



The Necropolitics of Coloniality and Climate Change in the South Pacific

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Introduction

Climate change is a source of stress for many communities in the South Pacific, given that the region contains many low-lying countries vulnerable to sea-level rise, an increased prevalence of disastrous cyclones, and unprecedented changes in precipitation. This stress is being compounded by continuing colonial practices perpetrated by France and the United States of America, and neo-colonial pressures arising from global capitalism. The relatively long period of independence of Aotearoa from the United Kingdom has not yet resulted in overcoming toxic postcolonial necropolitics facilitated against Indigenous Māori and South Pacific Island (Pasifika) communities. Even the U.N.'s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC 2022: 3-33) recognizes that many Indigenous communities have been made more vulnerable to climate change due to colonization. There is now a political storm brewing, symbolized by Pasifika youth activist creatives, the Pacific Climate Warriors, proclaiming at the U.N. Council of Parties (COP 26), “[w]e are not drowning, we are fighting”, and “[w]e are resilient beacons of hope” (Membrere 2021: 1). This is a political storm wrought by Indigenous communities that aligns with the weather storms wrought by climate change.

Working from what I have learned from Indigenous elders, anticipatory systems theory, continental philosophy, and Eastern Orthodox Christianity, I here analyze the systemic errors of past development models that continue to cause both climate change and coloniality. From this perspective, climate change, colonial, neo-colonial, and postcolonial turmoil can be seen as negative feedback loops impacting social-ecological systems (SES) and constituted by capitalist economy. Nevertheless, in the face of these dire negative feedbacks, Aotearoa Māori and Pasifika communities guided by cultural traditions retain hope and resilience. They maintain the capacity to recover, with a regenerative kernel that is growing in strength. This article outlines how an academic subsection within the Māori and Pasifika communities analyzes the situation to contribute to leadership and to empower their communities. I work within this matted felt of academia, having worked at universities in Aotearoa as well as in Samoa and Fiji.



My wife and children are Samoan, and I have a refugee mixed racial background (my parents were political refugees who escaped from the apartheid regime of South Africa in the 1960s), having come to live in Aotearoa as a young child. I have been blessed to learn from Indigenous elders in Aotearoa, Samoa, and Fiji, and to belong to a village (Samusu), where we as a family are based. As is commonplace among Samoan families, we travel back and forth to Aotearoa and between other South Pacific islands.

This article concludes with a case study focused on a rural community in Waikaipa (Upper Selwyn Huts), Aotearoa, whose reserve land will have to be abandoned in approximately 30 years due to climate change. We have a small bach (recreational holiday home) in Wakaipa as our Aotearoa base. I have developed my conceptual analysis in this study based on my ongoing primary community-based research in Wakaipa. The work has not yet been academically published. Up until now, my research in this area has only been used as a resource within local government and community consultation processes. Ultimately, it reveals that brutal necropolitical processes are leading people—especially youth, Indigenous peoples, and the rainbow community—to death by suicide. This article attempts to coherently analyze (using Samoan and Aotearoa Māori cultural traditions, anticipatory systems theory, and discourses from continental philosophy) the systemic processes of colonial and climate change necropolitics that legitimize state-sanctioned behavior so callous that even the Aotearoa-New Zealand Human Rights Commission has struggled to find ways to initiate a rational dialogue between the perpetrators and those being affected. Nevertheless, there is still hope and resilience, and recovery is underway.

The Necropolitics of Environmental and Social Decline

The necropolitics of environmental decline are being experienced and resisted by many communities in the South Pacific. The cultural traditions of the communities resisting necropolitics, such as those of Samoa, Fiji, and Aotearoa Māori, prioritize environmental health and human well-being. The necropolitics of both environmental and social decline can only be understood by first understanding what these communities understand to be “natural.” Then, showing how these communities maintain hope and resilience provides insight into realistic strategies for overcoming the necropolitics of environmental and social decline. A case study of a community in Aotearoa is then included to fill out four conceptual illustrations.

Incorporating concepts from the cultural traditions of these communities, I also work with necropolitical formulations as proffered by anticipatory systems theory as well as consider arguments from within continental philosophy discourses. I do so as a thread within the matted felt of the Pasifika and Māori communities. I use the metaphor from Deleuze and Guattari (1987[1980]: 475) of felt (*feutre*), compared to another one, that of woven tapestry, to emphasize that there is no overarching coherence or commonality within the Pasifika and Māori communities. There are patches of



unravelling tapestry; coloniality and capitalism have been woven into “striated space,” but generally it is a matted felt of “smooth space” (1987[1980]: 475). Moreover, and this needs to be emphasized, the cultural traditions are open and maintain “smooth” space¹ (I prefer to use the term *wild* space) to free them from coalescing into the “striated” space (I prefer to use the phrase *disembedded* and *domesticated* space) of a woven tapestry.

Firstly, I need to make clear that I consider the necropolitics of environmental decline and social decline to be real phenomena of the utmost importance. Further, I understand these forms of decline to be inseparable. Therefore, I will from now on use the term “anthropogenic necropolitics” to refer to them as a single phenomenon. Another reason why I do so is to distinguish both from “wild necropolitics,” a term used in some postcolonial and climate change literature, for example by Carl Death (2021). Wild necropolitics refers to negative feedback loops caused when natural processes (geologic, atmospheric, etc.) respond to anthropogenic climate change and other environmental crises. Following many commentators, I see anthropogenic necropolitics as inseparable from coloniality and capitalism (Mbembe 2019; Sultana 2022; DeBoom 2021, 2022). Coloniality in the context of the South Pacific refers to both European and North American colonialism that continues to this day, as well as ongoing post-colonial traumas and the global ascendance of neoliberal global capitalism within which the governments of postcolonial independent nations remain entrapped. The traditional communities resisting anthropogenic necropolitics are also to a large degree resisting their own post-independence nation state governments’ neo-colonial agendas.

There are three points of engagement with the South Pacific communities resisting necropolitics that I want to highlight. These are centers around which I will narrate anthropogenic and wild necropolitics, ultimately matting the three moments into a felt. Conceptual infographic models are provided below to help articulate these narratives.

1. The first point of engagement is one I have referred to in previously published articles about community-based research conducted in the South Pacific (Morrison 2021, 2022; Morrison & Singh 2009; Morrison et al. 2023). It is intuited and commonly communicated within South Pacific communities that climate change is a natural correction of unnatural forms of development. This framing by the communities reveals a two-stage reflexivity or set of horizons vis-à-vis climate

¹ Deleuze and Guattari define “smooth space” as “a space of contact, of small tactile or manual actions of contact rather than a visual space like Euclid’s striated space” that “do not meet the visual condition of being observable from a point in space external to them; an example of this is the system of sounds, or even of colors” that are “wedded to a very particular type of multiplicity: nonmetric, acentered, rhizomatic multiplicities that occupy space without ‘counting’ it” (1987[1980]: 371). Examples would be the experience of embeddedness in the forest, the ocean, and where creatives dwell. Striated space by contrast is aligned with state power: “[o]ne of the fundamental tasks of the State is to striate the space over which it reigns, or to utilize smooth spaces as a means of communication in the service of striated space” (385).



change: a *horizon of mortality* and a *divine horizon of hope*. This formulation of two horizons is critically developed from the discussion of two horizons found in the Kyoto School of continental philosophy. From this framing, the *horizon of mortality* refers to a primary negation of the substantivity of reality to reveal the nothingness of all. A secondary negation, to negate nothingness, reveals *the divine presence in a horizon of hope*, which is better described as revealing the emptiness of all (Heisig 1995: 217).

2. The second point I have not yet referred to in published works; it originates from a period of retreats spent in Saskatchewan with the Prairie Cree in 2008 to discuss our research for a book on Indigenous and inter-cultural human ecology (Morrison 2012). The insight emerged after discussions with elders/healers about cultural decline in our village in Samoa. Three times I was told something similar by Prairie Cree elders/healers independently of each other. It was a powerful corroboration that I had difficulty knowing what to do with. There are three aspects to their remarks. The first aspect is that culture can never be destroyed, as it is reproduced anew in each generation by gifted youth who are taught by those who have already passed on. But—and this is the second aspect—the current cultural decline worldwide among Indigenous communities is due to gifted youth being put into mental hospitals (and suiciding). The third aspect is that the health of gifted youth is also an indicator of the health of the natural environment.

3. The third point I have discussed in previous publications. It is that cultural traditions in the South Pacific maintain resilience by successfully resisting necropolitics, resistance that is often led by contemporary youth. For example, the South Pacific's own "Climate Warriors," a grassroots climate justice group, describe themselves as "resilient beacons of hope," indicating how the natural environment, inclusive of human beings, can recover and thrive (Membrere 2021: 1).

Background and Definition of Terms

Necropolitics

Necropolitics is used here in line with Mbembe's definition (2019), namely to illustrate how hegemonic power decides who deserves life and death. I focus on how state power imposes systemic maladaptation that is increasingly enforced unto the ultimate consequence of maladaptation, and eventually death—whether fast by execution or suicide, or slowly by deprivation and abuse. Coloniality, capitalism, and climate change are pertinent to this discussion because they contribute to anthropogenic necropolitics (inclusive of environmental and social decline) as it is currently playing itself out globally by bringing about environmental decline and social crises.



