

# PACIFIC STUDIES

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a journal devoted to the study of the Pacific--  
its islands and adjacent countries

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# PACIFIC STUDIES

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## TALKING ECONOMICS IN TAHITIAN: A FEW COMMENTS

Jean-François Baré

*ORSTOM*

*Paris*

This article presents some of the semantic specificities of economic categories, while exploring their possible translation into a given language, in this case, modern Tahitian as spoken in the Society Islands (French Polynesia). It draws attention to the semantic and linguistic aspects of international economic relations. It also stresses the importance, to this day, of the translation issue in anthropology. (English version of “L’économie décrite en Tahitien: quelques remarques,” trans. Cynthia Schoch, *L’Homme* 121 [Jan.-Mar. 1992]: 143-164.)

How does one talk about economics when one speaks only Tahitian?<sup>1</sup> With no claim to comprehensiveness, this article addresses that question by examining problems of translating into modern Tahitian a number of categories used in modern economics.<sup>2</sup>

The question lies at the intersection of two different approaches. The first sets out to give what could be called an ethnographic description of the cultural and social apparatus and processes used in what is commonly referred to as “development” aid in various areas of the globe. Among these processes, linguistic and semantic interinfluences should be carefully weighed, though they are often underestimated or even dismissed.<sup>3</sup> The second, drawing on previous studies on Pacific Polynesia, focuses mainly on the relations between semantics and history in contemporary Tahitian society. Among the areas examined, special attention is devoted to what is known in modern Tahitian as “things from the outside” (*ohipa no rapae*). Owing to this dual approach, the subject of this article could be qualified as “applied” but more exactly refers to economics, from a broader investigation of language and culture. The underlying intentions and the difficulties involved in such an undertak-

ing as well as the framework in which it is grounded are outlined in notes so as not to encumber the discussion.<sup>4</sup>

It is often forgotten that modern political economy is not only a set of analytical tools of undeniable, though relative, descriptive value. It is also a specific linguistic corpus arising from the equally specific history of "industrialized" countries in the Western sense. In fact, the value of this corpus may stem from the transformation and treatment of ancient semantic categories. Many of them, such as "growth," "debt," "loan," "margin," or "profit," reveal characteristics that liken them in many ways to "indigenous" anthropological categories, as the work of Emile Benveniste on Indo-European languages reveals (1969), and as I believe I have shown in regard to semantic groups in economic discourse (development theories and aspects of international financial vocabulary; Baré 1987b, 1991). Whatever the actual aspirations of contemporary economics to attain the status of an applied science, an essential feature, cleverly pinpointed by R. Laufer and common to all social sciences, sets it apart: "The laws of political economy differ from physical laws in that they must be instituted in order to function" (1986: 111). Because one can institute only by means of words, these laws convey the characteristics of language and culture.

It follows that to talk about economics in any language foreign to the historical location where a specific linguistic corpus was constituted is to engage in the process of *translation*, a process that, as Georges Mounin underlines, above all involves confronting not words but linguistic *structures*. The correspondence between structures is partial by definition, but speakers can improve it through a variety of means including "the dialectics of contact" (Mounin 1963:277), that is, the ability of speakers of different languages to detect maladjustments in cultural structures with which they are faced and to rectify them insofar as thought universals coexist with these nonhomologous structures. As a result, all utterances are translatable to varying degrees of precision. The existence of divergent semantic structures implies constellations of equally divergent semantic associations in the original language and the target language. Such associations can lead one *de facto* rather far astray from the subject one believes one is dealing with, not because of a poor translation, but simply because translation has taken place.

The aim here is to take a look at economics in reverse, so to speak, from the perspective of modern Tahitian, and to examine the specific semantic form certain categories of economics take on when treated within the particular semantic systems of the language in question. We will limit ourselves to the sort of spontaneous translation any speaker

performs when dealing with foreign concepts, that of converting them into his or her language and experience. The limitless possibilities of paraphrasing will be disregarded in favor of the categories existent in common vocabulary.

But the Pacific island context occasionally seems to provoke such drastically chivalrous attitudes that some individuals fly to the rescue of people who are not even under attack. In the course of a lecture, an American colleague, for instance, raised the question of the potential danger, in treating the semantic remoteness of modern Tahitian to Western economic concepts, of inducing a wariness among the public of the Tahitian people's economic ability. Of the various comments that might be directed at this type of remark, which is more common than one might think, let US at least mention the following: if it made any sense to assert that Tahitians are in general paltry economists, such a presumption would be prevalent among investors, and there would not be much anthropologists could do about it. But this assertion compels me to make one observation: that nonbilingual contemporary Tahitians,<sup>5</sup> when speaking about economics in their own way, demonstrate an acute sense of what is involved in "real" economic arithmetic is to my mind indisputable. It is derisory to fear that they lack such an ability, especially if one reflects on certain aspects of French Polynesia today. Still, why would it be considered dishonorable not to be familiar with this type of arithmetic in the first place?

A speaker of Tahitian is obviously capable of "thinking economics" and in doing SO uses specific semantic tools. I will not deal with the ability to make cost-benefit analyses for a given activity (customs, watermelon crops, and so forth) but will consider the semantic forms within which such analysis acquires meaning. The broad debate on "economic universals" will have to be left aside, and I will concentrate instead on the forms taken on by categories of meaning that by definition have universalizing tendencies in a given linguistic world.<sup>6</sup> Indeed, syntactic features--perhaps more appropriate to a discussion on economic universals--will only rarely be mentioned, the discussion being limited to lexical issues.

### **"Outside" and "Inside"**

One of the categories in political economy that contains the most semantic ambiguity is also one of the most essential from a logical standpoint: it involves delimiting a given economic sphere in relation to what lies "inside" or "outside" it (e.g., GDP, in French PIB or *produit inté-*



*rieur brut*, an aggregate that includes foreign economic actors, which are “outside,” or nondomestic from other points of view). These ambiguities have been pointed up in standard macroeconomic textbooks and will not be reviewed here (see, for example, Jessua 1982).

Tahitian, for reasons having a common logical basis, presents similar difficulties that are all the more deserving of attention in view of the lively debate on contemporary French Polynesia’s “dependence” on the “outside” (external dependency). In Tahitian, anything perceptible can be qualified as either *no rapae*, “from the outside,” or *no roto*, “from the inside,” these categories not being reserved for defining geographic limits. “Traditions” (actually “ways of being,” *peu*), ways of thinking, and long-standing institutions such as the Protestant Evangelical Church can be considered as “[coming] from the inside of the Ma’ohi people” (*no roto te nuna’a ma’ohi*). Hawaiian speakers too talk about “things from the inside,” *ka mea o loko*.<sup>7</sup> The notion of “outside” is used in an economic sense; the expression “food imports” would be translated today as *te mau ma’a e tonohia mai no rapae*, literally, “plant products (as in other Polynesian languages, the notion of food in Tahitian derives from edible plants) sent from the outside to the speaker.”<sup>8</sup> From the outside of what? Outside a given territory? But we have already seen that the notion of *rapae* is not exclusively geographic. Furthermore, recent creations of the economy, such as Hotel Tahara’a, would then be qualified as *no roto*, “from the inside,” which it seems they should not be.

Macroeconomics and national accounting run into the same problem, partially solved by adopting the legal categories of “resident” and “non-resident.” While the Tahitian language deals with the perceptible world, political economy deals with the definition of people in this world. Although economic categories may differ from common perceptions, current Tahitian usage (that, for example, of French Polynesian government translators) extends these perceptions to the economy. It is hence necessary to investigate semantic associations or concepts to which Tahitian usage implicitly refers but that are not strictly speaking part of economic vocabulary. In Tahitian, to be “from the inside” is associated with “having roots,” nearly a literal rendering of *ta’ata tumu*, “man root,” in that nothing “outside” can be qualified by the word “root.” The qualifier “outside” is variable. In certain contexts, it tends to mean “foreign” as it is used in Western national law; however, in economics “outside” is not exactly “foreign.” It can also refer to nonresidents, but from a territorial point of view regardless of the individual’s nationality. A Polynesian sailor from Rurutu (Austral Islands) who had

“taken root” on Huahine (Leeward Islands) was once described to me as not being “from here” (*no unei*), as a “man from the outside” (*ta’ata no rapae*).

These ambiguities arise from the absence of semantic configurations referring to the specific political form of “nation-state” implicit in basic macroeconomic concepts (Baré 1987b). This observation does not, however, preclude the establishment of a Tahitian nation-state in the Western sense; it just points up the impossibility of introducing in Tahitian a semantic form like nation-state together with the implications of “nationality” and “citizenship” as interlocking pieces of a puzzle. Similarly, a notion such as *‘ai’a*, which in many folk songs refers to something like “homeland” (the theme of *‘ai’a here* or “sweet homeland,” the name of a former autonomist movement), derives from a specific semantic evolution relating it to the former territorial divisions, not to any fortuitous Tahitian version of culturally connoted concepts such as “state,” “nation,” and “country.”<sup>9</sup> Despite the growing influence of French and Anglo-Saxon political-administrative models in Tahiti, it is territoriality--the fundamental and intimate relationship between an individual’s identity and territorial marking--that continues to define through ordinary language what is or is not “outside,” including the economy. In terms of semantics, that Tahiti’s European community is clearly referred to, even cursed, using the word *popa’a* (also used as an adjective for things foreign) sheds no light on the problem; this category refers to “kinds” or “species” (*huru*) of people, not to the structure of things economic. (The Chinese settled in Tahiti, *tinito*, are not *popa’a*, nor are the Samoans, who nevertheless come from the “outside.” It is likewise meaningless, economically speaking, to talk about tuna imported from New Zealand as *popa’a* tuna.)

The quality *ta’ata tumu* is acquired through residence in the anthropological sense: exercising customary rights over land. This principle plays a major historical role in forming families called “*demis*,” so important in French Polynesian economic activity today. In these families the principle of nationality (e.g., British, American, French) remained for a long time secondary to the principle of residency in accordance with Polynesian cultural models. Furthermore, it is interesting to note that the expression used to translate “citizenship,” *ti’ara’a*, originally referred to the idea of standing (*ti’a*), in other words, of being located territorially. When the subject is history, it still refers to what might be called the functional identity of a titular chief, also closely linked to a given territory.<sup>10</sup> One would say that X had another name, Y,

*i tona ti'ara'a ari'i*, "in his position (*ti'ara'a*) of chief." *Te ti'ara'a farani* is less an expression of French citizenship (as a legal status) than it is of the "territorialization" in France of the individual in question.

The notion of "root," *tumu*, suggesting a direct relationship between the earth and what is qualified as such (also meaning the reason for or the cause of), can be applied to a number of aspects perceived as "inside." Copra, sometimes considered the epitome of the colonial crop, is described as *'ohipa faufa'a tumu*, "root economic activity." Copra production is indeed one activity that links contemporary Tahitians to "old times" (*tau tahito*) through a series of historically connected shifts: from the use of coconut oil in the eighteenth century for body care, to the export of coconut oil to England in the context of the new economic order established by the London Missionary Society (LMS), then the nut's desiccation for the European food industry from the 1860s on, and finally its role as the basic agricultural crop subsidized by the French government. In the course of this process, the strictly European origin of copra production has perhaps been forgotten or disregarded;<sup>11</sup> the fact remains that coconut trees are rooted in Tahitian soil. Here the principle of territorialization, which originates in earlier cultural models, is perpetuated by the use of a single term to translate a variety of basic economic categories.

### **Market Economy and Exchange**

#### *Merchandise or Goods*

Political economy refers primarily to a market, hence a monetary, economy. It took progress in "economic" anthropology to identify a distinction between monetary and nonmonetary economic systems (spheres of exchange, pseudo-currencies, and so forth) (see Godelier 1966 for a review of the field). Modern political economy is therefore inseparable from the existence of goods measurable in currency without reference to their specific physical features: no matter how different a licorice roll is from a nuclear missile, each will always have a price.<sup>12</sup>

The definition of economics generally includes a reference to the "allocation of scarce resources." Finding an exact equivalent to "scarce resources" or "merchandise" in Tahitian is difficult, though one *mo-neme* seems suitable: *tao'a*. The use of another notion that may also come to mind, *faufa'a*, "wealth," is quite different.

In the mid-nineteenth century *tao'a* meant "property of any sort;

goods” (LMS 1851:248). This broad definition is still found in current usage, where *tao’a* means “*objet, bien, propriété.*” Trade can be construed as ‘*ohipa ho’ora’a tao’a*: “the activity of circulating (*ho’o*) *tao’a*” (we will return to the concept of *ho’o*). *Tao’a* can also have the extended sense of “thing” or even “thingamajig” (then synonym to *mea*), but also means “gift,” quite a different, even antonymous, meaning from “*bien marchand*” (merchandise) (Lemaître 1973:117).

The semantic fields would coincide well enough if all “scarce” and/or “market” goods could be perceived as *tao’a*. However, certain undeniably “scarce” or “market” goods are not *tao’a*, they are *tauuha’a*, “*ustensiles, objets usuels, meubles*” (utensils, common objects, furniture) (Lemaître 1973:121). If asked to think about his or her language, a Tahitian speaker might see in *tauuha’a* particular forms of *tao’a*, but in the course of ordinary conversation it will be noticed that *tao’a* are opposed to *tauuha’a*, as “exported agricultural produce” is opposed to “imported manufactured products.” Several examples attest this particular use of *tao’a*. As early as 1823, when Tahitian production first integrated the market economy, the Protestant deacon-chiefs on Ra’iatea, after several unsuccessful attempts to market cotton and coffee, anxiously asked the LMS office in London: “What are the right *tao’a*?” (*eaha ra te tao’a maita’i?*), meaning “what exported agricultural produce is lucrative?”<sup>13</sup> Today, this acceptance of *tao’a*--and the opposition of *tao’a* and *tauuha’a*--is an organizing element of historical time. The chronicle of an island and the biographies that constitute it constantly compare the prices of *tao’a* and *tauuha’a* (Baré 1987a: part 2, “Une vie polynésienne dans l’histoire”). *Tauuha’a* are thus identified with products imported to the islands. This being the case, any Tahitian discourse on merchandise implicitly deals with the classic “terms of exchange,” not the notion of a value attributed to undifferentiated goods.

The term *tauuha’a*, though perfectly common today, is absent from the LMS dictionary (compiled during the first half of the nineteenth century). Unless this absence is due to a missionary’s omission, the identification of *ustensiles* with imported goods apparently dates to this period, as already well-established exchange networks with the “outside” took shape within the context of a monetary economy. These exchange networks are clearly identifiable as early as the eighteenth century in a nonmonetary form. They include textiles, weapons, and many iron tools (Baré 1985, especially ch. 7). By separating market goods into two main categories (as basic elements of economic forms), modern Tahitian in fact evokes a major process in Tahitian history.

*Change, Exchange*

It is impossible here not to mention a related concept that inherently describes this diachrony hidden within a semantic structure. The term is *taui*, which provides the radical element for the word *tauiha'a*. Whereas *taui* once meant "a price, compensation (see *ho'o*); to exchange a thing for another which does not suit" (LMS 1851:260), the word is currently defined as "*changer*" and "*échanger*" (Lemaître 1973:121). In fact, the term *tauirā'a* is used today to refer to the notion of social change, making the exchange of goods inseparable from the Tahitian view of diachrony as it manifests itself in the language. The economist P. Couty sees in this Tahitian conception an illustration of the general principle of "compensation" inherent to the social world, advanced by such philosophers as Emerson (Couty 1987).

*Distribution, Price, Exchange*

The central concept relating to the distribution of goods is *ho'o*. Though this term is commonly used to describe the value or the price of an article and, as we shall see, any monetary transaction (buying and selling), it is indissociable from the idea of exchange. In the nineteenth century *ho'o* meant "price, exchange, equivalent; to buy or sell, exchange property" (LMS 1851:108). Whereas *tapiho'o* (literally, "to try *ho'o*") meant simply "to make an exchange" (ibid.:252), it has become the equivalent of *troquer* (to barter) (Lemaître 1973:118), hence apparently the opposite of monetary transaction. The central concept relating to economic distribution appears therefore to have led logically to two acceptations, one referring to the exchange of customary values, the other associated with value itself.

But the semantics of exchange--as a basic representation independent of the participants' specific position--extends to encompass everything referred to. *Ho'o* refers simultaneously to the price of something exchanged, its purchase, and its sale. A purchase is described as "a *ho'o* toward the speaker" (*ho'o mai*), a sale as "a *ho'o* that moves away from the speaker" (*ho'o tu*). This polysemia implies the idea of a sphere of general reciprocity in which purchase, sale, and measure of value are all considered aspects of a broader process of distribution. What might appear "lost" in total value on one end of the exchange cycle can be regained on the other. This notion is reminiscent of the rhetoric of exchange found throughout the ancient Polynesian world described by many observers.<sup>14</sup> The notion of *'ohipa ho'o*, "*ho'o* affairs," traditionally

translated as “commerce,” in no way overlaps the rather derogatory notion of *‘ohipa moni*, “money affairs,” money without which “commerce” makes no sense.<sup>15</sup> Moreover, the aristocratic disdain with which representatives of the contemporary Tahitian community have often viewed commerce is no secret, their virtual absence from this activity being ascribable not solely to fierce economic competition in French Polynesia.

But it must also be noted that in the case of market distribution as opposed to the notion of merchandise, the Tahitian language sketches a more general semantic form than the terminology of economy in the Western sense. Whereas the latter requires two asymmetrical relations (purchase and sale) and the particular concept of price, modern Tahitian encompasses the whole in a single term. One might object that an expression like “monetary transaction” does not indicate the respective directions in which currency and goods circulate. And though “transaction” implies “price,” the two terms are not synonymous as they are in the case of *ho‘o*--except when talking about the price of copra, *pene puha* (literally, “the copra penny”), which would require a separate discussion.

#### *Loans, Debts, Salaried Employment*

That the movement of goods is an exchange cycle that “breaks even”--a principle basic in the very structure of Tahitian semantics--is also observable in the translation of “loan” and “debt” by a *single term: tarahu*. In the nineteenth century *tarahu* meant at once “hire, wages, to hire or engage for a compensation” (LMS 1851:254); in modern Tahitian, its definitions are “*dette; . . . emprunter, louer, engager quelqu’un*” (debt, borrow, rent, hire someone) (Lemaître 1973:119). The only congruence between these two semantic configurations can be found in the French term *location*, which, as in Tahitian, does not indicate the direction of the transaction, contrary to “hire” and “let” in English. But the other meanings are totally different, since “to engage someone” cannot be taken as “to borrow,” an association that the semantics of Tahitian performs.

The implicit existence of general reciprocity appears in the notion of *utu‘a*, which formerly meant “reward, compensation, wages; the payment either of merit or demerit, penalty or reward” (LMS 1851:305), and now means “*punition, amende; dans la Bible récompense, sanction*” (punishment, fine; in the Bible, reward, sanction) (Lemaître 1973:134). This latter shows greater precision because the Tahitian used

in the Bible has retained much of the Ma'ohi usage of the nineteenth century, when former models of the distribution of goods were still in effect.

So here again the idea of a general cycle of exchange is emphasized in the semantics of the language without particular focus on any one constitutive element. That "wages" could have been a synonym for "compensation" (once pertaining to a transgression) and that *utu'a* now refers to "a reward" and "a fine" illustrates a particular conception of reciprocity, not the movement of goods. We shall see that the characteristics of the semantic fields for *utu'a*, especially where the meaning of "wages" is concerned, are very similar to those of *tarahu*.

As is the case with *ho'o*, the semantic fields for *tarahu* presuppose both general and closed-circuit reciprocity. Associated with all sorts of transactions deferred in time, *tarahu* seems, when it comes to wage earning, to underline the precariousness of salaried employment as the wage earner sees it. It may even go so far as to manifest a radically different perception of what it is supposed to refer to. Though *tarahu* means "to employ" someone, it would be more appropriate to say "to borrow" someone. That variability is moreover what is implied in the former acceptance of the term: "engage for a compensation" (not for "wages"). In any case, it so happens that, given identical conditions, Tahitian labor is described as particularly "undependable" by many employers.

The locution that translates as "wages" (*'aufaura'a 'ava'e*) is formed from the word *'aufaura'a*, which is generally translated as "payment" but which has always referred to asymmetrical contributions. In the nineteenth century *'aufaura'a* applied to tribute paid to the former chiefs, later to "voluntary" contributions to island churches. The expression *'aufaura'a mè*, or "May dues" (the month was believed to be the arrival date of the first missionary boat), meaning dues paid to the Evangelical Church, retains this notion. The word *'aufau* also refers to a "tax," thus constantly raising the Tahitian worker to a sort of lordly position if the language is interpreted literally. In fact, the term *'aufaura'a*, having once specified the asymmetrical nature of a certain type of movement of goods, has come to refer to another type of payment that can also be described as asymmetrical: when a boss opens his cash drawer, the absence of an immediate contribution in return assigns his contribution the status of *'aufaura'a*.

That Tahitian wage earners receiving their monthly pay are aware that it relates to the work performed is of course unquestionable. The problem is to understand how this awareness is perceived and talked

about. Since the language describes salaried employment as initiating a cycle of reciprocity (*tarahu*), it requires that this cycle be completed by a contribution in return (*'aufaura'a*), which better explains how *'utua*, a “fine,” could also refer to “wages.” The semantics of the language makes a wage earner someone who has consented to give (of one’s time or one’s “drive”-- *'itoi'to*) and expects something in return in a relationship that differs from wage earning in the economic sense.

The relation between semantic instruments and empirical and statistical reality is complex. It is, in any case, apparently relevant to the various areas dealt with here, particularly to that of “debt” or “loan,” the importance of which is recurrent throughout Tahitian society and history. Historical and contemporary examples abound of what could be termed, in a perhaps ethnocentric fashion, a model of nonchalance: take for example the comparatively gigantic debts of the two Polynesian “kingdoms,” Tahiti and Hawaii, which played a major role in negotiations with the European powers. As a result of the behavior of the titular chiefs or “kings,” these debts were constantly renewed or augmented.<sup>16</sup> Further examples can be found in the often astronomical tabs Tahitian farmers constantly ran up with Chinese shopkeepers, for instance when the price of vanilla skyrocketed in 1926; the equally legendary tabs mother-of-pearl divers would accumulate in the cabarets of Pape’ete up until the 1960s; or later, the frequency of overdrafts among Tahitian checking account holders, which prompted bankers to take remedial measures in the 1960s-1970s. The behavior described in these cases concerns actors in the “outside” system considered, rightly or wrongly, to be endowed with excessive wealth that should be hastily redistributed--not “loaned”--according to the ancient mode of distributing foodstuffs on the spot. But initiating a contribution cycle among rural Tahitians themselves has long been remote from the arithmetical relationship implied in the notion of debt. The acceptance of the word *horo'a* is highly illustrative in this respect: once meaning “to give or bestow some good” (LMS 1851:109), *horo'a* now means both *prêter* (lend) and *donner* (give) (Lemaître 1973:62-63).

In any case, what is called “debt” in both French and English is apparently not usually described as such in Tahitian.<sup>17</sup> Here again general reciprocity is implicit: what is lost by one who cannot be called a “creditor” is either immediately repaid (but then it is not a “debt” but an exchange), or deferred to what cannot be called an indefinite “due date,” or considered to be “regained” elsewhere. In a social sphere considered to be finite, if everyone has debts, then no one has any, and it is impossible to know what to call a “debt.” This situation is indicated



rather remarkably in D. Oliver's various observations on similar models in eighteenth-century society.<sup>18</sup> In the historical "long run," this view is also suggested, though in a different fashion, by the attitude of former chiefs who were largely responsible for the distribution of goods. They would conceal some of the goods from their dependents and even their families for fear of having to distribute them immediately.<sup>19</sup> This sort of debt related to hierarchy seems to be constantly floating; it can be called debt only for lack of a better word, but the identity of the borrowers and lenders remains ambiguous. Chiefs can be considered eternally obligated to the people to remain chiefs, or the dependents considered eternally obligated to the chiefs for what the latter distribute to them. However, the obligation of unilateral redistribution was far from limited to hierarchical relations, but was so widespread that a person in the habit of accumulating (a person who was at once "miserly," "tough," and "adult": *pa'ari*) was perceived in the 1820s as an "evildoer" (*ta'ata hamani 'ino*),<sup>20</sup> which would correspond to today's *horo'a 'ino* or "bad giver" ("chiche," "avare," "--stingy" or "miserly"--according to Lemaître 1973:62).

