association (PINA) conference in Pago Pago, American Sāmoa, he met an old Herald colleague:

*A friend of mine, Jim Irvine...we were having a beer one day, and we were having a PINA conference in Auckland within a year of me being home, and because I had been involved with the organisation, they asked me if I could help arrange it. Jim said, why don’t you organise a South Pacific week to go with it, like you did with the Japan weeks. I thought about it. I wasn’t so sure if it would sit with it, but I thought I’d give it a go.*

Upon his return to New Zealand, in February 1991, he created the original document from which Pasifika evolved. The scale of the proposal and the time in which it needed to be achieved meant that it was unable to be staged alongside the PINA conference in late 1991: ‘it was too soon, too short notice and the concept was a bit skewed’. Instead, the conference went ahead and Roy continued to work on the idea:

*Having associations with the Islands, I mean, Pacific Islanders are great presentation culture people, song and dance and gift giving and food providing, they are born actors. I thought, this should be a sinch really, it should be quite easy to put together, it’s just a matter of getting the vehicle off the ground.*

This vehicle came with the establishment of SPINDA:

*I took an easy way into this. At that stage, I was more familiar with Pacific Islands’ government people than I was with local community groups and churches. I thought, well, I know Bill Te Ariki, Cook Islands consular general, and I know Alister Martin, Papua New Guinea consular general. I went to people I knew, and friends. So we had an informal meeting, and we decided that we would form this group to make it happen.*

Bill reflects: ‘Roy came and saw me about the proposal to create Pasifika and I thought, why not? Auckland has festivals around the city, but not what we
were looking at, and the only other [Pacific] one was Polyfest’. The Reverend Strickson-Pua also reflected on the fact that no festivals existed prior to Pasifika, apart from Polyfest: ‘I think for Pacific religious communities we’ve always had our various internal community celebrations…but they were fragmented depending on your congregation. We were mixing but not to the extent that we now do today’.

The first thing SPINDA worked to achieve was to create a workable model out of Roy’s original idea. This model became based around a community day, an evening fashion event, and a trade show. The trade show presented the greatest difficulty because, as Roy told me, ‘the people who could make them happen then couldn’t see it happening, except for people in travel and tourism in the Islands, like the Solomon Islands and others, they could see the value, but the others couldn’t’. Therefore, SPINDA focused on the community day and fashion show. From the outset, Roy envisaged the festival day as one that encompassed the broadest possible range of what constituted Pacific cultures:

> I made a presentation on the community day. I suggested that we look at performances, handcraft sales, that we don’t make it a rigid cultural event, that we make it an event which allowed the Pacific Island community to grow, in other words, evolve as part of the Auckland community. So, if the songs were reggae style with island lyrics, that was OK. If they brought in handicrafts and new items…it allowed for evolution, cultural and commercial evolution. So it would be modern. That way younger people would be attracted to it and would be able to develop the festival as it went on.

Using SPINDA’s significant networks of contacts, details of the proposed event were disseminated to communities and churches, and feedback sought. Some of the elders expressed their desire to see Pasifika as purely a ‘traditional event’: ‘we had to talk them through it, we had to say we’ll do something you know, we’ll have three stages, and we’ll have one that is for traditional song and dance, one that is modern, and one for kids’.

**Bringing together the Council, the Churches and the Communities**

With the basic concept devised and agreed to, the process of finding a venue and funding began. Western Springs was identified as the ideal venue because of its natural surroundings, with plenty of space for families, and
because of its central location and proximity to public transport options. The
Auckland City mayor, Les Mills, was approached. Bill:

Les Mills was very supportive. He had heard about it and had been waiting
for us to come over. Auckland City was known as the biggest Polynesian city
in the world, so it wouldn’t have looked very good if we had taken it
somewhere else, so that is probably why he was so supportive. Once he knew
it was going to work, he gave us the venue.

Roy remembers the meeting as being ‘fantastic’:

Within fifteen minutes he was convinced, within an hour he had offered
Western Springs and committed council support. He could really see that this
was it. It had helped that I had done the Japan weeks, because I had a track
record...the council was really presented with a workable framework and all
they had to do was make it actually happen. We acted as an advisory group,
holding regular meetings to discuss progress, and it moved along really really
well.

Bill remembers the mayor asking, ‘is it going to work’? ‘We were confident it
was going to work because of the response we got from the churches’. I asked
Bill about the importance of involving and gaining support from the
churches. ‘We always respect our churches’, he told me, ‘you can’t get any
better starting point. It’s like a 747 taking off, you need a smooth take off,
otherwise you crash, so who better?’

Reinforcing the importance of the involvement of the various Pacific
communities, the council was also asked to provide, and granted, each Island
group the use of a community hall, where they could go in the week leading
up to the festival, to weave, sing, and generally able to prepare together for
the day. In terms of issues within the communities, Roy recalls that there
were ‘no major upsets’:

One thing we did find, and that I did expect, is that there would be a lot of
rivalries, and we thought we’d turn it to an advantage, because Islanders by
nature are very competitive people, especially between Islands. The thing that
was not so easy, I was really keen to bring in the other Islands of Melanesia –
the Solomons, Vanuatu and Papua New Guinea – and Micronesia, but we
only had a smattering, very small pockets of communities. We found that we
could bring in some of those groups, for example Solomon Airlines brought in
pan pipers, and there were little communities of Tuvaluans and i-Kiribati that
could come in an perform. So, it became much broader than just Sāmoans,
Tongans, Fijians and Cook Islanders from the very first festival. I had a friend
from Fiji who’s wife was a Solomon Islander living in Auckland and who was very engaged with the community. She rounded up a group of Solomoni students and made a stall. So, there were little networks all over.

The inaugural Pasifika festival was held from 6-12 March 1993, with an estimated 30,000 people turning up to the community day. For the inaugural festival, the community day was co-ordinated by Barbara Sumner, and the fashion show by Rosanna Raymond. Says Roy:

"I think we were a little overwhelmed by the response, pleasantly. Beyond Les Mills, there was a bit of scepticism. If you’re bringing in a migrant festival into a city that already might be a bit twitchy or has been twitchy about Pacific migrants, and the numbers that there were, sometimes you’ve got to overcome a little prejudice and resistance. You’d hear the odd comments, like ‘why do we have to do this for the Islanders?’ On the other side of the coin, I went to one community meeting where one guy said, ‘what do you want us to be, performing monkeys for Palagis?’ So, on both sides, you had to talk through some of these issues. In response to the performing monkeys statement, I said, ‘this is your show, you do what you want to do, all we’re doing is providing the venue. You decide what you’re going to do, we’re not going to tell you what to do’. Once the communities realised it was their festival, it was quite different."

The Evolution of Pasifika

By its second year, as the late Nancy Sheehan’s evaluation report makes clear, the fashion show and community day had become the two key events of the festival, which had immediately come to be regarded as an event of vital importance by the Pacific communities. Reflecting the thoughts of Roy, she noted:

This is an event waiting to happen… Last year proved that when a quality framework is provided, which the Pacific Island Community can claim ownership to, the Pacific Island Community will commit to it…The Pasifika festival is an important building block in the process of the Pacific Island Community finding a voice in New Zealand…With the Pacific Island Community being over-represented in the ranks of the un-employed, lowly skilled, low education achievers, the Festival must be used to continue to turn around the perception of the perpetual victim, by profiling the significant achievements within the communities and by those that proudly state their identity.

The Issue of Community Ownership

Concerns about festival ownership and the level of community engagement, a consistent theme that remains to this day, was evident by 1994. The Pasifika
festival was initially funded as a community-driven event, seen in terms of community development, and was funded for a number of its early years from the Recreation and Community Services division of the Auckland City Council, and run in partnership with SPINDA. After the first festival, a proposal presented to the council recommended an advisory komiti (committee) be set up to act as a working party and assist in the design of the event and ensure community support. Sheehan wrote that this was not evidenced and that the council, in fact, became the working party, leading to problems. Representation across the Pacific groups was not maintained, she noted, the clear specification as to the roles of the event manager, SPINDA and the komiti were not adhered to, causing confusion and animosity, and areas in which large numbers of the Pacific communities reside within Auckland city were not involved. As a result, Sheehan, as event manager, often felt ‘directed, undermined, and abused’.

In her recommendations, Sheehan highlighted the need to develop a ‘Pasifika Komiti’ that involved other council area offices, as these offices had their own Pacific networks and could become an effective working party. She also suggested that more sensitivity to the needs of the communities was required, ‘so that each stakeholder is appropriately treated, with a degree of cultural sensitivity’. She continued:

the role of an Advisory Komiti is an integral part of the Pasifika Festival, as the Pacific Island community is made up of six main ethnic groups with their own cultural processes, and historical contention. Auckland City Council needs to understand that managing to achieve unity within its diversity requires deft management skills, and the need to introduce processes which are totally transparent and perceived to be equal.

Sheehan notes that the most successful elements of the festival are those that provide a profile for contributors, who are able to take advantage of the benefits presented to them: ‘this should become the trademark for future Pasifika festivals’.

I asked Roy about the issue of community ownership, and whether Pasifika was supposed to be driven from the bottom-up:
It had to be, it had to be. If the locals don’t turn out, it doesn’t happen. And, you can’t make them. It has to be an attractive and workable thing for the communities. In a sense, it’s like an English summer festival in the country, or the old AMP shows, there’s a little bit of a parallel there.

In fact, Roy saw Pasifika as an inevitable progression and whether it was him or not, someone would have started it:

Immigrant groups want to bring some of their culture with them and I’m an immigrant from Britain, and it’s always there in your soul, where your home is and what your original culture was. And you want to show it off to other people, and song and dance…it is the culture of the Pacific Islands. So, obviously the best way of displaying that publicly was in a festival. And we already had the schools’ traditional festival, which was different.

**Nancy Sandhoy, 1995-1997**

Until 1997, Pasifika was organised from the Western Bays Parks and Recreation office and Nancy Sandhoy, the third event co-ordinator, reflects on the early days:

We had a passion and we’d burn the midnight oil. We’d have to go beg and borrow; we’d go to Otahuhu, to shops that are only open part-time as a sideline business, and get them involved. It was giving them a profile, but also showing people what was new…For businesses and designers, it was about providing them with somewhere they could build a profile; for performers it was about paying back and acknowledging the community, as well as giving them a platform, celebrating that rich cultural diversity as one. We introduced the church choirs as part of the festival. We were quite open. If anyone asked, we thought, ‘why not?’

The Pasifika staff comprised a small group of council staff who simultaneously maintained their day-to-day jobs while pulling together resources to make the festival work. For Nancy, the involvement of community and of keeping communication channels open were important:

You can’t really do an event like this without community, so we always acknowledged them, and kept contact with them. We would write community reports and send them out. We had stallholder meetings too, where we’d meet with them and give them a layout and make sure we got a newsletter out to them. They would go out monthly, then every two weeks as we got closer, then every week just before the festival. If they came in, we made sure that we were available to talk to them as well.

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After our interview, as Roy drove me around where he lives at Mangawhai, I noted the CD of traditional English music that played in the car.
Demonstrating how the festival has evolved, the early process of programming the stages is worth noting. Nancy:

_We didn’t have auditions in those days, we just wanted anybody and everybody. We had the main stage, and that was always the cultural and the church choirs because it was the biggest strongest stage, physically. We tried a more operatic stage at one time, but that didn’t carry on. We also had up and coming youth with new music. But once it was full that was it. The person in charge of music would always bring ideas to the weekly meetings and ask if we had heard of this group or these people, and if not, then we would do some background research. It was all word of mouth though…the rest came through the churches, choirs and other cultural groups. The only auditions we did were for the fashion show. We didn’t really even audition the models; we just got their sizes. It was the fuller figure; we didn’t have the classic model figures. We’d just call everyone and anybody, until it got to the point that it was really well noticed and everybody wanted to be a part of it. But we thought that the professionals already had an avenue, so we wanted to let new people come into it and the community to be part of it._

Roy also reflected on the early years of Pasifika:

_The festival grew in strength initially and sophistication. I think the communities knew what they were going to do, because they were going to do there exactly what they do in the Islands. The older generations looked on it as a church fair. And that’s exactly what we wanted them to do, because we knew they’d be very expert at it. They’d come along, gather up the materials, train their kids in song and dance, and they did just what they wanted to do. We simply provided a much bigger venue than they were used to. And, because a lot of Islanders holiday in New Zealand during summertime, they could come down to see their relatives to coincide with the festival, and bring soaps and perfumes, and mats and carvings; so having it at that time of the year was really really good._


After the 1997 festival, the Auckland City Council underwent a significant change process, centralising and restructuring the former regional offices. This resulted in the creation of a specific events team and Pasifika was brought ‘in-house’. It is this period that also marks the moment where criticism about control of the festival became most pronounced. The role of SPINDA as a festival partner had become superfluous. As Roy notes:

_After about four years of Pasifika, we realised that SPINDA didn’t really need to exist anymore because the networking had been established between the Island communities, government and council, and the council now had a model that they could just turn over each year. And also I realised that it had_
gotten to a point where it was taking up too much of my time...and I really needed to think about earning a living.

New event co-ordinator Pitsch Leiser immediately recognised the potential of the fashion show but the limitations of it remaining a council event:

Fashion Pasifika was a great project but, within the council structure, not very sustainable long term. So quickly I was on the look out for someone who had the capability, businesswise, philosophically, artistically, to grow it and sustain it outside of the council.

After this time Fashion Pasifika became a stand-alone event, eventfully moving to a September date and becoming Westfield Style Pasifika. ‘For better of for worse, in terms of community involvement, [it] has a legacy now that is probably more valuable to the wider community than a more grassroots fashion event’, Pitsch reflects.

Pitsch also noted the unsustainability of festival:

It was a team building exercise and probably great for the Western Bays team, but sustainable it wasn’t…I came from the perspective of ‘I need to run this sustainably into the future; I need to come up with a way that it can have an ongoing life and that it can be firmly rooted back into the community’. The first thing I noticed that there was disquiet among the Pasifika community around how council was running it...So the first thing I did was identify key people within the Pacific community that I could invite to become part of a committee, the Pasifika advisory committee. I had my own contacts through my theatre management, my previous marriage to a Sāmoan-Fijian, my friends in the Pacific community, so I kinda knew some of the movers and shakers, and I asked around and got some names. Also, Pati Umaga came on board. He happened to be in the right place at the right time, and with his musical background, he was a perfect fit to look after the music and stages part of it.44

The advisory committee comprised people who were ‘connected with the wider community who could also work within the local government bureaucracy, who could work across the different dynamics and understood the challenges that may come up’.

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44 Pati Umaga of popular 1980s band The Holidaymakers, with significant music industry contacts, was credited by Pitsch as being the person who began to programme higher profile popular music acts, lifting the overall profile of the festival in the late 1990s.
The two years Pitsch co-ordinated Pasifika are marked by three developments. In 1999, WOMAD was launched in New Zealand in conjunction with the festival. Ultimately proving a difficult venue, WOMAD moved into central Auckland City the next year before moving to its current New Plymouth home, in 2001. The middle years are also characterised by the beginning of the large growth that continued into the early 2000s, as audience numbers and levels of sponsorship significantly began to increase, and more established musical acts, both Pacific and non-Pacific, wanted to be involved with the event. Finally, and an outcome of the advisory committee, the village concept was developed and launched:

The idea of the villages was essentially to create little pockets of particular identities, so you could go to Sāmoa, you could go to Fiji, you could go to Tonga. And the idea was that you would start to recognise the diversity within Pasifika. For lack of a better word, it was about trying to get more authentic. Authentic for me was also hip hop, but more authentic in terms of what is unique about us. So you had a kava ceremony, a bure, tapa cloth, particular foods, particular rhythms. And it was about bringing the Fijians together, and their hospitality would be different than the hospitality of the Tokelauans. And each village had their own energy. We had village coordinators from the beginning, with brief job descriptions, but we just tried to get people from the committee to be a bit more involved and help out. And then we became much more proactive in developing the co-ordinator role. So we started to really put time and money and investment into the villages.

Michelle Khan, 2000 and 2001

By the time Michelle Khan came to Pasifika, in July 1999, the issues of communication and community disillusionment, remaining from the 1997 internal restructure, were still evident. Coming into the role, Michelle notes that Pasifika was going into a ‘growth faze’:

budgets were out of control, there was no communication links with the communities. There was the advisory board but there was no clear branding around it, no clear ownership. It had grown from a partnership between SPINDA and Auckland city coming in to help with operations, to Auckland city really stepping in.

Michelle saw part of her job as creating some clear structures, and this can be seen as the continuation of a process in which Pasifika moved from a pulling together of resources to the introduction of professional practices:
I was all about timelines, making sure things were delivered on time. They used to control traffic management on their own with volunteers at that stage, it was done part-time, and, I take my hat off to the job that had been done…but it was time to get some clear lines of responsibility and get budgets back under control, not to say that I didn’t overspend. But I knew I was going to overspend, and it was in things like getting operations right, getting some budget put into the villages.

In order to re-engage with community, community meetings were re-established, which came about indirectly as a response to Michelle’s decision to raise the stallholder fees:

I sat down with the budgets and thought, ‘those stallholder fees look a bit low, so let’s put those up’…Seth from Radio 531pi called me one day and asked me if I knew that a community meeting had been called over the fees. I hadn’t, so he gave me the details and I turned up. And so I turn up, and it’s like walking into a lion’s den. They were like, ‘what are you doing here?’, obviously they’d heard of me, and I said, ‘well, if I don’t know what the problems are, then I can’t do anything about them’. And it was quite a turning point in terms of engagement. So we had this meeting where I ended up on the whiteboard saying what else is the problem, and what else and what else? Once it went from community development to events, there were two or three years where there had been this disconnect, and I come in, brand new, and I haven’t consulted and put the fees up because I thought they could withstand it, and I get my ass kicked. But, at the same time, it taught me that there was no real community consultation at that point, so after that…we started the monthly meetings and newsletters…They felt like they didn’t have any ownership or connection into the council. They thought that council were this wall and council got on and organised their event, and there were big issues around that. They also felt like they had been taken over by corporates and sponsors and the community was being kicked out. There was a lot of conflict. So the ways to address it were the community meetings and realising that we weren’t communicating out. Because, apart from sending out the stallholder and performer letters, we wouldn’t really do a lot else.

By 2000, attendance had risen to around 90,000 and, apart from Michelle and a full-time administrator position that was introduced, three staff worked part-time for the four months preceding the festival, with a ‘big push in the last month’, and the last week, which was a ‘nightmare’. By this time, the festival incorporated around eight or nine villages, including a loosely themed Aotearoa/New Zealand village. The professional practices that were established into management structures were also extended into the festival arena. Michelle explains:

The villages were basically just a series of stalls. There would be gateways and some stalls, and that was it, basically. There was no focal point for
interaction. Some of the villages would have performances, but performances at that stage were centred around the big stages...I wanted them to establish their presence more. The stalls were great and a great opportunity to make money, but actually presenting their culture to people as well, and part of that was creating infrastructure – stages, sound systems, and that – but also giving them a budget to organise their own thing.

The stages also required some attention:

we started looking at some of the programming on the stage, and we felt that some of the groups weren’t quite up to standard, that could really fill the stage and present. We were getting quite a lot of pressure by this time; there were far more groups that wanted to perform than we had slots. So we started looking at, as part of the bigger picture, what are the stepping stones that people could go through, Pasifika being the pinnacle really, before they went off overseas, or into mainstream festivals. There are a lot of other smaller festivals and events around, so we felt that some of the groups were suited to that, to develop their craft at those levels before they came to Pasifika.

Other forms of contemporary arts were also incorporated into the festival, with the addition of an arts arena stage providing space for theatre and comedy, poetry, and other non music-based performances that were not represented elsewhere, and involving the Tautai Pacific contemporary dance trust. At the end of Michelle’s time with Pasifika, the 2001 festival won a Creative New Zealand ‘Creative Places Award’ for Best Festival, something it had also won in 1994.

After Michelle’s departure, Pasifika was put into joint management between Mere Lomaloma Elliot and one of the council’s non-Pacific events team members. This proved to be unsuccessful as the worlds of event management and community development created a fricative environment. Michelle explains: ‘I know Mere was frustrated, just the lack of understanding. You either come from an events background, or you come from a community background, and very few people can actually do both. Mere could’. The result was that from 2003 through until the after the 2006 festival, Mere was appointed Pasifika’s festival director.

**Pasifika to the Present Day**

By late 2004, the first full-time administrator had left and Rebecca Knox was hired. Born in Niue to Pākehā parents, Rebecca completed a degree in Fine
Arts, ‘which taught me that I didn’t want to be an artist’. Afterwards, while undertaking temporary work at Southern Cross Campus in Mangere, the administrator position was advertised. She explains:

So I applied and I have a Niuean middle name, so I’m sure they thought, Rebecca Siali Knox, currently working in Mangere, and thought I was a Pacific Islander. One of the Sāmoan village co-ordinators was also working there at the time, so Mere sent her over to check me out…I ended up with a six-month contract as the administrator and then ended up being kept on.

By the time Rebecca joined Pasifika, the advisory komiti had gone through several iterations. Originally operationally involved as well as strategically, the komiti was becoming redundant as the festival team under Mere had evolved into a self-functioning working model. It was therefore disbanded, and an advisory board was set up instead. As Rebecca told me, however, the differentiation between what the komiti was and what the board was to be was not well managed and many from the komiti were elected onto the board:

They did come up with some good stuff though, for example a refined ten-day festival as a long-term goal…[but] every time they came up with a plan, the plan would involve more money and every time you did anything asking for more money, you would get stonewalled. I wrote about five reports that got stopped at manager level, or manager above that, merely because it was so far down the ranks that it didn’t have visibility about what the budget needed was. It took me about three or four years of going, you can’t have a festival that’s grown from one to two hundred thousand people, and not spend more money on toilets and traffic management, and on the stages, to get someone to listen. Fortunately, a big survey was released and said that Māori and Pacific people were the next big consumer group, so we started getting a lot more sponsorship money, because people wanted to be a part of Pasifika, and that tied us over until we moved to a new council structure, where our department manager has both good visibility upwards, as well as sitting next to us, so understands what our needs are too.

The advisory board and council eventually came to an impasse. When Mere left Pasifika, after the 2006 festival, Rebecca re-established the komiti with around five or six people, ‘just so I had some people to talk to and bounce ideas off, as there was now no festival director’. By this time, the project manager role had become too big: ‘Mere had been in charge of producing the festival but at the same time she was responsible for building all the relationships and making the strategic plan, so it just got too big’. With Mere’s departure, Rebecca convinced council management to split the role
into operations, a position she successfully gained, and a strategic/relationships role, into which stepped Ole Maiava.

**Ole Maiava, Festival Director, 2007 onwards**

Ole Maiava came to the Pasifika with an extensive background in arts and events management, as well as an equally long history in community development. By the time Pasifika started, in 1993, Ole had worked on a number of projects across the country, establishing connections with Pacific peoples in the arts, education as well as business worlds. A phone call from a friend resulted in Ole, along with a group of students, travelling to the inaugural Pasifika to document it, and he emceed the first fashion show at Chase’s Plaza, as well as on the festival day.

In between this first exposure to Pasifika, and joining the festival team as festival director, among other projects, Ole played a part in establishing two other festivals – Tu Fa’atasi in Wellington in 1994 and Porirua’s Creekfest in 2004 – as well as working with Te Wānanga o Aotearoa and running the Youth Transition Service (YTS), both in Porirua. As the contract with YTS was coming to an end, a call came from Pasifika:

> I said I would come on board only if they made it a permanent position. They were in a bit of trouble. It was October and they hadn’t hired a co-ordinator yet. After seeing how they were running it, I formulated a five-year plan. I said, ‘look, next year, 2007, we’ll run it as it is, but it will be the last one’. I had read a lot of reports that the council had done over the years, and they all pointed towards a multi-day event, so I thought, why don’t we do that? I said, ‘you know, when it started and I came here, it was a week long’. So I said we’ll start to drive forward to that end. I also wanted to take it back to its community capability, because it had sort of strayed from that and the beauty about consistency, in terms of a multi-year contract, is that you can formulate five-year strategic plans. So I developed that, they thought it was a good idea, and hired me full-time.

Going through the first festival cycle allowed Ole a chance to evaluate Pasifika and strategise its future, with two key themes of change and development emerging. Since this time, Ole has progressively worked through and redeveloped various facets of the festival. This has included, for example, finding a way to properly remunerate participants. As he explains:
One of the things I was adamant about when I came here, was that I would find a way to remunerate and begin to understand, because, and this is what happened to the co-ordinators with burn-out, they would have a whole lot of family and connections, and they would negotiate everyone down, ask people for favours, get your cousins in and all that, and that’s how it worked. But it’s not sustainable. That person burns out, and sometimes burns out relationships and bridges, and then people just say no...At the end of the day, my thing is about self-determination, and the only way you’re going to get that is to get some sort of support from somewhere. So I think that the council, that’s our role, it’s really to support the community to a point where they develop and take over it and move it on. And it’s also about acknowledging that our top acts are worth what they would get in any other top festival. And that took a bit of understanding and time.

Staff development has also been a part of this focus:

I worked with the crew that I had inherited, handpicking the best from the group and strategising how we were going to introduce new blood and develop them. Again, it’s a youth development process, a development cycle. So I began to look at the graduates from AUT’s events management, what can we do with them?

Rebecca also reflects on these developments:

We try really really hard to put as many Pacific people into positions as we can and, where we can’t, into positions where they can learn. I guess it’s like most industries, most qualified production events people are young, European, type A personalities. When you’re working with events, it’s more about your personality than it is about qualifications or experience though and, therefore, if you can get the right personality type, they will learn what they need to learn. A lot, especially with Pasifika, a lot of that stuff you just have to be there and go through it to learn. There’s no way you get that from a classroom.

Another area targeted for development was the audition process and emerging artists, something Pacific Underground’s Tanya Muagututia also sought upon joining the staff, after having had less than great experiences of performing at the festival in the past. Ole explains: ‘there was a sort of adhoc process around who was going to perform...and not too many people would show up. So I thought, let’s grow this audition thing, let’s try and get more people involved again’. Tanya:

The paper trail of the audition process before I got there was that everyone who auditioned got in, that’s how I read the process. And there would be some acts that would come back year after year, and Pasifika was the only gig they would be doing, so they weren’t actively looking for a career in music. I felt
that they were filling up space that we should have been giving to other people, people who were going to try and take it to the next level, which is what I wanted us to be offering. And I asked around, who was on the audition panel and who decided, and it was random people, so it was questionable and, for me, it didn’t make a lot of sense in terms of what the actual purpose of an auditions process is.

Another thing Ole identified was a gap where emerging artists needed music industry development:

We would get these performers who hadn’t performed in front of an audience before...So we thought, no one is developing these young people, how to do the management side of it. We had this relationship with [music industry body] APRA, but they were just doing a stage...so we utilised that connection and said, ‘why don’t you guys help us develop these young people so they have the tools to improve themselves?’ And we were able to use that as one element in applying for government funding. We also began talking to Dawn Raid. And they’re in the States, and that’s a big market, so partnering with them makes it possible that there is a way to staircase these emerging artists.

This evolved into a half-day workshop for emerging artists that is now held before the festival. Involving Pasifika staff and invited representatives from the organisations such as APRA, Creative New Zealand, the Inland Revenue Department, and the Pacific Dance Project, the workshop starts with an overview by Ole, going over details of the festival day and navigating the park. The performers are then split into five groups, rotating through each, to get information and ask questions, before ending with a shared lunch. Starting in 2008, by 2010 the workshop involved fifty participants.

The planning for March’s Pasifika festival is now a year-round activity, as Rebecca detailed. The period immediately after the festival is used for completing payments and staff recovery, holding de-brief meetings and report writing. Reports to sponsors and funding bodies are completed in May. In June some initial planning and site layout is completed, especially if changes are to be made, and the basic structure is put together. Meetings with village co-ordinators begin around July. Funding applications are usually due in July, when most sponsors are looking at their budgets, so time is spent ‘getting in their faces and talking to them’. During this month the initial planning also starts to be fleshed out and stall applications open, which are then processed in August/September. Letters of acceptance and invoices
are issued by October. Recruiting for the fixed term contracts starts around July/August, after which time holidays are taken. Rebecca explains:

we try and get the initial ordering, basic structure, our communications, basic collateral and strategic planning done before Christmas. Basically, after this time, you can’t make any decisions or change anything, so you need to have everything in place so, when you come back, it’s just a matter of following it through. In the New Year is when all the performer stuff starts to happen. For the first time in 2010, we moved the auditions from November to January, which we think worked better...The amount of time between audition and performance was too lengthy, so we’re lengthening out the stallholder process and contracting the auditions. This also means there is more pressure on the performers to be performance-ready, up to standard, and ready to go. And then the immediate lead up to the festival is here again.

**Looking Forward: The Future of Pasifika**

Ole’s five-year strategic plan calls for the expansion of Pasifika to a ten-day festival by 2012. It is something he sees as achievable, despite the ongoing effects of the global financial crisis and that change is a ‘slow process, something not ever completely complete’. ‘People are risk-adverse, change-adverse’, he notes:

People will come and say, ‘it’s the same old same old’, but they don’t realise that they now walk into a fenced area [to better capture numbers], and that every village now has a stage. Before they would get the grass, and maybe a tent. So it’s about lifting the level of the festival. The whole thing is about that, and if you lift the level of community participation, then you lift the level of the festival as well. When I came, people thought they were coming to see the artist on the stage, because they are an attraction. And yes they are, but they actually want to come and see the cultures too.

Continuing to develop processes and staff are two other themes that remain at the forefront, with the intention to leverage this skill-base and expand the possibilities of what Pasifika can achieve, both nationally and internationally:

*We have to develop it here first. But if we can get our people here thinking about that, then that’s something we could do. We take the best from here and take it over there...They go over there and organise the communities there into a working model, and leave Pasifika there as something they do. Then we create this thing where we can take the best performers and rotate them around each festival. And then we’re not driven by any overarching commercial entity, but driven, and then seeded, in each place so that the communities take it over and run it themselves. We’re seeding some stuff in Australia and seeing what we can do there first.*
Conclusion

This chapter has presented detailed histories of the two festivals that provide the ethnographic basis for this research and the next four discussion chapters. The Positively Pasifika Festival in Wellington is a relatively new festival, beginning in 2008. Although ethnographic observations were carried out in the week beforehand, in working with festival organisers, the ultimate cancellation of the festival impacted the research. Observations were unable to be carried out at a festival proper, and performer interviews were limited to one performer, who was able to draw on the experience of performing at a variety of other Pacific festivals. Not only because of this, but also due to its lengthy history and primary place within the overall Pacific festival imagination, the Pasifika Festival is the central focus of this thesis. Its colossal size means a lengthier observation period was carried out, and more people involved with the festival and its history, and a much larger pool of performers, were able to interviewed. Nonetheless, the voices of all participants and observations from both Wellington and Auckland are weaved throughout the second half of the thesis, which discusses the themes identified, puts forward my theory for the Pacific festival space, and offers some conclusions.
Figure 2: A poster advertising the Māori and Pacific Islands Festival, as part of Summer City Wellington, 1986. The entertainment during the day featured ‘bombing’ and ‘music’ as differentiated from the ‘Māori and Pacific Islands Cultural Entertainment’ that featured later on in the evening. Poster courtesy of Wellington City Council archives.

Figure 3: A poster advertising the Pacific Island Festival, Wellington, 1989. The differing names given to the same festival show a lack of moniker and branding around the notion of Pacific festivals in the 1980s, as opposed to the connotations of ‘Pasifika’ in the 2000s. Poster courtesy of Wellington City Council archives.
Figure 4: A photo from around 1985, from an early Pacific Festival held in Wellington, shows a traditional performance and a collapsing of the boundary between performer and audience. Photo courtesy of Wellington City archives.

Figure 5: A second photo, from the same festival, demonstrates that traditional performances featured alongside contemporary street dancing. Photo courtesy of Wellington City Council archives.
Figure 6: The poster advertising the 2010 Positively Pasifika Festival, again incorporated as part of Summer City Wellington, clearly advertising contemporary and traditional performances. Poster courtesy of Wellington City Council.
Figure 7: A map of the 1995 Pasifika Festival shows the festival covered the South-West corners of Western Springs park, featuring three stages – community, contemporary, and the main stage, which was used for traditional performance groups – surrounded by food stalls, agency and craft tents, and a demonstration ‘village’. Map courtesy of Nancy Sandhoy.

Figure 8: By comparison, the map of the 2010 Pasifika Festival shows how the festival has grown – the red squares representing stages – and now covers the entire park, as well as the outer fields. The largest stage is now the international contemporary-oriented stage. Map courtesy of Rebecca Knox, Auckland City Council.
Figure 9: A poster advertising the 1994 Pasifika Festival, Auckland. The official logo, adopted in that year, is featured prominently in the centre. Poster courtesy of Nancy Sandhoy.
Figure 10: The 2010 Pasifika Festival poster, featuring a grandmother and grandson painting the newly adopted logo onto a piece of tapa cloth. The intergenerational nature of the poster forms part of a series, with the 2009 poster featuring a father and daughter, and the 2011 poster featuring a grandfather and granddaughter. Note the number of major sponsors in 2010, as compared to 1994. Poster courtesy of Auckland City Council.
Chapter Five

Festival Logistics, Leadership, and Development

The second half of this thesis revolves around four discussion chapters, with each corresponding to one of the four key issues outlined in the model for Pacific festivals proposed in the introduction (see figure 1, p. 6). These four issues represent the key themes as identified by research participants in interviews, and combined with ethnographic observations from the fieldwork carried out in early 2010. In this respect, these chapters represent the voices of participants, organised into identifiable themes through careful analysis, and contextualised within a theoretical framework to uncover new meanings.

The first discussion and analysis chapter centres around three themes: festival logistics, festival leadership and the notion of festivals as a development tool. This corresponds with the foundation of the model proposed, a foundation that provides the underpinning support and infrastructure upon which these events are constructed and organised. Because Pacific festivals cannot occur without this, I necessarily start here, discussing the foundation that allows the three surface-level foreground issues of performances and space, community, and place and identity, chapters six, seven and eight, to be documented.

Festival logistics and leadership emerge from, and are firmly rooted in the fieldwork experience. The discussion of these therefore draws predominantly from ethnographic descriptions. I have adopted a comparative approach to this, starting each section with the smaller and newer Positively Pasifika Festival in Wellington. The more intimate nature with which I was incorporated into the festival team means the account is more richly detailed. In Auckland, the larger size of the festival team and clearly defined roles created a degree of removal, and more often I was purely observing at a distance. By comparing Auckland to Wellington, the logistics of this festival are better illuminated. I begin by outlining the general festival logistics and discuss leadership, before moving on to the logistics of the venues and then of
the festival days. This leads into the final section and the theme of festivals as a development tool. This theme was both visible during fieldwork as well being noted in many interviews with both past and present festival directors and staff, as well as performers and village co-ordinators. I therefore offer a mixture of observations and participant reflections.

5.1 The Positively Pasifika Festival, Wellington

It’s 8.30am on Monday 8 February 2010, and I am sitting in the lobby of the Wellington City Council. I will be joining the city communities unit for the week and I’m waiting to meet Bessie Fepulea’i, the Pacific advisor. Within a few minutes, the heavily pregnant Bessie arrives, a visitor pass is organised, and we’re in the lift on our way up to the office. Throughout the first hour, I’m introduced to various staff members within the unit. The primary people involved in organising the festival are Marie Retimanu-Pule, senior communities advisor, and Bessie. They are assisted by Waylon, the youth communities advisor, who is responsible for organising the youth area, Billie, the council’s kaiārahi tikanga Māori cultural advisor, who was central in the previous weekend’s Waitangi Day celebrations and will assist in the official opening of Pasifika, and a small number of other technical and administration support staff. Importantly noted is that all of these people continue with their full-time jobs; Pasifika is one of many projects. It is only Marie and Bessie who are essentially full-time focused on the festival, although their ‘real’ jobs too will require attention at various stages throughout the week. Ultimate responsibility for the festival lies with the events team, who sit on another floor, and Rebecca, who we see intermittently throughout the week, is our contact with them. The fact that city communities complete the majority of on-the-ground organisational work while ultimate responsibility remains with events (including allocation of funding) will be the cause of tensions throughout the week.

The Positively Pasifika is a one-day festival, comprising a main stage, from which a range contemporary and traditional performances, two headlining acts and a fashion show will be staged, thirteen craft and twelve food stalls, and a number of social agency stalls. The food stalls will open at nine o’clock
on the day, with the official opening at ten-thirty and entertainment from eleven.

The approach in Wellington is collective and I am quickly absorbed into and made to feel part of the team, and allocated tasks to complete. Most of the discussion takes place around a communal table that, although placed in the middle of the pod in which we sit and is within arm’s reach of our desks, acts as the social hub, the space in which food is often shared, and where we are joined by others throughout the week. The desks operate as the points through which invoices are collected and collated, emails and information disseminated, decisions are put down in words; around the table the situation is more fluid, and we move here when brainstorming takes place. My personal input is sought from the outset around decisions like how the volunteers are going to work at the festival and what a rotating schedule of the various tasks will look like, and how the fashion show will run and troubleshooting issues that have arisen. We also bring up one hundred leis from the basement, decorating the pod to allow them to air, while also clearly marking the space, if not previously conceived of in those terms, as a Pacific space.

**Tensions and Issues: Leadership and Cultural Competencies**

Early on in my time with the city communities team, two issues become apparent. One is tension around leadership and control, and the other, related, is around the necessity of what is called ‘cultural competencies’.

The city communities unit, fronted by Marie and Bessie, take on much of the face-to-face organisational work, but events are ultimately responsible for staging the festival and controlling finances and payments. The issue of leadership and control, and a disconnection between the two units, soon arises. On Wednesday, our day starts with discussion about the lack of clarity and communication around who is responsible for doing what and that things sometimes seem to occur in a haphazard manner. It prompts Marie to repeat her earlier comment that she believes a team of people whose function is to produce events would surely have basic festival templates that provide a clear roadmap of what needs to be done, when, and the kinds of resourcing
required to achieve a successful outcome. This was prompted because of a discussion about the need to complete the resourcing of volunteers, something that was unable to be finished because we were still waiting on a list of tasks to allocate. We had also found out that the department in charge of site infrastructure had not been made aware of the power requirements for the festival, and that events did not know who had paid or not. All of this information had been previously provided.

Another example of issues with leadership arises at a subsequent traffic management meeting. The bill for the Waitangi Day celebrations, with identical traffic management set up as this weekend, was much higher than the Pasifika budget allows. It is revealed that a large portion of the cost had come having large orange ‘Event’ signs placed on the roads around the park, a directive that had come without consultation. The group convened are of the opinion that the signs are not necessary as it is quite obvious an event is taking place, and that this is simply wasteful spending. Furthermore, that this extra cost had been simply decided by events was frustrating.

The most pertinent example of the tension between the two council units occurs later in the day, one that reflects a lack of awareness and highlights the issue of cultural competencies. The council has recently adopted an initiative it calls ‘Kai to Compost’, which calls for waste stations to be provided at major council events where waste can be separated into different bins depending on whether it is recyclable, non-recyclable or compostable. Linking environmental concerns to the effects of climate change in the Pacific, the Pacific Advisory Group has taken this initiative one step further and made a decision that all stallholders will be required to use only biodegradable and compostable plates and cups so that food waste and containers alike can be composted. The issue that has arisen is that the council/events team are not supplying manpower on the day of the festival, to educate the public about the initiative and make sure people dispose of rubbish correctly. Instead it is assumed the volunteers will undertake this job. This creates a problem because many volunteers have come through family and churches; some are young, for some English is a second language, and, for many, the assertiveness and skills required to take on such an educational/monitoring
role require traits they do not possess. As well as raising questions as to why there is not a specific team to publicly face a supposedly important initiative, it represents lack of understanding in assuming the volunteers would have the capacity to fulfil this role, and again is frustrating because city communities had not been consulted about this need.

