Pukeahu, Aotearoa/New Zealand: One hundred years of remembrance

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Abstract

The development of Pukeahu National War Memorial Park in Wellington, Aotearoa/New Zealand, is a key project to acknowledge the centenary of the First World War: it is the place to remember and reflect on the country's experiences with military conflict and peacekeeping. Within the older complex at Pukeahu, Māori feature as little more than a footnote to a standard Pākehā (New Zealander of European descent) history of New Zealand at war. It is only in more recent memorials that there is a visible inclusion of a Māori experience of past wars expressed in a modern and distinctly Māori way. In this article, I explore whether or not these retrospective acknowledgements of the Māori experience equalise the park as a place for all New Zealanders. I also consider the design and purpose of the newer memorials at Pukeahu, which lack the sentiment and 'sorrow' of earlier memorials, and ask if a grander national narrative takes precedence over individual experiences of pride and loss. Overall, I suggest there is more going on in Pukeahu's most contemporary memorials than simply the formulation of a national narrative of Aotearoa/New Zealand at war and what that means. This is a nation that thrives on its balanced interaction within the international arena, but does it have the introspective capacity to consider the battles fought on home soil? Is its history, shared with a diverse group of nations around the globe, being utilised for political purposes – as an exercise in strengthening international relations? Or are these memorials truly acknowledging the shared experience and shared sense of loss? The answer may just depend on who is looking.

Key words

Pukeahu, Aotearoa/New Zealand, war memorial, commemoration, te ao Māori

'At the going down of the sun and in the morning, we will remember them'.1

This ode to the fallen is recited daily in English and te reo Māori (the Māori language) over the *Tomb of the Unknown Warrior* during the Last Post ceremony at the Pukeahu National War Memorial Park in Wellington, Aotearoa/New Zealand. The bugler makes their solemn call, the flags are lowered, and the ode is recited as part of the ritual of remembrance that has been repeated at 5pm every day since Anzac Day (April 25) 2015.² The events of the First World War which inspired this ritualistic recitation of remembrance have, over the intervening 100 years, passed from living memory into the history books. Therefore, now more than ever, it is important to critically examine how we engage in practices of remembrance, both with a colonial and military past and moving forward in Aotearoa/New Zealand as a unified bicultural nation. The National War Memorial Park complex at Pukeahu³ in Wellington is ideal for this undertaking because it incorporates many discrete memorials erected on the site from the 1930s through to the present day.

The concept of the Pukeahu National War Memorial Park (hereafter Pukeahu) arose as a First World War centenary project. In its turn, through showcasing how contemporary artists and their patrons address the art of commemoration, Pukeahu has become a microcosm of the evolution of war memorial design in Aotearoa/New Zealand. Sitting side by side at this site of historic national significance are traditional, modern and contemporary memorials which together provide a picture of the changes and the continuities in the commemoration of war in public art in Aotearoa/New Zealand.⁴

It must be noted that the Pukeahu war memorial complex with its range of commemorative works is not a unique phenomenon, though in a local context, there is no other national memorial which takes the form of an extensive urban park. It has parallels in major cities around the globe: Anzac Parade in Canberra, the National Mall in Washington DC, and Green Park / Hyde Park Corner in London come to mind. Each of these places is a memorial precinct populated by public art commemorating moments of great national significance - be they loss or triumph. Such places are, to borrow the phrase, 'sites of memory' (Young, 2000; also Brandon, 2007, p. 119), places where a nation's collective memory, a basis of its identity and character, is presented, brought to life by acts of remembrance. In the international arena, most of these memorial precincts have developed in places already steeped in local and national history. Pukeahu is no exception: this geographical mount – now greatly reduced in its natural profile – has a long and turbulent past (see Baird, 2020). Its known human history began in the 13th century when it was named by the Ngāi Tara iwi,5 who settled in the area. The English translation of the Māori word Pukeahu is 'sacred hill', suggesting this was an ancient, hallowed site, although colonial impacts have left no such trace. During European colonisation in the 19th century, a land deal was signed with local Māori chiefs designating part of Pukeahu as a reserve; but colonial officials coveted its strategic position and so began a history of military, police and penal institutions on the site. In the late 1920s, however, the place took on a new function – as a national site of commemoration. In an era of revised commemorations, the shift in memorial culture raises questions: as a memorial park that encompasses shared bonds between many nations, has Pukeahu succeeded in acknowledging the tangata whenua (people of the land)? Has modern-day Pukeahu come full circle, back to being hallowed ground albeit with a long martial history? Or is this another example of the appropriation of Māori for a period of almost 100 years?

The concept of a National War Memorial at Pukeahu was first mooted in 1919 and received a parliamentary grant of £100,000 (NZD\$10 million today), but a downturn in the economy and a lapse in government interest soon slowed progress.⁷ Consequently, impetus for the project fell to the public, as it did for most First World War memorials in Aotearoa/New Zealand. The ambitious idea to include in the memorial a carillon alongside a Hall of Memories was put forward in 1922; however, it did not gain momentum until 1926 when funds were raised to purchase 49 bells. This was achieved largely through subscriptions garnered from friends or relatives of those who had died in the war, and individual bells were inscribed with the names of the donor and of specific people or events to be remembered. The bells range from the large Reo Wairua (Voice of the Spirit) bell which honours the 1700 men of Wellington city who gave their lives, to more modestly sized bells honouring individuals. With the bells in hand, the push for a tower in which to house them became an imperative. In 1929, the architectural firm, Gummer and Ford, won a national design competition for The National War Memorial Carillon (hereafter The Carillion), the Hall of Memories and the new National Art Gallery and Museum proposed for the rear of the Pukeahu site. The firm's principal, William Gummer, was a returned serviceman who, prior to the war, had studied at the Royal Academy Schools in London, and had worked in the offices of Sir Edwin Lutyens as well as with Daniel Burnham, one of the pioneers of the skyscraper (see Lochhead, 1998). These diverse influences inform the Wellington project. The design of the museum (completed in 1936) bears the hallmarks of classical architecture. On the other hand, the Carillon Tower (opened on Anzac Day 1932) eschews classical motifs for an austere but modern look, echoing the skyscrapers of its time. It also features Gothic and French design elements and Art Deco copper louvres. A Hall of Memories attached to The Carillon was part of the initial plan, but 30 years would elapse before this was achieved, delayed by the Great Depression, the Second World War and inaction by successive governments. In fact, it would be 1964 before the original design for the National War Memorial was completed, and even then, Gummer's vision of a tree-lined boulevard leading to the base of The Carillon was not realised.