It is also necessary to distinguish direct human-induced or anthropogenic necropolitics from what is termed here “wild necropolitics”—necropolitical effects on humans that result from changes within the natural environment. Of course, wild necropolitics can also be seen as a secondary effect of anthropogenic necropolitics. I make the distinction, however, because it is a distinction that is emphasized in cultural traditions in the South Pacific. The distinction emphasizes what is considered to be “natural,” which is environmental health and well-being, and which has a source termed *mauri*. Moreover, *mauri* is also the divine agent that corrects the human activity that counters what is “natural” (as when humans degrade the environment and bring about human ill-being). I use the term “wild necropolitics” to emphasize the belief among South Pacific communities that there is an agent or agency behind the negative consequences of anthropogenic necropolitics. I also consider wild vs. anthropogenic necropolitics to be a necessary distinction for thinking about how to overcome necropolitics of all types, whether we mean the initiating anthropogenic necropolitics or the environmental consequences that return to humans in the form of wild necropolitics. This is because there are natural catastrophic changes of which *mauri* is also the source (such catastrophic changes are sometimes necessary for both environmental health and human well-being). Humans need to learn to live with natural catastrophic changes to live well. This can be understood in terms of anticipatory systems theory and catastrophe theory because catastrophic changes are a necessity for the co-evolutionary emergence of life and are hence necessary for environmental health and human well-being. From this helpful perspective, it can be seen that it is the kindness of *mauri* that brings us experiences of natural catastrophic changes, and if necessary, also wild necropolitics when we are slow learners. The kindness of the co-evolutionary emergence of life is also shown by its mercy: no grudges are held and all previous and current maladaptation is forgiven as long as there is at least one current adaptive feature that can be selected for. The same understanding is found in the 7th century writings of St Isaac the Syrian (1984: 153). Isaac argued that inconsistency is experienced because it is a divine gift that prompts learning and growth. Moreover, Isaac argued that the experience of consistency is a sure sign of being deluded and on a path to maladaptation. This Eastern Orthodox Christian view is relevant because as is shown later, Pasifika cultural traditions incorporated Christianity but rejected the metaphysics of Western Christianity.

Anticipatory Systems, Catastrophe Theory, and Emergence

Robert Rosen (2012[1985]), in articulating anticipatory systems theory, argued that all living systems, including human social systems, use anticipation to respond immediately to their environment. In this context, anticipation is defined as the projection of a model in some form or another to disclose a hidden reality, and therefore to model what the future might be. According to Rosen, projection models are used by all living systems to be able to construct environmental indicators. Comparing what is experienced to what a



model portrays and anticipates enables an immediate response by an organism to its environment. Of course, the adequacy of the response is only as good as the adequacy of the model, but the alternative of responding to the consequences in real time involves a time lag. For example, it would mean not recognizing the possible consequences of climate change until the consequences occur, which would be too late—or waiting until a person burns themselves rather than responding to heat as a potential danger. There are therefore two types of comparisons that occur, resulting in two types of mismatch, error, or difference. The first type of comparison is *parametric error*, which refers to the mismatch, error, or difference between what is experienced and what is modeled or anticipated. One can monitor the situation and immediately correct activity by implementing the model with a modified parametric value to guide activity. Examples might be the use of scenario models by the IPCC of expected climate change and the fact that they continually update, or a person sensing heat to avert placing their hand on a hot stove. The second type of comparison is *systemic error*, which refers to the inadequacy of a model to be able to monitor a situation. For example, scenario models by the IPCC are unable to model postcolonial social-political changes that influence the production of pollutants and the adaptive capacity of communities. Another example would be the inadequacy of heat-sensing capabilities to protect against the burns from acid exposure.

Rosen argues that all living systems operationalize their responses where possible to be reversible. This means that the experience of differences enables change in activity to be made by changing some feature (the parameter or indicator) of an action. For example, moving a hand away from a heat source to avoid burning, and moving it towards heat if it is cold. This is commonly the case over a specific range. But beyond the range where reversibility operates, the experience of the difference does not address the situation. For example, if a fire breaks out it may be necessary to recognize that the guidance provided by the model (which indicates that heat should be avoided) is inadequate, and that it is necessary instead to move closer to a fire to escape through a door while the fire is still only small, or to rush toward a fire when the fire extinguisher is nearby so the fire can be put out. This introduces a key feature of resilient living systems. They all have a requisite diversity of models in use. For example, there may be a model to guide movement to and away from a fire to stay warm, and a model to be used in an emergency to escape from or put out a fire. Similarly, it is clear why attempts to force all activity into a supposed single reversible model destroy resilience. For example, the imposing of monetary values on all goods and services such that the distribution of goods and services is relegated to people exchanging goods and services within a market. This example is pertinent, as Deleuze and Guattari (1987[1980]: 490) argue that human ill-being is caused by the repression and suppression of creative exploration of smooth space by the capitalist enforcement of monetization vis-à-vis goods and services. Deleuze and Guattari (1983[1972]: 240) liken the situation under capitalism to being held within a prison or mental hospital.



To recognize the need for a requisite diversity of models is to address systemic error. Within social-ecological systems (SES), it is crucial to also recognize the intrinsic inadequacy of all models. Thus, there is a need to continually explore possible models to better address possible situations, which is precisely how requisite diversity is maintained in SES. An important feature of Rosen's work is to point out that all living systems are akin to SES (Deans 2021: 2). All of life uses anticipatory models with which to bootstrap the exploration of co-evolutionary possibilities for the development of life. Humans' use of symbolic language to create feedforward (models made and used within anticipatory systems) is but an added sophistication, and not essentially different to the use of genetic models within biological reproduction. This means that humans are potentially able to experience participation in all anticipatory systems that constitute living systems to the extent that we can become aware of our unconscious. Our awareness of our unconscious feedforward and its feedback is what Polanyi (2009[1966]: 6) termed "tacit knowledge." It is the billion-year-old wisdom the body has, not only in the brain, but in each cell.

Associated with anticipatory systems theory is the catastrophe theory of René Thom (1989). This mathematical theory lays out that in any system that seeks to optimize and that has more than two parameters, catastrophic changes are inevitable among certain paths of parametric co-change. Given that all systems (according to the second law of thermodynamics) seek to optimize the rate of dissipation of energy gradients, catastrophic change is intrinsic to living systems. This produces a conundrum. It means that what Deleuze and Guattari (1983[1972]: 52) term unconscious "desiring-production," even though the repression of it is maladaptive as found for example in coloniality and capitalism, nevertheless results in situations of catastrophic change if given free rein. To a less repressed degree, this is what happens when optimizing self-interest within a market is given free rein. Catastrophe theory implies that there are two ways to avoid suffering ill-health and ill-being in the face of such inevitable catastrophic change. One way is to smooth out natural optimizing behavior, for example by repressing desiring-production. The other is to carefully avoid paths that result in catastrophic change, but which are still optimal, which is technically always possible.

The former approach is what Deleuze and Guattari (1983[1972]: 113) railed against in their criticism of Freudian psychoanalysis. Deleuze and Guattari argue that Freud developed a theory of an innate Oedipal complex that supposedly constitutes social organization through the sublimation of desiring-production to coerce people into repressing desiring-production. Deleuze and Guattari also argue that coloniality and capitalism similarly repress desire, and indeed that Freudian psychoanalysis is but a tool of coloniality and capitalism to help repress desiring-production.

Fortunately, the practicalities of how to carefully choose optimal paths that avoid catastrophic change have already been worked out by co-evolution over billions of



years. What works in practice is termed “ecological resilience” (Gunderson et al. 2003; Morrison 2016, 2022, 2024; Morrison & Nand 2023). Ecological resilience is what co-evolution selects for. As already alluded to, co-evolution selects living systems that maintain a requisite diversity of models or feedforward so that when a catastrophic change of irreversibility is encountered when implementing one model, other models are already available to replace the one that is no longer relevant. This is what establishes ecological resilience. An example would be having and enacting an emergency plan to escape or put out a fire once its heat is no longer able to be managed. Another example would be the need for genetic diversity to ensure the resilience of a species. Failure to maintain adequate genetic diversity inevitably results in extinction. Within SES, this entails having a requisite diversity of SES structures already in place so that failure is not catastrophic to the whole SES. To use metaphors from Deleuze and Guattari (1987[1980]: 475), a messy felt of threads matted together is what works to provide opportunities to continue to manifest desiring-production, whereas a woven tapestry stunts opportunities, fails to ensure requisite diversity, and therefore inevitably fails. To add nuance, it can be said that each thread in a felt can itself be a tapestry. What is required is a requisite diversity of tapestries that are continually being explored and woven, just in case, as all are known to involve degrees of inevitable repression in differing ways, such that the risk is spread out and mitigated. I define becoming aware of a particular tapestry or structure of a SES as “first order reflexivity.” This reflexivity is what enables a person to conform, to fit in, to play the game. It is necessary and recursive as the SES is co-evolving and hence always changing. But I argue that “second order reflexivity” is also required to be able to discern the need to conform to other structures when necessary. For example, when moving between cultural contexts, or when moving between sports and complying with their different rules. Finally, “third order reflexivity” is required to critically and creatively explore possible situations and opportunities and hence to develop new structures or codes, and even to develop cultural traditions to better confront new situations.