Within the same conversation, Marie raises the issue of whether funds have been allocated to feed the volunteers. The response she receives is that they (events) did not see why they should be providing food for the volunteers and that, ‘surely they can just buy their own food’. Marie is suitably horrified by this possibility and immediately sees that provision is made for the volunteers to be fed. While being a generalisation, the non-provision of food is something fundamentally anathema to a Pacific sensibility. Food in Pacific cultures plays a central role as a social glue; food means abundance, being historically linked to a bountiful harvest and a successful catch, and is an important display of hospitality and sharing. That food would be supplied for volunteers is not so much expected, as it would be embarrassing and inappropriate if it was not. The situation serves to demonstrate not only the issue around who leads, or should be leading, the festival, but also of a discrepancy between those with what are called ‘cultural competencies’, the ability to work effectively with Pacific communities and know instinctively how to proceed, and those with little or no experience to draw from.

**Cultural Competencies**

This issue became apparent within a short time after arriving. Marie explained that cultural competencies refers to the fact that someone adept in event management cannot simply expect or be expected to work successfully within a Pacific communities context without an understanding of certain nuances and cultural norms that facilitate a fruitful exchange. This is made most obvious by the fact that, although the events team is, to the council and wider public, ultimately accountable for the festival, in the eyes of the Pacific communities, it is the city communities unit, and Bessie and Marie specifically. While it is obvious, of course, that the Pacific advisor, who acts as a conduit between the communities and PAG, and the council, would be heavily involved in a Pacific festival, it highlights the fact that, without this
assistance, this route into the communities, without these cultural competencies, staging such an event would be made infinitely more difficult.

By the end of the second day, it is clear that the notion cultural competencies, the ability to walk in-between worlds, the Pacific communities and the ‘political beast’ as Marie called it, involves a sometimes delicate balancing act of ‘walking the tightrope’. In an interview conducted after the festival, I discussed this issue further with Marie and Bessie. They told me that, without question, organising and running a Pasifika festival required ‘corporate, grassroots, as well as cultural competencies’. This means having the abilities to operate simultaneously in environments with people working in a professional capacity with a council-focus, with people working both formally and informally with a community-focus, and balancing this with the needs and expectations of the Pacific communities, and working with them in ways that are sensitive to cultural difference. They furthered that these qualities were not so easily found, as some New Zealand-born Pacific Islanders can be either lacking in cultural awareness or, conversely, overly concerned with the politics of culture. It came down to, they concluded, having balance, and respect.

The issue of cultural competency manifests itself in many ways. Firstly, it is indirectly the creator of tension between the city communities unit and the events team. Put simply, the personal relationships needed to stage the festival exist with the Pacific advisor and city communities, the money sits with events, and the responsibilities for the event somewhat blurred between the two. This creates instances where the communication between Marie and Bessie, as conduits between the communities and personal contacts for those involved with the festival, and the events team, appear strained. One such example was Marie receiving a call from a performer who has been asked for an invoice by the events team. This had already supplied this to Marie, and passed on. The lack of control over the budget creates significant tension. As Marie puts it, ‘we have no control over the money…and when the payments will be made. We go by our word, and if we collectively [fail to deliver], people will lose faith, and we need that, those relationships, to make it work’.
Throughout the course of the week, it becomes clear that a significant amount of resourcing is being put into places where work is being doubled up. Something frequently mentioned is that the festival has grown to the point where a specific person with both events capabilities and cultural competencies needed to be in complete control. This again refers to the fact that the events team rely on the cultural competency of others to deliver not only Pasifika, but also the Waitangi Day and Matariki Māori New Year celebrations, and outside contractors for both the Diwali and Chinese New Year festivals. The issue of cultural competencies, in many ways, lies at the heart of debates over whether festivals of this type are, or should be, top-down or bottom-up driven events. I was made aware that the previous weekend’s Waitangi Day celebrations, driven top-down by the manager of the events team, had been something of a disaster. This was caused by a lack of consultation and regard for cultural practices that differed from those of the organiser. Thus, the role of the PAG members and Marie and Bessie are pivotal in ensuring that Pasifika is a success for all parties involved.

**Networks**

Out of the need for cultural competencies, two secondary themes emerge. The importance of having networks and connections, in some respects, facilitates the success of Pacific festivals. Pacific communities have an interconnected nature, and this extends outside the immediate locale. As an example, Marie, originally from Invercargill, had previously managed the community facility in Christchurch in which Pacific Underground is housed. Through this she met Tanya Muagututi’a, who is my contact at the Pasifika Festival in Auckland, and whose sister lives with Bessie’s sister. Bessie’s husband is one half of the comedy duo, The Laughing Sāmoans, and the other half is the son of their church minister. Before Christchurch, Marie had been the Pacific Islands advisor for the Southland Polytech, during which time she first met Ole Maiava, current Pasifika Festival director, when he was running the Achievers magazine and distributing it to secondary schools and tertiary institutions. Cindy of Sāmoa, one of two headlining acts, is a personal friend of Marie’s from the time she lived in Sāmoa. The purpose of highlighting these links, a situation repeated countless times throughout the course of this research, is to demonstrate that there exist vast networks of people, who are
interweaved and interconnected with and through each other, through the arts, business, agencies and institutions, across the various Pacific communities, from church, to community, city, nation and finally, across the broad Pacific diaspora, and often a result of long-standing genealogical connections.45

It is this idea of networks that most readily explains how the concept of cultural competencies is of vital importance, and the first afternoon provided an example of how important these are in the face of changing circumstances. Bessie explained how she was able to organise, at short notice, and by utilising church connections, the local Mission Choir and pastor to conduct the official opening, after the original plans fell apart due to ill health. The role and importance of the church within Pacific communities is the most easily understood cultural competency that anyone working within Pacific communities must hold. Simply and succinctly put, by Tala Cleverley, organiser of the first Pacific festivals in Wellington, in the 1980s: ‘the best way to get to the communities is to go through the churches, they are like villages...Once you’ve got the churches on board, then you’ve got something really special going on’. Bessie and Marie also explained how, despite the festival having ongoing funding in the council’s budget, much of the festival was run ‘in-kind’. An example used was the fashion show, which was being co-ordinated on a voluntary basis by a personal friend of Marie, and the garments for which were being provided by the popular and long-established Langi’s Island Styles stores in Lower Hutt and Porirua.

‘Mana Munching’
The other theme refers to tension caused as ways of being brought from the Pacific by early migrants, now community elders, conflict with those of the new generations of New Zealand-born and/or raised Pacific peoples. Much of this derives from the conflict created between the cultural protocols of respect for the position of elders, and how in New Zealand these positions and protocols have sometimes been challenged. This tension surfaces on the afternoon of the second day, with a phone call to Marie. A person associated

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45 Although I make this broad generalisation about the Pacific communities, it should be noted however, that, as the most populous group, both in New Zealand and across the diaspora, a majority of these links were between Sāmoans, and people who identified with various degrees of Sāmoan-ness. Despite this though, the point stands that many connections well extended beyond this ethnic boundary.
with a group heavily involved with the festival feels that, as a well-placed community elder, he should be allowed to speak at the official opening. Despite being told no by both Marie and Bessie, he has now asked the person supposed to be speaking on their behalf to call Marie and discuss the situation. Unimpressed with the way in which the situation had been approached, but realising the impasse that has been created, Marie can only advise the name that appears on the programme, that they have a window of two minutes to speak, and she will leave it up to them to decide who would be speaking.

While appreciating that there exists a need to afford an amount of respect to community elders, both Marie and Bessie were adamant of the necessity to successfully negotiate life as Pacific peoples within New Zealand, to realise the reality of living within diaspora, which sometimes meant adapting or adopting different practices. Both told me that their refusal to unquestioningly accept the ‘way it’s always been done’ had often made them unpopular with some, but that, as far as they were concerned, they were working for the communities first and expected others to have this focus rather than be involved simply to as a way to maintain, or hold onto, status.

From this discussion comes the term ‘mana muncher’, referring to the politics and hierarchies that surround the place of the elders, and to the practices of some who block younger generations from attaining positions of influence within the communities, in order to protect and promote their own statuses and positions. For Marie and Bessie this creates tension and frustration in that they see the lack of young Pacific leaders as a direct result of ‘mana munching’. They tell me they would prefer to see the younger generations mentored and progressed as future leaders, that a constant renewal, where new people are allowed to be a part of the community leadership, should be both desired and seen as beneficial.

Although discussed within the context of Pacific communities, the issue of ‘mana munching’ is a concept that reaches beyond. This was made obvious later in the week as we started discussing how the festival was going to run, on the day, and particularly the issue of VIPs. It was determined that there
needed to be people at the VIP tent who could greet VIPs, hand them passes and leis, and direct them to the seating in front of the stage at the appropriate time. At the stage, there would need to be people to seat them and this would need to be handled delicately because, as Marie pointed out, there were going to be people from across the range of political persuasions in attendance. With only those people speaking and the PAG members to be seated on-stage, and from previous experience, Marie said that there would be those who would assume, and try to assert, that they had a rightful place onstage. These people would need to be handled delicately but firmly, so as to not cause offence or create impressions or charges of favouritism.

Although many of the themes that permeate the ethnographic experience in Wellington will also be evident in Auckland – the importance of cultural competencies and networks, the concept of ‘mana munching’ – it is to a much lesser degree. In Auckland the importance of networks and cultural competencies, there called community capabilities, are visible because, as issues, they are invisible. Issues of leadership and control are also not apparent, because clear directive lines are in place. Moreover, it is the sheer difference in logistics that provides an illuminating point of comparison between the two events. Interestingly however, the operation in Wellington bore striking similarities to the descriptions given to me of how the Pasifika Festival operated in its early years, as described in the previous chapter.

5.2 The Pasifika Festival, Auckland

Today is Wednesday 5 March, and the Pasifika office is being moved, literally, from its home at 350 Queen Street, central Auckland, to the Western Springs Community Hall, directly across the road from the festival location, where I have arrived. Desks, computers, laminators...everything. Soon, food supplies and bottles of water that will sustain the myriad of people who will be in and out of the office over the next eleven days will also start arriving, and I will help to stack them in a side room.

I am met by Manu, the volunteers co-ordinator, and I also meet Pina, a council staff member who is allowed leave from her normal job within the larger events team, to be part of the festival each year. This year, she is the
office co-ordinator. A small team continue to bring in and set up furniture that has been brought from Queen Street. I help set up tables. The space is roughly split in two. In one half are a series of desks, where the ‘office’ is being set up, in the other, tables are set out in a large dining room-type fashion. Meals, completely catered for next week, will be eaten and shared here, and the space is also used for the array of meetings that will take place. Some are formal, like the stallholder and volunteer meetings, others informal, when artists or debate speakers, or old friends, stop by. Having just come from Wellington, where a round table in the middle of four desks acted as festival HQ, the scale here is starkly different.

Ole arrives, and music is turned on. ‘Oh good, music. Music is important’, he says. There is a familiarity between the people milling about and to the way the office is being set up: ‘where do you want to sit this year?’ Slowly, Pasifika starts to emerge, from the Pasifika-branded plastic bags that cover and wrap the office supplies, to the lollie-leis from a recent event, pieces of printed tapa cloth, photos, fans, and so on. Soon other key staff – Tanya, communications co-ordinator, and Leehane, artist co-ordinator – arrive and set up their spaces.

Looking around the office I find a large colour map, an aerial photo of Western Springs, onto which outlines of the villages, stalls and other areas have been printed (see figure 8, p. 137). The park is split into four sections – red, green, blue and yellow – and each, I am told, will have its own manager to oversee everything that takes place within it, and work directly with Rebecca and Johnnie, the operations and production managers respectively. I also find an A2-sized sheet of paper that outlines the planned programmes for the twelve stages, multicoloured to provide an easy way to identify the different types of acts: purple representing international groups, yellow those who have come through the auditions process, and light blue being local headlining acts that will appear on the international stage or have been programmed in villages.

The Pasifika Festival now has many components besides the main festival day. As well as the opening night concert held on the Thursday before
festival day, there is a debate series, playwrights’ workshop, best of auditions (BOA) concerts, and an art exhibition featuring contemporary Niuean art alongside tīvāevae displays and workshops by the Cook Island mamas of West Auckland. There were also colouring and stop-motion claymation video competitions, based around this year’s theme of the frangipani and centipede, which will be judged this week and displayed at the festival. A new logo has also been adopted, based on the artwork of a fifteen-year old student from Otara, whose piece incorporating the frangipani caught Ole’s eye. Finally, a large piece of Oamaru stone will be used in a sculpture symposium next week, where Tongan artist Filipe Tohi will mentor three other artists (Tahitian, Tokelauan and Tuvaluan), and the multi-sided work will be unveiled and displayed on the festival day. Later on, I note that the Pasifika website has been updated with a whole range of ‘Pacific’ events that are taking place during March, with many deliberately timed to coincide with and take advantage of the timing of both Pasifika and Polyfest.

For the BOA concert series, Ole has created a strategic partnership with the Dawn Raid record label in order to secure central government funding for the first time, and each concert will end with a headlining act from the Dawn Raid roster. Label bosses Brotha D and Andy Murnane have also created a compilation of forty songs that represent something of a history of Pacific artists in the New Zealand popular music industry, from the 1970s to current day, and covering many genres, including non-English language tracks. It is to be released as an official product of the Pasifika Festival.

By Friday, the office is starting to get busier. Rebecca, stalls co-ordinator Sera and Johnnie’s assistant, Donna, were in the office until midnight last night and are back this morning. ‘You get used to it in this business’, Sera tells me. There are also some new faces, including Frances, back for a second year as part of a council cadetship, working with the volunteers, and Taha, ex-chairperson of the Waitakere Pacific Board, who co-ordinates the village co-ordinators. As well as this, artists, performers, and others start to filter in for various reasons, and the section managers and other personnel also spend time in the office and on-site, marking out stalls, and so on. The meeting/shared meal area comes into its own as a myriad of meetings, both
planned and spontaneous, start filling the space. Meetings for performers, volunteers, stallholders, and crew are among those planned, while spontaneous gatherings are often to discuss and strategise an issue that has arisen.

Over Friday and Saturday I spend a lot of time laminating large stacks of documents that make up the information packs for the village co-ordinators and section managers. It becomes the running joke that I am completing a ‘Masters in Laminating’. Despite the mundane nature of the work, it provides an insight into the almost mind-boggling amount of information and co-ordination that occurs for an event the size of Pasifika. The section manager packs, held in large ring binders, comprise a production information pack, which includes maps, information about power, water, toilets, and so on, a health and safety information pack, and lists of the various people involved in the festival and their contact details. Other information includes details about the opening night concert, a copy of the spreadsheet detailing the different stages and performances, stallholder details for the section, and the different village requirements for each village in the particular section. I am also asked to condense the official health and safety plan into a one-page summary for volunteers. Reading through the giant document reveals the scope of outcomes that are taken into consideration. Every conceivable situation, problem, or threat has a contingency.

**Leadership and Cultural Competencies**

The issues surrounding leadership and control that created much tension in Wellington are absent here. The festival, in its eighteenth year and having long adopted professional practices and structures, has clear lines of communication and clear channels of command. The overall strategic direction is the basis of Ole’s position. Although he is the overall festival director and has input into all areas of the event, especially in the planning stages, by the time I arrive the production is almost completely handled by Rebecca and Johnnie, together with the production staff and section managers. Likewise, everything with regards to communications and media is filtered through Tanya, stalls through Sera, volunteers through Manu, village co-ordinators through Taha, and performer and concerts-related
through Leehane. This is not to intimate that there is an absence of the collective nature to the work as there was in Wellington; there is, in fact, much collective discussion between staff around an array of aspects of the festival’s operation. However, with clearly defined roles come clearly defined responsibilities, and clearly defined people who are in charge of their respective components. An example of how clearly defined the roles and chains of command are occurs on the night of the opening night concert when I, along with a section manager and volunteer, attempt to transport a carload of bottled water backstage. We are stopped at the main entrance and told that the gates are now closed and no further cars are allowed on the park. Rather than try to explain that we need to get onto the park, that the directive has come from Johnnie means we will not be driving onto the park no matter what we say, and we have to find an alternate way to finish transporting the water.

As with clearly defined leadership, the importance of cultural competency is visible in Auckland because of its absence as an issue. While the overall staff of Pasifika are of mixed ethnicities, the key conduits sitting between the council and the communities – largely Ole, Tanya, Leehane, Sera, Manu, Taha and Pina – are Pacific peoples. Rebecca, the only Pākehā, was born in Niue and has long acquired cultural competencies in working with Pacific communities. As an overall team, the Pasifika staff can be seen as a group easily able to shift between the working within the institutional frameworks of council structures and working with the Pacific communities. The tension caused in Wellington by having the only two key people able to operate in this manner not in ultimate control of the festival, is not apparent here.

Highlighting the necessity of having cultural competencies, I am on-site two days before the festival day, watching stallholders begin to come onto the park to set up. Decorations are going up around the stages and village entrances are being built. There are people everywhere. Section managers are moving village-to-village dealing with problems as they arise. I spend time with section manager Flo. She tells me that, to use the Wellington term, the only issue arising is a small amount of people ‘mana munching’. She maintains though that this is not reflective of Pacific people, but human
nature in general. The only difference, she says, is that you have to learn and know how to speak to Pacific people and, so long as you know how, everything is fine. I later bring this up while interviewing Tanya and Rebecca. They agree that having cultural competencies, what they call community capabilities, are essential in working with not just with Pacific communities but communities in general, who have ways of being and particular nuances that require foreknowledge and appropriate consideration.

Having a large culturally competent staff means the notion of networks is both more evident, but also less relied upon. The size of the festival means that, in general, far more people want to be involved than can be and, as a result, having to utilise networks to call upon favours is far less often required. It is, in fact, a practice current festival director Ole does not favour, calling it ‘unsustainable’, something that leads to the ‘burn-out’ of both staff and relationships with those called upon to assist in-kind. Nonetheless, the interconnected nature of relationships between festival staff, festival participants, and communities, is evident to the degree that I am unable to remember or note even close to some of them.

5.3 Festival Venues
As with the festival logistics, the venues and creation of festival spaces highlight the different planes upon which the two festivals operate. Again, the Positively Pasifika Festivals appears as the Pasifika Festival was: a smaller festival requiring less space, less logistical considerations and less time and effort to prepare. Where the Pasifika Festival now comprises ten villages, twelve stages, and over 350 stalls, in its first years it had three stages, no villages, and far less stalls. Similarly, the Positively Pasifika Festival has one main stage, one youth area (and smaller stage), and between thirty and forty stalls overall.

46 Occurrences of ‘mana munching’ in Auckland were largely witnessed between the stalls co-ordinator, Sera, and a small number of stallholders and one village co-ordinator. Briefly mentioned in some interviews with festival staff, the issue was otherwise not overtly brought up or discussed to any great length.

47 As with the overall festival logistics, the ways in which networks are utilised in Wellington is reminiscent of the way Pasifika operated in its earlier years, as described by those involved prior to 1997.
Waitangi Park, Wellington

The current venue for the Positively Pasifika Festival is the central city Waitangi Park, located between Te Papa, New Zealand’s national museum, Wellington’s user-friendly waterfront, and the popular Oriental Parade. It affords the festival a high visibility within the city and has the ability to attract passers-by in the vicinity for purposes other than the event. The design of the festival site is common to other cultural and community festivals, Pacific or otherwise: performance stages surrounded by food stalls, art and craft stalls, and social agency stalls. At one end of the park is the main stage, upon which the majority of musical performances will follow the official opening. A large screen that was present beside the stage at the previous weekend’s Waitangi Day celebrations, and that one PAG member commented added an air of spectacle to the event, will not be used due to budgetary constraints. At the other end of the park is the youth activities area. This includes a second, smaller and enclosed stage upon which some contemporary performances and assorted workshops will occur. Circling the park down the two sides, forming an enclosed village-like space, are the food stalls down one side, with the VIP tent and art and crafts down the other, and leaving a large middle space for festival attendees. This layout is not only followed at other Pacific festivals, but can be seen in the layout at the Pasifika Festival, where the specific Island villages follow this format. In this context, it can be considered a basic template adopted by festival organisers, or at least in terms of the elements that are then constructed in slightly different and unique ways.48

A call three days beforehand, from a highly visible Pacific agency, asking if they are able to have a stall at the festival, highlights the possibility that the festival will outgrow its current venue. Marie and Bessie inform me that, as well as this agency, they received a call on Monday from a Government department requesting the same thing, and there were at-least two other departments who had missed the deadline set, and so were also told no. While being strict in enforcing the cut-off date, in order to establish a level of professionalism into the festival’s organisation, it also emphasises that there

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48 Indeed, when visiting the Chinese New Year Festival the day after Pasifika, held indoors at Wellington’s TSB Arena, its layout was vastly similar, except that space constraints meant that there was a sub-circle of stalls within one half of the larger perimeter, with the other half comprising empty space in front of the main stage.
were more groups wishing to be a part of the festival than there is room for. I raise the issue of location with Bessie given that, after visiting the site on the first day, it is clear that there is not room at the park for sustained growth. We speak about the fact that there is not another suitably sized location within the central city that could host an enlarged festival. A possible alternative space is located in the south-Wellington suburb of Kilbirnie, although this has both positive and negative aspects.

The large Kilbirnie Park provides an ideal space for a large-scale event that could also easily incorporate sports activities as the festival grows. It is also centrally located to the suburbs where Wellington City’s Pacific communities are centred, making it more location-accessible. It also means that those, Pacific or otherwise, who are put off by the necessity of travelling into the central city to attend the festival, may be more likely to attend. Removing the event from the central city though would have political consequences. A less visible profile within the city would likely be viewed unfavourably by the council who, at least in part, want as much visibility and ‘feel good’ exposure as possible in return for their (financial) support of the event. As well as these aspects, a further consequence of moving the festival to a new location would be the severing of its ties to the Waitangi Day celebrations, and subsequent sharing of costs, which would impact the festival’s viability. These are issues that future organisers will have to grapple with as the event continues to grow and become further cemented as an established part of the council-supported festivalscape.

Due to the sharing of location and infrastructure with the Waitangi Day event, the main stage and marquees remain onsite during the course of the week in between. A small number of meetings are held on the park throughout the week to run through logistics for the festival day and meet with some of the social agency stallholders/sponsors. The festival will otherwise be completely packed in and out on the same day, starting at around six-thirty in the morning, with stallholders allowed on the park from seven. All vehicles must be off the park at eight-thirty, in time for a nine o’clock open.
Social Agencies
The involvement of non-government organisations, government departments and other social agencies and trusts at Pacific festivals in general, is one of the most significant themes to emerge. The general consensus, from the point of view of organisers and others I have spoken with, is that festivals present ideal sites through which these groups gain access to a large and specifically targeted market for their messages, a market that otherwise may not engage with traditional forms of media through which these agencies are most are visible. Additionally, as mediums through which these messages can be delivered, festivals offer a non-confrontational, positive, and affirming environment of cultural celebration through which social and health outcomes can be addressed in a manner that is culturally appropriate.

The chairperson of the Pacific Advisory Group, Ida Faiumu-Isa’ako, who has long worked in the field of public and Pacific health, told me that the group identified and highlighted the impact and benefit of social agency involvement early on. She views the festival as not only a site where information can be disseminated but also, just as importantly, to show Pacific communities that the people working in these fields and giving back to the community are ‘our own people’. This highlights the fact that festivals can be seen as spaces through which targeted messages aimed at the health and wellbeing of Pacific peoples can be delivered by Pacific peoples, a ‘for Pacific by Pacific’ approach. As well as this, the involvement of social agencies provides an important means of additional funding and sponsorship that can be increased as the size of the festival increases. These points were made explicitly clear to me when I later interviewed Pasifika Festival director, Ole. As someone who assisted in establishing Porirua’s Creekfest, a specifically health and wellbeing-focused festival, he told me that the group wanted to establish an event in (the Porirua suburb of) Cannons Creek, run by Cannons Creek people. With regards to funding, it was noted that many people involved worked within health and other social agencies, and they realised that they could pool resources and draw together various smaller amounts of money and support in order to create the event.
The presence of social agencies can therefore be viewed as one of a mutually beneficial relationship. The festival, as for festivals generally, exists in a state of perpetually balancing limited funds against bigger wants. Through agencies it can gain additional financing, which assists in festival sustainability and growth. For their part, the agencies gain significant visibility, achieving political and community gains along corporate responsibility lines, and the ‘feel good’ factor associated with being involved in such events. In other words, to be associated with Pasifika presents a way of being viewed in a positive light by both the Pacific and wider communities, creating favourable public relations opportunities.

**Western Springs, Auckland**

Given the name to differentiate it from the springs at the Auckland Domain, the city’s original source of water, Western Springs has a long colourful history and was valued by Māori in pre-colonial days for its eels and fresh clean water. Eventually, the land and its surrounds were set aside for primary and secondary schools to be built, a golf club to be established, and the Western Springs Stadium, as the central city suburbs expanded westwards. The area was slowly transformed into one of Auckland’s major parks, with regeneration transforming the lakeside into the perfect breeding ground for many native and exotic waterfowl.

Western Springs appears to be the natural home for the Pasifika Festival. Not only are its neighbouring suburbs the original homes of Pacific migrants in the 1960s and ‘70s but, in an interesting connection, the long-finned eel that make their home in the Western Springs lake, and are only found in New Zealand, migrate every year to breed in Sāmoan waters. It is however, more than this. As I walk around, the result of the regeneration makes it evident that Western Springs provides the only conceivable home for Pasifika. Apart from being the only public space within the central city large enough, aside

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49 After the arrival of the British, it became part of a block of land housing a flourmill. Becoming Auckland’s water supply in 1874, growth also led to Western Springs becoming a dumping ground for illegal rubbish, when reservoirs were built to supply water at the turn of the twentieth century and left the area with no specific purpose. This changed from the 1920s, when Auckland Zoo was established to the north of the lake. In 1933, Western Springs was turned into a popular motor camp before being used by American Servicemen during the Second World War, and for emergency housing afterwards. Demolished in 1960, land was set aside for primary and secondary schools to be built, a golf club to be established, and the Western Springs Stadium was also built. The area was slowly transformed into one of Auckland’s major parks. Land was regenerated with new plantings, which resulted in the lakeside becoming the perfect breeding ground for many native and exotic waterfowl. Sculptures created by local artists were also added to the park during the 1980s and ‘90s.
from perhaps the Domain and less desirable and not-so-central Cornwall Park, it does not require a great imagination to conjure up the feeling of being on a ‘Pacific Island’. Although some have hinted that Pasifika may be outgrowing Western Springs, its vast array of spaces, trees providing shade and overhanging the various lake edges, diverse range of flora, and large amount of waterfowl that are clearly used to the human presence and wander freely, make it the only space that in any way emulates the look and feel of ‘the Pacific’ within central Auckland. These surroundings play a significant role in transforming Western Springs into a Pacific space every March.

In complete contrast to the early years, where the majority of set up was completed the day before the festival, the park build officially starts the Monday before Saturday’s festival, although smaller amounts of preparation are completed before this time. Brush fencing has already been installed around the perimeter of the park though, and huge banners have been placed along Great North Road, a significant thoroughfare where a large amount of traffic passes daily. The park build involves first marking out the approximately 350 stalls, before infrastructure, including the twelve stages, starts to be constructed. From the day I arrive, the production crew are on-site marking out the villages, so all over the park hundreds and hundreds of spray-painted squares and rectangles, marking out stalls and stages, continue to emerge. Some of the smaller stages are soon put into place, including one in the Fiji village that cuts across a path in the children’s playground. As well as being practical, this serves to remind everyone who pass through from now until next Saturday that something is happening. The brushing that fences the park, as well as the large Pasifika banners, provide the detail.

As the festival day continues to get closer, the park becomes more and more a hive of activity. Various meetings take place. An array of contractors come and go, putting things in place such as the water tanks that will provide free water for festival-goers, rubbish bins, and generators. Some of the village entrances are also being put up, as well as signs that remind people to ‘please keep our villages clean’, with some written in various Pacific languages. Security staff, placed at the gates, facilitate the traffic. An area on the left-hand side of the park that looks like a quarry, called ‘the boneyard’, has been
transformed into a production area, and the various pieces and parts of infrastructure arrive here and are then dispersed into the park. With the spray-painted outlines now all in place, marquees start to pop up all over the park, as well as larger stages and a large marquee-roof over the stage in the Sāmoan village, which will act as the venue for the opening night concert. The sculpture symposium also starts at the entrance along the zoo road, and attracts many passers-by. In a sense Pasifika is now self-promoting; you cannot pass through the vicinity and not know it is about to happen.

5.4 The Festivals Materialised

Saturday 13 February, Wellington

Although the festival programme is due to commence at ten-thirty, stalls are to be ready for business and selling from nine. Because the stallholders are allowed onsite from seven, we arrive by six-thirty for a briefing and to collect things like t-shirts, walkie-talkies, and information sheets. Unfortunately, the weather turned ominous from Thursday afternoon, had severely deteriorated overnight and, as I was getting up at six o’clock, was not looking promising.

Nonetheless, we proceed in setting up the festival. I was given the task of organising the art and craft stalls marquee, made slightly difficult because we have to fit thirteen stalls into a space designed for twelve, and especially difficult because one stallholder has already arrived, guessed a position and proceeded to begin setting themselves up. After moving them, my next step is to quickly set up the remaining twelve tables, as more stallholders have arrived too. Across the park, similar scenarios are playing out, as festival staff and volunteers assist the food stalls being set up, the VIP tent, and the agency stalls. Other people are directing traffic and parking, and helping site crew with things like setting up toilet and rubbish blocks, sound equipment, and chairs.

By half past eight, it is clear the weather is going to be a problem. The position of the park combined with the direction of the weather has created a wind tunnel, and the stage, placed in the centre of this, is taking the brunt of the force. The marquees are also being battered by the strengthening gusts,
and I observe the increasingly worried looks of a Tongan family who have come down from Auckland to have a craft stall, and are clearly unused to the infamous Wellington wind. I try to reassure them that the conditions are, although unpleasant, not too extreme for Wellington, and explains why people were continuing to set up without paying too much attention. It is, however, becoming increasingly ominous.

In the green room, the various parties involved are holding a meeting that results in pack-in of the festival being suspended for an hour, at which time a further assessment will be made and a final decision made about whether the festival will go ahead. In the meantime, the marquees are to be locked and zipped up to try and minimise any damage occurring. I update my stallholders, advising them they were welcome to remain inside the marquee or could leave the festival site and return in an hour. The marquee is closed up, and a group of us sit and wait.

Unfortunately the weather conditions continue to worsen and the winds increase in intensity. The sides of the main stage come loose and are being blown about. As the hour passes and I make my way back over to the green room, there is a booming thud as a heavy piece of equipment is blown right off the stage. I take it is as a sign.

In the green room, the mood is subdued; Marie is visibly upset. Rebecca, from the events team, tells me that the decision had been made to cancel the festival. Helen, in charge of the site, advises that the conditions had become too extreme to be able to ensure the safety of the event, and so she had had to make the difficult but ultimately sensible decision. Despite the obvious disappointment, there is a collective realisation that we were always going to be fighting an almost impossible battle to get the festival off the ground on this particular day.

One of Marie’s immediate concerns is for the group of Cook Islanders who have travelled a great distance and have now lost the opportunity to sell their wares, and she is trying to think of a possible solution. PAG chairperson, Ida, also has these same concerns, as well as for the large quantities of food that
were being or had been cooked. She told me later that she felt responsible, as chair, for the festival’s failure to go ahead. Sensing the possibility that her church, in the nearby suburb of Newtown, could provide a possible solution, she makes a call to her minister. This proves successful, and the reverend of the PIPC (Pacific Islanders’ Presbyterian Church) church offers the church hall for art and craft and food stallholders to use. Marie, meanwhile, convinces the headlining acts – Cindy of Sāmoa and the Yandall Sisters – who have arrived from Auckland, to perform. Details about the new alternative event are quickly broadcast on Niu FM, the main sponsor, who has been broadcasting from the site since nine o’clock.

Arriving in Newtown, many of the stallholders that were at the park have set up and, while it is obviously far smaller than it would have been had the festival proceeded, a small crowd have assembled. This new site is set up similarly to the way it was to be presented at Waitangi Park. An in-built stage is at one end of the hall, with rows of seats loosely assembled in front. Around the edges of the hall, encircling a festival space, the various stalls have set up, with arts and crafts down one side and along the back, and the food stalls on the side where the church kitchen can be utilised.

I join Marie and Bessie at the foot of the stage. A PA system is set up by members of the church, who have become a temporary stage crew. Niu FM play background music, providing a Pacific soundscape to accompany the sights and smells. Fashion show MC, Tofiga, who has now taken the role of overall MC, arrives at the microphone to announce what is going to take place. Mimicking what would have occurred at the park, PAG chair Ida then comes on to officially open the ‘festival’, as she calls it, and offers a blessing. After a short break, the Yandall Sisters perform a shortened set of cabaret-styled songs, a popular Sāmoan song, and their seminal hit, ‘Sweet Inspiration’, which, as always, is well received. Their between-song banter recalls the collective migration experience and reinforces the notion of a common Pacific way. After another short break, the more outrageous Cindy of Sāmoa performs. As a professional performer, she tells me later that she especially enjoys performing for Pacific audiences as they are ‘my people’, and to be received well means they are recognising her and her talent. She is
received well. Afterwards, the festival is officially closed but people are told they can remain in the hall to continue to buy food and crafts, to support the stallholders. In fact, they are asked to. Shortly thereafter, the hall, which had gotten reasonably full, begins to empty and the event is over. A particular stallholder and I had discovered, by tracing our families, that her cousins were my childhood neighbours. To support her, I buy two large bags of Tokelauan doughnuts and trundle away. The alternative Positively Pasifika Festival of 2010 has lasted around three hours.

Even though a ‘festival’ of sorts did take place, it was ultimately disappointing that expectations of a large-scale public festival could not be met with a large-scale public festival. Despite this, there was a sense of ‘making the best of a bad situation’, as Marie and Bessie later commented. They also asserted that what transpired was a testament to the resourcefulness of people to quickly think ‘outside the box’ and find a solution. They also found the experience healing after the disappointment of the park, to be able to go to the hall, have some Island food, see the performers, and be with members their communities.

Saturday 13 March, Auckland
The infinitely larger size of the Pasifika Festival means there is a lot more that needs to be done before it officially opens, at nine o’clock. Just as I had left festival HQ in darkness the night before, so I arrive. It is 4.30am, and I am far from the first in the office. Great North Road, which runs alongside the park, is, as I drive in, not yet closed. It is, however, heavy laden with blockades all along the side of the road opposite the park, blocking off the road to all but a couple of strategically-positioned openings, where foot traffic will be guided and allowed to cross. Large plastic blocks have also been used to narrow the road and reduce traffic to two lanes, something that will remain in force throughout the day. ‘Road Closed’ signs are ready to be put in place and, at that time, only those with passes to go onto the park and set up will be allowed through. The road will again be closed at the end of the festival, to allow the reverse process to occur. Despite the hour, the office is alive with activity. Piles of boxes of water for each stage, with bags of t-shirts and lanyards atop them, compete for space with boxes of programmes, 18,500 in
total, split into boxes of 700. Park staff are getting ready to go onto the park in time for the 5.30 opening of the gates. The volunteer assistants, likewise, soon arrive and prepare.

Along Great North Road, cars are already lining up. The road, essentially impassable, is about to be closed. At five-thirty, as the gates open, I am in what will become the Sāmoan village. I watch two lines of cars, lights on, come from opposite sides of the park in convoy, and make their way in slowly moving lines, around the edges of a lake in darkness. It is cold, and it is pitch-black. Streams of people drive passed, find their positions, and start to unpack. Walking around the park, I am momentarily disoriented and take a wrong turn, leading me down a path into the middle of nowhere. After only a couple of minutes, I find my way along the path and back to a clearing, but it is long enough for the blanket of night to have broken and been replaced with a quickly lightening blue-grey hue. As I make my way across the bottom of the park, through the Cook Island, Aotearoa, Niue and Kiribati villages, more and more people still are arriving onto the park and, more and more, Western Springs is becoming ‘festivalised’.

Situated just outside the park, in the outer fields, the international stage will be surrounded by agency stalls, and others that have not found places in a village. The artist check-in tent is here too, from where the volunteers are also co-ordinated. Despite a seamless flow between this area and the rest of the festival created by stalls and a sports/youth area, it feels slightly removed from the main circular momentum of the festival inside the perimeter of the park (see figure 8, p. 137). It is a situation without remedy however, as the only area inside the park big enough is needed by the equally space-requiring Sāmoa village. In any case, the area will be well-populated, no doubt assisted by the big-name drawcards of high-profile local and international performers, this year including King Kapisi, J Williams, Fiji and headliners Mana Maoli, from Hawai’i. At this time, a hive of activity is busy transforming the space, and many agencies and small businesses are preparing their stalls. Over at the Fiji village, a crowd has gathered around the fence separating the park from the zoo. It appears the noise of the village coming to life has attracted the attention of the zoo’s elephants, and one of them has come up to the fence
to investigate. Closer to eight o’clock, the time when all vehicles need to be off-site, I am helping one of the section managers reminding her stallholders that they need to clear the park.

At nine, the villages begin to be officially opened, and I am in the Tuvalu village. As with the others, the ceremony comprises an opening prayer, welcome and blessing, and singing. The Tongan village, as I had previously seen, will also have a brass band perform. As the community representing one of Tuvalu’s eight atolls, or islands, takes responsibility each year for running the village, the majority of the people there at this time are from this year’s choice, Nukufetau, and they are wearing their Island-specific pattern made into costumes – lavalava and dresses.

As well as Air New Zealand, one of the other major sponsors this year is 2degrees, a new entry to the mobile phone market. They have provided a number of free calling posts throughout the park, where people are able to make free ten minute calls to a number of Pacific nations. Adapting their brand to the Pacific market and space, they have added a frangipani flower to their logo, which appears on posters and programmes, and they are handing out fans in the shape of large leaves, similar to the fans used in Fijian meke iri (fan dance). Their adaptation of marketing is similar to the Air New Zealand ‘big dig’ competition, situated in the international stage area. It attempts to emulate a Pacific island beach vista, and comes complete with cardboard palm trees emblazoned with the Air New Zealand logo and fale-like structures provided for people to sit under. Unsurprisingly, the prizes include air travel into the Pacific.

The huge array of stalls are as expected. There are a mixture of food and crafts of all sorts, from ‘traditional’ Island fare and ware, to more contemporary variations on themes. Umu, Hangi and Lovo are sold alongside coconuts, chestnuts, and pineapples and watermelons, cut in half, flesh scored and filled with ice cream and sauces. Various forms of weaving, tapa and lavalava sit beside stands selling nationalistic pieces, jewellery and the popular t-shirts that assert various forms of cultural pride, often through co-opting recognisable brands and slogans and giving them a tongue-in-cheek Pacific
makeover. There are also a vast array of agencies in attendance, from Government departments, to service providers and non-Government organisations, and educational institutions. Predominantly they revolve around themes of education, health and wellbeing, and social services. Many stalls use loud music, competing against the village performances, to draw attention and, at the Sāmoa village, the Best Training education institute have erected their own mini-stage. The two main radio stations that target Māori and Pacific peoples – Niu FM and Mai FM – as well as the Dawn Raid records stall, also contribute to the varied musical cacophony.