For almost 30 years after its inauguration there was little change to the memorial except for the incorporation of additional bells in The Carillon.8 Then, in 1990, Paul Walshe's bronze figurative sculpture, The Man with the Donkey, was installed. This is based on a well-known photograph taken at Gallipoli in 1915 of Private Richard Alexander Henderson of the New Zealand Medical Corps transporting a wounded man on a donkey. The sculpture is a memorial to all medical personnel who worked alongside Aotearoa/New Zealand troops during wartime. In 2004, the *Tomb of the Unknown Warrior* was added. Designed by Kingsley Baird, this sleek granite and marble memorial is the final resting place of an unnamed Aotearoa/New Zealand soldier, who was relocated from the Caterpillar Valley Cemetery on the Somme and buried with full military honours in this tomb on the forecourt of the National War Memorial.

Ten years later, during the centenary of the First World War, there came a transformation of the Pukeahu site. A redesign had been mooted as early as the year 2000 on the grounds that the memorial had become somewhat isolated in a semi-industrial zone, and the space in front of it, intended for public commemorative events, was rather awkwardly bisected by a suburban street. The decision was made to create a vehicular underpass with a park above it, which would be the centrepiece of the country's centenary commemorations. The stretch of land in front of The Carillon and Hall of Memories was transformed into the Pukeahu National War Memorial Park, with the Arras Tunnel running beneath it.¹⁰

The Arras Tunnel is named in memory of the New Zealand Tunnelling Company, whose graffitied messages in the Cook Islands' Māori language can be found in the tunnels under and around the French town of Arras. Completed in 2014, the underpass features 273 symbolic decorative poppies made of circular, powder-coated, aluminium tiles running along the tunnel wall. Above the tunnel, a tree-lined park provides a careful balance of basalt and granite paving, green spaces and low-angled, sculptural concrete walls. It has space for large public congregations and for recreational use, particularly on Anzac Square, the paved ceremonial plaza central to the design. A series of terraces on each side follows the contours of the land: these are shaped into spaces for memorials dedicated to countries with which Aotearoa/New Zealand has formed close relationships in times of peace and in conflict, as either historic friends or former foes. The east and west entrances are marked by gateway pavilions designed to acknowledge the Indigenous architecture of Māori and Pacific peoples.

Memorials have been, and continue to be, added to the park; initial plans for Pukeahu did not include a memorial acknowledging the mana whenua and the Māori contribution to battle on behalf of Aotearoa/New Zealand.¹¹ However, Morris Love (Te Āti Awa, Taranaki, Ngāti Ruanui and Ngāti Tama iwi of Taranaki) and others successfully advocated for the inclusion of a mana whenua presence ('Mana Whenua Stories at Pukeahu'). They were instrumental in the establishment of the commemorative park, including the Ngā Tapuwae o te Kāhui Maunga (the footsteps of the ancestors) Gardens (2015), a complex design by Darcy Nicholas relating to Māori experiences in war as well as on this particular piece of land, Pukeahu. The Australian Memorial with its distinctive red sandstone pillars was installed in the same year, and Matt Gauldie's smaller bronze Turkish Memorial was completed in 2017. So too was the Belgian memorial Laurel 'Memorial Wreath', and the British memorial, Whakaruruhau (shelter). The French memorial, Andrew Patterson's Le Calligramme was unveiled the following year, and the United States Memorial in 2019. A Pacific Islands memorial, Te Reo o Te Moana nui a Kiwa (the deep sigh of the Pacific) was scheduled to be unveiled on April 18, 2020 but was delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic, as was a Canadian memorial.

Overall, the memorials on Pukeahu span a chronological continuum of almost 90 years. In their disposition across the site there is a clear distance between the older and newer works which adds to the distinctions that can be made in terms of style and content. The older memorials (and those in keeping with older traditions) sit on the hill above the more recently developed lower reaches of the park. They share many motifs common to 20th-century traditional European-style memorials throughout Aotearoa/New Zealand. Not unnaturally, the dates of both world wars figure prominently, as does a range of inscriptions in and on The Carillon and Hall of Memories. All of these are in the English language which is standard for Aotearoa/New Zealand's First World War memorials. The word 'sacrifice' looms large, in keeping with the staple memorial theme of the living's debt to the dead. Lines from Laurence Binyon's *For the Fallen*, a highly popular choice of text for traditional war memorials, feature on a plaque in the ground floor atrium of The Carillon:

Age shall not weary them Nor the years condemn At the going down of the sun And in the morning We will remember them.

Continuing the theme of rendering immortality as compensation for death is the inscription 'Their name liveth forever more', a quote from the book of Ecclesiasticus 44:14 in the Old Testament Apocrypha. A number of overtly Christian inscriptions are pledged 'To the glory of God', and there is a direct quotation from Psalm 139: 8-10, which speaks of the omnipresence of God:

If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there:

If I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there.

If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea;

Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.

Indeed, Christian connotations abound throughout the entire design of the memorial complex. The Hall of Memories is a church-like space with a clerestory of stained-glass windows. There is a central aisle or 'nave' flanked on each side by six architectural recesses, essentially small side-chapels, each dedicated to a specific branch of the armed forces. Each of these shrine-like areas includes a plaque of remembrance beneath regimental flags. At the end of the central aisle there are steel crosses raised on pillars, and beyond that, in the Sanctuary, stands the focal point of the Hall, Lyndon Smith's bronze figurative sculpture, *Mother and Children* (1962) – a rare intrusion of a woman's presence amidst this space of remembrance. As Catherine Speck observes, 'most war memorials as official sites of commemoration ignore the contribution of women as citizens in wartime' (1996, p. 129). Above, carved in stone, are doves of peace and the verses from Psalm 139. Together with The Carillon, the Hall of Memories reads as a church. As with British memorials, in Aotearoa/New Zealand the incorporation of Christian symbolism has been a customary approach to commemoration: by association with the sacrifice of Christ, the losses of war became 'sacrifices made in the sense of something sacred' (Malvern, 2004, p. 153).

