Indigenising Heritage: Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland's Architectural Heritage – Challenging a Monocultural Construct

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Abstract

The purpose of this work is to explore how indigenous heritage has been both under-represented and misrepresented in colonial and post-colonial architecture in Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland, the largest city in Aotearoa/New Zealand. This work combines case-studies with a review of conceptual material relating to multi-cultural perceptions of heritage, and their manifestations in a modern cityscape. Included in this approach is a consideration of indigenous perspectives on the built environment. What emerges from surveying this confluence of culture and heritage is that the popular portrayal of the city's built past is confined to the colonial era and onwards, and that this has had the effect of associating Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland's architectural heritage with its European history – so much so that even depictions of Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland's Māori built heritage occur primarily in the context of European architecture.

Keywords: *Indigenous, Heritage, Māori, Built Environment, Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland*

Positions and Perspectives

This work draws on elements from various disciplines, including history, architecture, heritage, and indigenous studies (with the specific indigenous group in this case being New Zealand's Māori population). As such, the analysis relating to the indigenous aspects of heritage studies is inevitably inflected by the perspective of the author, who is Pākehā. Accordingly, points of ethnocentricity have been identified at certain junctures in this work, and issues such as the object of enquiry, the cultural constructs inherent in some aspects of the disciplines deployed here, and the prolonged effects of colonisation have been taken into account. Furthermore, where relevant, definitions are interrogated and certain traditional perceptions challenged in order to provide alternative perspectives on some of the subject matter being explored.

As far as the terminology is concerned, 'indigenous' is used primarily in the context of the international literature dealing with heritage issues. However, in the New Zealand context, the term 'Māori' is used, because it relates specifically to the tangata whenua (people of the land) of the country, and carries with it connections to the land formed by centuries of whakapapa (genealogical succession).

Architectural Heritage and History

Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland, in New Zealand, reached city-size (an urban population of over 50,000) in the 1910s. However, the area had been occupied by various Māori hapū (subtribes) and iwi (tribes) since around 1250 AD (Picard, et al, 2022), and became a British settlement in 1840 (serving as the country's capital from 1841 until 1865). Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland's built environment has very few remnants pre-dating the 1850s, and this, coupled with the cultivation of particular cultural perceptions of the city's past, has helped to shape both how its architectural heritage is defined and valued, and implicitly, and an enduring narrative around which groups in the city are associated with this architectural heritage (and which are therefore excluded).

One of the principal reasons for the dearth of examples of the pre-colonial Māori built environment throughout the country has to do with the processes of colonisation. Pre-colonial settlements were dislodged, land ownership shifted into European hands, and introduced building techniques and materials altered traditional approaches to construction, and preferences for dwellings. This process was accelerated, and the impacts exacerbated by the fact that many traditional sites of Māori settlement had been chosen because of their proximity to transport routes and food sources. Settlers identified the suitability of these sites, and subsequently occupied many of them. In addition, the location of some traditional settlement sites – on some of the more than 50 volcanic peaks in the region – ended up being quarried for the city is growing roading requirements, resulting in the permanent destruction of this earlier phase of the areas built heritage.

Since the early years of the twentieth century, the management of the country's heritage (natural and built) has been governed predominantly through legislation, which typically has reflected a fundamentally European understanding of what constitutes heritage (Gentry, 2015). Among the key legislative developments in this field were: the Scenery Preservation Act 1903, with its emphasis on preservation for the benefit of future generations; the National Parks Act 1950; the Reserves and Domains Act 1953; and the Historic Places Act 1954, which had as its focus elements of the built rather than just the natural environment. All these statutory advances introduced and fortified particular perceptions of what constitutes heritage. In one sense, they were reflective of the periods in which they were passed, yet in another sense, none of these pieces of legislation incorporated a perspective obtained directly from the country's indigenous population. Thus, cumulatively, these acts reinforced a particular discourse when it came to identifying and managing heritage sites (Smith, 2012). Related to this discourse is the principle of preservation (and the corresponding fear of endangerment and loss), which is central to Western notions of heritage. This is not to say that it is not also a consideration for indigenous peoples, but as Harrison and DeSilvey (2020) argue, such a guiding principle has the potential to shape decisions in the future about what constitutes heritage, and may be at odds in some ways with some indigenous views of objects, places and practices, which do not rely primarily of notions of endangerment and risk when determining heritage value.

