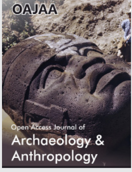
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Review Article

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Gender-Specific Dance and Theater in Polynesian, Melanesian and Balinese Ritual

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Introduction

In the break-out film, *Whale Rider* (2020), the Maori chief, Koro, prohibited his granddaughter, Pai, from learning tribal songs and ritual warrior movement because of her gender. This film raised the question the status of Polynesian women, and their ability to learn and perform gender-specific ritual movement. How have women's roles developed in Polynesian, Melanesian, and Balinese dance theatre?.

In many pre-Contact Polynesia as well as neo-Polynesian societies, women's ritual movement has been circumscribed. Traditionally, men were considered to have higher status than women; men of lower rank could commune with spirits safely and achieve high status through ritual . While women could own land, only high-ranking women could serve as priests on the *marae*, the sacred stone platform, where community rituals were performed. For Tahitians, who are considered to be the predecessors of the Maori, the ability to achieve the sacred state depended upon gender and geneology. In Tahiti, high-ranking women could rule. Pomare IV held political sway for fifty years in the mid-nineteenth century; it is noteworthy that the increasing power of the Europeans undermined her authority. Notably, Samoan women "held chiefly titles" and performed priestly functions in their families. Rank and family intersected with gender to influence which Polynesia women held political and spiritual power.

1. Lockwood (1993:20).
2. Ibid. Also see Levy (1995:234) and Forman's 'Women in the Churches of Oceania' in Rethinking Women's Roles: Perspectives from the Pacific. O'Brien and Tiffany, ed. (1984:156).
3. See Theroux's The Happy Isles of Oceania (1992, 20) and Patrick V. Kirch's 'Prehistory' in Developments in Polynesian Ethnology, Howard and Borofsky, ed. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press: 1989).
4. Lockwood (1993:35).
5. Ibid, 25.
6. See Forman's 'Women in the Churches of Oceania' in Rethinking Women's Roles: Perspectives from the Pacific. O'Brien and Tiffany, ed. (1984:156). Also see Goldman (1970:253) and Schoeffel (1977:11).

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Reasons offered for such spiritual exclusion includded contamination of women by menstrual blood and the power, and danger, of reproduction. Because Tahitian men considered women vulnerable to spiritual forces, especially during menstruation, society protected women by barring ritual involvement. Another theory considered that women's ability to create life brought them closer to the gods; this intimacy between women and the gods prevented women from enacting rituals in a dependable manner. The Maori took the profane quality of women a step farther. Citing Bradd Shore, the Maori culture termed a woman's vagina 'the house of calamity.' Conversely, the Maori elevated the spiritual power of the male chief, believing that crawling through a chief's legs near endowed the warriors with courage and strength. Tahitian and Maori societies allowed greater access to ritual participation and leadership than women.

The Polynesian preference for male leadership, owing to the presumed superior potency of men's spiritual power, could be mitigated by genealogy. High ranking women were considered sacred. Supporting this genealogical exception to the gender rule, a Tahitian woman's high rank mitigates the effect of gender on spiritual leadership. In some Polynesian cultures, such as Tonga, women were considered spiritually powerful. Indeed, Forman noted,"Mystical power was inherited through the female line." Thus, rank outweighed gender in access to political, and at times, spiritual leadership, particularly in Polynesian family ceremonies. Yet, in most public gender-specific Polynesian ritual movement women have been excluded.

In *Whale Rider*, did Chief Koro accept Pai as his heiress and allow her to ride in the canoe, a traditionally male activity, because she was her granddaughter, her high status or her courageous and sacred accomplishments? Initially, the Maori Chief excluded his granddaughter from learning the sacred warrior rituals. Because her grandfather would not let her learn the male stick dances, Pai sought the aid of her great-uncle who taught the warrior stick dance to her. Greatly displeased, the chief threw the whale tooth in the ocean. None of the chosen village boys found the sacred object. Surrepticiously Pai's great-uncle took her out in his boat in which she retrieved the chieftain's necklace from the water. Initially, her grandmother refused to let her show the sacred object to Chief Koro. Only after Pai called to the whales to the village beach and rode the lead whale out to sea did her grandmother show the sacred object to her grandfather. Realizing that Pai achieved the chieftaincy by merit, Chief Koro allowed her to sit by him in the canoe.