Alongside Christian motifs, the Hall of Memories contains an abundance of secular imagery drawn from classical and imperial symbols which are also staples of First World War memorial imagery in Aotearoa/New Zealand. Aside from the Roman arches and barrel vault, the strongest classical allusion lies in the tall columns flanking the aisle. The two at the entrance to the Sanctuary are laden with imperial symbolism: from the British coat of arms at each base rises a strong and sturdy tree bearing the escutcheons of Commonwealth countries on its branches, all linked by falling leaves. An image of St Edward's Crown, the centrepiece of the British Crown

Jewels, surmounts the tip of each tree and above this sits a replica of the Sovereign's Orb, supporting a Christian cross.

While the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior (2004) and The Man with the Donkey (1990) are relatively recent additions to the war memorial complex, they fit within the framework of traditional European memorials, the former in concept, the latter in form and content. The concept of a single unnamed soldier, buried at a place of national significance to represent all unidentified military victims of war, has international precedents dating back to 1920 with the burial of an unknown soldier at Westminster Abbey and another under the Arc de Triomphe in Paris. The Man with the Donkey is also highly traditional in that it is a bronze, representational, figurative sculpture designed to commemorate a specific group (although in this case one not commonly commemorated). Quite simply, these memorials on the hill at Pukeahu are based on tradition: they follow established formulas and share in standard motifs. In concept, design and style they are heavily influenced by time-honoured expectations of what a memorial should look like.

In contrast, amongst the international memorials in the lower reaches of the park there is greater emphasis on the designers' individual vision rather than on established tradition and symbolism. This is evidenced by the individuality of each memorial: the only commonalities are those which fulfil the requirements outlined by the Ministry for Culture and Heritage (2020). In this respect they are all made of materials that are durable, easy to maintain or replace, and are all either deeply rooted or lie low to the ground in order to withstand Wellington's particularly windy conditions. Each is built to a scale and design that fits well within its allotted plot without encroaching on pathways, common ground or other memorials. This ensures that the visibility of each work is maximised, particularly at night when they are all illuminated by concealed lighting. Beyond these broad parameters each memorial is visually unique; originality is key to fulfilling a principal requirement of proposals for the park - 'outstanding artistic merit' (Ministry for Culture and Heritage, 2020). The centenary memorials occupying the new park space are therefore innovative designs. They are distinguishable not only from each other but, even more so, from the older memorial forms.

The stark contrast between the older and the more recent memorials reflects a shift in memorial practice witnessed globally, a prime example being the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe by Peter Eisenman and Buro Happold, which puts the emphasis on phenomenology opposed to outright and directive didacticism. While still deeply influenced by tradition, erecting art to form tangible sites of commemoration runs the risk of becoming a display of rote-ritualism that means too little to too many, should the memorials fail to capture the urgency and the sense of human loss they stand to represent. When so much time has passed between a tragic event and the genesis of an appropriate signifying monument, the public has the opportunity to perform their rituals of mourning elsewhere in less permanent sites of memorialisation. Formalising monuments at a later date can equate to a piece of irrelevant art with the potential to symbolise little more than an ode to bystanderdom; however, if too little time is left after an event, a memorial may become the product of a hyper-charged political environment. Take the 9/11 memorial in New York City as an example: the jockeying for position amongst stakeholders from a range of perspectives necessitated 10 years of negotiation before Reflecting Absence came to fruition (Simpson, 2006, p. 5). Striking a balance between time-honoured commemorative practices and culturally relevant, apolitical people-oriented forms of iconography is no mean feat; 'getting it right' is an ever-shifting mirage, but at the very least, it requires a collaborative process of reflection and community engagement rather than political grandstanding.

An acknowledgement of this global shift in commemorative culture at Pukeahu is seen in the move from commissioning monuments as didactic objects to creating memorials offering open, contemplative spaces that do not impose a specific narrative upon the viewer of the event (Senie, 2016). The inscriptions and symbolism in the Hall of Memories and The Carillon are concerned to inform us categorically that those who fought and died sacrificed themselves for the good of others and that they should be remembered and honoured for their deeds. The visitor's actions in the memorial space are almost pre-determined, with alcoves functioning as places of tribute.

While the older forms tell us what to think and how to remember the war, the newer memorials are spaces for personal connection and reflection over nationalistic nobility, triumph and heroism. In the design guidelines, emphasis has been placed on minimising set interpretation so that visitors are allowed and encouraged 'to approach and experience each memorial on their own terms' (Ministry for Culture and Heritage, 2020). There are no grand statements alluding to either sacrifice or psalm; indeed, the British and Belgian memorials are devoid of almost any inscription. The visitor's movements and actions are dependent on their personal choices. If someone chooses to sit on the grass or a nearby bench, the experience can be contemplative; alternatively, walking through or around a memorial, viewing it from multiple angles, offers a more physical, immersive engagement. In the case of Niko Van Stichel and Lut Vandebos's Belgian Laurel 'Memorial Wreath', the Ngā Tapuwae o te Kāhui Maunga Gardens and the Australian Memorial, one can wander through the works, following almost any route. The Australian Memorial features a key outlining the content and meanings of the imagery set in the smooth black granite insert in each red column. This guide provides no hierarchy of significance or clear singular meaning, and the viewer can choose which values in the design to engage with.

One of the more telling signs of the shift from the didactic to the increasingly more freely interpretable models at Pukeahu is the difference in the use of the spaces around the older and newer memorials. The older memorial forms (the Hall of Memories, the Carillon Tower, *The Man with the Donkey* and the *Tomb of the Unknown Warrior*) together create a place with a singular purpose and have a tendency toward the funerary, an approach Aotearoa/New Zealand took in its memorialisation in the 20th century, by which the outpouring of sorrow indicated the atrocities of war (Smith, 2016). By contrast, the new park area on the lower level was intentionally designed to be a multifunctional urban space (Derby, 2016, pp. 145-46). During major commemorative events such as the Anzac Day services, the focus area, Anzac Square, can be a crowded space with an atmosphere of deep emotional engagement with Aotearoa/New Zealand's military past. On an ordinary sunny weekend afternoon, however, friends toss around rugby balls, families picnic on the grass, and children and adults alike glide across Anzac Square on scooters and skateboards. This newer area is a place that adapts to the needs of its visitors, a place where everyday life and remembrance co-exist easily.

