Tumunu, the Bush Beer Bar Tradition of Atiu, Cook Islands

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Richard Deal

Abstract

This chapter explores the tradition of tumunu on Atiu in the southern Cook Islands. Tumunu, which literally means "trunk of the coconut tree," are drinking establishments hidden in the bush of the island where home brew is produced and drunk. This chapter will first briefly examine the role of kava in the Pacific and its replacement with alcohol. The growth in alcohol use led to the development of the tumunu, which arose to hide the production and consumption of alcohol because it was prohibited. The five tumunu that existed in 2014, as well as two recently closed ones, are mapped and compared. Next, the changes in the tumunu in the recent past are examined. Brewing ingredients have changed from mainly indigenous oranges to imported malt extract since the 1980s. The similarity of social practices relating to the tumunu and to the consumption of kava on other Pacific Islands is pronounced. These social practices are changing as the society changes, and from the presence of tourists at the tumunu, which are promoted as a tourist attraction on the island.

Introduction

Tumunu, literally "the trunk of the coconut tree" in Cook Islands Maori, is a term for the term for a place where home brew is drunk on the island of Atiu in the Cook Islands. The term comes from the container the beer was often brewed in and served from, which was a hollowed-out portion of a coconut tree trunk, although now a plastic bucket in normally used. The beer itself is known as bush beer, because the tumunu were hidden in the bush of the island to avoid detection from island authorities enforcing prohibition laws. It is also known as orange beer, as oranges were traditionally the main ingredient.

R. Deal (✉)
Department of Geosciences, Edinboro University, Edinboro, PA 16444, USA
e-mail: rdeal@edinboro.edu

Atiu is a small island roughly 200 km north of Rarotonga, the capital and most populous island of the Cook Islands, a country in Polynesia (Figs. 4.1 and 4.2). Atiu is about 26 km^2 and 20 km in circumference. The island is a makatea, a raised coral island with cliffs on or near the coast (Fig. 4.3). There is another raised area in the center, where the population of about 400 is located. Between the center and the edge is a lower area where most of the cultivation occurs. Although all the population lives in the center of the island, it is divided into five villages: Teenui, Mapumai, Tengatangi, Areora, and Ngatiarua. Prior to European settlement, each village was located in a different part of the island, on lower ground (Tanga 1984).

Traditionally kava, a drink made from the roots of *Piper methysticum,* was the main ceremonial and social beverage on the island. After missionaries suppressed kava in the mid-1800s, alcohol replaced the use of kava. Alcohol production had been introduced to the region by Europeans and was spread further by natives traveling between islands (Mokoroa 1984). Alcohol was also disapproved of by missionaries and outlawed, so the production and consumption of alcohol moved to the tumunu, which were hidden deep in the bush of the island, in order to avoid detection and prosecution for violating the law.

While similar bush beer was drunk on many islands in the Pacific, it has largely been replaced by commercially brewed alcohol due to the rise of a cash economy and a reliance on imported foodstuffs. On Atiu, the tradition of the tumunu remains, although it has changed greatly due to sociocultural changes on the island. Tumunu are still nominally hidden, but they are very easy to find. They have grown more elaborate as they became more permanent. Drinkers at a particular tumunu were formally small close-knit groups of mainly related people, while tumunu now function much like

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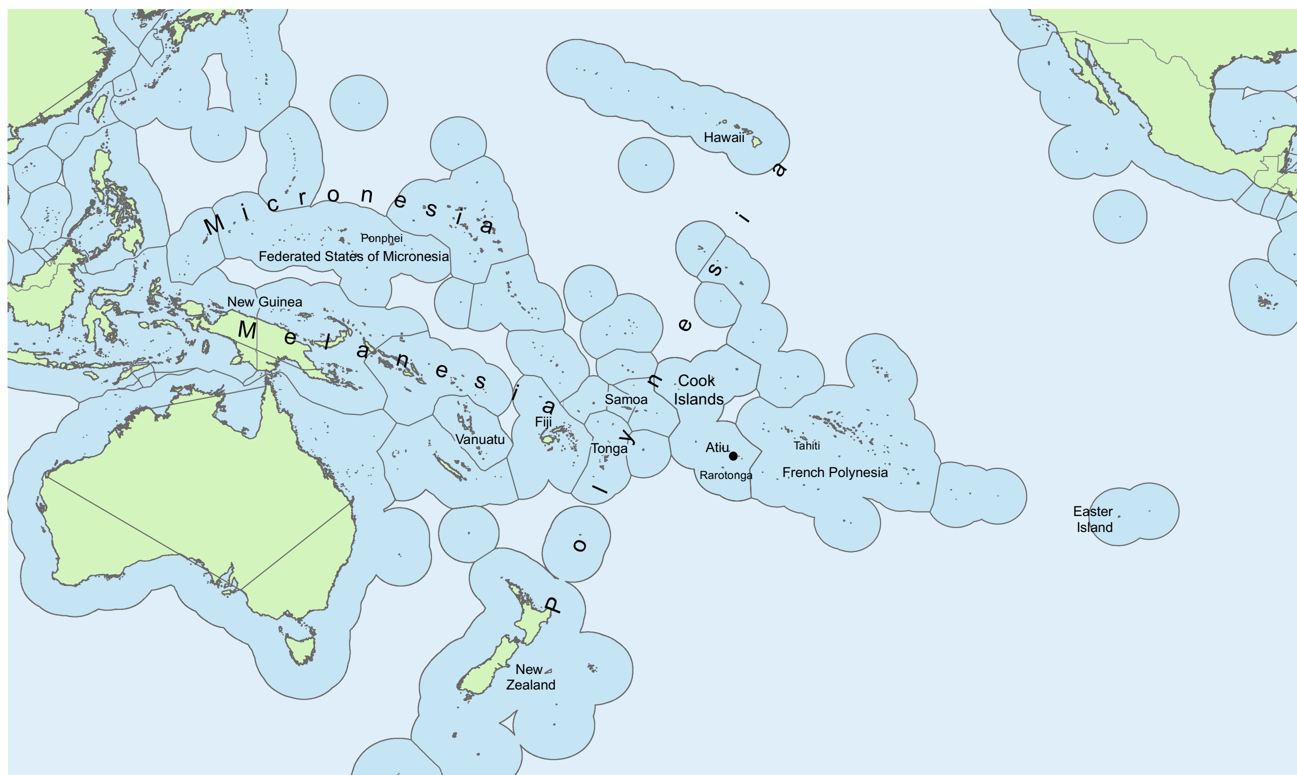