All buildings have a history – a sequence of events from planning to construction, occupation, maintenance, modifications, and eventually in most cases, demolition. In addition, all buildings are a part of history – constructed and designed in a specific era, for a purpose defined by the society and place in which they were erected, and to varying extents mirroring the aesthetic, social, economic, and other traits of that era. However, the heritage value of buildings is determined not only by their historical context and significance, but also by the way in which they contribute to the culture and identity of their surrounding communities in the present time, and on how they are currently perceived as embodying the values, aspirations, and zeitgeist of a previous age (Ashworth, 1994). This brings to the forefront the distinction between history and heritage. Whereas history is a record of the past that is documented in various ways, heritage 'is a contemporary commodity purposefully created to satisfy contemporary consumption', and therefore has no distinct documentary record. Heritage is thus effectively a later cultural commodification of history (Ashworth, 1994, p. 18), rather than a rendition of history.

In New Zealand, the heritage function of some architecture is currently addressed in legislation, principally in the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014. This statute emphasises that architectural heritage provides 'evidence of the origins of New Zealand's distinct society', as well as reflecting 'important or representative aspects of New Zealand history', and 'the association of the place with events, persons, or ideas of importance in New Zealand history', including their technical or symbolic significance

(Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014, ss. 4(a); 66(3)(a)(b)(g)(h)). In practice, though, the concept of heritage (especially in the context of architecture) defies a straightforward definition (Harvey, 2001), with the term meaning `virtually anything by which some kind of link, however tenuous or false, may be forged with the past' (Johnson & Thomas, 1995, p. 170). This immediately raises questions about who's past is being reclaimed, in what form, and for what purpose (and to the same extent, who's past is being submerged or abandoned in the process). To this extent, the heritage discourse in the current legislation is a continuation of that of earlier statutes which embody particular ways of defining, seeing, and interpreting heritage in the country – ways that are not sufficiently inclusive of indigenous perspectives. This is an issue internationally, with Onyemechalu and Ugwuanyi (2021) recognising the need to preserve the 'intangible heritage–knowledge over objects' (p. 1). They draw on understandings of the indigenous peoples of south-east Nigeria, whose approach to notions of heritage which is as much a social and cultural process as it is a matter of legal definition.

Such considerations draw attention to the shortcomings of the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014, which vaguely instructs the state to 'take account of all relevant cultural values, knowledge, and disciplines', but which at the same time limits the application of these perspectives to physical heritage' (s. 4(b)(i) and (ii)), and so to that extent, disregards the non-physical elements of heritage that are important to many indigenous peoples.

Unavoidably, the criteria used to determine whether a building possesses heritage value (and how that value is defined) remain largely a reflection of contemporary perspectives and concerns (Harvey, 2001), rather than conforming to a set of fixed measures or definitions. Unlike the historical value of a building, which can generally be determined from the outset and can be subsequently traced in a systematic manner, the heritage value of a building emerges (or in some cases, does not emerge) over time, and is dependent on attitudes to the past that prevail in a later period. The typical arc of architectural heritage commences with a building usually having no heritage value at the time of its construction, and over the following decades, diminishing in aesthetic and cultural appeal as it becomes outdated, and no longer suited to the purpose for which it was designed. It will then be demolished, or modified in order to give it some viable function. Finally, if it has survived for sufficiently long (and sufficiently in its original form), if the period in which it was constructed comes to be regarded as aesthetically or culturally important, and if the building is seen as representative or evocative of the era in which it was designed, then it may accrue the ingredients that will contribute to it acquiring heritage value. The bases for achieving such a status are not clearly defined, and are subjective, essentialist, and often arbitrarily applied. To this extent, architectural heritage is more the antithesis of historical architecture rather than its corollary.

Accompanying the evolutionary nature of the criteria for architectural heritage is the consideration given to buildings that do not meet current heritage thresholds, but may do in the future. Thus, in addition to resonating with present values and perceptions about the past, heritage also anticipates (and imagines) what might be regarded as heritage in a period to come. In the course of determining the heritage value of buildings, architectural heritage has developed from the act of preserving whatever remnants of the built environment in the past that has survived into the present, to an approach which monumentalises buildings from previous eras. Considerations of 'intrinsic criteria, such as age or beauty', based on the assessment of 'experts' (Ashworth, 1994, p. 17), guide this process of architectural monumentalisation, along with popular reactions supporting those structures entering the category of 'heritage'. The claim 'it's part of our heritage', can be intuitive and non-evidential, yet influential when designating heritage status.