#### *Spend Not, Refuse Not*

One might then be led to believe that the semantic world of "spending" would be implicitly enhanced. But such is not the case. In modern Tahitian spending can be translated as *ha'apau* (cause something to be *pau* --"vidé," "épuisé," "anéanti"--"emptied," "exhausted," "wiped out"), but the usual term is *ha'amau'a* (Lemaître 1973:158), cause something to be *mau'a*, "*gâché, ou gâté*" (wasted or spoiled) (ibid.:76). This Tahitian definition of "spending" seems to call into question the stereotype sometimes applied to Polynesians that "money burns a hole in their pockets." Whereas "to refuse" to loan can be translated as *pato'i*, which means refusal in general, the translation that indicates the economic relation is '*opipiri*, which presently corresponds to "*peu prêteur, avare; ne pas vouloir prêter ou donner*" (a nonloaner, miserly, unwilling to lend or give) (Lemaître 1973:89; emphasis added) and once meant "bashfulness, shame; . . . also to appear modest" (LMS 1851: 169). In current usage the sentence '*ua 'opipiri 'ona tona moni* could be rendered by "he *misered* his money." The radical *piri* implies an idea of "clinging" to something, as in the expression *tapiri mai*, which urges one to join a group but means more literally "come cling to us," or refers to groups that under the protectorate supported French rule: *te ta'ata piri i te mau farani*, the people who "cling" to the French. The former meaning

of *'opipiri*, less overtly derogatory, had to do with cardinal “shame” in traditional morals, rather similar to our “decency,” and also evoked the idea of someone who is trammled up or “retained,” especially if one realizes that *'opi* meant “to shut; to close up” (ibid.:169) and was given as a synonym of *oopi* (ibid.:167), “close, niggardly, as to food, etc.”

If “to spend” is “to spoil” or “to waste,” but “to refuse” is to be a miser, what remains is exchange, hence distribution.

### *Earning Is a “Novelty”*

The term in question is *'api*, which means “*neuf, frais*” and “*jeune*” (new, fresh, young) (Lemaître 1973:37), so that a Chinese shopkeeper who makes “ten francs on each canned item” (*'ua 'api te tinito e piti tara i ni'a i te punu*) adds, so to speak, “ten francs of youth” (ibid.). Instead of implicating the speaker as in the French *gain* or the English “earning”--the former also including a reference to victory, the latter referring more specifically to merit and both to what one gets from the world--the Tahitian idea of “earning” is defined as a measure of passing time, which can easily enough be associated with barter and exchange, since it is this very category that defines what changes (*tauirā'a*; see the earlier discussion of change).

### *Wealth, Meaning*

It is not surprising, then, that no concept can be associated with the idea of “tied up” wealth, as in “capital,” without resorting to recently formulated periphrases. The closest notion to wealth is *faufa'a*, which also means “possessions,” including socially acquired possessions as opposed to *tao'a*. Thus the expression *faufa'a feti'i* refers to undivided “family possessions,” particularly land.

But *faufa'a*, when it means “wealth,” does not appear to differ in usage value. Whereas in the nineteenth century this term corresponded to “gain, profit, advantage” (LMS 1851:83), the modern definition first mentions “*utilité, importance*,” then “*richesse, biens*” (Lemaître 1973: 53), so that a very common Tahitian expression describes something that is “uninteresting,” even “senseless” (in the idiomatic sense), as having “no wealth,” *'aita e faufa'a* or *faufa'a 'ore*. A promising enterprise would be described as “something *faufa'a*” or “rich” (*mea faufa'a*), which is close, but not identical, to the French/English acceptance of the word “rich.” A speech can be qualified as “rich in ideas” or a project as “rich in potential,” but something that lacks interest would never be

referred to in English as lacking "richness." (The polysememe "interest" of course also contains a reference to banking as in interest rate, but not to "capital.") To qualify an enterprise as "something *faufa'a*" is a figure of speech of which Tahitian Protestant pastors are particularly fond, which is all the more understandable when one realizes that the same term refers to the Scriptures, thus defined as both rich and full of interest in the full sense of both these qualifiers.

We are dealing here with a vast array of particular semantic associations. It is remarkable that something uninteresting can be designated as being both "without richness" and "without the Bible." It has moreover been noticed by various observers that a state recognized as poverty (*veve*) meets with disapproval in rural Tahitian circles (Levy 1973). This polysemia operates in a semantic world where someone who refuses is also a miser (see above), but "someone who gives" (*ta'ata horo'a*) is simply "generous" (Lemaître 1973:62). It must also be mentioned that another term corresponding to "rich," *rava'i*, once meant simply "to suffice, *to be adequate at the end designed*" (LMS 1851:224; emphasis added) and is currently defined both by "*riche*" and by "*suffisant*" (Lemaître 1973:109). To speak in Tahitian about "national wealth" would thus be to speak about the "adequacy of the land" (*rava'ira'a fenua*) as well as the "usefulness/interest that the country has" (*te faufa'a no te fenua*), which could also be construed as "the biblical nature of the land," quite far removed from some amount of "added value at factor cost."

*Business and Enterprise: The Eternal Absentee*<sup>2 1</sup>

It is hardly surprising after all that the concepts on which political economy has been founded since Adam Smith such as "enterprise" and "industry," or those that grew out of them like "production function," "added value," and "depreciation"--not to mention "current assets" or "capitalistic intensity"--are nonexistent in the semantic world of a unilingual Tahitian, even in periphrastic form, just as they are in any bilingual dictionary. Though, as has been pointed out to me, they are also absent from the semantic universe of a nonspecialist French or English speaker, there is a seemingly slight but decisive difference: these categories vaguely evoke something even for French or English speakers who haven't a clue about economics, because they are part of their language. Various and often remarkable American studies on entrepreneurship in the Pacific, especially in Polynesia, often note with a tinge of regret that

“for many Pacific islanders business remains an alien concept” (Hailey 1987:66-68; see also Fairbairn 1987).

Though business may be an alien concept, it is not because there is some kind of semantic void that places contemporary Tahiti out of the reach of, say, General Motors or Darty S.A. On the contrary, the density of Tahitian semantics pertaining to economics is organized in such a way that there is, so to speak, no room. In order for “enterprise” to exist, there would have to be “capital.” There is already “adequacy, sufficiency, wealth, Bible, etc.,” and none of these terms precisely corresponds to “capital” or implies this concept. There should also be “employment” where there is already “loan/debt, engagement for a compensation” --*rave* ‘*ohipa*, which refers to “worker” but more literally means “doer of something”; and there should be “wages” whereas there is “asymmetrical contribution that completes an exchange cycle,” and so forth. Though *moni* ‘*api* is generally translated as “profit,” this locution meaning “young/new money” is used to refer to all kinds of added value (the difference between purchase and sale price) and also covers what is known as “hard cash.”

Yet such is the error--believing that for Tahitian semantics to include “enterprise” it is sufficient to fill a void--into which falls the only lexicon that to my knowledge contains an entry for “entrepreneur” by opting for a particularly inadequate definition of the term: *ta’ata fa’atere* ‘*ohipa*, or “man supervisor of work,” probably in contrast to the notion *rave* ‘*ohipa* (“doer of work”) mentioned above (Cadousteau 1965). The problem is that the same expression can refer to a foreman or any other individual who oversees a group task. Actually, the notion of entrepreneur or company manager can symmetrically appear as a “local” category, even as a lexeme (an untranslatable minimal unit of meaning, such as “bake” or the “junk” in “junk food”). Thus a word like “business,” which is not exactly equivalent to “*affaires*,” has come to be commonly used in French.

Similar remarks apply to a notion like “industry,” which has taken on a specific twist in the context of highly singular processes (Europe’s industrialization) in which, according to such eminent specialists in economic history as Eric Hobsbawm (1962, 1986), much of the “how” and the “where” remains unexplained.

To account for the relative absence of an industrial sector and enterprise formation in unilingual communities in the Pacific islands, it is obviously neither necessary nor sufficient to invoke the exceptional alienism of Tahitian categories and their semantic environments. Vari-

ous studies, including those mentioned previously (Hailey 1987; Fairbairn 1987), show the importance of factors such as restricted markets or the lack of available land, which have no apparent relevance to linguistics. But such analysis could be seen as delineating implicitly the specificity of the European industrial revolution with other words.

The fact remains that the particular form of Tahitian enterprises managed by bilinguals, nearly always involved in networks historically defined by the activity of trade more so than manufacturing (i.e., ocean freight, import-export), likens them to *'ohipa ho'o*, the term by which they are moreover usually designated. Like the personal fortunes of their holders, they appear to be characterized by specific methods of financial management, which are worthy of examination, that I believe can be summarily described as giving priority to swiftness (stock rotation, securing high trade margins) or what modern Tahitian designates in positive terms as "quick" money (*moni vitiviti*). Whereas I long believed that the word *vitiviti* was a "Tahitianization" of the French *vite*, it is indeed a Polynesian term, similar to the Hawaiian *vikiviki*, "swift, brisk, avoiding delays" (Pukui, Elbert, and Mookini 1975:158). The idea that "swiftness" in the exchange cycle was a positive quality in ancient society is mentioned by Oliver (1974:1083). It is all the more significant that in the nineteenth century *vitiviti* was defined as "well set, clever, well finished" (LMS 1851:314). Thus the specificity of enterprises in Tahiti may indirectly be determined by semantic instruments of people who do not grasp exactly what an enterprise is. This is an interesting field of research, to which C. Robineau has contributed useful references (especially 1984).

In any case, one condition seems vital for unilingual Tahitians to set up enterprises: they must be able to perceive what this word is all about.

### **Last but Not Least: "Economics"**

It would be vain to seek a Tahitian definition of "economics" or "economy," the science or the activity, even in such specialized publications as the Académie Tahitienne's recent *Petit vocabulaire des mots techniques* (1981).<sup>22</sup> But one expression comes close to making a distinction between the economic aspect, or, if it be preferred, economic "activity," and social relations: *'imira'a moni* or *'imira'a faufa'a*, the search for money or *faufa'a*. The economic aspect of an island's history can be specified in the expression *i te pae 'imira'a moni*, "the search-for-money side," similar to the expression *i te pae 'orara'a*, which could translate as

“the life side” (in contrast to “the soul/faith side,” *pae fa'aro'o*). Specifically economic relations are thus distinguished--in a rather functional fashion--from other social relations, which runs contrary to the very concept of economics. In an economic system it makes little difference whether a franc is spent by a Polynesian pastor to buy communion bread or by a Chinese merchant to buy a can of beer; the main thing is that the franc circulates.

But the expression *'imira'a moni* indicates economic activity in a different manner. Contrary to the case of *ho'o*, it presupposes a given speaker on whose “side” it is pronounced, a speaker--an “individual-looking-for-money”--placed in an exchange network to which he or she is foreign. *'Imi*, as Lemaître points out (1973:67), is translated “*rechercher, chercher (quelque chose qu'on a égaré ou oublié)*” (seek, look for something lost or left behind) in opposition to *ti'i*, (“*aller chercher [quelqu'un ou quelque chose]*”), “go seek out someone or something” (ibid.:124), someone or something one is implicitly sure to find. What would correspond to economic activity is thus viewed as a seminomadic process comparable to hunting and gathering. This view is all the more significant when one takes note of the mobility characteristic of rural Tahitian residential models, hence of their economic activity (see especially Robineau 1984).

Furthermore, if the economy is “*'imi* money,” then there is a search for something absent or rather “outside.” It is highly unlikely, in view of the preceding remarks, that modern Tahitian would refer to its community of speakers as poor (because they “seek money”), though their income is among the lowest in French Polynesia. It is rather a question of distinguishing a monetary world from a nonmonetary one, as is often observable when describing the development of exchange with the “outside” (Baré 1987a), which continues to manifest an implicit but surprisingly detectable reference to the form of exchange.

It is to be hoped that case studies such as the present one will shed some light, or side lighting SO to speak, on debates concerning “insular” economies in the Pacific. It is indeed hard to imagine that linguistic worlds have not, to degrees that remain to be defined, lent a certain specificity to the existing economic mechanisms. That these mechanisms originate primarily (though not exclusively) in the specific patterns of organization and implementation used by the “powers” in this region is scarcely deniable. But even if it made sense to talk about shifting from a policy of domination to a policy based on contracts, when talking about economy one would have to make sure all involved were talking about the same thing. If there is a contract, hence an encounter, it is evidently

one of "ships that pass in the night."<sup>23</sup> And the fact is that the Pacific island natives vested with political and economic responsibility are bilingual.

If such is the case, it can only be because of the semantic "framing" and associations to which Sapir and Whorf, so often quoted by Mounin, once drew attention. An anthropologist who ignores these concerns runs the serious risk of dissociating culture from language and language from communication. From this standpoint, it is hard not to fall back in step of what has been called culturalism in areas such as the one discussed in this article.

### GLOSSARY

- 'ai'a*: nineteenth century: land (as territory); twentieth century: nation.  
*'api*: young, fresh, new; *moni 'api*: hard cash, profits.  
*'aufaura'a*: nineteenth century: tribute, voluntary contribution, asymmetrical contribution; twentieth century: payment; *'aufaura'a 'ava'e*: wages; *'aufau*: tax.  
*faufa'a*: nineteenth century: gain, profit, advantage; twentieth century: usefulness, importance, wealth, richness, goods; *mea faufa'a*: something rich (in potential); *faufa'a 'ore*: lacking *faufa'a*, uninteresting; *te faufa'a*, the Bible; *'imira'a faufa'a*: search for *faufa'a*, economic activity.  
*ha'amau'a*: spend, waste.  
*ho'o*: nineteenth century: price, exchange, equivalent; to buy or sell, exchange property; twentieth century: price of an object, purchase, sale; *tapiho'o* (lit., "to try *ho'o*"): to barter.  
*horo'a*: nineteenth century: to give or bestow some good; twentieth century: lend, give; *horo'a 'ino*: bad giver, stingy, miserly.  
*moni*: currency, money (from the English); *moni vitiviti*: money earned quickly; *vitiviti*: clever, well set, well finished; *'imira'a moni*: lit., "the search for *moni*," economic activity; *moni 'api*: see *'api*.  
*no rapae*: from the outside, foreign.  
*no roto*: from the inside, genuine, indigenous.  
*'ohipa*: job, occupation, activity, position, things as in the "things of life"; *fa'atere 'ohipa*: supervisor of work, in contrast to *rave 'ohipa*: doer of work, worker, labor; *'ohipa ho'o*: commerce; *'ohipa moni*: "money affairs"; *'ohipa no rapae*: things from the outside.  
*'opipiri*: nineteenth century: shameful, reserved, shy; twentieth century: unwillingly to lend, miserly; *piri*: to cling, retain.

- pa'ari*: adult, tough, miserly.  
*peu*: style, ways of being, customs.  
*rava'i*: nineteenth century: sufficient, adequate; twentieth century: rich, sufficient.  
*tahito*: ancient, but has left a trace in memory (in contrast to *matamua*: primordial, "mythical").  
*tao'a*: precious item, gift, "thingamajig"; export goods; *'ohipa ho'ora'a tao'a*: the activity of circulating *tao'a*, trade.  
*tarahu*: loan, debt; rent, engage someone.  
*taui*: nineteenth century: a price, compensation; to exchange a thing for another that does not suit; similar to *ho'o*; twentieth century: change, exchange; *tauiraa*: social change.  
*tauiha'a*: utensils, common objects, furniture; imported manufactured goods.  
*ti'ara'a*: lit., "the fact of standing up"; nineteenth century: functional identity of a titular chief; twentieth century: citizenship.  
*tumu*: root of a tree; cause and origin of things; *ta'ata tumu*; lit., "man root," autochthon due to use of a parcel land from birth.  
*utu'a*: nineteenth century: reward, compensation, wages; the payment of either merit or demerit, penalty or reward; twentieth century: punishment, fine; in the Bible: reward, sanction.

## NOTES

1. This article, originally published in French as "L'économie décrite en Tahiti: quelques remarques" in *L'Homme* 121 (January-March 1992): 143-164, develops in part work carried out from November 1988 to January 1989 when I was a visiting fellow at the Pacific Islands Development Program of the East-West Center for Cultural and Technical Exchange (Honolulu, Hawaii, U.S.), including a lecture series and a mimeographed report entitled "Tahitian Meanings." The linguistic examples presented were collected during field study from 1975 to 1978 for ORSTOM-Institut Français de Recherche Scientifique pour le Développement en Coopération. I would particularly like to thank John Charlot, Alan Howard, Alex Spoehr, Hardy Spoehr, and Jack Ward in Hawaii; and Robert Chaudenson, Gérard Lenclud, and Claude Robineau in France for their comments and critiques. Translation of this article from the French was done by Cynthia Schoch. I am solely responsible for the content.

2. By modern Tahitian is meant the language spoken in the Society Islands in the twentieth century as described in Y. Lemaître's lexicon (1973). Though not comprehensive, this lexicon is to me the most reliable reference. By Ma'ohi is meant the language described by the dictionary compiled in the first part of the nineteenth century by the London Missionary Society (hereafter abbreviated LMS), published in 1851. The noticeable difference between these two forms of the language spoken in the Tahitian archipelago owes more to the disappearance of specific terms (in the field of religion, for instance) than to funda-



mental linguistic changes (J. Ward, pers. corn., 1989). Contrary to a rather widely held opinion, early nineteenth-century writings on nonspecialized topics are perfectly comprehensible to Tahitians today.

3. I would like to draw attention to the research conducted on these topics by R. Chaudenson and the Centre International de Recherche et d'Étude en Linguistique Fondamentale et Appliquée (CIRELFA) under the auspices of the Agence de Coopération Culturelle et Technique and to emphasize the need for economists specializing in the informal sector (unrecorded economic activity) in various countries to take linguistic factors into account. Accounting is often done in a language other than the main languages used in economics: English and French (Charmes, pers. corn., 1987). Lastly, there is no doubt that statistical categories bear the marks of culture and language.

4. This article presents a preliminary study for a book to be titled *Ce qu'on dit en Tahiti*. It draws its basic inspiration from what is commonly called the "cultural current" in anthropology, especially the work of B. L. Whorf and E. Sapir, though a noncultural approach to anthropology is hard to envision. Furthermore, as P. Boyer notes (1991), it seems difficult to delineate clearly the field of cognitive anthropology (see, for example, Tyler 1969; Dougherty 1985), though the body of research appears to have historical connections to the earlier cultural current. It is awkward therefore to invoke analytical methods that supposedly belong to a subdiscipline of a field of study that is itself subject to debate. Equally problematic is the closely related field of "ethnosemantics." One might legitimately ask if, to a large extent, it simply covers ethnology itself. In this regard, it is hardly necessary to cite the name of Clifford Geertz. The problems related to "culturalism," hence to the points discussed here, can be posed as follows:

(1) Is the world as it is perceived the same when described in different languages, and are the resulting modes of action identical? The view espoused here, which largely reflects the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, answers in the negative for reasons that will become clear. Although this hypothesis has become unfashionable, any other view would heavily mortgage the very existence of anthropology, not to mention that of linguistic differences, reducing them to a sort of insignificant blabber.

(2) Are not what are known as homonyms in a language often instead polysememes that sketch the inherent framework of meanings? The hypothesis here is in agreement, for any other answer often leads to serious logical contradictions or absurdities, as notes M. Sahlins (1976). As to problems of translation, although the work of G. Mounin is often considered by linguists to be somewhat dated, no equally vast and precise survey appears to be available. Directions in research on financial aid to development are reviewed in Baré 1987b.

5. This expression refers to most of the rural population in French Polynesia. French-Tahitian bilingualism, further complexified by the peculiar type of French spoken in Tahiti, particularly by pluricultural groups known as "*demis*" (halves), or '*afa*, will not be dealt with in this article.

6. A fine presentation of the problems related to the concept of economic rationality can be found in Godelier 1966. Paul Fabra, the eminent financial columnist for *Le Monde*, frequently denounces preconceptions in this area, particularly what he recently termed the "elastic definition of rational." An eloquent example concerned the theory of "rational prediction" ("*anticipations rationnelles*"), unable, other than by way of tautology, to

account for phenomena such as the “tulipmania” that developed in Holland around 1625, causing the price of rare bulbs to increase twenty-five-fold in the course of one year (“La bourse expliquée à Candide” [2], *Le Monde*, 14 August 1990).

7. See, for example, Chariot 1983:115. For Hawaiians these “things from the inside” pertain to various identity markers such as the desired consistency of taro paste (*poi*). In Tahitian these markers correspond to the notion of *peu ma’ohi*, “Ma’ohi way of being.”

8. Translation taken from Blanchet 1985.

9. The word ‘*ai’a*’ once meant “a country or place where one makes his abode; an inheritance or portion of land” (LMS 1851: 14). This term has the same root as a variety of others used in Polynesia to refer to territorialized groups, like the Samoan ‘*aiga*’ or the Maori *kainga*.

10. It might be recalled that “citizenship” refers to belonging to the “city” in the Greek and later Roman sense (Benveniste 1969).

11. The processes of desiccating the coconut and using copra for oil were introduced by a German engineer in 1865-1870.

12. This remark obviously pertains to the notion of price itself, not to pricing systems, which naturally differ in each case.

13. *Eaha ra te taoa maitai* in the original spelling (Council for World Mission, South Sea Letters 3, 1823, quoted in Baré 1987a:196). A similar semantic opposition apparently exists in Samoan between “ceremonial goods” (*olo’a*) and imported goods (Tcherkezoff, pers. com., 1989).

14. See, for example, Firth 1936; Oliver 1974, 2.

15. Unless one is thinking of social “commerce,” which apparently is not contained in the term *ho’o*.

16. See, for example, Kuykendall 1947; Sahlins 1985; Danielsson 1978.

17. *Dette* and “debt” derive from the Latin *devere*, “to owe” (Dauzat, Dubois, and Mitterand 1989; Hoad 1986; Benveniste 1969: 185).

18. “The only generalization I can offer concerning the time factor in gift exchange is that . . . it appears to have been only loosely defined, and characterized by little or no time of urgency. . . . A generation or more seems not to have been considered excessive for the balancing of certain exchange accounts” (Oliver 1974: 1088). An anthropologist specialized in both New Guinea and Polynesia related this anecdote: He “helps out” a Tahitian passing through with some local currency; five years later he receives an invitation to a *tama’ara’a* organized by people he’d completely forgotten. Conversely, when on another occasion he “helps out” a New Guinean planter, a few days later he receives the amount plus interest computed at the going rate.

19. Many examples are given in Baré 1985, ch. 8.

20. Crook, 4 December 1824 (Council for World Mission Archives, South Sea Letters, 4).

21. “The Eternal Absentee” translates the French idiom “l’Arlésienne,” from a famous character of a nineteenth-century theater piece, a character who never appears. It refers more to something that could likely appear (but does not) than to something “absent.”

22. The Académic Tahitienne translates a notion such as "economic development" by *fa'arava'ira'a fenua* (make the land *rava'i*, "adequate" and "rich"), which is particularly inappropriate since this definition presupposes, among other implicit semantic associations, a final state. However, the various acceptations of the word "development" have in common that they describe it as a process, which is by definition endless (Baré 1987b).