Fig. 4.1 The location of the Cook Islands

bars in other areas, with people choosing to go to the location of their choice. A final change in the tumunu is the promotion of the tumunu among tourists to the island, which has brought a new, although relatively small clientele.

Kava

Many Pacific Island societies traditionally consumed kava. Kava is made from the roots of a pepper plant, *Piper methysticum*. Depending on the region, the roots are either chewed, grated, ground, or pounded into a powder. Water is run through the resulting material. This results in a cloudy liquid which is then drunk. The effects of kava are calming, numbness, and tiredness. Kava may also make the drinker sensitive to light and sound (Lebot et al. 1992).

Kava was grown throughout the Pacific, including most of Melanesia, parts of Micronesia, and almost all of Polynesia, except for Easter Island and some atolls that lacked suitable soils (Brunton 1989). The cultivation of kava declined after European contact and the conversion of the islands to Christianity. It is now grown in just a few countries of the Pacific, mainly Fiji, Samoa, Tonga, Vanuatu, and some parts of Papua New Guinea and Pohnpei in the Federated States of Micronesia (Lindstrom 2004).

Oliver (1989) described two patterns of traditional kava consumption in the Pacific. On Samoa, Tonga and Fiji and other nearby islands, kava was made from dried roots and served relatively weak and most often ceremonially. In contrast, kava from Eastern Polynesia, Vanuatu, and New Guinea was prepared from fresh (green) roots and made with less water, producing a stronger drink that tended to be drunk without ceremony.

Kava was traditionally the main ceremonial beverage in the Pacific as the Pacific was one of the few regions that had no alcohol prior to European contact (Lemert 1964). After European contact, missionaries attempted to stop the consumption of kava, which was accomplished in most of Polynesia, and other areas. This was done for several reasons. One was that missionaries likened kava to alcohol, which they also generally disapproved of. Kava was said to allow users to talk to the spirits of ancestors, which the missionaries associated with witchcraft (Lindstrom 2004). Kava was also used on ceremonial occasions in many areas, so halting its consumption would weaken the power of traditional chiefs and strengthen the position of the church