Therefore, whether Pai's lineage or her heroic actions allowed her to become the leader is intersectional. As the second-born female child of the son of the chief, Pai had high female status. Had she been a boy, Pai would have inherited the chieftaincy after her father abdicated. Pai's fulfillment of a sacred act overcame her gender to allow her to inherit the chieftaincy. The Maori worldview accounts for these phenomena. Gregory Schrempp noted, 'For the Maori, a positive is most typically achieved through the negation of a negative.'" By retrieving the sacred symbol of chieftaincy and calling and guiding the whales out to sea, Pai negated the taboo of her gender, becoming the heiress to the chieftaincy.

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7. See Lockwood (1993) and Oliver (1974:601).
8. Howard and Kirkpatrick (1989: 84)
9. Lockwood (1993:36). Also see Hanson (1982).
10. Translation of te whare o te aitu from the Maori, cited by Bradd Shore (1989:146) in (Best 1914:132, Hanson 1982c:89, Hanson and Hanson 1983:90).
11. E.S.C. Handy (1927:143), Shore (1989:142).
12. See Lockwood (1993: 34). According to Dennis Kawaharada, current archeology indicates a migration from the Society and Cook Islands to New Zealand at approximately 1000 A.D. Therefore, the connection between the Tahiti Maohi and the New Zealand Maori though systems. Also see Patrick V. Kirch's article in Howard and Borofsky's Developments in Polynesian Ethnology (1989).
13. Howard and Kirkpatrick (1989:78). Also see Goldman (1970:16).
14. Forman's 'Women in the Churches of Oceania' in Rethinking Women's Roles: Perspectives from the Pacific. O'Brien and Tiffany, ed. (1984:157); Rogers (1977:177-178).
15. Shore (1989:173) provides the key to intersectionality of status and gender: "Though Maori women in general were devalued in relation to men, seniority of descent could in fact outweigh the gender distinction. Primogeniture was sufficiently important for the Maori to guarantee that the first-born of a senior line would be ritually honored – whatever the sex…High-ranking women were considered tapu and important titled women such as puhi and tapairu could attain considerable political power" (Best 1924a, 1:407).
16. Gregory Schrempp's 'Maori cosmology' in Transformations of Polynesian Culture. Hooper and Huntsman, ed. (1985:25). Also see Smith (1974:23).
17. Ibid, Schrempp (1985:25).

Research into the status and ritual movement of Polynesian women led to comparison of Polynesian women's ritual movement to that of Melanesian and Balinese women and the effect of Asian politics on contemporary and neo-traditional dance. Consequently, rank and spiritual taboos of contemporary Maori culture and gender-specific ritual movement in Polynesia led to questions: Given traditional gender roles in Polynesian ritual movement, what is the impact of women's increasing involvement in traditionally male religious rituals and dances? How is Polynesian women's ritual and social movement similar to and different from that in Melanesia and Bali. What role does transvestism in comedic dance and drama play? Observations of Allan Thomas on Polynesian Tokelau, Raymond Ammann on the Melanesian Kanak, and Bandem and deBoer, De Zoete and Spies, and Daniel on Bali inform historical and modern performing arts

What Constitutes Traditional Dance and Drama?

Performing arts that described mythological origins responded to and fulfilled community needs. When indigenous dances and dramas were created, they incorporated stories, history, and contemporary events. During seventeenth, eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries, historical accounts documented Polynesian, Melanesian and Balinese dance and drama during its evolotion in response to a people's encounter with other cultures, whether it be a tribe on the same island or another island, or external forces such as whalers, explorers, slavers, missionaries, colonists or soldiers. These encounters profoundly influenced creative expression of social needs, dances, dance-dramas, and songs, resulting in loss of indigenous dances, songs, and dramas. Post-Contact influences resulting in devastating loss of dance and theater include:

- Authorities banning ritual dances, drama and songs
- Colonists relocating indigenous peoples to reservations
- Sailors and governments abusing, kidnapping, enslaving, and killing residents
- Missionaries discouraging or condemning the indigenous lifestyle
- The spread of epidemics.

These ills left an indelible mark on Polynesian, Melanesian and Balinese performing arts.

