

*The New Oceania:
A Selected Bibliography*

Graeme Whimp

This selection of essays, addresses, and related material by Albert Wendt concentrates on the major themes associated with the new Oceania, an enormously influential concept most fully developed in the 1976 essay “Towards a New Oceania” (hereafter “New Oceania”). Aspects of that essay are further discussed in my article “A Search for the New Oceania” in this issue of The Contemporary Pacific. A full Wendt bibliography to January 2003 by Paul Sharrad and Karen M Peacock, to which I am indebted, appeared in The Contemporary Pacific 15:378–420. A small number of my identifications of editions differ from those of Sharrad and Peacock.

1974 Inside “Outsider” Wendt. *New Zealand Book World* [Wellington] 8 (February/March): 6–8.

The “teaser” line for this article reads: “All his writing evolves out of a position as a ‘mongrel’ of two cultures.” Here emerge the themes of the richness of oral tradition; the influence of his storyteller grandmother, Mele Tuoapepe; his bonds with other Polynesian/Pacific artists, among whom are included Pākehā New Zealanders; the loneliness and power of being a “mongrel”; the evils of racism and the impositions of outsiders; pālagi fantasies about the Pacific that reveal more about their own hang-ups than about the region; the Pacific artistic renaissance with its new beginnings; and the creative writer as historian.

1975 A Sermon on National Development, Education, and the Rot in the South Pacific. In *Education in Melanesia*, edited by J Brammall

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and Ronald J May, 373–380. Canberra: Research School in Pacific Studies, the Australian National University; Port Moresby: University of Papua New Guinea.

Delivered at the Eighth Waigani Seminar, held in Port Moresby from 5 to 10 May 1974, this paper contains substantial segments on education and architecture that would appear almost verbatim in “New Oceania.” Its trenchant critique of the Church and its support for organized labor, however, do not carry over to the later publication. Themes that do recur later include a critique of the preservation of culture; colonial mimicry; corruption and the betrayal of independence by elites, experts, and meddling outsiders; and educational colonization and pacification. In this paper, Wendt ascribed to his grandmother the expression “heavy body odour” to describe postindependence stagnation; this phrase reappears in “New Oceania.”

1976a Towards a New Oceania. *Mana Review: A South Pacific Journal of Language and Literature* 1 (1) (January): 49–60. Reprinted in *Writers in East-West Encounter: New Cultural Bearings*, edited by Guy Amirthanayagam, 202–215. London: Macmillan, 1982; in *A Pacific Islands Collection: Cook Islands, Fiji, New Zealand, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Vanuatu, Western Samoa*, edited by Richard Hamasaki. *Seaweeds and Constructions* 7:71–85. Printed by Elepaio Press. Honolulu: Richard Hamasaki, 1983; in *Readings in Pacific Literature*, edited by Paul Sharrad, 9–19. Wollongong: New Literatures Research Centre, 1993; and in *The Arnold Anthology of Post-colonial Literatures in English*, edited by John Thieme, 641–651, London: Edward Arnold, 1996.

Note: At page 77, line 16, Hamasaki 1983 converts the *Mana* phrasing “choke in its own body odour, juices, and excreta” (page 53, lines 47–48) to “choke in its own bloody odour, juices and excreta”; the other anthologies follow the wording in *Mana*.

The complexity of “Towards a New Oceania” does not yield easily to brief summary. However, its major themes and those appearing elsewhere include the imperative of a return to Oceania by way of the ancestors and the artists, but a return to a renewed Oceania; the vital importance of oral tradition; the “chill” of colonialism and racism and the malign influence of “whitification”; the romantic distortions of “outsiders”; the predatory character of elites; illusory quests for tradition and authenticity, preserva-

tion and purity, and revival of and return to the past; the determination of “authenticity” by usage, not appeal to tradition; the diversity and vitality of real culture and real cultures; the importance of life in the present, not the past; and the immensity and creativity of the Pacific as expressed in the artistic renaissance of the 1960s.

1976b In a Stone Castle in the South Seas. *Mana Review: A South Pacific Journal of Language and Literature* 1 (2) (December): 27–32. Reprinted in *The Literary Half-Yearly* [Mysore, India] 18 (1): 152–160 (1977).