The living systems that anticipatory systems bootstrap into existence, and which co-evolve with ecological resilience, feature emergent properties. It is not possible to anticipate what will emerge. Anticipatory systems make it possible for emergence to occur. For example, preparing for inevitable sea-level rise and the need to relocate a community enables members of the community to co-creatively explore options and discover potential opportunities they had not yet considered. There are, however, two types of emergence that need to be defined. One is *indirect emergence*, which arises from the use of feedforward coupled with feedback within an anticipatory system. This is how all living systems emerge. The other type of emergence relevant here is *direct emergence*. This refers to the potential emergence of anticipatory systems of life themselves, and the catastrophic changes within them. Direct emergence is what gives rise to the universe in all its mysterious glory, living systems with their fecund ecosystem health and vibrancy, as well as human well-being forged through



relationships inclusive of compassion and love. Direct emergence is what is seen in the divine horizon of hope, where there is always the possibility of renewal, recovery, and development. It is to perceive the glorious emptiness overcoming all limitations, in contradistinction to the meaningless nothingness of inevitable failure, collapse, and death.

In their exploration of smooth space Deleuze and Guattari allude to direct emergence when discussing the experience of unobstructed flow and its ability to explore opportunities in between and through potential catastrophes. They also however warn that “smooth spaces are not in themselves liberatory” even though “the struggle is changed or displaced in them, and life reconstitutes its stakes, confronts new obstacles.” Still, we should “[n]ever believe that a smooth space will suffice to save us” (1987[1980]: 500). I interpret this to mean that the exhilarating experience of flow as obstructions are removed in smooth space can occur in the process of maladaptation as well as adaptation. Therefore, the maladaptation of anthropogenic necropolitics, which requires repression of desiring-production through fixated conformity to state-imposed striated space, can nonetheless also produce smooth space.

Deleuze and Guattari recognize that smooth space could emerge from striated space. In their words, “[w]hat interests us in the operations of striation and smoothing are precisely the passages or combinations: how the forces at work within space continually striate it, and how in the course of its striation it develops other forces and emits new smooth spaces” (1987[1980]: 500). It is unclear, however, whether they also recognized the distinction between maladaptive smooth spaces emerging from striated space, and adaptive smooth spaces that also emerge from striated space but escape it. When adaptive smooth space is fixated upon it will eventually become maladaptive, just as the flow of desiring-production is repressed when fixation occurs.

Deleuze and Guattari did however recognize that emergent smooth space is temporal and “stands opposed to all planes of principle and finality” (1987[1980]: 507) but appear to have overlooked the need for ecological resilience that requires continual exploring of new possible emergent smooth spaces to maintain requisite diversity of smooth spaces. This could be because of their association of smooth space with a “plane of consistency” (507). In their words, “[t]he plane of consistency knows nothing of substance and form” but rather “[t]he plane consists abstractly,” though “[i]n another sense, consistency concretely ties together heterogeneous elements as such: it assures the consolidation of fuzzy aggregates” (507). These aggregates are “*becomings*, which have neither culmination nor subject, but draw one another into zones of proximity or undecidability; *smooth spaces*, composed from within striated spaces” (500). For ecological resilience and the emergence of adaptive smooth space, there must be inconsistency in the place of consistency due to the non-consolidation of a set of consolidations (smooth spaces). To be adaptive it is necessary to jump from one



consolidation, consistency, or smooth space to another before it becomes maladaptive. Continually juxtaposing multiple smooth spaces to avoid maladaptation is to see through striated space, to relativize it, to make it translucent, opening to the divine horizon of hope and divine immanence to experience the smooth space that is found in the forest, the ocean, and where creatives dwell.

Just as Isaac the Syrian (1984: 153) argued for the need for inconsistency—and this agrees with anticipatory systems theory—it is likely that Deleuze and Guattari correctly recognized the insufficiency of simply adhering to smooth space but failed to fully see why. To help discern these differing types of smooth space, I define a distinction between “deep direct emergence,” which is the source of all life and is adaptive, and “shallow direct emergence,” which is short-term, maladaptive, even suicidal, and occurs due to compulsive conformity through the repression and suppression of primarily systemic error, but also parametric error when extreme. Therefore, I argue that as well as adherence to smooth space, what is required is second and third order reflexivity to embrace not merely an emergence (becoming) of consolidation but also a requisite diversity of them to continually provide opportunities to avoid catastrophic changes. Then the flow of desiring-production continues unrepressed and the experience of flowing in smooth space can be trusted. This matters because, as is shown later, it means that desiring-production cannot have productivity as an end in itself. If it does, desiring-production is maladaptive, creating consumerism and addiction, both of which are chronic features of anthropogenic necropolitics. It also matters because it means that desiring-production has a purpose, but not one dictated by any great Other as a signifier. The mistaken view that a great Other as a signifier can provide purpose is what has created the foundation for anthropogenic necropolitics. Rather, the purpose and therefore what allows desiring-production to flow unrepressed is the divine horizon of hope to develop an open-ended relationship within divine immanence.

Mauri and Va

Cultural traditions in the South Pacific have an understanding akin to what *différance*, emergence, and the operation of anticipatory systems signify. This is expressed primarily through two terms: *mauri* and *va*. The term *mauri* is used intentionally with polyvocality to refer to ineffable processes related to the direct emergence of all life, which nonetheless involves human participation through response to the soul-call at the centermost of one’s being—this process is guided by the use of symbolic language. *Mauri* means simultaneously the one lifeforce of all, the centermost of a human person, and talismanic art (Morrison 2022; Morrison et al. 2023).

As already mentioned, in traditional Samoan and Aotearoa Māori cultural traditions, a divine agent is recognized as the source of living systems. Catastrophic changes are seen to prompt growth, learning, and development, and wild necropolitics is viewed as a natural corrective to anthropogenic necropolitics. Whereas, in some versions, this divine



agency is personified as an Earth mother (for example as *Papatuanuku* in Aotearoa Māori), in Samoan culture, spatial imagery is used, indicated by the term *va*. *Va* refers to space, but space that has six dimensions (Lilomaiava-Doktor 2009; Matapo & Enari 2021; Morrison 2022; Morrison et al. 2023). The first four are those known to science. The fifth is the noetic realm of the human soul and spirits. The sixth dimension is divine; it is where noetic beings and all material beings spiritually unite into the one living system of life as relationship (Lilomaiava-Doktor 2009; Vaai 2017), known in the divine horizon of hope. *Mauri* can be seen to operate in all six dimensions, being the center that all noetic beings are potentially united within, which is simultaneously the one life force uniting all living beings and a source of well-being, of merciful compassion and love.

The fifth and sixth dimensions should not, however, be construed as transcending four-dimensional material space. Rather, they are immanent within four-dimensional material space. Deleuze and Guattari (1987[1980]: 482) elucidate this through their use of a mathematical analogy for smooth space. They refer to a fractal dimension between the first and second dimension where infinite distance and zero area emerge as the limit. I link this to the immanence of the fifth (noetic) dimension of freedom, where a soul can explore the material realm in an unhindered way. This indicates the inseparable composite nature of the human being, as both material and noetic, where the noetic is immanent within the material. Deleuze and Guattari then develop this further by referring to a fractal dimension between the second and third dimension where, at the limit, there is infinite distance between objects and each object has infinite surface but zero volume. I link this to the potential immanence of the sixth (divine) dimension, given how each human being is an image or microcosm of the whole (infinite area) but none are substantively the whole (zero volume), and there is therefore an infinite potential depth of relationships between and among all others (infinite distance between objects). Deleuze and Guattari (1987[1980]: 479) leave it there, as their focus is on the immanence of the immaterial or noetic “body without organs,” to use their term. Instead, I extend the analogy to a fractal dimension between the third and fourth dimensions. In this fractal dimension there is, at the limit, infinite movement or activity between objects that are infinitely apart, with each object having infinite volume, but zero time. I link this to a substantive divine immanence, when humans explore their infinite potential to forge relationships and to nurture the well-being of others who are co-extensively and equally related to all others, which attests to a timeless perspective (Morrison 2002).

Within Samoan cultural tradition, human beings are also known to uniquely span all six dimensions of *va* and to have the role of enhancing *va*—to cultivate relationships of well-being and ecosystem health with and for all as divine immanence (Lilomaiava-Doktor 2009; Matapo & Enari 2021; Morrison et al. 2023). Furthermore, this is understood to be an anticipatory recursive system involving the (re)construction of feedforward (*liliu*); implementation for praxis and openness to listen to feedback for



deconstruction (*toe liuliu*); and deconstruction (*liuliu*), before returning to *liliu* (Vaai, 2017; Matapo & Enari 2021; Morrison et al. 2023).

Samoan traditional cultural systems have institutionalized processes to maintain resilience. Feedforward is carried out by *lauga* or oratory to explore possible adaptation or wayfinding. Feedback is carried out by *talanoa* or ordinary discussion that emerges from everyone in response to their experiences (Matapo & Enari 2021; Morrison et al. 2023). *Talanoa* starts at the family level and then enters the council of chiefs where it forms the basis for *lauga*. Four recognized stages of resilience are incorporated in the process (Cyrulnik 2021; Mittlemark 2021; Morrison et al. 2023). Perseverance and resistance ensure that the integrity of listening to feedback is not lost. There is the overcoming of the fixated repression of desiring-production through the facilitation of recursive first order reflexivity as well as second order and third order reflexivity. The process is inclusive and democratic. Psychological resilience of individuals is maintained (Morrison & Nand 2023; Morrison et al. 2023). Using Deleuze and Guattari's (1987[1980]: 507) terminology, what is required is a process of institutionalizing schizoanalysis to ensure the free flow of desiring-production within smooth spaces. In the terminology of Orthodox Christianity, it is the recovery of the free flow of "natural will," which is recognized as the soul's desire for the divine immanence of personal relationships (Keselopoulos 2004: 55). From this perspective, the exploration of multiple adaptations can occur through narrative-making and rulemaking. These are then implemented with a requisite diversity of options and monitored closely (daily at the family level and weekly at the council level). The continual dialogue in *talanoa* and *lauga* provides social resilience (Morrison & Nand 2023; Morrison et al. 2023). Continual transformations to the structure of the village SES emerge to facilitate ecological resilience and to maintain and enhance well-being and ecosystem health.