Heritage and Cultural Values

However, architectural heritage is more than an act of the preservation and veneration for surviving buildings from a previous age that are judged to be 'important' or 'significant'. Elizabeth Pishief emphasises how current cultural values are superimposed on the physical remnants of the past (Pishief, 2012, p. 1) as part of the process of those remnants being deemed to possess heritage value. Architectural heritage is thus currently linked to the current constructions of place and identity (Smith, 2004). This further removes the possibility of greater objectivity in determining what constitutes a heritage building, because of the ever-fluctuating nature of cultural construction (and reconstruction).

Finally, what constitutes architectural heritage is determined largely by the preferences of those who consume it. Consequently, the authenticity, memory, and even to a degree, the history of heritage are, to varying extents, defined by the consumer (Ashworth, 1994). What emerges from this is a symbiotic relationship between artefact and consumer, which contributes to the constantly shifting definition of what constitutes a heritage building, and which at the same time highlights the crucial role that the composition of the consumer group plays in establishing the parameters of architectural heritage.

Jelić and Stanicič (2022) have broadened the definition of architectural heritage by encompassing a more interdisciplinary approach to the subject. They have suggested that notions of heritage must necessarily include issues of human embodiments and mode of cultural production. In the course of extending the conceptual basis of heritage, issues such as individual and collective social memory, political agency, power relationships, and even imagination are factored in to any assembly of a definition of architectural heritage. This makes the concept of heritage in this context substantially more subjective, and loosens its ties to any particular cultural orientation. However, this culturally broader approach to heritage has yet to appear in any systematic way in heritage policy in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

An important conceptual basis for positioning the role of indigenous perspectives in the field of heritage is provided in Laurajane Smith's work in this field. She devised the notion of Authorised Heritage Discourse (Smith, 2006) which examined how the management and interpretation of heritage is not a culturally neutral practice. She observed that 'Heritage is *not* a thing, site or place, nor is it 'found', rather heritage is the multiple processes of meaning making that occur as material heritage places or intangible heritage events are identified, defined, managed, exhibited and visited' (Smith, 2012, p. 1). Inherent in this view is the idea that heritage is not a fixed concept, but one that is based on subjective and shifting cultural and social values, and that dictates what is defined as having heritage value, and then how that value is exhibited, managed, and performed (Smith, 2012).

The implications of this in the context of heritage buildings and sites in Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland are considerable. The role of mana whenua perspectives in determining what constitutes heritage, and how indigenous meaning is incorporated into the decision-making processes regarding heritage assessments is partly addressed under present legislation. However, the deeper issues of what is valued in a heritage sense, by whom, for what reasons, and on what cultural bases need to inform every stage of the decision-making processes relating to assigning heritage status in order for an indigenous perspective to be given sufficient weighting.

One of the accompanying challenges with a culturally subjective approach to heritage is the idea that heritage values and definitions are universal. The significance of this universalism is that it can set the parameters for future decisions about what constitutes a heritage item. It is also suggestive of a unitary past, and to only a slightly lesser extent, a unitary interpretation of that past (Trigger, 1989). Another consequence of this subjectivity is the tendency to determine the significance of a heritage place or building in the context of values that are important in the contemporary world rather than those that may have prevailed at the time the place or building originally came into being. The bestowing of a heritage status is necessarily a retrospective action, but it is important to emphasise the role of contemporary values and establishing what constitutes heritage and how it is valued (Binford, 1962). This suggests that when it comes to an indigenous perspective on heritage significance, contemporary values about what constitutes heritage (which may well be largely monocultural) may need to be recalibrated as a necessary first step to re-evaluating heritage in a way that incorporates indigenous world views.

Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland's Early History

Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland's architectural heritage is immediately at odds with its history of human habitation. The former extends back to the mid-nineteenth century, while the latter commences over half a millennium earlier. The first settlers to the area now known as Auckland were Polynesian explorers, who arrived around 1200AD (Murray-McIntosh, 1998). Because of its narrow isthmus, the region subsequently became a popular location for visiting hapū to haul their waka (canoes) between the east and west coasts of the North Island. The favoured portage area was called Tāmaki Herenga Waka (the place where canoes are moored), and as more hapū visited this location, it became known as Tāmaki Makaurau, a personification of Tāmaki as a maiden sought after by a hundred lovers (Paterson 2018).