23. "Ships that pass in the night, and speak to each other in passing, / Only a signal shown and a distant voice in the darkness; / Only a look and a voice; then darkness again and a silence." (Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, "The Theologian's Tale," *Tales of a Wayside Inn*, 3)

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**EUROPEAN LOYALIST AND POLYNESIAN  
POLITICAL DISSENT IN NEW CALEDONIA:  
THE OTHER CHALLENGE TO RPCR ORTHODOXY**

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**Introduction**

Analysis of New Caledonian politics since the early 1980s has focused mainly on the question of the territory's possible independence from France. Works such as those written by Helen Fraser, John Connell, and Claude Gabriel and Vincent Kermel have concentrated on the political rise of the territory's independence movement.<sup>1</sup> The local Melanesian (or "Kanak") independence movement's demands for greater autonomy and eventual independence were among the major problems that confronted President François Mitterrand's French Socialist government in the mid-1980s. The embodiment of that movement is the FLNKS (Front de Libération Nationale Kanake et Socialiste; Kanak Socialist National Liberation Front). A coalition of parties and activist groups, the FLNKS represents the majority of the Kanaks supporting independence.

Since its establishment in 1984 the FLNKS's major dilemma in its pursuit of independence has been that, although it represents a majority of the largest ethnic group in New Caledonia, that group itself forms a minority of the territory's total population: the indigenous Melanesian population formed 44.8% of New Caledonia's inhabitants in April 1989 (see Table 1). The FLNKS thus holds the support of a minority of the New Caledonian electorate: in the provincial elections of June 1989 it

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TABLE 1. **New Caledonia's Population by Ethnic Group, 1989**

	Number	% of Population
Total	164,173	100
Melanesians	73,598	44.8
Europeans	55,085	33.6
Wallisians	14,186	8.6
Indonesians	5,191	3.2
Tahitians	4,750	2.9
Vietnamese	2,461	1.5
Ni-Vanuatu	1,683	1.0
Other Asians	642	0.4
Others	6,577	4.0

*Source:* Institut Territorial de la Statistique et des Études Économiques, Nouméa, 1989.

obtained 28.3% of the territory's votes (see Table 3 below). As John Connell has pointed out, although the FLNKS is one of the strongest political expressions of Melanesian nationalism in the South Pacific, it is, paradoxically, the one most unlikely to succeed by gaining independence through the ballot box.<sup>2</sup>

The principal local body in opposition to the FLNKS's independence claims has been the RPCR (Rassemblement Pour la Calédonie dans la République; Assembly for Caledonia in the Republic), formed in 1978. It is a coalition party of various political tendencies. A multiracial party, the RPCR's leadership and membership are nevertheless predominantly European, or of European descent. Whether born in metropolitan France or in New Caledonia, these French citizens are loyal to the concept of New Caledonia's remaining within the French Republic. French citizens living in New Caledonia of Asian, Polynesian, or Melanesian origin who support the RPCR are no less loyal to France, but they have not exerted as great an influence within the party as the Europeans. As a body, they are referred to as "French loyalists" in this article.

Much analysis of New Caledonian politics by the Pacific media has tended to concentrate solely on the FLNKS's and RPCR's political and ethnic divisions over the question of Kanak independence. It has been too readily assumed that the FLNKS is the united voice of all local Melanesians and that the RPCR is the sole voice of French loyalists, representing New Caledonia's European and non-European immigrant population.

Such a simplification of New Caledonian politics does not stand up to close scrutiny. It is important to delve beyond this analysis to gain a greater understanding of political interaction between the territory's intermixed ethnic and social groups. Just as the FLNKS does not enjoy the following of a minority of Melanesian voters (due to abstentions and support for either French loyalism<sup>3</sup> or minority independence parties such as LKS [Libération Kanake Socialiste; Kanak Socialist Liberation]), so too the RPCR does not command the support of all European and non-European immigrants. Since the assassination, in May 1989, of the FLNKS president Jean-Marie Tjibaou and his deputy, Yeiwené Yeiwené, by Djubelly Wéa, the South Pacific press has been obliged to become aware of Kanak factionalism within and outside the FLNKS. Outside the French media, on the other hand, little attention has been given to French loyalist factionalism.

This essay examines internal differences among New Caledonian French loyalists, highlighting the opposition of nonindigenous voters to the dominant RPCR party line. Such opposition has been a neglected area of study in New Caledonian politics, but it is worthy of scrutiny. As will be seen, the RPCR has been subject to loyalist critics, both within and beyond its party ranks, due to a complex interplay of social, economic, political, and personal factors. What influence such critics have exerted on New Caledonia's political scene will be discussed, along with the implications their opposition to the RPCR may hold for the territory's future. Periodically these individuals and the minority political groups behind them have shown the capacity to exert political influence out of all proportion to their actual strength.

Historically, French party politics has been noted for shifting allegiances between several parties in the pursuit of electoral power. Numerous ill-defined parties and candidates without permanent links to any particular party have been characteristic of French electoral politics. Under the Fifth Republic these characteristics have given way to a gradual bipolarization of voter preference for either left- or right-wing options. The outcome has been disciplined parties and governments considered to be relatively stable compared with those of the Third and Fourth French republics or modern Italy, although not as stable and bipolar as party politics in Great Britain, the United States, Australia, or New Zealand.<sup>4</sup>

Political parties in New Caledonia, as in metropolitan France, are polarized. However, New Caledonian electoral politics is characterized by a level of party instability uncommon in contemporary French parliamentary politics. The RPCR, the oldest loyalist party in New Caledo-



nia, has a comparatively short history, having been founded in 1978, while parties farther to the right, such as the FN(NC) (Front National [Nouvelle-Calédonie]; National Front [New Caledonia]) and the FC (Front Calédonien; Caledonian Front) were founded more recently still, in 1982 and 1984 respectively.<sup>5</sup>

Just as political parties come and go in New Caledonia (there have been more than fifty since the inception of party politics in the 1950s), so too party adherence is quite fluid. Certain high-ranking figures in the RPCR began their political careers in the UC (Union Calédonienne; Caledonian Union), now the largest party within the FLNKS. Dick Ukeiwé, the former Melanesian RPCR president and French senator, is a notable example. His is a moderate case of shifting party allegiance, as he left the UC as long ago as 1960. An extreme example and a figure consequently lacking in political credibility is François Néoéré, an electoral candidate for the FI (Front Indépendantiste; Independence Front) in 1979, who had become, by 1984, the secretary-general of the extreme right-wing FN(NC).<sup>6</sup> Less dramatic have been the shifting loyalist allegiances of figures such as Justin Guillemard and Bernard Marant, who are also flexible in their choice of parties.

Such shifts in party allegiance often have less to do with political ideology than with personality politics, a factor underestimated or ignored in the analysis of New Caledonian politics. Given the smallness, by the end of the 1980s, both of New Caledonia's population of 164,173 inhabitants' and its electorate (91,259 eligible voters in the provincial elections of June 1989--see Table 3), the effects of personality politics in the territory should not be disregarded. Personality politics form an important element behind many of the differences and rivalries examined in this article, along with the political, ethnic, and social considerations usually outlined in accounts of New Caledonian politics.

### **The RPCR--Internal Opposition**

When formed in 1978, the RPCR attracted followers of various French conservative political tendencies, *broussards* (rural Europeans), and Nouméan business interests. The RPCR also attracted the electoral support of some Melanesians (see note 3) and especially of nonindigenous minority groups (principally Wallisians, Indonesians, Tahitians, and Vietnamese), who did not identify with the goals of Kanaks wanting independence, and who were concerned about the uncertain prospects that independence would hold for them.

The RPCR's electoral support is predominantly centered on greater

Nouméa (the *communes* [districts] of Nouméa, Mont-Dore, Dumbéa, and Païta), where 59.4% of New Caledonia's population live. All of New Caledonia's ethnic groups except its indigenous Melanesians live largely in the south of the Grande Terre (the New Caledonian mainland). The 1989 census recorded 39.2% of the territory's Melanesians living in the South Province, where they constituted 25.8% of the 111,735 inhabitants. By comparison, 89.7% of New Caledonia's European population lived in the South Province, as did 97.8% of its Wallisians, 86.4% of its Indonesians, 95% of its Tahitians, and 97.2% of its Vietnamese. Within the South Province, Europeans comprised 44.3% of the population, Wallisians 12.4%, Indonesians 4%, Tahitians 4.1%, and Vietnamese 2.1%.<sup>8</sup>

This uneven nonindigenous demographic base has limited the extent to which the RPCR enjoys electoral support throughout New Caledonia. While retaining the following of a majority of the territory's voters, the RPCR's support is largely limited to the southern part of the Grande Terre. This situation was clearly demonstrated in the regional elections of September 1985, the first in which the FLNKS participated (see Table 2). The total RPCR vote of 37,146 (52% of the vote) greatly exceeded the FLNKS's 20,544 votes (28.8%) and formed an indisputable majority. But of the total RPCR vote, 71.6% (26,615 votes) was obtained in the South Region, one of four regions in the territory at that time (see below), with 72% of that total from greater Noumea alone. Elsewhere in the Grande Terre, 13.5% of the RPCR's support came from the Center Region (5,003 votes) and 7.8% from the North Region (2,888 votes). In the Loyalty Islands the RPCR obtained 7.1% of its support (2,640 votes). The RPCR attracted majority support in the South Region alone, where it gained 70.6% of the vote, in stark contrast with the FLNKS's 7.5%. Elsewhere, regional totals fell in the FLNKS's favor: 45.4% in the Center Region compared with the RPCR's 41.9% of the vote there; 59.6% for the FLNKS in the North Region compared with 23.3% for the RPCR; and 52.1% for the FLNKS in the Loyalty Islands compared with 28% for the RPCR.

The provincial elections of June 1989 demonstrated a similar pattern (see Table 3). As part of the Matignon Accords (a development plan signed by the RPCR, the FLNKS, and the French Socialist government in Paris in 1988, with provision for a self-determination referendum in 1998), New Caledonia's four regions had been altered to three provinces (see Figure 1). Once again, in spite of its having gained a firm relative majority (27,777 votes or 43.9% of the total), compared with the FLNKS's 17,898 votes (28.3% of the total), the RPCR achieved a

**TABLE 2. Regional Election Results, 29 September 1985**

Region <sup>a</sup>	Electorate	Votes Cast	FLNKS	RPCR	FN (NC) CN <sup>b</sup>	LKS	PFKO <sup>c</sup>	RPC <sup>d</sup>	
Total	89,784	71,440	20,544	37,146	5,263	514	4,596	2,319	1,058
South	48,678	37,690	2,820	26,615	5,263	514	1,232	1,246	
Center	14,260	11,951	5,434	5,003			788	726	
North	15,040	12,384	7,382	2,888			709	347	1,058
Loyalty Islands	11,806	9,415	4,908	2,640			1,867		

**Seats**

South (21): RPCR 17, FN(NC) 3, FLNKS 1.

Center (9): FLNKS 5, RPCR 4.

North (9): FLNKS 6, RPCR 2, RPC 1.

Loyalty Islands (7): FLNKS 4, RPCR 2, LKS 1.

*Source:* J. Connell, *New Caledonia or Kanaky?* (Canberra, 1987).

<sup>a</sup>The four regions used in the regional elections of 1985 differ from those which existed in New Caledonia between 1969 and 1985. Their creation was a result of the French Socialist government's Pisani/Fabius Interim Statute of 1985.

<sup>b</sup>Calédonie Nouvelle; A New Caledonia.

<sup>c</sup>Parti Fédérale Kanak d'Opao; Federal Kanak Party of Opao.

<sup>d</sup>Rassemblement Pour la Calédonie; Assembly for Caledonia.

TABLE 3. **Provincial Election Results, 11 June 1989**

Province <sup>a</sup>	Electorate	Votes Cast	FLNKS	RPCR	FN(NC)	CD	UO	FC	LKS	Other
Total	91,259	63,225	17,898	27,777	4,204	3,219	2,429	1,611	2,258	3,074
South	57,278	39,759	4,615	20,844	3,860	2,751	2,429	1,611	817	2,251 <sup>b</sup>
North	21,537	14,939	9,371	4,041	344	361				666 <sup>c</sup>
Loyalty Islands	12,444	8,527	3,912	2,892		107			1,441	157 <sup>d</sup>

Seats

South (32): RPCR 21, FLNKS 4, FN(NC) 3, CD 2, UO 2.

North (15): FLNKS 11, RPCR 4.

Loyalty Islands (7): FLNKS 4, RPCR 2, LKS 1.

Source: *Le Monde*, 13 June 1989.

<sup>a</sup>The three provinces used in the provincial elections of 1989 were created in 1988 as a result of the Matignon Accords.

<sup>b</sup>Includes UPPT (Un Pays Pour Tous; One Country for All) 1,526, RCM (Regroupement des Centristes et Modérés; Centrist and Moderate Group) 320, VDF (Vérité, Dialogue, Fraternité; Truth, Dialogue, Brotherhood) 405.

<sup>c</sup>UPC (Union Pour Construire; Union for Construction).

<sup>d</sup>FUPCE (Front Uni Pour Construire Ensemble; United Front for Building Together).

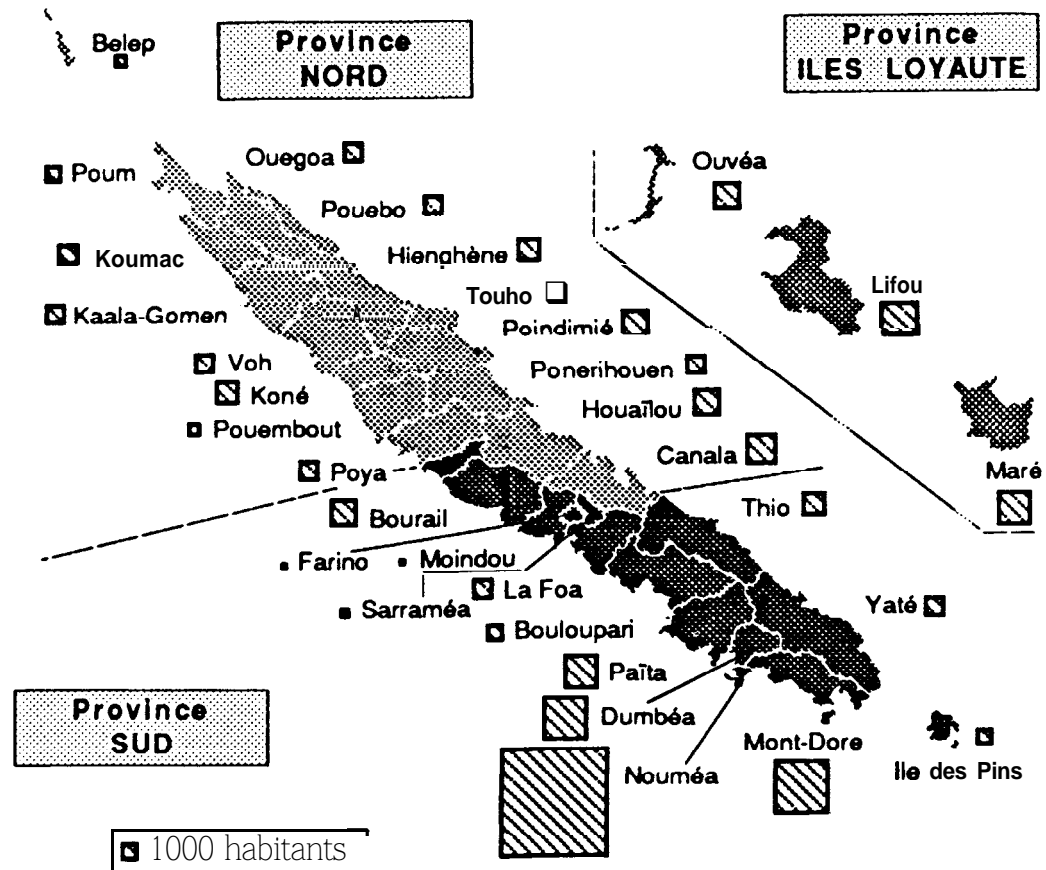


FIGURE 1. New Caledonia's provinces as established under the 1988 Matignon Accords, showing population size for each *commune*. The *commune* of Poya is divided between two provinces, with most of the *commune's* inhabitants in the North Province. (Reprinted from Institut Territorial de la Statistique et des Études Économiques, *Images de la population de la Nouvelle-Calédonie. Principaux résultats du recensement 1989* [Nouméa, 1989], 11.)

majority only in the South Province. It received 75% of its support (20,844 votes) in the South Province, 14.5% in the North Province (4,041 votes), and 10.4% (2,892 votes) in the Loyalty Islands. In the South Province the RPCR gained 52.4% of the vote, compared with the FLNKS's 11.6%, 27% in the North Province compared with the FLNKS's 62.7%, and 33.9% of the Loyalty Islands vote compared with the FLNKS's 45.9%. The redefinition of regional boundaries had done little to alter either the nature of the RPCR's uneven voter distribution or the FLNKS's electoral predominance outside the south of the Grande Terre.

While being its major political strength, the RPCR's overwhelming following in greater Nouméa--over 70% of its territorial total--has been a cause of dissatisfaction, and occasionally of open dissent, among

the *broussard* minority. Of New Caledonia's European inhabitants, perhaps only 500 families are still employed solely in agriculture. The 1983 census listed 227 male and 23 female cattle ranchers, and 204 male and 41 female farmers. These *broussards* and those who mix agriculture with part-time work in provincial centers or who work solely in rural service industries have felt marginalized socially, economically, and politically by the RPCR'S Nouméan bias. European commercial agriculture in New Caledonia has been in a state of decline since the 1960s, its importance greatly eroded by the nickel boom of the late 1960s. The most important rural European economic activities are now based on commerce and services rather than agriculture.<sup>9</sup>

The RPCR did little to reverse rural economic decline before it signed the Matignon Accords in 1988, largely because Nouméan business interests have played an important role in the party. From the RPCR's foundation in 1978 a major constituent party was EDS (Entente Démocratique et Sociale; Social and Democratic Entente). Formed in 1972 by Senator Henri Lafleur, his son Jacques Lafleur (who later became the RPCR president), and Roger Laroque (mayor of Nouméa until his death in 1985), the EDS was a conservative group of interests that relied on Nouméan support. RPCR leadership and policy have continued in this vein. In spite of Dick Ukeiwé's 1983 statement that the RPCR wants "the maximum of decentralization and dispersal,"<sup>10</sup> there was little evidence of initiatives by the RPCR to decentralize New Caledonia's economy prior to 1988. In 1988, a decade after the RPCR's formation, Nouméa remained the focal point of a highly centralized economy; it will remain so for years to come.<sup>11</sup>

*Broussards* feel marginalized from the Nouméan-based RPCR. Their resentment stems from social differences, accentuated by Noumea's prosperity and the rural decline. *Broussards* tend to have lower standards of living than their Nouméan counterparts, particularly the wealthy elite known as the "fifty families." *Broussards*, who have experienced substandard health and educational services, and low incomes from rural employment, have had cause to resent the "fifty families"--the Lafleur, De Rouvray, Lavoix, Barrau, and Ballande clans among others--who live affluently on the proceeds of substantial financial investments in various commercial operations. The members of these families not only live affluently but also hold key positions in the territory's economy and administration, as well as important posts in the RPCR, forming a plutocracy of considerable influence. They are popularly perceived as having traditionally held a monopoly on New Caledonia's socioeconomic power.

*Broussard* resentment has focused on RPCR leaders, particularly on

the RPCR president, Jacques Lafleur, for his large absentee landholdings, his major investments in twenty-one different companies, and for the privileged positions his relatives enjoy.<sup>12</sup> *Broussards*, like Melaneans, have voiced discontent about inequitable land distribution, which favors large landowners such as Lafleur. By 1988 fewer than 8% of New Caledonia's landowners still owned 75% of the land.<sup>13</sup> *Broussards* also resent major landowners for their alleged neglect of the land. A metropolitan French commentator, Jean-Claude Guillebaud, wrote of these tensions from Bourail in 1980: "Everywhere, I heard the colonists, small or middle-sized, fuming about the large estates, badly cultivated by a few rich Nouméans. Ballande, Pentecost, Lafleur . . . People of another race. Without real ties to the land."<sup>14</sup>

Such resentment had not vanished ten years later. Under the Matignon Accords, *broussards* feel that their economic interests are not considered seriously by the RPCR. Commenting on Jacques Lafleur's sale of 85% of his Société Minière du Sud Pacifique (SMSP; South Pacific Mining Company) to the North Province government, administered by the FLNKS, in April 1990, Olympe Bernanos, a European employed by the North Province, stated: "The *broussards* are listened to more today by Kanak representatives than they ever were by Noumea. Since the sale of the Lafleur mines, they [*broussards*] hold even fewer illusions about the South."<sup>15</sup> In October 1990 Lafleur's mines at Ouaco were transferred to the North Province. The sale was seen by *broussards* as a case of Lafleur's divesting himself of the rural investments, upon which he and his father had built their fortunes, as a result of misguided expediency and self-interest.

An element of self-interest was involved. The nickel industry had experienced a sharp drop in prices from 1989 to 1990, after having recovered from another bad drop between 1985 and 1986. The SMSP had accumulated debts of approximately Fr 80 million, for which the North Province assumed responsibility as part of the sale agreement. Lafleur's sale of 85% of the company for Fr 99 million left him free of this debt. He also made a profit on his investment: in 1987 Lafleur had purchased 65% of the SMSP's shares for around Fr 30 million at a time when the company's value had depreciated after the loss of its Japanese client, Nippon Mining. It was also estimated that the mineral deposits at Ouaco would be exhausted some time between 1995 and 2000.<sup>16</sup> Lafleur had obtained a good price for the SMSP, and the sale furthered the atmosphere of RPCR/FLNKS reconciliation following the Matignon Accords.

Frédéric Bobin of *Le Monde* commented that Lafleur hopes to dis-

courage rural migration to Nouméa, with the attendant economic and social problems it creates, by encouraging economic activity in the other provinces. Under such a scheme the SMSP sale indirectly benefited the development of the South Province, as well as being personally profitable to Lafleur.<sup>17</sup> Following his signing of the Matignon Accords, Lafleur recognized the importance of the rural economy, but much remains to be done to encourage rural economic growth.

*Broussards* have also felt resentment towards Nouméan members of the RPCR for their relative physical security. *Broussards* were the Europeans most exposed to FLNKS militancy in 1984 and 1985. Materially, *broussards* on the east coast of the Grande Terre suffered the most. Centers on the east coast, such as Hienghène and Thio, were the most severely affected by arson and bombings between November 1984 and February 1985. During this time CFPF 370.5 million and CFPF 401 million worth of property damage were inflicted in Hienghène and Thio respectively. In comparison, the far larger urban center of Nouméa suffered CFPF 2.8 million worth of property damage over the same period. Such property destruction, the erection of FLNKS roadblocks, and the occupation of Thio by the independence leader Eloi Machoro and his followers prompted more than 2,000 “refugees” (mainly *broussards*, but also metropolitan French, plus Polynesians and Asians) to relocate to Noumea, where they were rehoused by the French authorities in the vacant tower blocks of the Nouméan suburb of Saint Quentin.<sup>18</sup> From Hienghène, a special case, 294 *broussards* were evacuated between 4 and 6 December 1984, at the time of the massacre of ten Kanaks, leaving virtually no non-Melanesians there.<sup>19</sup> Justin Guillemard of Bourail defended the interests of these “refugees,” and at the time their situation constituted a source of provincial resentment against the RPCR.<sup>20</sup>

In his detestation of Nouméan interests in the RPCR, Justin Guillemard is the most outspoken *broussard*. He has repeatedly criticized the RPCR from the right, both within its ranks and outside. Guillemard was expelled from the RPCR in 1987, ostensibly for his rejection of the party’s proposed three-year residency qualification for voter eligibility in the self-determination referendum of September 1987. His personal attacks on RPCR leaders would also have influenced the decision to expel him. Guillemard attacked “the Nouméan racketeers” during an address to the Territorial Congress on 23 March 1987.<sup>21</sup> He opposes what he considers self-centered business interests for their lack of concern toward people of modest means living in the bush, blaming them for neglecting the economic well-being of the *broussards*. Guillemard’s



criticisms have some validity. They reflect his long-standing concern for *broussard* welfare; at the same time they are motivated by his animosities towards RPCR leaders and imply a personal as well as a political agenda.