Negation of Anthropogenic Necropolitics by Wild Necropolitics

A feature of Samoan cultural tradition is its incorporation of Christian tradition. In part, this is manifest as Christian baggage associated with European colonization and the imposition of capitalist economy, as well as the resulting oedipalization of social organization into structures of guilt and self-righteousness. However, it is not only that. Christian theologians play a major role in the academic leadership of Pasifika cultures. It was, for example, a theologian and professor at the Pacific Institute of Theology who first pointed me to the concept of necropolitics. One reason could be the Samoan experience of *va* and *mauri*. *Va* and *mauri* are more than abstract concepts, they are lived experiences. In contrast to Deleuze and Guattari's claim (1983[1972]: 217) that Christianity and Abrahamic religions are generally based on the use of a despotic signifier, the "divine Other" within Christianized Samoan cultural traditions is not considered a great Other as a signifier. Rather, the divine Other is known as the infinite and eternal well-being of immanent personal relationships. This is fascinating because



contemporary Eastern Orthodox Christian theologians generally argue that the authentic Christian tradition is personal apophatism akin to the Samoan experience, and they trenchantly condemn Western theology for adopting neo-Platonic metaphysics and transcendental signifiers (Morrison 2002; Romanides 2008: 27; Stăniloae 2003: 47; Yannaras 2005: 21). Eastern Orthodox Christian theologians' criticism of Western metaphysics is similar to the criticism of it leveled by Theil (1995: 71) in his commentary on Nietzsche and Heidegger. These critiques are all in accordance with Deleuze and Guattari's (1983[1972]: 240) criticism of how Western Christianity was and is used for coloniality and the support of capitalism through deference to a despotic great Other as a signifier, seen as the Logos of God. Pasifika incorporation of Christianity was fortunate to avoid Western metaphysics; some of its prominent theologians form a critical voice that negates anthropogenic necropolitics, while aligning with wild necropolitics (Vaai 2017; Aiava 2017).

From the perspective of anticipatory systems theory, the problem with Western metaphysics is that there is a conflation of feedforward with reality, and even a delusion that the projection of feedforward (the signifier) is considered the source of reality. This is found, for example, in how Western science among naïve adherents is considered to discover natural laws that are supposedly the source of reality. An example addressed by Deleuze and Guattari (1983[1972]: 222) is the equally deluded, axiomatically held view that capital is the source of production rather than a symbol of surplus value siphoned off from production.

Objet Petit A

I am therefore in agreement with Deleuze and Guattari's (1983[1972]: 27) critique of Lacan's notion of the "great Other as a signifier." Similarly, I agree with their use of the metaphor of a rhizome standing for symbolic language that forms feedforward, rather than the metaphor of a tree (1987[1980]: 6). I agree that there is no arborescent coherent structure to language supposedly structured by the great Other as a signifier (7). Rather, a language appears to emerge through co-evolution, through felt-like chaotic messiness, and with necessitated redundancy and requisite diversity to ensure that it is functional and resilient. I disagree with Deleuze and Guattari, however, in their suggestion that "Lacan's admirable theory of desire appears to us to have two poles: one related to 'the object small a' as a desiring machine, which defines desire in terms of a real production, thus going beyond any notion of need and any idea of fantasy; and the other related to the 'great Other' as a signifier, which reintroduces a certain notion of lack" (1987[1980]: 27).

"The object small a" (*objet petit a*) is generally recognized as referring to an always unattainable (even forbidden) absent (small) other that motivates drives that are misplaced or else defers needs. For example, according to Fuery, "the subject can find itself sitting by the river—the displacement between the oppositions of looking and



finding are negotiated by the code structure of desire and absence” and “the Other as code is what is essentially desired—what is offered by way of appeasement is the *objet petit a*” (Fuery 1995: 22). For Fuery, “[t]he object of the *objet petit a* is not fixed to paradigmatics of signifiers, but instead slides according to a set of external factors” (44) wherein “[t]he forbidden object is created” (44) and “[t]he narcissistic drive of the subject... is in fact directly tied to the sense of the Other as a determining absence” (46). Within Samoan cultural traditions, what an *objet petit a* refers to is considered a distracting or perverting demonic other, as it is also in Eastern Orthodox Christian theology.

Deleuze and Guattari correctly contend that the *objet petit a* is not fixed to signifiers but rather real external factors. What they appear to have overlooked is how *objet petit a* emerges as a proxy due to repression of desiring-production because it is diverted away from desiring the (divine) Other. They overlook that the *objet petit a* motivates a maladaptive displacement or deferral of desiring-production away from its unrepressed flow toward the (divine) Other. It is likely that this lacuna has the same source as their failure to recognize the need for inconsistency in smooth spaces emerging from striated space if maladaptation is to be avoided.

I contend that drives emerge through the repression of second and third order reflexivity, due to the folding over of the projection of feedforward back onto itself to close off not only the divine horizon of hope but also the horizon of mortality. I define the repression of second and third order reflexivity as producing “opaque knowledge.” Using Deleuze and Guattari’s (1983[1972]: 9) terminology, the folding over that represses desiring-production is “anti-production” and manifests as addiction. This is significant because driven desire and hence addictions are how anthropogenic necropolitics manifest within consumer-capitalist society, creating enormous issues of ill-being (for example, the epidemic across the South Pacific of non-communicable diseases). Orthodox Christianity traditions in accordance with Samoan cultural traditions see such addicted drivenness as arising due to the use of composite signs—conjoining a sign with a passion to produce an unnatural confused heart that cannot think dispassionately and clearly, and which therefore not only fails to creatively produce feedforward but even fails to monitor reality with feedforward. This understanding of drivenness is in accordance with Fuery’s (1995: 122) description of “gazing,” which objectifies and alienates others as well as oneself. Objectifying others and subjecting oneself to conformity is an example of how an *objet petit a* operates, and how anthropogenic necropolitics operates by extension.

False Sublimes and Surplus

A feature of how the repression of desiring-production represses second and third order reflexivity and creates anthropogenic necropolitics involves the folding over of feedforward, which conflates it with reality and so creates what I term a “false sublime,”



or to use Deleuze and Guattari's formulation (1983[1972]: 322), creates a coercive, frustrating double-bind, and a guilt-inducing subconscious structure created by "overcoding." The creation of false sublimates provides an exact definition of maladaptation within an anticipatory SES, and therefore also diagnoses what causes anthropogenic necropolitics. Deleuze and Guattari (1983[1972]: 296) helpfully analyze how oppressive subconscious structures (what I term false sublimates) are caused by coloniality and capitalism, which enforce the breakdown of social-ecological relationships into isolated private property and nuclear families. Deleuze and Guattari argue that this is the cause of the ill-being found in capitalist economies, pointing out that this is what Freud termed the Oedipus complex. But as already mentioned, Deleuze and Guattari are scathing of Freud's argument that all social organization beyond the nuclear family and private property is caused by the sublimation of desiring-production due to a supposed Oedipal complex. Deleuze and Guattari argue that Freud reversed the reality. This situation can be interpreted as another example of the folding over of feedforward to create an oppressive false sublime. In this case, Freud's feedforward, the Oedipus complex, is construed as the source of reality and so creates a false sublime of opaque knowledge that in reality serves to rationalize and reinforce coloniality and capitalism.

With this framing it is possible to analyze how wild necropolitics operates to negate anthropogenic necropolitics by dissolving and transfiguring oppressive subconscious structures or false sublimates. But as Deleuze and Guattari (1983[1972]: 136) point out, to try to take oppressive structures head on only results in tragically bouncing off them. Therefore, the fight being staged by the Climate Warriors and others aligned with wild necropolitics is to dissolve and transfigure and therefore to reconnect with the natural will of desiring-production through the creation of art, including political installations, as well as through natural contemplation toward the divine horizon of hope in divine immanence. They engage in what Deleuze and Guattari (1983[1972]: 296) term "deterritorialization" to expand out toward others and to relate with all in divine immanence. Similarly, the work of the matted felt collective of Pasifika academics addressing these issues through attentiveness to cultural traditions is to critically address and deconstruct axioms and to reconstruct alternative hypotheses through dialogue within second and third order reflexivity. Likewise, as already outlined, this is how traditional elders lead within traditional village institutions, through the praxis loop of *liliu*, *toeliliu*, and *liuliu*—to decode, recode, and implement.

A highly pertinent example of how to engage in wild necropolitics to negate anthropogenic necropolitics is the deconstruction of capitalist economy through an analysis of how surplus is construed, and to then reconstruct the notion of surplus based on a traditional cultural understanding, such that it avoids maladaptation and hence anthropogenic necropolitics. Three reconstructions of surplus are articulated below, but first a quick deconstruction of the notion of surplus in capitalism.



