

Kīngitanga Day

Thursday 8 September 2016



Kava and Maaori: New drug fashion or re-engagement with ‘kawa’?

Apo Aporosa (PhD), Research Fellow (Anthropology/Psychology)



Jerome (Waikato-Tainui) drinking kava at my home

KAVA: *yagona*, *sakau*, *'ava*, *'awa* (*Piper Mythisticum*)



*Kawakawa (Piper
Excelsum)*



KAVA: *yagona*, *sakau*, *'ava*, *'awa* (*Piper Mythisticum*)



The outer roots are located and the kava plant is carefully removed from the earth and then washed.

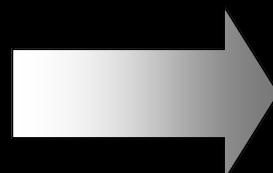




Balick, M. J. (2009). *Ethnobotany of Pohnpei: Plants, people, and island culture*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press in association with The New York Botanical Garden.



The roots (*waka*) are dried...



... pounded
into
powder...

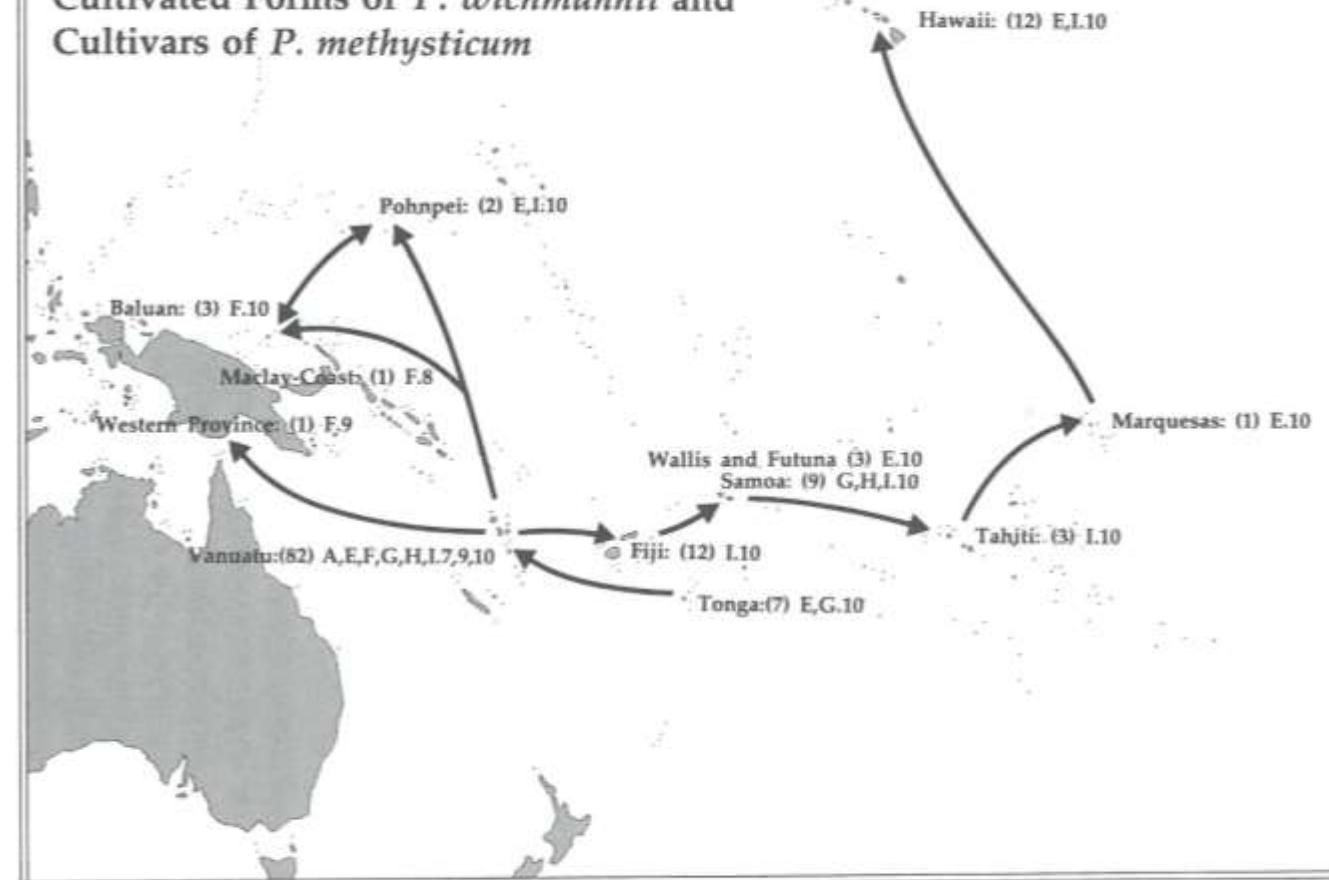


... then mixed
with water.



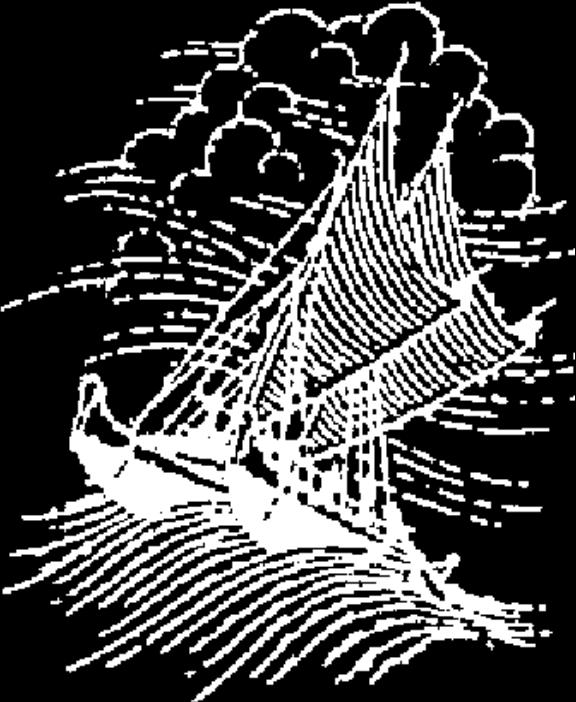
(Photos: Payson, 2008)

Distribution of Morphotypes, Chemotypes and Zymotypes of Cultivated Forms of *P. wichmannii* and Cultivars of *P. methysticum*



Map 4. Distribution pathways of kava, derived from zymotypic evidence. The numbers in parentheses are the number of morphotypes found, the letters indicate chemotype groups, and the numbers following the letters indicate zymotypes.