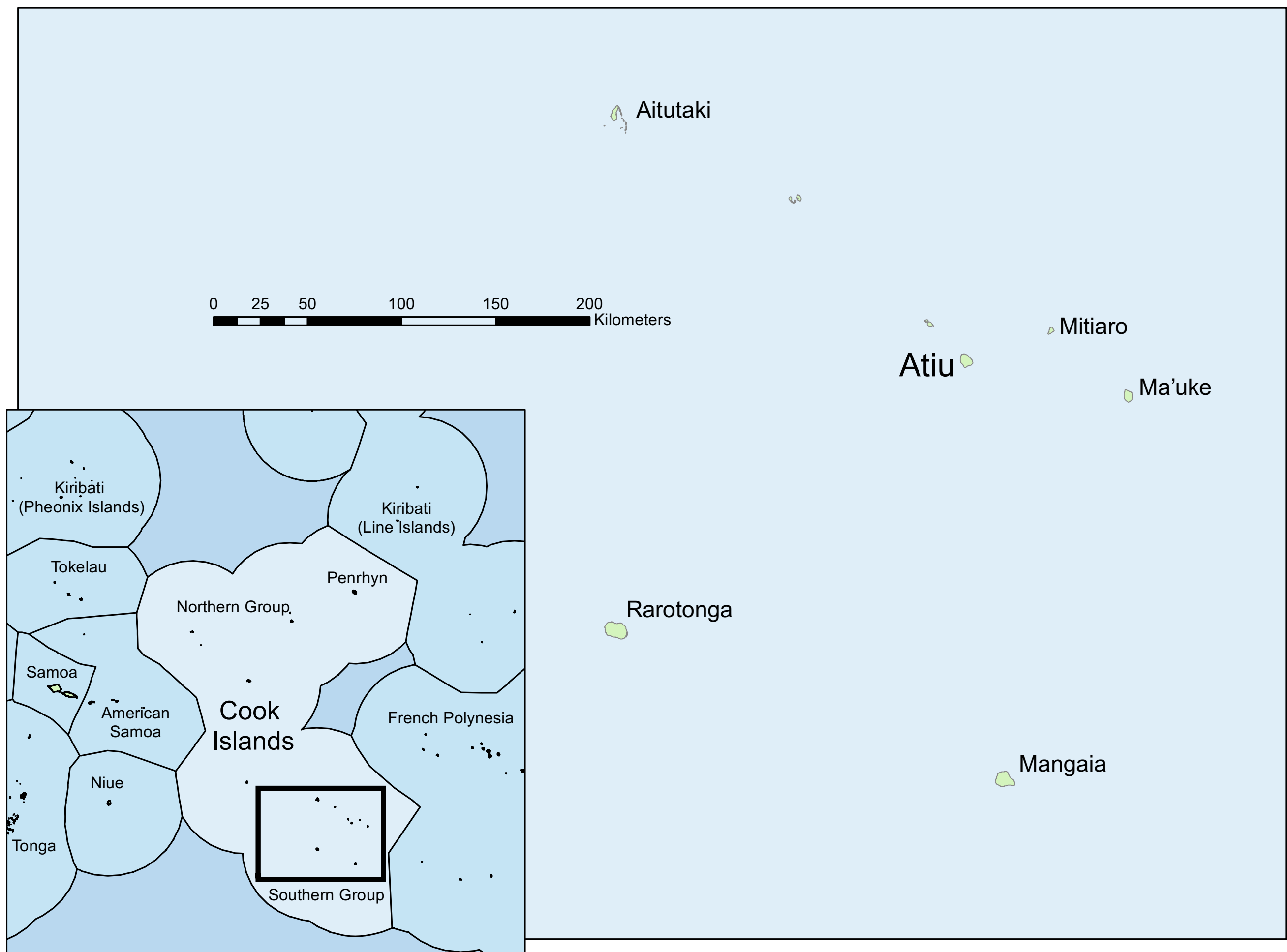

Fig. 4.2 The location of Atiu

(Lebot et al. 1992). In the Cook Islands, kava was consumed at chiefs' council meetings, but details about its use are lacking because it "was suppressed so quickly and thoroughly by the mission that no observations were made of its importance" (Gilson 1980, p. 15).

Kava's use has become more informal over the years. Several authors describe drinking kava in a circle, with a woman serving it to a male and his friends as an important part of courtship in Tonga in the recent past (Feldman 1980; Lemert 1962). Feldman (1980) and Lindstrom (2004) described kava clubs in Tonga and Fiji, where people go on a regular basis to drink kava in a circle. In Samoa, markets in most towns have a kava vendor. In Apia, there is a barman with a bucket and people sit in a circle. People drink from a coconut shell and must drink the entire cup at one. The barman distributes a round in order around the circle and then waits for a time before beginning the next round. When a person arrives, the barman will give that person several cups immediately, rather than waiting for the next round. While the details vary from place to place, most authors mention kava being served in order around a circle from a cup made from a coconut shell (Lemert 1964; Feldman 1980). Many also mention the importance of drinking the entire contents of the cup without removing it from the lips (Gregory et al. 1981; Feldman 1980; Lemert 1962).

Kava's role in preserving culture has been noted in several countries. Urbanowicz predicted kava drinking in Tonga would increase in the future as a way to "maintain and perpetuate Tongan unity and identity" (1975, p. 46) against the forces that were acting on and changing Tongan society in the late twentieth century. Kava in Vanuatu has a similar role. In Villa, the capital, kava bars advertise that kava is from a particular island (Lebot et al. 1992). This attracts patrons who are migrants from those islands, who seek to maintain their traditional cultural identity while living in the city far away from their home villages and islands.