The move from memorials being didactic to becoming flexible, reflective spaces is not the only transformation in commemorative culture that Pukeahu illustrates. Memorials have become less personal in the centenary period, with a greater emphasis on creativity and interpretive design. The older memorials on the southern side of the park, specifically the Hall of Memories, lean more heavily in the direction of personal sorrow. This is not to say they do not glorify and ennoble those who are commemorated: the grandeur in the architecture and allusions to Christ-like sacrifice are evidence enough of that. What is immediately noticeable, however, is the attention to the personal. In the Carillon Tower, many of the bells commemorate specific people or groups whose names are inscribed upon them. Unusually for a memorial (though not unusual for a national war memorial), the Hall of Memories does not laud the names of either those who served or those who did not return. However, there is a tangible, personal sense of loss: the home towns of those who did not return are displayed on the walls

of what might be called the Sanctuary (continuing the church analogy), and each side 'chapel', representing a particular division in which men fought and died, acts as a focal point of grief for their loved ones. The sculpture at the heart of the Hall and rising above the assembly of symbolic imagery, Lyndon Smith's Mother and Children, is the most poignant image of loss. It represents the women and children left behind by those who went to war and never returned. Historian Jock Phillips thus speaks of Aotearoa/New Zealand memorials in terms of a balance between sorrow and pride (MacLean & Phillips, 1990).

This orientation towards acknowledging personal loss, even amid the visual rhetoric that seeks to justify that loss, makes perfect sense given the audience at the time the Hall of Memories and Carillon Tower were commissioned. Memorials erected in Aotearoa/New Zealand soon after both world wars functioned essentially as surrogate tombs for the thousands buried in marked and unmarked graves in distant lands. For those bereft family members who could not make the long journey overseas to the final resting places of their loved ones, public memorials at home were a place to grieve and find closure. In terms of surrogate tombs, the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior takes this further, being both a literal tomb and one that symbolically represents all the New Zealanders laid to rest in unnamed graves.

The original audience for these memorials, those who attended the first Anzac Day services, would have been, as John Horrocks put it, 'thinking of their living memories of the people who died' (2014, p. 223). Today – well over 70 years after the Second World War and more than 100 years since the end of the First – these deaths are more distant, and potentially less personal. Moreover, memorials have taken on a stronger socio-political role. This is patently clear when one considers the design and purpose of the new memorials at Pukeahu: these lack the personal sentiment, the 'sorrow' of the earlier memorials. It is not simply that their open and contemplative design means we are not directed to grieve, but that the concept is fundamentally different. These 'memorials' are not overtly about remembering the dead. Instead, they are places of reflection and of celebration – a celebration of the bonds created in times of war, be they with nations which were historically friends or foe. Pukeahu's mission statements and guidelines specify this, placing emphasis on highlighting 'the relationships New Zealand has forged with other countries through a shared military heritage' (Ministry for Culture and Heritage, 2020). A grander national narrative takes precedence over individual experiences of personal loss.

The Australian Memorial, in pride of place and mirroring the vertical form of the imposing Carillon Tower across Anzac Square, highlights the firm and enduring bond of the Anzacs. In a display of Antipodean unity, it can be seen as a reciprocal gesture to Kingsley Baird's New Zealand Memorial (2001) straddling its site on Anzac Parade in Canberra. As with Baird's Canberra design, the Australian Memorial at Pukeahu juxtaposes Australian and Aotearoa/ New Zealand motifs in a unified programme. One specific similarity is the acknowledgement of both nations' Indigenous cultures: four of the columns of the Australian Memorial at Pukeahu feature Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art made by the Balarinji design studio in Sydney. This includes references to billabong (the secret place), the arduous journeying of tribes, totem stripes, body paint, patterns of the Dreaming, ¹² artifact (wisdom traditionally passed down), the warrior's shield (a symbol of protection) and the Abudji dance referring to the crucial role of women in society. This information is provided on one of the single blocks that sit amidst the columns. Three of the columns feature artworks by Jacob Manu Scott which acknowledge tikanga Māori (Māori customs). Rising up the central column is the word Anzac, and 7 of the 15 smooth, black granite panels inset into the 6-metre-high columns are inscribed with the principal theatres of war in which New Zealanders and Australians have fought side by side. On the paving, the columns seemingly cast a shadow in the same iconic Australian red sandstone interspersed with the bands of grey basalt representing the Aotearoa/New Zealand landscape.

On a slightly less grand scale, age-old bonds are celebrated in the British memorial, Whakaruruhau (shelter), a work which signifies the post-imperial relationship between Aotearoa/New Zealand and Great Britain. Even here, there is no evidence of the imperial symbols that characterise older memorials, despite the intention to connect the shared colonial past of Britain and Aotearoa/New Zealand (see King, 2003, pp. 198-207). The design group for this work, led by Weta Workshop, involved a team of 100 people, including students from Massey University, Wellington and the Wimbledon College of Arts in London. This combination of voices generated an innovative and more freely interpreted design of a silhouette of a soldier formed by the branches of two sculpted conjoined trees, an image which is visible from only one angle, a privileged viewing point. The way that the under-lighting at night and the sun overhead during the day catch the coloured canopy and reveal the distinctive form exemplifies the dramatic flair for which Weta Workshop is known. The powerfully symbolic form of Britain's iconic oak and Aotearoa/New Zealand's native Pohutukawa tree intertwine in Whakaruruhau into one multi-coloured, light-filtering canopy, creating an emblem of almost 150 years of military and civil cooperation between the two nations. Notably, they are presented as equals, not as imperial master and subordinate.

In a similar concept to *Whakaruruhau*, the Flanders fields' poppy and Aotearoa/New Zealand foliage combine in the centre of the large, walk-in, Corten steel Belgian memorial *Laurel 'Memorial Wreath'*. This combination reflects shared sacrifice and hardship in times of conflict, and remembers the thousands of Aotearoa/New Zealand servicemen who lie in Belgian soil. A similar sculpture is installed in East Flanders. The work at Pukeahu incorporates an additional dynamic in its combination of symbolic motifs of the laurel wreath, which is usually associated with victory, and the memorial wreath, a tribute to the dead. Rather than celebrating bonds forged by fighting side by side (as the British memorial does), the form of *Laurel 'Memorial Wreath'* suggests the ambiguity of war.