Lebot, V., Merlin, M., & Lindstrom, L. (1997). *Kava, the Pacific elixir: The definitive guide to its ethnobotany, history and chemistry*. Vermont: Healing Arts Press. (p.52)



“Early Pacific Islanders considered kava a desirable and tradeable commodity. It had to be traded because, lacking flowers and seeds, it cannot reproduce naturally... Well cut and wrapped fresh kava branches can be planted after sea voyages of up to two weeks... Thus, we can attribute the entire distribution of drinkable kava across the Pacific to the earlier maritime explorers of the region, long before the late arrival of European explorers.”

Huffman, K. (2012). Kava: A Pacific Elixir. *MUSE (Journal of the Sydney University Museums)*(1), 24-25. (p.25)

MANA



MANA



...kava plays a unique role as a conduit through which *mana* is ingested and then suffused into a situation, event or third party...

MANA



Kava presentation to the crew of *Uto ni Yalo* (Fijian traditional voyaging waka) to protect their upcoming voyage. (Photographer unknown)

MANA



Kava ceremony to affirm Ratu Peni Raiyani's (Ben Ryan, coach, Fiji Rugby 7's) new chiefly title following Olympic Games.

(Source: FijiVillage, 29 Aug. 2016)

MANA



At home in Kadavu, Fiji, with the *whaanau*: My nephew Sivorosi Junior serving kava to his great grandfather Sivorosi Senior, the Tui Rauni.