As already mentioned, a delusion held within capitalism, and how it suppresses desiring-production, is by portraying a reversal of reality, namely by claiming axiomatically that capital is the source of production. As Deleuze and Guattari (1983[1972]: 222) point out, this reversal is grounded by a successful manipulation that induces the delusion in others that the currency produced by capitalists symbolizes the value of production. As Deleuze and Guattari argue, it is a completely arbitrary equation and constituted purely by way of oppression and trauma. Once subjected to it, however, as an internalized, subconscious structure, a false sublime has been established, and guilt is internalized to ensure conformity to it. “Surplus” is then siphoned off by those who create the delusion that their creation of currency symbolizes all real production. Surplus is therefore whatever can successfully be siphoned off without productive individuals becoming suspicious and rebelling against being manipulated throughout the process.

Now for the articulations of surplus as found in traditional Samoan culture. First, it needs to be pointed out that currency is also used in traditional Samoan SES, but it is not created by an unproductive or anti-productive capitalist class. Rather, it is created by those who are productive. In the Samoan context, currency is created through weaving mats and pig husbandry. Woven mats and pigs are currency that are used as tickets for participation within the SES. Currency has a different role in production, or perhaps better stated, it has its own sort of production but does not purport to be the source of all types of production. Alternatively, it can be said that the productive creation of currency is also a surplus that is meant to be shared within reciprocal gift-giving to maximize inclusive participation within the SES. Reciprocal gift-giving is based on finite debt created by receiving a gift, thus establishing a debt to be met through giving a gift in return. As Deleuze and Guattari (1983[1972]: 148) point out, the finite debts created in such primal cultures are completely different to the infinite debt created by capitalism, where instead monetary currency creates absolute dependence because it claims to be the source of all production. It is no wonder it results in suicides.

There are, more importantly, three other and more significant surpluses. The first was recognized by Deleuze and Guattari (1983[1972]: 145) as generic in all primal cultures, namely a *surplus of code*. This is precisely what I see as a requisite diversity of SES structures to ensure ecological resilience. The processes of *lauga* and *talanoa* within the praxis loop of *liliu*, *toeliliu*, and *liuliu* are how this surplus is created and maintained. What I disagree with, however, is Deleuze and Guattari’s characterization of the process as constituted by cruelty, even in their qualification that “[c]ruelty has nothing to do with some ill-defined or natural violence” but rather, “cruelty is the movement of culture that is realized in bodies and inscribed on them, belaboring them” where “it forcibly injects production into desire, and conversely, it forcibly inserts desire into social production” (1983[1972]: 145). This is not the case in Samoan cultural tradition. An articulation of the other two significant surpluses will show why and how.



The second surplus is a *surplus of material production*, created for the functionality of the SES. As Deleuze and Guattari (1983[1972]: 142) point out, various functions, for example eating, are seen as something all persons in the village participate in and partake of, rather than being seen as something owned by a colonized and oedipalized private individual. The term *inati* can be used to symbolize this type of surplus. *Inati* refers to how fishers in a village cooperate, fish together, and bring back their catch together, whereupon it is distributed to all families in the village according to need/functionality. This process not only seeks to justly and inclusively distribute the goods and services that are produced but also uses resources sustainably. This cooperative approach ensures environmental management unto ecosystem health is maintained.

Village cooperation, however, is not usually collective. Ironically, it usually indirectly supports the enterprises of each family. This occurs through a cultural imperative to give if possible whenever and whatever is asked for by others. This creates the situation where all families seek to be as independent as possible by relying on their own productivity. They do so to avoid asking from anyone else, because once asking for help from someone else starts, the reciprocity of finite debt begins. On the other hand, there is never desperation because everyone knows there is security as deep as the produce and productivity the village holds collectively. Moreover, families also cooperate in their support to assist other families to help maintain their independence, so they are not forced into asking from others. Production is maximized as well as security (Morrison 2008).

The third surplus is the *surplus of the heart*. It is central to all the other surpluses. It is openness to others in compassion, mercy, forgiveness, and self-sacrificial love—the forming of relationships or connections with others to enhance *va*. This can be symbolized by *ifoga*, which refers to an institution of forgiveness and mercy shown toward others, as well as humility involving the use of the very best woven mats. This surplus gives way to emotional intelligence and oils healing and adaptive processes. It is to maintain and to share grounding in divine immanence (emptiness).

Conceptual Models

Four conceptual models are proffered to illustrate the processes involved in anthropogenic necropolitics (of environmental and social decline), and the wild necropolitics that negate anthropogenic necropolitics. In keeping with the cultural worldview of traditional communities in the South Pacific, the conceptual illustrations start by outlining what the intrinsic natural processes are, then move to outline how unnatural processes (anthropogenic necropolitics) emerge from these, and finally how natural processes (wild necropolitics) operate to negate the unnatural processes (anthropogenic necropolitics) that emerge. There are accordingly three subsections.

In the first subsection, **Figures 1 and 2** illustrate the natural processes seen by South Pacific traditional communities as resisting anthropogenic necropolitics. Both figures attempt to be comprehensive in their linking together of concepts outlined here. In the second subsection, **Figure 3** illustrates natural processes in terms of anticipatory systems, emphasizing the processes that maintain ecological resilience. How maladaptation (read anthropogenic necropolitics of environmental and social decline) emerges out of the process is shown, which, as I illustrate, is a consequence of coloniality interfering with natural adaptive processes. In the third subsection, **Figure 4** outlines natural regenerative processes, formulated as a complex set of three anticipatory systems (soft system methodologies). These are emerging in the South Pacific in response to anthropogenic necropolitics. I refer throughout to previous work I have published on this topic.

Natural Processes to Resist Anthropogenic Necropolitics

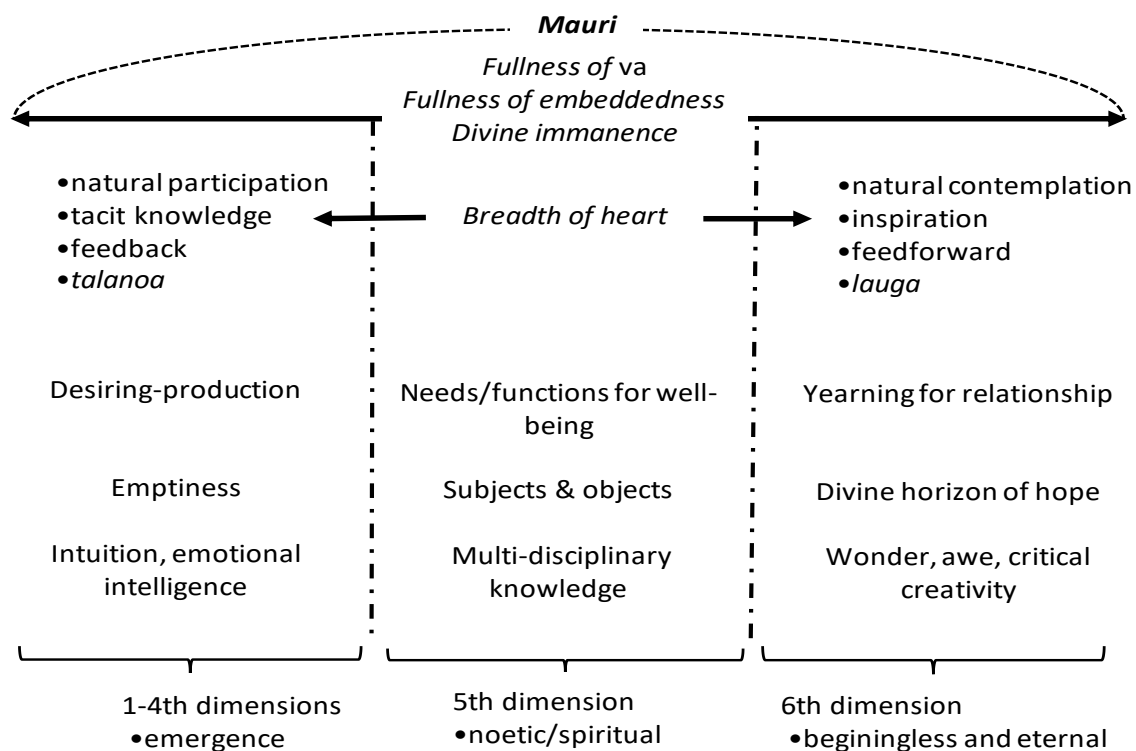


Figure 1. An illustration of the dimensions of *va* and the expansive process by *mauri*.

The structure of **Figure 1** aims to show the expansion of the heart from within the 5th noetic dimension to become embedded in the experience of participation in the natural world (dimensions 1-4) and the experience of divine inspiration (6th dimension). The simultaneous dual-embedding movement in two directions is an opening to divine



immanence or emptiness. The process of expansion is what Orthodox Christian theology terms “perichoresis.” Perichoresis is the union with divine immanence but in a way that simultaneously fulfills creaturely life as it reveals and unites with divine immanence. This process of development and growth in relationships manifests divine immanence and is aligned with natural will and flowing unrepressed desiring-production. It enhances *va* as embeddedness increases into the depths of materiality in union with all life, the earth, and the universe, to experience tacit knowledge. It is also to become embedded in the immanent presence of the spirits, through the discernment of demons (including certain ancestors) and guidance from angels (including certain ancestors). It is to unite the depths of materiality and spirituality in divine immanence known as personal relationships.