Some communities preserved historical dances, songs, and dramas, or adapted these forms by incorporating current events and new styles. A dance or drama created to accommodate innovation is more likely to survive. However, methods for deciding which dances, songs and stories become traditional were inconsistent. On the Cook Islands, the tin drum which had been played for more than a hundred years was rejected as "non-traditional" in competitions and festivals in the 1970s, but a song accompanied by guitar could considered as traditional, if the subject concerns subsistence activities, historical occurrences, or family records. In Tahiti, English hymn tunes were considered as indigenous. Tuvaluans incorporated the tune of "Clementine" into a new 'indigenous' song and dance. During the Second World War, Furthermore, Tokelauans responded to the presence of American soldiers stationed on Atafu by creating a satirical *fātele*, "Eh Joe Be Careful", after viewing a film on the island. Thus, the Tokelauan fātele, which originated in Tuvalu, served as an example of a community processing political changes, especially from 1840 to present. Polynesian, Melanesian and Balinese dance drama that transformed to meet current needs became as traditional as ancient forms.

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18. Royce (1977:110) and Thomas (1996:156).

19. Stillman (1993: 97) and Thomas (1996).

20. Thomas (1996:20). Also see Hoem (1992: 33).

21. Thomas (1996:54) notes that accounts of the Second World War are given in Matagi Tokelau (1991:128).

Evolution in the performing arts is a natural phenomenon. The performing arts are, by nature, plastic, ephemeral, existing but for a moment, then gone forever. Dance and drama may be captured in photographs or on film or video, but the crystalline moments of performance that live in the muscle memory of those who perform these forms create atmospheric waves that ripple across generations and echo around the globe to influence performing arts for centuries to come.

Comparison of Polynesian, Melanesian and Balinese Dance

Pacific Island style were usually earthbound, emphasizing movement in the torso, hips and arms. In Polynesia, Melanesia and Bali, male dancers squatted, stepped in place and marched. Women, in contrast, stepped side to side, or forward and backwards on one spot. In Bali and Melanesia, balancing on one leg for a long moment was also common. Further, the Tokelauan stick dance resembled some Melanesian dances and the Balinese Baris, in which men in two or more lines fight each other in a classic warrior dance. Jumping in Polynesian, Melanesian and Balinese dance was a twentieth-century development.

Polynesia

Through widespread observation of styles, characteristics of Polynesian dance emerged:

I. The feet provide a stable base. Little traveling or jumping occurs.

II. Dance, music and text are frequently combined.

III. Dance or drama is presentational, facing an audience.

IV. Given a semi-permeable boundary, the audience may join performers in some dances.

V. Community members rather than elite professionals perform in these social event.

VI. Dancers, actors and singers perform material in their own language as themselves instead of reenacting myths or historical dramas as animals, gods or heroes.

VII. Dances vary by increasing pace throughout the performance.

Tokelau

The Tokelauan *fātele* examplified adaptive Polynesian dance. Originating in the early twentieth century, the *fātele* allowed for creation of new material from current events and new modes of transportation and communication. These features illustrate Tokelauan dance-drama:

I. In the beginning, the text was prominent and the movement slow.

II. The torso remained upright for all *fātele*.

III. Men and women used different lower body stances that deepen as the pace increases.

IV. Representational gestures, such as rubbing one's eyes to indicate crying, and ornamental gestures, such as a bird flying, changed based on the content of a specific song or dance.

V. Tilting the torso, stepping in a full circle or spiral, dropping to one knee, and hopping may be added according to the needs of the text.

VI. As the song accelerated, the dancers' gestures become larger and more specific.

VII. Topics of text include contemporary events, Bible stories, traditional literature, messages for the attendees, or mimetic actions such as fishing.

VIII. The dance-drama may be adapted for specific events. Funerals may include text only, but pure dance and song without text may be featured entertainment purposes.

IX. A high value is placed on a calm exterior as the pace increases.

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22. Bandem and deBoer (1995) and De Zoete and Spies 1938).

23. Ammann (1997: 257-258). Also see Moyle (1991:48); Allan (1996:36).

24 Ammann (1997: 257-258).

25. Kaeppler (1983:12) notes that observations of this phenomenon differ in Poort (1975:12). Also see Burrows (1940:343).