MANA



We believe kava is both a
possessant and a *transferant*
of mana.

MANA



So'otaga (welcoming ceremony) by the *Waikato University Samoan Students Association*, at the University here last week. (Source: Aporosa)

MANA



So'otaga

Poowhiri for new students and their
whaanau, The University of Waikato.
(Source: UoW, 2012)

MANA



This notion of power, efficacy and action of *mana* through kava has led to its use in almost every ceremony and practice from birth to death.

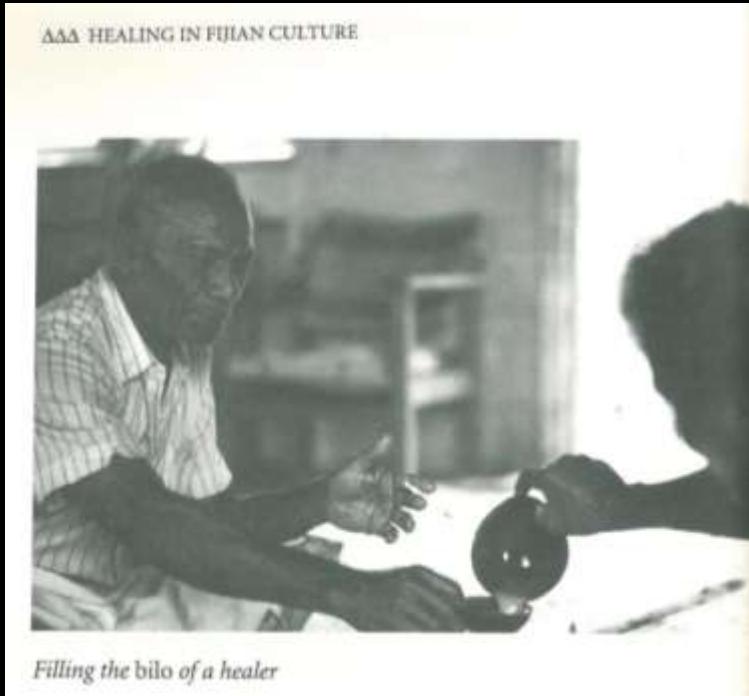
(Image author: Unknown)

| PLACE | SYMPTOM | MEDICATION | SOURCE |
|-----------------|--|---|---|
| Tubuai | inflammation of the genito-urinary system | maceration of young kava shoots, orally | (Aitken, 1930-86) |
| Pacific Islands | gonorrhoea and chronic cystitis | the drink, orally | (Steinmetz, 1960-41) |
| Hawaii | difficulties in urinating | the rhizome | (Handy <i>et al.</i> , 1934-20) (Titcomb, 1948-126) |
| * | irritation of the genito-urinary system | the rhizome | (Handy <i>et al.</i> , 1940-204) |
| * | feminine puberty syndromes, weakness | drinking masticated kava | (Titcomb, 1948-126) |
| " | menstrual problems, dysmenorrhea | kava-based medication | (Handy <i>et al.</i> , 1934-20) |
| * | painful migraine headache (related to women's sicknesses according to Zepernick) | drinking masticated kava | (Titcomb, 1948-126) |
| * | vaginal prolapsus | maceration of kava | (Titcomb, 1948-126) |
| * | to provoke an abortion | kava leaves in situ | (Handy <i>et al.</i> , 1934-20) |
| " | headaches | masticated kava as a drink or masticated kava as such | (Handy <i>et al.</i> , 1934-20) (Handy, 1940-204) (Titcomb, 1948-126) |

Detailed table of illnesses/symptoms and the appropriate kava preparation method

Lebot, V., & Cabalion, P. (1988). *Kavas of Vanuatu: Cultivars of Piper methysticum Frost* (Vol. Technical Paper No.195). Noumea: South Pacific Commission. (p.23-9).