Shoreline settlements were established by early arrivals, but most have left little if any physical trace on the landscape. However, the first known site of built historical and heritage value is on the small island now known as Boat Rock, west of the Harbour Bridge. It was there that Tama Te Kapua (the captain of the Te Arawa canoe) placed a piece of rock from Hawaiki – the location in the South Pacific where the Polynesian migrants originally departed from. This island was then called Te Matā (a contraction of Kahumatamomoe – Tama Te Kapua's son). The site was subsequently regarded as so sacred that the waters around it were named Wai Te Matā (the waters of Matā, from which Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland's main harbour gets its present name: Waitematā) (Moon, 2007).

Waves of hapū and iwi moved in and out of the region over subsequent centuries, but in a few areas, the same communities remained at one location from the time of the first voyages from Polynesia. One of these is the settlement at Ihumatao, adjacent to Auckland Airport. The neighbouring Ōtuataua Stonefields are the largest pre-European built structure in the city that has survived to the present day. Designed to protect gardens from wind and maintain heat, the location is a wāhi tāpu (sacred site) (Horricks & Lawlor, 2006).

The region endured a series of inter-iwi wars in the 1820s, leading to a drastic decline in the number of Māori living there. A visiting French naval officer recorded in 1827 that '[w]e did not notice any trace of inhabitants, nothing but one or two fires a very long way off in the interior. There can be no doubt that this extreme depopulation is due to the ravages of war' (D'Urville, 1950, p. 152).

Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland's Built Environment, 1840-1970

Extensive European colonisation in Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland commenced in 1840, when the Crown purchased land in the area in anticipation of establishing the colony's capital there. However, growth was slow. The following year, the settler population was just 600, and even by the middle of the decade, there were '[n]o wharves, or even houses, with one or two exceptions…to be seen; and indeed, few buildings in the city of Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland and its suburbs were perceptible….Queen Street was almost unbuilt upon, and there were scarcely any buildings beyond Wyndham Street' (An Old Hand, 1887, p. 6). However, building grew in step with Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland's increasing population. By 1871, the number of residents had grown to 21,000, and by the end of the century, this figure had risen to 36,000. In 1921, the population reached 83,000, escalating to 320,000 in 1950, and 635,000 in 1970.

From a heritage perspective, the city's architecture in the period 1840 to 1970 can be divided into three general phases: the colonial (from 1840 to around 1900); the early-twentieth century (from 1900 to approximately 1940); and the modernist (lasting from the 1940s to 1970). While these phases are chronologically arbitrary, and contain stylistic examples that transcend these timeframes, they are nonetheless helpful in establishing different categories of architectural heritage in Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland, and tracing the accompanying perceptions of each of these phases. For illustrative purposes, samples of architectural archetypes from each of these phases are considered here (a combination of commercial and residential). They each embody what subsequently came to be identified as heritage buildings in the city (although there is no intention here to imply that they encompass the entire architectural range of each period).

Phase One

As Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland expanded into a city, the scale of some buildings grew to reflect this evolution. Blackett's Building in Queen Street is an example of this. Completed in 1879, this office block reflected Italianate styles which were employed at the time to conjure 'a sense of grandeur and security by evoking associations with the merchant princes of Venice' (HNZ LN4483, n.d.). Residential architecture in this era was dominated by the villa – predominately timber houses built in the Gothic Revival style, with steep-pitched roofs, large bay windows, verandas, and ornate finishes (Stewart, 1992).

Phase Two

The 1YA Radio Station Building, in Shortland Street, was constructed in 1935. It embodied the Art Deco style that was pervasive in this period, with ziggurat features on the external façade, and popular geometrical design motifs from this era inside the building. By the 1920s, the bungalow had become the favoured form of housing in Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland. Their low-pitched roofs, leadlight windows, and more open-planned interiors revealed a growing American influence on domestic architecture, and a correspondingly reduced orientation to the country's colonial British past (Toomath, 1992).