The movement of expanding the heart into relationship involves what I term the “hermeneutic spiral” (Morrison 2019). The hermeneutic spiral is what the praxis loop in which *liliu*, *toeliuliu*, and *liuliu* engage. The hermeneutic spiral is the development of, and is in continuity with, intuition and associated emotional intelligence. The hermeneutic spiral expands as the heart expands in the process of perichoresis. There are two movements within the hermeneutic spiral. One is from below. To use formulations from Deleuze and Guattari (1987[1980]: 333), the movement from below is first deterritorialization to clear the scene and to expand the scope as far as desired. Secondly, there is re-territorialization, which is to gather parts of whatever is possible to create “assemblages” in smooth wild space to ensure the work done is functional. This process of creating functional assemblages uses what I term “translucent knowledge,” because it opens toward the horizons of mortality and divine hope: there is relative truth in what is being conceived and visualized because if assembled well it can potentially be functional. Thirdly, there is either positive feedback from divine immanence such that the assemblage is functional, or negative feedback such that it isn’t. If the feedback is negative, tacit knowledge prompts reorientation toward a renewed deterritorialization and reterritorialization process. If the feedback is positive, the heart has successfully expanded and perichoresis grows another step. This is when the other movement of the hermeneutic spiral occurs, which is from above. It is to experience what I term “transparent knowledge”—direct insight and vision that transcends signs and code. It opens new possibilities for expanded deterritorialization to take further steps of growth on the infinite journey of perichoresis and the expansion of the heart into relationship.

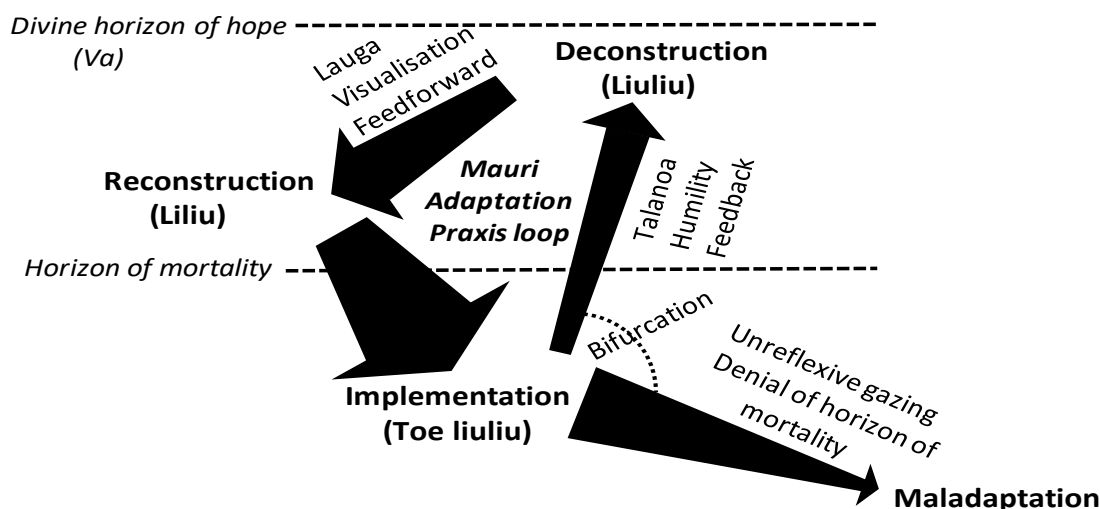


Figure 2. The Samoan village institutionalized adaptive process maintained by *mauri* within *va*.

Figure 2 illustrates the recursive process of praxis linking key concepts from anticipatory systems theory to those used within Samoan cultural tradition. How the process engages with the experience of the horizon of mortality and the divine horizon of hope is emphasized. It is shown where maladaptation (anthropogenic necropolitics in our current context) emerges, which is through a bifurcation within the implementation phase, when the horizon of mortality is repressed due to the suppression of both second and third order reflexivity as well as recursive first order reflexivity. To illustrate the distinction between individual development and aggregate statistical emergence, even though they follow the same process, arrows vary in width. The wider the arrow, the higher the percentage of society is on that path. The two paths are adaptation and maladaptation. Overall, the process is one where after a bifurcation occurs during the implementation phase, individuals gradually awaken from unreflexive drivenness on the dead-end path of maladaptation and ill-being and instead elect to join the recursive path of adaptation increasing well-being.

The metaphor of the rhizome in Deleuze and Guattari (1987[1980]: 6) is helpful for understanding the processes outlined in **Figures 1** and **2**. The metaphor refers to direct emergence within life, which flows and re-emerges rhizome-like as corms with the whole in each part. Within the flow there is the potential for the emergence of life. Given the right conditions, a field of potatoes will grow, and then hidden rhizomes thread across barren land to establish another field. This is a metaphor for how, through bootstrapping by anticipatory systems, opportunities are created and discovered. The rhizome is an imperfect metaphor, however, because it refers only to one species. The reality of direct emergence is that what emerges, when given the opportunity, is a diversity of SES. Direct emergence is a rhizome of irrepressible diversity as well as irrepressible tenacity to take up opportunities and establish uniqueness wherever and

whenever it does so. The term, *mauri*, as a life force, refers to this rhizome-like flow of direct emergence.

The rhizome metaphor is also helpful to allude to how deterritorialization and decoding operates to open us to divine immanence in our relationship with all. The flow of full potential as direct emergence constitutes the bootstrapping process by anticipatory systems that use code for indirect emergence, and so direct emergence is the source of all possible diversity and uniqueness that emerges in an ecosystem. To decode is to return to this potential, the divine emptiness free from obscuration, which is to see the divine immanence in the divine horizon of hope, to see emptiness.

Anthropogenic Necropolitics Enforcing Maladaptation

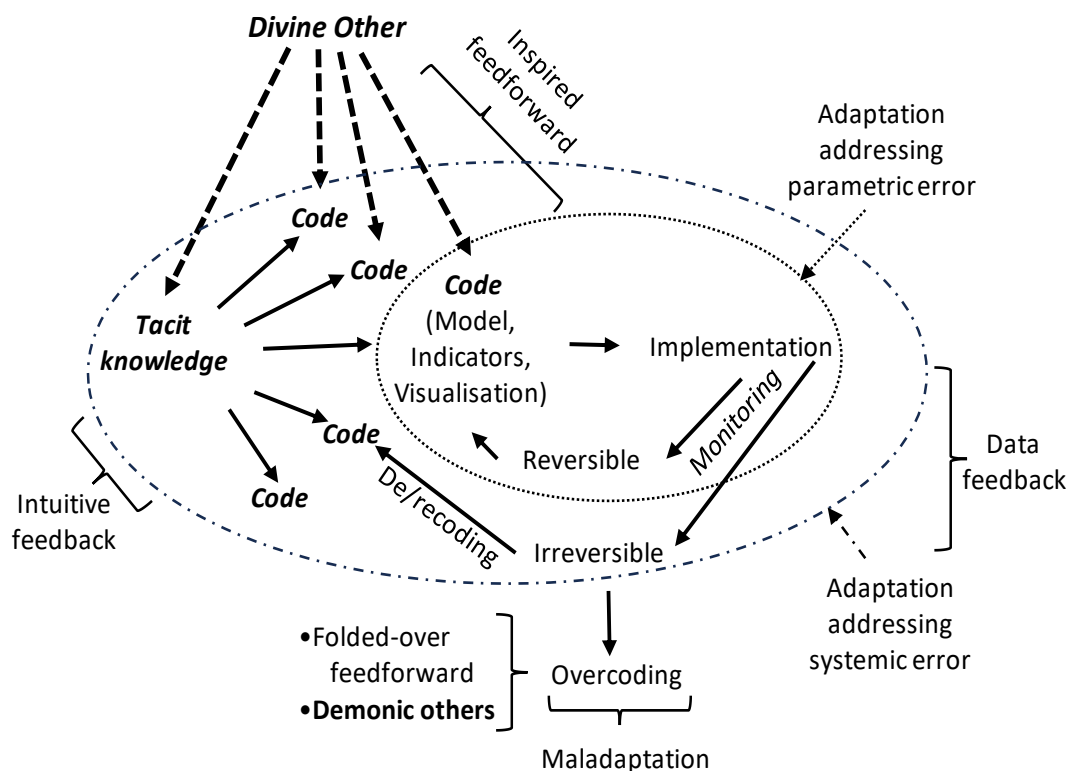


Figure 3: An anticipatory system meta-model of a resilient social-ecological system.

Figure 3 illustrates the processes involved in an SES that has emerged through maintaining ecological resilience. A key feature is how the agency of the divine Other is known both in tacit knowledge responding to feedback and in the inspiration for feedforward. It is helpful to juxtapose this anticipatory system theoretical metamodel of experience of divine immanence with that outlined in **Figure 2** to see how traditional Samoan communities conceive of it as a process of dialogue facilitated by village institutions. Similarly, it is helpful to juxtapose both with **Figure 1**, which conceives of it as the expansion of the heart in accordance with traditional Samoan spirituality. The juxtaposition of the three emphasizes that the reality the three metamodels refer to is

not and must not be conflated with the feedforward projected by the metamodels. To mistakenly believe in the metamodels as anything more than translucent knowledge would be to engage in overcoding that folds over the metamodels to close off the horizon of mortality as well as hope, ultimately becoming a tool of oppression inducing guilt when a person does not live in accordance with the models as perceived by others. Hence, as within the praxis loop of *lilui*, *toeliliu*, and *liuliu*, everything must be left open to being questioned by engaging in third order reflexivity. This is the only way that maladaptation can be dissolved when aligning with the *mauri* of wild necropolitics to negate anthropogenic necropolitics.