MANA

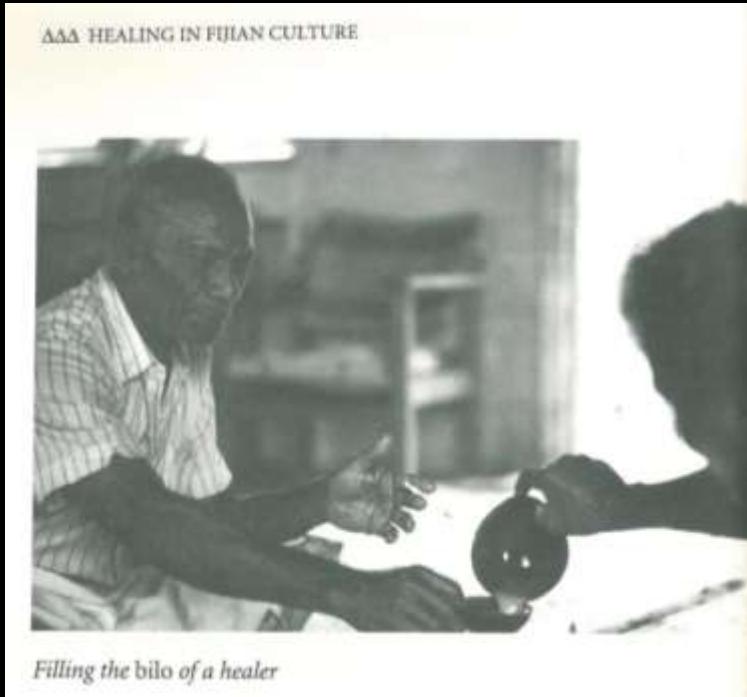


(Katz, 1993:56)

... the kava “bring[s] the healing *mana* to the work ... it is in the healer’s acceptance of the kava that the healing itself is accomplished. In that moment, *mana* is said to become available, allowing accurate diagnosis.”

Katz, R. (1993). *The straight path: A story of healing and transformation in Fiji.*
Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley. (pp.54-4).

MANA



(Katz, 1993:56)

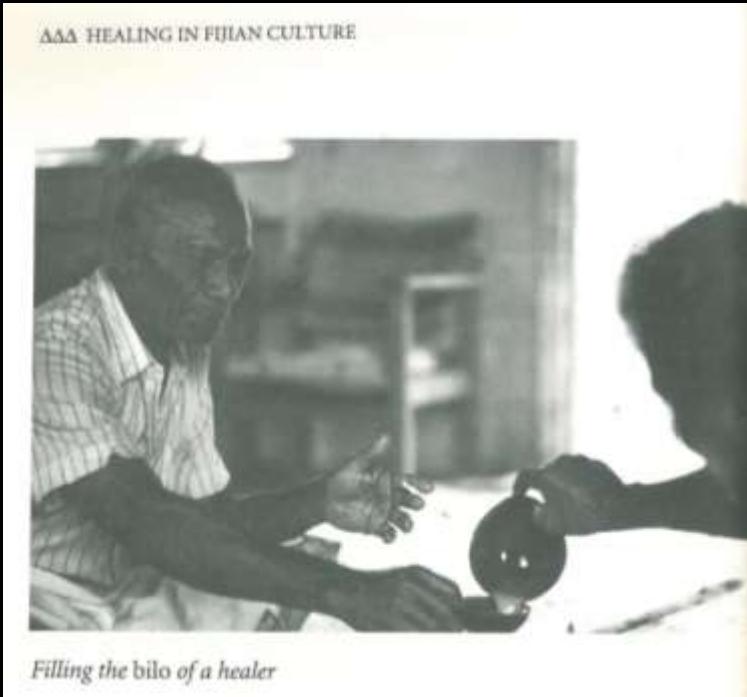
“speaking *mana*”

“*mana* [as] illocutionary force”

gives efficacy to situations
requiring *mana*.

Tomlinson, M., & Bigitibau, S. (2016).
Theologies of mana and sau in Fiji. In M.
Tomlinson & T. P. K. Tengan (Eds.), *New
mana: Transformations of a classic concept
in Pacific languages and cultures* (pp. 237-
256). Canberra: ANU Press. (p.239-243).