The festival day passes blur-like. I am continuously moving about, attempting to circle village-by-village and experience as much as possible. It is a fruitless impossibility; there is more to see and do than can possibly be done in one day. Pasifika is a festival that requires repeat visits. Logistics-wise, the festival is largely successful, a result of careful planning and a longevity of experience on the part of production staff. A decision to block off the two bridges beside the Sāmoa village, where bottle-necks have occurred in the past, encouraging festival-goers to walk around the entire park instead, proves unpopular however and draws criticism. They will remain open in 2011. Similar estimates of 200,000 attendees are again recorded, but the park on the whole does not feel over-crowded or burdened with too much foot-traffic.

The festival finishes at five, as this is strictly enforced. In fact, power and/or sound to the stages is cut shortly thereafter I hear, to ensure that no stages continue on. This results in the final act on the Aotearoa stage being cut short. Because of the contract with the Auckland council, the entire festival, a build that has taken place over more than a week, must be completely packed down and removed so the park can return to a normal state by the next day. Production staff and contractors will work into the night to ensure this happens. As the park empties and it is slowly transformed into its prior state, I help move equipment off the Aotearoa village stage. Contractors will soon arrive on the park to dismantle and remove all the stages and marquees, generators, sound equipment, rubbish bins, water towers, village entrances and other signs off the park.
Afterwards, back at festival HQ, staff slowly return from packing up their respective parts of the park. After everyone has returned, Ole leads the group in a shared meal and drinks, congratulating everyone for a successful day. He leaves shortly after the meal is finished, and others slowly follow. Attempts to sustain a ‘festival after-party’ are fruitless; extreme tiredness prevails. Although the festival is over, the work for festival staff is not. Tomorrow, many of them will return to the office to begin an array of tasks that must be completed post-festival. For me however, my experience of the 2010 Pasifika Festival is over, and my fieldwork has come to an end. I return home, shower and fall into a slumber that will last well into the next afternoon.

5.5 The Festival as a Development Tool

The leadership and logistics of successful festivals require specific personnel, something demonstrated by the fieldwork experience and something that feeds into the theme of development. The notion that festivals can be used as a development tool is manifested in several ways, from the development of staff through to performers, and is a theme that reaches back to the origins of the Pasifika Festival. As well as the community day and fashion show, Roy Vaughan explained that part of the original plan for the festival was a trade show to develop local Pacific businesses, and establish trade possibilities with other Pacific nations, something that was not realised at that stage. Instead, the community day was seen as a way to build ‘grass roots trade’ between families in New Zealand and Island homelands, and also as a way to differentiate the festival from the already well-established Polyfest, creating an event that moved beyond a focus on performance only, to also focus on trade and economic development. Roy explained:

You know people said, ‘well aren’t we just doing what the schools are doing?’, and I said ‘no, not at all, because we want stalls there, we want ladies to come with their mats, and sell their mats’…there was a whole lot of money going into the Islands at grass roots level, and a whole lot of stuff coming back from the Islands at grass roots, so we thought, why don’t we try and emphasise that a bit more. And that helps families, if they have stuff they can sell and introduce at Pasifika…So Pasifika is a once-a-year focus on the Pacific and what it does, and then you have these other little events around the place.
For Ole, the current festival director, Pasifika offers an array of development opportunities. His first action upon being appointed was to develop and implement a five-year strategic plan, to develop and expand the festival. As he told me:

*When I came to Pasifika, [community development] was still my framework, and I thought, what an animal, imagine what we can do if we utilise the community development aspect and looked at capability building, and so that became a moniker.*

And Rebecca, operations manager, explained that the notion of development has become one of the three central aims of the festival, the other two being to ensure that everyone involved has a positive experience and to build the international reputation of the festival:

*This festival is so well-known and famous, so we have to use it for good. So we can use it as a vehicle for youth development, we can use it as a vehicle to build peoples’ event capabilities, we can use it as a vehicle for economic development.*

**Developing Performers**

One of the first changes Ole made was to the auditions process. In the festival’s early years, as early event co-ordinator Nancy Sandhoy told me, everyone and anyone who wanted to perform were given a stage. In later years, an auditions process had been developed but was haphazardly applied and adhered to, and the numbers of people auditioning were low. Auditions were also held in November and, by March, bands had sometimes changed or split up. The process was therefore re-designed, moved to late-January, with a focus on incorporating professional audition processes. The result, as Ole told me, was the number of auditionees greatly increased:

*We had forty-two audition [last year] and then this year, we had eighty-six expressions of interest, so we had to cull it...we noticed that, as they saw there was a change in what we were doing, the amount of people applying to come in and audition became bigger, and this year, through the audition process, I saw some amazing acts that we wouldn’t have seen otherwise.*

At the 2010 festival, Ole introduced a new ‘Best of Auditions’ concert series. Partnering with local record label Dawn Raid, the purpose of the concerts was to develop emerging talent, providing them with a second paid performance
in addition to performing at the festival, the chance to network with Dawn Raid management and artists, who also performed, and the experience of being exposed to a professional concert environment. For Ole, this was significant as, for emerging artists, ‘they got to experience a new experience, especially for the new ones who came through, because they hadn’t been exposed to a green room for example’. This was true for the Niuean hip hop duo the Church Boiz that I met. Having only performed at a small number of ‘bar gigs’, they did not know what a green room was or that they were entitled to use it. Meeting them again at one of the subsequent concerts, they told me about their green room experience, of having been able to not only enjoy the food and drink there, but ‘hang out’ and network with artists who had turned professional, as they hoped to do eventually.

The development of emerging artists was continued through a strategic partnership with APRA (the Australasian Performing Rights Association), something that had first started in the late-1990s. Originally providing support by sponsoring a stage, Ole saw room for their involvement to be extended to a developmental role. Noting a lack of support for emerging artists, he devised the half-day industry workshop, which is now held before the festival. In small groups, participants rotate around several agencies including APRA, Creative New Zealand and the tax department, who provide practical advice about building careers in the entertainment industries. At the end of the morning, a shared lunch is held, during which time artists can meet and network with each other.

Another change Ole made was to the opening night concert, moving it away from a variety show and incorporating a community development ethos. It now involves a community group from each of the ten villages creating and performing a short, original piece based around the theme of the year’s festival, and created in collaboration with elders and culture bearers from within those communities. This change has been a deliberate attempt by Ole to create a ‘common focus, or a common thread’, and also to provide recognition for community elders.
Finally, the development of performances has also impacted the villages and village co-ordinators, who have been provided with practical information about stage managing and running a backstage environment, and were given templates to use for programming. The result was that the 2010 festival marked the first time festival management had a complete programme and were aware of what performances were taking place across all twelve stages.

**Developing Skills**

Another important aspect of development is the development of festival and events staff. Rebecca explains:

> we try really really hard to put as many Pacific people into positions as we can, and where we can’t, we try and put them in positions where they can learn...Tanya’s a really good example of that as we employed her knowing that she could do the job. Sera has an events management qualification...Leehane was half way through hers when we employed her for the first time, and she’s said she has learnt more with us than she ever learnt on a course. She has one more paper to graduate. [Section manager] Mel got one year into his [events management] course and then his father died so he had to drop out. Manu is a Pacific studies student, half way through her Masters.

Ole also discusses this with me, pointing out his pleasure in seeing Leehane being mentored by Tanya, who previously held the artist co-ordinator role. In continually looking forward, he makes a point of knowing who the recent graduates are from the events management programme at AUT (Auckland University of Technology). And in the days leading up to the festival, Tanya showed around a group of students from the Music Audio Institute of New Zealand (MAINZ). They will also work as stagehands at the festival, to gain industry experience.

Ultimately, festivals like Pasifika create development opportunities beyond the visible aspects of performance and material culture. As previous festival director Pitsch Leiser reflected, festivals as development tools are about

> capability building in event management, in all sort of aspects, whether it’s hospitality, practical logistics, traffic management, safety and security, lighting and sound...all those things are offering opportunities specifically to those who participate, because Pasifika people might not necessarily have been involved in a festival of that scale. But, within their own festival, there’s more of an opportunity to say ‘hey, I’ll volunteer and be part of this’.
Professional/Personal Development: Reflections from Participants

In performer interviews, many participants noted the developmental aspect of the festival. Two Niuean sisters, performing traditional repertoire, are occasionally hired to perform outside of the festival in community contexts, and see the festival as a medium through which to promote themselves. Two other village performers, a Sāmoan who predominantly performs in contemporary popular styles and a Tongan Bollywood dancer who performed on several stages, also shared this opinion.

For my Tongan participant, performing ‘showcase[s] my talents as part of Pasifika’. In terms of personal development, performing, she noted, ‘has given me the courage to be better’, and during our interview she talked about already looking forward to the next year’s festival and performance. She told me, ‘I’m really excited about what I want to showcase and perform with the group [next year], so…Pasifika makes you want to be better’. Similarly, when I asked my Sāmoan participant why she wanted to perform, she told me, ‘the main reason is so I could showcase my talent in front of people I knew were Pacific Islanders as well. I think my passion for my music and for my culture is what got me into performing at Pasifika’.

For musicians and dancers that performed on non-village stages, the idea that Pasifika offers a vehicle for promotion and to develop experience is prevalent. For rock band TribalState, performing presented a ‘good opportunity to gig’ and offered ‘good exposure for the band’; ‘plus we are Islanders’, they told me, ‘and it’s hard enough to get out there in the first place…there’s so many emerging artists out there it can be really hard just getting a gig’. The band does not specifically promote themselves as ‘Pacific’, ‘because of what people perceive Island bands to be, it would push us towards that market’. They viewed the fact that they played a style of music not commonly associated with Pacific peoples as presenting a further opportunity to promote their point of difference:

For us to play there, with the kind of music we play, I think it’s better, like it’s a better buzz for me because we are playing for people who will most likely not like your stuff. It’s nice and challenging, and if you can get someone to like rock, then it’s a huge achievement…the advantage we have is that we can tap
into different markets because of the way we look. We can play Pasifika and alter our playlist to fit.

For Pacific Underground members Tanya and Pos, performing ‘has a lot of levels to it’. For Tanya, as the largest Pacific festival in the world, ‘it’s about us supporting that, and wanting to be part of it…to show people what we do, and that we’re from Christchurch, that we’ve been around for a long time and we’re still going’. More than this, for Pos, Pasifika is ‘not too far away from what we do at home…it reaffirms that what we’re doing at home is at a professional standard’. Therefore, ‘whenever I go home, I go home with a new energy of where I want my boys to be, where I want the standard to be…I can gauge what we produce to what we can make happen [up] here [in future]’.

Established artists (Te Awanui) Awa Reeder, of R&B/hip hop group Nesian Mystik, and King Kapisi see performing at Pasifika not as a development tool for themselves, but as part of an overall message they see themselves as promoting, as providing examples and options for young people. As Awa told me,

it’s about letting kids know that…that’s how we got here, we put in hard work. And it’s just like when our aunts and uncles first came over, they were working hard and trying to make a better life for themselves, so it’s a very similar concept…if they work hard, they can be here too, and make money, travel the world, and break some records.

For King Kapisi, leading by example means offering musical alternatives:

What I’m there to do is give them an option…to say to them, you don’t have to do the same old shit all the time, so instead of just doing the same R&B song by Alicia Keys and thinking, ‘man this is a PI gig’, you shouldn’t be covering other peoples’ songs…This is the time for Pacific artists to show themselves and perform their own styles…I’m just hopefully another guy who’s laying down another couple of bricks for our youth to build on the yellow brick road, or the taro brick road, you know, for the rest of our people to get on.

Finally, for Fijian-based collective VOU, Pasifika is both a high-profile promotional opportunity as well as the chance to develop troupe members. Founder and lead dancer/singer Sachiko Miller told me that Pasifika is ‘a huge international festival, with a massive audience base’, and with ambitions
to ‘gear our product commercially, we thought it would be a good platform to get our brand out there to a large number of people’. As well as this, performing was experiential and educational:

I wanted to give my dancers that experience of being at a huge festival and know that there is a platform...For us it was an educational thing, to expose them to this and say to them, ‘look, this is something that is taken seriously overseas, and you can make a career out of it’, because we’re still really stuck in the colonial education system in Fiji, you know, you can’t be a dancer, that’s not a real job.

These sentiments were reflected in many of the interviews conducted with village co-ordinators. Mina Leolahi, of Niue, for example, told me that Pasifika is an ideal way to provide new bands with an opportunity to promote themselves while, at the same time, keeping performances ‘fresh’ so audiences do not feel like they are seeing ‘the same old bands’. And similarly, for Peggy Maloo, co-ordinator of the 2010 Tuvalu village, putting contemporary popular performers from within the community on stage was something she wanted to see:

we have quite a few talented people out there who do their own material and CDs, and I think the festival is something for them to aim for...some of our singers and composers can do hip hop in our own language and you can attract our youngsters to learn from them, and they can work their way up and make names for themselves. They can start from there to get out on the stage in bigger events. They can see that they can do this, so where can I go next?

**Conclusion**

This chapter has largely comprised of ethnographic descriptions from the fieldwork conducted at the Positively Pasifika and Pasifika festivals of 2010. These descriptions highlight two central issues of the fieldwork experience: the logistics involved in staging large-scale cultural festivals, and the role of leadership. The issue of leadership was particularly strained in Wellington, where the public face of the festival’s organisation and those ultimately responsible (and in charge of the budget) were not the same people. This created instances of tension and highlighted the necessity of cultural competencies: the ability to work within institutional structures while meeting the needs of communities, balancing Western cultural frames and Pacific cultural sensibilities. This corresponds with the importance of having
networks and connections that are able to be utilised, as well as having cultural competencies in sometimes dealing with sensitivities. These themes were also evident in Auckland where, because the majority of staff are Pacific and/or have sufficient cultural competencies, they were not as visible.

Finally, the notion of the festival as a development tool is one that extends beyond performances, although my focus has been largely directed there. Each aspect of running and staging the event involves skills that can be accumulated and developed. For performers, the festival provides a medium to create and build a profile, to develop skills and experiences conducive to establishing professional stage careers, and to promote themselves within their communities, and the wider festival audiences. This focus on performers and festival performances continues in the next chapter, which addresses music within the festival space, its various meanings, and looks at the interaction between performances and space.
I have previously stated that Harnish’s *Bridges to the Ancestors* (2006) provided a model for approaching this research and, accordingly, the processes and meanings of festivals and festivalisation are highlighted, as opposed to focusing on analysis of festival repertoire. However, as this is a work of ethnomusicology, some discussion of musical performance is both necessary and important; necessary because, in discussing music within the Pacific festival space, meanings of music and performance are uncovered and provide another way of understanding how the Pacific diaspora operates in New Zealand. More than this, because the research involved interviews with performers and others involved in festival organisation, and these interviews naturally focused to some degree around the discussion of performances and their meanings, representing the voices of these participants therefore necessitates that this discussion is contained within its own chapter. For these reasons, performances and their interactions with the festival space represent the first of the three interconnected and overlapping foreground issues, identified from my analysis of interviews and proposed in my model for Pacific festivals (figure 1, p. 6).

I begin by providing observations of and discussion about festival performances and repertoire. Combined with reflections from participants about the meanings given to performances, this discussion highlights the importance given to balancing representations of traditional and contemporary cultural forms. This leads into a more broad discussion about the place of traditional and contemporary musics within the festival space, demonstrating that they function in very different ways. Based on the unanimous views of participants, I argue against the notion of ‘staged authenticity’ (MacCannell 1973) and for a reconsideration of how traditional performances are viewed within the Pacific festival space. This discussion
also adds to the more broad dialectical debate about the nature and what can be considered representative of the label ‘Pacific music’.

The final section, performances and festival space, is a discussion about the interaction and interface between performances and space, how they influence the perception of each other. I began with the notion of space, reflecting how, after having seen two festival performers in non-festival environments, the festival space had influenced both their performances and how their performances could be read. I then realised that participants had also discussed space, how the festival space influences the content of performances, which are tailored to meet the demands of festival audiences or specific cultural contexts. A consideration of performances and space is therefore pertinent in reflecting the views of participants. I present my discussion in this order, ending, again through observation, by noting the reverse, that performances also affect the perception of the festival space and, in this particular context, that the festivalised space is a Pacific space.

6.1 Performances at Pasifika Festivals
Performances at the Pasifika Festival, as well as those of the Positively Pasifika Festival, are characterised by one overall and important theme: that the festival space contains a balanced mixture of traditional and contemporary cultural expressions. Traditional singing and dancing is performed alongside contemporary popular music forms, dominated by the genres of reggae, R&B and hip hop. Choirs and choral singing in the Christian tradition are also featured throughout, and popular music groups performing Christian messages present a contemporary update. Besides traditional styles associated with particular Pacific nations, such as the Sāmoan sasa and siva, the Tuvaluan and Tokelauan fatale, or Fijian meke, particular musics also reflect specific nuances, such as Bollywood demonstrating the Indian presence in Fiji, and the brass bands having a particular association with Tonga. And, alongside these, contemporary forms outside of the ‘popular’ and situated within ‘contemporary art’ also appear, such as contemporary dance groups. The following re-constructed field notes demonstrate this variety, from the contemporary-oriented best of auditions concerts, to the traditionally-focused opening night concert, and finally the
festival day, where a complete mélange is on display. It is important to note that the terms traditional and contemporary are those used by participants in describing performances. An exploration these terms follows, along with a discussion of questions raised by festival performances.

The Opening Best of Auditions Concert – Monday 8 March

I’m on my way to central Auckland for the very first time since arriving a week and a half ago. The Best of Auditions concert series is being held at Galatos, a multi-level venue owned by the not-for-profit media and interdisciplinary arts centre, MIC Toi Rerehiko. It is situated just off the entertainment strip of Karangahape (‘K’) Road. The main concert room, which holds three hundred people, is a long, oblong-shaped space. At one end is the stage, with a soundbox at the other, to the right of the entrance. Down the left-hand side are three black leather booths and, apart from another long couch in front of the soundbox, the space is empty. Long, black drapes hang from the roof, down the long sides. Beside the first booth, stairs lead up to the lounge bar, which looks down at the stage and will host sponsors tomorrow night, and a friends and family event on Wednesday. The basement, accessible by stairs to the left of the stage, will be used for the green room. Sound checks are currently taking place, before the concert gets underway at around eight-thirty.

The opening act is Mana Maoli, from Hawai‘i, who are also going to be the headlining act on the international stage on Saturday. They are a diverse group, reflecting different types of Hawaiian-ness, as indigenous Hawaiians play alongside people of mixed Asian-Hawaiian and Anglo-Hawaiian descent. They are a not-for-profit collective, formed in 1999, comprising of three strands – the Halau Ku Mana charter school, the Kanehunamoku sailing canoe programme, and Mana Maoli music, who are represented here – and are made up of educators, artists, musicians, cultural practitioners and community organisers. Their performance is in a contemporary popular style and its lilting reggae-based songs with rich harmonies and extra use of non-drum kit percussion is easily accessible and well-received.
The next act to perform are the Church Boiiz, whose self-deprecating humour, which spills into their raps, provide the evening’s highlight for me. They are followed by perhaps the most interesting acts, from an anthropological point of view. City of Missiles and TribalState are both rock bands, the former a metal band, the latter an interesting mix of hard rock with acoustic guitar and three-part harmonies (in parts), and they both provide a challenge to the notion that ‘Pacific popular music’ is R&B, reggae, or hip hop. Partly because it is getting late, and maybe partly because of the musical styles, the crowd significantly thins out during these acts so that, by the time the Dawn Raid headliner, hip hop artist Savage, performs, it is even later and the crowd even smaller. Nonetheless his asking the other acts to join him onstage for the final song provides a nice close to the concert and, approaching one am, we finally leave Galatos for the night.

**Opening Night Concert – Thursday 11 March**

Unfortunately, because some of the volunteers fail to show up, I am relegated to spend the duration of the concert assisting the backstage manager, although I manage to catch part of the performances from the side of the stage. Backstage I meet Peggy, the village co-ordinator for Tuvalu. She tells me that, for the concert, they have created a new dance based on this year’s festival theme (the frangipani and centipede), and that they were lucky because Tuvalu has many myths about the flower. The internationally-recognised Tuvaluan/Tokelauan band, Te Vaka, have a song on their new album about Tuvalu, Peggy says, and they have been given permission to use it tonight as well.

From all accounts, out front the concert looked polished and proceeded without any problems. Although I couldn’t see them, it was well received by the sizeable audience, judging by the amount of noise they made in appreciation. A local kapa haka group provided the official opening of the concert, and were followed by Sunameke, a contemporary Pacific dance group from Darwin, Australia, invited to perform at the festival. Among the acts, the Tahitians and Cook Islanders were the loudest and audibly most popular. The Sāmoan fire dancing was also popular, as were the Tokelauan group, comprised of oiled, young men. The Kiribati group were younger and,
I was told, first time performers, and so were especially well-supported by the audience. As is often the case with Kiribati performance, being among the newer migrants to become part of the Pacific diaspora in New Zealand, it is intrigue and the uniqueness of Kiribati performance that interests the audience. The concert ended with the festival headliners, Mana Maoli, showcasing both their traditional dance troupe and then ending with their contemporary, popular music collective.

**Festival Day – Saturday 13 March**

The village stages open from nine o’clock, and they are strictly traditional, with a mixture of choral hymns and national anthems providing the musical accompaniment to opening speeches, prayers and blessings. Earlier I had seen a brass band warming up for the Tonga village opening. Although staggered, I cannot visit them all. However, from looking at their programmes, I could see that openings are generally followed by performances that remain in the traditional mould, such as the Mwai and Tahiti Ia Ora dance troupes in the Kiribati and Tahiti villages respectively, and the Heimana String Band on the Cook Island stage. After this time, contemporary acts begin to appear, and a mixture of traditional and contemporary musics will fill the sonic landscape for the rest of the day.

The international stage opens at ten, beginning with contemporary dance troupes Sunameke, Fiji-based VOU, and a contemporary dance collaboration. After this time, the roster of cotemporary popular acts begins with up-and-coming soul singer Bella Kalolo, followed by acts that encompass a variety of styles, such as reggae, R&B, and hip hop, and who are broken up by hip hop dance crews and a contemporary Sāmoan dance group, Tatau. The stage closes with the Mana Maoli traditional dance and popular music collectives, separated by Māori singer-songwriter Mihirangi, who creates live (beat) loops onstage using only her voice.

At 10am however, I am at the emerging artists stage. It opens as Leehane has programmed, with easy-listening reggae group Ah Reggae (by comparison to the hard rock and heavy metal that will be heard throughout the middle of the day). The audience is small, as expected, but will gain momentum
throughout the day, attended largely, as anticipated and desired, by younger people. After the opening, on my way to check out Bella at the international stage, I am back at the Tuvalu village watching traditional performances by the Nukufetau community, that year’s host atoll/community. There is now a substantial crowd gathered here and the village is bustling. Interestingly the community group has eschewed the stage in favour of the ground in front of it, where the younger members stand in two rows to sing and dance while a large group of the older members are seated around the group leader in front of them. Rows of seats have been provided for the elder members of the community, while others stand around the perimeter. The distinctive dress of the Nukufetau community is the only visible aspect that separates performers from audiences, as they blend within the same space. As will be seen frequently throughout the day, across many villages, it is not only ‘performers’ that sing and/or dance. Here, many ‘audience members’ are singing along. The dancers are dressed in distinctive Tuvaluan costume, and interestingly, the dress bears much similarity to Tokelauan costumes. The two communities also share the same main song/dance form, the fatale, characterised by stanzas that speed up and modulate higher with each repetition, with the singing intensifying as the dancers koli ki lalo (dance progressively lower) (Thomas 1988).

Later, after passing through the Sāmoa village to watch Pacific Underground perform songs from Island Summer, their musical re-interpretation of Sāmoan songs for guitar orchestra, I visit the Fiji village. In a demonstration of the diversity of Fijian society, the contemporary dance group, VOU, have just finished, and are followed by a Bollywood dance group (led by a Tongan), while the traditional group, Kabara Meke, will be performing when I pass through a little while later. In the Tokelau village I see the end of a hip hop group, who I also see later on the Sāmoa stage. This happens frequently throughout the day, with many acts performing on multiple stages. Generally these acts perform on one of the contemporary stages and then in the village that represents their Pacific ancestry (which is sometimes multiple), or in support of a particular village, for example the Mana Maoli dance collective performing in the Tahiti village.
The remainder of the festival day performances pass in a similar fashion, a carefully co-ordinated and staged balance of contemporary popular music acts and traditional song and dance. On the international stage I see hip hop artist King Kapisi, followed by a church-based choir in the Sāmoa village. A Christian band, performing in a pop/R&B style, are followed by traditional dancing at the very popular Cook Islands stage, while, in the Niue village, two dancers and a band comprising the village co-ordinator, elders and younger community members, are re-performing the piece created for the opening night concert. My day ends walking between the Tahiti village and emerging artists stage, watching iconic Cook Island-Tahitian singer Annie Crummer, who brings her father, her ‘musical inspiration’, onstage and serenades him, and up-and-coming multi-ethnic R&B group 4DG.

**Discussion**

What can be considered the repertoire of the Pacific festival space is, as highlighted above, marked by two considerations: the importance of maintaining and displaying performance traditions that were brought to New Zealand by migrants, and that are sustained through their continued central role within communities, and the recognition and acceptance of the place of contemporary music forms in the evolution of Pacific cultural expressions. All participants that exert a degree of control over what is staged within the festival space, from festival organisers to village co-ordinators, were unanimous in their assertions of the importance of incorporating and representing each of the broadly defined musical constructs. Much of the remainder of this chapter, and indeed the final discussion chapter, makes repeated references to the importance of this balance, such is its prominence as a central theme arising from performances.

The repertoire performed is first and foremost grounded in the traditional. For the 2010 festival, performers for the Positively Pasifika Festival were sourced from within the communities via the various Pacific Advisory Group members. Ultimately the programme and its order was put together by the festival organisers, Marie and Bessie, who also used their own networks to book the headlining acts and find a choir to open the festival, after the initially-scheduled group had to cancel at a late stage. This approach was
similar to that carried out in Auckland. PAG equivalents, the village co-ordinators, were ultimately responsible for programming their village stages, although Pasifika staff sometimes assisted in filling spaces and offering them performers that had come through the auditions process, which is also how the emerging artists stage was programmed. The village co-ordinators used a number of approaches to find performers. Most commonly these were churches and personal networks, especially for the smaller communities, while, because of the larger and more dispersed nature of Auckland and its Pacific communities, community radio shows were also important, especially for the larger communities.

For the largest communities, the Sāmoan and Tongan and, presumably, the Cook Islands, more performers want to take part than space is available. While forcing those village co-ordinators into an adhoc gate-keeping position, rather than meaning certain types of performances are not staged or deemed unacceptable, they indicated in discussions with me that they try to keep the performances new and interesting, and rotate performers to allow new people to participate. Many performers are known to them and, where possible, they try to see and hear those who are not, or use word of mouth to find out whether they are appropriate for the festival. The openness in allowing for a variety of musical and cultural expressions to be performed was something true of all village co-ordinators, and none expressed a desire to not allow a particular type of performance on stage or talked about this having been a problem in the past. All knew what the performances they programmed involved. From discussions and observations, it can be concluded that there exists a general self-governing set of expectations as to the kinds of performances that are appropriate in the village space. Neither performers nor village co-ordinators want to either cause embarrassment for their families or communities, or disrespect community elders, and this generally governs behaviour.

An example of where this did happen at the festival, and the outcomes it can create, occurred in the Fiji village. Up-and-coming R&B singer Erakah, who is of Fijian ancestry but was adopted and raised in a Palagi family, was offered to Fiji village co-ordinator, Joana, by the festival organisers. Excited by the
prospect that, according to Joana’s assistant, Seta, ‘finally there was an up-and-coming artist who was Fijian’, and an ideal way to attract young people, she disappointed on the day. According to Joana, she acted in a disrespectful manner backstage before performing, proceeded to swear on stage (‘bugger’ or ‘bloody’ supposedly) and left shortly afterwards, despite having earlier said she would remain in the village to be introduced to members of her biological family. Although putting this down to her palagi upbringing, the incident caused great embarrassment for Joana because her language and behaviour upset community elders, who then proceeded to make Joana aware of this. Even though she had not programmed Erakah herself and had relied on the word of festival organisers that she was a suitable performer for the Fiji village, ‘I had to stand there that day, and take it from my community elders’, she told me, before adding that she would only be welcomed into the village again if she promised to change her attitude and behaviour.

Festival performances raise a number of questions and highlight several areas that can be explored for meaning. These can be grouped into two themes and are presented as the following two sections: performance meanings and functions, and performances and festival space.

6.2 Performance Meanings and Functions

In Wellington, while speaking with the Pacific Advisory Group’s chairperson, Ida Faiumu-Isa’ako, we discussed what the meaning is that performances communicate. She told me that festival performances make a highly visible and audible statement that cultural traditions are alive and well. As well as providing encouragement for those who perhaps ‘teach at our schools or are married to Pacific Islanders’, performances provide a way of reaching Pacific youth who attend European-dominated schools, of allowing them to recognise something that belongs to them and making them more well-rounded and aware of their heritage. Many participants shared Ida’s view of the kinds of meanings that performances communicate, although it is important to note that not everyone viewed performance as having meaning beyond the literal. As one contemporary performer noted, ‘I’ve never really thought about it like that, because I’ve always seen a performance as a
performance, where I just perform to an audience and make sure I do my job and communicate ideas of songs to people’.

Communicating Culture, Text, and ‘Showing Off’

A common theme however, was that performances were able to communicate the ephemeral notion of what a particular Pacific culture was, such as when the Tahiti village co-ordinator, Tua, told me that the idea of performances within the village was that people could say they were ‘touched by Tahiti’. When I questioned her further about exactly what this meant, she told me that it if makes people want to go to Tahiti, ‘then I’ve done my job’, adding that a ‘touch of Tahiti’ was ‘in the culture, in the language...[it’s] about exposing Tahiti as much as I can in such a short time, that they [the audience] say ‘wow’’. Like many others I spoke with, attempting to put into words how performances communicate this was difficult, if not impossible. On many occasions, this line of questioning was answered with either silence or fragmented sentences that, upon review, made sense, but only in a nonsensical manner. In spite of this, terms like ‘uniqueness’, ‘showing who we are’ and the idea that ‘culture’ was contained in performances, as well as food, dress, hospitality, and art and crafts, were common. This difficulty participants had in articulating how festivals and festival performances communicate the concept of culture, brings to mind Cooley’s observation that music behaviours, however defined, throughout the world seem to be locus of people’s most deeply held beliefs, motivations and meanings. Music is especially useful for expressing the unquantifiable and intangible such as religious belief, historical narrative, profound emotion, and ideas about identity (2005, p. 15).

Of participants, VOU’s Sachiko Miller was perhaps able to articulate this notion best when she stated:

_We’re trying to communicate a certain type of energy to the audience, so not necessarily a thing, so we concentrate on delivering the mana or power that the Fijian culture has...just collecting and delivering that to the audience so they get a feeling of Fiji without having to intellectually understand it._

Aside from communicating the complex notion of culture, the two other common meanings attributed to performances by participants were literal interpretations of song texts and as mediums for ‘showing off’. For
performers of traditional material, where language barriers may prevent a significant proportion of the audience from adequately understanding song texts, this was an especially important consideration. Typical of the responses was the explanation by my Tahiti village participant. She told me that,

when I am on stage, I’m living my dance. Each movement that I do, it’s not just a movement; it has to be graceful. You have to tell a message to the public through your dance...Parema means you talk with your hands, so when you dance a parema, even if the people can’t understand the language, they can guess what you’re dancing. Like if you’re doing moana [ocean], or the rain, you tell a story.

The Fiji village and Tongan Bollywood performers were identical in the meanings they attributed to their performances. My Fijian participant explained that, while performing, ‘I just think of it like you’re telling a story with your body and so...I’m just like my character, whoever I’m meant to be to tell my story. It’s like you’re going on a journey everytime you perform’. For the Tongan Bollywood dancer, a connection was made between her Tongan culture and upbringing, how ‘when you’re doing Pacific dance, you’re telling a story’, and how this was the same when performing Bollywood. In this respect, she made an effort to learn about the songs and view them in the contexts in which they appeared in Bollywood films because, as she told me, ‘it would be really difficult if I didn’t know what the words were about, what the songs were about’.

For the dancers from the Kiribati and Niue villages, the meanings communicated reflected the historically-based notion of oral culture. As my i-Kiribati participant noted, ‘it is important as song and dance is a way of communicating our history, and passing our stories’. In terms of communicating the messages of particular songs and dances, the costuming of Kiribati performers is also an integral part: ‘a lot of dances depict nature, the sea, birds, etc, and the adornments on the head and arms often accentuate these actions’. Similarly, for two Niuean sisters, ‘the actions, and the words of the song, portray our Island and the people’. In this respect, the songs and dances performed, as well as the costumes worn, become symbolic and are imbued with meanings of ‘who we are, where we come from’.
Finally, the notion of festival performances meaning an opportunity to ‘show off’ was a particular turn of phrase frequently mentioned by many participants, from performers to village co-ordinators, and others. For the man whose original idea led to the creation of the Pasifika Festival, Roy Vaughan, the notion of showing off was central to the event. He told me that Pacific peoples are ‘great presentation culture people; it’s all song and dance and gift giving and food providing, [they’re] born actors’. Additionally, he asserted that

*most immigrant groups want to bring some of their culture with them...and you want to show it off to other people, and song and dance, it’s such a huge...it is the culture of the Pacific Islands. So, obviously the best way of displaying it [is] in a festival of that kind.*

This idea was expressed by village co-ordinators and performers alike. Representative of these opinions was Kiribati village co-ordinator Merea Pathak, who told me that, simply put, Pasifika is ‘just celebration, and showing off of our culture’, and Tahiti’s Tua Huri, who stated, ‘this is the one time you can show off, show off that Tahiti is involved’. And for performers, like my Tokelauan participants, performing was ‘competitive’ and meant ‘showing off our culture’, while my Fijian participant, for whom performing had a literal communicative function, also added: ‘I guess, for me, personally...just showing off the culture is my purpose. We’re a minority [within the Pacific community] so I guess that’s really one reason why we show it off’. Being a minority within the Pacific communities was also a reason to show off for my Tuvaluan participant: ‘it’s not just that I’m showing off...in our culture, it’s like we’re celebrating. While other cultures might be doing it for show, we’re doing it for enjoyment and for ourselves’.

Alongside the meaning of performances, many participants discussed the distinct and differing functions of traditional and contemporary performances, something that is fully realised in conjunction with the final chapter, festivals, place and identity. Representative of these opinions was PAG chairperson, Ida Faiumu-Isa’ako. She stated that having performances of both traditional and contemporary forms is important, for different reasons. The maintaining of traditional music and dance forms ‘pay homage to who we are and where we’ve come from’, while the inclusion of
contemporary forms recognises that young people have different tastes. Ida believes this is about balance: ‘we [the older generations] have to give a little in what we think the music should be, and meet them where they think it should be’, noting that ‘we will find that balance, that fia fia [spirit of celebration]’.

Two additional points bear discussion here however. The first is the notion of traditional performance and staged authenticity, and the second is the role of contemporary performances in reflecting the current reality of Pacific cultures in their diasporic New Zealand context.

**The Place of Traditional Music**

A contested notion about performances of traditional musics that take place within tourist or tourist-like settings, such as festivals, is the assumption that performances are staged for the benefit of audiences, comprising aspects of cultural practices no longer a part of everyday culture, and are therefore inauthentic, representing culture re-created for a consuming public (see for example Jolly 1992; Sissons 1993 and 1997; Fitzgerald 1998; Kirschenblatt-Gimblett 1998; Condevaux 2009). This process has been referred to as ‘staged authenticity’ (MacCanell 1973), or ‘negotiated authenticity’ (Balme 1998), with the worst effects being a form of ‘cultural self-abasement…the performative equivalent of airport art’ (ibid, p. 57). Cooley (2005) complicates this notion when he discusses how he was challenged after initially devaluing festivals in favour of impromptu private performances for these reasons and then, having experienced both, realised the festival performances better represented the particular traditions of the music culture he was studying, while private performances reflected the global influences and flows of music in which participants lived. In light of the amount of preparation and practicing that took place for festival performances, their importance in the maintenance of cultural practices and creation of cultural identity are therefore transformed from the periphery to the centre. It should be noted that this debate centres around notions of traditional culture and performances, and the degree to which they can be said to represent a true and relevant essence of that culture.
I raise this issue because Pacific festivals and performances present a fundamental challenge to the idea of staged or negotiated authenticity. In discussions with village co-ordinators and performers, all were unanimous in their assertion that traditional songs and dances performed at Pasifika are the same as those performed within the communities at large, at other events and celebrations. They do not represent repertoire dusted off from the oral archives of culture bearers and community elders, and re-presented in a one-off fashion especially for the festival and its cultural tourists. Rather, they are songs and dances about Pacific cultures, homelands and concerns that may be ‘traditional’ in style or have a degree of antiquity, but which are contemporaneously functional. In fact, my Tuvaluan participant went as far as to suggest that, even at the festival, the performances function to serve the performers more than the audiences:

A lot of the same dances that we perform, we do anyway, at our own events and stuff. Some are very old traditional ones, some are newer, but they’re the same. When we perform within our own community, we get into our dance, we enjoy it...when we go to perform at [Pasifika], the men are beating just as hard, the women are doing [the same] things, and I notice that they’re not doing it as much for the audience as they’re just getting into it...they’re not doing it for the Pākehās, they’re doing it for themselves.

As her village co-ordinator, Peggy, noted, dancing and singing is the way entertainment occurs at all community feasts and events, ‘so that’s where we always do that. The festival is the public display of that’. Peggy did note though that there are very old songs and dances, called fakaseasea, which are not often performed at the festival due to their antiquity. Similarly, my Fijian participant noted that there was one area where performances at Pasifika differed from some performed within her community. She noted that ‘Sunday for us, is the day of rest, and you don’t celebrate anything but Jesus and God’; the songs performed within church are therefore solely of a religious nature. By comparison, the ‘songs that we perform at Pasifika are a celebration of our land, our genealogy’, although she pointed out that these same songs are performed at other community events.

In addition to this, as this excerpt from my discussion with Tonga village co-ordinator Wai Tufui highlights, the festival space actually provides a medium
through which traditional musics are valued by those who may not normally do so:

Wai: I find that, every time I play my music at home, the kids don’t even like to listen to it. Two of the children were born in Tonga but we came when they were still babies, they hate me playing my music all the time... but the kids, I find, were performing at the Polyfest, and because they go on to events like that, they really enjoy the dancing and music.

Me: So the music at home they don’t like, but at the festival space...

Wai: Yeah, they really enjoy it.

Me: Why do you think that is?

Wai: Because, the music I play, there is no action to it, but when they come and see the groups singing, they really enjoy [it].

Music brought alive through the context of performance and the festivalised space takes on new meanings and, accordingly, the space promotes a greater interaction and appreciation. This promotes viewing the festival space as important for the maintenance and survival of performance traditions.

**Traditional as Contemporary: The Circularity of Pacific Time and Music**

The argument that touristic performances of traditional music are inauthentic re-creations of antiquated music no longer relevant to everyday life, something re-fashioned from an imagined past, is challenged by the Pacific festival space because this does not adequately describe the role and function of traditional music within Pacific communities. The role and function of traditional music can be explained by considering differing conceptions of time between the West, which views time as linear, and the Pacific conception of time as circular. This offers a view of performances of traditional music as having contemporaneous functions.