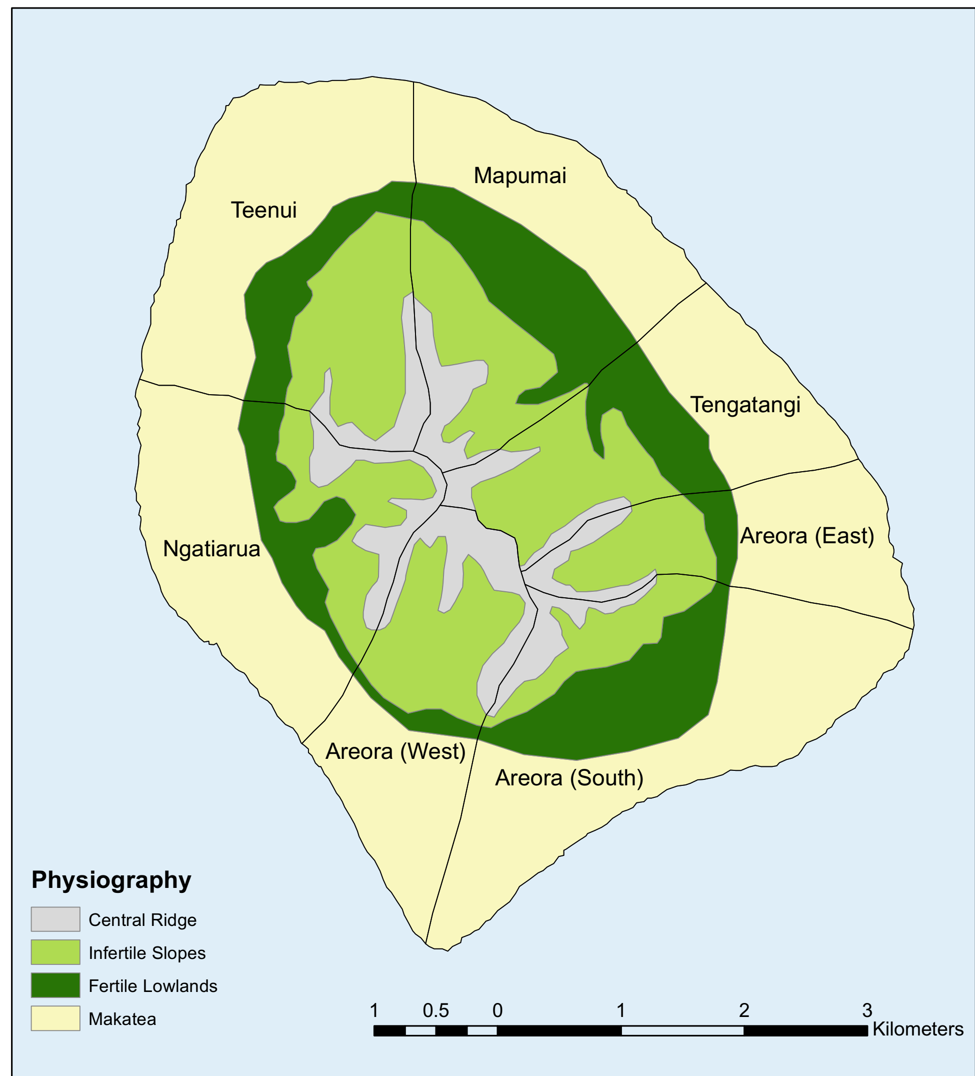

Fig. 4.3 The physiography of Atiu (after Tanga 1984)

Growth of Alcohol

After the missionaries suppressed kava, the use of alcohol took the place of kava (Lebot et al. 1992). Lemert (1964) suggests that alcohol production was brought to Hawaii around 1800 by escaped convicts from Botany Bay. In Hawaii, ti (*Cordyline fruticosa*) roots were distilled to make a drink called okole hao. This drink was then brought to Tahiti and nearby islands, where it was replaced by a drink called kava anni, which was an alcoholic beverage made from oranges. Lemert (1964) says this was brought to the Cook Islands in 1848, where it became known as orange or bush beer. Other authors give slightly differing accounts, with Mokoroa (1984) stating bush beer was brought to the Cook Islands in the 1850s from Tahiti, and others saying Cook Islanders visiting relatives in Tahiti bought bush beer back in 1850 (Lemert 1976). Regardless of how alcohol came to the Cook Islands, by 1860, brewing of bush beer became widespread (Gilson 1980).

Bush beer was drunk throughout the Cook Islands. It was most common on Atiu, but was present on other islands, including Rarotonga, Aitutaki, Mangaia, and Penrhyn (Lemert 1962; 1976). Early beer was primarily made with the juice of oranges, which had recently been introduced to the islands. Other sugars could be added, especially honey and bananas (Lemert 1976; Gilson 1980). The sediment from a previous batch was added to be sure there was enough yeast for fermentation. The beer could be brewed in a hole in the ground lined with leaves, and old barrel, or from a hollowed-out tree trunk (Lemert 1976).

Alcohol became the main ceremonial beverage. Lemert (1962) says the earliest form of alcohol consumption in Polynesia was to consume it at various feasts and festivals. In French Polynesia, located to the east of the Cook Islands, large festivals of this sort, which were a continuation of

traditional feasts, continued for 60 or 70 years until roughly 1920. The link between alcohol and kava is summed up by Lemert who says, "the prototype for patterns of alcohol consumption in all areas of Polynesia, except New Zealand, is found in the kava circle" (1964, p. 363). He divides alcohol consumption patterns into three types: festive, which today consists of large family or village gatherings on special occasions, but are descended from traditional feasts, which is most clearly expressed in French Polynesia; ritual-disciplined, in which set patterns are followed by the drinkers, which developed in the Cook Islands, as exemplified by tumunu on Atiu; and secular, which he describes as a group of people drinking to find a release without any ritual involved, as is common in Samoa.

Origins of the Tumunu

In the mid-1800s, alcohol was drunk on Atiu at large festive occasions called kava patu (Lemert 1976). These were similar to the festivals on Tahiti and consisted of large groups of several dozen people. They were reciprocal events in which the host of a particular feast would compete with the hosts of other feasts to provide more food and drink than the other hosts and more than the guests could consume. There was much dancing and singing at the events, which could last several days. These are modified versions of traditional Polynesian feasts, which continued even after the adoption of Christianity.