26. Tourism changed performance. Tahitian dance was exported to hotels in New Caledonia (Ammann 1997:96).

27. Thomas (1996: 4).

28. Ibid, 122. Also see Lister (1892: 45).

29. For a fuller description, see Thomas (1996: 36, 48-51, and 67-69).

30. Ibid, 41.

The community fātele reinforced social bonds. The primary criterion for performance in the fātele is the dancer's membership in the community, which Thomas defines as 'kinship, residence, church membership or atoll of origin,' rather than skill. Dancers lined up by height instead of status. Fātele leaders agreed that a dance may look better with the best dancers in front, but group membership overrode aesthetics. The group leader often allowed each dancer to be in front. Due to the import of community involvement, the audience spontaneously joined the dance and the dancer placed a costume piece on an audience member during the dance.

Men and women perform the fātele together. While men and women performed the same gestures, the manner in which the gestures were performed differed. For example, women move with greatly fluidity in a smaller kinesphere; men use angular gestures in a larger kinesphere. As with other Polynesian and Melanesian dances, male and female stance differed. In Tokelau, dancers beat the rhythm on the ground, shifting weight from side to side by raising the foot off the ground. In contrast with other Polynesian movement, women who danced the fātele neither vibrated their hips nor rotated their pelvises in a figure-eight in the characteristic style of Tahitian or Cook Island dances. Instead, Tokelauan women danced in a narrow parallel stance with the knees close together. However, male dancers spread their legs wide, bent their knees, and turned out at their hip to perform combative and magical actions. In Tokelau and Samoa, the audience urged men to deepen their stances. Whereas Tokelauan women's dance differed from other Polynesian dances, the male stance resembles the Maoran haka and Tongan *lakalaka*.

For example, the *fātele* demonstrates its competitive roots in fiafia singing. Some fātele began with a wrestling gesture: men folded their arms and clapped one hand on the opposite upper arm. These fiafia challenges underline the confrontational spirit. fātele groups prepared 15 to 25 *fātele*. One group performed a fātele; the other group responded with a most topical and witty dance. Fiafia groups attempt to best each other by dancing better or eliciting more laughter. In Tokelauan dances and songs, women's movement differed greatly from Polynesian dances.

Melanesia

Torso initiation that influenced movement throughout the body characterized female and male Melanesian dance In movement analysis of Pacific Island and Asian films, Ness noted that women led movement with the wrist and used 'near-reach foot stepping.' The Trobriand and Andaman Islanders and the Maring people of Papua New Guinea were notable exceptions to the distal-led arm use of women. Ammann cites Kaeppler's characteristics of Melanesian dances:

I. The round dance, which does not exist in Polynesia, is the most common form.

II. Legs and torso movement, rather than arm and hand gesture, dominate the dancing.

III. Dancers progressed in a circle, or in single or multiple lines.

IV. Depending upon age and marital status, all community members joined in the dance. There were no separate audience members.

V. Dance had a spontaneity which did not require long and arduous training.

VI. Dancers either participated as themselves or become other characters such as birds.

31. Thomas (1996:79)

32. Ibid, 97.

33. Ibid, 69.

34. Ibid, 39.

35. Ibid, 34. Also see Mead (1939:112).

36.Thomas (1996:36-37).

37.Ibid, 91.

38. Thomas (1996:63-65) notes that 2-3 new fātele are prepared each year for these competitions.

39. Ness (1992:121n). For further description of distal use of wrist in Asian dance, see McPhee (1970).

40. Ammann (1997:254).

41. See Kaeppler (1983:12). Also see Burrows (1940:343).

42. In Melanesia, these dances were a rite-of-passage; dancers were limited in which dances they could perform during pre-pubescence, adolescence before marriage or adulthood.

43. However, if the dance makes part of a venerated ritual woman are generally excluded.

44. Ammann (1997:254). Also see Kaeppler (1983:62).

45. Thomas (1996:124).

In Polynesian dances, the performers face the audience to fight imaginary attackers. Contrariwise, Melanesian dancers fight other performers directly. Consider the Kanak dance as typical Melanesian movement.

New Caledonia

In New Caledonia, many round-dances existed in larger exchanges and dances. Movement was largely drawn from mimetic actions of community life such as spear-fishing, swinging a club in a war-like movement, jumping, thrusting the pelvis, kneeling to shoot a gun, and parodying Western medicine in scenes of doctors treating patients. Such dances concluded with throwing dance tassels, an ancient symbol of war readiness.