The view of ‘traditional’ music as something from the past, recent or distant, real or imagined, is based on a conception of time as linear, evolutionary and chronological. In Pacific cultures however there exists a ‘tremendous recourse to the past and the ‘ways of the ancestors’’ (Lal et al 2000, p. 484). The past is situated ‘in dynamic relation with the present and future rather than as an epoch fixed in time’ (ibid). As opposed to a linear construction,
where time is broken up into units, Pacific cultures adopt an holistic approach, viewing the past, present and future as all combined into an all present and all embracing ‘now’ (Thaman 2002, p. 234). In many Pacific languages, the terms past and future often relate, respectively, to in front, or ahead, and behind, or after (Hau’ofa 2008, p. 67). Relating this to time, the future therefore lies behind because it cannot be seen; the visible past lies to the front. In this sense, ‘the past is going ahead of us, leading into the future, which is behind us’ (ibid). From this perspective time is seen as circular, and relationships to and conceptions of the past are therefore considered through a different lens:

That the past is ahead, in front of us, is a conception of time that helps us retain our memories and be aware of its presence. What is behind us cannot be seen and is liable to be forgotten readily. What is ahead of us cannot be forgotten so readily or ignored, for it is in front of our minds’ eyes, always reminding us of its presence. Since the past is alive in us, the dead are alive – we are our history (ibid).

The circularity of time is further reinforced by the ways in which Pacific peoples are organised genealogically, and then to the lands (villages) to which genealogical ties relate. Ka’ili (2005) shows how these genealogies remain in the contemporary and are used to form socio-cultural relationships, or re-affirm ones previously created, and to nurture, or sow the seeds of those that will follow afterwards. In this sense, Pacific peoples are arranged in ‘plural, holistic and circular’ ways, something at odds their organisation in the West, which is done along lines that are ‘singular, individualist, analytical and linear’ (Mahina 2007, quoted in Leota-Ete 2007, p. 5).

Applying this non-linear conception of time to traditional Pacific musics provides a different understanding of what they mean, and the ways they are used and function within communities. Traditional musics displayed and performed at Pacific festivals are not re-created from a past no longer relevant to the communities. Nor are they being staged, pulled from repositories that contain the long-forgotten songs of Pacific cultures, purely for the benefit of a consuming public. Rather, the music is part of a tradition that remains ongoing in the present day, a canon of music widely performed, something

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50 Hau’ofa also notes that there are examples in the English language that point towards a previous understanding of time in this sense, such as ‘let us pay tribute to those who have gone before us’ and the ‘generations that follow’.
that is part of the reality of twenty-first century Pacific communities in New Zealand. New songs and dances in traditional styles, sometimes created especially, exist alongside those written in other times, and mix with performances of hip hop dancing, rap, reggae, and other contemporary styles, to create the totality of Pacific cultural expression. As the Tokelauan village co-ordinator told me:

A lot of our culture, you will know through our songs and dances, ‘cos a lot of the songs we sing are about what’s happening in Tokelau and what Tokelau is all about…That’s why our people dance, like to dance. The songs have meanings, they’re not just songs. They’re actually explaining all about Tokelau.

In this sense, the traditional has a contemporaneous function, and plays a vital and central role within Pacific communities. Traditional music provides present-day understanding of Pacific cultures, and what it means to be of the Pacific (as in Sāmoan, Tongan, Cook Island, and so forth). They are, in fact, contemporaneous displays of Pacific cultures, and not re-creations and representations of traditions that are static, fixed or bound. Festival performances viewed from the outside as such, as music rooted in a linear past and brought back to life for public consumption, represent a preconceived misunderstanding. They can be performances rooted in other times, indeed, but they are routed through the contemporary day New Zealand to provide new meaning, new understandings of Pacific cultures, new passing of knowledge. Performances at Pacific festivals are sites where the continued importance and presence of ancestry and the past is balanced with the reality of contemporaneous situations, in order that cultures survive and adapt moving into the future, and that this future is continually made present. This is logical when viewed through the lens of circular time, the idea that the past is not a fixed point that continually recedes with the passing of time, but is constantly standing before us, leading into the future. Thus, and in contradiction to the ways in which others have argued, the festival space does not represent staged authenticity, material re-negotiated for the performance frame. It is culture, alive, transplanted from private community settings into new public performance frames.

51 This same viewpoint has been expressed with regards to the performance of Māori song and dance within tourist venues (see Condevaux 2009).

52 And see Wood (2003) for a discussion of how the ‘library of Oceanic knowledge is found in performance’ (p. 361).
The Place of Contemporary Music

While the performance of traditional musics is central in representing and communicating aspects of Pacific cultures, this is balanced by the importance of contemporary, meaning non-Pacific originated contemporary styles, or hybrids of, in reflecting the reality of Pacific peoples and cultures in twenty-first century New Zealand. As Macpherson has noted, ‘many young Pacific people [are] able to listen to [contemporary popular] music and find in it confirmation that their experiences and feelings [are] shared by others (2001b, p. 78).

As mentioned above, participants, from festival staff to village co-ordinators, to performers, highlighted the importance of a balance between traditional and contemporary music performances. Typical of the opinions expressed was Tahiti village co-ordinator, Tua, who told me:

> Because that’s what it’s all about. We’re in 2010 now…tradition is good, but we’re in New Zealand and we need to know that our young ones, not all of them stick to tradition. They like some of it, some of that old culture is good, and it’s there. But they also want to see the new stuff as well.

The Fiji and Niue village co-ordinators, Joana and Mina, also highlighted that the contemporary was important as it kept youth in the villages and allowed for the possibility of a broader engagement with their culture. For Joana, this was crucial in making young New Zealand-born Fijians feel ‘at home’, while Mina told me, ‘we can’t have just Pacific music going on, ‘cos then the young people are walking around and are missing out. So we can have the contemporary and the traditional, and it keeps them in the village’.

Also reminiscent of general opinion, my Tuvalu village performer related the importance of contemporary cultural expressions to the experiences of being a New Zealand-raised Pacific person:

> I think it’s important to have that part of the festival, because not everyone is a weaver, and being Pacific doesn’t mean that I’m going to be performing cultural dancing…with so many of our young being New Zealand-raised…we need to have that kind of platform for them as well, otherwise it will be just some kind of dance festival…it breathes so much more when kids have their platform as well, the reality of being a Kiwi is that kind of expression here, as much as for those who are traditionally involved as well.
Problematising the Influence of the Contemporary

It is important to note that, although a balance between traditional and contemporary cultural forms was seen as crucial in reflecting the realities of diasporic Pacific communities, especially for those born and raised away from Island homelands, concerns were expressed by some participants about the detrimental effect that a focus on contemporary, and the New Zealand lifestyle and environment more generally, was having on the traditional.

Characteristic of this concern was the opinion expressed by Fiji village coordinators Joana and daughter Seta, who noted that knowledge of traditional performance styles were being lost:

*Joana:* we try our best to incorporate the two [traditional and contemporary], but because we live here in New Zealand, the old is going out.

*Seta:* It’s not only going out, but the people who live here now think that they don’t need to do it because they can just put on a CD. And they don’t feel the need to step forward and…

*Joana:* Perhaps they’re getting lazy. I think they’re getting lazy.

Although lamenting the loss of cultural traditions within the New Zealand communities, they, as well as others, acknowledged that, to a lesser degree, these traditions were also being lost in the Pacific too. This reflects an overall concern about the impacts of Westernised culture on Pacific cultural patterns and ways of life, which, although beyond the scope of discussion here, is also important to note.

For performers Ryan Monga, of Ardijah, and Cindy of Sāmoa, despite being contemporary performers, concern about the impacts of contemporary culture revolved around issues of Americanisation and mimicry. ‘[The Pasifika Festival] was so American influenced,’ Cindy told me, ‘I was sitting there talking to people and saying, ‘oh, I thought this was a Sāmoan village’’. For her, the festival should be a place where people ‘showcase the cultural stuff…but there was nothing cultural that day’. Similarly, Ryan was concerned about the outright imitation of American counterparts, which, for him, represents the commercialisation of culture:
There's a definite line to being cultural, contemporary and then mainstream... And it’s not about the culture anymore, it’s about the business... Don’t get it mixed up. Don’t contaminate this thing; keep it traditional or contemporary, or traditionally contemporary, or contemporalising traditional.

In other words, for Ryan, it is important to ‘keep that corporate thing out of it... Because it’s acknowledging their culture, my culture’. For performers who simply imitate other popular musicians, ‘as far as I’m concerned, they haven’t done enough to find out who they are’.

What is interesting to note is that Ardijah and Cindy are contemporary performers but did not see themselves as implicated in this concern. For Ryan, this is because the self-defined style of Ardijah’s music, ‘polyfonk’, is an example of ‘traditionally contemporary’ music, or ‘contemporalising traditional’, a hybridised style of popular music that incorporates characteristic elements of Polynesian musics, such as ukelele and log drums: ‘Polyfonk isn’t traditional music, but it’s got elements of traditional in it’, he told me. Interestingly, he also counted reggae as acceptable, ‘because that’s kinda indigenous’, something that reflects Jen Cattermole’s arguments about the indigenisation of reggae in New Zealand (2004). In the case of Cindy, as someone born and raised in Sāmoa, she considered herself as ‘still very much fresh from the Islands’ and her act in New Zealand is a replication of the act originally created and performed in Sāmoa. Therefore she situates herself as a Sāmoan entertainer, something reflected on stage through her performance style, which positions her clearly as a Sāmoan migrant, primarily through language and the fact of her being fa’afafine, a distinctly Pacific/Polynesian gender construct.

Notions of traditional and contemporary, of the balance and influence of one upon the other, is an important debate that is taking place within Pacific communities. Re-thinking traditional in terms of functioning contemporaneously, the importance of contemporary in reflecting a New Zealand reality, as well as concerns about the detrimental effect to traditional musics that this focus brings, add to this debate, demonstrating the complexities involved in negotiating how these concerns are balanced. Clearly, for participants, both are seen as important. These issues raise the
wider question of what Pacific music is, another facet of the debate taking place within Pacific communities, and which festival performances contribute to.

What is Pacific Music?

It is important to note that there is no agreement around the notion of what can be labelled ‘Pacific music’, and what the acceptable boundaries of the term are. This debate was perfectly encapsulated at the 2010 Pacific Music Awards when Te Vaka lead singer Opetaia Foa’i, coming onstage shortly after Smashproof performed their record-breaking hip hop single Brother, announced that it was time for some ‘real Pacific music’. Exactly what Foa’i meant by this is unclear, but the not-so-subtle remark was clearly directed at previous performers that had included R&B singers J Williams and Erakah, and its intention was clear to the audience. It was also perhaps an ironic quip, given that Te Vaka have fashioned a career based largely on performing for and catering to the ‘World Music’ market, fusing Pacific language, percussion and dance, with synthesisers, guitars and other popular music elements. If this constitutes ‘real Pacific music’, it begs the question, ‘what is real Pacific music, anyway?’

The debate taking place, as new generations of Pacific peoples consider and negotiate their diasporic identities and the future paths of Pacific cultures, was highlighted frequently by participants. Some adopted the stance that Pacific music excluded what was seen as Western popular, or as deriving from outside of Pacific nations, while others asserted a middle path through what is clearly a problematic and highly-charged politics of culture and cultural representation. These views were most often expressed as a division between contemporary and traditional, where contemporary refers to music situated within popular music styles, predominantly rap, R&B or reggae, and largely although not always in English, and traditional is generally music and musical styles brought to New Zealand from the Pacific, music that carries a degree of authority and/or antiquity, is performed largely within communities, and is never commercial.53

53 It is important to note that these categories are problematic. Interestingly, by these definitions, the music of Te Vaka is considered ‘contemporary’ because, although it is predominantly sung in Pacific languages and features log drum percussion, it is situated within an overall popular music style. At events like Polyfest and the Pasifika
The debate is further complicated by a series of value judgments inherent in the type of music or musicians that appear acceptable as both contemporary, and also Pacific. In other words, that are acceptable representations of ‘Pacific music’. These views were often expressed as opposites, with some (predominantly older) participants appreciating only that contemporary popular music has to have a prominent role in festivals because it attracts younger people. Joana, the Fiji village co-ordinator, a contemporary visual artist who appreciates contemporised traditional music and dance, told me:

*I had a hard time accepting Western stuff coming through, but I could see [the festival] committee, I could see their side, what they saw, and I tried to understand it, and meet them half way...But it’s hard bringing in outside stuff, but for the younger generation, I’ve got to allow that to happen.*

These opinions were often not directed at contemporary music overall, as with Ryan’s assertion and acceptance of reggae of indigenous, but rather towards hip hop, or to the degree of undefined Pacific ‘credentials’ expressed or not within the music. Contemporary musicians such as the Yandall Sisters, Ardijah, and Annie Crummer are considered iconic, and have crafted careers and particular identities by emphasising their Pacific-ness through their music and personas. King Kapisi, with his ‘Sāmoan Hip Hop Worldwide’ brand of rap, which avoids the bragging, materialistic, and misogynistic nature of hip hop culture in favour of emphasising cultural pride and more humanistic pursuits, as does both Che Fu and Nesian Mystik, is viewed in the same manner.

King Kapisi himself, as well as Ardijah’s Ryan Monga, both expressed these opinions. For them, contemporary popular music by Pacific artists that purely simulate their American counterparts, without undergoing a localising process, lacks credibility as ‘Pacific music’. King Kapisi told me:

*I figured out how important it is to represent culture and heritage when you’re onstage...If we don’t do things like that, then we just become part of the pop culture. I don’t mind pop and I don’t mind pop culture, but if you go out and you don’t have a message, then you just become part of the same shit*
you hear everyday...I believe that we’re from here, we have to portray and give the listener a different story to what the rest of the world is telling them, ‘cos there’s no gangsters here, you know, we’re not really like L.A. We have to portray that in our music.

Being Pacific artists, he furthered, allows for an exploration of ‘our Pacific Island-ness, within our music’:

You don’t always need the contemporary kick and snare drum to make hip hop, you can run with different, you know...no-one’s just gonna go back to the pātē. I think that’s what we have to do as artists is really explore our culture and explore our heritage, and find new sounds that we can work with.

For Ryan, it is important to acknowledge Pacific heritage, as well as maintaining a separation between culture and business. He stated:

For me, Polyfonk gave me the ok to play what I play, ‘cos I was giving recognition to my cultural background. Polyfonk isn’t traditional music, but it’s got elements of tradition, so that jigsaw puzzle is mine. To have Polynesians performing at a Polynesian festival doing hip hop or R&B...nothing against hip hop music, but I think it’s about trying to keep it authentic, or close to what the whole theme is about...It’s got to have a kinda ethnic feel...Don’t get [business] mixed up with culture. To me, hip hop is business and it’s music. Sweet. But it’s business, it’s not cultural.

He continued, asserting that simply being a person of Pacific descent did not make the music Pacific, you have to make an effort to sound Pacific, ‘to have your roots in there’: ‘To me, a lot of these kids that are born into this era, they’ve been born into TV. You need to go back and research who you are, who your parents are, who your aunties and uncles are, grandma and grandpa are’.

From an opposing point of view, some participants believed people, rather than musical style, are crucial determinants. In discussing how she organises performances, Sāmoa village co-ordinator, Te’evā, told me that, ‘we recognise all facets of music, and the different types of music that [we] are very talented in...the day is all about celebrating our people, and that’s what I want to capture throughout the day’.

For two festival performers, who performed neither traditional nor contemporary styles commonly associated with Pacific peoples, the emphasis
on people rather than product was also highlighted. For rock band TribalState, part of the attraction of performing at Pasifika was to change, or at least challenge, peoples’ perceptions of what Pacific music could be, a view also expressed by the Pasifika staff such as Ole and Tanya, who did not want to programme the same styles of music year after year. TribalState acknowledged that the ‘curiosity factor’ of them being a band of three Sāmoan guitar players and a female drummer, playing a style of music not usually associated with Pacific peoples, set them apart and created interest. At the Pasifika Festival, where expectations are created by popular notions of what Pacific music and musicians are, their musical presence disrupted and challenged this norm.

For my Bollywood-dancing Tongan participant, her physicality made her performance a Pacific performance. She told me:

\[I \text{ wanted to perform at Pasifika because, as a Tongan, and as a Pacific Islander, I wanted to showcase my talents as part of Pasifika, as celebrating Pasifika the festival. As a Pasifika person, I wanted to be part of it. It didn’t matter that my dance was totally different, but as a Pasifika person, I thought I had every right to be there...it’s a total different dance, but it’s celebrating Pasifika. We all change in time, all Pasifika, it’s going to be more and more Bollywood or different types of performers there in future.}\]

In one respect, the notion of physicality has clear limitations. My Tongan participant was certainly not claiming that, by performing Bollywood dancing, she was transforming it into a style of Pacific dance; nor were TribalState claiming that they played a specific type of Pacific rock. In previous years, opera singers of Pacific descent have also performed at the Pasifika Festival, as they have likewise also gained profiles within the classical music world. Clearly, in doing so, their Pacific bodies do not transform Italian arias into music people would label ‘Pacific’. Rather, it is opera being performed by Pacific peoples, Bollywood dancing performed by a Tongan, and rock music being performed by three Sāmoans and a Pākehā.

The fact that festival performances appear as part of a defined, delineated Pacific space mean that they are framed by notions of Pacific-ness, viewed as representations of Pacific peoples and cultures. In short, because the festival is constructed as a Pacific space, a celebration of Pacific communities, the
performances that take place within it are viewed as representative of those communities; performances become ‘Pacific’ by virtue of the space they appear within. This explains why performances as varied as rock, heavy metal, hip hop, reggae, contemporary dance, as well as the array of traditional styles, can be encompassed under the banner of Pacific performance, and read as such. The festival space can therefore be seen as playing a role in the debate and changing boundaries and constructions of Pacific musical performance. In turn, this highlights the notion and influence of space, the final area I wish to address in this chapter. I begin by returning to the ethnographic voice.

6.3 Performances and Festival Space

It’s late-morning at the Pasifika Festival, and I have returned to the international stage to see Bella Kalolo, an up-and-coming soul singer. Musically, there is nothing sonically that situates specifically her as a Pacific artist and I stand there, eyes closed, trying to imagine how I would envisage her if I was hearing her only on record. Given her sung-accent and musical style, I am instantly transplanted into an American context, standing in front of an African-American diva. This is in no way a criticism, as Bella is musically spectacular and exciting, but rather a short meditation on the thorny issue of what makes music, or an artist, ‘Pacific’. It is through her between-song humour and banter that she situates herself as a Pacific person, connecting with both the space she is in and also with the audience. Afterwards, back at the emerging artist stage, the middle of the day acts City of Missiles (heavy metal) and TribalState (hard rock) are about to start. Sitting amongst the smaller audience, the reaction to performances in genres not usually associated with Pacific peoples is not entirely unexpected. While enthusiastic, the reactions appear as curiosity, not quite bewilderment, but their presence immediately challenges ideas about what Pacific music is and who Pacific performers are, and I suspect more than a few of the audience members would not normally listen to these styles of music, but stay on anyway. Again, there is nothing sonically that differentiates the acts from other performers of the same genres, although I will later learn, in the case of TribalState, that at least a couple of the songs have themes relating to the songwriter’s prior life in Sāmoa.
In considering this, I realise it is space that highlights performers’ Pacific credentials, that situates them as Pacific artists. The festivalised space is a complete melange of cultural forms – traditional, contemporary, popular, Sāmoan, Tokelauan, Cook Island, pre-European, European-influenced, French-influenced, and so on – and everything is framed by notions of Pacific-ness. It is a meeting place of both diversity and unity, where the uniqueness of each Pacific culture is displayed alongside contemporary, urban, and more pan-Pacific incarnations. The space is also chaotic. Sonically, the entire park is filled; the sounds of various musics, from stages and stalls, collide and compete for space. Multiple sounds overlap the soundscape, claiming ownership of different areas and intersecting in a chorus of sound. At one of the landlocked meeting points, I capture the collision of Tahitian drum dance and heavy metal on video. From one side of the lake you can also hear the rhythms being danced to in villages on the other side. While at the opening of the Tuvalu village, in a music-less space, I noted the penetrating sounds of other villages. Continuing on while the opening prayer and blessing was conducted, these sounds were then pushed out as the flag was raised, and the sound of hymns being sung re-claimed and re-territorialised the village space. While sound is one of the main elements that festivalise and Pacific-ise the space, other senses are equally impacted, with the colours, smells, tastes and textures creating a multi-sensory experience.

After seeing the festival come to life, and talking to people involved, I question whether the criticism sometimes directed at cultural festivals, that they are nothing beyond superficial engagements with multiculturalism, failing to address serious issues, is a fair assumption or charge to make. I think about what festivals are supposed to be. Festivals are about festivity and celebration, fia fia. More than this, although Pasifika is consumed by ‘others’, and the sharing of culture beyond the bounds of the Pacific communities is an important facet, this is clearly a festival run by Pacific people for Pacific people. Criticisms of superficial engagement are surely relevant and an argument can be made, but I feel that this misses the point. What is unquestionable is that, for a huge amount of people, Pasifika is a hugely important event, a vital time for the celebration of that which
comprises, *materially*, Pacific cultures. Material culture is the nature of festivals generally, and thus Pasifika is no different.

**The Festival Space as Creator of ‘Pacific’ Performances**

I suggest that Pacific festivals create spaces in which performances are framed as ‘Pacific’, and seen as examples of Pacific peoples and cultures as they are situated in twenty-first century New Zealand. In turn, this opens up new spaces for challenging and changing peoples’ perceptions of what this can mean, and therefore provides perfect spaces in which debates and negotiations about what constitutes Pacific music and performance can be played out. This was highlighted by the differences I noticed when I later witnessed two Pasifika performers and in non-Pacific festival contexts.

After the Pasifika Festival, I took the opportunity to attend further shows by Bella Kalolo and TribalState. Both shows were held in public bars, late at night, and, in most ways, the performances were similar to as they appeared within the festival space. However, one striking difference I noticed was how the spaces in which the shows were held affected the way the performances could be read. Within the festival, their performances were framed as being ‘Pacific’. They appeared on stages decorated with Pacific motifs, surrounded by Pacific food, art and crafts, and iconography, leaving audiences to purposefully make connections between performers and notions of Pacific cultures in order to understand them. Within the bar environment, the performances were more easily identified and read purely as performances of rock and soul music, and no aspect of them appeared consciously constructed to draw connections between the music and the musicians as Pacific peoples. Furthermore, within the festival space both TribalState and Bella highlighted their Pacific-ness during on-stage banter between songs. This aspect was absent at the bar gigs; indeed, it would have seemed out of place. The notion of how spaces in which musical events occur affect and impact the way they are understood and read, is not new (Small 1998), and has also been discussed with specific regard to festivals (Duffy 2005; Wood et al. 2007). As Duffy suggests, ‘when we attend a music festival, certain ways of understanding the performances are suggested through the festival framework and associated paraphernalia’ (2005, p. 682). In short, place affects and effects the music that
is produced: ‘the venue of a concert is a material influence on how performances are staged and heard’ (Wood et al. 2007, p. 871).

I discussed this with contemporary performer Grace Ikenasio, who performed on the Sāmoa village stage. She noted that there was ‘most definitely’ a difference between performing at the festival and at a bar. On a practical level, she noted that ‘bar gigs can be quite intimate, whereas with Pasifika you’re trying to grab peoples’ attention, because they’re moving around all the time’. The notion of how the space influenced the meaning of the performance, however, was more difficult to articulate. ‘There is a big difference’, Grace explained, ‘because at a Pasifika festival, the people there will probably grasp onto my performance and what I’m displaying, they will take something back with them’. As to what this ‘something’ was, ‘it will help them, I think’, she suggested, ‘for me, I think there would be a connection between me and Pacific people when I do music because, being Sāmoan and having music as a part of me is definitely something that I want to take into what I do next’.

After another minute trying to find the words to adequately communicate what she meant, she finally exclaimed, ‘there is a difference, but I can’t explain why’. Grace’s difficulty in putting into words how the space of the festival differed from the space of a bar performance highlights that festival performances carry different and heightened meanings. Whereas performing in other contexts were seen as performances, performing within a space constructed as a Pacific festival created the notion that the performances were somehow different, carried more meaning and importance, and were representative of and spoke to Pacific peoples and cultures, even where those performances in other contexts would not be readily identifiable as such, beyond the physicality of the performers. This theme extended to the way in which performances were constructed within and specifically for the festival context, which manifested in two distinct and different ways.

Creating Specific Performances for Festival Spaces
Several participants highlighted the difference between festival and non-festival environments and performances. King Kapisi noted that, at Pacific
festivals, ‘you have to be nice, you can’t swear, you can’t do your angry tracks, you have to do your happy tracks that people will enjoy...you can’t put on your dark hoody and swear at the crowd’. He called this ‘playing to the audience’, stating that, at a festival, where children are present, ‘you can’t go out and do your hardcore songs’.

Although he situated this within a larger frame of social responsibility, and the fact that, as a high-profile artist, ‘I can’t just throw off my PIndness and say ‘fuck that, I don’t [care]’, when really I do...I can’t shame my parents...I don’t want to shame my country’, clearly the festival space impacted on the choice of material performed, and material that could be seen as oppositional or inappropriate for a family environment was absent. My suggestion of a self-governing set of expectations, discussed above, is applicable here: the pressure to perform material appropriate for the context as well as being representative of ‘Pacific peoples’ reflects the delicate balance required between meeting the desires of older, Island-raised migrant generations, and those of their younger, New Zealand-raised contemporaries.

Awa, of Nesian Mystik, also spoke about this pressure. He talked about the ‘indirect obligation for us to give back’, noting that ‘when our people see us do well, you’re expected to give back, you’re expected to give time’. These expectations, however, also meant pressure and added scrutiny, because of their public profiles. In terms of performing at Pacific festivals, this added pressure was reflected in the serious nature with which performances were regarded and how they were adapted to the festival context:

*It’s even tougher at Pasifika...The range of ages is very broad when you do a Pasifika, and you have to cater to them [because] that’s your people, that who you go home to. It’s even more important to perform well...we’ll hear about it otherwise. I’m not worried about the reviewers in the magazine, I’m worried about Aunty going, ‘you sucked’.*

In discussing this with Ardijah’s Ryan, he supported the notion that performances at festivals like Pasifika should be tailored to suit the context in which they appeared, otherwise, ‘it’s like putting an opera singer on at the Big Day Out [rock festival], it doesn’t fit’. Although he was initially dismissive of including hip hop as representative of Pacific cultures, upon further
discussion, it was clearly certain aspects of the musical form that were problematic. He stated that

> to have Polynesians performing at a Polynesian festival and doing hip hop or R&B...nothing against hip hop music, but I think it’s about keeping it, or trying to keep it authentic, or close to what the whole theme is about...as soon as you get up there and start shouting about my bitches and all that stuff, you know, they call that hip hop culture. Don’t get that mixed up with culture; to me, it’s business.

For Ryan, Pacific festivals are about celebrating life, movement, and music, and about sharing culture and a common Pacific ancestry. Performances should therefore be reflective of this; hip hop musicians merely mimicking their largely African-American counterparts ‘haven’t done enough to find out who they are’. Artists like Savage, King Kapisi and Che Fu, who had self-consciously incorporated aspects of their respective Pacific heritages into their music were, in Ryan’s words, ‘beautiful’: ‘now that’s what I call crossing it with contemporary and traditional. As a Polynesian, that’s it right there’, he added.

**Tailoring Performances to Specific (Cultural) Contexts**

For contemporary Fijian performing arts collective VOU, performances on the international stage and then in the Fiji village were modified to meet the specific contexts of the spaces in which they took place. For the more general audience at the international stage, the troupe began by performing in recognisably traditional Fijian styles and ending with contemporary pieces. Founder Sachiko Miller explains:

> We went from the quite traditional, we did a meke iri, which is a fan dance, and then into the traditional chanting, and then a very contemporary fusion, using the traditional bamboo, Derua, which is normally only an instrument, but we danced with it, and ending with a contemporary fusion piece, which any audience could understand and appreciate.

Knowing that the audience would be a mixture of people, the repertoire chosen was purposefully geared towards first identifiably situating the group within a Fijian context. After this, VOU’s performance was then able to progress into a display of (their) contemporary renderings of Fijian culture, combining elements of traditional Fijian culture and fusing it with elements of
contemporary dance. This approach meets the expectations of Pasifika’s general festival audience, which has, through the ideology and performance direction of festival management, evolved past expecting to see only the traditional, and now expects to see how culture has been contemporised. In other words, in the way that Pasifika has been mediated since 1993, festival-goers expect to see both traditional and contemporary displays of Pacific cultures, where contemporary means both popular and ‘high-art’. Performers like VOU, who seamlessly move from one to the other, offering an easily comprehensible chronological-like understanding of Pacific cultures, help to satisfy (and propagate) this demand.

Later in the day, when they moved to the Fiji village, VOU were freed up to modify their performance for a predominantly Fijian audience, and offer a more nuanced ‘insider’ performance of Fijian culture. Sachiko:

> With the Fiji stage, we knew that there was a large Fijian population that would understand different things about what we were trying to perform, so that’s when we brought out all of our funny stuff, our comedic stuff, that the Fijian people would enjoy and laugh at. We still did traditional meke and stuff, but [we also performed] things that an international audience wouldn’t understand, but a Fijian audience would.

One of these items was a taki song, which elicited rapturous and knowing laughs and acknowledgements from the Fijian audience. Having witnessed the performance, I knew clearly that this represented something you needed to be Fijian, or have knowledge of Fijian culture, to understand. As it was something I did not possess, the performance was, while enjoyable, somewhat lost in translation.\(^5^4\) Sachiko explained that the song was about the social culture of drinking Kava in Fiji:

> [it’s] about the things that people do in Fiji every day after work and because Fijian people know exactly what he is singing about and it’s so ridiculous, they all thought it was really funny, rolling around and laughing and were like, ‘that’s so true’, because they got it…and they’ll remember it.

The purpose of tailoring the performance, as Sachiko explained, was to create connections for those people, to their former lives in Fiji, and provide a way

\(^{54}\) The process of taki comes from the traditional ceremony of drinking of kava (or yagona in Fijian), where a small bowl of kava is passed around a group, each person taking a sip. When the bowl empties, it is refilled from the larger kava bowl. Beer or other drinks can be substituted for kava, and taki carried out in the same manner.
for them to reminisce in those memories with fellow Fijians. In a similar sense, this also explains why, for the Tongan Bollywood dancer, performing in the Fiji village was the highlight of performing at Pasifika, ‘because I knew this was their song, their culture that I was doing, so I wanted to show them what I can do with it, and they loved it’.

For Grace, a contemporary performer in the Sāmoa village, context was also a determining factor in deciding what material she performed and some songs were chosen to ‘speak’ directly to her Sāmoan community. Two songs were chosen because the themes – about where you find a sense of ‘home’, and ignoring negativity – ‘fitted well with the stage’. As she explained,

> it’s something I felt a need to communicate specifically to Pacific Islanders about, ‘cos it seems that a lot of young Pacific Island people get down on themselves about family issues and stuff like that. So it’s trying to encourage people to feel uplifted.

And a contemporary rendering of an old Sāmoan love song was chosen as a song that elder members of the audience would recognise and appreciate, with the contemporisation of it providing something that sounded attractive to younger audience members.

The theme of adapting performances to meet the specific festival context was not however universal. For Cindy of Sāmoa, her career as a professional performer meant that she refused to change her act dependent on context, despite the risqué nature of the performance and between-song banter, which, albeit light-heartedly, plays on the ambiguous nature of her gender and sexuality. As she explained:

> I never change my act, and I’m never gonna change my act. I mean, they know what I do. And it’s just like the church, when they ask me to come and do things for them, I say, ‘look, you know I don’t do gospel shows’. It’s just the way it is; this is what I do and I’m not gonna change anything for anybody.

In spite of her unwavering position with regards to performance content, Cindy has performed at several Pacific festivals in addition to the Positively Pasifika Festival, where her performance was received in the playful manner in which it is intended. Cindy attributes this to the general although not
universal acceptance of fa’afafine within Pacific communities and that the humour, although risqué, is not meant to cause offense:

   *It’s more a case of one person with an issue, and that what’s I mean by they should leave their issues at home, because even back home [in Sāmoa] it’s not a problem. At the Teuila [festival] we have a fa’afafine pageant, and I have performed at pageants in New Zealand, like Miss Sāmoa.*

**The Festivalisation and Pacificisation of Space**

There is one final point to be made with regards to performances and space. Thus far I have focused on and discussed how the festival space influences festival performances, how it frames them as Pacific performances and affects the nature of their content. It is important to note that the reverse is equally true: the performances festivalise and Pacific-ise the festival space. What I mean by this is that performances assist in the process of transforming the parks in which they take place into festivals, into festivalised spaces. As an essential element of festivals, performances provide the sonic markers of festivals and festivity, indicating to those within its audible landscape that the collective ritual of festivals is occurring. This is similar to Harnish’s assertion, with regards to the festival of his ethnography that, ‘for the music to be ‘meaningful’ and experienced as such, the environment must be properly set’ (2006, pp. 165 – 166). In context of this study, performances mark these environments as Pacific spaces. Thus, while the festival space endows notions of Pacific-ness upon performances, performances also sonically identify the festival space as specifically a Pacific festival space.

A telling example of this occurred at the failure of the 2010 Positively Pasifika Festival to go ahead as planned, and by its absence at the festival as it eventuated. Therefore I return once more to the ethnographic voice to demonstrate this and close the chapter:

At the alternative festival, I spend some time looking around and observing events and the festival attendees. Noting the change of venue from a public park to the enclosed hall of a Pacific Island church, it is apparent to me the nature of the festival as a site, or space, has been altered. From being a public celebration of Pacific-ness, the festival has become akin to a Pacific
community event. To me, this has changed the dynamics of the space in ways I find hard to articulate. Rather than attending and observing an open-air festival, where a multitude of people and elements combine to create a particular and public environment, I now feel invited into a private celebration.

This raises the question: why is this ‘festival’ not really a Pasifika festival? What aspects of a Pasifika festival are missing? In the sense that we know what something is by what it is not, the answers help to answer the larger question: what is a Pasifika festival? By this account, a Pasifika festival is an outdoor space, often a public park, set up in such a way to facilitate the easy movement of large crowds around stalls selling arts and crafts, food, and providing targeted access to a range of social services. The space is marked by a Pacific soundscape, provided largely by live entertainment on one or more stages, of traditional and contemporary performances. It is decorated in such a way as to delineate a ‘Pacific’ visual aesthetic, using where possible natural surroundings to add to the overall feeling of ‘the Pacific’. The festival is held across a full day. By this definition, the alternative Pasifika ‘festival’ fell short. It was not a festival because it was not the festival it should have been; it was incomplete, especially in terms of musical performances. Furthermore, the space in which the alternative Pasifika was held was not ‘festivalised’; it had not been set up as a festival space and imbued with the dynamics and atmosphere of festivalisation. The idea of attending a festival carries with it certain connotations, certain expectations of festivity. A festivalised space equally conjures images, associations, and assumptions of that which will take place within its boundaries. The Positively Pasifika Festival, as it transpired, failed to meet these expectations or associations.

**Conclusion**

This chapter has taken, as its starting point, festival performances and repertoire, using field observations and discussion to uncover meanings of musical performances, meanings that assist in an understanding of festival spaces and the Pacific diaspora in New Zealand. I began with reflections from participants as to the meanings of performances, highlighting that they carried both literal communicative meanings, as well as more abstract
possibilities. This led into a discussion about the place of traditional and contemporary musics, demonstrating that they function in very different and distinct ways. Arguing against the notion of ‘staged authenticity’ (MacCanell 1973) by employing the Pacific conception of circular time, I showed that traditional performances serve contemporaneous functions because they remain central within Pacific communities, as ways of understanding Pacific cultures in New Zealand as well as in Island homelands. Contemporary performances, by contrast, highlight solely the twenty-first century reality of the place of diasporic Pacific peoples within New Zealand, their relationships to Island homelands, and how this has changed Pacific cultural expressions. The nature of traditional and contemporary music performance touches on the debate occurring within Pacific communities, about what the label ‘Pacific music’ means. The reflections of participants were therefore outlined, and add to this conversation.

In the final section of this chapter, the focus shifted to the interaction between performances and space. By outlining field observations, I discussed how the festival space influences perceptions of performances as representative of Pacific cultural expression. Furthermore, the festival space influenced the repertoire performed in being modified to meet the demands of the festival audience, or for specific cultural contexts. And, where space influences performances and the perceptions of performance, performances also influence the festival space, providing the sonic elements in the processes of festivalisation that occur, and territorialising the space as a Pacific festival.

Having now outlined the logistics and performances, and explored the related themes and meanings of the two Pasifika festivals studied, the focus of the next two chapters switches to purely theoretical considerations in constructing my argument about the meaning of the Pacific festival space. I begin in the next chapter with the theme of festivals and community, before concluding with a discussion of place and identity.
Chapter Seven

Festivals and Community

Festivals are overwhelmingly constructed as community spaces, in a broad sense; events where groups of people are brought together in celebration of particular interests, cultures, lifestyles, and so forth. The notion of community was then, unsurprisingly, an area frequently commented upon by participants, in many guises. Coupled with ethnographic observations, these anecdotes comprise one of the four interrelated main themes of this research. This chapter takes community as its starting point – the second of three surface-level themes proposed in my model for Pacific festivals (see figure 1, p. 6) – discussing and demonstrating its various meanings, and the multiple ways community is manifested within the festival space. The place of communities can be contextualised in two specific ways: firstly, on a localised level, in the role of families and specific Island communities, and secondly, at a meta-level, in the interactions and inter-relationships between various Pacific communities, in displays of both unity and diversity. Finally, many participants also discussed the place of Māori within the festival space, noting their role as part of an inclusive rendering of what the Pacific communities are. This has not always been so, and the changing and various roles of Māori within Pacific festivals is therefore another important consideration. A move towards the inclusion of Māori reflects the gradual adoption of viewing Māori, although distinctly and importantly recognised as tangata whenua, as nonetheless part of the broader sense of the Pacific communities.

The notion of festivals and community is also important to the pivotal argument of this thesis in that festivals highlight and demonstrate Hau’ofa’s ‘sea of islands’, providing a venue through which the mindset of operating within this interconnected diasporic network is displayed and affirmed as a dominant ideological perspective and narrative. Furthermore, the festival space is where Ka’ilī’s notion of tauhi vā is practised, where connections within, between and through communities are (re)made and (re)affirmed,
strengthened through the (re)creation of sociospatial ties. These connections lend themselves to a reading of festivals within an expanded ‘contact zone’ framework, highlighting intra- and inter-diasporic contact, and, finally, as examples of collective ritual. Thus, the reflections of research participants and my own ethnographic observations are contextualised within this theoretical framework to close the chapter.

7.1 The Role of Families and Communities
In interviews, many participants discussed the importance of the church environment, the ways in which a natural musicality is nurtured within Pacific communities, and, more prominently, how Pasifika is a space through which performers can ‘give back’ to their communities, in which the importance of families is highlighted, and is a space in which people can simply ‘be’ with their communities.

The role of the church and Christianity in Pacific communities, and therefore at Pasifika, is unquestionable and central, and cannot be understated, as has been highlighted at various points throughout this thesis. It was to the churches that the original organisers of festivals in both Wellington and Auckland turned in order to create support for the idea of the festival, and it remains through churches that much communication occurs and many performers are sourced. All village co-ordinators noted the importance of the church as primary networks through which the communities operate. The only exception was Tahiti, where the small and dispersed community meant a dedicated church had not been established. On the festival day, each village had official opening and closing ceremonies, which were religious in nature and offered prayers for the success of the day and safety of those in attendance. Similarly, the opening night concert opened and closed with prayer, and in Wellington, what became the festival was held in a local church hall and, expectedly, also opened and closed with prayer. The importance of religion as a unifying pan-Pacific concept was also demonstrated at other times, such as the shared dinner that was had after the festival had finished.