Natural Regenerative Processes of Wild Necropolitics

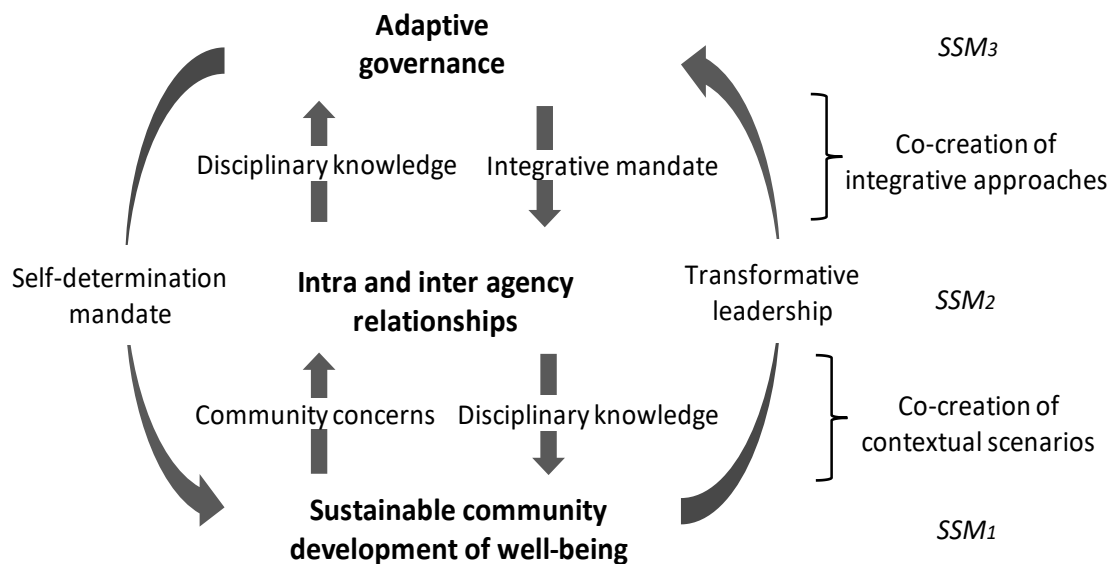


Figure 4. Tri-SSM regenerative kernel for resilience and well-being.

Figure 4 illustrates the concept of a regenerative kernel that is emerging in the South Pacific. It is an emerging manifestation of divine immanence within wild space and connects to the postcolonial empowerment of Indigenous communities. Moreover, it is aligned with wild necropolitics—forging a renewed relationship between the natural world and humankind to recover from the breakdown in relationship wrought by anthropogenic necropolitics.

The regenerative kernel is conceived as three anticipatory systems: SSM₁, SSM₂, and SSM₃. SSM stands for “soft systems methodology.” Soft systems methodology was a precursor to formal anticipatory systems theory, used in the innovative management of complex situations through the recognition of a recursive process that distinguished between worldviews (discourse), rules (code), while recognizing that there were



multiple agents (Checkland 1999[1982]; Morrison 2021, 2022, 2024; Morrison & Singh 2009; Morrison et al. 2023). SSM₁ refers to an anticipatory system that operates in a community guided by cultural traditions. SSM₂ refers to an anticipatory system that potentially operates within and between organizations within an SES, including governmental departments (NGOs, CSOs, universities, and research institutes). SSM₃ refers to an anticipatory system that potentially operates within and through governance structures. Within the South Pacific, the potential anticipatory systems have begun to emerge and link up as resistance to coloniality strengthens, galvanized by the effects of climate change.

The centermost part of tri-SSM is SSM₁. This is what cultural traditions nurture and maintain. Therefore, the beginning of regeneration through tri-SSM is to recover authentic cultural traditions. This means, for example, decoupling from monetized and truncated versions of cultural traditions often used for tourism purposes. It means recognizing and supporting gifted youth, creatives, critical researchers, and elders who live in dual-embeddedness (both within materiality and spirituality) to sustain the centermost part of the regenerative kernel (Morrison 2024; Morrison et al. 2023). SSM₁ is where decoding occurs in a safe and supportive way, enabling safe critical creativity without judgement about madness or placement of guilt. From this positionality, multiple (potentially innumerable) rhizome corms are created, indicating that potential leadership can exist in everyone by way of the unique contribution they make. Transformative leaders are those who feel empowered through collaboration to complement and connect with other leaders. They emerge from SSM₁. The leadership shown within traditional villages, where the praxis loop of *liliu*, *toeliliu*, and *liuliu*, operates, and where *lauga* and *talanoa* are used, occurs within SSM₁. The Climate Warriors have been and continue to be nurtured within this context. The matted felt of academic threads I work within have all similarly been nurtured by this context.

To the extent that there are people in society who are also reflexive and yearn for well-being—and who are following their soul-call to use disciplinary knowledge translucently to help fulfill defined needs/functions within a SES—the regenerative kernel and hence resistance can extend beyond Indigenous community members to productively engage with formal organizations within SES. This bolsters resistance, giving it arms and legs with which to engage more fully in praxis, such as exploring adaptations that better enhance and maintain well-being and ecosystem health. This is SSM₂ and addresses the concerns of communities by framing them through co-creative narrative-making with the communities. This is done by identifying needs to be fulfilled through parametric analysis and the monitoring of indicators. Evidence-based research and outcome-based management protocols are engaged with to maintain translucence throughout the process. I have already published papers on how this has begun in practice (Morrison 2021, 2024; Morrison et al. 2023). It is being taken up by academics at universities and United Nations agencies working in collaboration with government



departments and ministries. Unfortunately, however, because these partnerships remain entrapped within capitalist economy, it is the external funding from the United Nations, the European Union, and the multiple bilateral grants and loans from foreign nations (including the United States of America, Canada, China, Aotearoa, and Australia) that forge almost all the collaborations.

The projects where SSM₂ within tri-SSM has been implemented have primarily addressed climate change but are also seen as inseparable from disaster risk reduction and the United Nations' sustainability and development goals (Morrison 2022). It is widely recognized that all projects need to be community-based if they are to be successful, and so this tri-SSM approach has some traction, but not external funding. Nonetheless, an example is the facilitation of a collaboration between multiple central government departments and ministries in Fiji and their engagement with Indigenous villages and informal squatter settlements. The facilitation was to empower the adaptive capacity of village and settlement communities by enabling them to develop their own indicators of well-being and to monitor them with assistance as required and sought by the communities from the departments and ministries. It was, however, contested by those who follow a neoliberal capitalist development model, for example "Green Growth." These critics of the collaborative process instead carry out externally funded vulnerability-mapping to prioritize which communities get funding allocated to them for relocation. Many researchers have determined that the consequence of these state-sanctioned and even imposed allocations has been spreading disempowerment and ill-being. A review of the fraught process can be found in Morrison et al. (2023). Sadly, given the competition from those championing neoliberal capitalist development, this example of facilitation did not proceed beyond the initial pilot studies. Another example was, however, completed. It was a non-external funded facilitation of collaboration between ministries and departments of the government of Kiribati, along with active Pacific region NGOs, and village communities. It was to address a health crisis that had arisen due to a UNICEF-funded project that addressed waste management but had compromised the delicate water supplies on the very low-lying atolls. Happily, this project was successful, and the second stage of the UNICEF-funded project was adapted to address concerns. It is a stimulating research environment, especially as the most motivated and brightest local students are heavily invested in aligning with what is termed here "wild necropolitics," to better negate anthropogenic necropolitics.

For SSM₂ to be fully effective, however, requires that there be a governance mandate for governmental organizations to act in a translucent and integrated way throughout their engagement with communities and other organizations. SSM₃ signals this integrated process and whilst being informed by the SSM₂ process regarding appropriate disciplinary knowledge, it is also an advocate for all the rhizome corms of potential unique leadership (i.e. by creatives) who emerge and provide feedback about systemic error. The Climate Warriors act within SSM₃, all the way up to global COPs.



Transformative leadership in SSM₃ extends and challenges disciplinary knowledge to consider other paradigms, including what emerges from NGOs, CSOs, academic researchers, and creatives. SSM₃ is nested all the way up to global UN agencies. The process is visible at annual COPs. Academics who maintain their academic freedom are able to act within SSM₃ to challenge and inspire through their teaching, research degree supervision, and own research.

Case Study

“Wakaipa” is an Aotearoa Māori name meaning a settlement where there is food. Prior to colonization, it identified a settlement on the banks of lake Te Waihora, itself meaning “a water full of life.” Fish and bird life were plentiful. Te Waihora is a shallow lake having recently been an estuary that closed over due to sediment from rivers and is still brackish due to saltwater intrusion. When European colonization occurred by the British in the 19th century, the land on which the Wakaipa settlement dwelled was sold through a fair degree of trickery, as was most of the South Island (Te Waipounamu) of Aotearoa. The rich sediment of the shallow lake resulted in the lake being drained to become half its original size. Wakaipa ceased to be on the lake edge and was called instead “Springston South” because of the fresh water artesian springs that arose within the lake. Slowly, the local Indigenous Māori tribe, Ngai Tahu, resisted and fought through the courts to gain redress and compensation, which included ownership of the lakebed of Te Waihora and some of the land currently surrounding it. Wakaipa was not included, but because it is land owned by the government, Ngai Tahu has first right of refusal if the land is ever to be sold.