Consider the popular war dance from the Paicî region of New Caledonia. Ammann described the dance's central motif in which dancers knelt and lowered arms as if to strike:

I. Stamped the left foot in place and moved the arms in and out

II. Stamped, turned one-quarter clockwise, and knelt on one knee

III. Rose, stamped, turned in a half turn counterclockwise, and knelt on the other knee.

Ammann linked this motif with preparation for war because acceleration and stamping preceded battles. In the 1990s, male Kanak performer continued to deck themselves as warriors by painting their torsos black and holding dance tassels. In contrast, Polynesian and Melanesian dances often excluded women, perhaps due to their ability to give life. Accordingly, Lepowsky noted that Vanatinai women were forbidden to 'throw spears to kill animals or, formerly, human beings.' Since dance prepared men for war, Melansian women did not dance with weapons.

Polynesian and Melanesian women did dance to assist the men in preparation for war. Melanesian women frequently celebrated a successful raid in dance. In New Caledonia, women and children circled in a counterclockwise direction as the men prepared for war. Sometimes women even decided whether or not their people should wage war. In Vanatinai, a senior woman initiated a battle by throwing her outerskirt on the ground between male combatants. Yet, the unusual cèto dance of northern *Grande Terre* women held up spears and circled a house to ward off a bad spirit during dwelling construction. The woman who played the bad spirit entered the circle, but women with spears chased her out. This dance challenged the Pacific Island taboos of women dancing with weapons.

Bali

To better understand the difference between traditional female and male roles in Balinese ritual, consider several dances which exemplify gender-specific movement. Women danced the Rejang and Legong. Men danced the *Baris Gedé.* fter these gender-based dances, the *Barong Ket* character Rangda was vanquished by the *Kris dancers.*

In the *Rejang*, girls and women danced in a procession of four lines. Waving a fan in one hand, they held long sashes in the other. Ana Daniel described the leader's movement:

Her movements were restrained, exact, then quick – a flick of the wrist – and slow again, concentrated, her head still, her back straight, her eyes motionless yet clear. She lifted and swayed with each minute step…she stood poised, breathing deeply several times…

bringing her hands together to form the mudra.

46.Rivierre (1983:162).

47.Ammann (1997:152).

48. Ibid, 144.

49. Ammann (1997:108).

50. Ibid, 94). Also see Oliver (1974:601) and Lockwood (1993:36)

51. Lepowsky (1993:93).

52. See Crowe (1990) for counterclockwise circling in Melanesia, in 'Dancing Backwards?' See Ammann (1997:65).

53. Lepowsky (1993: 286).

54. Ammann (1997:164-165).

55. Also spelled Redjang. Bandem and deBoer note that "in the more traditional Bali Aga villages of Tenganan and Asak, the performers are drawn only from among the children and young women of the village." (Bandem and deBoer 1995:16).

56. Daniel (1981:109).

These movements were given as an offering to the gods.

In the Baris Gedé, men marched in columns, shouted, knelt, rose, and fought each other in unison in this great line dance. Warriors balanced on one leg with their other legs bent at a 90 degree angle, and sprung lightly onto the other leg repeatedly. This martial offering trained and prepared the men for war with reverence to the gods.

The Legong, the sacred temple dance, was typically performed by two prepubescent girls. With bent knees and hips jutting backwards, the dancers rippled their arms. Sudden wrist movements punctuated the serpentine flow. Intermittently, they shrugged their shoulders up and down, and forward and back, with alacrity. Periodically, the girls shook their splayed fingers and slightly shifted their heads from side to side. Arresting the movement of their arms, the moon-like calm of the girls' faces were accented by their tilting heads and shifting eyes. The dancers took tiny, quick steps to the right and left. Raising up on their toes, they walked forward with small stamps. The girls finished by undulating their sleek torsos and walking briskly in a circle. The Legong epitomizes the feminine spiritual power of the dancers.