Later, drinking was done at secret locations in the bush. These were called pange kava on other islands (Lemert 1976), but normally these were called tumunu (coconut trunk) on Atiu, after the vessel used to hold the beer (Mokoroa 1984). Drinking went into hiding due to church disapproval and prohibition laws. There were many laws passed to restrict alcohol in the Cook Islands in the 1800s. In the 1870s prohibition was the law, but by 1890, it was routinely ignored in Rarotonga, which had many saloons. In 1889, after the formation of a British Protectorate, the importation of liquor was banned without permission of the resident commissioner. At first, the distribution of liquor to natives was banned, while manufacturing and consuming bush beer by natives or Europeans resulted in a fine. In 1891, saloons in Rarotonga were closed, bush beer was banned throughout the Cook Islands, and liquor could only be bought by someone with a permit (Gilson 1980). These regulations never ended the production of bush beer, but did manage to send the use of bush beer into hiding. In 1899, there was another attempt to limit imports. In 1915, alcohol was banned, unless imported and distributed to non-natives by the resident commissioner. In 1921, all sales were banned except for medical purposes (Gilson 1980).

While these repeated attempts at prohibition did not work effectively to end drinking, they did force the tumunu deep into the bush. The tumunu were exclusive places for men, as women were not allowed to visit them. The penalty for drinking alcohol was a fine, so it had to be done clandestinely. Drinkers were now "outlaws", whereas previously they had only been "sinners" (Mokoroa 1984, p.75). Fines and arrests for alcohol offenses continued, but it never stopped bush beer drinking, as the native police officers did not want to enforce the laws too harshly to avoid strained relations with the rest of their community (Gilson 1980).

Bush beer has declined in most places in the Pacific and today Atiu is the only stronghold in the Cook Islands. Declines have been attributed to various causes. Orange blight, which greatly reduced the number of oranges available, is one cause. Another is the availability of commercial alcohol (Lemert 1962). Changes in laws allowing the purchasing of alcoholic beverages and the growth in wage employment provided a way and means to buy and consume alcohol legally.

Lemert (1976) attributes the survival of the tumunu on Atiu to a number of factors: the isolation of the island, slower response to missionization due to chiefs having a greater influence on the church than chiefs on other islands, and providing men a place to express their traditional warrior aggressiveness in a society that no longer had warfare between islands. Mokoroa (1984) gives very different reasons for its survival. He states the tumunu are based on traditional cultural institutions and kinship ties. Tumunu are places to teach younger men about traditional arts; he refers to the tumunu as "bush beer school." He stresses the importance of tumunu in regulating drinking, as the tumunu are highly structured. This prevents much alcohol-related violence. The tumunu are places for men to discuss village affairs, similar to a town meeting. Thus, the tumunu are far more than places to socialize.

Tumunu Today

The tumunu have changed greatly over the years. The tumunu became far less secretive. Social changes have also resulted in a change in the composition of who attends the tumunu. Brewing methods have changed due to new raw materials being available. Finally, Atiu is much more linked to the wider world than it was several decades ago.

In 1985 after visiting dignitaries visited a tumunu, the locations of the tumunu were moved into the villages as the tumunu no longer felt they had to remain hidden. This resulted in an increase in drinking and a loss of the tight-knit nature of the tumunu. After complaints and some prosecution, they moved back out of the villages (Tumunu nd).

While the tumunu moved back out of the village, they were not as hidden as before. Most are relatively near the village now.

The numbers of tumunu have varied over the years. Historically, there were large numbers, as they each formed from a tight-knit group of mainly related people from a single village. Lemert mentions that one village (of the five) had six tumunu (1976). As of an unspecified date circa 1990 there were eleven (Tumunu nd) . A travel guide from 2000 says there are eight (Hunt et al. 2000). In June 2014, during a field visit by the author, there were five tumunu operating on the island: Walking Dead, Vaitamina, Teponui, Rising Sun, and Vanilla (Fig. 4.4). There were also two recently closed tumunu: Aretou, and Amos. The author visited each tumunu and recorded its location with a handheld GPS unit in order to place them on the map. A report in October 2015, lists five tumunu: Aretou has reopened, while Vanilla is not listed (Tutaka12 2015).

The tumunu open during the visit are near the village, and with one exception, Vanilla, very close to roads. Vaitamina is just off the main road which goes to the airport, near the edge of a large sports ground. There are no trees between it and the road. Walking Dead, a bit further up the same road, is set back among some trees, but is just visible from the road at the dirt path that goes to it. This was the only one the author needed help to find, but the people at the house almost across the road pointed it out. Teponui, which is also clearly visible from the road, is on a small road that branches off from a main road out of the village. Rising Sun is just past the last house on its road. It is clearly visible from the road, which as it leaves the village becomes a dirt track that goes to one of, if not the largest, area of taro patches on the island, and eventually to the coast. Vanilla is on a small track, which starts as a path on the main road just next to a house. Once the house has been passed, it becomes a wide track that is very easy to follow to the tumunu, which is a