While the British and Belgian memorials celebrate historic bonds, the dynamic of the *Turkish Memorial* (2017) is one of reconciliation with old foes. It is a step beyond the 1990 *Atatürk Memorial* located on a ridge above Wellington's Tarakena Bay. That work might cynically be regarded as a tit-for-tat memorial, agreed upon in exchange for the Turkish government officially naming the landing site at Gallipoli as Anzac Cove and establishing a commemorative space there. Matt Gauldie's *Turkish Memorial* at Pukeahu focuses on the shared experience of Gallipoli, where the Turks were defending their homeland. The bronze Anzac 'lemon squeezer' campaign hat and the Turkish helmet, lying side by side on a base that incorporates stones from the beaches of Gallipoli, finds common ground in a shared sense of loss. The two countries' bond in dealing with that loss is recognised by the words of reconciliation on the bronze backboard of the Pukeahu memorial:

Those heroes who shed their blood and lost their lives, you are now lying in the soil of a friendly country. Therefore, rest in peace. There is no difference between the Johnnies and the Mehemets to us where they lie side by side in this country of ours.¹⁴

Text also figures large in the French memorial, *Le Calligramme*, where slabs of French Caen stone carry verses from Guillaume Apollinaire's *Le Chant de l'Honneur* (1915). This tribute in French to young soldiers who fought in the trenches in the First World War is answered in te reo, 'haere whakamua, titiro whakamuri', which broadly translates as 'walking backwards into the future with our eyes wide open to the past'. This acknowledgement conceptualises an Indigenous Māori perspective of time, where past, present and future are viewed as circular

and therefore intertwined, rather than simply applying the culturally conditioned European notions of linear time (see Lo & Houkamau, 2013, p. 117). Evoking the bonds forged between Aotearoa/New Zealand and France since the First World War, Le Calligramme includes a sound sculpture created by children from France and Aotearoa/New Zealand reading out Le Chant de l'Honneur in te reo, French and English. 15

At Pukeahu, we see then a celebration of bonds with historic allies, shared values with those whom Aotearoa/New Zealand aided, and even reconciliation with former enemies. The purposes of these works lead us to question if they are indeed memorials. The more recent inclusions at Pukeahu are definitely more agenda-driven than simple, overt national narratives of Aotearoa/ New Zealand at war: the international memorials seek to strengthen ties with countries with which Aotearoa/New Zealand has had some historic relationship. Aotearoa/New Zealand is a nation that thrives on its balanced interaction in the international arena. It has survived, and continues to survive in times of peace, though cooperation – political, military and economic - with overseas partners. It takes no leap of the imagination to perceive a political advantage in celebrating the historic bonds of war with nations that are potentially lucrative (politically and economically) international partners. Is Aotearoa/New Zealand's historical connection with a diverse group of nations around the globe therefore being utilised for political purposes in an exercise designed to strengthen international relations? Or are these memorials truly acknowledging a shared experience and shared sense of loss? Whatever the answer, the personal element seen in the older style of memorials has, more recently, been eclipsed.

Switching from an outward to an inward gaze, there is a further shift in memorial culture at Pukeahu, one which pertains to commemorating the Māori experience in the international arena of 20th-century war; there is room to re-write history in line with Aotearoa/New Zealand's vision as a bicultural nation, with consideration of te ao Māori (the Māori worldview) at the fore. Within the older complex at Pukeahu, Māori feature as little more than a footnote to a standard Pākehā (European) history of Aotearoa/New Zealand at war. The symbolism and inscriptions of the Carillon Tower make no specific allusion to Māori, although some of the more recent bells are named for Māori. In the Hall of Memories, one can find the words '28th Māori Battalion' added somewhat awkwardly to the bottom of the plaque commemorating the New Zealand Second Expeditionary Force. Were it not for the more recent addition of the Tāhiwi (heart – of a tree), a three-panelled Māori carving presented by Gallipoli veterans to honour the First World War Māori Pioneer Battalion, there would be nothing in the Hall and Carillon complex that expresses the Māori experience with any distinctive cultural significance. This is particularly pertinent given the appropriation of te reo Māori in the title of the memorial park.

Kingsley Baird's 2004 Tomb of the Unknown Warrior shows greater inclusivity of bicultural commemoration. The inscription around the edge, a karanga (ritual chant of welcome) calling the warrior back home, forms a wreath of words in Māori and English. Beyond this, the imagery is a clever interweave of Māori and European symbolism. The mantle over the sarcophagus could be at once a korowai (Māori cloak) and the New Zealand flag inlaid with four pounamu (greenstone) crosses representing the principal stars of the Southern Cross constellation, a distinctive feature of the night sky in the Southern Hemisphere. The tomb itself is black granite inlaid with light grey Tākaka marble crosses, which are inspired by the Southern Cross guiding the warrior home on his journey back to Aotearoa/New Zealand. Being symbolic of a starladen sky, the crosses signify the distance he has travelled to foreign lands, and also represent the companions he leaves behind, those who also died in the service of their country and were laid to rest in foreign soil. The pattern brings to mind the lines of the poem, In Flanders Fields, written by Canadian physician Lieutenant-Colonel John MacRae in 1915 during the Second Battle of Ypres: 'In Flanders fields the poppies blow, Between the crosses, row on row,

That mark our place'. ¹⁶ In a bicultural reading, the crosses also form the poutama (stairway to heaven) pattern of Māori tukutuku weaving (latticework woven with reeds). However, the overall concept of the tomb sits within a traditional European memorial framework.