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55 In addition, with the growth of communities and their dispersal, and the slowly declining influence of the church, central community associations that represented communities across all denominations were also noted as important community networks, as well as the use of community radio stations, like those broadcast through the Pacific Media Network, centred in Auckland. Several village co-ordinators were hosts of radio shows on community station 531pi, while others had direct contacts and were able to secure airtime to promote Pasifika.
at which grace was said and thanks offered for the success of the festival, and
on the day on the opening night concert, when the visiting Hawaiian group,
Mana Maoli, presented the festival staff with a gift during a ceremony that
was permeated with religious overtones.

Many performers noted the central role of church within their lives, and how
it led them to performing, and performing at Pasifika. For example, my
Tongan participant, who grew up performing plays and singing in church
choirs, exclaimed, ‘it did, it did…that gave me, that opened up a love of the
performing arts’, while my Fiji village performer told me that,

*I started performing in church, singing, little skits at Christmas time, and my
love for it just grew from there…[village co-ordinator] Joana is a friend of our
church, and she asked our church youth to perform there, and so it’s just been
a thing we’ve done for a long time.*

For the three Sāmoan TribalState members, growing up singing in church
taught them to harmonise and ‘instinctively know’ what to do and how to
sing. This highlights the notion of a noted natural musicality within Pacific
cultures, something that is nurtured within the churches and communities in
general, and was also noted by many participants. Awa, of Nesian Mystik,
noted that music ‘is part of the cultural element, it’s just normal to sing’. He
told me that,

*Dad would sing and take me to Marae, and I’d see it all the time at pōwhiri
and stuff. Same with the [other Nesian] boys, they were always at cultural
events. Junior’s parents would teach Cook Island dancing and drumming, so
he always knew how to do it.*

Of the eight village performers I interviewed, half – from the Sāmoa, Tokelau,
Niue and Fiji villages – were raised in Auckland. For these performers,
another way in which their musicality was nurtured, and which operated as a
route to performing at Pasifika, was through Polyfest. Of these four cultures,
only two – Sāmoan and Niuean – are specifically represented at Polyfest with
dedicated stages. For the Tokelauans, this meant they performed with their
nearest Pacific neighbour (and closest comparable culture), Sāmoa, while my
Fijian participant attended a school with significant enough numbers to have
a Fijian group, who performed on the diversity stage. Paradoxically, my
Niuean participants attended a school where there were not sufficient numbers to have a Niuean group every year. When this happened, they took the opportunity to perform with a Bollywood group, also on the diversity stage.\(^\text{56}\)

**‘Giving Back to my Community’**

Several performers stated that performing was an act of reciprocity, of giving back to their communities. Although an ephemeral concept, that performers gave meaning to their performances in this way is a further demonstration of the importance placed on the notion of community. Representative of this theme was contemporary Sāmoan performer, Grace Ikenasio, who said of Pasifika: ‘I just like to be able to give back to my people, and show them that we are all capable of doing music, in some way, and it’s a part of who we are…and just being able to share my knowledge of my language as well’. In a similar sense, my Tongan participant noted that the festival provides a way to ‘showcase what I love to do, for my Pacific Island community’, and to give confidence to others to try new things: ‘Not many Pacific Island girls do it [Bollywood dancing]. They love it but they don’t have the confidence to get out there…and that’s why I’m starting these Bollywood classes, [to give them] that confidence’.

For the high profile performers, King Kapisi and Nesian Mystik’s Awa, the notion of ‘giving back’ was marked. Awa stated that the festival ‘strengthens what we know. It reaffirms what we’ve been taught growing up in terms of giving back…making time to give’. In fact, he noted, it was an ‘indirect obligation’ and ‘expectation’, but called it a ‘beautiful thing’. Participating at festivals was, for King Kapisi, part of an holistic approach to giving back and inspiring others, especially Pacific youth. He told me:

> I’m very active in trying to help Polynesian kids, in general...There’s a lot of kids out there at this particular time who are lost, they’re lost in the American dream and the colours of gangsters have become a more important way of life than your family...so, if I can help some other kids stay out of that kinda

\(^{56}\) Two village co-ordinators also explicitly made a link between Polyfest and Pasifika, with one, Tonga village co-ordinator Wai lamenting the fact that, because Pasifika was held the weekend before Polyfest, groups refused or were unable to take part at Pasifika. This was because they were either rehearsing on the day, such is the level of effort and preparation that goes into the festival, or because they did not want to ‘give away’ details of their performances to other groups, a reflection of the level of competition that exists.
lifestyle, then I’m all for it. It’s one of those things, as an artist, you have a social responsibility to get out there.

As well as performers, the notion of giving back was prominent in discussions with village co-ordinators, and was expressed in many ways. Although village co-ordinators receive some payment for their work, the amounts are not large and are considered *koha* (donation). Thus, working with and for their communities was a primary reason given when I asked why they took on the village co-ordinator role. For example, Sarai Tanu, of the Tokelau village said:

> We want to help our Tokelau people and, if it means we need to get involved, then why not. I mean, it’s not all for the money. ‘Cos we started off voluntarily, so we’re not doing it for the money, we’re doing it for our people… to give back to our community.

In a similar sense, Niue village co-ordinator Mina Leolahi undertook the job because, ‘I’m interested in doing it for my people, my community. I love my people, love doing things for my people…I don’t get paid, but I’m just happy to do it’. Tahiti village co-ordinator Tua Huri, of Cook Island/Māori descent, told me, ‘it’s for Tahiti… I’m not doing it for me, I’m doing it because of the love for my husband, and for his culture’, and Sāmoan Teʻevā Tagaloa-Leniu said, ‘I do it because I have a great passion for Sāmoa…I guess that’s my service to my community’. She also saw it as important that ‘us younger ones need to stand up now’.

**The Festival as a Family Space**

According to Makerita Urale, organiser of the Tu Faʻatasi festivals in the 1990s, for Pacific festivals to be successful they must recognise this: ‘Islanders move as a family. Islanders operate as an intergenerational family, and programming things like that, you have to have all generations, know how to press the buttons for Pacific families to come’. When one of those generations is not catered for, things go wrong, especially if the ‘the knowledge and experience from the elders is missing’.

The importance of the festival as a family space was frequently highlighted during interviews. Mirroring Makerita, early festival co-ordinator Nancy
Sandhoy told me, for example, that ‘we tried to cater for the whole family from young to old, ‘cos when Pacific [peoples] celebrate, it’s holistic’. And village co-ordinators were especially adamant about the importance of catering for all family members. Niue village co-ordinator Mina Leolahi represents this opinion well. In programming her stage, she wanted performances that were ‘not for the young people only, for the old people as well’. In part, this was because ‘not many people have old songs on the CDs, so there’s only one place they can go to hear it [the festival], or the radio, or people who are giving them CDs to play. But some of the old people don’t know how to operate [CDs]’. For the elders, the inclusion of ‘old songs’ acted as a way to ‘take back the memory of the old people, how in olden days things happening back home’, something that resulted in them not wanting to move: ‘they want to sit there and listen’.

Performers also reflected on the importance intergenerational Pacific families. For Awa, Nesian Mystik took this fact into account. He noted that the range of ages is broad when you perform at Pasifika, ‘and you have to cater to them, that’s your people...it’s even more important to perform well, ‘cos they’re generally the biggest supporters of us’. For Ardrijah’s Ryan, family is central in understanding what Pacific festivals are: ‘They’re a family day...and it’s about getting the children in there, and just enjoying each other’s company and the music’. He views festivals as ‘important for peoples’ wellbeing’, as somewhere where you interact with people and ‘you’re not just a number’. The richness of Pacific cultures and communities, he asserted, ‘is in our families, and our friends and whanau around the place’. And, referring to what became the Positively Pasifika Festival in Wellington, Cindy of Samoa highlighted that the atmosphere had a ‘community feeling’ and was ‘like a real family show day’: ‘people were relaxed, the performers were relaxed, it was good’.

The Niue village performers described the process of preparing for the festival, which provides another example of how Pasifika fosters a family space. Their mother, they noted, helped them to understand the material by translating and explaining the songs’ meanings. In addition, ‘the night before, we would always be going hard out on the costumes, ‘cos mum sews
the costumes, so we’d all be busy’. This was mirrored during other conversations I had, both informally and during interviews, about how families came together to prepare food for stalls, for example, or by hosting family members who had travelled from out of town to attend the festival. In this sense, Pasifika creates family spaces beyond the context of the festival space, by creating opportunities where families come together and notions of culture act as a conduit for families working together.

Finally, my i-Kiribati participant noted the important role elders play in teaching, giving advice and supporting younger community members. This was something she saw as being ‘accentuated’ at Pasifika because they give advice on performing and what songs and dances should be done. This process is one of passing knowledge and ‘strengthens the role of older people in the community’. The changes festival director Ole made to the opening night concert best demonstrates this idea. Moving away from a variety show and incorporating a community development ethos, the concert now involves a community group representing each of the ten villages. They perform an original song/dance based around the theme of the year’s festival, and create it in collaboration with elders and culture bearers from within the communities. This change has been a deliberate attempt by Ole to create a ‘common focus, or a common thread’, and also to provide recognition for community elders. The result is that the concert builds and strengthens the role of community elders, and connects young people with their elder culture bearers. The festival is thus not only a family space, but more broadly a space of community togetherness.

The Festival as a Community Space

The festival space is seen as a significant time of community togetherness. It is, as some participants suggested, the one day a year when the entire community comes together, and the festival is therefore significant in creating notions of community. Sarai Tanu, for example, noted that, despite Tokelau representing one of the smallest Pacific groups in Auckland, it is hard to get the whole community together because it was dispersed geographically and congregated in smaller groups, sometimes based around atoll affiliations. The
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festival, however, provided a central event around which they converged. She told me:

_Usually Pasifika is one event in the year that I notice they all come together. The whole lot, the religious groups, Nukunonu, Atafu, Fakaofo [the three atolls that comprise Tokelau], you see them all...because even though we have a registered Auckland Tokelauan group, not all of them attend that group like [they do] Pasifika...Pasifika is probably the event where we see all of our people together._

This was noted, to varying degrees, by other village co-ordinators, such as Kiribati’s Merea Pathak. She told me that, despite sometimes being frustrated by people not coming forward to assist in preparations and planning, ‘funnily enough, on the day, when it happens, everyone comes and it’s just wonderful...they are **so** good, we’re just so happy, and they all wanna do it [help out]’.

In addition, the notion of community togetherness extended further than Auckland. Mirroring Hau’ofa and Ka’ili’s notion of diasporic interconnections, many participants noted that the Pasifika Festival now attracts significant numbers of visitors from Pacific homelands, who see the festival as an opportunity to work with New Zealand-based families holding a stall, strengthening and re-affirming diasporic and sociospatial ties through reciprocal exchange, or simply as a reason to plan holidays and family reunions. In 2011, the Pasifika Festival acted as the impetus for a reunion of women who attended the same high school, in Kiribati, forty-two years earlier (one of whom was my i-Kiribati participant). And for the smallest Pacific communities, who do not have a village at Pasifika, the festival still acts as day when they can come together and celebrate. In a special item about the small New Zealand Rotuman community, aired on magazine show _Tagata Pasifika_, one community member noted that, once a year, they meet and go to the festival as a day of togetherness, because ‘what else is there?’ (Tagata Pasifika 2010). Similarly, Fiji village co-ordinator Joana Monolagi told me that she wants to incorporate the small communities of other Melanesians into her village, such as the Solomon Islanders, Vanuatuans, and Papua New Guineans, as they represent ‘our Pacific brothers and sisters as well’.
For performers too, the notion of the festival as a community space was important. My Fiji village performer, for instance, said: ‘it’s a really good feeling...Just being amongst other Fijians you feel more at home...it just feels like you can be yourself as a Fijian’. My i-Kiribati participant also expressed the same opinion when she noted that Pasifika ‘allows us to come together, as Kiribati people’. Likewise, Cindy of Sāmoa told me that ‘when the festival comes around I look forward to going, to be around Pacific people’. She explained further:

*When I perform for the Europeans, for me, it’s just a job...When I perform for my people, for me, it’s like, I’m Sāmoan, they’re Sāmoan, and they’re acknowledging me as part of them as well. It means a lot to me...I’ve got lots of friends, you know, European friends...you can talk English, and tell stories in English, but it’s not the same when you tell it in your own language...it’s got more character, and more things about it...[At the festival] I feel like I’m blending, I’m not so standing out. Yeah, a feeling of just being around the same people, it’s very comforting.*

Finally, my Tuvalu village performer explained how one year, in the days leading up to the festival, a school fire in Tuvalu had killed twelve girls. In spite of this, the community came together and continued with the staging of their village, and she recounted the emotion-filled *fatale* performed that year. In spite of the situation, the festival provided the community with the opportunity to come together and grieve with those who were most affected by what had occurred. ‘It was still good to come together as a community’, she told me.

### 7.2 Unity and Diversity within the Festival Space

The next part of this discussion continues and extends the idea of festivals and community from within specific communities to between the various Pacific communities, in displays of both unity and diversity. In doing so, the notion of being connected to one community extends, in an Hau’ofan sense, to being connected to a larger Pacific network marked by commonalities as well as uniqueness. The festival becomes the space in which these aspects

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57 This specific idea was also emulated by the Tokelau village co-ordinator, Sarai Tanu, who told me that Pasifika is ‘the only time we can sit down and just celebrate our Island and not have to worry about anything else...And we’re amongst people that speak the same, and they can relate, those people are there because they have the same way of life. We have our own culture here, and we live it’.

manifest and are displayed. The notion of uniqueness is especially important for smaller Pacific communities, who feel that Pasifika puts their culture on the centre stage, equating it as being equally important as the more dominant groups. Finally, the diversity of Pacific cultures itself creates a sense of unity.

Unity within a Pacific Context
During my time conducting fieldwork in Wellington, I attend a Pacific Advisory Group meeting. I sit outside the group, observing the interactions taking place, and I begin to think about the notions of pan-Pacific unity. In front of me I see Fijians, Sāmoans, Tokelauans, Tongans, Cook Islanders, Tuvaluans, and Niueans. I see diversity brought together around a notion of unity created from common cultural and social histories. While specific identities were being performed, and perhaps heightened by the fact that the people in attendance were representing their specific community, there are also moments when the collectivity of Pacific peoples was demonstrated, in words, gestures and actions, demonstrating that, in spite of diversity, there is also a unity that has been created through the diasporic experience. The PAG members make overt gestures to ensure inclusivity, such as when it is decided that there would be a second reverend to perform the closing prayer. Someone notes that the Niuean community provided the reverend for this in 2009 and that another community should have a turn. As the Fijian rugby team had recently beaten Sāmoa to win the rugby sevens tournament in Wellington, it is agreed that the Fijian community will provide the reverend. Furthermore, the PAG members, except when referring to issues that had arisen within their own specific communities, speak inclusively of matters as being and affecting the Pacific communities as a whole, and the meeting is conducted in a fashion where a unified Pacific-ness is sought.

Later, I discuss the concept of Pasifika festivals with the PAG chairperson, Ida Faiumu-Isaako. She tells me that there is no direct translation of the word ‘festival’ in Polynesian languages and that, when asked by the community elders what a festival is, she relates it back to the festival of the harvest and the concept of fia fia, a day of celebration, and especially the community fia fia. As a term that translates as ‘the place of happiness’, she reiterates that, in this sense, a festival is not merely a show, or a market day, but rather about
communities coming together in celebration. Thus the festival space can be seen as a ‘great big malai, a ground, where we will all come together. It’s not about difference, but the [coming] together’. For Ida, this is important. She tells me that the festival provides one of the few opportunities for the Pacific communities to come together, communities that largely congregate within their own Island groups and church hubs.59 This narrative of collective unity is displayed at the festival, in the language used in the opening and closing prayers, and by the MC, and also during the performance by the Yandall Sisters, who invoke the collective Pacific migrant experience when talking about their own lives.

In Auckland, a particularly poignant display of this sense of unity occurs on the day of the opening night concert, after a dress rehearsal has finished. While still on the park, the visiting Hawaiian group, Mana Maoli, thank Ole, Tanya and Leehane, on behalf of the Pasifika team. They perform a traditional chant, a dance, and then present Ole with a gift that includes a decorated, hollowed-out coconut. Ole reciprocates by making a speech, first in Samoan and then in English. He thanks them for their gift and gesture, and acknowledges both ‘those who have gone before, because without them, none of us would be here’, as well as the tāngata whenua of the land upon which Western Springs sits, for allowing the cultures of others to be shared upon their lands. He welcomes them as ‘our cousins’, reaffirming his thanks that they could be here, and how humbled we are by their presence. Demonstrating their ties to New Zealand, he notes that, for himself, and Tanya and Lee, this is the land where their family are now buried. Finally, he acknowledges the alofa (love) that has been shared amongst all, that Pasifika as a team will share their gift, and that this is how it is received. From a distance, I can see that it is an emotional moment for both parties. Speaking to Ole, Tanya and Lee afterwards, they tell me how they were close to tears, and had to stop themselves from crying. Lee said that at that moment she felt a connection with them that was hard to describe, with Ole and Tanya agreeing.

59 The idea of festivals acting as a way for Pasifika communities to meet and come together was also stated by Tala Cleverley as one of the reasons why she started the first Pacific festivals in Wellington.
The theme of unity was frequently raised in interviews. Village co-ordinators were explicit in their interpretations of Pasifika as a space in which Pacific peoples are united. Fiji village co-ordinator Joana Monolagi, for example, commented: ‘Pasifika for me is a humongous celebration of Pacific people, right across the Pacific. It’s a day we come together as one united nation, if you like, to celebrate who we are as Pacific Island people’. Others expressed similar sentiments. These include Sāmoa village co-ordinator, Te’evā Tagaloa-Leniu, who told me that ‘Pasifika is our Pacific nations put together, it’s all our nations united’, and Niue village co-ordinator Mina Leolahi, who asserted that the purpose of the festival is to ‘bring people together, Pasifika people together…A day of togetherness, for anyone, for Pasifika…it’s all the different Pasifika communities together’.

Several performers also highlighted this. For the Tahiti village performer, and recent migrant to New Zealand, the whole Pasifika festival reminds her of life in Tahiti. Because of the similarities she sees between the different Pacific cultures, Pasifika is ‘like one big family’. For others, the festival brings Pacific peoples together and emphasises commonality. My i-Kiribati participant commented that Pasifika is ‘a gathering up of our people and saying, we are proud of who we are and here is a snippet of our life in the Islands. It allows us to come together…so we can appreciate each other as Pacific Islanders’. And contemporary artist Grace Ikenasio, similarly noted that Pasifika is a place where Pacific people can come together to really embrace their culture, their food, their music they see there, the dance performances, it’s a good way to bring Islanders together…it’s a place where people can hang out and be free and who they are.

My Tongan participant also expressed this sentiment. Although referring to herself as a ‘proud Tongan’, she also labelled herself a ‘Pasifika person’ and noted that the festival celebrated ‘our community’, ‘our people and our culture’, where our referred to the plurality of Pacific communities unified into a singular. And for the Fiji village performer, the festival was an important display of Fiji’s inclusion as part of New Zealand’s Pacific communities: ‘without having that opportunity to show off our culture, it kinda seems like there’s a gap’, she said, ‘or you miss something, because all the [other Pacific] cultures do it’.
For Nesian Mystik’s Awa, the notion of unity was expressed specifically through their performances. He told me that, ‘we generally try and tell direct messages about unity…’cos we’re all so mixed up; we have all these different cultures. And it’s a beautiful thing, this diversity, letting people know that it’s ok, and to be proud of who you are’. These messages of unity are based on the group’s multiple Pacific backgrounds (including Māori), as well as the fact of being New Zealand-born and raised. Thus, Nesian Mystik purposefully attempt to connect with urban New Zealand Pacific peoples, representing and reflecting the New Zealand born and/or raised experience with representations of pan-Pacific unity.

This notion of unity is informed by a wider sense of commonality among Pacific communities (Hau’ofa 1994; Anae 2001; Fairbairn-Dunlop and Makisi 2003; Macpherson 2006), and was a theme that arose during interviews. For King Kapisi, Pasifika, the festival and the word, means ‘the whole Pacific’, and specifically includes non-Polynesian communities as ‘they’re Pacific too. When it comes down to it, if it’s a Pacific Island, it’s a Pacific Island’. One of the Tokelau village performers was unable to articulate exactly why he felt a sense of unity with other Pacific people, telling me, ‘I don’t know, Islanders just feel the same, more than any other culture, ‘cos they have the same values as us’. By hinting at ‘Islanders’ as sharing the same values, he points towards the historical and cultural similarities shared between Pacific cultures.

And for my Tongan participant, feelings of unity arose while living in Tonga, with opportunities to travel throughout the Pacific. She told me:

*I met all these kids who were Sāmoan, Solomon Island and Tuvaluan, and I thought, ‘wow, it’s amazing, we’re all from the South Pacific’. It just became a real eye opener ‘cos at uni all my friends were Palagi and you don’t have that connection. I mean, I thought I was connected to them until I went back to Tonga and then I thought, ‘no, I’m not connected to them, these are the people I’m connected to’...so when I came to Auckland, I just knew this is where it is.*

**Unity in Specific Contexts**

In addition to pan-Pacific unity, for some performers and village coordinators the notion of unity was also identified in relation to their specific village environments. Given the diversity of Fiji, and therefore in its
transplanted New Zealand community, this was expressed most strongly in
discussion with the Fiji village co-ordinator Joana and Sachiko, of Fiji-based
collective, VOU. Joana told me that Pasifika is about ‘bringing our Fijian
people together, even if it is just the one day…and bringing in all that is
Fijian’. She noted that ‘whether they’re Indian, or Rotuman, or Chinese, it’s
important that they’re part of the Fijian village, ‘cos, of course, they have to
be’. In saying that ‘they have to be’, Joana is referring to her conception of the
Fiji village as one that includes the Indian, Rotuman and Chinese people,
among other groups, that are part of Fiji’s demographic make-up. Her desire
to include them in the staging of Fiji is ‘to make sure everyone is represented
on the day, not just Indigenous Fijians’.

For Sachiko, as for Nesian Mystik, ideas of unity are specifically expressed
through performance, and relates to both the ethnic diversity of Fiji, as well as
her place as a European Fiji Islander. She told me that, in performance,

[we] try to look at peace, unity and understanding, that kind of thing.
Obviously I’m not Fijian, I’m European descendant, and there’s obviously
Fijians and Indians in Fiji, so it’s that thing of unity, bringing all those races
together…though music and dance, having that kind of theme…a really
positive message of being one.60

Attempting to create a sense of unity for an ethnically diverse Pacific nation is
also the challenge for Tahiti’s Tua Huri, and her village space includes the
reality of the French presence as well as including culturally and
geographically close neighbours not represented elsewhere at Pasifika. For
her,

Rapanui is part of Tahiti, and even though [their presence at Pasifika is
through] a Chilean connection, I don’t want anyone to be left out or
discriminated against because of that…I think it’s a good balance, I’m not
trying to rubbish the French. I’m trying to embrace it, and it’s showing
people that the culture is French.

Tua also adopts an inclusive stance towards Cook Islanders unable to be
accommodated in the busy Cook Islands village: ‘if they’ve got Tahitian
connections, I’ll let them come through’, she told me, ‘it’s good for them as

60 For singer Grace Ikenasio, a sense of specific community unity was also something she tried to express in her
festival performance. As well as trying to communicate other things, she told me she was also ‘trying to
communicate ideas of unity, the unity in that we’re all from Sāmoa, and the sense of home’.
well for us, because they’re sister Islands to Tahitians, so I see it as a bit of a partnership’.

Although unstated by either Tua or Joana, it is likely that the inclusive stance taken is in part a reflection of the smaller sizes of their respective communities in Auckland, and their possible inability to fill an entire village space by relying on these communities alone, more so in the case of Tahiti. For Fiji, I sensed the presentation of a unified multicultural Fijian face was politically and ideologically driven, as a desire to give space equally to performers connected to Fiji. In any case, there is the diversity in homeland demographics and historical relationships beyond a general sense of Pacific-level cultural similarities to draw upon. For the equally small Tokelauan and Tuvaluan communities, some periods of inactivity in the villages during the festival reflected the difficulties in staging between seven and eight hours of staged entertainment. To assist in this, part of artistic co-ordinator Leehane Stowers’ job was to identify and offer to village co-ordinators, acts that would be suitable to stage in their particular village environment.61

**Limits of Unity**

It is important to note that, in interviews, limits to the notions of pan-Pacific and community unity arose. The majority of Pacific peoples in New Zealand live in ‘meshblocks’ in which at least half of the population is also Pacific, something that is statistically unique (Johnston et al. 2003).62 Pacific peoples are therefore more likely to be raised in communities with significant numbers of other Pacific peoples. However, given that the vast majority of Pacific peoples in New Zealand are, fully or in part, Sāmoan, Tongan, or Cook Islander, Pacific peoples are also more likely to be raised among larger numbers from these communities. The Niue village performers I interviewed demonstrated this when they told me that they felt a sense of unity particularly with Sāmoans and Tongans. When I asked them why it was with

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61 The specific notion of unity was also mentioned by the Tokelau, Tuvalu and Kiribati village co-ordinators; something that can be seen as a reflection of their smaller community sizes. For Tuvalu village co-ordinator, Peggy Maloo, a feeling of community unity is created because everyone in the community takes part, performing together. She noted: ‘we are very small, and we feel special [because] we have our own village, run by our own selves...It’s a very good feeling, everyone feels important...and, in just doing the dance and the singing, are brought together in unity. There is that spirit of connecting’. This reflects the words of the Tuvalu village performer, who similarly noted that, in performing, ‘they’re not doing it as much for the audience as they’re just getting into it...they’re not doing it for the Pākehā, they’re doing it for themselves’.

62 Meshblocks are smaller-scale statistical units combined and used to measure localities.
these particular communities, one of them told me it was ‘because we grew up with those ethnic groups, wherever we go they are Sāmoans and Tongans’, while the other noted, ‘you don’t see Tokelauans, and Fijians’, explaining that she was therefore always more intrigued when meeting someone from one of these communities, as they represented a Pacific culture she knew less about. This presents a challenge to the notion that Pacific peoples have an innate sense of unity with other Pacific peoples generally, suggesting instead that it may be more influenced by the particular environments in which people are raised. For the Niuean performers, as this had included mostly Sāmoan and Tongan people, it was with these communities that they felt a particular unity, as opposed to the less-visible Fijian or Tokelauan people, although they acknowledged an overall Pacific connection.

For Cindy of Sāmoa, a fa’afafine performer, the possibly risqué nature of her performance (for a family environment) and sexually ambiguous position presents a challenge to notions of unity, casting festival performance coordinators in gatekeeper roles.63 Although she has performed at several Pacific festivals, for other festival organisers she suggested there was a stigma attached to her, that ‘I’m not Pacific enough’. When I asked her what this means, she replied:

> oh, not to them, the organisers. I think some of it has to do with my sexuality, which really doesn’t bother me at all…but I just think, people that are organisers for events like that should really be people with open minds and looking at having a good show, instead of bringing in their own personal issues.

The notion that performers may be excluded from taking part because of their sexuality or gender identity is impossible to gauge without focusing specifically on that issue. In offering a counterpoint, one of the striking observations made at a number of festivals I attended during the course of this research was the number of performances that displayed a fluid approach to the notion of gender, including a fa’afafine traditional dance troupe on the Tahiti stage at Pasifika 2011, performances at Polyfest 2010, and especially the inclusion of a number of young fa’afafine in groups performing at the Waikato

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63 It is frequently asserted that fa’afafine are an accepted part of Sāmoan society and culture. However, my discussion with Cindy indicated that, both in Sāmoa as well as in diasporic communities, this acceptance is not universal and is rather something influenced by Western conceptions of sexuality, and a general intolerance of those perceived to fall into transsexual categories.
Polyfest, Pacific by Nature, in 2010. Cindy’s concern, however, is worth noting as it highlights the issue of who defines what is staged at Pacific festivals, and therefore what identities are displayed. As indicated in the previous chapter, it appears a generally accepted set of expectations govern what is and what is not staged. Cindy’s concern offers a challenge to this, highlighting that personal politics can be seen as an influencing factor.

The Diversity of Pacific Cultures Displayed

Like unity, the theme of diversity was expressed in two ways: in that the festival displays the diversity of Pacific cultures and communities in New Zealand, and that it highlights the uniqueness of particular cultural identities. While many performers highlighted the specific cultural context in which they performed, some also noted the overall diversity that the festival displayed. ‘It’s not just lumping us into the same pot’, Ryan Monga of Ardijah told me, ‘it’s recognising all of those things where, oh yeah, you’re from here…but we all have another place of origin’. Similarly, my Tahiti village participant stated that, ‘for some people, Polynesians are all the same, but [they’re] not really, they have their own [cultures], they’re not really the same’. For her, the festival presents an opportunity for others to learn about this diversity.

This notion of learning about the distinctiveness of Pacific cultures was mentioned by other performers. Singer Grace Ikenasio told me that it was ‘quite cool’ to see her other Pacific friends ‘performing their own material’ and ‘seeing them go on stage in their traditional costumes’, noting that ‘it’s quite important to their culture, as well as mine’, and therefore equating the feelings of importance she placed on performing within and for her own community with those of her friends. For the Niue village performers, Pasifika represents the ‘get together of different ethnicities and culture groups’, something they found ‘amazing’. This was because,

_‘you think that you know their culture, but they’ve got more to it. So when it comes to the day, and you go and see their village, you’re like, ‘wow, I never knew that you do that, or you make that. And it’s like the Tokelauan people, you know, I don’t really know much about them; I don’t even know how they dance, or the Kiribati people. So it’s fascinating.’_
This was reinforced by their village co-ordinator, Mina Leolahi, who noted that, without the villages, ‘I don’t think Pasifika would be the same...that way, people can realise as they go village-by-village, and see the differences and all that’. Similarly, Tokelau’s Sarai Tanu told me that Pasifika is a ‘celebration of our Pacific Island nations. And that’s what I think Pasifika is all about...otherwise you would not know what Tokelau is all about, and Tonga, and Sāmoa, etc’.

**The Importance of Displaying Diversity**

I spoke to operations manager Rebecca about the notion of diversity and the importance of highlighting how and where Pacific cultures are different. She had this to say:

*The smaller communities, for example Kiribati and Tuvalu, put a huge amount of effort to get there and I think the whole communities turn out, so...being at and taking part in events like Pasifika, presents an opportunity to say, ‘this is who we are, we are unique and different from everyone else, this is what’s important to us’, to put that stake in the ground.*

One of the Niue village performers humourously noted that Pasifika was when ‘other ethnic groups can see the Niuean side. They can see that we are here; we do exist. We’re alive; we haven’t extincted like the dinosaurs. We’re not gone yet so don’t ignore us’. For her, the festival space allows them to showcase diversity by displaying unique aspects of Niuean culture. In doing so, the festival provides a platform upon which the smaller Pacific communities were able to assert their place as part of the wider Pacific community, challenging perceptions that are influenced by the dominance of the three largest Pacific groups: the Sāmoans, Tongans and Cook Islanders.

This was also true for the Fiji village performer, who commented: ‘Fijians are a minority. There are heaps of Sāmoans and Tongans and Cook Islanders...so I guess that’s one reason why we show it off’. For her, performing creates a feeling of difference: ‘just being set apart I guess...it makes me feel more unique, like my culture is more authentic, not that theirs isn’t, but just for me it is’. By this she means that, in performing, her Fijian culture is being highlighted and made distinct within the public sphere, as opposed to a generic pan-Pacific notion of culture. This is important because, as she
further noted: ‘I even do it with Asians, I’ll just call them Asians. And I just think being acknowledged for your differences, like the diversity within the Pacific Island culture, I think that is something really special’.

This same notion was expressed by my Tuvaluan performer. She commented that performing is an opportunity to

> get up and represent, to show that I’m a Tuvaluan, and not Cook Islander, or Māori or Sāmoan, and just to put our really tiny island’s culture on the big stage…and people have often never seen our dancing, you know. New Zealand is so used to seeing the Sāmoan sasa, the Cook Island dancing…when they see Tuvaluan, it’s something different.

In her opinion, the festival thus elevates the smaller Pacific communities to being ‘as important in the landscape as the Sāmoan’: ‘you’ve got your own village, your own stage. Being a little country, or culture, within the larger Pacific groups, we’re often still on the side. But Pasifika really places value on us, and says you’re as important’.

Likewise, for the other smaller Pacific communities, the notion of the festival as equalising cultural distinctiveness was highlighted. My Kiribati village participant told me that, when performing, they are performing

> both to our own people and showing the rest of New Zealand and the world that we are unique, and it makes our performers feel proud. The exposure is changing peoples’ ideas of Pacific Islanders. They are more nuanced now and know the differences between different Pacific Islands rather than just thinking we’re the same.

Her village co-ordinator expressed the same opinion: ‘it’s just a celebration…just the uniqueness, how different we are from the other Pacific Islanders, ‘cos actually in our dancing, that’s the biggest difference’; while for one Tokelau village performer, performing was ‘being Tokelauan, being different from everyone else. It’s good to explain who we are, to show people what Tokelau is’.

And for Tuvalu village co-ordinator, Peggy Maloo, Pasifika brings Tuvaluan culture into the public sphere and reaffirms its place there, something she sees as having the potential to instil pride in the community’ young people:
Dancing is a way of entertainment in every feast and community event, so that’s where we always do that. The festival is the public display of that and it is an incentive for our young people to… I think that, sometimes they are ashamed of being, ashamed of speaking the language. The festival is a way to make them think that, ‘yeah my language is important actually, my music, my dancing’. It takes away that feeling of…it’s not hidden, it’s public, and then they will say, ‘yeah, it’s important, the whole world is out there watching it, it’s not only confined to us’.

Diversity in Specific Contexts

Just as several village co-ordinators emphasised notions unity within their specific village environments, in the same manner, they equally emphasised the importance of highlighting internal diversity. Tahiti village co-ordinator Tua Huri, for example, attempts to create a sense of unity by displaying French cultural influences and the specific cultural and historical similarities with Rapanui and the Cook Islands. And for Fiji village co-ordinator Joana Monolagi, staging Fiji is also a show of diversity. She told me that Pasifika is the ‘one time that we can all come together and really celebrate who we are, our identity as individual Pacific nations’. For her, as well as her assistant, daughter Seta, this means ‘the whole of Fiji, not just the one…we try to make sure everyone is represented on the day’. As Seta noted, ‘because we have Indigenous, we have Rotuman, we have Chinese as well’. ‘And then’, added Joana,

we have our other Pacific brothers and sisters as well. We have the Tongans and the Sāmoans who are born and breed in Fiji. And if our Melanesian side comes in as well, the Vanuatuans or [Solomon Islanders], we would like to bring them in as well.

Tuvalu village co-ordinator Peggy highlighted how each of Tuvalu’s eight Islands has its own unique culture. Therefore, rather attempting to capture this diversity across one day, each year a different Island took charge in constructing the village and staging the performances, allowing their unique cultural display to be placed centre stage. And for Tonga village co-ordinator Wai, as well as the importance of displaying the diversity of Pacific cultures – ‘Pasifika festival is unique, because it has the different cultures there…and I think it’s very important that we see each other’s performances’ – the festival is also an important space through which to showcase the diversity of Tonga. ‘That’s one thing I am for,’ she told me, ‘is for different villages to be
displayed, not just one group, but all the different ones’. This display of diversity is directed at creating a sense of unity among Tongans however because, as Wai stated, without an understanding of Tongan culture and/or language, these differences would not be detectable.

**Unity from Diversity**

Finally, the themes of unity and diversity are joined, and a sense of unity is drawn from the diversity within Pacific cultures. Nesian Mystik’s Awa noted that it is important for Pacific peoples to celebrate ‘where we’re similar, and where we’re different’, while Ardijah’s Ryan asserted that, in spite of the unity in being of the Pacific, ‘your place of origin is where it is, that’s how you define where you’re from and who you are’.

Referring to the festival space, Tuvalu village co-ordinator Peggy noted that:

*Pasifika is the time where all cultures of the Pacific people come together and enjoy, learn and share their experiences together. It’s a time of unity and sharing. Diversity and unity, yeah, it shows the love, the feast, that the Pacific people share. It comes out in their singing, their dancing, [receiving] people into the village.*

For Peggy, these similarities created a sense of unity, a ‘spirit of sharing, of learning each other’s cultures and traditions’, something she wanted to share with other festival-goers, so that ‘it’s not only confined to us’. This was shared by the Tuvalu village performer, who told me:

*It’s the one day to celebrate not just my own culture, but myself as a Pacific Islander, and not just for myself to celebrate, but to share and see other Pacific Island people celebrating their own culture. So it’s a day of sharing and celebrating, all of our cultures.*

For my i-Kiribati participant, their place within the festival was an important declaration of inclusion, as well as highlighting uniqueness. ‘We are Pacific Islanders first, but we are also from this Island called Kiribati’, she explained:

*It was important for us to be part of Pasifika as we were not seen as part of the Pacific community and we wanted to be part of that because we are Pacific Islanders, but more because we are Micronesians...who are not part of the majority of Pacific peoples. Before Pasifika people would very rarely have seen our culture and our dances and music. We wanted to be acknowledged as part of the wider Pacific community.*
This was the same for my Fiji village participant. For her, the festival created a sense of Pacific unity at a meta-level, while allowing people to make localised connections at the village level. She told me that Pasifika is

*when all the Pacific nations come together and they get to showcase their stuff, but then they, people from their villages, people that are from that nation, they get to come back, be brought back down to earth, realise where they’re from and stuff.*

Finally, and outside the festival context, Tahiti village co-ordinator Tua hinted at the unity created from the diversity among the village co-ordinators. She told me: ‘I value every single one of my sisters and brothers that come, because we’re all there [as] proud individual representatives of our Islands, and when we come together we try and help each other’.

### 7.3 The Place of Māori within Pacific Festivals

The final theme that relates to festivals and community is the way in which Māori are situated and constructed as part of Pacific festivals, something that has ramifications for situating festivals within the ‘sea of islands’ notion of diaspora. I have already discussed the notion of an ‘axis of equivalence’ (Hall 1992) between Māori and Pacific peoples, based on historical and cultural similarities and similar experiences of socio-cultural, political and economic positioning within the nation of New Zealand. This section builds on this, noting the importance many participants place on the festival as a space of Māori inclusiveness, citing these similarities and a connection they feel with their Pacific cousins, before outlining the Māori/Pacific axis of equivalence as it can be seen in Pacific festivals in general.

It is important to note that the axis of equivalence identified in literature was also a theme raised by some people interviewed for this research. Early Pasifika festival co-ordinator Nancy Sandhoy, for example, stated:

*It was the closest culture you could align yourself with, so there was a unity with Māori and Pacific...You become so New Zealand-ised, so Kiwi-ised, so you may have lost part of the Pacific, but you understand the Māori issues, so there was a greater alignment with those cultures. And we have the same sense of humour, and same type of music...you had the same things that happened in the 70s, etc.*
Performers noted this connection as well. King Kapisi attacked the labels ‘Māori’ and ‘Pacific Islanders’. He stated:

I don’t see the difference between Māori and Pacific Islanders, it’s just a word that the government uses to try and estrange cousins from cousins, the relatives from the relatives...it’s a word that the government back in the ’70s and ’80s put on us as Pacific Islanders and tried to say, ‘you gotta keep those guys out’, and it’s been etched into the tāngata whenua psyche...when really we’re just another cousin they haven’t seen for a while; we’re from the same family.

Ardijah’s Ryan was also in agreement. During the early days of the band, he told me,

I was trying to push the Polynesian/Cook Island thing, but I would always get my Māori mates and fans coming up and going ‘kia ora bro’, giving me the hongi and saying, ‘go hard, you’re doing it for our people’...I thought, well, I don’t hongi, I’m not Māori. But when I found out who I was, I thought, well, it’s all the same, we’re the same people. I mean, Māori came from Polynesia...Māori and Polynesian is the same thing, that’s why you feel [a connection].