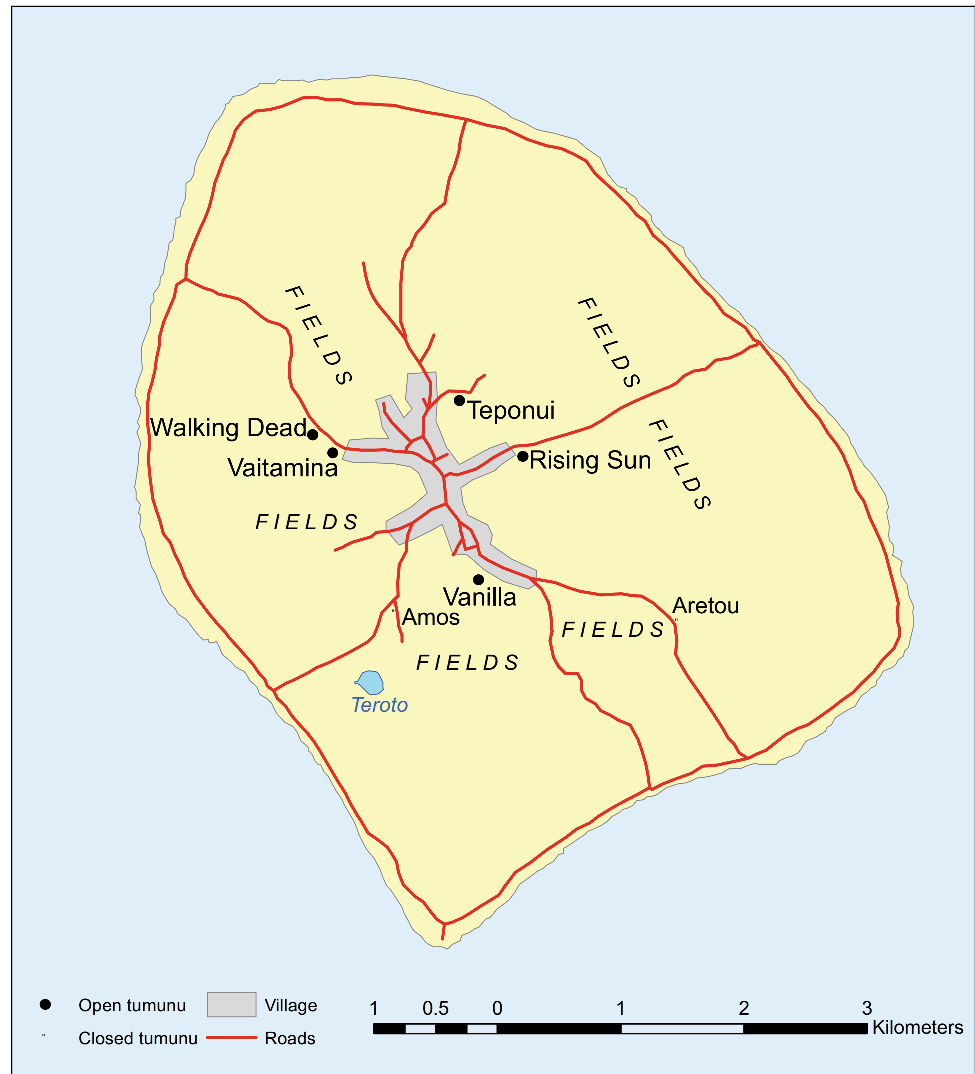

Fig. 4.4 The locations of the Tumunu **on Atiu**

Fig. 4.5 **a** Walking Dead, **b** Vaitamina, **c** Teponui, **d** Vanilla Tumunus

few minutes' walk down into a valley and then up a hill on the other side.

The two closed tumunu were much further from the village. Aretou is about one and a half kilometers out of the village. It is on a dirt track that goes to another area of taro patches and other fields. It is also clearly visible from the road. Finally, Amos is most remote. It is about one kilometer out of the village near the intersection of two roads near Lake Teroto, the only body of water on the island, which also has many taro patches near it. At the time of the fieldwork, it had only recently been closed and it was found by looking for a hut in the area that people had described as its location. A hut was located and it had recently discarded empty malt extract cans, so it was obviously the correct location.

The structures of the tumunu have grown more elaborate now that they are no longer clandestine (Fig. 4.5 and Table 4.1). The structure is similar to older Pacific homes, before blockhouses became common. They tend to have tree trunks for columns, while most of the timbers supporting the roofs are milled lumber. Most have concrete floors and Teponui also had tiles on the portion of the floor where people drink. All have corrugated roofs except for Teponui, which had a traditional thatched roof. Almost all have partial walls built to waist or chest level.

In addition to the area for drinking, several have other structures. Three have small storage rooms that can be locked. About half have a separate structure for brewing. Teponui also has a separate concrete block toilet building. At

Table 4.1 Comparison of the tumunu structures

Tumunu	Floor	Roof	Walls	Brewing	Other
Walking dead	Crushed stone	Corrugated	Corrugated	Outside	
Vaitamia	Concrete	Corrugated	Thatch	Separate structure	
Teponui	Concrete, partially tiled	Thatch	None	Separate structure	Storage, toilet
Rising sun	Concrete	Corrugated	Lumber	Space in rear	Storage
Vanilla	Concrete	Corrugated	Corrugated	Lean-to	Storage
Aretou	Concrete	Corrugated	None	Separate structure	
Amos	Concrete	Corrugated	Corrugated		

least four have electricity (all but Vaitamina definitely do), including Vanilla, which is quite a distance off the road.

Brewing

Historically, the beer was produced mainly with orange juice, although other local sources of sugar were used, such as honey and banana. Older accounts described the brewing process as consisting of simply squeezing the oranges to get the juice, then adding any other sugar to be used, then adding yeast. The beer was then covered and allowed to ferment (Mokoroa 1984; Lemert 1976). Lemert says sugar (presumably refined, as he also mentions honey and banana) was added by 1910. Mokoroa simply mentions honey or sugar being added. Several drinkers at Vaitamina said malt extract was used beginning in the 1980s. This was attributed to malt extract being easier than oranges to ship to Atiu from Rarotonga once there were no longer enough fresh oranges on Atiu due to the decline of the orange groves.