MANA



(Katz, 1993:56)

“Even a twig of kava would be enough, a twig that someone else might throw away or overlook”

Katz, R. (1993). *The straight path: A story of healing and transformation in Fiji.* Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley. (p.230).

Western Pharmacological uses of kava

GENERALISED ANXIETY DISORDER (GAD):

Sarris, J., Stough, C., Bousman, C. A., Wahid, Z. T., Murray, G., Teschke, R., . . .

Schweitzer, I. (2013). Kava in the treatment of generalized anxiety disorder: A double-blind, randomized, placebo-controlled study. *Journal of Clinical Psychopharmacology*, 33(5).

HRT (hormone replacement therapy) ALTERNATIVE:

Cagnacci, A., Arangino, S., Renzi, A., Zanni, A. L., Malmusi, S., & Volpe, A. (2003). Kava-kava administration reduces anxiety in perimenopausal women. *Maturitas: The European Menopause Journal*, 44(2), 103-109.

Romm, A. (2003). Women and depression: A phytotherapist's approach.

Complementary Health Practice Review, 8(25), 25-39.



Western Pharmacological uses of kava

CANCER RESEARCH:

- Tabudravu, J. N., & Jaspars, M. (2005). Anticancer activities of constituents of kava (*Piper methysticum*). *South Pacific Journal of Natural Science*, 23, 26-29. P.26.
- Zi, X., & Simoneau, A. R. (2005). Flavokawain A: A novel chalcone from kava extract, induces apoptosis in bladder cancer cells by involvement of Bax protein-dependent and mitochondria-dependent apoptotic pathway and suppresses tumour growth in mice. *Cancer Research*, 65(8), 3479-3486. P.3485-6.
- Leitzman, P., Narayananpillai, S. C., Balbo, S., Zhou, B., Upadhyaya, P., Shaik, A. A., . . . Xing, C. (2013). Kava blocks 4-(Methylnitrosamino)-1-(3-pyridyl)-1-butanone-induced lung tumorigenesis in association with reducing O₆-methylguanine DNA adduct in A/J mice. *Cancer Prevention Research*, 7(1), 86-96.
- Vasich, T. (2014). *Can kava cure cancer?* UCIrvine News (University of California: Irvine), Feb. 25. <http://news.uci.edu/features/can-kava-cure-cancer/>.



Kava is **not** alcohol - it is not even fermented

Aporosa, S. (2011). Is kava alcohol?: The myths and the facts. *Journal of Community Health and Clinical Medicine for the Pacific*, 17(1), 157-164.

Kava is **not** alcohol - it is not even fermented

Aporosa, S. (2011). Is kava alcohol?: The myths and the facts. *Journal of Community Health and Clinical Medicine for the Pacific*, 17(1), 157-164.

... unlike alcohol, kava use does “not lead to violent behaviour” and does “not befuddle the mind and can be used to stimulate ‘clear-headed’ discussion”.

D'Abbs, P. (1995). The power of kava or the power of ideas? Kava use and kava policy in the Northern Territory, Australia. In N. J. Pollock (Ed.), *The power of kava* (Vol. 18, Canberra Anthropology (Special volume,1&2), pp. 166-183). Canberra: Australian National University. (p.169)

MANA

talanoa/korero

Respect values and attitudes underpin kava use venues:



Richmond Methodist High School,
Kadavu, Fiji

- *vakaturaga* (Fiji),
- *anga fakaTonga* (Tonga),
- *fa'aSamoa* (Samoa),
- *kauraro Rarotonga* (Te Au Maohi),
- *tika* (Maaori).

Respect is seen as a personal expression of *mana*.

MANA



'Contractual kava presentation':
Kava being presented by the
grooms family assuring the
brides family that their daughter
will be well cared for.

Solodamu Village, Kadavu, Fiji.
(Tomlinson, 2006)

MANA



Year 11 student
presenting kava plant
as part of opening of
school fundraising
event

Richmond Methodist High
School, Kadavu, Fiji.

MANA



Kava: Pasifika's *cultural keystone species* and arguably our most dominant icon of identity.