Guillemard was not alone in opposing the RPCR from a rural perspective. Another strand of rural dissent in New Caledonia originated from moderate right-wing voters, who had followed the centrist FNSC (Fédération pour une Nouvelle Société Calédonienne; Federation for a New Caledonian Society), and before that, the UC in the days before it supported autonomy. The FNSC, opposing what it saw as the RPCR's inflexible response to the political demands of the FI, formed a coalition government with the FI in June 1982, but this ultimately discredited the FNSC in the eyes of the bulk of its followers. The FNSC collapsed in 1984, a victim of voter polarization over the question of independence. Most of its supporters shifted their allegiance to the RPCR or even farther to the right in response to the founding of the FLNKS. By the time of the territorial elections of November 1984, which the FNSC contested under the title UPLO (Union Pour la Liberté dans l'Ordre; Union for Liberty in Order), the party's following was marginal (see Table 4). The number of seats held by the FNSC in the territorial elections of 1979 had been seven. The elections of November 1984 reduced this figure to one. The FNSC retained significant support only in Bourail and Pouembout, with Jean-Pierre Aïfa, its sole elected representative, isolated in the center ground between the FLNKS and the RPCR. Frustrated by the situation, Aïfa resigned in May 1985.<sup>22</sup>

Attempts by Aïfa to recapture moderate voters from his electoral base in Bourail have not resulted in widespread *broussard* support. In the regional elections of September 1985 (see Table 2), his involvement with the PFKO (Parti Fédérale Kanak d'Opao; Federal Kanak Party of Opao), the renamed FNSC which now advocated a moderate form of independence, eroded his following even further. Aïfa failed to regain a seat. For the provincial elections of June 1989 (see Table 3), Aïfa joined with Raymond Bouvard, an RPCR dissident and president of the Chamber of Trades, to form UPPT (Un Pays Pour Tous; One Country for All). UPPT, which presented electoral candidates only in the South Province, likewise failed to gain any seats. Aïfa's support in territorial elections had declined significantly, although the community of Bourail had earlier voiced its confidence in his capacity as mayor by reelecting him in the municipal elections of March 1989.

There was another attempt to recapture some of the center ground in New Caledonian politics. In September 1985 Henri Leleu, then the

TABLE 4. **Territorial Election Results, 18 November 1984**

Region <sup>a</sup>	Electorate	Votes Cast	RPCR	LKS	FN(NC)	Others
Total	79,271	39,227	27,851	2,879	2,379	6,118
South	40,894	27,251	19,685	1,074	1,838	4,654 <sup>b</sup>
West	15,766	7,495	5,611	335	376	1,173 <sup>c</sup>
East	12,507	2,350	1,537	425	165	223 <sup>d</sup>
Loyalty	10,104	2,131	1,018	1,045		68 <sup>e</sup>

## Seats

South (17): RPCR 16, FN(NC) 1.

West (9): RPCR 8, UPLO 1.

East (9): RPCR 7, LKS 2.

Loyalty Islands (7): LKS 4, RPCR 3.

Source: J. Connell, *New Caledonia or Kanaky?* (Canberra, 1987).

<sup>a</sup>The four electoral regions into which New Caledonia was subdivided at the time of this election were created in 1969. They were redrawn in 1985 as a result of the implementation of the French Socialist government's Pisani/Fabius Interim Statute.

<sup>b</sup>Includes UPLO (Union Pour la Liberté dans l'Ordre; Union for Liberty in Order) 902, UF (Uvea mo Futuna; Wahis and Futuna) 566, ETPP (Entente Territoriale Pour le Progrès; Territorial Entente for Progress) 269, FC (Front Calédonien; Caledonian Front) 732, LPC (Liste Pour la Calédonie; List for Caledonia) 712, EPA (Ensemble Pour l'Avenir; Together for the Future) 826.

<sup>c</sup>UPLO 739, LPC 200, AT (Alliance Territoriale; Territorial Alliance) 30, EPA 185.

<sup>d</sup>LPC 42, AT 23, EPA 66.

<sup>e</sup>EPA and AT.

RPCR secretary-general, was expelled from the party for his personal animosity towards Lafleur and his business interests. Leleu conducted what *Le Monde* described as "an all-out guerrilla war against Mr. Lafleur."<sup>23</sup> In 1987 he set up the RC (Renouveau Calédonien; Caledonian Renewal), a moderate right-wing party of RPCR dissidents. Despite this, he was accepted back into the RPCR in April 1988. This acceptance displayed a great degree of RPCR pragmatism, and suggested that Leleu was not intransigent either. The moderate right in New Caledonia has not enjoyed a separate electoral identity, as it does in metropolitan France under the UDF (Union pour la Démocratie Française; Union for French Democracy). Instead, it has largely been subsumed in the RPCR's broader right-wing following.

Loyalist opposition to the RPCR is found predominantly in greater Nouméa, the largest population center in the territory. Reasons for Nouméan opposition to the RPCR vary. The same social distinctions that prompt *broussards* to distrust RPCR leaders are broadly applicable to

Europeans in urban areas. Owners of small businesses at times harbor resentment about the RPCR leaders' control of Nouméa's economy. Entrepreneurs starting new businesses, frequently recent arrivals from metropolitan France, find themselves in competition with established Nouméan companies, owned by figures such as Jacques Lafleur, that have dominated New Caledonia's import/export trade for decades.<sup>24</sup> Nouméa's urban proletariat, in its pursuit of better working conditions and wages, can also find itself at odds with the Nouméan plutocracy that employs it. In 1990 increasing numbers of non-Kanak workers turned to the USTKE (Union des Syndicats des Travailleurs Kanaks et Exploités; Combined Union of Exploited Kanak Workers) for union representation. This development was regarded as sufficient threat to the interests of RPCR leaders for Jacques Lafleur to threaten RPCR members who joined the USTKE with expulsion from the party.<sup>25</sup> Urban loyalists disaffected with the RPCR for social reasons may find that sufficient cause to vote for the minority loyalist parties of the far right. Some metropolitan French inhabitants of greater Nouméa may also feel a greater affinity for the FN(NC), with its close metropolitan links, than for the RPCR, with its more parochial concerns and leadership.

Lafleur has never been able to dispel entirely his image of a materialistic despot, despite active measures taken by him, for example his 1988 defamation suit against FN Secretary-General Jean-Pierre Stirbois, who had remarked that Lafleur was the "godfather of a mafia of racketeers."<sup>26</sup> Although there has been some indication of corruption within the RPCR hierarchy (see below), no substantial evidence confirms that Lafleur's French loyalism is motivated more by consideration for the protection of his finances than by patriotism or wider developmental prospects for New Caledonia. Lafleur does hold investments in metropolitan France and in Australia, but if financial considerations formed his sole concern, he would have left New Caledonia years ago. Considering the substantial role his family has played in New Caledonia's politics and economy, and his publicly professed concern for the future of the territory, it is unlikely that Lafleur would leave.

Another cause of differences within the RPCR has been the perceived extent to which the party's leaders have opposed the FLNKS and its independence goals. Compared with statements made in 1984 and 1985, by 1988 there had been a public softening of RPCR opposition to the FLNKS. In 1985 Roger Laroque, then the RPCR's elder statesman, stated categorically that "the FLNKS is an organization that does not have the right to exist."<sup>27</sup> At the height of the troubles of late 1984-1985 Jacques Lafleur stated his belief that the FLNKS was a marginal party,

representing only 10-15% of voters, motivated by “a racist, Marxist, Kanak, hateful concept,” and commented that “this country has no desire to become independent.”<sup>28</sup> The RPCR’s hardline views at that time led Laroque to advocate armed militias to defend loyalist interests, while Lafleur lent them material support.<sup>29</sup>

By the time of the Matignon Accords the public attitudes of the RPCR’s leaders had changed considerably. By the middle of 1988 Lafleur was stressing the need for peaceful dialogue with the FLNKS; he complimented Jean-Marie Tjibaou for his responsible attitude in negotiations. Lafleur claimed on 25 June 1988 that his personal desire for negotiations with the FLNKS was that of the RPCR in general: “The RPCR has agreed to conduct a dialogue . . . everyone agrees about having dialogue, but that doesn’t mean they’ll accept any old thing.”<sup>30</sup> This statement was made only a month after RPCR militants demanded during the hostage incident on Ouvéa (22 April to 5 May 1988) that FLNKS leaders be arrested and their party outlawed. This incident involved the murder and abduction of French gendarmes by Kanak independence activists. Such militancy does not dissolve in a matter of weeks, and it is questionable whether Lafleur did command the total support of the RPCR at that stage. Privately, conservatives within the RPCR may have objected to Lafleur’s wish for dialogue with the FLNKS, but there was no public indication of any challenge to his leadership of the RPCR.

Justin Guillemard, who by 1988 was no longer an RPCR representative, spoke out against what he saw as the RPCR’s “shameful capitulation” and “pseudo-dialogue,” as he described it to the Territorial Congress on 20 September 1988. Haranguing the RPCR councillors present, Guillemard claimed that the Matignon Accords had “shared out political and economic power between the politico-racketeers [the RPCR] on one hand, and the terrorist assassins [the FLNKS] on the other hand, supposedly for ten years, a time lapse that will allow you to carry out some good and juicy deals!”<sup>31</sup>

It later became clear that not all RPCR voters were convinced of the need for dialogue with the FLNKS. In spite of the RPCR’s public support of the Matignon Accords, in the referendum on the accords in November 1988, five southern *communes* voted overwhelmingly against them. Not only did these five *communes* include Bourail and Dumbéa, centers of RPCR dissent where Justin Guillemard and Bernard Marant<sup>32</sup> respectively were prominent, but also Nouméa itself, the cornerstone of the RPCR’s support. In Nouméa, 63.7% of the voters rejected acceptance of the Matignon Accords. 56.4% did so in Mont-

Dore, 53.0% in La Foa, 79.3% in Farino, 65.9% in Dumbéa, and 56.3% in Bourail. Fortunately for the RPCR, such opposition did not command majority support, either in New Caledonia, where 57% of the overall vote supported the accords, or in metropolitan France, where 80% of voters favored them.<sup>33</sup>

Overall, although opposition within the RPCR has prompted the occasional dispute with outspoken figures such as Marant, Guillemard, and Leleu, dissent within the party has not adversely affected its progress. *Broussard* interests, while arguably still not satisfied under the Matignon Accords, are not significant enough for the Nouméan-based RPCR to alter its outlook. Urban dissent has also failed to articulate itself in a form that would pose any major threat to Lafleur's leadership. Lafleur has managed to lead the RPCR away from its former hardline opposition to the independence movement into a period of formal conciliation and dialogue with the FLNKS under the Matignon Accords without upsetting the RPCR's electoral dominance of New Caledonian politics.

Of greater electoral importance to the RPCR (and damaging to its reputation as a multiracial party) has been its loss of some Wallisian electoral support to the UO (Union Océanienne; Oceanic Union). The UO was formed in May 1989 to represent the interests of Wallis and Futuna Islanders living in New Caledonia. Wallisians have overwhelmingly supported conservative European parties in past years, most significantly the RPCR since 1978. The UO's formation is claimed by its leaders to be a result of dissatisfaction with the RPCR's lack of assistance to the Wallisian community (see below). Younger Wallisians in particular feel resentment over the RPCR's past tendency to take Wallisian support for granted and have decided to respond by following their own party.

### **The Extreme Right**

The two main parties of the extreme right in New Caledonia, the FN(NC) and the FC, are essentially marginal in terms of loyalist electoral support. Nonetheless, they are both worth examining for their loyalist criticisms of the RPCR from the right and for their ability to exert an occasional influence on local politics out of all proportion to their size.

The FN(NC) was formed in May 1984 with the help of the metropolitan French FN. Initially led by Pierre Guillemard (no relation to Justin Guillemard), the FN(NC) started with only a few dozen members, but

rapidly gained further support. In the June 1984 elections for French representatives to the European parliament, the FN obtained 16% of the New Caledonian vote, exceeding the 11% of the vote the FN gained in metropolitan France. The FC lent support to the FN, which swelled its vote.<sup>34</sup>

Like the RPCR, the FN(NC)'s voter support has consistently been based in Nouméa where, by no coincidence, the majority of metropolitan French in the territory live. In the Territorial Assembly elections of November 1984 (see Table 4), the FN(NC), under the campaign title *Paix, Fraternité, Liberté* (Peace, Fraternity, Liberty), obtained 1,369 votes in the *commune* of Nouméa. These votes formed 57.5% of its 2,379 total, spread over all three regions of the Grande Terre. The FN(NC) achieved 77.2% of its total support (1,838 votes) in the South Region, with negligible support elsewhere--a mere 376 votes in the West Region and 165 votes in the East Region. No FN(NC) electoral list was presented in the Loyalty Islands, probably due to a combination of the party's racist image and the islands' exclusively Melanesian population. Roger Galliot, the FN(NC) mayor of Thio, was elected to the Territorial Assembly. Nonetheless, only 65 votes were cast for the FN(NC) in Thio itself, compared with 353 for the RPCR. The FLNKS's boycott of the election encouraged greater electoral success than the FN(NC) would otherwise have achieved, as extreme right-wing voters were able to vote for right-wing minority parties without splitting the loyalist vote to the advantage of the FLNKS. Such support for the FN(NC) also sent a message to RPCR leaders that some of the loyalist electorate were dissatisfied with their leadership.

From its earliest days the FN(NC) stood to the right of the RPCR's comparatively mainstream conservatism. The FN(NC)'s formation, like that of the FLNKS some months later, was a consequence of New Caledonia's increasing political polarization over independence. Unlike the RPCR's more autonomous relationship with the metropolitan French RPR, the FN(NC) is subordinate to the FN. The views of the FN's leader, Jean-Marie Le Pen, have had an important influence on the FN(NC). A good example of this influence concerns François Néoéré's resignation from his post as the FN(NC) secretary-general in January 1986, after the circulation of a letter by Le Pen questioning the presence of a Melanesian in such a prominent position within the party. The FN(NC) had appointed Néoéré in 1984, partly as an attempt to dispel the FN's racist reputation. Connell suggests that Le Pen's desire to expel Néoéré was due not to any deficiency in fulfilling his responsibilities as secretary-general but to Le Pen's own racism.<sup>35</sup> Néoéré's previous alle-

giances to various parties across a range of the political spectrum may also have counted against him, in Le Pen's view.

Likewise, in its total opposition to greater autonomy for New Caledonia, the FN(NC) has followed the political line of its parent party. Proposals for change in New Caledonia's administrative structure and status--such as the French Socialist government's Pisani/Fabius Interim Statute of 1985, the Chirac government's Regionalized Autonomy Statute of 1987, and the Matignon Accords--have all met with a negative response from the FN(NC). This stance is the FN(NC)'s major policy difference from the RPCR, and it became more pronounced as the RPCR moved to support administrative reform in New Caledonia in the late 1980s. Both the FN(NC) and the RPCR stood united on the right in their opposition to the Socialist Pisani/Fabius Interim Statute. There was no such unity of views in their responses to the Regionalized Autonomy Statute: the FN(NC)'s total opposition was not shared with the RPCR, which broadly supported the statute, although it expressed certain reservations to Chirac's RPR/UDF coalition government. In its opposition to the Matignon Accords in 1988, the FN(NC), like the RPR, was at odds with the RPCR's support for dialogue with the FLNKS under the new French Socialist government.

From its inception the FN(NC) has vigorously opposed the FI/FLNKS and has criticized the RPCR for allegedly weak opposition to Kanak independence. In January 1985 Roger Galliot accused the FLNKS of being in league with the Eastern bloc: "Our adversaries [the FLNKS] don't want a decolonization, but a transfer of colonization towards the countries of the East." Even more remarkable was Néoéré's assertion at the same time that Lafleur supported Kanak socialist independence.<sup>36</sup> Néoéré based this claim on the assumption that Lafleur's financial interests would profit from an independent Kanaky. Like some other people within the RPCR, Néoéré felt that Lafleur placed his personal interests ahead of continued links with the French Republic. In 1985 nothing could have been farther from the truth, considering Lafleur's own pointed dismissals of the FLNKS and the considerable amount of money he had spent on the RPCR and operations supporting *broussard* communities.<sup>37</sup> By 1989 such a claim seemed more plausible to some loyalists, given the unprecedented amount of RPCR dialogue with the FLNKS and Lafleur's sale of the SMSP to the FLNKS-governed North Province, a sale financed by the French state. The high levels of opposition expressed to the Matignon Accords in the referendum of November 1988 in the *communes* of Nouméa, Mont-Dore, Farino, La Foa, Dumbéa, and Bourail were certainly fueled by distrust of RPCR dialogue with the FLNKS.

In the regional elections of September 1985 (see Table 2), the FN(NC) presented only one electoral list, in the South Region. Initially, a list for the Center Region had been put forward too, but this was withdrawn on Le Pen's orders, following his arrival in the territory just days before the elections. His fear was that the FN(NC)'s presence in the regional ballot would split the loyalist vote between the FN(NC) and the RPCR and allow the FLNKS to gain a regional majority. In this instance Le Pen overrode the FN(NC)'s rivalry with the RPCR in the interests of the wider loyalist cause. Despite their earlier anti-RPCR polemics, FN(NC) leaders followed his wishes, suggesting that they were not as entrenched in their views as might have been believed earlier. Even so, the FLNKS gained 5,434 votes in the Center Region, and the RPCR obtained 5,003 votes. As a result, the FLNKS gained five of the region's nine seats, while the RPCR held the other four.<sup>38</sup>

In the South Region, once more the overwhelming majority of the FN(NC)'s support came from Nouméa. Of the party's total of 5,263 votes, 75.4% (3,970) came from the *commune* of Nouméa. This gained the FN(NC) three seats in the South Region, consolidating its earlier support in the Nouméa *commune*. In the South Region, the FN(NC) was mainly competing with the RPCR for votes, as the FLNKS secured only 7.2% of the regional vote (2,820 votes). The FN(NC) aimed to attract loyalist European voters, rather than Melanesians, for whom the party's image held little appeal.

The FN(NC) showed further capacity for cooperation with the RPCR during the French legislative elections of March 1986: it combined with the RPCR to contest the elections with a joint electoral list, displaying a level of cooperation unlikely to eventuate in metropolitan France between the FN and the RPR. These elections, like those of September 1985, demonstrated that both parties could, if they wished, find common ground. When faced with an urgent need to present a united front against the independence movement, loyalist parties can coalesce and work together.

The FN(NC) continued to gain electoral support in 1988, and during that year it became increasingly hostile towards the RPCR over that party's signature of the Matignon Accords. The regional elections held on 24 April 1988--and disrupted by an active FLNKS boycott, which forced the closure of thirty-eight rural polling offices--were the FN(NC)'s most successful. These regional elections were contested under the framework of the Chirac government's Regionalized Autonomy Statute of 1987. This statute redrew the regional boundaries of 1985 eliminating the Center and North regions through the creation of East and West regions on the Grande Terre. The FN(NC) campaigned



without its former level of cooperation with the RPCR. The absence of the FLNKS from the polls, as in the territorial elections of November 1984, allowed loyalist voters to support the minority parties of the extreme right without fear of eroding the RPCR's electoral power relative to the FLNKS. For the first time the party ran lists in all four regions. In the South Region, the FN(NC) gained 23.6% of the vote (7,329 votes), sufficient to obtain five of the twenty-one seats. The party also polled well in the West Region, gaining 28.6% of the vote there (3,275 votes) and winning three of the nine seats. This support for the FN(NC) was evidence of a right-wing protest vote against the hostage incident, which was then unfolding on Ouvéa, against FLNKS militancy in general, and against the RPCR's response to the situation.<sup>39</sup>

The FN(NC)'s success in the West Region can partly be attributed to Justin Guillemard's presence at the head of the party's list there. In Bourail he obtained 41.8% of the *commune's* votes, as opposed to the trifling 2.1% (or 28 votes) gained by the FN(NC) there in November 1984.<sup>40</sup> The absence of the FLNKS from the elections was also an important contribution, allowing *broussards*, like loyalists in the South Region, to vote for the FN(NC) without concern for the consequences of splitting the loyalist vote.

The FN(NC) was also perceived as having won a victory over the RPCR in the national referendum on the Matignon Accords in November 1988. After the referendum it appeared that FN(NC) councillor Bernard Herpin's earlier insistence that the accords had surrendered New Caledonia to the "murderous folly of the FLNKS" had been accepted by a substantial portion of the loyalist electorate.<sup>41</sup> That majority opposition to the accords was expressed in RPCR strongholds such as the *communes* of Nouméa and Mont-Dore was assumed to indicate rejection of the RPCR's cosignature to the accords and support for the FN(NC)'s opposition to them. Guy Georges, the FN(NC) secretary-general, expressed the party's hope that the French Socialist government would overturn the accords in light of the referendum results and renegotiate them with non-RPCR loyalist parties involved as well. It was highly unlikely that the RPCR, the FLNKS, and the French Socialist government would redefine the Matignon Accords to satisfy a marginal, extremist formation such as the FN(NC), particularly when the referendum's overall results indicated majority support for the accords.

But such success as the FN(NC) experienced was only temporary, and did not lead to the party becoming a major loyalist force. Factional disputes hindered its development. Bernard Marant joined forces with FN(NC) dissident Matelot Dubois to form CD (Calédonie Demain;

Caledonia Tomorrow). Dubois, a former territorial councillor, president of the Territorial Union of Cattle Breeders, and a major landowner, had fallen out with the FN(NC). The cause of Dubois's departure from the FN(NC) was reputedly a brawl with Camille Fournier, an FN(NC) representative and local novelist. Marant led the CD list in the South Province in the provincial elections in June 1989 (see Table 3), while Dubois led the party's list in the North Province. CD polled 5.1% of the territorial vote, with 6.9% of the votes in the South Province (2,751 votes), 2.4% in the North Province (361 votes), and 1.3% in the Loyalty Islands (107 votes). CD gained two seats in the South Province.

Bernard Marant stated that CD would push back all "systematic opposition" to French loyalism by figuring among "the natural allies of the RPCR."<sup>42</sup> It might legitimately be asked why CD did not join the RPCR and thereby contribute more effectively to the loyalist cause. The answer lies in the personal animosities that existed between Marant and the Nouméan RPCR hierarchy. Cooperation with the RPCR was out of the question, considering that Marant had just won a major personal victory against the party in the municipal elections of March 1989. The RPCR had presented Dick Ukeiwé as its mayoral candidate for Dumbéa. Marant successfully opposed this challenge to his local preeminence by obtaining 51.1% of the local vote. This was an important indication of local loyalist dissatisfaction with the RPCR, particularly after Lafleur had warned that if Ukeiwé failed to win the Dumbéa mayoralty, it would be regarded as "a break with me."<sup>43</sup> While Marant could agree with the RPCR's political opposition to independence, he was not prepared to abandon his autonomy to the RPCR.

While CD gained two seats in the South Province in June 1989, the FN(NC) lost two, leaving it with only three. The FN(NC) gained 9.7% of the vote (3,860 votes) in the South Province. In the North Province it obtained 2.3% (344 votes). The party's total support was 6.6% (4,204 votes) of the territorial vote. This decline marked a return to pre-1988 levels of support, and the FN(NC)'s electoral significance was reduced, being largely confined to Nouméa. The FN(NC)'s inability to hold its ranks together and its failure to expand by forming a coalition with the FC contributed to this setback.