The author observed the brewing process at Teponui. Two large cans of malt extract were added to a bucket. The brand used was Maltexo, in 1500 g cans. Two other cans of this malt were boiled for 30 min along with about a handful of dried hops. The malt and the boiled malt were combined, and water was added. Ten bags of refined white sugar (approximately two kilograms each) were stirred into the mixture. More water was added to fill the bucket, which was a five-gallon bucket. When the mixture had cooled enough, the sediment from a previous batch was added. The bucket was then covered and allowed to ferment for about five days. The process was similar to other tumunu. Everyone asked said they only use malt extract, sugar, and hops. There was only one brand of malt extract at the shop, so everyone used the same extract. This was confirmed by looking at the trash at the various tumunu. The cans were often left in piles at each tumunu, so it was possible to see them at most of the locations. In addition to the tumunu, there was a home brewer on the island who used to brew at Teponui. He followed the same procedure, except he used more hops. He said that sometimes the shop ran out of hops, so the tumunu used very little or no hops at those times. He had his own hops supply imported from New Zealand. He also put his beer in plastic soda bottles and kept them in his refrigerator, partly to extend the life of the beer, but mostly because he liked to drink cold beer.

The resulting beer is served unfiltered, so it is a bit cloudy. The color varies from dark golden to light orange-brown and is quite hazy. The flavor varies from tumunu to tumunu, as each is using the yeast from their previous batches, and from day–to-day, as the beer continues to ferment until it is drunk. The flavor is reminiscent of a Belgian tripel with a strong alcohol aftertaste. The author tried the beer at each tumunu. Some tumunu's beer was a bit sweeter than at other tumunu. Presumably, this was younger beer and there were still a lot of unfermented sugars in the beer. One tumunu's beer, which was far hazier than the other beers had a slight sour tang, reminiscent of a lambic.

Social Setting

Each tumunu had different opening times. Each tended to be open on certain days of the week. They typically opened late afternoon and stayed open for several hours. They opened much earlier on the weekend, particularly Teponui, which was open all Saturday afternoon. Not surprisingly, they tended to be less crowded during the week than on the weekend, as many people work during the week. The average age of the people at the tumunu tended to high during the week, with most people over 50. The clientele was also entirely male. During the weekend, there was a far younger clientele, with most of them being men under 30. There were also several females at Teponui on both Friday and Saturday. Most of them were fairly young, but one woman helping with the brewing was about 50. The women

were greatly outnumbered by males. This is to be expected, as historically women were not allowed to go to the tumunu. Mokoroa (1984) speaks only of men in his description of the tumunu. Other authors specifically mention the exclusion of women in order to avoid violating traditional cultural mores (Lemert 1976).

While the hours were more-or-less fixed, it also depended on the people of the tumunu. Vanilla was closed one day it was supposed to be open. Vaitamina was open on Friday morning because one of the regulars was flying off the island, so the tumunu was opened to celebrate his departure. Since people were there anyway, the tumunu remained open after he left.

People at the tumunu were arranged in a large circle. In most places, the seats were a series of long benches. The ritual involved was the same at each tumunu. The barman sat at the head of the circle. In front of him was a bucket with the beer. He filled a small cup made from part of a coconut shell with the beer and handed it to the person seated next to him. The person must drink the entire cup at once. The cup was handed back to the barman, who then refilled the cup, and handed it to the next person. This continued until everyone has had a cup of beer. He then covered the bucket and waited for some period of time before starting the next round. If a person arrived later, he or she was usually given one or more cups immediately, rather than waiting until the next round. People may refuse a cup if they feel they have had enough. The barman did not drink himself and controlled the pace of the drinking. His job was to ensure people do not drink too much. The procedure for drinking bush beer is very similar to Polynesian kava ceremonies and modern drinking of kava as described in the kava section. In fact, Mokoroa (1984) states that the Atiu tumunu drinking customs are a substitute for the traditional kava drinking customs.

This has not changed much from earlier accounts, except now women may be present. Mokoroa (1984) described the same procedure. He stressed the role of the barman in controlling how much people drink and stopping them if they have had too much. Lemert (1962) described essentially the same procedure. There are two other main differences between these accounts of decades ago and the present. One is the religious component has declined. Both of these accounts talk of a prayer being said, hymns being sung, and even Bible readings taking place. Today, there was often a short saying of grace, but nothing as long or formal as these earlier accounts. The other main difference is that people were expected to all arrive at the same time and both mention procedures for how to deal with latecomers. Today is more informal, and people arrive and leave as they want.

Traditionally, people drank at a tumunu with other people from their village and not with people from other villages. This was done to make it easier to know when to go (traditionally everyone was expected to arrive at about the same time) as the men would likely be working in the fields together. It also strengthened the social bonds as everyone was related and also made it easier to resolve any disputes, as they are were from the same extended family (Mokoroa 1984). Keeping the drinkers from one village also made it easier to keep the location secret so police did not interfere and so that outsiders would not steal the beer. Today, people drink at the tumunu of their choice. Teponui was the most popular in 2014. It had the best facilities. Walking Dead was said to be where all the alcoholics drunk. Aretou shut down because the brewer there didn't want to brew any longer and changed to drinking at Walking Dead. The home brewer used to brew at Teponui but left to make home brew because he felt he was doing too much of the work himself and that others did no work and drank the beer.