This piece contains flashes of reference to the earlier themes but, in contrast to the earlier celebration of artistic renaissance, is marked by pessimism and despair about the possibility of personal creativity in the environment of the University of the South Pacific in Suva, Fiji. It emphasizes Wendt’s reliance as a writer on his roots in Sāmoa, to which he craves return. A substantial passage pays tribute to his grandmother, Mele Tuaopepe, the “most precious” of his dead, for the influence on him of her storytelling skills.

1978 The Artist and the Reefs Breaking Open. *Mana: A South Pacific Journal of Language and Literature* 3 (1) (October): 107–121.

Delivered at the Second International Symposium on the Arts of Oceania at Victoria University of Wellington in February 1978, this paper returns to a trenchant critique of colonialism and its effects on the existing art forms and artists. It attacks the straitjacket of “authentic traditional art” imposed by the tourist industry, and it surveys and celebrates a variety of developments in the renaissance of Pacific arts.

1980 Introduction. *Lali: A Pacific Anthology*, edited by Albert Wendt, xiii–xix. Auckland: Longman Paul.

This short piece carries over material from both “New Oceania” and “The Artist and the Reefs Breaking Open.” Another celebration of the 1960s renaissance is followed by an acknowledgment that it stalled in the early 1970s after independence spread across the Pacific, diverting artists into politics and administration, and by an account of the attempt at revival led by Mana Publications.

- 1983a Contemporary Arts in Oceania: Trying to Stay Alive in Paradise as an Artist. In *Art and Artists of Oceania*, edited by Sydney M Mead and Bernie Kernot, 198–209. Palmerston North, NZ: Dunmore Press.

This is a reworking of “The Artist and the Reefs Breaking Open.”

- 1983b The Writer as Fiction. *Mana: A South Pacific Journal of Language and Literature* 8 (1): 40–46. Reprinted in *Pacific Islands Communication Journal* 13 (1): 41–49 (1984); and in *Publishing in the Pacific Islands*, edited by Jim Richstad and Miles M Jackson, 41–50. Honolulu: Graduate School of Library Studies, University of Hawai‘i, 1984.

This address, delivered at the First South Pacific Conference on Reading held in Auckland in January 1983, traces Wendt’s development as a writer from the time he left Sāmoa at the age of thirteen and “was adopted by another language, English” (Taranaki English!). The whole piece might be summarized as a sustained celebration of the writer as storyteller and Māui-like trickster.

- 1987 Novelists and Historians and the Art of Remembering. In *Class and Culture in the South Pacific*, edited by Antony Hooper and others, 78–91. Suva: Institute of Pacific Studies, University of the South Pacific; Auckland: Centre for Pacific Studies, University of Auckland.

Delivered at a conference on Pacific studies at the University of Auckland in August 1985, this paper returns to the themes of writer as historian, the importance of living (and writing history) in the “ever-moving” present, and the impositions of outsiders. It briefly explores the novel in postcolonial conditions.

- 1990 Pacific Maps and Fiction(s): A Personal Journey. In *Migration and New Zealand Society: Proceedings of the Stout Research Centre Sixth Annual Conference*, 59–81. Wellington: Stout Research Centre. Reprinted in *Perceiving Other Worlds*, edited by Edwin Thumboo, 179–210. Singapore: Singapore Times, 1991; in *Meridian* 14 (2): 13–44 (1995); and in *Asian and Pacific Inscriptions: Identi-*

ties, Ethnicities, Nationalities, edited by Suvendrini Perera, 13–44. Bundoora: Meridian, LaTrobe University, 1995.

This paper was delivered as an inaugural lecture at the University of Auckland in 1987 following Wendt's return to New Zealand, and at the Stout Research Centre Sixth Annual Conference at Victoria University of Wellington in June–July 1989. Containing small elements from "New Oceania," it celebrates cultural diversity, storytelling, and Wendt's grandmother, Mele Tuaopepe, and returns to the attack on colonialism, racism, cultural purity, as well as outsiders and their stereotypes.

1991 A Genealogy of Women. In *Soho Square IV*, edited by Bill Manhire, 24–37. Wellington: Bridget Williams.

This piece is a sustained celebration of some of the women in Wendt's family and, especially and at some length, of the life and powers of his grandmother, Mele Tuaopepe, "the greatest storyteller you've ever known."

1999 Afterword: Tatauing the Post-Colonial Body. In *Inside Out: Literature, Cultural Politics, and Identity in the New Pacific*, edited by Vilsoni Hereniko and Rob Wilson, 399–412. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

This essay explores the ta tatau (tattoo) as a script or text with a long history, the foundation of "a rich storehouse of oral tradition."