The RPCR's mobilization for the elections of June 1989 also contributed to the FN(NC)'s diminished vote. The RPCR made a concerted effort to canvass support during the elections, unlike the referendum in November 1988, preceding which the party did not publicly campaign to explain its position because the RPR in metropolitan France opposed the accords. Jacques Lafleur devoted his attention to regaining votes *in*

those southern *communes* where opposition to the Matignon Accords expressed in the November 1988 referendum had been high. Prior doubts about the strength of RPCR support were dispelled in June 1989, when the party gained 43.9% (27,777 votes) of the territorial vote. The loyalist electorate had stood firmly with the RPCR.

Like the FN(NC), the FC had experienced mixed fortunes since its foundation in 1982. Formed by Justin Guillemard, the FC was a break-away group of the PNC (Parti National Calédonien; Caledonian National Party), itself established in January 1982 by Georges Chate-nay, with the support of Guillemard, Rogert Galliot, and Henri Morini.<sup>44</sup> The PNC claimed to offer a forceful assertion of New Caledonian nationalism, advocating a conservative form of multiracial independence for the territory, led by non-Kanaks. By the end of 1982 Guillemard had successfully won over most of the PNC's supporters after founding the FC. An important exception was Roger Galliot. Guillemard chose to break away from the PNC as the organization had fallen into inactivity, another in a long line of short-lived New Caledonian political groups.

Unlike the FN(NC), with its predominantly Nouméan support, including metropolitan French inhabitants, under Guillemard the FC combined *broussard* interests with those of the metropolitan French and settlers from Algeria living in New Caledonia. The FC strongly opposed land reform and made threats of direct action against the FI for its land claims. The FC also opposed Kanak independence, proposing instead that New Caledonia should receive the less autonomous status of a French overseas department. The notion of departmentalization for New Caledonia had previously attracted a minority following among older leaders in the RPCR, notably Roger Laroque, but support within the RPCR for the concept had dwindled by the time the FC came to advocate it.<sup>45</sup> Departmentalization is a concept that, by the late 1980s, had fallen out of favor with the RPCR. Lafleur's signature of the Matignon Accords formally signaled the RPCR's support for moderate territorial autonomy.

Guillemard left the FC in 1984, taking his Bourail supporters with him. He had viewed the FC as a pressure group, a focus for rallies and demonstrations of loyalist discontent with reforms advocated by the French Socialist government. He found himself in disagreement with FC members who wished to see the FC compete in local elections as a political party. Claude Sarran assumed the leadership of the FC and led the party in the territorial elections of November 1984 under the campaign title *Renouveau de l'Opposition en Calédonie* (Caledonian Oppo-

sition Renewal). The name was a reaction to the formation of the FLNKS two months earlier: a call for the rallying of loyalist opposition to Kanak independence. Sarran held to policy set under Guillemard and added his own economic views in stressing the importance of a free market economy in New Caledonia. The FC gained substantially fewer votes in the elections than the newly established FN(NC). Sarran led an electoral list in the South Region alone and gained a mere 732 votes, 1.9% of a territorial vote diminished by abstentions enforced by the FLNKS (see Table 4). This was little to show for two years' presence on the New Caledonian political scene. By February 1985 the FC had only 300 members.

In 1985 the FC raised its public profile and its level of loyalist political credibility as a result of the Thio "picnic." On 17 February 1985 the FC organized a motorcade to the mining center, then occupied by FLNKS militants. Some 400 people, of whom around 170 claimed to be Thio "refugees," crossed the Humboldt Massif to the east coast and sparked protests from FLNKS supporters in the Saint Philippe tribe. In the ensuing clashes, several people were injured: gendarmes dispersed participants with tear gas grenades. Media attention to the incident offered Sarran the opportunity to expound his views to the metropolitan French press. He placed the FC to the right of the RPCR, but stated that the FC's members were "extremely legalist" in wanting the stricter application of French Republican law in New Caledonia. It was another way of saying that he felt the French Socialist government had been treating the FLNKS too leniently.<sup>46</sup>

Edgard Pisani, New Caledonia's high commissioner at the time, did not concur with Sarran's view that the FC's members were "extremely legalist," and he ordered that Sarran, three other FC leaders, and one sympathizer (Emile Lebargy, president of the local parachutists' association), be deported from the territory. The FC leaders went into hiding for several months. Lebargy pleaded for clemency and was allowed to stay in New Caledonia. After the FC leaders refused an RPCR offer of safe passage to Tahiti, the RPCR publicly lent support to them through a public rally in Nouméa.<sup>47</sup>

The Thio "picnic" backfired on the FC. With Sarran hiding until July 1985 from the French authorities (who made little effort to catch him), the party did not succeed in mobilizing for the regional elections in September 1985. In the municipal elections in January 1986 the FC was able to gain 10% of the Nouméan vote, but was still far from achieving a broad loyalist support base.<sup>48</sup>

The FC managed to make limited electoral progress during the rest of

the 1980s. In the regional elections of April 1988, which were boycotted by the FLNKS, the FC gained two seats in the South Region, the only region in which the party presented candidates. The FC's total was 9.2% (2,916 votes) of the vote, a considerable gain by comparison with the territorial elections of November 1984, yet substantially less than the FN(NC)'s level of support in 1988. Even this achievement proved to be short-lived. In the provincial elections of June 1989 (see Table 3), the FC's losses were heavier than the FN(NC)'s. The FC lost both of its seats in the South Province, obtaining only 4.1% (1,611 votes) of the vote there. This figure represented only 2.6% of the territorial vote. Once again, the South Province was the only area where the FC offered an electoral list.<sup>49</sup>

It may seem surprising that the FN(NC) and the FC have not formed a coalition in order to broaden their support. Both parties stand on similar ideological ground in their opposition to increased territorial autonomy, stressing the importance of retaining close ties with the French Republic to a greater degree than the RPCR. For this reason, both the FN(NC) and the FC oppose the Matignon Accords and criticize the RPCR's signature of them. They feel that the RPCR's undertaking of reconciliation and cooperation with the FLNKS, prior to a self-determination referendum in 1998, poses unnecessary risks to New Caledonia's maintenance of strong links with France. The RPCR's opening of cooperation with the FLNKS is seen as a weak, and potentially dangerous, centrist concession.

Both the FN(NC) and the FC have also criticized corruption alleged to involve the RPCR. Such criticisms allow FN(NC) and FC leaders to claim for themselves a patch of moral high ground over the RPCR, whence they can pronounce upon the unscrupulousness of its leaders. FN(NC) and FC leaders' criticisms of the RPCR's signature of the Matignon Accords exude a similar moralistic tone, permitting them to proclaim themselves more loyalist than the RPCR. In 1987 Guy Georges, the FN(NC) secretary-general, described the RPCR's administration of the Agence de Développement et d'Aménagement Foncier (ADRAF; Rural Development and Land Management Agency) as "a permanent scandal," accusing its RPCR managers of corrupt administration. This occurred two years before François Asselineau, a French inspector-general of finances, officially confirmed RPCR mismanagement of the agency, in September 1989. Similarly, in April 1989 Claude Sarran demanded that the West Region's budget of 22 December 1988 be annulled due to the misappropriation of funds by RPCR councillors. His claims were supported by the findings of a French government commission, but were rejected by a Nouméan administrative tribunal.<sup>50</sup>

The FN(NC) and the FC have displayed the capacity to work together on occasion: their joint Armistice Day protest on 11 November 1989 is one example. But despite their common ground, they remain apart, probably more due to the temperamental differences of their leaders than for ideological reasons. Without a coalition the FC has remained stalemated as a poor second to the FN(NC) in voter support.

By the end of the 1980s the FC, like the FN(NC), had still failed to capture a significant and stable share of the loyalist vote. Both parties have found that, electorally, most loyalists prefer to support the RPCR in opposing the independence claims of the FLNKS. In elections boycotted by the FLNKS, the FN(NC) and the FC have enjoyed higher voter support than they would otherwise have gained, as loyalist voters lodged protest votes against the RPCR by supporting the minority parties of the extreme right. But both are far from presenting an electoral threat to the RPCR's majority support. As a result, these two extreme right-wing parties have yet to break out of mere fringe politics. In absence of a major decline in loyalist support for the RPCR, their future role will be that of pressure groups to the right of that party.

### **Wallisian Dissent**

A group that has greater potential to undermine significantly the RPCR's predominance in New Caledonia is the territory's Wallisian community. Wallisians form the third largest ethnic group in New Caledonia (see Table 1). Their presence in the territory has been politically contentious for Kanaks. The FLNKS has proposed criteria for electoral eligibility that would exclude recent immigrants from voting and from residency in any future Kanaky. Wallisian immigrants have been regarded by Kanaks as intruders, introduced by the French government in league with local loyalist politicians in order to flood New Caledonia with cheap labor and tip the electoral balance in favor of loyalist opinion. Since the arrival of Wallisians in the 1950s, when they found employment in public works programs and the construction of the Yaté dam, considerable racial tension has intermittently existed between local Melanesians and these Polynesian immigrants. The permanent settlement of these islanders, to the point that their number in New Caledonia is now greater than in their home islands, has been an important source of this tension. For example, in 1980 the territorial administration proposed the reallocation of an estate near Dumbéa to Wallisians for settlement. Madame Pidjot led an FI campaign against the proposal and claimed the land in question for various dispossessed clans. The administration eventually abandoned the reallocation amid rising

racial hostility between Kanaks and Wallisians, which culminated in a sizeable brawl in Nouméa.<sup>51</sup>

It has been suggested that this incident was part of a larger plan by the territorial administration to use Wallisian settlements as "barriers" against Melanesians. Jean Guiart cites the establishment of Wallisians in lots around the outskirts of Nouméa, the building of a Wallisian village at Thio on land claimed by Melanesians, and a Wallisian settlement at Houaïlou adjacent to the Nédivin tribe as other examples of the provocative strategic location of Wallisians.<sup>52</sup> Whether the choice of these locations really was a conscious plot, the result of thoughtless planning, or occurred for want of other options is open to question, but such settlements are undeniable sources of tension. With those Europeans who fled Thio in 1985 following its occupation by FLNKS activists were several hundred Wallisians who were unenthusiastic about the prospect of remaining with Kanak militants roaming the area. They felt just as threatened by the presence of Kanak militants as did Thio's Europeans.

In the past, Wallisians have been stereotyped by Kanaks supporting independence as being easily led by local European conservative leaders. The employment of a small number of Wallisians in the 1980s as bodyguards and in anti-independence demonstrations by the RPCR has done much to confirm this characterization. However, Wallisian participation in loyalist party politics extends more deeply than these activities. Local conservative parties sought Wallisian votes as far back as the early 1970s. In 1972 EDS and the MLC (Mouvement Libéral Calédonien; Caledonian Liberal Movement) supported the election of New Caledonia's first two Wallisian representatives into the Territorial Assembly. Since then, with the exception of ETE (Ensemble Toutes Ethnies; All Ethnic Groups Together), a loyalist party aimed specifically at non-European minority groups between 1976 and 1978, Wallisians have mainly voted for loyalist European parties, in particular for the RPCR. In general, Wallisians have viewed the RPCR, with its reputation as a multiracial party, as the political group that best serves Wallisian interests within New Caledonian society. Having no great agricultural holdings in New Caledonia, Wallisians are dependent on RPCR employers in local government and elsewhere for work.

Since the mid-1980s, however, there have been indications that Wallisians are increasingly searching for their own political voice, a search that has involved a drift away from the RPCR. The first sign of differences between the RPCR and its Wallisian supporters came in 1982, when Petelo Manuofiua, the RPCR's only Wallisian representative in the Territorial Assembly, resigned from the party to become an indepen-

dent. UF (Uvea mo Futuna; Wallis and Futuna) was formed for the municipal elections of March 1983. The Wallisian list in Nouméa gained 464 votes (2.4%). In November 1984 UF contested the territorial elections. Led by Kalépo Muliava, the party aimed to serve Wallisians more specifically than the RPCR had done, while still adhering to loyalist principles. UF placed candidates only in the South Region, where its demographic support was concentrated. It gained a mere 566 votes (1.4% of the total).<sup>53</sup> At that time Wallisians still preferred the broader electoral appeal of the RPCR, and there was pressure to vote for the RPCR during the FLNKS's boycott of the elections.

Between 1984 and 1989 there is little evidence of independent Wallisian political party organization. The check experienced by UF in 1984 may well have dissuaded further action. That situation changed remarkably following the creation of the UO in May 1989. Although led by the same Kalépo Muliava, the UO was much more radical than UF in that the party did not align itself with the RPCR's loyalist goals. Instead, Muliava proclaimed the UO's "cultural cousinage with the Kanaks." Under the tutelage of the RPCR, he claimed, the Wallisian community "hasn't advanced an inch in ten years. We are as marginalized as the Kanaks." With a Wallisian unemployment rate of 50%, only two Wallisians in the territorial administration, and the Wallisian community's lack of representation at the Matignon negotiations, Muliava's faith in the RPCR had dissipated. He attacked the RPCR's electoral clientelism of Wallisians through its patronage of Wallisian custom authority and its use of Wallisian youths as RPCR bodyguards.<sup>54</sup>

Bluntly stated, Muliava's views contained a plausible assessment of the status of the Wallisian community in New Caledonia. In the provincial elections of June 1989, the UO succeeded in gaining relatively widespread support, considering its then recent formation and the electoral conservatism of the Wallisian community. The UO won two of thirty-two seats in the South Province, ironically the same number held by Wallisian representatives in the territory in 1972. The UO's total support was 2,429 votes, or 6.1% of the votes in the South Province (see Table 3). Assuming that only Wallisians voted for the UO, this totaled around 40% of Wallisian suffrage.<sup>55</sup>

In spite of Muliava's death from cancer in August 1989, the UO has remained active. Its secretary-general, Aloisio Sako, visited Paris in January 1990 to put the party's case to metropolitan French leaders. He expressed the UO's dissatisfaction with the Wallisian community's exclusion from the Matignon negotiations as a result of its being "both despised by the RPCR and rejected by the FLNKS." The UO wanted to



be an active partner in the Matignon Accords so that it could further the well-being of its community in the same manner as the FLNKS and the RPCR. Sako held discussions with a wide range of political representatives during his visit; he later commented that the representatives he spoke to made no promises of political action to support UO claims.<sup>56</sup> Following Sako's visit there have been no moves by the French government to integrate the UO's claims into the Matignon Accords, because Wallisians had no independent political representation when the accords were signed and, like the FN(NC), lack the electoral power to justify a redefinition of the accords.

On 8 and 9 September 1990 the UO held its first party congress in Nouméa, attended by around 200 delegates from its twenty-five "base sections" in the South Province. UO representatives at the congress declared their sense of sharing common political ground with the FLNKS. Three resolutions were affirmed: first, "to pursue with vigor the fight against injustice, racism, and colonialism"; second, "to clearly undertake a true emancipation of the peoples of the territory" (a veiled reference to a redefinition of the Matignon Accords); and third, to attack the RPCR's "classic methods born of arrogance, scorn, exclusion, and racketeering," as well as its policies "based fundamentally on the maintenance of inequalities and colonial structures."<sup>57</sup>

This last resolution offered an indication of the UO's increasing hostility to the RPCR. Michel Héma, the UO's new president and a former leader of the RPCR Wallisian "security force," stated that the UO's followers were no longer averse to Kanak independence. Paul Neaoutyne, the FLNKS president since March 1990, has indicated that the FLNKS is now trying to cooperate with the UO. He declared to *Pacific Islands Monthly* that, although the RPCR and Jacques Lafleur were "trying to break the UO," "we will not let them [the UO] continue to be held hostages by the French and the RPCR against us!"<sup>58</sup>

It is difficult to see how the UO could be held hostage when it is so outspokenly independent, but Jacques Lafleur has opposed the UO's progress. The RPCR's loss of a portion of its Wallisian support has been damaging to its reputation as a multiracial party. On 13 April 1990, on Nouméa's Radio Rythme-Bleu, Lafleur denounced the UO for its "provocative attitude," its "excessive pretention," and its "racism."<sup>59</sup> The language of his denunciation bears a striking similarity to his pejorative descriptions of the FLNKS in the mid-1980s. At a meeting of RPCR youth at Sarraméa in September 1990, Lafleur declared that UO members should be deported to Wallis and Futuna if they ever use violence to

further their goals. Such actions would ultimately be counterproductive. If the UO were to use violent means, and there is no indication that it wishes to, the party would alienate conservative Wallisians and block any electoral progress it might have gained by soliciting their votes. Any ill-considered punitive response by the RPCR could equally alienate Wallisians who vote for the RPCR and lead to a loss of support.

Lafleur's immediate response to the UO congress consisted of cultivating the support the RPCR retained in the Wallisian community by making goodwill gestures to Wallis and Futuna. Following the UO's first congress in September 1990, a delegation from the RPCR-administered South Province paid a three-day visit to the islands. The delegation held meetings with Wallis and Futuna's political and administrative leaders to discuss the territory's development. Matters discussed included the improvement of air links with New Caledonia, the encouragement of exports to Nouméa, surmounting problems in Wallis and Futuna's health service, and increasing the number of Wallisians receiving technical and professional training in New Caledonia. This was clearly an attempt by the RPCR to maintain Wallisian confidence and to discourage support for the UO by displaying that RPCR patronage was still capable of improving the material situation of Wallisians.<sup>60</sup>

The cause of Lafleur's antagonism to the UO goes beyond disappointment at having lost a portion of the RPCR's Wallisian following. If the UO can obtain the full electoral support of the Wallisian or the wider Polynesian community in New Caledonia, it could tip the vote in the 1998 self-determination referendum. The UO's maintenance of a good rapport with the FLNKS up to 1998 is a necessary precondition to having the UO urge its followers to vote for independence. The RPCR hopes to discourage any increase in the UO's following and to dissuade Wallisians from supporting independence by reasserting the role the RPCR can play in assisting the Wallisian community. It remains to be seen whether the UO can attract a majority of the Polynesian vote, or whether it will still be a significant political force in 1998. Nine years is a long time for a minority party to survive in New Caledonian politics; the UO could fragment or cease to exist altogether before 1998.

### **Conclusion: RPCR-dominated Plurality**

While the RPCR remains the dominant loyalist party in New Caledonia, it has not been the only voice in loyalist politics. Even at the time of high voter polarization in the mid-1980s, when loyalist support coa-

lesced around the RPCR in order to present a strong front against the independence goals of the FLNKS, differences remained evident among New Caledonian loyalists.

One difference centered on the distrust held by *broussards* for the Nouméan plutocracy, which forms the dominant force behind the RPCR. This rural discontent, stemming from *broussard* feelings of social, economic, and political neglect at the hands of the RPCR, found no strong, independent political vehicle in the latter half of the 1980s. At the time of the collapse of the moderate FNCS, prompted by a loss of confidence in its call for dialogue with the Kanak independence movement, rural loyalist voters shifted their support to the right but felt that their interests were not a high priority for the RPCR. *Broussards* form a minority of the loyalist electorate and do not have the numerical strength, as they did in the 1940s, to influence significantly New Caledonia's political landscape. To some extent the FC capitalized on *broussard* dissatisfaction when Justin Guillemard was its leader, but in later years found that its following, like that of the FN(NC), was largely confined to Nouméa.

Urban loyalist dissent in the south, specifically around Nouméa, is numerically stronger than that of the *broussards* and has stronger representation. Its elected representatives, who have voiced the belief that the RPCR's leadership is overly concerned with personal profit, to the detriment of wider loyalist considerations, are not as intransigent as might be assumed. Occasionally vehement rhetoric often obscures the common ground that exists between the RPCR and parties of the extreme right. As has been mentioned earlier, the FN(NC) has seen fit to cooperate with the RPCR and subordinate itself electorally in favor of wider loyalist considerations. Neither is the RPCR completely insulated from the far right. It has accepted major figures from the extreme right into its ranks, such as Justin Guillemard after he left the FC, and Morini, with his MOP and PNC associations. The fact that Guillemard's FC and Morini's MOP were movements, rather than formal political parties, facilitated their membership in the RPCR. However, the boundary between the RPCR and the groups and parties of the far right is difficult to delineate. It shifted closer to the RPCR in times of confrontation with the FLNKS in the mid-1980s, when Lafleur was willing to give financial assistance to rural militias and to see Morini appointed as head of the RPCR's "security force" (see nn. 37, 44). In less tense times, following the adoption of the Matignon Accords, the boundary has shifted away from the RPCR, as it came to prefer dialogue rather than confrontation with the FLNKS.

Such shifts are more indicative of tactical differences between the RPCR and the far right than of an ideological gulf. The RPCR has resolved to follow the Matignon Accords as the surest path to maintaining New Caledonia's presence within the French Republic, in the belief that if the Melanesian population receives sufficient development funds under the accords, the demand for Kanak independence will diminish. The RPCR shares with the far right an opposition to the concept of Kanak independence, but differs with the far right over the means by which that opposition will be successfully conducted.

The power of the FN(NC) and the FC does not seem likely to grow unless the Matignon Accords experience some major upset that would cause loyalists to lose confidence in the RPCR; for example, the election of a French government hostile to the accords. The potential threat the rise of the UO has posed has been of more immediate concern to the RPCR. If Polynesian voters joined with Kanaks to vote for independence in 1998, this could tip the electoral balance in favor of independence. New Caledonia's Asian minorities might also have some influence on the 1998 self-determination referendum. In the past, they have avoided any great commitment to politics, but if the prospect of independence became likely, some Asians might seek dialogue with the FLNKS, following the UO's example. However, such comments should be regarded as speculation. In the past, much similar theorizing concerning the prospects of Kanak independence has been proved wrong.

## NOTES

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Translations into English of French sources have been provided by the author. All Melanesian and Polynesian names in the text retain their French spellings.

1. See John Connell, *New Caledonia or Kanaky? The Political History of a French Colony* (Canberra: National Centre for Development Studies, Research School of Pacific Studies, Australian National University, 1987); Helen Fraser, *New Caledonia: Anti-colonialism in a Pacific Territory* (Canberra: Peace Research Centre, Research School of Pacific Studies, Australian National University, 1988); Claude Gabriel and Vincent Kermel, *Nouvelle-Calédonie: la révolte kanake* (Paris: La Brèche, 1985).

2. Connell, *New Caledonia or Kanaky?*, 445.

3. For example, in *communes* (districts) such as the islands of Maré, Lifou, and Ouvéa in the Loyalty Islands, where the population is over 98% Melanesian, the RPCR has repeatedly gained support. In the territorial elections of November 1984 (see Table 4), which were boycotted by the FLNKS, the RPCR obtained 29.8% of the vote on Maré, 81.6% on

Lifou, and 73.3% on Ouvéa. In the September 1985 regional elections (see Table 2), the RPCR gained 32% of the vote on Maré, 17.7% on Lifou, and 34.3% on Ouvéa (Connell, *New Caledonia or Kanaky?*, 326, 362-363). In the provincial elections of June 1989 (see Table 3), the RPCR gained 33.9% of the overall vote on the Loyalty Islands (*Le Monde*, 13 June 1989, 9).

4. See Alastair Cole and Peter Campbell, *French Electoral Systems and Elections since 1789*, 3d edition (Aldershot, England: Gower 1989).

5. Throughout this article the initials FN(NC) are used to distinguish the New Caledonian National Front from the metropolitan French FN (Front National; National Front).

6. Connell, *New Caledonia or Kanaky?*, 323.

7. Institut Territorial de la Statistique et des Études Économiques, *Images de la population de la Nouvelle-Calédonie. Principaux résultats du recensement 1989* (Nouméa, 1989), 11.

8. *Ibid.*, 12, 22-23.

9. See Connell, *New Caledonia or Kanaky?*, 141, 142, 222. Cf. Jean Guiart, *La terre est le sang des morts. Nouvelle-Calédonie du passé au présent* (Paris: Editions Anthropos, 1985), 235.