And Nesian Mystik’s Awa, of Māori descent, demonstrates that this connection also operates from the other direction. Emphasising the shared commonalities and histories of Māori and other Pacific peoples, while also reinforcing the notion of Māori as tāngata whenua, he noted that ‘they’re our families living here, and we’ve still got to look after them, as manuhiri [guests]’.

**The Importance of Māori Inclusiveness**

This connection extends into the festival space, and many participants highlighted the importance of the Māori involvement. For example, the Tahiti village performer, a recent migrant without the specific New Zealand historical or political context informing her, said it was important Māori were part of Pasifika simply because ‘they look like they’re Tahitian...it was a little weird, because you would look at the Māori and think they are Tahitian, and then they speak English’. Inclusiveness is important because ‘Polynesian people are like one big family, we come from the same [place]’. This notion of common origins was also expressed by others, such as Ardijah’s Ryan, who told me that

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technically, with the Māori being part of us, and us being part of Māori, this is our country too. Our ancestors came down here on canoes from Rarotonga. So, if our ancestors came down here, and these other fullas over here, their ancestors came from something else, then we’re the same people.

Pasifika thus became the place where ‘we all connect together’. Similarly, Nesia Mystik’s Awa told me (with tongue in cheek): ‘we’re all connected, in some way, we just dropped the ugly ones off before we came to Aotearoa…so you know, it’s important to celebrate that journey and that connection, where we’re similar’. And Tonga village co-ordinator Wai noted, of Pasifika, ‘it is important that we see each other’s performance…and also that we have tāngata whenua there, because they are part of us, and they were here before us, so I think it’s very important that we include them’.

These anecdotes demonstrate the feelings of connection between Māori and other Pacific peoples that exist. Although based on cultural similarities and historical relationships, this axis of equivalence is also in part ‘imagined’ in an Andersonian sense (Anderson 1991). The strategic benefits of emphasising a commonality result in the adoption and propagation of the ideology of common kinship, as per Hau’ofa (1994), which in turn highlights and augments existing historical similarities. This relationship explains why Māori have played, to varying degrees, a role in the festivalisation of migrant Pacific cultures in New Zealand.

Māori at the Positively Pasifika and Pasifika Festivals
At Wellington’s Positively Pasifika Festival, Māori are purposefully incorporated. Being the smaller festival without villages and only one main stage, this does not extend to performances, due to time and space constraints, however the festival organisers, Bessie and Marie, both highlighted the importance that Māori were noted and recognised as both tāngata whenua and as Pacific people. This was achieved by inviting a local kaumātua (elder) to speak at the opening of the festival, and by performing several waiata between opening speeches. As a newer festival that started in 2008, Māori inclusiveness has been consistent, in line with the popular rhetoric that has (re)developed over the past twenty years, one that sees
Māori as both distinct from as well as recognising similarities with other Pacific peoples (Hill 2010).

The current organisation of the Pasifika Festival is also consistent with this rhetoric. At the opening night concert, Māori are included within the communities that create and perform an item around the year’s festival theme. As tāngata whenua, Māori are accorded a special role in being placed first, in a pōwhiri-like role, to open the performances. The kaumātua of the local īwi, Ngāti Whātau, is also invited to speak among dignitaries. At the festival day, Māori are represented as a Pacific culture through the placement of a specific Aotearoa village. This inclusion, however, has not been consistent throughout the festival’s history, and the changing role of Māori demonstrates this changing rhetoric.

**The Changing Role of Māori within Pasifika**

Initially, as SPINDA member Bill Te Ariki told me, local Māori were involved in performing a pōwhiri. He noted, ‘we allowed them to come in, but we asked them nicely that it is ours, and they have their own things, and they were quite happy. There was a good relationship created with tāngata whenua’.

By the time Pitsch Leiser became the event co-ordinator, in 1997, the thinking was changing. The opening night concert continued with local īwi performing the pōwhiri, which, as Pitsch explained, was not just to open the festival, ‘but also to bless that the festival will go well…[and that] the relationship with tāngata whenua was handled properly’. The introduction of the village concept by the advisory committee, however, and the inclusion of Māori village, was a deliberate statement about the inclusion of Māori as a part of the Pacific.

In the early years of the village concept, the direction of the Māori village appears to have been problematic. When Michelle Khan became event co-ordinator for the 2000 festival, she noted that the village

*had no clear direction around it, so it ended up being filled with agencies. And Ngāti Whātau, by that stage, didn’t want to do a pōwhiri either. They*
Part of the reason for this problematic status was the perception that Pasifika was a festival for migrant Pacific cultures. As Michelle explained: ‘at that stage, there was also no Matariki [Māori New Year] festival, so they felt like they were visitors...because Pasifika was for Pacific Islanders’. As a result, the issue became too difficult to solve – ‘in the end I thought, you know what, let’s park that for a bit’ – and the village was discontinued.

This situation remained until Ole Maiava became the festival director in late-2006. By this time the festival advisory committee had been re-established and, according to member Will ‘Ilolahia, the absence of Māori was causing unease:

*People didn’t feel right that Māori were excluded from the festival, as they had been there in the beginning and they are tāngata whenua. It’s like having a festival in Tonga without Tongans. So the advisory board were strongly pushing for that.*

For Ole, the importance of Māori inclusion was unquestionable: ‘I still think Māori are in intricate part of the Pacific...but here in New Zealand, they’re separated because of biculturalism’. Therefore, importance was placed on the re-incorporation of a Māori village:

*I began to see where there were holes, slight tensions, whatever that may have been, because the animal itself wasn’t totally connected...Māori were complaining about the fact they weren’t allowed to have a hāngi there, so I walked into this firing range, Māori didn’t have a village, all this stuff that was going on. So, one of the first things I did was to say that we are going to have Māori village...I actually see it as enriching Pasifika, because any group in the Pacific can be Pacific. But what is so different about Aotearoa is the tāngata whenua, and we needed to have that ‘cos of the whole connection with our whakapapa [genealogy].*

**The ‘Axis of Equivalence’ as it Relates to Pacific Festivals**

Outside of these festivals, the close relationship between Māori and other Pacific peoples is visible at other Pacific festivals. Few Pacific festivals are exclusively (migrant) Pacific in content and all generally include Māori to some degree, even if largely in a symbolic fashion, as with Wellington’s
Positively Pasifika. The other of the largest festivals, the original Polyfest, has, from the beginning, featured Māori predominantly beside other Pacific cultural displays. It now includes a specific Māori stage. Following this precedence, the majority of other Polyfests established are inclusively Māori and Pacific festivals, and many allow participants to freely construct their performances using any combination of material. The ‘axis of equivalence’ is not so openly displayed at Pasifika festivals. Aside from the Pasifika Festival, with its sheer scale allowing a broader approach to the notion of ‘the Pacific’, the smaller number of other Pasifika festivals held throughout New Zealand tend to be celebrations exclusively for the more recent migrant Pacific cultures. In spite of this, like the Positively Pasifika festival, these events tend to acknowledge the place of Māori as tāngata whenua and note the close historical and cultural ties between the communities.

The way in which Māori and migrant Pacific cultures have been weaved together and connected through many festivals held in New Zealand supports the argument for and makes visible the ‘axis of equivalence’ that exists. These ‘strategic essentialisms’ (Turino 2007, p. 104), created by socio-economic, political and cultural histories and conditions within New Zealand, highlight and bring to the surface the fact that this ‘axis’ is also based in historical and genealogical connections and cultural similarities. Thus, although these connections can be said to have been, in part, re-imagined and re-created within the nation of New Zealand, the cultural re-connection within festival spaces confirms that this re-imagining has a basis in a collective Pacific past.

7.4 Situating Festivals and Communities, Unity and Diversity

There are multiple ways of contextualising and understanding the themes of festival and community as they relate to the Pacific festival space. The fact that the communities coalesce around notions of community, in celebration of Pacific homelands and cultures, and the transplantation of these into an evolving New Zealand context, as well as incorporating the culturally and historically related indigenous Māori, is a demonstration of Hau‘ofa’s ‘sea of islands’ network in operation. I shall return to this notion, in greater detail, in the next chapter. Related to this, however, is the concept of tauhi vā (Ka‘ili
and I argue that the festival space can be seen as a space where socio-spatial relationships are (re)created and nurtured. That these relationships exist across generations, communities, and vast distances, is conducive to a reading of festivals within the framework of ‘contact zones’ (Pratt 1992; Clifford 1997; Bendrups 2008) and, finally, as an example where festivals are modern-day collective rituals (Turner 1982; Cooley 2005).

**Festival Space and Socio-Cultural Relationships**

I have already discussed the importance of space and socio-cultural relationships in terms of the practice of *tauhi vā*, the practice of maintaining socio-cultural and spatial relationships through the nurturing ties of reciprocal exchange, a maintenance that takes place across families, friends, communities, churches, lands, and across generations. In transnational diasporic contexts, the practice of *tauhi vā* is a key principle in caring for socio-spatial relations (Ka‘ili 2005).

The practice of *tauhi vā* is visible within the Pacific festival space and is a helpful way of interpreting the importance of festivals for Pacific communities. As many participants noted, the festival is a time of togetherness for both their particular communities as well as the broader Pacific diaspora, inclusive of Māori. The festival space provides the meeting point for this collective celebration, where communities come together to reaffirm their position within and connection to the broader purpose under which the festival takes place. *Tauhi vā* explains the processes and activities of celebration that take place. Festivals are spaces in which the multiple socio-cultural ties and relationships that weave through and between multilocal Pacific communities are remembered, (re)established, maintained and nurtured into the future. They are spaces of reciprocal exchange of social and economic goods with kin and kin-like members. This exchange extends beyond the boundaries of New Zealand-based communities and can be seen as incorporating Island-based families and communities as well. The practice of community duties through the theme of ‘giving back’, can also be seen as practicing *tauhi vā*, where socio-spatial connections and relationships are viewed within the context of entire communities, or diaspora, and are reinforced through the festival space.
The concept of land is also pertinent here. The festival is a fertile space for creating connections to the genealogical ties associated with fonua, not necessarily to the physical concept of land, although also this, but more so to the notion of ancestral lands as expressed through aspects of material culture. As will be discussed in next previous chapter, performances within the festival space can be understood in this manner, and festivals act as the most highly visible and collective manner in which diasporic Pacific communities, dispersed in physical space, demonstrate their sociospatial connections to both the land of New Zealand, as well as lands elsewhere.

Practicing tauhi vā though the sharing of food, socialising, performance, and material culture within a festival context is a demonstration by Pacific peoples of their socio-cultural connections to one another. It is a day in which communities come together in celebration, in reunion, to (re)establish and (re)affirm these relationships in a festivalised space. The festival represents a significant event at which otherwise heterogeneous communities come together in commonality and unity. The nurturing of socio-cultural relations that takes place within the festival environment can be seen on multiple levels, from kinship, to the kinship-like, the community and the diasporic level. This extends to the historically and culturally connected but politically distinct Māori communities and, as many participants noted, this concept of sharing is also extended to non-Pacific peoples. The festival can thus also be seen as a space in which tauhi vā is practiced with non-Pacific peoples, in the creation and nurturing of relationships and furthering understanding of Pacific cultures within their localised contexts.

Festivals as ‘Contact Zones’
In considering these multiple and overlapping parties, and the relationships within and between Pacific communities, the notion of ‘contact zones’, and specifically Bendrups employment of the concept (2008), is brought to mind. Utilising Pratt’s original theorisation of the term (1992), and Clifford’s expansion of the concept to the museum space (1997), Bendrups situates this approach within the Pacific festival space, expanding the idea once again to account for the ‘multiple layers of display’ and the fact that, while audiences play an important role in their development, there exists a number of other
‘contact parties’ for whom the encounter of the festival is equally important (2008, p. 17). The festival, he asserts, can be ‘just as meaningful for insider participants as it is for outsiders (ibid). His study of the Tapiti Rapa Nui festival identifies four key contact parties:

1. International contact with tourists from beyond the Pacific region
2. Intra-national contact with tourists, authorities and functionaries from mainland Chile
3. Inter-clan contact between traditional kinship groups on Rapa Nui, and
4. Intergenerational contact between Rapa Nui elders

and concludes that ‘these complex interactions demonstrate that an expanded contact zone framework is useful beyond the binary discourses of coloniser/colonised, performer/audience, and host/guest’ (ibid).

This framework provides a useful guide for conceptualising the Pacific festival space within New Zealand, although in its application, and to account for the specifics of the New Zealand context, I extend it once more. Drawing from the interviews conducted with participants, and based on ethnographic observations from fieldwork in Wellington and Auckland, as well as visiting other Pacific festivals throughout the course of this research, there are five central contact parties visible to varying degrees:

1. Intra-community contact within specific New Zealand-based Pacific communities
2. Intra-diasporic contact within the New Zealand-based Pacific communities
3. Intra-diasporic contact within the broader Pacific diaspora
4. Intra-national contact between New Zealand-based Pacific peoples and other New Zealanders/peoples resident in New Zealand.
5. International contact between Pacific peoples and non-Pacific peoples who travel from outside of New Zealand to attend the festivals.

Beyond the notion of communities celebrating in unison, intra-community contact itself incorporates multiple examples of contact parties. Most visibly, this is seen in the importance of the festival space as an intergenerational family space, and the incorporation and importance of elders into the staging of the festival. The central role that the church occupies, and the fact that various religious denominations exist within each community, mean that there is also significant inter-denominational contact. This is seen by the fact
that, even though religion plays a central role, the festival space remains necessarily non-denominational. And, representing the heterogeneous nature of the communities, in terms of homeland geographies, there is inter-island or inter-atoll contact between sections of the community aligned to particular sub-national groupings. The notion of geographies extends further, to intra-diasporic contact, including for example, inter-city contact between Auckland or Wellington-based community members and other members from the same diasporic Pacific community who travel to the festival from out of town. This is something especially and increasingly visible at Auckland’s Pasifika Festival. Intra-diasporic contact also refers to contact between Pacific communities, something noted in the theme of diversity within unity, and in celebrating the unique aspects of each other’s culture. I have drawn a differentiation between this intra-diasporic contact, of contact occurring between the different New Zealand-based Pacific communities situated under the Pasifika umbrella, and the intra-diasporic contact that arises where Pacific peoples travel from either Pacific homelands or other international nations to attend a festival. This is to note the difference between New Zealand-born and/or raised Pacific peoples, or long-term migrants resident in New Zealand, and those Pacific peoples raised in other locales, where the different cultural environments and experiences result in different worldviews and identities.

As well as these five primary contact parties, other kinds of contact are also likely present; for example, contact with cultural tourists and other tourists, such as politicians who attend festivals for politicking purposes. While this may be read cynically, it is meant only to highlight that not all attendees are there for the sole purpose of cultural experience. Media in attendance could also be included within this group. Another possibility is inter-diasporic contact, where other diasporic peoples, who attend as cultural tourists, may in fact share a sense of solidarity or understanding with another group with whom they share a diasporic, non-majority, non-indigenous position.64

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64 The other consideration that needs to be made, when contemplating the framework of contact zones applied to Pacific festivals in New Zealand generally, is that not all contact parties will be present. While, based on my observations at the Pasifika festivals in both Wellington and Auckland, all five contact parties were present, other, smaller regional festivals will have varying degrees of contact. Smaller festivals are far more likely to not have large amounts of intra-diasporic contact with Pacific peoples from outside of New Zealand, and international contact especially.
Clifford notes that whenever a community displays itself through collections and ceremonies, it constitutes an ‘inside’ and an ‘outside’, and that ‘the message of identity is directed differently to members and to outsiders’ (1997, p. 218). While insiders are invited to share in the ‘symbolic wealth’, outsiders are maintained as outsiders, or partially integrated. This statement reflects well the five contact parties described above. For the first three (‘insiders’), attending a festival is to share in the ‘symbolic wealth’ of collective celebration, for outsiders it is to witness the ‘symbolic wealth’ being celebrated. This is especially relevant for Pacific festivals in New Zealand, which are not, the Pasifika Festival aside, major sites of either domestic or international tourism; rather the primary emphasis and significance is in their intra-community and -diasporic contact. The notion of insider and outsider is not meant to draw un-permeable boundaries and delineate who is included in which category, and who is not, however. Certainly the degree of mixing of ethnic heritages in New Zealand alone, as well as accounting for people who may not have Pacific ancestry but who may feel that they share in the symbolic celebration rather than simply witness it, renders borders blurred. Rather, it is to assert that the Pacific festival space becomes a central and important point around which the diaspora, in all its contact party manifestations, congregate in celebration of Pacific cultures and communities; a celebration of themselves. This is the central and most significant function of Pacific festivals, the notion of collective celebration.

**Festivals as Collective Ritual**

The importance of this community togetherness and collective celebration, the practicing of *tauhi vā* across communities, generations, physical space, and diaspora, highlights that Pacific festivals are examples of, as Cooley describes, modern-day collective rituals: ‘performed to define an ethnic place in a changing world’ (2005, p. 10). In this context, and drawing on Hau’ofa’s ‘sea of islands’ (1994), I mean ‘ethnic place’ to be the performance and reassertion of commitment and connections to Pacific cultures and identities, and to Island homelands, real or imagined, a demonstration of the fluid multidirectional nature of the Pacific diaspora in New Zealand. This foreshadows the discussion of place and identity in the next chapter.
The themes of this chapter though, themes of unity and diversity, unity within diversity, the axis of equivalence with Māori, the notions of ‘giving back’, and the important role of families, churches and communities, all reinforce the notion that Pacific festival spaces are spaces that contain and display collective ritual behaviour, something akin to Small’s notion of ‘musicking’ (1998), where certain rituals and behaviours are performed within and shaped by the spaces in which they occur. Cooley’s emphasis on festivals as modern-day re-inventions of the collective rituals of old is not entirely transferrable to the diasporic Pacific context. Collective rituals carried forward from previous times and brought to New Zealand from Pacific homelands are still enacted and other events take place, such as weddings and other religious and life-cycle celebrations, in which Pacific cultures are collectively performed. These occur, however, in relatively private contexts and are only collectively communal within certain boundaries, such as those defined by geography or religious denomination. Festivals, however, act as a means in which these rituals become distinctly public and collective on a scale not possible in other contexts, something that echoes Johnson’s observation of Diwali festivals in New Zealand (2007).

The notion of Pacific festivals as collective rituals also reminiscent of Turner’s writing on the concept. His assertion that, in celebrating a particular event or occasion, a group ‘also celebrates itself’ (1982, p. 15) is resolutely true of the Pacific festival space. The notion of self-celebration was one of the central themes expressed by participants, in a variety of guises, in every interview conducted. Those that manifest and perform Pacific cultures within festival spaces are helping to shape the new Pacific ‘stylistic traditions’ that Turner states are developed within the festival framework (ibid, p. 12), and they become the ‘articulators’ of an otherwise ‘inchoate’, indefinable celebratory spirit (ibid, p. 15).

Turner’s focus on the ‘objects of ritual’ is also important because, although not especially created solely for the purpose of the festival and therefore not bound only to being situated within this frame, these objects are ‘properly understood within the context of their celebration, and when their meanings are also understood’ (1982, p. 15). By this I mean that the objects of ritual –
the performances, the food and drink, the arts, crafts, dress, flags and other symbols of Island homelands and Pacific cultures – collectively combine to embody the self-manifestation of Pacific cultures within the festival context, transmitting a multitude of messages and identity markers and possibilities to community members, a notion that forms the basis of my final discussion chapter.

**Conclusion**

This chapter has demonstrated how notions of community are a central theme around which the Pacific festival space is conceptualised. It began by outlining the importance of festivals as both spaces of community togetherness and as family spaces, highlighting that family incorporates a holistic intergenerational Pacific conception of the term. The role of the church in creating this sense of community is also pivotal. As a result, for many participants, the festival space becomes a space of ‘giving back’ to their communities. The theme of community also extends more holistically, and the festival space becomes important in expressing and reflecting the unity of the Pacific communities in diaspora, not only where they are similar, but also where they are unique. Finally, the notion of community has been extended to and incorporates New Zealand’s *tāngata whenua*, the culturally and historically related indigenous Māori with whom Pacific communities are also aligned in an ‘axis of equivalence’. The changing role of Māori within the long-standing Pasifika Festival highlights, in a broad sense, how this ideology has unfolded and changed over the course of twenty years.

The theme of festivals and community can be understood as a demonstration of Hau’ofa’s ‘sea of islands’, celebrations of Pacific cultures and homelands around which communities, connected by and through these notions, coalesce and network. Furthermore, the processes and activities that take place within these collective celebrations can be seen as the practicing of *tauhi vā*, the (re)creation, (re)affirmation and nurturing of socio-cultural connections across time and space, connections that stretch throughout the diaspora, across and between communities. The variety of community members that participate in festivals lend to a reading of festival spaces as contact zones, allowing for a understanding of festivals beyond performer/audience binaries and
highlighting their importance and significance for the Pacific communities so centrally involved. Finally, this collective celebration, the contact zones in which the practice of *tauhi vā* takes place, indicates that Pacific festivals are examples of highly-public modern-day collective rituals, creating and shaping new stylistic traditions. The performance and ritualisation of aspects of material culture, and with it, the reification and evolution of both the traditional and contemporary, significantly influences how ideas of identity and place are constructed and understood within the festival space. These notions are now explored in the final chapter: festivals, identity and place.
In this research, the overwhelming view expressed by participants and theme observed during the periods of fieldwork, was the centrality and intertwined nature of notions of place and identity, and how they are manifested within the festival space. Pacific festivals are primarily centred on performances of these concepts, and ideas of Pacific homelands, cultures and identities, their place within New Zealand, and how the two interact, are fundamental ingredients in how they are enacted. Overlapping with the issues of leadership and logistics, performances and space, and especially community, place and identity represents the final of the four key areas established from my analysis of participant interviews and ethnographic observations. This final discussion chapter therefore focuses on participants’ views of place, and how place influences and shapes diasporic Pacific identities.

Discussing place as intertwined with the concept of identity is a complicated and multifaceted area. Furthermore, identity is interconnected with the idea of culture to the degree at which they become interchangeable. Culture, as expressed by my participants, was used to delineate the definable, describable, and material aspects of what they perceive to be Pacific cultures, such as music, beliefs and morals, food. The concept of identity proved far more problematic. Frequently, upon asking what they meant by identity when discussing their identities, or the notion of cultural identity, participants attempted to answer and either became disoriented, or started and then digressed off topic. My Tuvalu village performer addressed this head on when she stated:

*I see myself as a Tuvaluan, but who’s also Pākehā as well. What does that mean? I don’t know, I feel the essence of what it means...I’m proud to be Tuvaluan, I love my culture, I love my people, that they are humble in the way they are. And I think that’s why I want to represent it, and put it out there.*
Other times there was silence, an inability to offer a meaningful answer. Nevertheless, participants expressed that performing and the festival space informed and created notions of identity, and how identity acted as that which connects them to their culture, or were the materialisations of their culture within themselves. This suggests that performance, and other material and definable aspects of culture, fulfil and bring into being words and concepts that are not easily expressed in verbal language.

This chapter begins by discussing the place of Pacific homelands and cultures, showing how the festival space provides a medium through which participants connect with notions of ‘home’ in the performance of Pacific cultures and identities. This is contextualised within Hau’ofa’s ‘sea of islands’, where Pacific festivals are seen as the visible manifestation of this kinship network operating within New Zealand. Concurrently and seemingly paradoxically, the place of New Zealand provides another source of connection. The festival allows for participants to assert a sense of ‘home’ as also relating to New Zealand. This is contextualised within Duffy’s notion of territorialisation, where festivals territorialise New Zealand places as spaces of belonging, also of ‘home’, for diasporic Pacific peoples. Finally, in drawing these themes together, a multi-local sense of belonging to place offers possibilities for a stabilisation of diasporic identities; festivals create ‘mooring posts’, rooted within Island homelands and the New Zealand homeland, and around which new identities can be attached, negotiated, and asserted. In terms of ‘polycultural capital’, this affirmation of multi-local place and identities is implicated in the successful ‘edgewalking’ processes of new generations of diasporic Pacific peoples.

8.1 The Place of Pacific Homelands and Cultures

Discussions with participants about the place of Pacific homelands and cultures fell into four identifiable themes: for migrants, the festival offers a way to (re)connect with a remembered homeland; for New Zealand-born and/or raised Pacific peoples, the festival offers a way to connect with ideas of Island homelands, or with the idea of what homeland Pacific cultures are; and finally, the importance of Pacific cultures as a means of knowing or establishing holistic and complete identities.
Connecting with a Home Remembered

The majority of participants interviewed for this research were born and/or raised in New Zealand. This is representative of and reflects the fact that the majority of Pacific peoples who live in New Zealand today are born and raised here (Macpherson 2006). A smaller number of interviewees were migrants; some were part of the migrations that mark the starting point of this research, others were younger and more recent migrants. This is also reflective of the fact that a large number of older Pacific people in New Zealand were raised elsewhere, with the presence of younger migrants emphasising fluidity and that migration is an ongoing feature of the Pacific diaspora.

For these migrants, the festival space acts as a medium for creating a feeling of connection with their homelands, or of nostalgia for their homelands, either remembered from an historical distance or from a more recent perspective. While recounting the history of Pasifika, former SPINDA chair Bill Te Ariki reflected on how the festival achieves this, an anecdote that merits quoting in full:

*It’s a family day, a meeting of relatives. Some of those people look forward to it as their day to go and buy their local food that they’ve not been able to cook or prepare themselves. It brings back memories too, of what they do back in the Islands, like husking coconuts. You watch some of these people from the Islands watching the kids do it, and the next minute, they jump in and husk the nuts too, because it’s that feeling of ‘I want to do it again’. It’s a way of connecting.*

*It’s always in your blood, and when you see it, it makes you want to do it. A few years ago I was toying with the idea of planting a vegetable garden, because of remembering me back home in the plantation. The urge was still in me, to start digging. So I start digging. I have half an acre, and so I rotary hoe’d the lot and planted all these vegetables. And then I thought, ‘gee what am I going to do with all this?’ So I told the kids to put a stall on the side of the street, and of course I never saw the money from it. But it didn’t bother me. Those things, they’re still in your blood, and when you see these things, it comes back, it brings back memories...It’s like getting something off your chest, ‘there I’ve done it; I’m still as good as I was when I was ten’...I go to a lot of dinners, and you have a knife and a fork, and a white tablecloth. But now and again, that urge for Island food is there, no matter how good a steak or a roast meal is. I still think, ‘I wish I had some pork there, with taro’. So you eat to satisfy yourself, and then you go back to the knife and fork*. 
Musical performances within this space are a powerful ingredient in the creation of these feelings. Fiji village co-ordinator Joana Monolagi, for example, explained it in this way:

A lot of elderly people, a lot of the older generation, music to them, Fiji music, they remember the times, the good times they had when they went to Fiji. Our music, all Pacific Island music, there’s a story there in it, of something that happened in their childhood...it always tells a story of home, and of our ancestors, our journey, where we were going in life, and it just has that connection, you’re connected somewhere for us. Connecting back to Fiji.

The performance of Fiji-based VOU in the Fiji village, and how they specifically modified their performance for the specific cultural context, demonstrates this effect. As Sachiko Miller explained, the inclusion of a taki song in their Fiji stage repertoire, a song about the ritual processes involved in social drinking for Fijians, was specifically performed for Fijian migrants, as a way of creating a feeling of connection for them, transplanting them temporarily back to their former lives in Fiji.

Niue village co-ordinator Mina Leolahi also noted the impact of music in the festival space, in creating a sense of nostalgia for an Island homeland. She told me that, ‘some times the old songs can take back the memory of the old people, how in olden days things happened back home. And sometimes they are the people who don’t want to move, they want to sit there and listen’. She also told me that many of these older people do not have easy access to these songs and that, apart from the community radio, the festival provides one of the few places where they can hear them.

For younger, more recent migrants, the festival and performing at the festival provides sometimes-powerful reminders of their former lives. For the lead singer of rock band TribalState, who migrated from Sāmoa specifically to pursue a music career, living in New Zealand creates an environment in which his Sāmoan culture is unintentionally sidelined. He told me:

You tend to forget about things, like for me, I tend to just drift and forget about my culture. But when you go to things like [Pasifika], you feel like you’re at home again; you’ve got your Island food, and dances, and you are celebrating Island cultures.
Cindy of Sāmoa, a resident of New Zealand for almost a decade, shared this opinion. She told me that, ‘for people from back home who live here...everyday you wake up and it’s a whole different lifestyle’, emphasising that there is vast a difference between a Sāmoan way of life, and the European-oriented norms of New Zealand society. With the festival however, this norm was inverted, as ‘we get to celebrate our lives back home that we used to have, and to remind us of who we are’. This recalls Manning’s notion of the paradoxical nature of festivals as encompassing both order and disorder, where play inverts the social order temporarily (1983). In this case, Pacific peoples and ways of being become, for one day and in a particular space, the majority.

And for my Tahiti village performer, the act of recounting the experience of rehearsing for and performing at the festival was an emotional experience. ‘I really like the Pacific stuff’, she explained, ‘cos it reminds me of Tahiti and my culture’. The festival connected her with a home she left only a couple of years ago: ‘it’s like you’re home. And when you eat the Tahitian food and stuff, it’s like, ‘I wanna go home”’. Discussing the process of preparing to perform at the festival, and the impact of the music, physically moved her to tears. She told me:

_The first time I went to Tahiti Ora [festival] practice, I wanted to cry, because it’s been a long time, and when you hear the drums and stuff, it’s like...[becomes emotional], and then they pray before the practice and after the practice, same as in Tahiti, it’s like, ’aw, it’s like home’._

These examples clearly demonstrate that the festival space and performing within it acts as a significant medium through which migrants, whether long-term or recent, forge connections with their former homelands. As the TribalState member and Cindy of Sāmoa both indicated, living in New Zealand means they tend towards adopting a New Zealand lifestyle and so the festival provides a way of inversing this norm, re-connecting with and remembering their former lives. For longer-term migrants, the festival space acts as a nostalgia, a way of connecting with (ideas of) homelands that remain in their memories.
For New Zealand-born and/or raised Pacific peoples, the festival space and performing within it acts in almost an identical manner, with the exception that the homelands they feel connected are not those in which they grew up, but rather are those imagined and remembered through visits and/or short-term residencies. More often though, and especially for those without the experiences of actual or frequent visits to draw upon, the connections made were to notions of culture, as opposed to remembered lifestyles.

**Connecting with a Home Imagined**

Recalling the notions of unity and diversity discussed in the previous chapter, Ryan Monga, of Ardijah, noted that: ‘we’re all [Pacific Islanders], and [the festival’s] where we all connect together…but we all have another place of origin’. For him, part of the purpose of the festival space is to provide a means to connect with that place of origin, to ‘know who you are and…celebrate who you are, as indigenous people’. Awa, of Nesian Mystik, echoed these words. He asserted that at Pacific festivals,

> it’s like they can go to the Islands without going to the Islands, and that’s the first point, it’s like a first step for them to go home. I think it’s a good awakening for them, a good place for them to meet other people that may be from their Island, or doing good things for their community.

Thus festivals act as an ideal ‘starting point’ for those who want to engage with notions of identity and culture because ‘they get the full 360 view, they can’t escape it…it’s a good point for them to connect and celebrate who they are’.

For the Niue village performers, performing at the festival increases their sense of their Niuean-ness: ‘We belong somewhere, we belong there, we know where we come from, our heritage, and our identity’. This, in turn, strengthens the idea of Niue as ‘home’. As one of them explained: ‘Because we’re not in Niue, and we’re in New Zealand, we tend to do things more modernly, we forget about our culture, and if we dance, we kinda realise, ‘oh Niue’, that kinda thing…So I can [connect to] home there’. Similarly, for singer Grace Ikenasio, performing at the festival and being surrounded by the Sāmoan communities and symbols and materials of Sāmoan culture, is ‘very special, like I was back home in Sāmoa’. Paradoxically, as the daughter of a
reverend who grew up in a religious environment, visiting Sāmoa and the churches there reminded her of her childhood growing up in West Auckland.

And for my Tongan Bollywood dancing participant, although performing for her did not act as a way of connecting with ideas of Tonga as home, or with Tongan culture, she believed that the festival did so in a general sense, however ‘more so when you do the traditional [dancing], you know, it’s more connected’. Her sense of her Tongan identity had been solidified during the two periods in which she lived in Tonga, or, as she noted, it was during these times that she ‘reconnected’ with her Tongan identity.

Although the festival space and the musics within it create feelings of connections to Island homelands for different participants in different ways, the comment of my Tongan participant hints at the boundaries that invisibly create the specific (musical) circumstances through which these connections are made. It is through performances of traditional musics only that an environment of connecting is created. Tellingly, despite the impacts of globalisation and the spread of aspects of Western popular culture throughout the Pacific, it is only through notions of traditional Pacific cultures and musics, through music that is seen to originate of the Pacific and is largely devoid of the impacts of the popular contemporary culture that is part of their everyday lives, that participants expressed a sense of connecting with Island homelands. This highlights the imagined nature of the connections and the impact that this has on conceptions of what ‘Pacific cultures’ are. No participants expressed a sense of connecting with an Island homeland while discussing anything other than ‘the old songs’ or ‘traditional’ music and dance. Pacific cultures are thus imagined largely in these traditional and bounded terms.

**The Place of Culture in Creating Identity**

These same boundaries also applied to the more strongly asserted notion of the festival and performing as providing a way of connecting with ideas of Pacific cultures in the creation of identities, which some participants expressed alongside an assertion of connecting with a physical homeland.
As a way of approaching this theme, the identity journey of the recently migrated Tahiti village performer is telling. In telling me about her ethnic background vis-à-vis her conception of her own cultural identity, she told me: ‘well, actually, I don’t have a lot of Tahitian in me. My father is Chinese and my mother is half-Chinese, half-Tahitian, so I’m more Chinese…but I feel Tahitian because I started dancing real young, I feel more Tahitian because I dance’. In this case, learning about and performing culture through dance directly influenced and created the resulting identity of my participant, having had more influence than both her ethnic composition and home family environment. It is this idea of performing culture influencing identity and creating an idea of connection that surfaced most strongly from interviews with participants. In this sense, a connection with ‘home’ is more adequately labelled a connection with a ‘home culture’, and what participants conceive those to be.

For my Tuvalu village performer, for whom Tuvalu is the home of her ancestors, as opposed to any other kind of home, and for whom performing creates feelings of connecting with her Tuvalu community rather than to Tuvalu as an ancestral homeland, performing is an important way in which she connects with her sense of Tuvaluan culture, and therefore her identity as part-Tuvaluan woman. As she explained:

I think that because I can participate in a very important part of my culture, and do that, whether it’s through the festival, or through other events, I think it certainly makes me feel like I’m part of this culture, that I can step up and participate with the rest of my community.

My Tokelau village performers and singer Grace Ikenasio also expressed similar sentiments, that performing is a way of demonstrating knowledge of and a connection with their Pacific culture. One of the Tokelauans, for example, told me that performing is about ‘pride’: ‘it represents our culture, showing other people who we are...showing them we know how to dance, know our culture’, while the other reflected, ‘just automatically when I hear the music and start dancing, I just feel happy in representing our culture’. For Grace, ‘knowing your language and knowing who you are is a whole part of my cultural identity, as a Sāmoan’, and performing is a way of displaying this publicly, representing Sāmoan people and encouraging other community
members too. Grace attributed part of the construction of her identity to having taken part at Polyfest during her secondary schooling. The experience, she told me, taught her that,

there’s more to being Sāmoan than just knowing the language. I think through dance, learning some of the moves, getting to know my culture through dance was another new experience for me…it made me want to learn more about Sāmoa.

This desire for further knowledge and connections to her Sāmoan culture has continued to be important:

I think performing at [Pasifika] has influenced me a lot. I’m even wanting to write a song in Sāmoan for my EP, just so I can get to know my roots a bit more as well, and to really know my language…I think I can actually sing more Sāmoan songs than I can speak so, in a way, I’ve learnt the language through music.

The net result is that singing in church choirs in her youth, learning cultural performances through Polyfest, and continuing this into Pasifika by contemporising Sāmoan songs and performing them alongside her own compositions, has ‘made me realise how much more I want to be Sāmoan, and how much I want Sāmoan to be part of me’.

For my Niue village participants, performing creates and reinforces their connection to a Niuean identity, and also reinforces the importance of its preservation because of this value. One of them told me that ‘the actions, and the words of the songs, portray our Island and the people…We’re proud, very proud [of being Niuean] when we perform’, with the other adding that, performing ‘makes us realise the importance of our cultural traditions…and how we should try and maintain it, ‘cos it’s dying out’. When I asked them why it was important, and why it was important to preserve cultural traditions, they explained that it was because the process of learning the dances taught them more about Niuean culture and, as a result, increased their sense of their Niuean-ness: ‘It’s like we belong somewhere, we belong there, we know where we come from, our heritage, and our identity’, one of them commented.
The Fiji village performer I discussed these concepts with expressed similar sentiments. She told me that performing creates a

really good feeling, especially when it’s your own tradition. I mean, we don’t do it everyday, even though we’re Fijian, so when you get to do something with your own culture, it just makes you feel better about yourself, like your identity, you feel like you belong somewhere...[Performing has] allowed me to be more in touch with my identity.

As well as creating her identity by reinforcing notions of what Fijian culture is, opportunities to perform culture, as for the others above, was also an important way in which she increased knowledge of her culture: ‘You learn more about it everytime you perform it’, she asserted. This was especially important for the fact of living in New Zealand, as opposed to Fiji. In New Zealand, ‘I think it’s really easy to lose touch with your cultural identity’, she told me, and with performing, ‘I feel a connection to my identity, I feel more Fijian, I guess’.

And for the assistant Fiji village co-ordinator, Seta, who also performs in the village, the festival is a public demonstration of the all-encompassing totality of her Fijian identity, and of the ways in which she connects to notions of her Fijian culture. Crucially, she also noted the role of the gaze of others in the festival space, and that the village is therefore a demonstration of how the world views her and her Fijian culture as well:

It’s everything that’s who I am, how I see the world, through my eyes, and how the world sees me, whether the way I dance, or the way I dress, or the way I cook, maybe, food-wise. And it’s part of my identity, living here in Auckland. It’s a way of thinking, I guess. Yeah, it’s what we wear, how we wear it, our place on the map, the flag that we wave around, the Pasifika flag.

The Importance of Connecting
The importance of connecting with notions of culture in the creation of identity was expressed in two different ways: one – that it represents a point of difference – was expressed by a single participant, the other – because it represents where you are from – was a theme repeated and put forward by many.
Sāmoa village co-ordinator Te’evā told me that the festival space offers Pacific peoples a rich medium through which they are able to connect with their Pacific cultures. She told me that, ‘I’m just a believer in getting enriched in our cultures, because that’s our identities’. The importance of doing so, for her, was that these cultures and identities offered a ‘point of difference to anyone else and everything else’, and therefore, they should be nurtured and celebrated. She believes being raised with strong Sāmoan cultural values whilst also being able to operate in the European environment of New Zealand has benefited her:

> I really thank my parents for that, because if they didn’t, then I’d be just another New Zealand-Sāmoan who didn’t know anything about my culture, wouldn’t bother about Sāmoan community events...Because I know, I’ve got a lot of family members whose parents didn’t know, didn’t think it was necessary to say, ‘hey, speak Sāmoan when you come home’, and when you see them now, they’re dying to speaking Sāmoan, dying to speak their language.