Phase Three

Housing in this era became more architecturally diverse and experimental. The Symonds Street Flats (completed in 1947) are an example of a design heavily influenced by European modernism. With its concaved façade, semi-recessed balconies, and stark linear form, this building has become part of the city's more recent architectural heritage (Freeman, 2015).

Current Assessments of Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland's Architectural Heritage

As architectural heritage is the confluence of aesthetic and historical assessments with popular perceptions of what constitutes heritage value, it is inevitable that the depictions of Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland's built heritage will be subjective. However, it is also evident that the views on what constitute a heritage building are far from uniform. In the case of the first phase of Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland's architecture described here, there tends to be greater unanimity on its heritage value. For nineteenth-century commercial buildings (mainly in the city centre), their heritage value rests with a combination of their design, scale, former functions, historical connections, appearance, and their capacity to evoke a previous era. Blackett's Building for example, according to Heritage New Zealand 'makes a significant contribution to the urban streetscape, and is of particular value for its close associations with nearby financial and commercial structures, including the later South British Insurance Company Building in Shortland Street. It illustrates the commercial character of lower Queen Street in the late nineteenth century, and the smaller scale of nineteenth-century insurance buildings compared to their office-block successors' (HNZ LN4483, n.d.). In the case of villas, some of the heritage value they possess is based on specific attributes, such as their 'basic form, decoration and architectural value', although there are also subjective and slightly nebulous bases, including their 'character' and 'distinctive ambience', and the claim that they possess 'a sense of propriety and formality', with appearances that 'impart a sense of welcome' (Auckland Council, Unitary Plan, 2021, pp. 1-2). For most buildings constructed in this phase, the European influences on their architecture was overt and intentional. Almost all that was deemed to be aesthetically good was to be found in the northern hemisphere. What is significant in these assessments is the absence of an indigenous perspective of the heritage value of these buildings. The criteria for evaluation are entirely European in orientation.

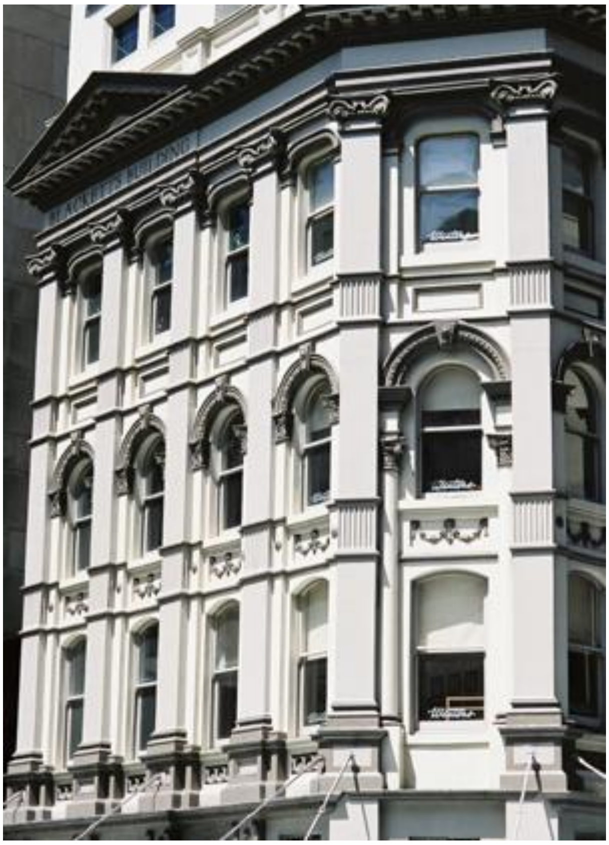
In the second phase of Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland's architectural heritage – covering the period 1900-1940 – the heritage value assigned to the built environment is less persuasive, and comes with slightly reduced popular enthusiasm. For example, consents to demolish or substantially modify the interior and exterior of bungalows are still by granted by councils, and with very few exceptions. Consideration is not given to their heritage value in the same extent that it is to buildings constructed in the previous century. While bungalows are commonly identified as architectural heritage (Stock, 2004), they are seldom treated as such. The 1YA Radio Station Building, on the other hand, has official heritage status (HNZ LN660, n.d.), and is popularly regarded as a heritage building (Burgoyne, n.d.). The reason for this (and perhaps the reasons bungalows built in the same period generally lack such official heritage status) may have to do with scarcity. Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland has thousands of bungalows, but possibly only a few dozen major art deco commercial buildings. The role of scarcity in determining heritage value is also a European metric that is applied to heritage evaluations in Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland. From an indigenous perspective, other considerations could take priority. As one example, a bungalow in the suburb of Mt Albert, which has not heritage status assigned to it, is regarded as culturally important to one whānau because it is the location where their ancestor lived when they first moved to Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland in the 1930s (H. H. N., 2024). A member of the whānau described the importance of this house from a heritage perspective: 'it's where we were replanted in Tāmaki [Makaurau/Auckland]. For us, this is our new starting point. It's where our ancestors decided to make a go of it here. So for us, this is the beginning of our whānau in Tāmaki, and it's coming up to a hundred years for us' (H. H. N., 2024). As yet, there is no provision the city's heritage rules and planning processes to accommodate these sorts of values when determining heritage status.