10. *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes*, 5 October 1983; Association Fraternité Calédonienne, *Nouvelle-Calédonie: combat pour les droits de l'homme 1981-1984* (Nouméa, 1984), 54.

11. Jean-Paul Besset, *Le dossier calédonien. Les enjeux de l'après-référendum* (Paris: Editions la Découverte, 1988), 97.

12. Jacques Lafleur is the largest individual landholder in New Caledonia; see Connell, *New Caledonia or Kanaky?*, 136. Lafleur's nephew Frederic used to own *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes*, the territory's only newspaper. His other nephew, Henri, his son Pascal, his daughter Isabelle and his wife control various of his companies. For a detailed description of Lafleur's investments, see "L'empire Lafleur," *Le Point*, 19 December 1988, 81-86.

13. Besset, *Le dossier*, 37.

14. Jean-Claude Guillebaud, *Un Voyage en Océanie* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1980), 125.

15. *Le Monde*, 17 October 1990, 1.

16. *Le Monde*, 19 April 1990, 10; 20 April 1990, 7; 24 April 1990, 9.

17. *Le Monde*, 7-8 June 1987, 6.

18. Connell, *New Caledonia or Kanaky?*, 343-344.

19. Lionel Duroy, *Hienghène, le désespoir calédonien* (Paris: Barrault, 1988), 249.

20. Guillemard is notable for his active links with a number of loyalist political groups. A *métis* (half-caste), Guillemard's support is based in and around Bourail. He has been involved with the RPCR since the late 1970s. In 1980 he founded RURALE (Ruraux Unis pour une Réforme Agraire Libérale et Equitable; Rural Inhabitants, United for Liberal and Equitable Agrarian Reform), a *broussard* group opposing Melanesian land claims. He formed the FC in 1982. In 1985 he set up and became president of the CAP (Comité d'Actions Patriotiques; Patriotic Action Committee), a paramilitary reservist formation. After

leaving the FC in 1984 he was an RPCR representative until his expulsion from the party in 1987. Since then he has established links with the FN(NC). Guillemard commented in *Le Monde*, 7-8 June 1987, 6: "Me, I don't defend the fat people, I defend the disadvantaged people, in particular all the *broussards* who sought refuge in Nouméa in 1984 and 1985, who live in the miserable conditions . . . of Saint Quentin [a suburb of Noumea]."

21. *Le Monde*, 27 June 1990, 8.

22. Connell, *New Caledonia or Kanaky?*, 329, 355.

23. *Le Monde*, 5 April 1988, 18.

24. *Le Monde*, 3 July 1990, 23.

25. *Le Monde*, 12 May 1990, 8.

26. *Le Monde*, 1 November 1988, 8.

27. *Le Monde*, 21-22 April 1985, 9.

28. *Le Monde*, 6-7 January 1985, 1; 18 November 1984, 10.

29. Connell, *New Caledonia or Kanaky?*, 348; cf. n. 37 below.

30. *Le Monde*, 25 May 1988, 11.

31. *Le Monde*, 22 September 1988, 10.

32. The mayor of Dumbéa Bernard Marant, is a former RPCR councillor who left the party in 1987, reportedly over a dispute with Nouméan RPCR councillors about the siting of a municipal golf course. Marant had already upset RPCR leaders in 1986, when he set up in Dumbéa a section of the metropolitan French RPR (Rassemblement Pour la République; Assembly for the Republic). RPCR leaders stand for election to the French National Assembly as RPR candidates.

33. *Le Monde*, 8 November 1988, 8. Stephen Henningham, "Keeping the Tricolor Flying: The French Pacific in the 1990s," *The Contemporary Pacific* 1, nos. 1 & 2 (Spring & Fall 1989): 101-102.

34. Connell, *New Caledonia or Kanaky?*, 314.

35. Connell, *New Caledonia or Kanaky?*, 370.

36. *Le Monde*, 30 January 1985, 8.

37. Lafleur sold 80% of the SMSP and two properties in Sologne to furnish the RPCR with funds. He also paid for helicopter transport for *broussard* militias in 1984. See *Le Point*, 19 December 1988, 83, 84.

38. Connell, *New Caledonia or Kanaky?*, 359.

39. *Le Monde*, 26 April 1988, 36; 27 April 1988, 13.

40. *Le Monde*, 26 April 1988, 36; Connell, *New Caledonia or Kanaky?*, 326.

41. *Le Monde*, 22 September 1988, 10.

42. *Le Monde*, 14 June 1989, 10.

43. *Le Monde*, 14 March 1989, 32; 12-13 March 1989, 11.

44. Chatenay is a lawyer who has been active in New Caledonian conservative politics since the 1950s. Roger Galliot started his political career with the UC, shifted to the centrist FNSC, later joined the RPCR, and in 1982 the PNC. By 1984 he was an FN(NC) representative. In 1979 Henri Morini founded the right-wing extremist MOP (Mouvement pour l'Ordre et la Paix; Movement for Order and Peace). In 1985 he was appointed as head of the newly formed RPCR "security force."
45. Connell, *New Caledonia or Kanaky?*, 305, 306. Stephen Henningham, "A Dialogue of the Deaf: Attitudes and Issues in New Caledonian Politics," *Pacific Affairs* 61, no. 4 (Winter 1988-1989): 647-648.
46. *Le Monde*, 19 February 1985, 1; cf. Connell, *New Caledonia or Kanaky?*, 347-348.
47. Connell, *New Caledonia or Kanaky?*, 348; *Pacific Islands Monthly*, April 1985, 26.
48. Alain Christnacht, *La Nouvelle-Calédonie*, Notes et études documentaires, no. 4839 (Paris: La Documentation Française, 1987), 57.
49. *Le Monde*, 5 April 1988, 18; 13 June 1989, 9.
50. *Le Monde*, 12 September 1987, 8; 22 September 1989, 10; 15 November 1989, 10.
51. Alan Ward, *Land and Politics in New Caledonia*, Department of Political and Social Change Monograph 2 (Canberra: Research School of Pacific Studies, Australian National University, 1982), 56-57.
52. Guiart, *La terre*, 281-282.
53. See Connell, *New Caledonia or Kanaky?*, 300, 322, 327; *Le Monde*, 14 March 1989, 32.
54. *Le Monde*, 10 June 1989, 14.
55. *Pacific Islands Monthly*, July 1989, 24; *Le Monde*, 13 June 1989, 9; 14 June 1989, 10.
56. *Le Monde*, 4 January 1990, 7; 2 February 1990, 9.
57. *Le Monde*, 12 September 1990, 10.
58. *Le Monde*, 4 January 1990, 7; 12 September 1990, 10; *Pacific Islands Monthly*, October 1990, 51.
59. *Le Monde*, 14 April 1990, 8.
60. See *Pacific Report*, 13 September 1990.

## **A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE ON AID AND DEPENDENCY: THE EXAMPLE OF TONGA**

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Economies of Pacific island nations are frequently described as dependent, meaning they cannot sustain their present levels of activity (including consumption, production, investment, and savings) without the continuation of loans, grants, favorable marketing treatment, or some other gratuitous circumstances. In other words, their economic activity is not autonomous but contingent on decisions and events that are not of an economic nature, and which may be described as political or diplomatic.

### **Foreign Aid and Pacific Island Nations**

Most Pacific island nations depend heavily on foreign aid, although reliable, up-to-date measurements of this are not generally accessible. In 1979, aid per head for the Pacific islands as a whole averaged 19% of gross national product and 75% of export revenue. Aid expenditure was about 77% of the non-aid government expenditure in the Pacific island nations as a whole (Knapman 1986:146). In 1982, the South Pacific Commission estimated that aid provided 50% or more of the incomes in each of four countries (South Pacific Commission 1986:22-23). Although this was less than the nine countries in that position in 1980, during the last twenty-five years or so, the general trend is that aid has increased in absolute terms and at a faster rate than productive sources of income.

There is dependency also in the sense that much of the commercial



sector of Pacific island economies is owned by foreign interests. Such trading giants as Burns Philp, Morris Hedstrom, W. R. Carpenter, and Westpac Banking Corporation for many years dominated the retail, wholesale, and financial services sector. Economic decisions made by these companies could have major effects on national economies; their potential to influence politicians and policies is often thought to be considerable, although the allegation is more commonly made than demonstrated (see for example, Hughes 1983:260-261 for a typical statement of the scenario; also Howard 1983; UNCTAD 1974:3, 11, 12; cf. MacDonald 1982:57).

Most Pacific governments, however, seem aware of this danger and have acted in ways that appear to reduce it. They have taken advantage of centralized authority to try to diversify their economies, reduce reliance on the small number of trading partners, and widen the circle of economic participation (Fairbairn 1985:72-73). Diversification has been one objective of aid programs: greater local participation, greater local ownership, and a broader productive base.

A frequent criticism of aid programs, though, is that they compromise the freedom of recipient governments in diplomatic activity or economic and social policy-making. This allegation arises from the origin of the modern aid phenomenon in the Marshall Plan of the United States of America. Under that scheme, massive funds were made available to Western Europe shortly after World War II to alleviate the poverty and distress that would favor a westward expansion of communism. At the same time, the consequential economic growth and expansion created opportunities for American businesses, and the nations of Western Europe joined with the United States in an alliance (NATO) to oppose the communist bloc. During the 1950s, aid to Southeast Asian and South American nations was similarly expanded and directed to serve the American view of international politics and global security (Mikesell 1968:2-5). American subordination of aid to foreign policy in this manner came increasingly under criticism, and by the early 1970s this critical mood was captured in the title of a book by Teresa Hayter, *Aid as Imperialism* (Harmondsworth, Eng., 1971). This book was commonly interpreted as proving that aid was an instrument of neocolonialism, directed not at promoting national independence and self-sufficiency but at subordinating the recipient country to the will of the donor, a view echoed frequently ever since (for example, Hughes 1983:251-253).

Although major aid donors to the Pacific islands in the 1970s modified their aid methods in an attempt to allay such fears (Maizels and

Nissanke 1984:891; Needs 1988:11), the fear of domination through aid lingers, at least at a popular level. The political intention of aid has been plausibly argued by Knapman (1986:139-140), who points out that Pacific islanders collectively are greater recipients of aid on a per capita basis than residents of any other region in the world, though far from being the neediest. The correlation lends support to the view that aid is used as a political lever.

Evidence of such political leverage is, however, not usually conspicuous, despite Fiji's change of policy leading to the banning of visits by nuclear-armed or nuclear-powered ships in the early 1980s or the softening of criticisms of France within the South Pacific Forum in the late 1980s following an increase in French aid to the anglophone nations of the region. On the other hand, the forum countries have not been sparing of criticisms and diplomatic snubs of the major aid donors to the region, Australia and New Zealand, especially over their reactions to the military takeover in Fiji in 1987, or of their criticisms of Japan and the Republic of China (Taiwan) over fishing practices. Such criticisms do not imply that Pacific islanders feel obligated by being aid recipients; on the contrary, aid seems to be regarded by them as a right.

Nevertheless, the fact remains that the Pacific island nations trade mainly with the major aid donors (Fairbairn 1985: tables 4.5, 4.8); and, therefore, the suspicion continues that aid is a way of controlling economies or of attracting trade. For example, in Tonga's case, Australia and New Zealand are the major trade partners and the greatest aid donors (Tonga 1987b:11-12); Britain, formerly Tonga's greatest donor, has allowed its share of aid to fall steadily since the mid-1970s<sup>1</sup> and during the same period its share of Tongan imports has fallen from about 14% to practically zero. Any putative causal link here may be called into question by the fact that in the 1970s New Zealand's share of Tongan imports grew while its percentage contribution to aid fell (Tonga 1981:81).

Trade relations in the Pacific are not the result of aid but of geographic proximity. Where geographic logic has been distorted, the distortion results from direct colonial power, as indicated by consideration of the economic history of the Pacific islands.

During the precolonial and early colonial period, Pacific economies were not dependent in the sense that they relied on subsidies. But their economic development, such as it was, was the accomplishment of foreign entrepreneurs on whom they were therefore dependent for their products to reach the limited markets available to them; similarly, they had to rely on a limited range of suppliers. During the late nineteenth

century, the range was wider than it became later, with traders from Australia, New Zealand, Britain, Germany, and the United States all competing for the limited trade of the Pacific islands. Japan became increasingly prominent in Micronesia from the 1890s onwards. France was prominent only in those areas where it had acquired political power and in the New Hebrides. Traders of other nations were also prominent in the French territories. This concentration primarily reflected the fact that Britain, France, Germany, and the United States were the major industrial nations of the time and dominated world trade generally. Australia and New Zealand were prominent because as settler-societies with proximity to the region their economies complemented those of the islands. The growth of protectionism as a feature of world trade early in the twentieth century drew colonial possessions into trading blocs, which were artificial only in the sense that they constrained the choice of which one of a small number of industrialized countries an unindustrialized country might trade with.

### **The Case of Tonga: Background**

Tonga provides a good case study of trade patterns in this period because there was no colonial government to distort them. In 1887, Tonga's exports were 90% copra, 2.5% kava, and 5% wool. Practically all the copra that year was exported to Portugal. Of imports, about 50% came from New Zealand, 20% from Australia (much ultimately of British origin), and 30% from Samoa (almost entirely goods of German manufacture). The main imports were drapery and foodstuffs, followed by timber (for construction) and liquid fuels (mainly kerosene for lighting) (Tonga 1887). This pattern differs little in broad features from that of 1987: Samoa and Germany had become insignificant and wool had long since ceased to be a Tongan product, but the concentration of trade on Australia and New Zealand, the dominance of coconut products in Tongan exports, and the configuration of the imports is the same (Tonga 1987b:10-13).

During the period of the British protectorate (1900-1970), Tonga's overall trade pattern changed only slightly. The major changes were the disappearance of German imports during and after World War I and the increasing prominence of Japanese goods during the 1930s, despite the preferential tariff favoring British empire countries (Great Britain 1928, 1932, 1938). After the return to full independence in 1970, the earlier pattern remained basically unchanged, with heavy reliance on coconut products for exports and most imports coming from Australia

and New Zealand. Such change as has taken place in trading patterns since 1970 has been small, accomplished only with great effort and a specific intention to diversify both products and partners to reduce vulnerability to fluctuations in both supply and prices. In 1986, Australia and New Zealand still supplied 63% of Tongan imports. Japan and Singapore had between them increased their share to only 11% (Tonga 1987b:12).

Thus, with strong continuities between the precolonial, colonial, and postcolonial trade patterns, it is difficult to argue that foreign aid so far has been responsible for economic exploitation or domination. On the contrary, it is more likely that the quasi-colonial relationship with Britain played no role in consolidating this pattern because the Tongan government itself played no significant role in economic development before 1940, when the Agricultural Organization Act was passed. Far from playing into the hands of foreign interests, this act drove the private and corporate copra traders out of business by establishing a centralized marketing authority for the nation's copra and other produce.

In the years before 1940 the Tongan economy, like those of colonial possessions generally, was self-supporting, propped up neither by subsidies nor special marketing agreements; unlike most colonies, Tonga was not shackled by regulations that kept it locked into an accustomed pattern. From the early 1930s, however, there was a preferential tariff on goods coming from British Empire countries. This was a reciprocal arrangement, whereby Tongan exports benefited by escaping heavy taxes at their destinations. The tariff levels for Tongan imports were, in any case, set by the Tongan government itself with a view to raising revenue rather than manipulating trade.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, after the collapse of the German economy following the World War I, with little American interest in the region and before the period of Asian industrialization, British Empire countries were the only likely trade partners for Tonga, and thus any supposed influence by the British consul may be discounted as superfluous. Notwithstanding such influence, and the imperial preferential tariff, Japanese imports increased significantly in the 1930s (most coming via New Zealand), reaching the level of 15% of the total in 1937, after which a tariff adjustment cut the Japanese share back to 8% in 1938 (Great Britain 1938).

Nor can it be said that commercial penetration before 1970 established structures that Tonga would not be able to shake off after independence. No land was foreign-owned; foreign-owned plantation leases were small and few (Simkin 1945:112) and were allowed to lapse when they expired. Improvement in living standards before about 1960 was

slow, and there was virtually no capital accumulation; two large firms (Morris Hedstrom and Burns Philp) dominated retailing, but the rate of commercial penetration of what was still overwhelmingly a subsistence economy was set by the slowly growing demand of the Tongan landholders for nonsubsistence goods. These were of the most basic kind: drapery and other consumables, and manual tools used in subsistence agriculture, as demonstrated by surveys by Simkin in 1945 and Thaman in 1973 (Simkin 1945:107-108, 112; Crane 1979:30). Private capital investment and policies directed thereto are post-1970 phenomena, and even mundane monetization was quite rudimentary before the late 1960s (Bollard 1977:130-131).

It might still be thought, however, that even if quasi-colonial status made no difference to Tonga's economic development before 1970, aid arrangements since then might have compounded Tonga's economic dependence. The nature and origins of these arrangements, therefore, need to be considered. Foreign aid to the Pacific in general, and to Tonga in particular, is in most cases unconnected with the Marshall Plan and the American schemes derived from it, with their connotations of neo-imperialism. The precursors of aid in this region are the Colonial Development Act of the British government of 1929, and its successor, the Colonial Development and Welfare Act of 1940, which, although they were not applied directly to Tonga, led to later acts under which Tonga was a beneficiary in the 1960s. Such aid sprang not from a post-war worry about the international spread of communism but from a prewar concern about living standards and the desirability of progress in the territories for which Britain had a colonial responsibility (Abbott 1971; Meredith 1975; Mikesell 1968:4, 13-14).

British aid schemes thus predated the Marshall Plan and its connotations of Great Power global strategy. Britain's prewar colonial policy was reinforced during the war by the Atlantic Charter, signed between Britain and the United States in 1941; the Treaty of San Francisco of 1945, which led to the founding of the United Nations Organization; and the United Nations trusteeship agreements for dependent territories (colonies). These documents all stressed the rights of peoples everywhere to national self-determination. This stance reinforced the goal of accelerated development in consultation with and in the interests of the indigenous populations.

The second descent line of Pacific aid schemes began with the Canberra Agreement of 1944 between Australia and New Zealand. This agreement, the result of shared sentiments between New Zealand Prime

Minister Peter Fraser and Australian Minister for External Affairs H. V. Evatt, had two main objectives: regional security (the war still in progress at the time was demonstrating how much Australia and New Zealand were responsible for the defense of the South Pacific) and social progress for the peoples of the Pacific islands (Hudson 1988:72-73). This second goal reflects the reformist zeal of the Labor parties that at the time formed the governments of both nations, their tradition of anti-imperialism, a sense of having neglected responsibilities to promote their neighbors' progress, a feeling of obligation to compensate for the suffering the war had brought, and an idealism about seizing the opportunity offered by the destruction of war to reconstruct their part of the world on more humanitarian principles. Evatt regarded the Canberra Agreement as applying the principles of the Atlantic Charter to the Pacific (Hasluck 1980: 119-123).

Consequently, in almost all Pacific colonies, the immediate postwar years saw significantly increased expenditure: loans were made available for development and in some cases budgets were subsidized for new hospitals, schools, roads, harbor works, airfields, electricity supplies, radio communications, and agricultural research and development. Efforts were also made early in the 1950s to stimulate tourism as a means of diversifying economies and increasing incomes (see, for example, Fiji 1951). Cooperative societies were encouraged and assisted to promote the local formation of capital and to give people experience in administering enterprises and financial management (see, for example, Fiji 1948). The cooperative society movement was expressly intended to eliminate reliance on foreign entrepreneurs and institutions (Finney 1968:65). In Tonga, cooperatives were not established until 1964 (Tonga 1981), probably because the Agricultural Organization Act of 1940 had accomplished the goal of eliminating private and corporate foreign traders from the copra and fruit export industries.

By the time that international events in the 1960s brought pressure to bear on colonial administrations to accelerate decolonization, there was a strong feeling among settlers and expatriate civil servants that they were being asked to leave their tasks uncompleted, that much remained to be done before the Pacific islands were "ready" for independence. Standards of living had been raised by the postwar programs, but there was an expectation of further development. The independence agreements usually included provision for continued assistance, often budgetary support as well as developmental funding. Although such support may be regarded as a devious plot to maintain dependency and foreign

control, Pacific island leaders themselves requested such support to allay their own anxieties about independence (Larmour 1983:9-10; Macdonald 1982:51, 53).

This background helps to explain the nature of early foreign-aid schemes in the Pacific, with their emphasis on development and preference for either grants or "soft" loans (that is, loans either interest free or at nominal rates) to avoid the trap experienced elsewhere among underdeveloped countries, where assistance led to a drain of capital out of the country. Such aid was also expected to be an interim arrangement, intended to accelerate the coming of economic independence, when island economies would "take off" and thus be able to sustain the levels of welfare and consumption desired (Mikesell 1968:39, 70-77).

### **The Case of Tonga: 1965 to 1986**

This scenerio is well illustrated by the case of Tonga, which, not having been a formal colony, had never received any budgetary or commercial subsidies. Throughout the reign of Queen Salote (1918-1965) Tonga was economically independent in the sense that economic policies and development decisions had been determined by Tongan politicians and employees of the Tongan civil service (senior ones were admittedly expatriate but most made their careers in Tonga, and in any case did not have absolute power in such matters) and paid for out of Tongan government revenues. Tonga paid its own way with budget surpluses and balance of trade surpluses throughout the protectorate period from 1905 until the 1960s; by the late 1940s, accumulated foreign reserves equaled two years' expenditure and continued to accumulate after that. Since World War II the government had been planning and spending more on development in a drive to raise living standards, paying the development expenditure of the 1950s out of either current revenue or accumulated reserves. Tonga's experience with foreign aid began in 1957 with the World Health Organization sharing the cost and supplying the technical expertise for an environmental sanitation scheme. The first bilateral aid (that is, government to government) was a loan of £514,000 from Britain under the Colonial Development and Welfare Act for the first stage of the Queen Salote wharf in 1965 (Great Britain, various dates).

Plans for higher living standards were limited by rapid population growth (3.1% per annum between 1956 and 1966; Crane 1979:48) and the inefficiencies of the agricultural economy (Tonga 1965). Meeting growing needs required a more coordinated approach to development

than had previously prevailed. Accordingly, in 1965, the first Five-Year Development Plan was drawn up, with particular emphasis on improving agricultural productivity, roads and harbor, and health and educational facilities. The cost of this plan was met 52% from Tongan government accumulated reserves and 48% from foreign sources, 96% of which were British government loans. The plan's final cost was \$4.85 million (Tongan currency), compared with a planned expenditure of \$4.1 million (or about three times the government's expenditure for the fiscal year 1965-1966). At this time, growth in foreign aid was neither expected nor envisaged, and the recognition of and aspiration for self-reliance was clearly evident in the first Development Plan. Implementation of the first plan, indeed, began with the hope that aid would become available, rather than with guarantees that it would.

The Second Development Plan (1970-1975) was a more elaborate document than the first one but was conceived as a continuation of the first plan, undertaking capital works and public health projects that could not be encompassed or accomplished in the first. Emphasis, however, shifted, with a substantially increased provision for economic services. Overall, the planned expenditure was modest (\$4.778 million), well within the absorptive capacity of the Tongan economy, and about 1.6 times the 1970-1971 expenditure estimates (therefore considerably smaller than the first plan, making allowance for inflation). It was planned that about 52% of the necessary funds would be raised from overseas, but, the preamble stated, "It is expected . . . that the successful implementation of the present plan will make Tonga less dependent on foreign aid in the future" (Tonga 1971). The modest scope suggests that the Tongan government believed that with this plan it would have "caught up" and achieved the infrastructure Tongan society needed. Clearly, the emergence of a "development industry" was not envisaged,

The aims of the Second Development Plan, however, were not achieved; indeed, the amount allocated was not even spent. The failure was attributed to inexperience in development planning, failure to define responsibility and monitor implementation, and the absence of a central planning authority (Tonga 1976:35).