Furthermore, this ‘point of difference’ could act as the impetus to create stronger connections and identities, because of the value in its difference. Te’evā made this observation based on the experience of taking groups of young people back to Sāmoa and noting the value that they placed on the notion of culture. In her opinion, the performances of these groups rivalled if not exceeded those situated within the Sāmoan homeland because, within Sāmoa, as a lived culture, there was no differential forces against which a sense of value was created. This view was also expressed by Fiji village co-ordinator Joana, who told me that she did not appreciate her Fijian culture growing up in Fiji, because it surrounded her. It was not until migrating to New Zealand, where her culture was different and invisible, that she started to place value on culture as a concept.

The common reason given however, for the importance of connecting with notions of Pacific cultures, was because creating identities through strong connections with culture acts a way to ‘know where you’re from’. This phrase was repeatedly emphasised in different ways. For example, my Fiji village performer asserted that, ‘I really think it’s important because that’s where they come from. If you don’t know where you came from, you don’t know where you’re going...don’t forget where you came from’. Her village
co-ordinators, Joana and daughter Seta, expressed an almost identical sentiment when they told me:

Joana: If you don’t know your roots, where you came from, your feet won’t be planted in the ground to know where you’re going. With Pasifika, you can come back to your roots.

Seta: I know that happens through the schools, through Polyfest. So, hopefully, if it doesn’t grab them at school, especially for kids who might be half-half, might be brought up more European than whatever their other half is, hopefully it will implant in them, instils in them that need to know, that sense of belonging. I hope Pasifika does plant the seed maybe, which is what we try and do with the village.

Joana: At the early age, it’s good that there are festivals, that they can hopefully, the festivals will prick something in them, to wake them up.

One of the members of TribalState also noted this importance for young New Zealand-raised Pacific peoples: ‘To go to a thing like Pasifika, they get to keep in touch with their roots’, he said, ‘it’s important to know your roots and where you’re from’. And, equally, for the Kiribati village performer,

the village and festival is an important showcase of who we are. We can show our children to be proud of who they are and not get lost in the wider New Zealand culture…knowing your culture first means you are able to appreciate other cultures.

This idea of knowing who you are in order to find a place and not get lost within the wider New Zealand society and culture was expressed multiple times. Nesian Mystik’s Awa, in repeating this notion, also noted the impact the inverse, of finding a place from the position of being lost. He explained:

It’s important for [young Pacific people] to know who they are, so they don’t get lost in the world. Like the saying, whakataut [Māori proverb], you have to know where you’re from to know where you’re going. And you see it all the time…when our people are lost and they find the reo [language] or they find the culture, and all of a sudden this new person comes out, so that’s why.

For Ryan Monga, of Ardijah, young Pacific peoples need to know and research their genealogies in order to avoid getting lost. In doing so, ‘you’ll probably find there’s a whole different world down there than what you’ve been exposed to’. Connecting with and celebrating culture and identity through festivals is thus ‘more important than a wad of money, it’s about
being human and...not buying into this ‘thumbs down’ thing’, a criticism directed at negative portrayals of Pacific peoples propagated by the media and general public, and also sometimes from within Pacific communities themselves. The relative absence of positive media representations of Pacific peoples was also noted by my Tongan performer. In this context and in the absence of many other alternative spaces, the festival, as a space through which to create and connect with positive ideas of Pacific cultures and identities, is important because, as she asserted, ‘mainstream media still don’t really play a lot of our music, they don’t acknowledge a lot of our brown people. On TV you always see blond and blue eyed presenters and stuff, so yes, it will take time’.

Finally, my Tuvalu village performer explained the importance of young Pacific people connecting with their Pacific cultures in order to create holistic identities, and how knowing her culture made her feel ‘complete’. She stated:

[Young people] look in the mirror and they see a brown face, but they don’t know anything other than the English language, so who are they? It’s like, if you know more about who you are, I feel like you certainly feel more whole...I think if kids holistically have all the part to them, they have more of that whole and less of that conflict internally. If you’re strong in your identity, I don’t know what it is, but you’re better able to move, even within mainstream, because you know who you are.

In terms of her own identity, performing at the festival, connecting with her culture and Tuvaluan community, had profound impacts:

I don’t think it’s about how I see myself, it’s how I feel. It’s not how I view myself, I don’t view myself as better, but I feel better, I feel more complete, more whole, when I’m able to have all parts of my identity...not the dancing alone, because it’s definitely language as well, but it is part of that identity thing, that I’m able to feel a little bit more complete, a little bit more a part of this community.

8.2 Contextualising the Place of Pacific Homelands and Cultures
The Pacific festival space creates highly public opportunities for diasporic Pacific peoples to connect with and perform various conceptions of ‘home’ being in the Pacific or of the Pacific, with resulting influences in the development of diasporic identity. For those within the communities who are celebrating and being celebrated, festival displays provide meaningful
connections to notions of Pacific cultures, and their public manner places added value on their performance. The ways in which these ideas of belonging to Island homelands, or of seeing them as the ancestral roots of a significant part of their identities, and how these connections are maintained across vast distance and space and played out within the festival space, can be contextualised within Hau’ofa’s fluid conceptualisation of the Pacific diaspora.

**Pacific Festivals as Manifestations of a ‘Sea of Islands’**

The variety of insider contact parties present within the Pacific festival space, reflecting the dynamic nature in which they are present in the broader New Zealand community, lends itself to a reading best understood within Hau’ofa’s view of the Pacific as an inter-connected ‘sea of islands’ (1994, 2000, 2008). Conceiving of a world where people, skills, trade, and arts and culture have circulated endlessly in processes of what he calls ‘world enlargement’, and highlighting similarity over difference, prioritising historical and cultural commonalities, Hau’ofa’s vision presents the Pacific as far more intimate than imposed national borders suggest. Reflecting its basis in reality, this notion was expressed by participants that had spent time living and travelling throughout the region.

While interviewing Roy Vaughan, he recounted his time spent living in Fiji, from 1989 to 1991, working for the South Pacific Forum. One of the striking memories he had was returning to a small Island he had visited years earlier. Stepping off the boat, he was greeted by an unfamiliar man who not only remembered him by name but also several other details about him. It was someone he had met on his earlier visit years before and with whom he had previously established a socio-cultural connection, a relationship that had been remembered across the passing of time. Roy also told me that he was constantly amazed by the ways in which news (and gossip) travelled and relationships were maintained as if the people involved were living in adjacent towns, and not separated by several hundred or thousand kilometres. While interviewing my Tongan Bollywood-dancing participant, who has spent two periods of her life living in Tonga, she too told me about the intimacy of the Pacific, and especially how new technologies had added a
new layer to ways in which these connections are maintained. She recounted how dance trends also moved in this manner, how the popularity of specific types of Pacific dance had spread to Tonga from Tahiti, the Cook Islands and Hawai’i and, from the opposite direction, how she had been introduced to Bollywood dancing after its popularity in Fiji expanded outwards.

Most importantly, for the purposes of this research, this intimacy and interconnectedness has expanded into the contemporary Pacific diaspora. Hau’ofa argues that the ‘world enlargement’ that occurred in the aftermath of the Second World War has extended the connections of the vast Pacific kinship network, as Pacific peoples have been able to ‘shake off their confinement…doing what their ancestors had done before them: enlarging their world as they go, but on a scale not possible before’ (1994, p. 157).

**New Zealand within the ‘Sea of Islands’**

Island homelands and new, adopted homelands represent the nodes through which the Pacific world circulates, the points through which Pacific peoples travel, holiday, live, and maintain relationships. Where Pacific peoples have travelled and settled, they have taken these connections with them, connections that tie them to other places, people, and cultures, and connections that become new posts of Pacific-ness. Conceiving the ‘sea of islands’ as a matrix, New Zealand and its diasporic Pacific communities represent the most significant node outside of the central Pacific nations, on the Southern extremity of a network that cross-crosses the Pacific, stretching West to Australia, around the bottom of the Pacific Rim to the Americas on the East, and back across the top of Hawai’i and Micronesia. This kinship network becomes more detailed when viewed domestically, through Auckland as the main point of entry and so-called ‘First City of the Pacific’, through significant pockets of Pacific-ness in the central North Island, Porirua and Wellington, and then down the South Island, through Christchurch, Dunedin and finally Invercargill, as well as places in between. The festivals, which have followed Pacific peoples as they have moved and settled across New Zealand, become representations of the domestic extensions of this

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65 A moniker adopted by the turn of the twenty-first century Auckland City Council. Auckland as the ‘biggest Polynesian city in the world’ is now more frequently employed.
larger, international network. As Hau’ofa concludes, the resources of Pacific peoples are no longer confined to national boundaries, they are located wherever they are living permanently or otherwise, establishing new resource bases and expanding the networks for circulation in the process (1994, p. 157).

Based on these ideas, I assert that Pacific festivals represent the most publicly visible manifestations of the ‘sea of islands’ operating within New Zealand, and of its connection to and place within it. Festivals are the way in which Pacific peoples publicly celebrate the notion of a ‘sea of islands’ within New Zealand contexts, a notion that reinforces movement, circulation, and re-affirms a history of the interconnectedness of the Pacific. Throughout the fieldwork and interviews carried out, the dominant theme has been that festivals are highly-public opportunities to celebrate and assert Pacific identities within New Zealand, of belonging to other places or having identities that are based on coming from other places. Pacific festivals are occasions where New Zealand spaces are transformed into Pacific places; or, as Clifford has described, the bending together of both roots and routes to construct alternative public spheres (1994, p. 308). This should not be mistaken for an assertion that the festivals aim to mimic or recreate Pacific homelands. The role of New Zealand in the production of the festivals, and in the influence of what is performed within them, is clear: these are urban Pacific spaces, and represent (re)creations of Pacific-ness informed by the New Zealand places in which they occur, as discussed further below.

Pacific festivals are public displays of the connection of different nodes of the diasporic Pacific network to each other, New Zealand to various other Pacific nations, and festival performances are one of the material ways in which these connections are achieved and displayed. Performing identity is thus also about re-affirming ideas of connection and place, highlighting the connections that link together people, culture, history and ideas, and the routes that have extended the network and brought Pacific peoples to a new place. Performing at one node connects people to another node, or other nodes, within the ‘sea of islands’. The importance expressed by participants of connecting with notions of culture, or the ways in which performances create connections to ideas of home, is understood in this manner. Festivals and
opportunities to perform connectivity are important because they facilitate the maintenance of these connections to place, allowing for public assertions and appreciation of New Zealand’s central role within the ‘sea of islands’.

Several themes identified in other discussion chapters also reflect how the interconnected-ness of the Pacific diaspora is present within the festival space. Most prominent are the themes of unity, diversity and unity within diversity, and the festival as a community space, discussed in the previous chapter. These themes highlight that the festival space creates and reinforces a sense of unity and commonality among Pacific peoples at the same time as it ‘shows off’ the diversity and uniqueness of the different Pacific cultures on display. This sense of uniqueness was especially important for participants from the smaller Pacific communities, who see the festival as a medium through which their cultures are elevated to equal importance as those of the more dominant and larger groups. The migration of Pacific peoples to New Zealand created an equivalence based not only on common historical and cultural similarities within the Pacific, but also on socio-cultural and economic place within New Zealand upon migration. It also opened up a space for a (re)connection with indigenous Māori, as Pacific ‘cousins’, a relationship viewed as important for many participants and reflected at many Pacific festivals.

On this basis, Ka‘ili’s practice of tauhi vā (2005) is situated alongside the ‘sea of islands’ in explaining how the Pacific festival space is a manifestation of the diasporic network. The Pacific festival space is a space in which the creation and re-creation, establishing and re-establishing, and affirmation of sociospatial relationships through the practices of tauhi vā are visible. The importance of tauhi vā explains how relationships are facilitated and maintained throughout the vast ‘sea of islands’, and these practices are an important facet of community interaction within the festival space. In this context, festival performances are one of the vital ingredients that together create the space and environment in which these practices can occur, the reason that brings communities together; festivals as facilitating large-scale and cross-community tauhi vā.
Flu
dility within the ‘Sea of Islands’
Hau’ofa’s ‘sea of islands’ emphasises fluidity and exchange. This idea of lucidity is useful in understanding the dynamic nature of the Pacific diaspora. As opposed to the singular dispersal from a homeland to which eventual return becomes untenable over time, as per Safran’s model (1991), the Pacific diaspora is characterised by movement. Advances in technology and travel, as well as reasonably favourable geographic placement, have made return journeys both possible and, in some cases, frequent. The fact of Cook Islanders, Tokelauans and Niueans also being New Zealand citizens has also facilitated movement. Migrations, and return migrations (Tagata Pasifika 2002b; Macpherson and Macpherson 2009), exchange of people, culture and goods have thus been continual features of Pacific communities in New Zealand.66 This characteristic of fluidity and movement was evident during ethnographic observations at Pasifika festivals in Wellington and Auckland, as well as during interviews with participants. More than occasional examples surfaced where people involved in the festivals, in a variety of roles from performers to vendors to organisers, told me about periods they had spent living in Island homelands or how they were able to make reasonably frequent return trips, about family members who lived in the Pacific, other family members who travelled up and down, and still others who had migrated either temporarily or permanently. Stallholders at both festivals also used the event as an opportunity to bring people and goods from Island homelands, involving a wider employment of manpower in those locations and providing economic generation possibilities.

That the festival opens up spaces in which connections with Island homelands are created, reinforces the twin notions of inter-connectedness and fluidity. For migrants, either recent or longer-term, the festival reminds them of the homes they left, recreating home environments of recent or more distant memories, and demonstrating the ways in which these connections are maintained. For New Zealand-born and/or raised Pacific peoples, the festival can serve to create connections, notions of ‘home’, with Pacific homelands, although this situation arises where the fluidity of movement has been

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66 In asserting this, it must be noted that this movement is not equally available across the diaspora. Peoples of Tokelau, Tuvalu, Tahiti and Kiribati, for example, are constrained by the costs and infrequency of travel services in travelling ‘home’, something emphasised by the village co-ordinators of these villages, while travel to the Cook Islands, Niue, Fiji, Tonga and Samoa is more readily accessible.
already established through a habit of back-and-forth travel. More strongly, the festival creates connections with ideas of Pacific cultures, and with their communities. These cultures are resolutely grounded in the Pacific and are of the Pacific, demonstrating in a highly public fashion how these cultures have been routed through, re-fashioned and re-imagined anew, in the New Zealand public sphere.

The theme of communicating through performance, outlined in chapter six, also demonstrates how these connections are facilitated. Communicating a literal message is communicating stories, histories, and genealogies of Island homelands, disseminating and passing knowledge and creating connections to these homelands and to tangible concepts of Pacific cultures. Through performance, messages of community and diasporic unity are also conveyed, with special relevance to the situation of young urban Pacific peoples who may not have significant relationships with ancestral homelands or speak Pacific languages. Communicating a figurative message through performance directly relates to the ephemeral nature of culture as performers communicate, often without being able to articulate how, what Pacific cultures are. And the importance of families and communities also reflects the fluid and dynamic nature the Pacific diaspora. Families are multigenerational as opposed to nuclear, comprising grandparents, parents, aunties, uncles, children and cousins, and their large and holistic composition encompasses migrants, New Zealand-borns and various permutations in between. Furthermore, as noted in the previous chapter, Pacific festivals are designed with this conception of family in mind, with the spaces constructed to appeal from its youngest members through to its oldest.

New Zealand’s Pacific communities are distinctly multi-local in their operation. Transplanted churches operated as the original focal points of community interaction for new migrants and, while there are now additional avenues, their central role at festivals reflects their continued importance. The notion of the festival as a day in which whole communities come together was highlighted by many and can be seen as contemporary manifestations of the way in which churches previously operated, when the communities were small enough to be able to congregate around a small number of parishes.
These communities are characterised by their mix of migrants and citizens and the festival demonstrates their fluid and inter-connected nature. New migrants perform for and socialise with older migrants; New Zealand-born generations work with community elders and culture bearers to create performances; domestic and international visitors from the diaspora reconnect and reunite with friends and families; and Pacific peoples from Island homelands perform at or sell goods for the festival, or simply plan a visit around the timing of the event. Furthermore, as the 2011 Pasifika Festival highlighted, these events can act as a point around which dispersed groups reunite, as with the Kiribati women’s school reunion, and, as the Fiji village co-ordinator noted and the Tagata Pasifika item about the Rotuman community showed, the festival is also a space in which communities not represented can nonetheless still be or feel included as part of the Pacific diaspora that is being celebrated. Finally the notion of giving back to communities, and the expectation to do so that higher-profile Pacific performers mentioned, highlights the way in which a larger sense of community exists, at both pan-Pacific and localised Pacific community levels, and the festival is seen as a space through which community service to these groups is performed. Furthermore, as Ka’ili noted, community service (fatongia) can be seen as way through the practice of tauhi vā is carried out, and fits within this festival context (2005, p. 92).

The Pacific festival space is a manifestation of the fluid, dynamic, and interconnected nature of the multi-directional Pacific world (the Pacific and its diaspora). Themes of place and identity, as well as those from other chapters highlighted above, demonstrate this. Beyond publicly mediated representations of Pacific festivals as displays of diversity and of New Zealand’s multicultural society, the primary significance of the festivals is that they are spaces in which Pacific communities come together to celebrate their place within the New Zealand society, their relationships to Island homelands and to each other, and the connections between these two positions. Festivals are therefore important spaces of multi-local community collectivity, where relationships are created and re-established, and, in this sense, they can be seen as vital for the maintenance of socio-cultural relationships, and the wider diasporic network.
This explains however, only one half of the place equation: the place of Pacific homelands and of their influence in the creation of diasporic identities. An equally important consideration is the role and influence of New Zealand in these constructions. And it is therefore together that they provide a complete understanding of how place and identity operate within the festival space.

8.3 The Place of a New Pacific Homeland
The dynamic relationship between New Zealand and the Pacific is manifested within the festival space. Festival spaces re-create the Pacific in New Zealand and, as a result, make New Zealand a Pacific nation while, concurrently, the influence of New Zealand on these re-creations of Pacific cultures, and the creation of diasporic identities, means that the influence is multi-directional. This is an especially important theme with regards to notions of place, identity and belonging, and was one of the most striking observations made during the ethnographic fieldwork for this research. During participant interviews the place of New Zealand was expressed in different ways, from assertions that the festival confirms New Zealand as a Pacific nation and is a space in which notions of Pacific peoples belonging to and being celebrated within New Zealand can be expressed, to the way in which the festival creates New Zealand as ‘home’, and the unique position of Pasifika and New Zealand as the place where multiple Pacific cultures and communities reside.

The Place of the Pacific within New Zealand
For hip hop artist King Kapisi, geography makes the situation clear: ‘One thing I’ve always said, New Zealand and Aotearoa is a Pacific Island’. As a Sāmoan-New Zealander, performing at the festival (as well as in general) means that he adopts and represents both Sāmoa and New Zealand. He explained his reason for doing this as being because it reflects a truer representation of who he is, and feels, and also because it allows him to better connect with the audience, some of whom will identify more with the Sāmoan, or Polynesian, aspect, and others who will connect better with his New Zealand-ness. Awa, of Nesian Mystik, was equally explicit in his assessment of the connection between New Zealand and the Pacific, and how the festival played a role in that:
That’s the main thing, that we’re connected somehow, and even if you’re a Pākeha New Zealander, you’re still an Islander, ‘cos you’re still in the South Pacific, so you’re connected that way. You try to find ways to connect rather than find ways to divide, and music allows people to do that.

As an older New Zealand-born Pacific person, Ardijah member Ryan views the festival as reflective of the social change that has occurred since the 1970s, and how Pacific peoples can assert New Zealand as ‘our country’. He explained:

For me, I love the whole day, because it’s part of the [migrant] dream. It’s like, if you were here in the beginning when our people were getting bagged and put down, and called coconuts and losers, and then you see it now, I’m just happy, so content, that celebrating who we are as a people within our own country too as well.

Similarly, contemporary performer Grace Ikenasio told me that the festival shows that ‘we’re identified as someone, and that we’re a part of this nation as well as being our own culture’. This was important for her as Pacific peoples are both of the Pacific, but ‘they’re all people from here as well, they grew up in New Zealand’. Grace’s opinion is typical and reflects a general opinion of participants, that the notion of New Zealand as a Pacific nation is expressed through Pacific peoples being recognised and celebrated as a part of New Zealand. The festival space furthermore, provides a highly visible and public medium through which this is demonstrated:

There are a lot of Pacific Islanders in New Zealand now, and I think Pasifika is just another way of saying, ‘hey, we’re here too’, and that there’s more to us Pacific Islanders than...what’s in the news, that we do have talents, that we are people too. And I think that’s the time for them to celebrate the Pacific Islands...I think it helps [them] too, to understand us Pacific Island people and where we came from and what we had to do to be here, and to integrate into the New Zealand culture.

The words above, from Tokelau village co-ordinator, Sarai Tanu, encapsulate the multiple perspectives that many participants expressed around the notion of the festival as demonstrating the place of Pacific peoples; that is, that it acknowledges Pacific peoples as part of New Zealand, offers a medium through which stereotypes can be countered and through which other New Zealanders can be educated about Pacific cultures, and that it celebrates both where Pacific peoples have come from, and that they are here.
My Tongan participant also reflected many of Sarai’s words. She told me that the festival is a way for New Zealand to acknowledge the place of Pacific people, and

> to appreciate what we have, you know, our culture, and that we’re there to celebrate...It’s just a way for the country to acknowledge that we do exist and we do bring a big part to the economy and to New Zealand, that we are beautiful people and we have a beautiful culture, and they should be able to appreciate it as well.

Tuvalu village co-ordinator Peggy called the festival a ‘road map’, a ‘path’ in providing opportunities for the recognition of Pacific peoples as equals in New Zealand society, as a place ‘where we can have our say too’ and, ultimately, as furthering the close ties between New Zealand and other Pacific nations and allowing for the concerns of those nations to be addressed. She told me that, through the festival, Pacific peoples ‘show them that we are very much part of New Zealand, and we can make New Zealanders...proud of us’.

A performer from her village adopted a more celebratory viewpoint. For her, the festival is about ‘all New Zealanders celebrating us, as people who love Pacific cultures...all New Zealanders celebrating the Pacific’. Displaying Pacific cultures in a celebratory format was important, ‘so we can share our cultures with each other, celebrate that coming together, and in an informal sense, so that we appreciate each other’. And this notion of sharing culture with the wider community was also noted by a member of rock band TribalState. He told me that the festival is

> really important for New Zealand. Auckland’s got so many people and diversity of different cultures, mostly made up of Pacific Islanders, and Asians and Indians, and to actually go there and experience the different cultures and different [music] is like a preview of where they’re from...you see a different view.

The idea of the festival as a ‘preview of where they’re from’ suggests educational implications, as Pacific peoples display and inform about both their origins as well as who they are in New Zealand. Kiribati village co-ordinator Merea indicated this when she commented that

> New Zealand is Kiwi, New Zealand is New Zealand and, because there are so many different cultures here, I think that it’s great that they see us and they are aware of our actual culture. They see someone else and they think we all
The performer from Merea’s village supported this, noting that ‘the village and festival is an important showcase of who we are’. For her, the festival was important in order to ‘show our children to be proud of who they are and to not get lost in the wider New Zealand culture’, as well as ‘changing peoples ideas of Pacific Islanders’. Through the festival, she believes, these perceptions and ideas are ‘more nuanced now, and [people] know the difference between different Pacific Islanders, rather than just thinking we’re all the same’. This was also the part of the purpose for the Niuean dancers I interviewed, who saw the festival space as an opportunity to counter the stereotyped ‘savage’ perceptions people have of Niuean dance, and show them that it is ‘proper’ and ‘civilised’.

Finally, Fiji village co-ordinator Joana noted that the festival was not only a place where people ‘come and experience the music, the culture, the food, everything about Fiji’, it was also about ‘letting the world see Fiji from Aotearoa’, with her daughter and assistant village co-ordinator adding that, at the festival, ‘the other New Zealanders, they celebrate with us’. Joana’s choice of words is telling. For her, the festival is not only about showing and sharing Fijian culture with the wider community, but it showing Fijian culture as it is in New Zealand, meaning the way Fijian culture has been manifested, has changed and been adapted to its new New Zealand home.

**The Place of New Zealand as ‘Home’**

The festival space creates, for many participants, a dual sense of ‘home’. After situating New Zealand as a Pacific nation, Nesian Mystik’s Awa noted that the festival was also a ‘good point’ for Pacific peoples to ‘connect and celebrate who they are’. For Awa, as well as the notion of connecting with an ancestral Pacific home, this was also about connecting with and affirming belonging within New Zealand. He asserted that, ‘for our Pacific Island communities, a lot of them can feel lost, especially being in New Zealand’. Performing at the festival therefore provides a medium through which to connect with ‘urban Islanders’: “cos a lot of Pacific Islanders haven’t even
gone back to the Islands. So, for them, it’s to let them know that that’s ok, like, still be proud, still walk tall, be staunch, but know your history’.

For the Niuean dancers, performing creates a sense of having ‘two homes’. As discussed above, although it made them feel a sense of Niue as being home, this did not exclude New Zealand from also being home because, as they pointed out, ‘we were born here, we went to school here’. This opinion was shared by both the Sāmoa and Tokelau village performers I spoke with. For my Sāmoan participant, visiting Sāmoa recalled her New Zealand childhood and performing in the Sāmoa village reminds her of being in Sāmoa. This led her to exclaim:

*I’d say I have two homes. It’s definitely here, but also in Sāmoa. Home in New Zealand for me is where I grew up most of my life, but going back to where my parents were born and where they grew up, that also felt like part of me.*

And, for the Tokelauans, ‘New Zealand is where we live, and Tokelau is where we’re from...[where] our old family, our parents grew up, so it’s where we’re from’.

This was not universal however and my Tuvalu village performer offered a radically different conception of ‘home’. For her, the festival offers an opportunity to perform a connection with her sense of Tuvalu and her Tuvaluan-ness. However Tuvalu, a Pacific nation comprising eight atolls and islands, is ‘the home of my ancestors’ and this did not create in her the feeling of Tuvalu as an ‘ancestral home’, a slight but tellingly subtle difference. Rather, ‘home’ and her conception of Tuvalu was her Tuvaluan community in West Auckland. Thus, for her, Tuvalu and Tuvaluan culture are as they are, situated within New Zealand; Pasifika the festival is an affirmation of its new New Zealand roots and creates for her an affirmation of her sense of what ‘home’ is.

Despite the subtle differences in how these participants find a sense of ‘home’ in New Zealand, they all reaffirm the same finding: that the festival space provides a public medium through which their notion of being at home as Pacific peoples in New Zealand is asserted, and reaffirmed. This is achieved
through their performances of Pacific cultures or as Pacific people, in either traditional or contemporary contexts, and is a way in which their Niueanness, Tuvaluan-ness, Sāmoan-ness, and Tokelauan-ness is reaffirmed as belonging in and as a part of the twenty-first century reality of multicultural New Zealand. They do not have to become and identify as New Zealanders, or hybrid-New Zealanders, but are free to be Tokelauans living in New Zealand, or Sāmoans living in New Zealand, and so on, and to create and assert their own understandings of what this might be.

One anecdote offers the most pertinent demonstration of this point of any interviews conducted. My Tongan participant, the Bollywood dancer, was raised in Sydney, Australia, but spent two periods of her life living in Tonga, both times at the request of her grandmother, the family matriarch: once as a teenager, because her grandmother ‘thought we were being too Palagi’, and then again in her early twenties. During these periods, she also travelled to other Pacific nations, such as Sāmoa, Fiji and the Cook Islands. She told me that the time spent living in Tonga,

*made me realise how much I missed my culture and how much it’s a part of me, you know, I really missed it. I knew in my heart that I wanted to work within my Pacific Island community, but just not in Tonga...Tonga will always be home, because of my people there, but [it] is so traditional...and you don’t get that feeling in Australia, in Sydney. I’ve never walked around Sydney and felt that connection, you know, at all...So when I went back to Sydney I was always yearning for that connection.*

For her, Tonga provided the people and part of the cultural surrounding and environment but did not allow her to be ‘the Tongan that I am’. Sydney gave her the remaining ingredients, the Western culture and freedom of society, but lacked the influence of and connection to Pacific communities and cultures. Coming to New Zealand in 2008, to attend the Pasifika Festival, she was finally provided the combination that she was seeking. She explained:

*When I came in 2008, I was basically walking around opening my mouth the whole time. Basically I was flabbergasted seeing so many Islanders...I was looking around Pasifika, and for the first time in my life, I was like, ‘this is where I’m supposed to be, this is home for me’...I saw the Tongan village, and the Sāmoa village, the Fiji village, and you have that connection instantly, I mean, for me, it was an instant connection that I wanted to be there to perform*
with them. And watching all the performers on stage, made me want to perform too.

Moving to New Zealand shortly afterwards, she realised this ambition and performed at the Pasifika Festival the following year, as well as in 2010. As her new ‘home’, she explains that New Zealand allows her to balance what she sees as the two sides of her identity:

I can do that here, because you’re got the Western culture and the Tongan, Pacific Island community here, you know, so we can blend, and balance. I think I balance both cultures here very well. I balance my Tongan culture by doing the work that I do, and going out into the community and [being] with them...and, at the same time, I can be Western; I can go to the movies, I can dress in my boots and jeans. I can be whatever I want...That’s why I love the connection here.

It is important to note the central role of New Zealand in this notion of balance and of unifying aspects of Pacific and Western cultures. The festival space presents both, as well as the diversity of the different Pacific cultures. This is a unique aspect of the Pacific festival space, one that reflects the diasporic communities in New Zealand and one that was commented upon by several participants. The diasporic Pacific communities within New Zealand and the specific histories of their migrations created the circumstances in which festivals arose. For Sachiko, of Fiji-based VOU, the unique and extraordinary character of Pasifika lay in this. ‘There’s nothing comparable anywhere in the Pacific, because there’s just not that volume of people’, she stated. ‘There’s no support for that kind of thing, just so many races in one place, it’s really fantastic’.

Being able to be of your own Pacific culture(s) while still being in New Zealand ‘is pretty special and unique’, King Kapisi told me:

You can’t see that at any other time, unless you go to that specific Pacific Island, or go to a night that that particular culture is having. So, to be able to see them all at once...you’ve got to revel in it, and just be able to soak it in, what’s happening, because it is, you know, we’re unique, and that’s what I like about being able to go to these particular festivals, because you can celebrate our uniqueness, and see our different cultures.

And similarly, for Nesian Mystik’s Awa, in specifically noting the place of New Zealand as the location of this Pacific unity and diversity, and inclusive
of Māori, he asserted: ‘It’s obviously like a very big massive village. It’s almost like we’ve got Hawaiki in the middle of Auckland. So it’s how we were before we all came. Except now we got shoes and jeans on, and Gucci glasses’. This recalls Macpherson, who noted the irony in that:

Aotearoa, the last settled of the Polynesian enclaves, may well be the site in which a Pacific identity re-emerges as the differences which stemmed from the group’s separation from one another as a consequence of a thousand or more years of voyaging and settlement are rendered less significant by a new set of common experiences (2001b, p. 80).

8.4 Contextualising the Place of a New Pacific Homeland

Contextualising the discussion thus far asserts that Pacific festivals are spaces through which the dynamic and fluid nature of the Pacific diaspora in New Zealand is most publicly manifested, creating a variety of ways through which participants connect with the idea of Island homelands and/or cultures and, through the practice of tauhi và, (re)establish and (re)affirm sociospatial relationships on a variety of levels. This reinforces the notion that Pacific festivals are sites of collective ritual, where communities congregate in ways and numbers not possible at other times of the year to collectively celebrate themselves, their cultures, their Pacific ‘roots’ and ‘routes’, and their connections through and with one another. This focus on connections to and with notions of Island homelands and Pacific cultures, however, does not adequately account for the place of New Zealand and the feelings expressed by many participants of New Zealand as ‘home’.

Festivals as Territorialising Spaces

The philosophers Deleuze and Guattari assert that music can be seen as a metaphor for the processes by which people territorialise and mark ownership of space; these processes characterised by the use of periodic, repeated and recognisable refrains and rhythms (1987). Utilising these ideas, Duffy surmises that ‘in a similar way that rhythm orders sounds into a musical structure, so mapping space through repeated signs is a means of establishing possession’ (2000, p. 55).

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67 Hawaiki being the mythical homeland from which all Pacific peoples came.
Situating this idea within the site of a festival, Duffy demonstrates how musical performances can be a means of connecting festival participants to notions of place and, in doing so, create a sense of identity. She notes that participating ‘marks out one’s identity’ and ‘opens up a space that reaffirms participants’ membership’ within a particular group (2000, p. 54). Further, festival participants hear performances that are framed by images of the festival, something reinforced in both stage talk and the performances themselves (ibid). Both of these points have clear relevance to Pacific festivals in that participating, as Pacific peoples, marks out one’s identity as a part of the diasporic ‘sea of islands’ and opens up a space that reaffirms their membership in this group. Pacific festivals are sites of an ‘intensification of connections’, particularly the musical and social (Duffy 1999, p. 1), and they achieve this through the practice of tauhi vā, through notions such nostalgia and longing, community, unity, and belonging, notions that speak to being part of the diaspora. Festival performances are likewise framed by images of the Pacific and reinforced through cultural practices such as music and dance, food, and spirituality, as well as through stage talk and decorations. In short, they are the markers of group identity.

Taking this notion further, Duffy argues that as participants move through festivals, they alter festival spaces by recoding them and claiming them through a specific aesthetic, based around the performative elements of the festival (2000, p. 59). For participants, festival spaces become particular places, territorialised, where performers and performances provide the conduit to a relationship to place and a means through which others can identify and locate themselves (ibid, p. 63). In other words, the framing of musical performances with associations to place both situates the music within discourses of identity and belonging, but also alters, through a process of territorialisation, the area in which festivals occur. As already explored, the Pacific festival space provides narratives of identity and belonging, and relationships to place, with regards to Pacific homelands. It is the sense of altering the places in which festivals take place, through a process of territorialisation, that I want to extend to the Pacific festival space and New Zealand places in which they are staged.
The Pacific Territorialisation of New Zealand

Pacific festivals create notions of belonging that relate to a trans-cultural sense of diasporic identity; in other words, as connoting a sense of belonging not only to ancestral Pacific homelands and/or ideas of Pacific cultures, but also to and within New Zealand, and completing a multi-local mapping of place. Conceiving of festival spaces and their repeated annual occurrences as relating to Deleuze and Guattari’s periodic recognisable refrains or Duffy’s repeated signs, Pacific festivals can be seen as territorialising beacons of belonging. They are the most highly visible manifestations of not only New Zealand’s place within the Pacific diaspora, but of the place of the Pacific peoples within New Zealand. As the Pacific diaspora in New Zealand has been transformed from a majority of migrants to one where the majority are New Zealand-born, and as that diaspora has spread across the country, putting down new roots and communities, the festivals that have followed them have altered the places in which they occur. They help to create, reinforce and (re)establish Pacific peoples’ connections to New Zealand, and influence notions and change perceptions of what ‘New Zealand’ and ‘New Zealand-ness’ is.

When Pacific peoples started migrating to New Zealand in large numbers, they moved to a country that was, on the whole, unprepared for their arrival, both in terms of systems designed to assist with successful settlements and in terms of the culture shock experienced by both migrants and hosts (Rolls 2004; Anae et al. 2006; Stevenson and Stevenson 2006, for example). In the time since, it is clear that the situation has changed. While I do not argue that it is festivals that are responsible for this transformation, itself a complex confluence of social forces of which festivals are however a part, I view Pacific festivals and their growth and spread throughout New Zealand as symbolic of this changing landscape. As society has changed, as Pacific peoples have made homes and communities in New Zealand, the festivals have been one of the most significant public ways in which a sense of belonging has been both asserted and celebrated, and recognised.

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68 The notion of ‘New Zealand-ness’, or a New Zealand identity, is problematic and beyond the scope of even a cursory approach here. The struggle for a New Zealand identity, or whether one can logically exist, has been well-documented, and centres around (white, colonial) settler imagery, the place of indigenous Māori, and the multicultural reality of twenty-first century New Zealand (see for example Smith 2003; Skilling 2008).
This public visibility and recognition has influenced and altered areas in which festivals occur, as things Pacific become (an accepted) part of local human geographies and cultural landscapes. This has occurred most of all in Auckland, a process that Anae refers to as a ‘browning’ (2004), and a process that can be seen to varying degrees in many other urban centres, such as Porirua, Wellington, and parts of the central North Island. In creating spaces of Pacific-ness, Pacific festivals thus become highly visible, important and symbolic ways in which Pacific people connect to and create a sense of belonging to those places, and to New Zealand.

For some participants, as a country situated in the Pacific Ocean, New Zealand is intrinsically a Pacific nation. The fact of New Zealand’s indigenous population being of Polynesian origin further reinforces this claim. Moreover, however, participants asserted that the festivals were a way in which their place as part of New Zealand was acknowledged and celebrated by the wider society, and acted as a way to display and educate people about the diversity and uniqueness of Pacific cultures, change perceptions and counter persisting negative stereotypes of Pacific peoples. This essence of acknowledgement and sharing results in a process by which New Zealand is territorialised as ‘home’ and by which Pacific peoples assert not ownership of but of belonging to place. For participants the sense of ‘home’ created was not instead of but rather in addition to, as they expressed a sense that they in fact had two homes, further reinforcing a multi-local notion of belonging.

This process of territorialisation was considered additionally and especially important for young Pacific peoples, whose contemporary urban New Zealand realities are coupled with varying degrees of relationships with Island homelands. The festival provides a space for the acknowledgment of Pacific peoples in New Zealand who do not have close relationships with these homelands, or the ability to speak its language, because it provides multiple avenues through which the notion of belonging can be negotiated, asserted and reaffirmed. This is achieved through the conscious incorporation of a variety of contemporary cultural displays that speak to and of these New Zealand urban realities, allowing for a sense of belonging to be
located that is not confined to only stereotypical conceptions of ‘traditional’ Pacific homes, cultures and peoples. It also expresses, as participants pointed out, that limitations are not created around the types of performance and music that can be performed or that someone can be proficient in purely by virtue of their being a Pacific person. The festival space allows for a reflection of this, by displaying a broad range of musics and performances and providing a platform for young people to participate in a way that reflects them, as opposed to placing boundaries around how they present themselves that cannot be negotiated.69

The process of territorialisation can also be seen in the unique situation of the Pacific diaspora in New Zealand, reflected in notions of unity within diversity. Although notions of pan-Pacific identification have been disseminated within the wider Pacific, the nature of the inter-community relationships that is a characteristic of the particular Pacific communities within New Zealand is a unique reflection and consequence of the post-Second World War migrations and the ongoing impact of these peoples making their homes in New Zealand. The unity within the diversity of Pacific cultures displayed in the festival space and expressed by participants is thus a reflection of this unique situation and history. As VOU’s Sachiko Miller noted, the festival space is extraordinary in that nowhere else do events exist that support and display the range of Pacific cultures as occurs in New Zealand. The only comparable event, on an international scale, is the quadrennial Festival of Pacific Arts, which is both broader in its representation of Pacific cultures and range of events that take place, and limited by its changing location and smaller numbers of people able to attend. New Zealand is therefore significant itself in creating the distinct environment that brought certain Pacific communities together and providing the mediums

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69 Interestingly, this notion was also expressed in the Fijian context, by Sachiko Miller of Fiji-based VOU. For her, the importance of connecting with culture is not a simple act of connecting with the notions of traditional culture, but of connecting and representing a contemporary cultural reality. ‘We’re contemporary urban Fijians’, she told me, ‘none of us live in a village, none of us go fishing everyday, we don’t have a plantation, we live in the city, so it’s not really authentic for us to be doing all traditional dances. For us, that’s not our reality now, but we still have strong links to tradition, you know, all the people in our group, they’re still Fijian, they still have their traditional stories, their traditional heritage, their traditional obligations as a Fijian, but you have to reflect yourself honestly’. For VOU, the way to do this is to reflect both, ‘cos we’re both of those things, we are traditional, and we are contemporary…so it’s an honest reflection of ourselves’. As modern urban Fijians, the creations and performances of VOU reflect that their lives are a mixture of Fijian traditions and the influences from the other cultures that comprise the current day Fiji, which includes contemporary and popular Western cultural elements.
through which space and ideas of belonging have been festivalised and territorialised.