It is only in the First World War centenary project, Ngā Tapuwae o te Kāhui Maunga Gardens (The Footsteps of the Ancestors Gardens), that we see the Māori experience of past wars expressed in a modern and distinctly Māori way. The name for this memorial space gives the first clue, then two inscriptions on the walls dividing the paved area and native plantings make direct allusions to Māori experiences in war. The first, 'te hokowhitu a tu' (twice 70 warriors of the god of war), is the motto of the Native Contingent and the New Zealand (Māori) Pioneer Battalion in the First World War. The second, 'ake ake kia kaha e' (stand forever strong), is the anthem of the 28th (Māori) Battalion in the Second World War. These are not, however, the sole or central element of the memorial, and in Māoritanga (Māori culture, traditions and way of life) nor should they be. As an example, the latter inscription is partially concealed by native plants. To bring focus to the singular, in place of any grander, holistic, ancestral context, is at odds with Māoritanga. The texts are part of a design that sets the Māori war experiences within a broader whakapapa (genealogy). So too do three large rocks situated on an area of tiles arranged in a poutama design, which represents the passage to the spirit world. The rocks tell the story of the people of Te Āti Awa, who, alongside their Taranaki kin, are the mana whenua of the area. In Māori oral history, tribal relations can be traced through physical landmarks, and the landmarks in the ancestral story of Te Āti Awa include the mountains of Taranaki, Ruapehu and Tongariro. For the Ngā Tapuwae o te Kāhui Maunga Gardens, a large rock from each of these mountains was transported to the Pukeahu site, and each featured carvings by contemporary Māori artist Darcy Nicholas. The Ruapehu rock is the central matua, or parent, rock; underneath it is a mauri stone. Such stones blessed by a kaumātua (Māori elder) are believed to maintain mauri (life force). The carvings on the rock represent the land's entire history, from its rising from the sea to the present day. The rock from the warrior mountain, Tongariro, features seven warriors, representing the descendants of seven waka (canoes) believed to have brought Māori to Aotearoa/New Zealand. They also represent those who died in the country's tribal and colonial wars (Derby, 2016, p. 154). The Taranaki rock, sitting on its own at the eastern end of the garden, features symbols of the sun, which rises over Mount Hikurangi and sets over Mount Taranaki, connecting the two mountains and their people's histories. The rock also carries the stars of the Southern Cross, which connect Australia and Aotearoa/New Zealand through their flags, as well as a representation of four sentinels which oversee the arrival of visitors from the four corners of the earth.

As well as acknowledgement of the ancestry of those iwi with a connection to the land at Pukeahu, there are references to more recent Māori experiences on the site, specifically in the red bricks inset next to the third inscription 'maungarongo ki runga i te whenua' (peace across the land). The historic bricks, recovered during the tunnel project, were made in the Mount Cook Prison that formerly stood on the hill and once held Te Āti Awa people. In this context, a rather nondescript monument of unknown date and provenance warrants mention. Behind the National War Memorial is a stone cairn topped by two rocks, which the accompanying plaque explains are symbolic of a prisoner wrapped in a blanket, with his head bowed. The Pukeahu website identifies this as a memorial to the prisoners from Parihaka in Taranaki, who were held at Mount Cook Barracks in 1879.¹⁷ However, on-site there is nothing to communicate either this or the history of the passive resistance of the Taranaki iwi to the British military at Parihaka.

While Ngā Tapuwae o te Kāhui Maunga Gardens is distinctive in referencing the Māori experience, it is similarly innovative in its recognition of the presence of women. The centrepiece of Ngā Tapuwae o te Kāhui Maunga Gardens is Darcy Nicholas's bronze sculpture

Hinerangi, located near the Taranaki stone. This tall, semi-abstract figure has no discernible personal features, no face or hands. Her form is composed entirely of her kākahu (cloak). The patterns at the top of the cloak represent the land, and running down a strip on her back, the sun, moon and stars tell of family, home and guardianship. The tassels represent tears for those lost in war and the poutama designs at the bottom of the cloak symbolise the pathways Māori soldiers took on their journey to the spirit world. Some of these are interrupted, representing the reality of war. Hinerangi embodies the kaikaranga, the female elder who calls family and visitors onto the marae, the courtyard in front of a traditional Maori meeting house. She stands, facing south towards the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior and beyond to Aoraki (the highest mountain in Aotearoa/New Zealand), ready to make the karanga (call) to the spirits of those fallen in war to return home. 18 It is rare indeed for the voice of women to be the central element in a war memorial, both in Aotearoa/New Zealand and elsewhere (Speck, 1996). At Pukeahu, Hinerangi and Lyndon Smith's Mother and Children are the only signs of women's experiences during war: women are recognised, albeit to a very limited extent.

The full meaning of the Ngā Tapuwae o te Kāhui Maunga Gardens is not expressed by a singular feature: everything is relevant, even the inclusion of traditional medicinal plants have meaning. The complete entity ties together the cultural-historical significance of the site and its present purpose. It abides by Māori historical narrative traditions where time is collapsed, collating past, present and future. Ngā Tapuwae o te Kāhui Maunga Gardens is a culturally sensitive expression of a burgeoning recognition of the Māori experience in the international arena of war.

A temporary light and sound show with a bicultural perspective, World War 1 Remembered, ran for seven nights between the official opening of Pukeahu National War Memorial Park on 18 April 2015 and the commemoration of the centenary of the Anzac landing at Gallipoli on 25 April 2015. Projected onto the façade of the Carillon Tower were photographs of World War One servicemen interspersed with Māori and Pacific tukutuku and kowhaiwhai patterning designed by contemporary Māori artist, Ngataiharuru Taepa.¹⁹ The genealogical patterns of the kowhaiwhai served to integrate a Māori cultural perspective and narrative (Baird, 2019, p. 18).

It is important to note that not all previously marginalised experiences of the world wars have been afforded increased recognition. While the broad, non-didactic nature of the newer memorials at Pukeahu allows for more individual thought and reflection on what war means for New Zealanders - both Māori and Pākehā - the darker side of Aotearoa/New Zealand's experiences of war remains in the shadows. Despite the steps taken to broaden inclusivity and recognition of the biculturality that defines contemporary Aotearoa/New Zealand culture, Pukeahu as a memorial park remains tied to its colonial beginnings, rather than fully realising its pre-colonial origins as a sacred hill. Many commemorative practices within te ao Māori do not traditionally materialise as sculptural monuments but emerge from mātauranga Māori (shared knowledge). Oration, waiata (commemorative song), kapa haka (performing arts), carvings and weavings express shared knowledge through traditional Indigenous practices of creativity which emerged prior to the colonial era (see Mead, 2012, pp. 9-14). However, at Pukeahu, it seems the monumental and weather-hardy is favoured over more ephemeral displays of Indigenous commemoration; there is space in the park, but it must be fit for purpose. The design of the park largely hegemonizes remembrance as a Pākehā interpretation of a collective experience, while conveniently commodifying elements of Māoritanga that are deemed to 'fit'. One such example is the imagery projected onto the Carillion Tower by Ngataiharuru Tapea in 2015.