During the time frame of the third plan, aid acquired an entirely new dimension. The targets were set much higher than previously, with the explicit intention of making use of larger amounts of aid then becoming available. The assumptions of the planners (foreign consultants on this occasion) were that the very base of the Tongan economy could be changed: agriculture could be made more productive and export-oriented, including expansion into livestock production; manufacturing



and processing (which had actually declined during the previous five years) for export could be initiated through the creation of an industrial estate; and the private commercial sector much enlarged.

The projected cost of the Third Development Plan was \$49.6 million, of which 53% was expected to come from foreign sources, for as the plan put it, "Wherever possible the capital investment programme will be financed by foreign aid, particularly those projects which have a substantial import content" (Tonga 1976:92). The volume of aid available, though, now reached unprecedented levels; as a result fully 97% of the Third Development Plan was funded in this way.

The plan proved to be only a mixed success. Construction and replanting targets were not attained, and the provision of services and capital expenditure on infrastructure did not lead to significantly increased levels of private sector business activity. The reasons were the same as before, to which were added the difficulties of drought and declining export prices. In fact, although the total projected expenditure was met, high inflation meant that in 1975 values, spending reached only two-thirds of the projected level (Tonga 1981:81). This apparent lack of achievement may be overstated, for the physical plant added to the nation's assets in terms of health, training, buildings, roads and wharves, and so on represented permanent achievements, even though the more directly productive schemes (such as livestock production) accomplished little. One lesson learned from the shortfall of this plan was that development on this scale required a more numerous, and more skilled, administrative staff. Increased growth of the permanent public service was the most immediate result.

The Fourth Five-Year Development Plan (Tonga 1981) made no reference to the aspiration of economic independence, and was at least as frank as the third plan in targeting aid donors. The projected five-year expenditure for 1981-1985 was placed between \$65 million and \$80 million, depending on how much aid could be attracted. The amount hoped for was \$55 million. In the event, \$89 million was spent on this development plan, 90% (or \$81 million) being of foreign origin. The programs laid out were even more comprehensive than in the third plan, suggesting that the government was bent on the most rapid possible development to take advantage of aid while the opportunity lasted. The government's plans were in any case much more ambitious, aiming at Western standards of living whereas the first plan (1965-1970) seems to have been devised to improve the quality of a sustainable, traditional way of life.

The Fifth Development Plan, 1986-1990, expressed aims more

directed to encouraging the private sector as a basis for more rapid social and economic change. Although recognizing the continuing need for foreign assistance, it offered the disclaimer, "Nevertheless, it remains the Government's long-term objective to achieve economic independence and reduce the Kingdom's reliance on foreign aid for development in the future" (Tonga 1987a:i). The aid target was set this time at 83% of the total of nearly \$150 million. Aid grants, as distinct from loans, however, were planned to be only 52% of the total, compared with 64% in the fourth plan (Tonga 1987a:65-67).

Official indebtedness had been kept at a manageable level. A creditor nation until the First Development Plan (1965-1970), Tonga's public debt in 1975 was still only \$1.36 million; during the Third Development Plan it rose sharply to \$16.4 million, reflecting the growing use of multi-lateral sources of aid; in 1986 it was \$42.7 million, of which about 70% was either interest free or at a nominal rate. Debt repayment in 1986 was only 6.7% of the recurrent budget (Tonga, various dates), but in the fifth plan the government clearly adopted a policy of increasing indebtedness as part of its strategy to reduce aid dependency. Its policy on aid in development was to move away from grants and more toward loans as a means of funding; more particularly, the intention has been to seek commercial loans at market rates of interest (not assistance loans) for these projects (such as buying commercial aircraft) that could be expected to generate revenue and to pay for their own costs (Tonga 1987a:67).

Over the course of twenty years of planning, the development budget projections thus increased by a factor of almost 25, whereas the recurrent budget for 1985-1986 was about 17 times that of 1965-1966. This may be taken as evidence of growing dependency, but the development policies of the Tongan government suggest that it believes what it says about ultimate economic independence. Since the Second Development Plan (1970-1975), the recurrent budget has been distinguished from the development budget; the former is met by locally raised revenue and up to the time of writing (1990), usually had either a small surplus or a small deficit. Foreign aid is allocated to the development budget only, and has been directed to projects that increase the capital assets of the nation, recent examples being harbor developments, airport reconstruction and expansion, road improvements, a foreshore protection scheme, training programs in a variety of specialties--education being perhaps foremost, the national cultural center, and sports stadiums. In other words, aid provides things that are either of permanent value or that Tonga could probably afford not to have but are nevertheless desirable.

Whether the future maintenance of these assets can be encompassed by the recurrent budget is an open question, but the growth of the recurrent budget over twenty years seems to suggest that it may be.

### **Implications**

If Tonga's aid programs were abruptly terminated, some economic contraction would follow. Many public servants currently employed on development administration, and their support staffs, would become redundant, the loss of activity in construction would be a serious matter, and the retail sector would suffer. There would almost certainly be a period of negative growth. But the loss would be less serious than appears at first sight because much of the aid is not received as revenue. For the 1985-1986 financial year, only \$6.5 million was received as revenue of total aid estimates of \$12.8 million. This was due in part to underspending and in part to the fact that much of the aid is for off-shore costs (Tonga 1987b:8). Also, some projects are entirely carried out by the donor in Tonga with a large foreign-labor component (such as the foreshore protection scheme provided by Japan) and do not appear as treasury receipts; they probably contribute little to the local money supply.

For all this, the Tongan economy is structurally weak. But it was structurally weak (though prosperous) before the development plans, with their foreign-aid implications, were adopted: it relied almost entirely on a single crop (copra) in which productivity and for which world prices were both declining; and it was vulnerable to drought and hurricane that had severe effects at least once each decade (Naisoro [1986] estimated that Tonga had suffered 108 cyclones between 1830 and 1982). After almost twenty-five years of intensive development spending, though, Tonga has a slightly more diversified economy, receiving the benefit of value-added components for its produce through local processing.

Aid dependency is therefore not the cause of the structural weakness of Tonga's economy, nor is aid causing further weakness. The vulnerability is best shown through an examination of the balance of payments. Tonga had a trade surplus from probably 1906 until 1961 with the exception only of 1958. Since 1961, the trade deficit has increased as shown from the following export-to-import ratios (data from successive development plans; Tonga, various dates) :

1961-1962	1966-1967	1971-1972	1976-1977	1980-1981	1986
96%	87%	35%	28%	24%	14%

The ratio has not stood above 48% since 1970-1971, and at its lowest point, after Hurricane Isaac in 1982, was only 9%.

The reason for the deficit in the early to mid-1960s was increased imports for development purposes, paid from accumulated funds. Since the beginning of the Second Development Plan (1970-1975), the cost of capital imports has been met by foreign-aid grants and loans. This has still left a substantial payments deficit, which has grown steadily but has always been covered by invisibles, of which tourist receipts have been only a small part--estimated for 1985-1986 at only \$6.3 million of a total trade deficit of \$45.6 million. The bulk of the deficit is caused by private consumer demand, paid for by remittances from Tongans overseas and reflecting the rate of Tongan emigration. It was estimated in 1984 that 40,000 Tongans were living abroad (Naisoro 1986), compared with a domestic population of perhaps 96,000. Remittance receipts (as estimated officially) rose sharply in the late 1970s; during the five years of the Fourth Development Plan, (1980-1985), the receipts were double what they had been in the previous five years. During the third plan, remittances had amounted to 1.5 times the value of exports; during the fourth plan, they amounted to 4 times the value of exports. In 1981 their value was estimated at \$12.2 million; in 1984, \$21.1 million; in 1987, \$30.8 million as compared with a trade deficit for that year of \$45 million (Tonga, various dates).

Official estimates of remittances are based on the sums transmitted through banking channels: additional large sums are sent as cash or in the form of goods. A study of a group of donors in Auckland suggests that informal cash transfers and goods equaled the value of money sent through formal channels (Fuka 1985:61, 70). The result is that, despite the gloomy trade situation, Tonga's balance of payments usually shows a surplus, and the level of foreign reserves remains at a comfortable level, usually equivalent to four to six months' imports (see, for example, Tonga 1987b:14).

Parallel with the rise in emigration and remittance income has been a decline in the productivity of Tonga's major resource, copra. The table below shows estimates of tons per head (compiled from Great Britain, various dates; Tonga, various dates):

1882	1912	1923	1938	1947	1956	1969	1976	1981	1985
.47	.51	.60	.38	.44	.34	.17	.16	.12	.06

These figures are approximations only, based on data that are admittedly unreliable, but the general trend is probably accurate. The dates shown reflect gaps in the data or have been selected to avoid atypical

years: 1981 was the last full crop year before Hurricane Isaac in 1982; by 1985 trees would not have recovered sufficiently for full production to be resumed. Nevertheless, the trend shows the importance of alternative sources of income during a time of rising living standards.

Therefore, insofar as Tonga can be described as economically dependent, this dependency is due neither to supposedly misguided policies of the government nor to the government's having been beguiled by the blandishments of foreign consultants, diplomats, and aid donors. On the contrary, the government has been determinedly following a policy of modernization since the end of World War II; it has shown much ingenuity and resourcefulness in trying to find sources of income based on services that Tonga might provide to the region and the world, such as in shipping, engineering, banking, oil supply, and communications--and more recently by such doubtful schemes as providing high-priced passports for noncitizens. None of these schemes has proven to be a panacea for the problems that derive from isolation and a small land area of limestone origin.

The basic consideration has been to provide for a growing population on a narrow resource base; emigration has provided an unexpected solution. But this has also given Tongans remaining at home access to a standard of living not otherwise achievable, and this higher standard is the basis of the nation's present dependency or vulnerability. The fragile prosperity depends on things beyond the government's control, including continuing emigration, the continuing prosperity of the overseas population, their continued loyalty to their families in Tonga, exchange-rate stability, and the absence of foreign-exchange controls in the host nations.

Any lessening in the level of remittances will cause an abrupt fall in Tongan imports rather than a further widening of the trade deficit. A reduced import level would have a seriously adverse effect on government revenue directly and lead to further losses from the consequential contraction of other activity, especially in construction. A reverse multiplier effect would cause many bankruptcies in the retail sector, the contraction of government services, and a declining standard of living that would force many people back into the subsistence economy, with increased pressure on land and kinship relationships. Political upheaval could be a further downstream effect.

Some idea of the severity of the loss of remittances on government revenue may be deduced from the following table, which shows the ratio of exports to government revenue (recurrent budget only--thus excluding aid sources) (compiled from Great Britain, various dates; Tonga, various dates):

1955	1960	1965	1970	1975	1980	1985
300%	209%	159%	89%	78%	60%	26%

Export productivity has clearly not kept pace with government spending, and since, despite attempts to diversify the economy, Tonga does not produce very much for local consumption outside the subsistence economy, the invisibles (mainly remittances) in the balance of payments are keeping Tonga afloat economically.

The consequences of the loss of remittance income is therefore much more threatening than the cessation of foreign aid. Unless the remittances continue for long enough to allow enough private capital formation to convert Tonga into a service economy for the central Pacific, the prospects look bleak. The cause, however, is primarily geographic, to which is added the Tongan demand to enjoy living standards and consumption habits similar to other peoples. Dependency in this case is simply the measure of the difference between resources and demand.

### NOTES

Earlier versions of this paper were delivered as a public lecture at 'Atenisi University, Tonga, in 1989, and at the Fourth Tongan History Conference in Auckland in 1990. The author expresses his appreciation to those present on each occasion for their remarks and interest. All dollar figures are given in Tongan currency.

1. Britain supplied 96% of Tonga's foreign aid during the First Development Plan, 1965-1970; 68% during the Second Development Plan, 1970-1975; and 8% during the Third Development Plan, 1976-1980 (Tonga 1965:8; Tonga 1971:19; Tonga 1976, 1981). For Britain's trade with Tonga, see Tonga 1976:11 and Tonga 1987b:8.

2. The proportion of government revenue raised from taxes on imports and exports were: 1927-1928, 42%; 1938, 45%; 1952-1953, 60%; 1975, 44%; 1985-1986, 57%.

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## **SOCIAL PROTEST AND SPONTANEOUS DEVELOPMENT: A CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL MOVEMENT IN FIJI**

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Historically, prophet-led social movements in Fiji have exhibited a variety of characteristics common to the process of revitalization in response to rapid social change. Preoccupation with supernatural power in such movements is at least in part an adaptation to frustrated attempts to implement an economic and political agenda and related persecution of the leader. A contemporary movement called "the Lami" is connected with prophecy, a strong secular business orientation, and a relatively long period of stability. Members of the Lami initially defied the authority of village chiefs and refused to participate in a colonial structure and ceremonial regimen that inhibited capital accumulation. Instead, the members entered the modern market economy as a group, acting as middlemen with the goal of helping Fijian farmers and agricultural laborers. Lami ideology, founded upon egalitarian ideals, is linked to the Fijian priestly tradition of resistance to colonial authority and opposition to hereditary chiefs. The multipurpose organizational framework of the Lami contributed to their success in business but limited the scope of the organization's popular appeal. This movement represents a response both to the erosion of traditional values and to the need for progressive economic change.

### **Introduction**

While I was conducting fieldwork in Fiji in 1983, the manager of a sugar mill alerted me to the existence of a group of rural Fijians called "the Lami." The members had separated themselves from the rest of society in the 1960s and spontaneously formed into a kind of business organization. I was intrigued both by the group's innovative involvement in commercial activities and by its emergence in resistance to the authority of traditional chiefs and the colonial government, seemingly

with the objective of bringing about social reform. The Lami movement, unlike earlier social movements in Fiji, overcame initial opposition by outsiders and occupied a stable niche in society for more than twenty years. The recency of this movement, its survival following independence, and the degree of success attained in its program for Fijian development make it an interesting case.

This study of the Lami is based on short-term ethnographic fieldwork involving observation and several lengthy interviews, for my inadvertent discovery of the Lami soon evoked several intriguing questions. Under what circumstances did the movement originate? What was its relationship to historical predecessors? How did the particular background and experience of the leader shape the character of the movement? Why were supernatural elements downplayed? What contributed to the movement's appeal and longevity? Does the movement give insight into the process of economic development? The following discussion is intended to shed light on these and related matters in the context of Fijian colonial history, with brief reference to predecessor movements in Fiji and elsewhere.

Revitalization movements, of which the Lami group is one example, arise as a response to material and moral deprivation associated with rapid social change. Such movements are adaptive strategies aimed at achieving group, as opposed to individual, goals and establishing a new social order that will restore livelihood and a sense of purpose to the participants. These movements must be understood as having evolved under a set of specific socioeconomic conditions to which social organization and beliefs are adapted (Lawrence 1964:273). Social movements of this kind are widely reported to have occurred in Pacific Island societies, where they have been referred to as "cargo cults" (Worsely 1959:117-128).

Wallace's classic article describes six stages in organizational development of a long-lasting revitalization movement (1956:270-275): (1) prophecy based on revelation or inspiration, (2) communication to other people, (3) organization of followers, (4) adaptation to resistance, (5) cultural transformation based on widespread acceptance, and (6) routinization as normal social institutions and customs. Wallace finds that longevity is related to the amount of "realism," as opposed to supernatural ritual and belief, associated with the movement.

McDowell argues against the labeling of broad typologies and generalizations, as those above, which she finds are inappropriately abstracted out of indigenous cultural context (1988:121-122). Social movements may vary not only according to aspects of indigenous cul-

ture, as McDowell suggests, but also according to the nature of colonial domination and exposure to selected aspects of Western culture. Differences often are great. However, generalizations may be useful in assessing regional similarities and systematic variation according to local conditions and historical circumstances. Differences should not keep us from dealing with the broader principles that can be derived from comparison.

Like other Fijian social movements in Melanesia, those in Fiji typically have originated with prophecy, which facilitates group mobilization where the understanding of a drastically changed future must be conveyed by the leader in the absence of substantial knowledge acquired by followers; it also adds a dynamic element, allowing new directions and experimentation with alternatives. In fact, movements based on prophecy may succeed while purely secular organizations, such as the Fijian Chamber of Commerce, which existed briefly in 1968, may fail (Durutalo 1985:40).

Social movements in Fiji also exhibit distinctive characteristics when compared with those in the less stratified cultures of Melanesia, where followers sought to restore the influence of indigenous leaders (big-men) who had been left out of the colonial administration (Cochrane 1970: 51-66). The chiefs in Fiji did not suffer from similar deprivation; they were incorporated into the colonial hierarchy and often found their authority challenged by such movements. Social movements in Fiji began inland among unacculturated hill people, in areas away from the centers of power, where military pacification campaigns had been carried out to bring the people under colonial rule (Gravelle 1979:128-131). In these areas Christianity had few adherents and indigenous Fijian beliefs were stronger. Followers of such movements resisted the British takeover and focused their resentment on coastal chiefs for their compliance with a system of external domination.

Van Fossen insightfully characterizes Fijian social movements as seeking to displace traditional principles of chiefly hereditary succession with the supernatural power under control of the Fijian priesthood (1986:158-160). The influence of the priests had suffered from the introduction of Christianity, which at the same time had enhanced the status of the chiefs. Social movements in this context arose to restore a way of life and values based on the authority of the priests as opposed to the leadership of corrupt and selfish chiefs. The use of supernatural force transcended local ties of kinship and heredity upon which the power of the chiefs was based. The leaders of these movements, however, advocated an idealized theocracy rather than a modern type of

egalitarian democracy. In advancing a sociopolitical agenda, the priests sought to justify their own privileged position as the ruling class in the name of the public good. Their central focus was to restructure internal relations within Fijian society rather than to resort to external violence, which already had proved futile as a means of resistance. They spread their message and recruited followers through the exercise of such rituals as *yaqona* (kava) drinking, music, dance, and drills.

### **Early Social Movements in Fiji: Four Examples**

Several of these early Fijian social movements have been described in the literature cited at the end of this article. The case that best fits Van Fossen's model is the Tuka movement of the late nineteenth century, which created a national stir and provoked persecution by the colonial authorities. This movement has been described by Thomson (1908), Brewster (1922), Worsely (1968), Scarr (1980), and most recently by Kaplan (1988). The leader, Dugumoi, who later took the name Navosavakadua,<sup>1</sup> was a hereditary priest from the hills near Rakiraki in western Viti Levu. Navosavakadua's father had been executed by the high chief Cakobau because of his prophecies. After his return from a four-year deportation (1878-1882), Navosavakadua announced that he had acquired supernatural power that prevented the whites from killing him. He claimed that it had been revealed to him that biblical characters were actually Fijian ancestor gods referred to by other names. He prophesied that the world would soon be *tavuki* (turned upside-down), and whites would serve natives and chiefs would serve commoners. Preparation for this event included rebuilding Fijian temples destroyed by missionaries, engaging in military-dance drills, and *yaqona* drinking. He promised that faithful followers would be rewarded with shops full of calico and tinned salmon. Navosavakadua sold holy water that he claimed would confer invulnerability, accumulating great wealth that he quickly dissipated in ceremonial exchange. Among his attendants were several concubines, and he promised them that the holy water would keep them in a state of perpetual virginity. The elderly were promised the renewal of their youth. Navosavakadua's movement spread widely in the area of the present-day hill provinces of Ra, Navosa, Naitasiri, and Namosi; and it emerged repeatedly despite attempts by the colonial government to suppress it. In the end the government deported the prophet's entire home village to the island of Kadavu.

A local movement on that same island of Kadavu in the 1940s has

been described by Cato (1947). It was founded by a traditional healer, Kelevi Nawai, who deposed and replaced a village chief in Nakausele. Kelevi was not an entrepreneur, but he set up his own church along with a new work regimen, in which he controlled the assignment of labor to his own gardens. Kelevi claimed that he could call forth the spirits of the dead, that his followers would not die, and that Christ spoke through him. Six young girls called "Roses of Life" were taken by him as mistresses and assisted in church services twice a day. Eventually the authorities confiscated Kelevi's books and religious materials, but they did not deport him.

Both Navosavakadua and Kelevi claimed absolute authority over their followers, opposed the chiefs, and attempted the transformation of social life through the exercise of ritual. Neither of these leaders had much knowledge of the economic and political culture of their colonizers; their response to social disruption and dissatisfaction with the colonial social order was to construct a syncretic ideology powerful enough to mobilize followers and challenge the dominance of Christianity,

Although incorporating elements of the same priestly tradition, other social movements in Fiji had a different agenda. Information about a historically important movement led by Apolosi Nawai is contained in Macnaught (1979), Gravelle (1979), and Scarr (1980, 1984). Apolosi was a commoner from Narewa village in the hills of Nadi in western Viti Levu who had been educated in Christian schools. By 1915 he had achieved a large following and nationwide prominence as founder and head of the Fiji Company, an all-Fijian cooperative that gained a near monopoly over the lucrative banana trade in competition with the Europeans and traditional chiefs. Apolosi's vision was that the Fiji Company, with thousands of native shareholders and under its own flag, would not only gain control of the country's economy but would take over politically and run communities and institutions including towns, schools, police, ships, and government offices. For this purpose he set up a rival bureaucratic organization to the Fijian Administration, which was the part of the colonial government dealing with Native Fijian affairs.

Apolosi accused the chiefs of selling too much of the land set aside for Native Fijians, as the leasing of land by the chiefs to East Indian immigrant farmers had forced many Native Fijians to become poorly paid laborers. Without an apparent system of accounting, Apolosi was charged by the colonial government with misusing Fiji Company funds to support a lavish life-style. Colonial officials first jailed him for eighteen months and then exiled him to Rotuma for seven years. In Apolosi's

absence the Fiji Company collapsed. After his return to Fiji, Apolosi announced the founding of the Church of Time, which was inspired by revelations from the old gods of Fiji and by newly acquired supernatural power gained from his discovery of a box lost from a mythical ancestor's canoe. Impressed by tales of miracles, many of his followers returned. Meanwhile the government accused Apolosi of rape, incest, and drunken debauchery. There was a rumor that he had more than a dozen wives. On one occasion Apolosi showed his followers a document that he said was signed by Queen Victoria and which, he said, made him King of Fiji. Again he was exiled to Rotuma, this time for ten years. Again, after being released for only a few days, Apolosi was sentenced to another eight years of exile at the outbreak of World War II. In one of his last sermons before his death on Yanuca island, he claimed that he was King of the World.

Garrett (1973) and Spate (1960) provide accounts of a related movement in the village of Daku, headed by Emosi Saurura. Daku, near Nausori on Viti Levu, originally had been settled by hill people from Lovoni on the island of Ovalau. Emosi received basic education on the chiefly island of Bau and later undertook Bible study and technical training in trades at a school run by the Methodist Church. He was expelled from this school for being involved in a strike. He learned his skills later working in carpentry and road construction in Lautoka, where he came to know several of Apolosi's followers who were engaged in a project to help villagers make use of modern technology in a cash economy. Emosi returned to Daku in 1937, proclaiming that he had experienced a revelation about a new kind of village society. He launched a renovation and construction program, using his experience in carpentry and road construction. He envisioned combining traditional ways of Fijian village life with the values associated with the factory and the clock. The village raised finances for the new buildings by selling handicrafts, shellfish, and firewood, but it had no bank account. Eventually, Emosi bought out the business of an Indian fuel merchant in the town of Nausori. Daku raised its own flag and, under Emosi's leadership, declared its independence from the jurisdiction of the Fijian Administration, taking the name "New Jerusalem." Two satellite villages were incorporated into the program for change. Emosi and his lieutenants spread the message of the "New Life" to many other villages in an unsuccessful attempt to bring all Fijians into the movement. Emosi had a sophisticated philosophy about the difference between, on the one hand, the immorality and lawlessness of large-scale, impersonal societies where people are obsessed with money and, on the other, the

superior morality of small-scale, theocratic societies where people care about each other and leaders provide moral guidance. In 1947 and again in 1967 Emosi burned down the houses of dissident Catholics who refused to join his program. After each incident he was sent to a mental hospital. During the five years of his second incarceration he wrote an account of his vision.