8.5 Weaving Places and Identities Together

Thus far, I have presented two separate and central notions. Firstly, I have shown how Pacific festivals create spaces through which participants connect with notions of Pacific nations as ‘home’, whether literal, imagined, or ancestral, or as the homes from which the cultures that inform their identities originate. Concurrently I have demonstrated that festivals, through a process of territorialisation, create spaces through which participants assert a belonging to place, to New Zealand also as ‘home’. This raises the question of how these two seemingly paradoxical notions interact, and what the resulting effect is on the creation, performance and display of diasporic Pacific identities.

The ‘Here’ and ‘There’ as ‘Mooring Posts’

I propose that these processes – of simultaneously and in multiple ways connecting with Island homelands and asserting a connection to the new New Zealand homeland – represent ‘mooring posts’, positions around which a dual, or multi-local, sense of belonging is created. The idea of mooring posts reflects the nodes of the ‘sea of islands’ through which the Pacific world and diaspora circulate but, more significantly, they represent the idea of stability. In arguing for a view of Pacific festivals as both local manifestations of an historically-based interconnected network of kinship and exchange, as well as visible celebrations of Pacific-ness that have, over time, altered the places in which they occur, the notion of mooring posts creating a multi-local sense of belonging challenges conceptions of diasporic identity as unstable, as belonging to and being at home neither here nor there.

A multi-local sense of belonging represents multiple moorings and being attached to multiple mooring posts allows for positions in relation to those mooring posts to change over time. At particular moments individuals may position themselves closer to one post, at times another, depending on circumstance, something that also reinforces the unfixed and changing nature of identity. It should be pointed out that an assertion of multiple moorings
does not imply that diasporic people sit, attached to and moving between two (or more) places, lost in in-between state. I am not arguing that the diasporic space is a liminal state, an in-between middle ground of transitioning completely from a former state, to a new one. Rather, I believe that the Pacific diasporic space, while remaining characterised by fluidity, circulation and multi-localities, will remain firmly attached to both original and new homelands, because of this fluidity. Therefore, I am speaking metaphorically, suggesting that the Pacific festival space offers symbolic mooring posts around which ideas of identity can be negotiated within a multi-local sense of belonging, ultimately offering a stabilising force for an identity journey often viewed as unstable. This notion supports the concept of ‘polycultural capital’ (Mila-Schaaf 2010) being important in assisting diasporic Pacific peoples in ‘edgewalking’ processes (Tupuola 2004).

**Polycultural Diasporic Identities within the Festival Space**

A diasporic multi-local sense of belonging, rather than creating instability, can be instead viewed as creating powerful and symbolic mooring posts around which multiple possibilities exist for the creation of a plethora of new (urban) Pacific identities. Within the festival space, participants can pick and choose from the variety of influences, whether urban-based, Island-based, New Zealand, Pacific, ‘traditional’, ‘contemporary’, or any combination thereof. Through festivals, Pacific peoples can be influenced by, create, and assert or affirm identities that speak of belonging literally, figuratively, or metaphorically. Indeed, as my Tuvalu village performer demonstrated, the ways in which people connect with notions of ‘home’, homelands, New Zealand and the Pacific, are not simplistic or definitive, but rather complex and individual. For her, being part of Pasifika made her feel connected to Tuvalu, except that this referred to her Tuvaluan community in West Auckland. Tuvalu, the nation, is her father’s home, and the home of her ancestors. The mooring posts of her identity, as a Tuvaluan-Pākehā, are both rooted within New Zealand, the Tuvaluan part of her cultural identity connected to Tuvalu indirectly through West Auckland. In speaking of ‘home’ through Tuvaluan music and dance, she is fact speaking of West Auckland. Tuvalu is thus visceral.
Within festivalised spaces, trans-cultural notions of Pacific cultures are celebrated and affirmed in ways that static museum-displays, rooted in the traditional, cannot. In the sense that festivals are celebratory occasions, these possible identities offered can be seen to be acceptable and condoned representations of what it means to be a Pacific person (in whatever sense that may be claimed). This can be considered especially important for young, New Zealand-born Pacific peoples to counter the narrow or negative portrayals reflected at them through media or perceptions held by educational institutions (Loto et al 2006 and Ferguson et al 2008, respectively). In interviews conducted and conversations held with the organisers of various Pacific festivals, participants placed a clear importance on engaging young Pacific people through a careful balancing of cultural practices that reflect ancestral heritages with those of their predominantly contemporary Western realities. In this sense, festivals are important community empowerment practices, as vehicles for celebrating Pacific homes, New Zealand homes, new Pacific homes in New Zealand, and the evolution of both Pacific and New Zealand cultures.

The multiplicity of identity positions and possibilities reaffirms the notion of fluidity that I have reinforced throughout this chapter. Ultimately, it reflects the impacts and realities of being a diasporic Pacific person within a country governed by notions of biculturalism and situated culturally within a dominant Western European construct. It hints at the process of ‘cultural shifting’ (Tupuola 2004, p. 90), of being able weave between, balance and unify the Pacific and the Western, the collective and the personal, the local, regional and global. Having multiple forms of cultural capital create positions in which diasporic Pacific peoples are able to ‘strongly reap the possible advantages of cross-cultural movement’ (Mila-Schaaf 2010, p. 274). The accumulation of polycultural capital, as Mila-Schaaf concludes, existing in an ‘intercultural in-between’ and not aligning to particular reified notions of Pacific or Other ways of being, creates the best chances of holistic success for diasporic Pacific peoples in New Zealand (2010, p. 274). This is achieved by ‘edgewalking’ (Tupuola 2004), walking across and between worlds, and employing a wealth of polycultural capital to negotiate the complex spaces in which Pacific peoples are situated.
Finally, the entirety of the argument in this chapter, the twin processes of connecting with notions of there, the territorialising of here, and creation of mooring posts, suggests that the Pacific festival space presents the circumstances in which polycultural capital is presented and made ‘up for grabs’, to assist in negotiating the creation and direction of urban diasporic Pacific identities. The importance of finding a place as a Pacific person, as a point of difference, of having a unique perspective from which to stand, of reflecting contemporary urban realities alongside ancestral roots, of knowing who you are and where you are from in order to know where you are going, reflect the ways in which the importance of polycultural capital is reinforced through the festivalisation of Pacific cultures. The traditional is presented alongside the contemporary, the Pacific alongside the Western, each part an integral ingredient in representing, reflecting and being reflective of the totality of diasporic Pacific peoples, their cultures and their identities as they are understood in current-day twenty-first century New Zealand. As spaces in which a multiplicity of identity possibilities and options are negotiated and asserted, Pacific festivals offer mooring posts around which polycultural capital is not only performed, but also shared with and acquired by others. The festival space is thus a primary site in the creation and evolution of diasporic Pacific cultures.

In Context: Why Polycultural Capital is Important
Mila-Schaaf argues for the importance of having polycultural capital in negotiating a place as a Pacific person in New Zealand (2010). This was evident and affirmed throughout the ethnographic experience. Therefore, and as a final example, demonstrating the importance of polycultural capital, of the ability to edgewalk, and the way in which this was highlighted through the festival space, I return one final time, to the field.

During my time working with the Pasifika festivals in both Wellington and Auckland, one of the single most important themes, by virtue of the degree to which it occurred as a source of tension in Wellington, and was evident in the more seamless operations in Auckland, was what in Wellington was called ‘cultural competencies’, and in Auckland ‘community capabilities’. The notion of ‘cultural competencies’, as explained to me, refers to the need for
people organising Pacific festivals to be able to operate within, across and between institutional structures and community expectations. This requires an understanding of both Pacific cultures and communities, and the organisational requirements of running publicly funded events. In short, the possession of polycultural capital and the ability to edgewalk.

In Auckland, with a predominantly Pacific staff that had clearly recognisable polycultural capital, the notion of ‘community capabilities’ was expressed primarily when I raised it in discussions with staff. It was otherwise something I observed in the predominantly smooth execution of the festival and the interactions between the various parties that inhabited and were connected to its operation. In Wellington, tension in the organisation of the festival was clearly evident. This was expressed to me as occurring because the events team, officially in charge of running the festival, contained no Pacific staff members or people who held sufficient amounts of ‘cultural competencies’. They therefore relied on two Pacific staff members to primarily act as the conduit between council, the Pacific Advisory Group and the communities, managing relationships but ultimately having to rely on the events team before decisions could be finalised. The lack of clear direction around who was in charge, and the mis- and cross-communications that eventuated, created tensions at the interface of council and community, tensions that had the potential to disrupt the desired end-result of a successful festival.

The notion of ‘cultural competencies’ was also a theme I identified during the period of data collection completed in 2009. In speaking with the organisers of Pacific festivals across New Zealand, it was clear that they all possessed varying degrees of ‘polycultural capital’ and had the ‘cultural competencies’ required to run such events. The majority of festival organisers work within institutional frameworks, such as the education or health ministries or non-government health providers, or are teachers, and were able to utilise connections, skills and knowledge acquired in these fields to initiate and ultimately establish festivals.
Furthermore, and finally, the Pasifika Festival, viewed as a development tool in chapter five, provides participants with the opportunities to build and develop polycultural capital. This was observed in multiple ways. During ethnographic observations, the idea of development was a conscious process, where festival staff were given opportunities to expand their roles and learn more about the processes involved in running a large-scale festival. Stallholders, performers and village co-ordinators were also included within this focus. Opportunities to share skills in order to allow village co-ordinators to operate their villages more efficiently and autonomously were being identified, and up-and-coming performers were given valuable opportunities to participate in workshops and gain professional performance experience. Moreover, as many participants highlighted, the festival provided the means for promotion and building a public profile.

Conclusion
This final discussion chapter has explored the intertwined concepts of place and identity for diasporic Pacific peoples, and how these relate to the festival space. This has revolved around two central themes. The first is the place of Pacific homelands and cultures, which, for participants, create differing notions of ‘home’. For migrants, this is a home remembered, either historically or from a more recent distance. For the more populous New Zealand-born group, this can represent a home imagined, influenced by the degree to which relationships with those homelands exist. More strongly expressed, Pacific homelands represent the roots of their Pacific culture, something central in the creation of their identities. The importance of these connections, and the performance of these connections, are seen in the notions that Pacific cultures represent a point of difference within the New Zealand nation, and also that ‘where you’re from’ is central in knowing ‘who you are’, and ‘where you’re going’. The place of Pacific cultures and homelands is contextualised within Hau’ofa’s conception of the Pacific diaspora as a ‘sea of islands’. Pacific festivals represent the most visible manifestations of New Zealand’s place within this interconnected kinship network. The spread of Pacific festivals across New Zealand shows this network extending domestically, as Pacific communities have settled and become established, creating new connections and nodes, outposts of diasporic Pacific-ness. This
conception emphasises fluidity, circulation and exchange, something that is characterised by the variety of diasporic positions within Pacific communities. These connections, and how the ‘sea of islands’ remains connected across vast distances, can be understood within the practice of tauhi vā, the maintenance of socio-cultural relations through time and space, something that is visible and practiced within the festival space.

The second central theme centred on the place of New Zealand. New Zealand is a Pacific nation and the festival space celebrates and affirms the place of diasporic Pacific peoples and cultures within it. This creates in participants a sense that New Zealand is also ‘home’. The specific place of New Zealand in the creation of diasporic Pacific communities was also noted, something that therefore also creates the unique situation in which Pacific festivals began and have evolved. This place of New Zealand is contextualised within Duffy’s notion of festivals as territorialising spaces. The growth and spread of Pacific festivals across New Zealand mirrors the spread of diasporic communities. Festivals recode and alter spaces into particular Pacific places, territorialising and changing the places in which they occur. Festivals have thus become visible beacons of belonging, assertions of place within the New Zealand nation. The process of territorialisation is especially important in creating notions of belonging for the new generations of urban Pacific peoples, for whom connections with Pacific homelands may be more imagined that physically possible.

Finally, these two themes were woven together. In doing so, the notion that Pacific festivals create ‘mooring posts’, around which diasporic Pacific identities can be created, negotiated and asserted, was put forward. These mooring posts are rooted in various nodes throughout the ‘sea of islands’, in the Pacific and within New Zealand, and, in offering a plethora or identity possibilities, challenge the notion that diasporic identities are unstable, belonging neither here nor there. The Pacific festival space thus allows for the performance, accumulation and affirmation of polycultural capital, a crucial process in successfully negotiating place for diasporic Pacific peoples in current-day New Zealand.
Conclusion

Diasporic Flow and Identity within a ‘Sea of Islands’

This research began with a question: Do Pacific festivals reflect the ways in which the Pacific diaspora is situated, imagined, and has evolved in New Zealand, and how are music and musical performances implicated in these processes? For diasporic peoples, music and the arts in general ‘epitomise the process of cultural translation, making sense of the circumstances and experiences of life’ and creating ways that allows these new ideas to be communicated (Mallon and Pereira 2002b, p. 7). Furthermore, music provides a framework for the life of festivals, and for the transmission of its diverse meanings and experiences (Harnish 2006, p. 216). The Pacific festival space and its music performances therefore provide ideal sites and mediums through which we can understand how the Pacific diaspora is imagined and constructed in its New Zealand context, how Pacific cultures and identities have changed and continue to evolve, and the influence this has had on the New Zealand nation.

I first set out to uncover and document the history and development of Pacific festivals in New Zealand. By situating this alongside the already-documented history and evolution of the Pacific diaspora, I investigated how one can be seen as a reflection of the other. In addition to uncovering the meanings of Pacific festivals, by focusing on music within the festivalised space, I wanted to uncover what music means and communicates, and how it is implicated in processes of diasporic space and identity construction. Although this is a work grounded in the discipline and teachings of ethnomusicology, I drew on a diverse range of theories and theoretical areas: theories of diaspora, influenced especially by Pacific scholars, and theories of festivals and festivity, some originating from ethnomusicology, some anthropology, and one pertinent theory of music and festivals grounded in human geography. By drawing these areas together in the construction of a
new argument and new theory, this research extends the application of these ideas into the ethnomusicological space.

The Pacific Diaspora and the Festivalisation of Pacific Cultures

Pacific peoples began to migrate to New Zealand in large numbers from the 1960s onwards. With a long history of contact and constitutional arrangements between New Zealand and many other Pacific nations, and with small numbers of prior migration, it was to the Pacific that the New Zealand government turned when post-Second World War economic diversification resulted in labour shortages. In the Pacific, a number of factors also combined to push people away from their homelands (Lay 1996; Chappell 1999), creating the common ‘push-pull’ factors of the migration experience (Petersen 1958). As immigrants and a minority in a new country where laws, customs and institutions were geared toward the majority, Pacific cultures were initially a set of attributes performed privately (Moyle 2002, p. 103). Accordingly, performances of song and dance tended to be staged for the benefit of the respective communities and only rarely attracted wider attention.

By the time the central festival studied here began, in 1993, this was beginning to change, and the influence and representation of Pacific people and cultures grew in significance throughout the 1990s. Along with sport (Thomas and Dyall 1999, Te’evale 2001, Grainger 2006; Schaaf 2006) and other art forms (Mallon and Pereira 2002a), music represents a key area in which these changes were visible (Spoonley 2001). Before the 1980s, few Pacific musicians were visible outside of the Pacific communities. Some influential and groundbreaking examples emerged in the 1980s and early 1990s, and tentative steps were taken in combining Western-derived music styles with Pacific influences. However, as iconic singer Annie Crummer has noted of those days, ‘we really struggled to get the colour of our sound to be…accepted. It was quite a struggle’ (quoted in Tagata Pasifika 2002a). It was from the mid-1990s that the popular music created by new generations of New Zealand-raised Pacific peoples became ‘vibrant and evolving facets of Pacific art’ (Zemke-White 2002, p. 117). The growth of Pacific festivals across New
Zealand mirror and reflect these broader socio-cultural and demographic changes.

The inaugural Polynesian Festival of 1972 is the earliest example of the festivalisation of Pacific cultures in New Zealand, when the Pacific diaspora was in its infancy. This festivalised display was, however, largely tokenistic, and was subsumed by the fact that the focus of the festival was primarily on Māori cultural performance. The beginning of the schools-driven Polyfest in 1976 represents the first crucial moment in the history of Pacific festivals. Initiating a model of festivalisation that has been replicated in every major urban centre where significant enough numbers of Pacific peoples reside, it also represented the first festival where the music and dance of migrant Pacific cultures was highlighted and placed equally alongside the indigenous Māori, a reflection of the close social, historical, and cultural ties, and position within the New Zealand state, that these communities shared.

In the early 1980s, a new type of Pacific festival began, in Wellington. As part of the city council’s Summer City programme, these were highly public events, and came to encompass what have become familiar elements of Pasifika festivals: performances as a central focus, surrounded by food and art and craft stalls, displays, workshops and sports events. The last of these festivals was held in 1990. The following year, the seeds of what became the Pasifika Festival were planted. The South Pacific Islands Development Agency was formed to implement Roy Vaughan’s original idea and see it come to fruition, which they did, in partnership with the Auckland City Council, in 1993. It is since this time that the majority of Pacific festivals now in existence began, including two – Wellington’s Tu Fa’atasi Festival and West Auckland’s Pacifica Living Arts Festival – that began in 1994 as a direct response to Pasifika. Some of these follow the Pasifika model, more are school-driven Polyfests.

The Pasifika Festival is celebrated as the biggest Pacific festival in the world, regularly attracting upwards of 200,000 attendees, and encompassing ten villages, twelve stages, and over 350 stalls. No other Pacific festival, on a global scale, approaches its colossal size. This makes it a central object of
focus in a study that seeks to understand Pacific festivals as a cultural phenomenon. At the time of beginning this research, the most recent Pacific festival to be initiated was Wellington’s Positively Pasifika Festival, which was first held in February 2008. Studying this event presented an opportunity to study a festival in its early years of development, as a comparison to one approaching the beginning of its third decade, and to do so at another key site in the production of the Pacific diaspora in New Zealand.

I argued in chapter three that there are several, interconnected reasons that explain the proliferation of Pacific festivals since the Pasifika Festival began in 1993, and especially in the first decade of the twenty-first century. A socio-cultural and political rendering of recent New Zealand history shows that a number of social, economic and political changes from the mid-1970s to the early-1990s in particular, adversely affected the position of Pacific peoples. Pertinent examples of this history include the severe recession of the 1970s that led to the infamous Dawn Raids; the impact of Rogernomics in the 1980s, where the deregulation of the New Zealand economy saw industries in which Pacific peoples were concentrated severely contract, creating widespread unemployment at the same time as the size of government was also reduced and many services previously provided became user-pays; and compounded by the recession of the early 1990s, which led to further policy changes in areas such as state housing, social welfare and education. By the early 1990s, the marginalisation of Pacific peoples and communities reached a point at which a response was needed.

The Pasifika Festival, and subsequent Pacific festivals, was part of this response. By this time, the first generations of New Zealand-born and/or raised Pacific peoples were coming of age. With different educations, up-bringings and identities than those of their migrant parents, these new generations had different outlooks and expectations. A growing number began to attain positions in which they could influence the direction of policy and support with respect to Pacific communities. This highlights the important themes of key people, networks and social agencies, themes that also arose during the period of fieldwork. Key interconnected networks of people provided much impetus towards festivalisation, creating the
foundations from which other festivals (and arts and cultural developments) have evolved. In addition, a wide range of agencies, institutions, and Government and non-Government organisations became involved with festivals, using them as opportunities to engage with Pacific communities. In return festivals found support in a range of ways, through stallholder fees and general sponsorship that provided crucial assistance, and by enlarging the scope of offerings within the festival space to beyond only consumables, and into services. The incorporation of key people within institutional frameworks, social agencies, and the support of Pacific communities means that, organisationally and in issues of control, Pacific festivals can be seen as examples of neither top-down nor bottom-up approaches. They are, in reality, a carefully balanced combination, where festivals rely equally on both council and institutional support as well as the support of the communities.

At the same time as Pacific peoples were beginning to advance into positions of influence, others were beginning to assert and politicise Pacific identities publicly; Pacific peoples and cultures were becoming more visible, and Pacific arts experienced a ‘renaissance’, a coming-of-age. In sports, in arts, in popular music. Part of this flourishing came in the form of festivals and developments were mutually beneficial. The growth of festivals provided outlets for the development, display, and sale of arts and crafts, and captive audiences for a range of musical performances. At the same time, the development of arts and artists, and the growing popularity of Pacific musicians in the popular music industry, provided increasing content for the Pacific festival space.

In a broader context, international societal changes were also influential. As I outlined, there has been a general move towards festivalisation across the world since the end of the Second World War, and festivals have come to be seen to serve a range of political, economic and social functions (Gibson and Connell 2005; Ryan 2006). The festivalisation of Pacific cultures can be situated within this broader, global festivalisation. In addition, the politicisation and assertion of the rights of indigenous and diasporic communities around the world, of the place of their identities and cultures, influenced developments in New Zealand. Progress in the recognition and
value of Māori, and the so-called ‘Māori renaissance’ of the 1980s, paved the way for the same to happen with respect to diasporic Pacific communities.

I have shown that the growth and spread of Pacific festivals provides a way of viewing and understanding how the Pacific diaspora has been transformed from a small group of migrant communities in specific locations, to a large group of distinctly heterogeneous communities in many locations, where the majority are now born and raised in New Zealand. The first festivals started where the largest communities resided – Auckland, and Wellington. As the communities spread, grew in size, and became entrenched in other locations, so the initiation of further festivals followed them. Furthermore, the type and content of festivals tell us about how the Pacific diaspora has evolved.

The first festivals established were Polyfests, driven by schools and focused on the transmission of Pacific cultural performance and traditions to young Pacific peoples. The Pacific festivals of the 1980s, in Wellington, provided the blueprint for what would be expanded exponentially when the Pasifika Festival started in 1993: mixing cultural traditions with contemporary performances. A key focus of the Pasifika Festival, as Roy Vaughan pointed out, was that it allowed for cultural evolution, showing how Pacific cultures were being adapted to and influenced by the New Zealand environment (as well as reflecting global cultural influences). At the 2010 Pasifika Festival, I met Darryl Thompson, a member of seminal New Zealand rap group the Upper Hutt Posse, who asserted that the festival became a reflection of cultural change. A part of Pasifika when it first started, he told me that he became involved because he wanted to bring the music and fashion he was seeing, being developed within communities, to a wider audience. He told me there was nothing at the time in an urban setting for urban Pacific people and so, for him, Pasifika was a response to that.

**Inside the Festival Space**

Interviewing key people involved in the organisation of festivals, and festival performers, uncovered several layers of meaning. After a careful analysis of these interviews, and incorporating ethnographic observations, these themes centred around four central issues that constitute the four discussion chapters
of the second half of this thesis. These four issues combine to create a model for understanding the Pacific festival space that I outlined at the head of this work (see figure 1, p. 6). The issue of logistics, leadership and development provide the structural base of Pacific festivals, while notions of community, performances and space, and place and identity, form an overlapping and interconnected trio of foreground, or surface-level overarching themes.

**Logistics, Leadership and Development**

In chapter five, I compared the logistical differences between Auckland’s Pasifika Festival and Wellington’s Positively Pasifika Festival. The smaller and newer festival in Wellington operates in a way that is reminiscent of the ways in which Auckland’s Pasifika was run in its early years: the not inconsequential funding provided by the council nonetheless requires that networks are utilised for in-kind support, organisers maintain their ‘day jobs’ while preparing for the festival, and roles are less clearly defined, meaning issues that arise are shared and worked through in a collective manner. In Auckland, a now dedicated team work solely on Pasifika. Although a collective working environment remains, the different positions – such as artistic co-ordinator, volunteer co-ordinator, stalls co-ordinator – are clearly defined. This reflects the now huge size of the festival operation and the professional practices that were incorporated from 1997, when the festival became part of a dedicated events team. Part of these practices includes market-like remuneration, especially for performers, removing, or at least reducing, the unsustainable practice of using networks to ask for favours.

The central themes to emerge form the fieldwork experience were the importance of organisers having networks in which to facilitate the organisation of festivals, and ‘cultural competencies’, the ability to operate simultaneously in institutional environments while working with community groups, balancing the requirements of councils with the needs and expectations of Pacific communities and working with them in ways that are sensitive to cultural difference. It is seen as a ‘must have’ that organisers of festivals have the cultural competencies required to work with, and connections and networks into, Pacific communities. Ideally they come from those communities. Furthermore, communities must be involved in the
process of organising and staging the festivals. Alienation from these processes causes tension that can lead to disillusionment and ultimately the withdrawal of support. The Pasifika Festival underwent an especially pronounced transformation in 1997, when it was incorporated into a specialised events team after a centralisation process saw the closure of regional offices. This, alongside the gradual takeover of the festival’s operation by the council, rightly or wrongly, fuelled sentiment that the festival had been taken away from the communities. Subsequent waves of change by successive festival directors have taken steps to address these concerns, yet the perception of council control remains. The perception of engagement and value placed on input is of vital and symbolic importance.

Alongside the importance of having community involvement, as current Pasifika Festival director Ole Maiava has made a key goal, festivals can also be seen as vehicles for development. This has specific contextual applications, such as involving community elders in initiating a process of knowledge transmission or providing avenues for community groups to develop income or fundraising streams, as well as more general development strategies. These include the development of staff and volunteers in event production and management, personal skill development for others involved, such as village co-ordinators, and developing performers through professional performance experiences, opportunities for promotion and profile building, and incorporating other industry groups in the provision of workshops. As demonstrated, many performers and village co-ordinators also shared the view that Pasifika presented a range of opportunities for development.

**Festival Performances and Space**

Chapter six outlined how the Pacific festival space and musical performances within it influence and change the nature of each other. The site of a festival is not a space waiting to be filled, it is already in the process of becoming, and affects the music that is thereafter produced: ‘the material spaces of music – their fabric, their economy, their sociality – are also what music is’ (Wood et al. 2007, pp. 871-872). Notions of space provide a way of looking at music within the specific festival context and understanding that festival spaces change the perception and meaning of performances. I suggested that Pacific
festivals create spaces in which performances are framed as ‘Pacific’, seen as examples of Pacific peoples and cultures as they are situated in twenty-first century New Zealand. This creates a medium for challenging perceptions of what this means and provides spaces in which what constitutes Pacific music and performance can be (re)negotiated. Performing within a space constructed as a Pacific festival creates the perception that performances carry more meaning and importance, and are representative of and speak to Pacific peoples and cultures. This in turn can change the content of festival performances, where they are altered and constructed to meet the demands of the intergenerational Pacific festival audience, or for specific cultural contexts. At the same time, performances festivalise and Pacific-ise the festival space, assisting in the process of transforming bounded geographies into festivals, into festivalised spaces. As an essential element of festivals, performances provide the sonic markers of festivals and festivity, indicating to those within its audible landscape that the collective ritual of festivals is occurring. In this respect, as Harnish asserts, content, context, and function synergise to create musical meanings (2006, p. 121).

Festival performances communicate. I demonstrated that they communicate literally, disseminating stories and histories of Pacific cultures, and that they communicate figuratively, conveying to audiences the otherwise indefinable concept of ‘culture’. Festival performances are viewed through the categories of traditional and contemporary and, I showed, each functions in different and distinct ways. Contemporary, meaning non-Pacific originated and generally popular music styles, or hybrids, containing elements of traditional musics, are important in reflecting the reality of twenty-first century Pacific peoples in New Zealand. Contemporary performances are seen as particularly vital in meeting the needs of New Zealand-born Pacific peoples, reflecting their cultural realities. This reflects Clifford’s assertion that diasporic cultural forms teach us that cultures are not preserved by being protected from ‘mixing’, but continue to exist as a product of such mixing (1994, p. 323). In this respect, cultures and identities are constantly being remade. Alongside this cultural mixing, Pacific peoples’ contemporary cultural realities are also represented by the place of traditional performances.
I argued against notions of ‘staged authenticity’ (MacCannell 1973), where festival and touristic performances are seen as staged purely for the benefit of cultural tourists. Participants’ reflections showed that traditional performances serve contemporaneous functions; they are a part of repertoires that remains widely performed within communities and therefore also reflect the reality of twenty-first century Pacific communities in New Zealand. I contextualised this by employing the Pacific conception of time as circular (Thaman 2002; Hau'ofa 2008), the idea that the past is not fixed and continually recedes into the past, but stands before us, leading into the future. Performances at Pacific festivals are sites where the continued importance and presence of ancestry is balanced with contemporaneous situations. Traditional musics provide contemporaneous displays of Pacific cultures. They are not re-creations and re-presentations of traditions that are static, fixed or bound. They can be performances rooted in other times, but they are routed through the contemporary New Zealand context to provide new meanings and understandings of Pacific cultures. New songs and dances in traditional styles, sometimes created especially, exist alongside those written in other times, and mix with performances of hip hop dancing, rap, reggae, and other contemporary styles, to create the totality of diasporic Pacific cultural performance.

**Festivals and Community**
In chapter seven I outlined how notions of community and communities are manifested within the Pacific festival space. Here the role of families and churches are important considerations. Pacific families are intergenerational, and move intergenerationally. The design of the Pacific festival space reflects this by providing for the range of ages present. The role of and respect conferred upon community elders means they are a prominent consideration in the staging and programme of events. Likewise, the central role of churches in Pacific communities means that they continue to act as a vital way in which information is disseminated and in which festival participants are sourced.

For participants, the Pacific festival space acts as the impetus that brings communities together. It creates feelings of community cohesion and, by
incorporating community members in a diasporic sense, strengthens connections across diasporic distance. It is seen as an opportunity for people to ‘give back’ to their communities. Ideas of community were expressed in the themes of unity, diversity and unity from diversity. The Pacific festival space creates a sense of unity on two levels: unity in a pan-Pacific and diasporic context, and unity within specific Pacific communities. This feeling of unity among Pacific communities reflects a wider sense of commonality that exists outside the festival space. The idea of unity is supplemented by the notion of diversity. Many participants described how the festival space highlights the distinctiveness and unique qualities of and within Pacific communities, something especially important for the smaller communities, whose cultural practices are often rendered invisible by the more dominant and larger Pacific groups. This sense of diversity, in turn, reaffirms the sense of unity. In addition, the sense of diasporic community has come to value and place the culturally and historically related indigenous Māori within conceptions of ‘the Pacific’.

I proposed that the way in which the Pacific festival space brings communities together, creating community cohesion and unity, positions Pacific festivals as modern-day collective rituals (Turner 1982; Cooley 2005). Further, I employed the concept of festivals as ‘contact zones’ (Bendrups 2008) to explain the variety of community parties interacting within the festival space. This accounts for both the multiple layers of display, and recognises that festivals can be just as meaningful for insider participants as it is for outsiders. To account for the specific construction of the Pacific diaspora in New Zealand, I extended to five the number of primary contact parties present in the Pacific festival space. This allows for a differentiation between intra-community and intra-diasporic contact within the New Zealand-based Pacific communities, intra-diasporic more broadly, and then intra-national and international contact.

Conceptualising Pacific festival spaces as sites of collective ritual and multifaceted contact zones draws attention to the interactions that take place within and between communities. I proposed that the practice of tauhi vā (Ka’ili 2005), alongside a view of the Pacific diaspora as an interconnected
kinship network (Hau’ofa 1994), provides an approach to understanding these. Viewing festival spaces as sites where socio-spatial relationships are created, maintained and (re)affirmed, explains not only the immediate community interactions but helps to situate them within a broader diasporic context. This highlights how relationships traverse the vast distances between temporal and spatial diasporic nodes, remaining powerful connections in the present. Music and festival performances, alongside other festival elements, provide the environment in which these processes occur.

**Festivals, Place and Identity**

Acknowledging that a range of arguments can be made about the purpose, effectiveness, and politics of festivalisation, this research shows that the diasporic festival space represents an important site of negotiation, of finding a place, balancing the ongoing connections to homelands with relationships to new adopted homelands, and negotiating evolving and changing identities. Clifford (1994 p. 310) states that the sense of connection, of diaspora to ‘home’, must be strong enough to resist erasure through the normalising process of forgetting, assimilating, and distancing. The Pacific festival space provides a way in which this is achieved, in which these bonds and connections are performed and maintained.

Hau’ofa argues that the Pacific diaspora is an interconnected ‘sea of islands’, an historically-based kinship network characterised by the circulation of people, culture, goods and trade (1994). In the final chapter, I demonstrated that Pacific festivals can be seen as a manifestation of this concept, representing the central place of New Zealand within the Pacific diaspora. New Zealand represents the most significant node outside the central rim Pacific nations through which the ‘endless circulation’ of Hau’ofa’s ‘sea of islands’ takes place. Auckland acts as the central conduit through which this circulation extends to the other ‘nodes’ in New Zealand, in which pockets of the diaspora reside and in which festivals have been established. Pacific festivals are the most highly visible and public way in which this manifestation is recognised and celebrated. Supporting this is the notion of tauhi vā (Ka’ili 2005), where socio-cultural relationships that connect diasporic communities are fostered and nurtured through the festival space.
For participants, festival spaces provide the means through which connections with Pacific cultures and homelands, real or imagined, are created and maintained, asserted and celebrated. These connections expand across and traverse generations, diaspora, communities and kin. For migrants, the festival space (and the musical performances within it) acts as a conduit through which homelands are remembered and (re)created. This also occurs for New Zealand-born and/or raised Pacific peoples, especially where relationships with Island homelands exist. Moreover though, the festival acts as a medium through which connections with Pacific cultures are realised. The importance of these connections, in placing value on and creating Pacific identities, are seen as crucial, especially for young Pacific people finding a sense of place; the notion that strong roots create strong routes (Diaz and Kauanui 2001). As so many participants noted, ‘you have to know where you’re from, to know where you’re going’.

In addition to Island homelands, Pacific festivals also create notions of ‘home’ and belonging within New Zealand. Participants noted that the Pacific festival space celebrates and affirms the place of diasporic Pacific peoples and cultures as part of New Zealand. I outlined how this occurs through a process of territorialisation, and festivals as territorialising spaces (Duffy 1999a, 2000). As beacons of belonging, the growth and spread of Pacific festivals across New Zealand mirrors the spread of diasporic communities, recoding and altering the places in which they take place, transforming the notion of New Zealand as a Pacific nation and asserting and reaffirming a sense of belonging. The incorporation and balance of contemporary cultural displays is crucial in this process. The specific place of New Zealand in the creation of diasporic Pacific communities was also noted; the fact that New Zealand has created the unique demographics and social and cultural histories in which Pacific festivals begun and have evolved.

In drawing these ideas of connections and territorialisation together, I finally arrived at diasporic identity. Pacific festivals are spaces of multi-local and multi-directional belonging. In creating multiple senses of home, of connections to both Island homelands and New Zealand, highlighting circulation, change, roots and routes, diasporic flow, I suggested that Pacific
festivals contain ‘mooring posts’ around which new diasporic Pacific identities are created, negotiated and asserted. These mooring posts offer a plethora of identity possibilities, rooted in various nodes throughout the diaspora, in the Pacific and within New Zealand, and challenge the notion that diasporic identities are unstable and represent a belonging to neither here nor there. Within the festival space, musical performances interlock with other aspects of material culture, the objects of celebration and ritual (Turner 1982), to create the ‘multimedial’ experience and ‘symbolic packaging’ that becomes the ‘force for realising personal and collective identities’ (Harnish 2006, p. 163). In highlighting the importance of ‘polycultural capital’ (Mila-Schaaf 2010) in successfully negotiating and travelling within multiple worlds, and completing ‘identity journeys’ (Anae 1998), the Pacific festival space thus allows for the performance, assertion and affirmation of polycultural diasporic Pacific identities.

**Limitations Revisited and Further Research**

During the course of conducting this research, several areas for further research became apparent. At a number of festivals I visited, the playful blurring of gender representations and the growing visibility of *fa’aafafine* performers was a striking development. While conducting interviews with participants for whom English was a second language, it struck me that different meanings and interpretations could arise if research was conducted in native languages, by truly ‘insider’ researchers, or if the research concentrated on particular Pacific communities rather than employing the overarching Pacific umbrella. And, at times, I found myself pondering questions that would be answered through detailed research undertaken from a tourism and economics, or community development perspective. These reflections all provide avenues for future research focusing on Pacific festivals.

At the outset of this work, I noted the research limitations. I noted that the ethnographic perspective was one informed by the voices of people in positions of authority within the organisation of Pacific festivals, by culture bearers and community leaders, and by performers. I also stated that,
although rooted in ethnomusicology, it was not an attempt to analyse the performance of Pacific musics within the festival space.

In addition to the areas noted above, these limitations also provide scope for future research. A more detailed analysis of festival performances may uncover further understandings and new insights into how the Pacific diaspora is constructed and imagined in New Zealand. The sheer range of musics performed at the Pasifika Festival make this a sizeable task. Focusing on particular stages or villages, therefore, may prove both more easily achievable as well as more revealing, describing how particular Pacific communities mediate performing notions of their culture, or how general stages attempt to stage ‘the Pacific’. In addition there are now a number of Island-specific festivals held, offering other sites of festivalisation that, given their nationalistic nature, likely carry significantly different meanings. Of particular interest, I noted that there are two Fiji-specific festivals held in Auckland. One is organised by the Indian community-oriented Radio Tarana, the other by the Fiji Association. How do these two events differ, and how is ethnicity implicated?

Other voices, creating different ethnographic perspectives from within the festival space, may also prove revelatory. How do festival-goers from within the Pacific communities perceive and understand the festival space? Why do they attend? How do non-Pacific festival-goers negotiate meaning; why do they attend? How do Māori perceive their place within the Pacific diaspora and the notion of Pacific festivals? What motivates stallholders to participate; are there altruistic reasons, or are they purely economic? How do all of these contact parties perceive and interact with music in the festival space? As I noted in my introduction, ethnomusicological research focusing on festivals in New Zealand, Pacific or otherwise, represents a small body of work. Additions to these studies are therefore warmly welcomed.

**In Conclusion**
The ongoing connections to Island homelands and to New Zealand help to create the diasporic condition of Pacific peoples in New Zealand. Diasporic consciousness is both positively and negatively constructed; it is a sense of
feeling global, of feeling a connection and attachment to elsewhere, a different vision, a different temporality (Clifford 1994, pp. 311-312). It is also defined by the challenges and experiences of adopted homelands, of economic and social marginalisation, of cultural adaptation, evolution and change. The Pacific communities of New Zealand have transitioned, or remain transitioning, from Island-based identities to dynamic, fluid, multi-local identities that traverse between interconnected diasporic spaces in the ‘sea of islands’. This fluidity and diasporic flow characterises the Pacific festival space.

In trying to find an appropriate way to close this work, to summarise a three-year journey, it seems appropriate, fitting, to return to the point where I began. The Pacific festival space is a dynamic and evolving space, and it does reflect the fluid and evolving nature of the Pacific diaspora and communities in New Zealand. Their evolution and growth reflects how the diaspora has been transformed from small communities of migrants into large and vital communities in imagining the New Zealand ethnoscape. Music and musical performances within the Pacific festival space are central to understanding this change. An evolving mixture of traditional and contemporary musics fill the sonic boundaries of collective ritual as our diasporic Pacific communities continue to celebrate and negotiate ideas of place, connectivity, community and identity.


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