Aside from the overlooked Parihaka monument and the subtle allusion to Parihaka in the Ngā Tapuwae o te Kāhui Maunga Gardens, the darker aspects of Aotearoa/New Zealand's military history are not directly addressed at Pukeahu. No reference, for instance, is made to

the imprisonment of conscientious objectors in the nearby Alexandra Barracks between 1917 and 1919. Nor will one find mention of the harsh punishments dealt to conscripts who refused to abandon their moral convictions. This, however, is again not unique to Pukeahu. Nowhere in official memorials is there an acknowledgement of forced and, in the case of Waikato-Maniapoto iwi, targeted conscription, nor to the oppression of conscientious objectors, nor to field punishment. In terms of damage to mind, body and soul, that which has been left unspoken, largely remains so. An exception occurred on Anzac Day, 2016, when three sculptures (by an anonymous artist) of a soldier enduring Field Punishment Number One temporarily appeared on the Wellington waterfront (see Hunt, 2016). During the First World War, Field Punishment Number One was inflicted on resisters with pacifist beliefs, or soldiers found guilty of minor offences such as drunkenness. This involved the soldier in question being attached, standing full length, to a fixed object (such as a post or gun wheel) for up to two hours a day and for a period up to three months. These men were sometimes put in a place within range of enemy shell-fire.

There are strong arguments for an absence of overt anti-war sentiment in war memorials on the grounds that these should be spaces for neutral reflection, where varied interpretations of events can co-exist. If we look, for instance, at Maya Lin's *Vietnam Veterans Memorial* on the National Mall in Washington DC, part of its success lies in not aggravating either the anti-war or pro-war camps (Bell, 2019). While Aotearoa/New Zealand's involvement in the world wars and later peacekeeping actions has never been as controversial as the US involvement in the Vietnam War, openly addressing varying perspectives of Aotearoa/New Zealand's war history by way of a physical statement in the memorial park could still be seen by some to impugn the honour of those who fought. That said, the absence of comment, paired with the almost uniform emphasis among the new memorials at Pukeahu on the bonds forged in war, makes for a missed opportunity. There is, for example, nothing in line with the tradition of pacifist criticism, centred around Anzac Day, which emerged in the 1930s (Thomson, 1995).

In terms of the contemporary public reception to Pukeahu, there is little collective response to the memorials. In Aotearoa/New Zealand, there is yet to be a well-developed critical culture toward public sculpture beyond the forums of news media, with the responses being in a populist discursive style of writing rather than a critical analysis; each memorial unveiling attracts little other than a single-cycle news report. However, monuments are increasingly becoming sites of protest and a more critical form of discussion is emerging around the lack of inclusivity within traditional commemorative sculpture, with questions being raised about what they signify and who they truly represent. With much of the attention of current revisionist culture focused on figurative statues of European settlers, many sites around Aotearoa/New Zealand hosting the likes of Captain James Cook and Sir George Grey were defaced and vandalised amidst the 2020 Black Lives Matter protests. Pukeahu, however, did not attract such attention. This may have been because the war memorial building was closed to the public at the time for earthquake strengthening.

The nature of Pukeahu today raises questions applicable to all Aotearoa/New Zealand's centenary commemorative projects. Are we becoming more diversified and inclusive in our approach to remembering the world wars and the lives they claimed, or are we simply sustaining the same platitudes and rhetoric of the last hundred years in shiny new clothes? There is a shift from building didactic monuments to creating spaces of reflection; a greater focus on aesthetically diverse memorials; moves made towards reconciliation with old enemies; and more culturally specific expressions of Māori experiences. All these developments might suggest a change in how war, specifically the world wars, is remembered in Aotearoa/New Zealand. At the same time, can we say our understanding of history has matured to the point where it is possible to discuss the darker, more complex aspects of the First World War on

a public stage? It would appear not, going by Pukeahu's silence on this matter. Instead, the country's shared military history with other nations has become a focal point at Pukeahu, which in effect drives the public's reception and interaction with memorialisation. In turn, that raises issues not simply of what or how we remember, but also why. It also begs the question: should memorials be used for political purposes?

It is tempting to look not only at the past and present but also the future of Pukeahu National War Memorial Park. While we know what the park looks like in 2021, future development is a tantalising unknown. There is plenty of scope. The Ministry for Culture and Heritage's policy for the selection and management of memorials at Pukeahu states that a purpose of the park is to 'recognize military conflicts currently not recognized in a "national" memorial'. (Ministry for Culture and Heritage 2013, p. 4). It cites, for example, Aotearoa/New Zealand's ongoing role in peace-keeping operations, and the New Zealand Wars of the 1800s. The latter may prove problematic: the New Zealand Wars, which pitted Māori against the colonising Europeans in the years between 1845 and 1872, are divisive (King, 2003, pp. 211-24). The sesquicentenary of the end of that conflict looms in 2022, offering an opportunity for a truly holistic national memorial. However, only three out of every ten New Zealanders are aware there is a national day of commemoration for the New Zealand Wars, Rā Maumahara, on 28 October every year, and just two years out from the sesquicentenary, there has been no call for expressions of interest, nor a whisper of any form of sculptural inclusion within the war memorial park (see Ministry for Culture and Heritage, 2019). The conflict may be distant, but the wounds still run deep: any form of memorialisation could be an uncomfortable mix for New Zealanders, further politicising Pukeahu as a place of neutral reflection. Yet omitting such a significant facet of Aotearoa/New Zealand – specifically Māori – military history begins to take on political significance by its very omission. It seems that it is not simply a question of whether memorials should be used for political purposes; rather, the very nature of war is political which in turn makes the places of reflection inherently political sites.