Traditionally, the beer would be brewed with oranges collected from nearby trees. Each member was expected to take turns collecting oranges and squeezing and preparing them. Today, the beer is made from malt extract, refined white sugar, and dried hops which are all imported and require cash to buy. Instead of providing labor, people may buy supplies and bring them. Alternatively, people may "donate" money for the next batch. Officially, this is done because the law now allows people to brew for personal use, but not to sell alcohol. This is also probably due to Polynesian cultural sensibilities and ideas of reciprocity. In other places in Polynesia, people have refused money from the author as payment for some item, but were perfectly happy to accept a "donation for the family" in its place, as they would rather give a gift and receive a gift in return than sell a good. Brewing by donation is just another way to tie the tumunu with traditional cultural practices and perhaps this becomes more important as the economy changes to a more commercial system.

Future of the Tumunu

The bush beer on other islands has disappeared, while the tumunu are still going strong. The availability of cash to buy commercial beer has caused a decline in other places, but how has Atiu's tradition survived? One drinker at Vaitamina stated he drank bush beer because it was cheap. He said he spent $10 a week at the tumunu, while beer started at $2 a bottle in the shop. While this is true, it is also true on other islands where bush beer was formerly made. The association of the tumunu with maintaining cultural ties is an important reason cited. Both Mokoroa (1984) and Lemert (1976) empathized the role of tumunu in handing down traditional knowledge.

Another important reason is tourism. People travel to distant locations to experience other cultures. Baldacchino

(2010) examined the existence of commercial breweries on small islands. He concluded that a major reason for their existence is due to tourism, with wanting authentic experiences. This includes sampling local foods and beverages. Other authors, while not studying islands, have noted the ways in which breweries use their unique setting as a way to promote their brands. Schnell and Reese (2014) looked at the names of beers produced by American microbreweries that used some local imagery (historical figures, landmarks, etc.) and concluded that this attachment to place is stronger than ever. Other authors have also noted the use of an attachment to place in promoting breweries (Paulsen and Tuller 2017; Jones and Harvey 2017; Eberts 2014)

Tourism is certainly in important influence on the tumunu. A prominent local citizen and entrepreneur, Roger Malcolm, owns Atiu Villas, one of the hotels on the island. He saw promoting the tumunu as a way to draw tourists to the island. He also thought that they were not tourist-friendly places as they existed (R. Malcom, personal communication, June 13, 2014). As a result, he came up with the Tumunu Tukata as a way to clean up the tumunu. The competition rates them on cleanliness, attractiveness, friendliness, order, and other categories relating to the experience at the tumunu. He felt by doing this, tourists would be able to feel comfortable going to the tumunu, and it would draw more tourists by allowing them to have a unique experience. This was originally an annual competition, but is now held irregularly. He stated that this was due to the goal of improving the tumunu being achieved and the difficulty of having neutral judges, who must be from off-island to avoid charges of favoritism. While the numbers of tourists are still small, the tumunu have succeeding in increasing the numbers of tourists who visit.

Perhaps there is no single answer as to why the tumunu survive. Many of the explanations given apply to many islands in the Pacific and those islands no longer have a bush beer tradition. Perhaps a better way to think of the survival of the tumunu would be to compare them to regional breweries in the United States. Out of the thousands of pre-prohibition breweries in the United States, just a handful survived to the current time. These breweries have been revitalized and sales of beers from many of these surviving breweries has risen dramatically after the craft beer boom (Yenne 2003; Tremblay and Tremblay 2009). As people seek localism in their beer, regionals have grown. The tumunu may be similar. Just as a particular brewery survived through some quirk of history, the tumunu happened to survive on Atiu. With the increased emphasis on localism in beer, they are now undergoing a renaissance, as locals want to maintain their traditions and as tourists want to have an experience they cannot have anywhere else.

Conclusion

Tumunu, the bush beer bars of Atiu, Cook Islands occupy a unique position in the history of beer. They originated after kava was suppressed by missionaries and alcohol was introduced to the islands. As alcohol was restricted or banned, the beer began to be brewed in secret locations in the bush, leading to the birth of the tumunu. These developed into a highly structured environment for the consumption of bush beer. The social practices were highly influenced by the practices involved with kava, which the beer replaced.

While bush beer declined in other regions, it remains strong in Atiu. The tumunu have evolved with the island. They are no longer secret and are open to anyone, including women, who never formerly drank at the tumunu. The locations have moved closer to the villages and to the road and the structures housing the tumunu have become quite elaborate. The brewing methods have changed to using malt extract, refined sugar, and dried hops.

At the same time, the tumunu have retained an attachment to the culture of Atiu and that of wider Polynesia. The procedure and ceremony involved with drinking still closely resemble that of kava drinking, both historically, and with contemporary kava use on other islands. The arrival of international tourism has added a new raison d'etre to the tumunu. Tourists looking for an experience unique to the location of their travels, with the help of people looking to promote the local tourism industry, have been going to the tumunu, which give Atiuans another incentive to maintain the tradition of the tumunu.

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