(Image author: Unknown)



MAAORI KAVA USE





MAAORI KAVA USE



Drinking kava with John and Okeroa (both Waikato-Tainui) at the *Waikato-Tainui College for Research and Development*.

(Source: Wharetapu Takiare, 2014)





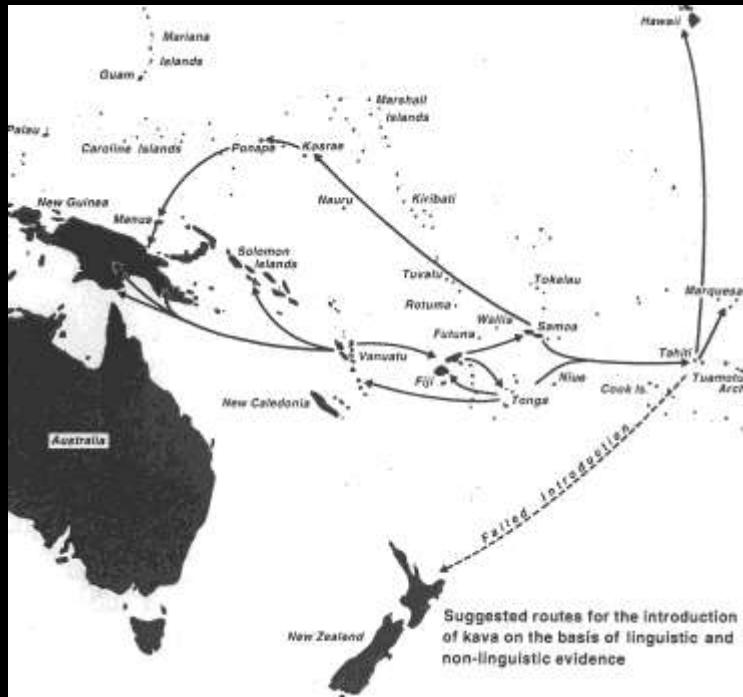
MAAORI KAVA USE



Liam (Tuhoe) and 'Bones' (Ngati Kahanunu)



MAAORI KAVA USE



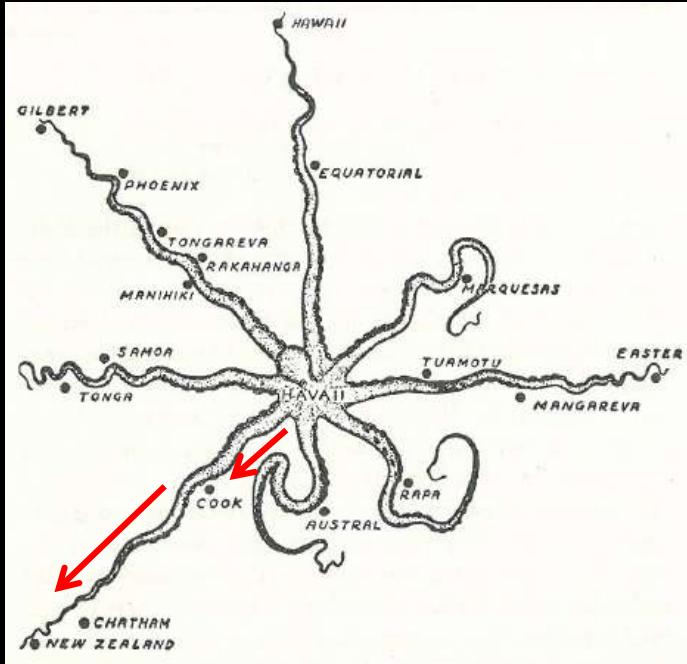
“the key point is that the use of kava ... was a part of Ancestral Polynesian ritual practice”

Kirch, P. V., & Green, R. C. (2001). *Hawaiki: Ancestral Polynesia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (p. 257)

Crowley, T. (1994). *Proto who drank kava?* Canberra: Dept. of Linguistics, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, The Australian National University. (p.97)



MAAORI KAVA USE



Ra'iatea (ex- Hawai'i) = Hawaiki
Buck, P. (1964). *Vikings of the Pacific*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. (p.88; red arrows added).