In the film The Three Worlds of Bali, an abridged version of Barong Ket, the male Kris dancers initially talked jokingly and pointed at a man who impersonated the witch-goddess of death, Rangda. As this widow chased a Kris dancers, he trembled, kicked his knees high, and ran out. Another Kris dancer knelt and prayed, then undulated his body stiffly imitated and held up his robes by his chest in a gesture of mock humility and authority. Suddenly, a Kris dancer whipped a Legong girl, tied her arms to a tree, and gyrated in a circle around her. The entranced Kris dancers concluded by stabbing themselves in the chest with Kris knives. The Barong Ket demonstrates the power of trance by preventing the knives from harming the Kris dancers.

In Indonesia, carefully chosen performers dance in rituals. However, some dances, such as the sensual ngibing, offered the opportunity for male audience members to dance with female dancers. As in the Tokelauan performance, the performer bedecked audience member with a piece of the performer's costume during the dance. Unlike Tokelau, the performer chose the audience participant. Sometimes, the ngibing pairings culminated in a sexual interaction. Inclusion of audience members in the ngibing allowed for community participation. Typically, a the Balinese chose a specific family member as a divinely-inspired dancer.

Crossing the Gender Barrier

Time-honored lines between who performed which dances have begun to blur. Crossing-dressing allowed dancers to break gender barriers, but these opportunities reinforced the status quo. Carnivalesque role reversal violated taboos and reinforced the social order.

In Polynesian dance and theater, transvestism provided a vehicle for men and women to engage in cross-gender behavior. For instance, Tokelauan women, known as the fāluma served as clowns, court jesters or masters of ceremony who dressed in ragged men's clothes to perform comic acts. Sometimes, comic skits even included violence towards women. Thomas described the faleaitu in which a couple sometimes had violent fights in an improvised skit. Like the Tokelau skit, one Samoan dance enacted wife-beating, punctuated by the typical Samoan sound effect: body slapping. However, museum ethnographer William Burrows (1921) contradicted the Tokelauan observation: "No current dances resemble those depicting matrimonial squabbles."Nevertheless, on other Polynesian islands, community members exhibited clown behavior. A Samoan male clown purposely 'miss[ed] a beat,' performed movement out of sequence, or 'dance[d] clumsily.' However, unlike cross-dressing in other cultures, the women and men performed the Samoan jester dance as themselves.

57. Bandem and deBoer (1995: 20).

58. Also see extensive descriptions of the Baris in De Zoete and Spies' Dance and Drama in Bali (1938).

59. Observations of the Legong duet from viewing the PBS video, The Three Worlds of Bali (1975), a performance of Balinese dance filmed on site of Sigapadu. c1988, 1980.

59. While the Balinese has been receptive to some Western ideas, Bandem and deBoer (1995) report that pressure to "exhibit sacred dances for commercial purposes resisted by Balinese religious, cultural, and political leaders, especially since 1971 when a seminar on the subject, 'Sacred and Secular Art' resulted in 'Proyek Pemeliharan dan Pengambungan Kebudayaan Daerah Bali' (1971), the report issued at the conclusion of this pivotal seminar.

60. Observed in the PBS video, The Three Worlds of Bali (1975).

61. De Zoete and Spies (1938:78).

62. Bandem and deBoer (1995:89).

63. Thomas (1996:94).

64. Thomas (1996:127). Also see Thomson (1928:3).

65. Thomas (1996:96). Also see Shore (1982: 256-262).

In Melanesia, cross-dressed woman had an expanded range of acceptable behavior onstage. In New Britain, the comic Babae dance encouraged women to perform song, dance and jokes in men's clothes as ritual initiation. Standard dress for the vevene included men's shirts, hats, and a large taro tuber, a phallic symbol, dangling from the dancer's neck. One female dancer challenged another by lifting her skirt. Through hyperexposure in a community setting, the woman acknowledged her role as a 'domesticated pig.' In the Babae, this cross-dressed female performer exhibited a 'tamed' sexual role, which reinforced cultural mores. In Weiner's film on theTrobriand Islands, a young woman dressed as an 'ugly' man and pushed inbetween two young women whom "he" wanted to marry. These potential wives ran and hid. Another woman feigned to assist the 'man' by telling him where to find women. When 'he' pressed through the door, the women captured the "ugly man" with a cloth. Weiner interpreted the moral of this performance: 'No woman wants to marry an ugly man.' These comedic performances revolve around coming of age and marriage as rights of passage.