The closer to the present time a building is, the less likely it is to be seen as having some heritage value. Consequently, there are comparatively few post-war buildings in Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland that are considered to be examples of architectural heritage. The Symonds Street Flats are one of the cases of a relatively recent building that is judged to possess heritage value, but as with most other examples of architectural heritage, its categorisation is partially subjective, with references made to its 'heritage fabric' (Gatley, 2019, p. 7), and its 'aesthetic heritage values' (International, 2013, p. 2). In decades to come, it is probable that more architecture from this phase will acquire heritage status, reflecting future values being superimposed on this period in decades to come. One aspect about this particular designation is that the measure for its heritage value is based entirely on European metrics. Significantly, there are no similar weightings given to Māori values in such evaluations.

The criteria for the selection of buildings to be officially deemed architectural heritage by Auckland Council is inevitably broad and lacking in specific measures. Among the requirements are that the buildings reflect 'important or representative aspects of national, regional or local history', or are associated with 'an important event, person, group of people, or with an idea or early period of settlement'. The building can also have heritage value on the basis of the esteem with which it is held by a particular community, or its particular cultural value. And architecturally, consideration is given to its 'design or style…method of construction, craftsmanship', or the fact that it is 'the work of a notable architect', and has 'notable or distinctive…aesthetic, visual, or landmark qualities' (Auckland Council, Unitary Plan, 2021, 1-2). These can assist in making the case for the heritage value of some architecture, but even collectively, are not defining tenets of architectural heritage. This culturally narrow definition of heritage has left it more susceptible to subjective arguments and popular influence, resulting, among much else, in Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland's Māori architectural heritage having only a peripheral presence.

One element of consideration that is largely absent from the categorisation of heritage buildings in Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland is that of their spiritual significance. For Māori, the connection between the physical and the spiritual is an important aspect of culture and identity (Cowie, et al., 2016), and in this context, is not necessarily connected to issues solely of a building's age or architectural features. These sorts of activities that have taken place in a building can contribute to its wairua (spirituality), and give it a value that is least tangible, but still important in terms of an indigenous cultural heritage perspective. In general, heritage planners have struggled to comprehend, let along articulate certain cultural and spiritual values that Māori regard as being inherent in some buildings (Viriaere & Miller, 2018; Watkins, 2006; Kahotea, 2018).

Examples of Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland Heritage Buildings



Blackett's Building, 86-92, Queen Street, Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland.

Credit: Martin Jones, 18 July 2001, New Zealand Historic Places Trust

South British Insurance Company Building, 5-13 Shortland Street, Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland

Credit: Martin Jones, 31 October 2001, New Zealand Historic Places Trust

1YA Radio Station Building, 74 Shortland Street, Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland

Credit: Phil Clark, 23 August 2020, phil1066photography.com

The Indigenous Presence in Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland's Architectural Heritage

One of the most telling aspects of perceptions of Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland's architectural heritage is how monocultural it is. Admittedly, Auckland Council has made provision for the inclusion of the city's Māori architectural heritage in its planning, and the Resource Management Act 1991 requires Councils to take into account the significance of wāhi tāpu (sacred sites) in its consenting processes. However, in various ways, Māori architectural heritage has been shunted to the periphery of assessments of Auckland's built heritage.