Looking 20 years ahead, what innovations might the centenary of the Second World War bring forth? There is, for example, no memorial at Pukeahu expressing a common bond of loss with Germany, nor is there a Japanese memorial, and there is no explicit memorial to women's lives lost during the two world wars. Beyond that, what might Pukeahu look like in another century or so? Will it have stood the test of time and be a beacon of history, or will it have lost its way and sunk into neglect and an irrelevance of its own making? While war memorials are themselves an invention of tradition and can be seen as deliberate acts of propaganda and social control (MacLean and Phillips, 1990, p. 4), to affirm contemporary values they need also to project a true narrative of collective remembrance. At this point, the audience must come into play. As memorials take on increasingly abstracted forms, interpretation becomes dependent on an art-literate viewer, which seems to contravene the basis of loss and reflection. First and foremost, the role of commemorative sculpture is exactly that, but if the average viewer does not know how to conceptualise a commemorative interpretation, can it be classed as a successful memorial? Consequently, memorials can become distanced from their intended audience, the public, and risk becoming monoliths to forget instead of beacons of remembrance.

To continue to be relevant, memorials must remain both accessible and inclusive when seeking the balance between didacticism and open-ended interpretation while avoiding a forced narrative. Parallel to this, for Aotearoa/New Zealand to forge ahead as a bicultural nation, perhaps the way to do so successfully is encapsulated in the text on the French memorial at Pukeahu: 'haere whakamua, titiro whakamuri' - walking backwards into the future with our eyes wide open to the past. Pukeahu National Memorial Park is still negotiating this pathway through reconsidering past commemorative artistic practices and re-writing history through new

forms, functions and the content of its public monuments. While Pukeahu may not yet have come full-circle and back to its origins as a sacred hill, in a bicultural nation with a burgeoning appetite for change and inclusivity, the stars may well be aligned. It is well-nigh time.

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Notes

- 1. The Ode of Remembrance is taken from the fourth stanza of Laurence Binyon, For the Fallen first published in 1914.
- 2. The acronym ANZAC stands for Australian and New Zealand Army Corps. Anzac Day is a national day of remembrance in Aotearoa/New Zealand and Australia. It is observed on 25 April which marks the anniversary of Aotearoa/New Zealand's first engagement in the First World War, the Gallipoli (Turkey) landings of 25 April 1915.
- 3. Pukeahu, the place, has historically also been known as Mount Cook. Named for English explorer Captain James Cook, Mount Cook is the name given to Pukeahu by British settlers in the 19th century. The Māori placename was officially restored in 2012. For details see Derby (2016, p. 12). The Ministry for Culture and Heritage has a website dedicated to the Pukeahu National War Memorial Park: https://mch.govt.nz/pukeahu-national-war-memorial-park.
- 4. I am grateful to Michael Irwin who was my research assistant on this project, and to Ellie Thomas for her critical input.
- 5. The Māori word iwi refers to an extended kinship group, tribe or people. It often refers to a large group of people descended from a common ancestor and associated with a distinct territory. Māori are the Polynesian Indigenous peoples of New Zealand, the tangata whenua (people of the land).
- 6. In Māori culture, the connection to the land represents connection to ancestry and the natural world.
- 7. For a detailed history of the National War Memorial see Phillips (2016, pp. 147-50).
- 8. In 1985 the newly appointed carillonist, Timothy Hurd, led a push to add the remaining 20 bells originally planned. In 1986, 16 treble bells were added (including five donated by Hurd) and finally in 1995, to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the end of the Second World War, the New Zealand government and the New Zealand Lottery Grants Board funded the four largest missing bells: *Aroha* (Grace), *Tūmanako* (Hope), *Whakamaharatanga* (Remembrance) and *Rangimārie* (Peace). With 74 bells, ranging from 10kg to 12.5 tonnes, this is the third largest carillon in the world. A full list of the bells, along with their inscriptions can be found on the New Zealand History website: https://nzhistory.govt.nz/war/bells-of-remembrance
- 9. An image of *The Man with the Donkey* and more information about the history behind the sculpture can be found on the Ministry for Culture and Heritage website: https://mch.govt.nz/pukeahu/park/national-war-memorial/man-with-donkey
- 10. A detailed account of the construction of the tunnel and park can be found in Derby (2016); Phillips (2016, pp. 217-19).
- 11. Mana whenua refers to the historic and territorial rights of the Indigenous people (Māori) over a particular area of land.
- 12. For more information about Australian Aboriginal dreamtime and the Dreaming philosophy, see https://www.aboriginal-art-library/understanding-aboriginal-dreaming-and-the-dreamtime/
- 13. The *Atatürk Memorial* was not well received by the Greek community in Aotearoa/New Zealand, who were appeased only when a Greek memorial 'to the friendship of the peoples of Greece and New Zealand' was erected between Cambridge and Kent Terraces, Wellington, in 1995 (Phillips, 2016, pp. 205-206). The Greek memorial today stands rundown and isolated, at a distance from Pukeahu National War Memorial Park.
- 14. These lines, which also appear on the 1990 *Atatürk Memorial* in Wellington are traditionally attributed to Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, leader of the Turkish forces defending Gallipoli. It is noted that the attribution to Atatürk has become controversial and deemed 'fraudulent' (at best a loose translation) following research by the organization Honest History under the presidency of Professor Peter Stanley (University of New South Wales). For more, see Robins (2018).

- 15. Nearly 8,000 New Zealanders lost their lives in France during two world wars, more than in any other country. For further details, see the Ministry for Culture and Heritage website: https://mch.govt.nz/french-memorialunveiling-pukeahu-national-war-memorial-park
- 16. In Flanders Fields was first published in Punch December 8, 1915. The poem can be read on the Poetry Foundation website: https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/47380/in-flanders-fields
- 17. For more information on the Parihaka memorial and the history of Parihaka, see the Ministry for Culture and Heritage website: https://mch.govt.nz/pukeahu/park/significant-sites/parihaka-memorial. Also King (2003, pp. 220-21).
- 18. In Māori tradition when people pass on, their spirits traverse their ancestral land before departing from the northern most tip of the North Island of Aotearoa/New Zealand.
- 19. Kowhaiwhai are patterns, usually geometric, painted in a whare tipuna (meeting house) telling the history and whakapapa (geneology) of the iwi (tribe).

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