In Bali, men often took the woman's part. In the early twentieth century, even older men played young girls. In the 1930s, female impersonators played roles such gravediggers and market-women. In the masked Topeng, female impersonators played principal female roles such as Rangda, and Limboer, a comic mother. Notably, in the Balinese Tjalonarung, Rangda, played by a man, was frightening and treated with irreverence. Two comic characters antagonize and mock Rangda by entice her in the Ngibing dance. When she responded to wooing, the male clowns tripped her. In Bali, women who performed feminine roles were respected, but male characters mocked female characters who served as gravediggers, market-women, and witches.

The most obvious changes in male and female dance occurred in Bali. While the Baris was a male dance, the Balinese dance master Kakul challenged the essence of this traditional dance by teaching Baris movement to female dancers. Kakul initially taught the Baris to his daughter, Dawan, in the 1950s. In the early 1970's, Kakul choreographed a Baris for young Balinese girls and taught Baris to Daniels because he considered the Baris to be the foundation of Balinese movement. To the chagrin of the villagers, Kakul also taught the role of the refined, sweet male hero, Panji, from the Gambuh dance-drama to his daughter. Panji was often played by a female dancer in Batuan. Significantly, by 1995, female students learned the Baris in their first year at the college of the performing arts in Bali. In Bali, I was permitted to learn the Baris in group classes and in private instruction, but American and Balinese teachers forbade women to perform Baris publicly. Though some Balinese girls were allowed to perform dances formerly restricted to boys in the late-twentieth century, the Legong is still the primary female dance.

Traditional performances tend to reinforce gender roles. When cross-dressing permits a dancer to perform movement of the opposite sex, performance offers a temporary release. By violating social norms in performance, gender roles in society may be maintained.

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66. Mead (1939:115)

67. Deane Fergie's (1995) 'Tranforming Women: Being and Becoming in Island Melanesian Culture' in Gender Rituals: Female Initiation in Melanesia, Nancy C. Lutkehaus and Paul B. Roscoe, eds. New York, Routledge.

68. Weiner (1990).

69. De Zoete and Spies (1938:17, 33, 36, 66, 78, 107. 128-129).

70. Ibid, 33, 197.

71. Ibid,:33, 123).

72. See Daniel (1981:xviii).

73. See Bandem and deBoer (1995:35).

74. Sekolah Tinggi Seni Indonesia (STSI) is the College of the Arts.

Changes in Pacific Arts

Post-contact, the traditional performing arts underwent pressure to adapt to nations and businesses that occupied Polynesian and Melanesian islands. Indeed, fewer than 20% of the indigenous populations survived disease and violent encounters with Westerners. Consequently, not all festivals featured traditional dances and dance-dramas. In the 1930's Tahitians danced in a Western style at the New Year's festival in Piri. Since the Second World War, governments supported festivals and state schools, and private studios trained dancers to preserve traditional Polynesian, Melanesian, and Balienese dances and developed new dance drama forms. However, the exponential growth of tourism after the Second World War created pressure for cultures such as Bali and Tahiti to commercialize their performing arts. The need to preserve and develop traditional dance, song, and dance drama and new dance forms in Polynesia, Melanesia, and Bali butts up against the need for performers to benefit from decades of hard work and training through commercial venues.

Polynesian and Melanesian indigenous performing arts were preserved and protected by local and national organizational sponsors through pan-Pacific festivals. The French government sponsored Bastille Day, which featured traditional Tahiti group dances that performed in competitions. Further, the creation of Pacific arts festivals has greatly enhanced the traditional performances. In 1972, the First South Pacific Festival of the Arts was held at Suva, Fiji in which the Melanesian Kanak troupe performed with traditional groups from twenty Pacific nations. Subsequently, the Kanaks danced, sang and recited speeches in their own national festival in 1975. The Fifth Festival of the Performing Arts held in Australia in 1988 featured pan-Pacific performers from many South Pacific nations. In Auckland, the Pacific Drum Festival featured Tuvaluans who performed a seated welcome dance in canoes in 1989. Indeed, the development of new dances has a history of commission, first by politicos, such as the Tokelauan king who commissioned the lakalaka, the Balinese court creations from the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries. Yet, in the beginning of the twenty-first century, the mainstay of traditional Tahitian dances was entertainment of tourists in hotels.