One indication of this marginalised presence of Māori architectural heritage is the lack of recognition of marae in the city. There are around sixty marae (Māori meeting houses) in Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland (Auckland Council, Auckland Plan, 2018, p. 80), yet in many architectural heritage reviews, they simply do not feature. Of the approximately 270 buildings in Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland listed by New Zealand Heritage, for example, not one is a marae, even though several Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland marae fulfil some of the criteria to be designated as architectural heritage . Neither is any marae included in Auckland Council's *Auckland's Heritage Counts 2019 Annual Summary*.

And if Māori architectural heritage is not excluded, it is sometimes diminished. An example of this is Lopdell House (formerly Hotel Titirangi) (HNZ LN9823, n.d.). This building was designed in 1929 by the Māori architect William Bloomfield, but it is not commonly considered as a piece of Māori architecture. One possible reason for this is the popular tendency for Māori architecture to be regarded as something that existed in the pre-colonial era (and by implication, which ceased to exist after the European arrival), or of a style that contains 'traditional' Māori stylistic features. Another possible reason is the disassociation of the ethnicity of the architect with the form of the building. Both of these reasons are viable, but the former seems more likely in the context of Auckland Council's 2019 statement that '18% of Auckland's protected heritage places relate to Māori-origin archaeology' (Auckland Council, Auckland's Heritage Counts, 2019, p. 4). The language used here is instructive – particularly the reference to 'archaeology'. This drives a wedge between Māori architectural heritage (which is implicitly something to be dug-up from the pre-colonial period) and general architectural heritage , which commenced in colonial era and has continued since then (and in which the role of Māori in the design of a building is not factored into its heritage value).

Of course, the argument could be made that the sheer volume of non-Māori heritage buildings in Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland, when set against the paucity of exclusively Māori architectural heritage accounts for the European orientation of so much of the discussion and analysis of Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland's architectural heritage. However, this argument can only be sustained if quantity is the principal criterion for heritage, rather than other measures, such as the extent of importance of the community, what the architecture evokes, who is involved in its creation, and which groups subsequently get to decide what heritage value it possesses. This later point is significant, with one report identifying that Māori 'were much more likely to be interested in Māori archaeological sites and historic cemeteries, and less likely to be interested in commercial buildings, residential buildings and places of worship' (Auckland Council, Auckland's Heritage Counts, 2019, p. 26), and so were therefore less likely to be invested in advocating for these buildings to be given heritage status.

Equally, though, this perception could be the consequence rather than the cause of Māori architectural heritage being marginalised for so long – a consideration that does not feature in official reports on Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland’s architectural heritage.

Another aspect of how the indigenous presence in Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland’s architectural heritage is distorted is the appearance of Māori ‘motifs’ in some architecture. These are typically stylised allusions to indigenous designs (or in some cases, even Māori words) deployed by European designers and architects to add a local flavour to their buildings. Māori names appear in Art Deco houses in suburbs such as Parnell, Epsom and Newmarket, with dwellings given titles such as ‘Tuhitahi’ and ‘Ranui’. However, such features assume an ambiguous role in architectural heritage , falling somewhere between indigenous and colonised. Thus, Māori architectural heritage still remains contested in its nature and status, and underrepresented in Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland’s inventory of heritage buildings.

Conclusion

Several themes emerge from this analysis with respect to the ways in which architectural heritage in Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland has been conceptualised and managed in a largely monocultural framework. Admittedly, this monoculturalism has been fostered in part by the fact that there are very few examples of the built environment in the region that pre-date colonisation. However, as has been examined here, this does not account for the ways in which subsequent buildings have been deemed ‘important’ or ‘significant’ in legislation, in the decision-making processes of local authorities, or in popular perception. What is also evident is that the subjectivity of terms used in assessing the heritage value of buildings – such as ‘character’, ‘ambience’, and ‘aesthetic values’ tend to bend towards European notions of those terms, and do not necessarily reflect indigenous perceptions of those concepts. Moreover, such concepts are applied using contemporary measures relating to what constitutes heritage, the rationales for its preservation, and the types of meaning-construction that emerge from the process. What is also evident in this work, though, is there are opportunities for ideas about what constitutes architectural heritage to be broadened, and to encompass indigenous perspectives, both in the areas of defining heritage and in its management. And finally, despite the challenges present in defining, contextualising, and managing heritage sites in New Zealand, the process remains one rooted in European values and constructs. The opportunity for indigenous engagement exists, and the contribution of that engagement could be considerable, but the legislative and social mechanisms to allow it have thus far proven to have been inadequate.

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