Anderson, A. (2014). Ancient origins: 3000 BC - AD 1300. In A. Anderson, J. Binney, & A. Harris (Eds.), *Tangata whenua: An illustrated history* (pp. 16-162). Wellington: Bridget Williams Books. (p.18)



MAAORI KAVA USE



“The first Polynesian migrants in New Zealand probably also brought kava with them, though it failed to grow in the colder climate. However, the plant kawakawa of the related *Macropiper excelsum* from a different genesis (which the Māori used for medicinal purposes) is found there.”



(Crowley, 1994:97)

Crowley, T. (1994). *Proto who drank kava?* Canberra: Dept. of Linguistics, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, The Australian National University. (p.95)



MAAORI KAVA USE



“The first Polynesian migrants in New Zealand probably also brought kava with them, though it failed to grow in the colder climate. However, the plant kawakawa of the related *Macropiper excelsum* from a different genesis (which the Māori used for medicinal purposes) is found there.”

“The word *kawa* in Māori is also used to mean ‘marae protocol’, which would accord with kava having been previously used in a ceremonial context as we find in Polynesia today”

Crowley, T. (1994). *Proto who drank kava?* Canberra: Dept. of Linguistics, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, The Australian National University. (p.95)



MAAORI KAVA USE



"E aha te tohu o te Ringaringa he kawakawa".
("What is the sign in our hands? Kawakawa leaves!")

... *kawakawa* was consumed as “cava” when Maaori first arrived in Aotearoa.

Taylor, R. (1848). A leaf from the natural history of New Zealand. Auckland: Robert Stokes, at the Office of the New Zealand Spectator and Cook's Strait Guardian.
(pp.24,100)

“Māori kava”

Bock, M. P. (2000). Maori kava (*Macropiper excelsum*).
Eleusis, 4, 175-179. (pp. 176-7)





MAAORI KAVA USE



... early Maaori potentially used *kawakawa* spiritually and even recreationally as a substitute for kava ... lost following the introduction of the 1907 Tohunga Suppression Act.

Aporosa, S. (2014). *Yaqona (kava) and education in Fiji: Investigating 'cultural complexities' from a post-development perspective*. Albany: Massey University, Directorate Pasifika@Massey. (pp.29-31)





MANA MAAORI



Comprising two elements: distinctiveness of Maaori as a people with their *whenua*, culture, heritage, language, *toanga* etc., and *mana* giving potency and efficacy to that union.

Crawford, Luke. (2016). Personal communication, Aug. 24.

“Manā is enhanced when collective well-being is the outcome... inextricably entwined ...”

Durie, M. (2003). *Mauri ora: the dynamics of Maori health*. Melbourne: Oxford University Press. (pp.82-3,160-163)



MAAORI KAVA USE



mana gives “extra strength and wisdom” to healers and power to traditional medicines ... *kawakawa* is a *taonga*

McGowan, R. E. (2009). *Rongoa Maori: A practical guide to traditional Maori medicine.* Tauranga: R. McGowan. (pp.21-2,32).



MAAORI KAVA USE





MAAORI KAVA USE



Rangatahi drinking kava



MAAORI KAVA USE



Waikato-Tainui *whaanau* drinking kava at Whatawhata



MAAORI KAVA USE



Hoturua Kerr:

(Thatcher, 2011)



MAAORI KAVA USE



Hoturua Kerr:

“We [Maaori] talk about coming from Hawaiki [the pre-migration homeland of Maaori], but at the same time we are mostly inward focused and see ourselves as separate, with no Pacific link”.

(Thatcher, 2011)



"The arrival of the Maoris in New Zealand"
by Louis John Steele and Charles Frederick Goldie, 1989.



MAAORI KAVA USE



Haunui (waka haurua)

(Thatcher, 2011)





MAAORI KAVA USE



(Thatcher, 2011)

Hoturua Kerr:

"Kava has always been important to Islanders. Early voyagers would have taken kava with them, brought it here [to Aotearoa], used it here. Kava is part of Maaori culture, but we gave it up once we got established here..."

we Maaori originally came from the Pacific, so kava is already in us".