Bali adapted traditional forms and created dance and drama renaissance. The Dutch invasion of 1908 and the First World War temporarily derailed the performing arts. Fortunately, traditions such as the Odalan, a temple festival continued to feature performing arts every 210 days. The 1950s tour of Balinese performing arts sponsored by Columbia Artists led to increased international awareness and interest. In 1979, the annual Bali Arts Festival, a new pantomime dance-drama based on Balinese literature was choreographed. In 1988, rarely seen reconstructions of Sang Hyang Legong masks and sacred dances were performed publicly at the Walter Spies Performing Arts Festival at the Arts Centre in Denpasar. Contemporary Balinese clans needed historical Babad manuscripts for develop a new Topeng Pajegan. Additionally, art aficionado Walter Spies requested the creation of the Cak, the 'Monkey Dance.' The Cak is taught to male and female tourists who learn and perform this dance in Bali; I learned and performed the Tjak in Batuan in 2008. In a syncretic fusion of traditions, choreographer I Wayan Dibia integrated tap and the Balinese Tjak. Though innovation is prized and encouraged in Bali, respect for its regional and national material must endure. The dance-drama prembon was a brief revue of Balinese dances in local resorts. Since infrequent local festivals may be insufficient for preservation of performance of dance and theater pieces, the twentieth-century reconstruction and expansion of traditional material enhances opportunities to preserve Balinese performing arts.

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75. See Ammann 1997:3. For a more complete analysis, also see Rallu (1990).

76. See Levy (1993:72-73).

77. See Stephanie Reinhart's article in Solomon and Solomon's East Meets West in Dance (1995:1).

79. Lockwood (1993:75).

79 Ammann (1997:9). Also see Mwa Véé 1995:10, 18-45.

80. Thomas (1996: personal comm.).

81. Bandem and deBoer noted that Topeng Pajegan (masked solo), Wayang Wong (shadow puppet theater) and Gambuh dance-drama from Malat romantic poems developed in Hindu-Balinese courts (1995:31, 42, 44).

82. Bandem and deBoer (1995:136).

83 Ibid, 71.

84. Ibid, 56.

85. Ibid, 128.

86. Ibid, 163.

87. I Wayan Dibia's article in Solomon and Solomon's East Meets West in Dance (1995:161-162).

In Pacific Arts, another trend is a narrative or mimetic approach towards abstraction. Modern dance expanded on traditional movement vocabulary; women had reasons to jump and turn and enlarge stronger gestures in dances. Despite the freedom that women gained in dance, compulsory military service often causes men to withdrawn from dance training. The influence of Western arts on Polynesian, Melanesian, and Balinese dance and dance drama not only increases commercialization that provides pays performers, but also raises awareness about the import of preserving, protecting, and reinventing traditional indigenous performing arts.

Towards a Developmental Ethnological Study of Dance and Theater

Innovation in the performing arts empower Polynesian, Melanesian and Balinese peoples to preserve culture assets. As Thomas asserted, changes in expressive arts allowed Pacific Islanders to redefine their culture in relation to the worldwide development that impact their lifestyles. Thus, transformation of traditional themes into new forms that reflect contemporary cultural needs deepen the meaning of the dances and dance-dramas in community. Such reverential innovation encourages greater participation of male dancers and advocates for an increase of women's participation in traditional and newly-developed dance and dance-drama. To ensure consistency and accuracy of data collection in dance ethnology, documentation of the history and performance of traditional dances and dance-dramas should include:

a. Notation by Labanotators trained in traditional dances to clarify movement performed.

b. Careful comparison of written descriptions of movement with reconstruction, combined with interviews, observation and study of movements currently performed, and

c. Longitudinal studies of a group of dancers to evaluate changes in specific communities.

This combination of preservation of the indigenous performing arts that fulfill cultural needs and ongoing exploration in historical and contemporary performing arts in contemporary contexts best ensures the continuity of the unique cultures of Polynesia, Melanesia, and Bali.

Acknowledgement

None.

Conflict of Interest

No conflict of interest.

88. Yang Mei-qi in ibid, 57.
89. Leon Koning in ibid, 293.
90. See Thomas (1996:19).
91. Ibid, 94.