In collaboration with the Department of Conservation, Ngai Tahu is engaged in ecological restoration projects that started in earnest with many tens of thousands of native plants being planted to restore many hectares of the lake surround. It is a process that is still gaining momentum. Sadly, the lake itself has become eutrophic due to run-off from the very wealthy farms in the catchment to the lake. The catchment district is per capita the wealthiest district in Aotearoa due to farming (most recently dairy farming), which is also the greatest source of emissions from within Aotearoa causing climate change.

One colonial settlement in Springston South is comprised of former fishing huts (Upper Selwyn Huts), originally owned by the wealthiest British colonists. They introduced European trout and game birds. Once the lake became eutrophic, however, the trout fishery collapsed, and the settlement of fishing huts—many substandard and non-compliant—became low-income housing for the poorest in society. The resident community includes a higher-than-average percentage of Indigenous Māori, as well as creatives. With the worsening social crises, including housing, there has more recently been an influx of urban commuters seeking cheap rent and affordable housing. They have brought a culture very different to that which evolved post-trout fishery collapse—



including xenophobic and colonial attitudes of resentment and white supremacy. This process was exacerbated by the Christchurch 2012 earthquake that made thousands homeless. There was an influx from Christchurch of those who could not afford to rebuild or who lost rental accommodation. Previously non-compliant and substandard dwellings were allowed to become inhabited due to the acute housing crisis.

As this was occurring there was simultaneously pressure from the local Indigenous tribe, Ngai Tahu, along with the local regional council dealing with water, land, and air compliance, and from the Department of Conservation to ensure the settlement complied with environmental standards. However, the consent to discharge partially treated sewage to the land ended in 2020. It is impossible to get it re-consented and the only option now is a very expensive pipeline that would cost each hut owner the equivalent of \$100NZD per week for the foreseeable future, assuming the local territorial authority is willing to be the banker and allow the cost to be treated as a targeted rate. At the same time, it has become apparent that it would be impossible to maintain the current drained lake level due to sea-level rise from climate change bringing increased saltwater intrusion. It is estimated that a managed retreat for the community will become necessary within approximately 30 years.

The long-time residents took this reality in stride and worked with Ngai Tahu, the Department of Conservation, and the regional council, aware of the inevitable eventual restoration of Wakaipa's native forest and its return to Ngai Tahu ownership. This community, guided by local Indigenous cultural traditions and creative insight, has nevertheless become the target of vitriol from the newer residents who see their move to Wakaipa as an economic investment that has now turned sour. The reality is that these new residents did not carry out their due diligence regarding their legal status before they bought their huts as business ventures.

The resident rainbow community, creatives, and Indigenous peoples in this area have suffered ongoing bullying, violence, and abuse. The case was taken to the Aotearoa Human Right Commission to impel the local territorial authority (which has the mandate to manage the reserve the huts reside on) to address the bullying, but mediation failed. There have been multiple suicides by youth, with the medical profession also appealing to the territorial authority (of the wealthiest district in Aotearoa) to address the issue, also to no avail.

This very brief introduction to the situation provides a realistic sense of how the interplay between anthropogenic necropolitics and wild necropolitics is playing out in the South Pacific. There is a clear bifurcation between those aligning with anthropogenic necropolitics and those aligning with wild necropolitics, a gulf that is widening with no foreseeable resolution. Moreover, the bifurcation is manifest within local government and between government departments. The link between coloniality and the entrenched denial of any need to plan for well-being, which is instead replaced by focusing on



optimizing economic growth, is also clear. The local Indigenous tribe detaching from the coloniality of the established SES to establish instead a regenerative kernel is also clear. Furthermore, the interaction between the necropolitics of environmental decline and social decline is apparent. Finally, the operation of wild necropolitics to negate anthropogenic necropolitics is visible, with the good and hopeful news being that it is possible to recover well-being by choosing to flow with the *mauri* of life, though at this stage of bifurcating transition, those heralding the way are still suffering the bluntest and most insidious effects of anthropogenic necropolitics.

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A postscript is now available, as it is nine months on since this article was conceived. There has been a change in central government, with a conservative nationalist party-led government (which requires support from both a minor right wing climate change denying and anti-Indigenous rights populist party and a minor libertarian party that is also anti-Indigenous rights and against measures to address climate change). The coalition government has bluntly attacked local governments, demanding they focus only on water and waste, and has informed them that well-being is going to be removed from the Local Government Act. Not surprisingly, a new head of the Aotearoa Human Rights Commission has been named, and Māori names of government departments and ministries, along with the use of Māori language in government, has been suppressed.

There has been an ironic consequence with the local government council now deciding to implement the previous recommendations from the Aotearoa Human Rights Commission, which up until recently they had ignored. It appears that having been castigated by those aligned with anthropogenic necropolitics, the local government council has been forced to make a stand and has chosen to side with wild necropolitics. This has provided some relief and support for the marginalized and bullied members of Wakaipa but has also resulted in those doing the bullying threatening legal action against the council and seeking to obtain support from members of parliament within the right-wing populist party. The bifurcation is continuing to intensify.

Conclusion

As an example of *lauga* oratory to poetically show the way forward, I describe anthropogenic necropolitics as akin to skating on thin ice over a deep lake, with climate change melting the ice. Eventually the ice will mostly break, and the skaters will sink into the embedded depths of the lake. Those and their communities who survive the co-evolutionary selection by *mauri* through wild necropolitics are those who are unfazed by the depth of the lake, which they know as emptiness, and so they flourish happily in the wild freshness. Furthermore, they are guided by the guard rails of coding by cultural traditions rather than capitalist coloniality. They are guided by the fullness of the regenerative kernel of tri-SSM, which empowers them to swim gracefully up and down



and around to explore the whole lake in its full depth and breadth. A few will nonetheless remain unreflexively driven to lift off the thin ice before it breaks, to try to fly to the moon and Mars, but they will only end up in the greatest pyramid tomb symbol of immortality yet constructed.

This situation amounts to natural system collapse, not merely climate change and mass extinction or environmental and social decline. Nonetheless, it is a co-evolutionary natural phenomenon. There have been five previously known natural system collapses in human history. The trigger for this collapse, however—from the perspective of the traditional Indigenous communities in the South Pacific—is the influence of evil spirits on the human heart, which test us so that we learn to prioritize the development of community well-being, including all natural beings, all of whom are known to be relatives. This process is experienced on the human scale by traditional communities, even though it is also known that recovery will occur at a geological time scale. For the foreseeable future (and likely for the existence of our current human species), we will be in a co-evolutionary phase of having the opportunity and duty to develop our brains and our SES to maintain well-being and to nurture ecological recovery of the global natural system. This will become—as it is already in the places that retain traditional culture—the ecological meaning of being a human being. Being aware of *mauri*, we are required to explore all possible ways to maintain our ecological resilience through continual transformation of our SES. This will eventually become the global basis for narratives that survive and co-evolve with wild necropolitics to avoid being selected against by co-evolution. The SES that are selected for will be those that nurture discernment and reject the influence of evil spirits, choosing instead to respond to the divine spirit. Such narratives will hasten the flourishing of diverse cultural traditions and languages, as co-evolutionary ecological diversity re-emerges. This process will involve the conservation of ecological remnants, including the restoration of degraded ecosystems and the replacement of those that have been obliterated, enabling recombinant new ecosystems to emerge with flourishing biodiversity.

Nature is fighting back and humans who are on its side are also recovering well-being. The tension at Wakaipa in Aotearoa between the humans who are attuned to wild necropolitics and those who are still imposing anthropogenic necropolitics shows that bifurcation has started. It is a postcolonial process that is at once a global process. It also shows, however, that there is hope beyond the impending apocalypse of natural system collapse. South Pacific communities have hope and are beacons of resilience, showing the way. They are fighting as part of wild necropolitics. The climate warriors are a motley bunch of Indigenous communities, children, teenagers, the rainbow community, and the neurologically diverse. But they are more powerful than nuclear weapons and the capitalist economy driving and backing anthropogenic necropolitics. In their weakness they can continually transform and co-evolve with whom they know are relatives from time immemorial, those that make up all of life. This wilderness



community, which includes humans, is what will survive the necropolitics of environmental decline. This is how the traditional communities in the South Pacific see things.

Gifted creatives are leading the way as the adaptive and explorative growing edge, addressing systemic error to orient away from opaque discourse, away from the over-coding of both traditional cultural knowledge and scientific disciplinary knowledge. Thus, the full weight of science and technology, policymaking, and management can become used and scale up to the global U.N. agencies for good purposes. Disciplinary knowledge is then able to be used translucently, once it is normalized by governance mandates that everyone is oriented towards the soul-call of the *mauri* (divine Other) within *va* (divine immanence of relationship).

Most importantly, relationships are becoming focalized as the end and purpose—as contributing to eternal well-being, maintained and enhanced by caring and compassionate concern. Coding through rules, policies, and plans are then implemented mercifully, the same way that the *mauri* is merciful to humanity in our creation of SES. Just as the *mauri* is doing with us, we likewise must do with all other beings in our SES: if a person chooses to recover their natural will, they must be forgiven and allowed to naturally flourish anew into well-being. There must be no guilt or judgment imposed. This is what wild necropolitics is doing mercifully to us humans through the selection process of co-evolution. To the extent that we choose to do so with all our fellow beings, especially as we face the need to proactively welcome an influx of environmental and political refugees, we are negating the anthropogenic necropolitics of environmental and social decline.

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