MAAORI KAVA USE



Drinking kava aboard *Haunui* (waka haurua)
(Source: Turanga Kerr, 2014)

PASIFIKA KAVA USE



- ‘cultural keystone species’
- most dominant icons of identity
- used in almost every event from birth to death
- a conduit for *mana*



MAAORI KAVA USE



MAAORI?

- pre-migration kava use by Maaori
- likely use upon arrival in Aotearoa
- Seen metaphorically in place names, *kawa*, *tikanga*, and *poowhiri* and *whakatau* in the creation of *noa*
- Increasing kava use by Maaori
- Maaori perceived Pasifika separation
- “Kava is part of Maaori culture” (Hoturoa Kerr)

MAAORI KAVA USE

I am suggesting that some contemporary use of kava by Maaori can be interpreted as a cultural expression of pre-migration Hawaiiki, rather than simply a new interaction with a foreign drug substance





MAAORI KAVA USE

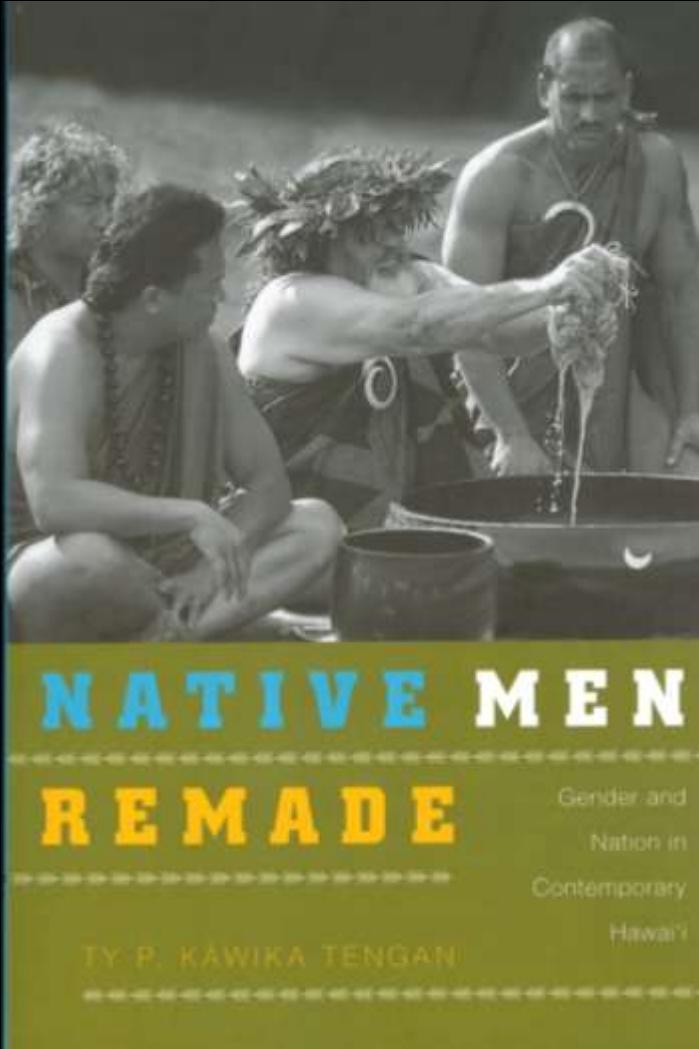


MAAORI?

- lack of inebriant effects ... clear-headed *koorero* underpinned by respect and chiefly values
- settings in which *mana* through kava gives efficacy to apologies, contractual agreements and important matters of discussion
- sit alongside *poowhiri*, *waiata* and *kapa haka*?



MAAORI KAVA USE



“Many of the colonial experiences encountered by men in Hawai’i articulate with those of Māori men in Aotearoa ... our [increasing] indigenous discourse has been the direct influence of Māori modes of resistance...” (pp.201-2)



In Hamilton with my *whaanau* enjoying some *koorero* around the kava bowl with visitors from Auckland.



aaporosa@waikato.ac.nz