The attributes that the four movements just described have in common are leadership based on prophecy, opposition to hereditary chiefs and the colonial government sanctioning their authority, restructuring of the internal moral order, and the creation of a new ceremonial or ritual system to replace the old. This phenomenon of revitalization movements represents a reversal in the process of acculturation and social change, such that external institutions are modified to suit a way of life rather than the other way around. In all four instances, a leader's attempt to assert moral authority was viewed as a threat by officials of the colonial government, whose response was to administer punishment, the effect of which was to induce greater preoccupation with the manipulation of supernatural power.<sup>2</sup> The latter two movements, and to a lesser extent the first two, represent more than a reworking of Christianity or a restoration of traditional priestly prerogatives; they borrowed and adapted models of Western business enterprise and political organization to what they regarded as the true Fijian way of life and asserted a kind of political independence. The degree to which Western economic and political elements were introduced into such movements was the outcome of the leader's personal experience and still-incomplete knowledge about Western culture. The movements led by Apolosi and Emosi were better informed in this respect and more business-oriented, but they still did not adopt Western practices of accounting or managing money, perhaps because of a lack of knowledge, but also because of the disparities between Fijian and Western culture on how resources should be allocated. Moreover, they began to show concern for an incipient class of Native Fijians working for wages. The Lami pattern of cultural borrowing and adaptation can be similarly construed, but as a contemporary group, the Lami evolved toward a more secular orientation with less overt supernatural emphasis, which, after initial difficulties, enabled it to insulate itself from persecution.

### **Colonial Institutions in Fiji**

The setting in which the Lami movement emerged was Fiji's late colonial period. The administrative system in Fiji, as in other British col-

onies, was characterized by indirect rule, in which native elites were trained to assist in local governance. However, as it unfolded historically, the system in Fiji developed unique features.

The colonial bureaucracy in Fiji extended to the village level as a means of maintaining control over every aspect of indigenous Fijian social life. The Fijian Administration, established as a separate arm of the colonial government to implement indirect rule, placed each village settlement under the jurisdiction of a chief appointed as a headman. Taxes known as *solu ni yasana* (provincial rates) were assessed on individuals, and the headman required contributions of labor for village maintenance and improvement projects decided upon at the provincial level. The headman also required all able-bodied men to plant a garden for raising food crops. All births and marriages had to be registered with the government. Children between the ages of six and twelve were obliged to attend school. Emigration from the village was restricted, and communal obligations were enforced to keep Native Fijians under close supervision and prevent them from crowding into urban centers. Justice was administered by a system of native courts extending to the *tikina* (district) level (Roth 1951:2-3).

Administrative policy in the colonial period was effective in segregating the rural subsistence economy of Native Fijians from the plantation export economy of the major towns and ports. (It is interesting that the politician chiefs of the Alliance Party who ruled after independence from 1970 to 1987 sought to revive the old Fijian Administration system as a means of coping with the post-independence problems of unemployment, crime, and the growth of urban ghettos [Durutalo 1986:51].) This policy, however, failed to address a continuing economic and class division in Native Fijian society, and this failure was a major factor in the founding of the Lami in 1959.

In the post-World War II era, a small but significant number of people left their villages under a 1911 law that allowed them to establish themselves as independent farmers by paying an annual tax in lieu of performing their communal obligations. These independent farmers were no longer responsible to the appointed village headman. Individuals who wished to escape the economic constraints of village life chose this option, but most rural Fijians remained in their villages, where a strong system of mutual support rewarded their participation. During the same period the Fijian Administration encouraged cash cropping in the traditional sector. However, the incentive for market production and individual gain in Fijian villages was inhibited by the custom of *kerekere* (sharing), according to which possessions and resources of indi-



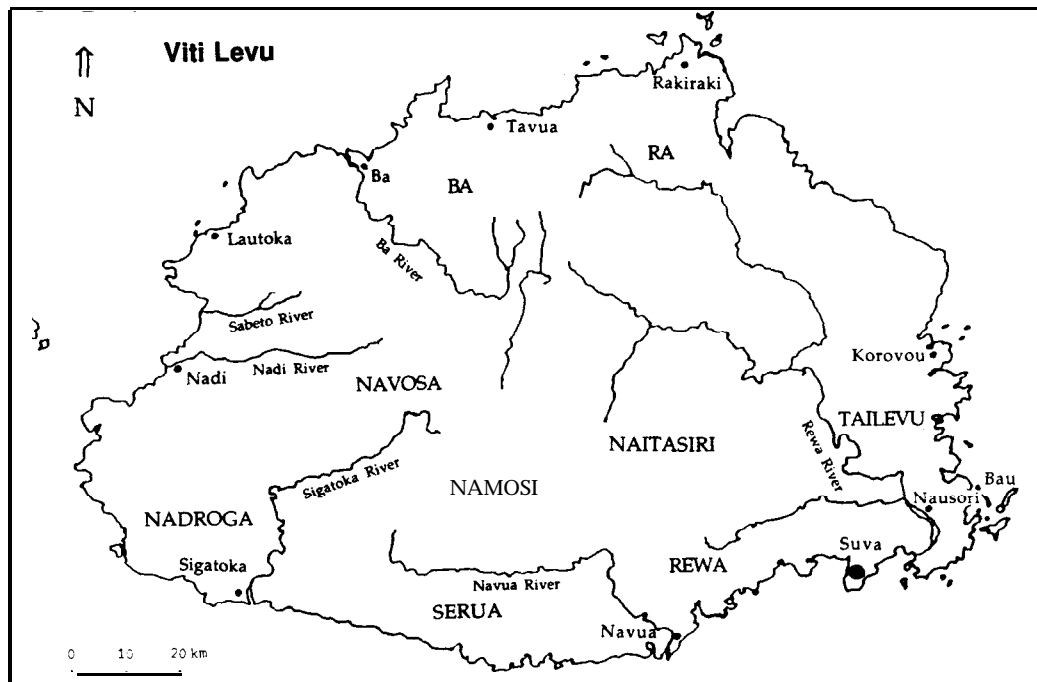
viduals and families could be borrowed with little or no obligation to repay and every household was obliged to help cover the expenses of ceremonial events.<sup>3</sup> For those who chose to be businesslike and “stingy,” relations with kinsmen and fellow villagers could become strained. The Lami movement represented a reaction against village customs, which, combined with the rules and regulations of the Fijian Administration, seemed to be holding individuals back from economic advancement.

Finally, the Methodist Church, established by the earliest missionaries to Fiji and exercising a pervasive influence upon Fijian society from 1835 to the present, reinforced British colonial administration by sanctifying the power of the chiefs. The church accepted British colonial domination and required docile, obedient behavior from the villagers. In addition, the church placed its own demands on individual resources in the form of monetary donations. Thus the church itself could become, and was for the Lami in particular, a focus of resentment because of its financial demands and because it supported the demands of secular leaders associated with the Fijian Administration. Missionaries ran the schools as an adjunct to the church, placing similar emphasis on social conformity and the acquisition of Western ways. School fees represented a drain on resources, and classes took older children out of productive activities. The link between church and state in the colonial setting had the effect of undermining Fijian identity and making demands on vital resources.

### **Origins of the Lami**

The Lami originated in Togovere village, a small settlement located not far upriver from the town of Sigatoka. Overall the Sigatoka Valley is the most productive agricultural region on Fiji’s largest island of Viti Levu, but it also includes extreme internal variation in the suitability of soils for agriculture and in access to water. The conditions for growing staple root crops were not favorable in Togovere. Most of the community’s cash income was provided by citrus crops.

The people of Togovere were descended from hill people, said to have come to the valley sometime before 1908 as refugees. They were regarded as guests or temporary settlers and were granted no land rights of their own. Historically the custom of allowing temporary settlement of outside groups was a way of accommodating populations displaced by warfare or internal disputes (Farrell 1977:102). Although the cause of the migration of the Togovere people has been lost in the past, their status as guests, rather than landowners, was well recognized in the



local area. When the Lands' Claims Commission met in 1911 to record land titles on the basis of kinship in each *matagali* (resident lineage), the Togovere people were left out. They were placed under the jurisdiction of the local Voua chiefs, who could repossess the land if they wished. Since the land was quite poor, the village remained small. (The 1983 population consisted of only eight households.) Several families split off at various times and founded other villages, including Kabisi and Tilivalevu (with five and ten households in 1983, respectively). Another household head departed to become a *galagala* (independent farmer). No matter where they moved, the Togovere people had no secure tenure of land. Togovere village itself was relocated on five different sites after it was first established.<sup>4</sup>

Little or nothing of any consequence happened to the Togovere people until the Lami became an active group. Apolosi's movement was known to residents of the Sigatoka Valley as late as the 1930s and its legacy may have influenced the Lami in some way, but consultants could point to no direct connections, either through membership or doctrine, between the two movements. All indications are that the Lami emerged independently, though sharing with Apolosi's movement similar perceptions of social needs and a strong opposition to colonial rule. The Lami drew followers primarily from the currently defined province of Nadroga between Sigatoka and Nadi, approximately the same area of western Viti Levu where Apolosi had achieved his greatest popularity.

The Lami movement was actually the third in a succession of closely related movements that started about 1959, according to Durutalo (1985:406-410). The first was an antigovernment peasant organization called the Dra-ni-Lami (Blood of the Lamb). Although this movement soon died, it was revived again in 1961 as the Bula Tale (New Life) Association by four Nadroga villages. The public spokesman for the group at that time was Apimeleki Ramatau, a former clerk in the Medical Department. Apimeleki claimed that the *Bula Tale* aspired to be a communist state where laws would regulate work and traditional customs, and Christian practices would be rejected. This movement received widespread support from other parts of Fiji. The Fijian Administration was initially alarmed, but stood aside upon finding that the main aim of the organization was economic. Probably after running into opposition from local chiefs, the Bula Tale Communist Party changed its name to the Dra-ni-Lami Club and established a branch in Navua. Today the group exists under the name "Lami" in Yolalevu, near the town of Ba.

On a June evening in 1983, accompanied by two university colleagues, I entered the Lami headquarters building for the first time. A picture on the door of the meeting room showed our elderly host, the spokesman for the Lami, Emosi Sove, as a younger man standing with an unidentified companion. Pictures of the Queen, high chiefs, and religious figures that usually adorn Fijian private quarters were absent. We were greeted by about twenty-five men and four or five women sitting cross-legged on the floor. They served us with *yaqona*, but did not partake themselves as it was the start of the sugarcane harvest season. We began to ask questions, and these were answered by Sove and his two assistants while the onlookers sat contentedly. As the night wore on, several left to return to their homes. We parted with good feelings on both sides. A month later I paid a second interview visit, during which we were taken to observe daily work activities. A third interview occurred in the home village of the Lami, where relatives and acquaintances lived. Finally, we conducted a fourth interview with a prominent politician from western Viti Levu, who was acquainted with the history of the Lami. The following account of the history, philosophy, and economic life of the Lami comes from these interviews and from observations in the field.

### **Kitione's Revelation**

Although the original Lami followers were not well educated and spoke a nonstandard, western dialect of the Fijian language, their founder

and prophet came from a successful entrepreneurial background that must have given him a broader worldview. The prophet, Kitione, was a man in his early forties when he founded the movement. He had been known as a quiet person whom nobody thought capable of causing a stir. His father had been a comparatively successful commercial farmer. An outsider who knew him commented that Kitione's father was one of the best farmers in the area. The father grew rice and raised cattle for sale, something that the present generation does not do. He also built a barn for storing his bags of rice, corn, and yams; he had so much that he kept the surplus in his house and in the church. He even paid other people to work on his farm. By local standards, Kitione's father was wealthy. Perhaps for this reason, consultants said that Togovere village "always contained great differences in wealth."

The *turaga ni koro* (village chief) of Togovere heard Kitione prophesy for the first time when he was a young man staying at Naduri in the interior of the Sigatoka Valley. He speculated that Kitione probably came to Naduri to visit relatives and look for a wife. A younger man, Kitione's namesake,<sup>5</sup> followed him to Naduri with a message to return home. Kitione, who was related to the young man as a father's brother's son, told him about a new association called Bula Tale (New Life). Kitione said that he had been asleep in his bed when things like instructions fell down in front of his eyes, and he was told that all people needed to be equalized. The vision was in the form of a metaphor--one household should not be eating yams (a desirable and expensive food) while another household was eating *tapioka* (cassava, a less desirable and inexpensive food). Soon after this revelation Kitione sold off the pair of bullocks, horses, and farm implements that he had inherited from his father. His reason for selling these possessions was to set an example for others and demonstrate the strength of his conviction that everyone should be equal.

The news of Kitione's revelation spread quickly, but not through his own direct efforts. Close relatives and friends to whom he had initially communicated his vision went up and down the Sigatoka Valley to proselytize. The movement reached Nadroumai, Emuri, Nabua, Semo, Yagadra, and other villages throughout the length of the valley. A consultant who was a teacher at the time described his experience when he first heard about the movement.

Lami members approached me saying that they had formed a new marketing and agricultural society. They also said that they did not agree with the government and social system in

Fiji. Some spirit influenced them to form this society, but they were not very specific about it. Perhaps the spirit talked to Kitione. They wanted village people to join. I said that it was a free world and any villagers could join if they wished. I told them that people would think about it and let them know. Most people did not see how the society could succeed.

New recruits were asked to pay one shilling for each family member as a membership fee. They were urged to give up their possessions, following Kitione's example, and move to Emuri, another Sigatoka Valley village, where they would live in a communal setting to restore the basic principles of the traditional Fijian way of life. All property, including farmland and animals, was to be commonly owned. In Emuri the group built two dormitories, one for men and another for women, and set up a mess hall for communal dining. All men, women, and children were to eat the same food together in accordance with the vision of the prophet. Followers immediately began selling vegetables on the coast at Cuvu (near Sigatoka town) as a means of supporting themselves.

The Lami rejected everything associated with colonial domination that Kitione regarded as preventing the attainment of social equality and economic advancement for Fijians. The informal code of the newly formed group abolished the marriage ceremony, registration of births, formal education for children, and participation in Christian churches. One Sunday when a Methodist minister came to preach to the village, Kitione entered the place where the service was being held, walked straight to the pulpit, and seized the Bible away from the minister. Kitione asked the minister if he practiced what he preached, and chased him out of the village. Kitione also defied chiefly authority by prohibiting followers from contributing either money or free labor for village purposes and by rejecting Fijian customs associated with the existing social system. Whales' teeth, used as a special-purpose money to pay tribute to chiefs and facilitate ceremonial expenditure, were "thrown away into the forest," along with the *yaqona* bowl. The drinking of *yaqona*, a mild sedative drug, occurs in association with Fijian ceremonies where wealth is consumed and social status is recognized by serving individuals in order of rank. According to Kitione, drinking *yaqona* not only reinforced the social hierarchy and dissipation of wealth but also was not compatible with maximizing the use of human resources for social and economic development. (If ingested in large enough quantities, *yaqona* can be debilitating to motor coordination, alertness, and the productive use of time.)

In the early 1960s the Lami also defied the authority of the colonial government. The courts issued one-month jail sentences to some followers who had refused to pay their provincial taxes. The people of Cuvu, the chiefly village of Nadroga on the coast, were suspicious of the Lami and their resemblance to communists. The colonial government for the most part adopted a wait-and-see attitude and kept quiet about its opinion. A representative from the Fijian Administration came to discuss the problem with the chiefs in the area, but the fate of the Lami ultimately was left to local landowners, who objected from the start to the Lami organization and its activities. The village of Togovere also was badly split, since some residents refused to join the movement. Meanwhile the Lami, as guests or temporary residents on the land, had no power to control their own destiny. The landowners warned them that they would be forced to move out if they did not change their ways. After little more than a year, the Lami were ordered to leave the area. Membership in the movement during the early 1960s may have been as high as the one thousand claimed by consultants, or perhaps somewhat less. In any case it is likely that the population numbered more than the 271 reported in 1983. Forced removal resulted in followers scattering to various places on the island of Viti Levu in search of a livelihood. It seems that few (if any) returned to their home villages. A core group led by Kitone settled in Ba on the northwest side of Viti Levu, well away from the Sigatoka Valley on the southwest side of the island. Ba became their permanent home. Deceased members were buried in a cemetery there rather than in their villages.

Not all the original members left their villages immediately after the group was expelled. Some stayed behind until the members in Ba became successful in business. Every year some members from villages in the Sigatoka Valley would leave to join the group in Ba. For example, the namesake of Emosi Sove, the spokesman in 1983, was one of those who went later. Consultants said that new members joined the group primarily because of the appeal of the philosophy rather than for the practical reason of finding employment.

### **Social Philosophy**

The name chosen for the Lami movement underwent a three-stage evolution. The memories of current members differ from the version in written records mentioned earlier. The earliest name was Bula Tale (New Life). According to consultants, this term signified the intention

to bring back the original Fijian way of life. When this attempt failed and followers were under threat from the government and local chiefs, they changed their name to Dra-ni-Lami (Blood of the Lamb). With respect to this name, group leaders indicated that the concept of sacrifice was meaningful to their interpretation of events and to their sense of shared purpose. Not only did individuals sacrifice their homes and belongings to join the group, but followers believed the group itself was making a sacrifice for the greater good of Fijian society. Later, as the group stabilized and gained a measure of economic strength, "Dra-ni" was dropped and followers referred to themselves simply as "the Lami." In 1983, the spokesman said: "The name Lami is taken from the Bible. It symbolizes togetherness in the blood of the lamb and that Jesus came to die for other people. This is the only aspect of the Bible that we have chosen to use."

The Lami believed in ethical principles that they felt would not be supported by organized religion. The spokesman elaborated as follows: "We do not want to be influenced by religious ideas that would lead us astray. What is important is to remain faithful to oneself and follow a righteous path. We believe in fairness in dealing with other human beings. Some people pray for forgiveness and come out of church only to repeat the same offense."

Although the Lami sought to restore certain basic Fijian values and to serve as a model for others to emulate, the members did not wish to appear backward. One striking symbol displayed on the door of one of their transport vehicles was a picture of a spacecraft along with the inscription "Apollo 11," referring to American astronauts who landed on the moon. In this way the Lami depicted themselves as forward-looking Fijian pioneers in the modern business world. They saw no contradiction between living a Fijian way of life and being economically successful. In fact they believed that Fijian culture could not survive without economic strength in the marketplace and that such strength could be achieved only by eliminating the influence of individualistic Western values.

The strategy of the Lami movement was to establish a collective business enterprise. The members did not believe that prosperity would be handed to them magically; they understood that economic strength would come through capital accumulation and investment. They also understood from experience that individual capital accumulation produced extreme differences in wealth. They were unwilling to tolerate such differences among themselves because they did not regard unequal-

ity as consistent with the Fijian ideal of communal sharing of basic resources. Doing things the Fijian way meant pooling possessions, labor, and income so that they could make business investments and balance this requirement against the need for consumption.

The Lami emphasized that their resistance to chiefs and colonial institutions in Togovere was calculated to bring about conditions that would promote capital accumulation and investment. They believed that Native Fijians were being robbed of their wealth by colonial taxes, church donations, school fees, ceremonial gifts, and unpaid labor conscripted by the chiefs. Thus their resistance had a purpose and was based on an assessment of village life in which Fijian economic advancement was being systematically thwarted.

In regard to the Fijian chiefly system, the Lami believed that there was a need for communal organization as well as a need for one voice in making important decisions. But this voice did not have to be the chiefs voice. It could be the voice of a commoner or anyone else as long as the people involved had the opportunity to sit down, debate, and think about what the person was saying. The spokesman commented:

People must be allowed to give their reactions to ideas and decisions. A chief can remain in his position of honor but should not make all the decisions. The word of a chief should not be swallowed regardless of whether it is right or wrong. It is most important for people to reach a consensus. In villages where the chief controls all decision-making, material and social well-being is far below other villages. Problems arise because people fear to challenge the chiefs opinion. The result is that when the chief gives a command, nobody follows it. This happens in some villages. If everyone agrees to a decision in the first place, there is a greater chance of it being carried out. The result will be to enhance the status of the chief rather than to downgrade it.

The spokesman added that this concept of decision-making procedure derives from the Lami view of traditional society modeled upon the less stratified system typical of western hill people rather than the hierarchical system of the coastal and eastern islands. He argued that command-type decision-making was a later innovation, not representative of Fijian tradition. This view is consistent with the fact that the imposition of indirect rule by British colonizers strengthened the authority exercised by the chiefs.



### **Benevolent Middlemen**

After moving to Ba, the Lami supported themselves by marketing fruits and vegetables. They sought to help Fijian village farmers by providing transportation and retail outlets to give them access to urban consumers. The Lami obtained much of their produce from villages in the Sigatoka Valley to which they had kinship ties. For example, they collected lemons and mandarin oranges annually from Togovere. Later they also began to obtain produce from commercial farmers who were independent of the village and from some Indo-Fijian farmers. By pooling their resources the Lami were able to purchase trucks that could serve the wholesale transportation needs of a number of villages too poor to afford their own vehicles.

The Lami rented market stalls for retailing in towns along the coast of western Viti Levu. In 1983 they operated a total of fourteen market stalls in six different urban places: four at Nadi, three at Ba, three at Lautoka, two at Tavua, one at Sigatoka, and one at Rakiraki. Individual members, sometimes with the help of children, managed these market stalls on a weekly rotation. Other members transported village products to the various market locations. Stall managers kept receipts and returned them to headquarters in Ba at the end of the week. Frequent communication between headquarters and market staff was maintained by telephone and supervisory visits. In more recent years the Lami began to supplement the sale of domestic produce with high-quality fruits and vegetables acquired from Australia and New Zealand. They did not grow food themselves; whatever they sold or consumed came through wholesale purchases.

### **Representatives for Labor**

The recruitment of labor for the sugarcane harvest was the second major business of the Lami, aimed at improving the wages and living conditions of the harvest work force. Nationwide, four thousand Native Fijian men would leave their villages each year to work as sugarcane cutters during the six-month harvest period (Young 1983:19). Crews of twelve to sixteen laborers typically signed a contract with a "gang" or group of farmers to move between the fields harvesting the crops of each farmer. In the absence of mechanization, the use of unskilled, inexpensive labor was essential for the farmers, most of whom were Indo-Fijian and rented their land in ten- to fifteen-acre blocks from either the Fiji Sugar Corporation or Native Fijian landowners. Farmers were hard

pressed to find a reliable source of labor. In addition to paying wages, farmers had to provide necessary lodging, implements, and often food and clothes to keep the crews working. At the same time, with proper coordination, young Fijian men could be persuaded to leave their villages and join the sugarcane harvest because other wage labor opportunities were scarce. These men were eager to find jobs that gave them at least a small cash income. Sometimes workers from the same village would join together to earn money for a communal project. Although the overall economic advantage or disadvantage of the migrant labor system on Native Fijian village life has not been examined, two general observations can be made: one is that the potential exists for a significant infusion of cash into a village when one or more crews return from the harvest; another is that the laborers absent from the village for half the year are taken out of subsistence production and forced either to rely on relatives or to pay cash for what they consume. According to Lami informants, it was common for laborers to dissipate a large portion of their earnings before returning home. What was not spent for necessities was frequently used on drink, particularly *yaqona*, to relieve the hardship and monotony of working long days in the hot sun. Lack of savings resulted in workers contributing little or nothing of their earnings back to their home villages.

My second interview with the Lami was arranged for a morning in July after the sugarcane harvest had begun. Again accompanied by two colleagues, I was invited into the Lami headquarters by Emosi Sove, the spokesman, and Simione Nabenu, the general supervisor of field labor. Two other men were present to serve *yaqona*, but only to us as guests. Eight or ten women gathered to listen and sew clothes in the back of the room. In the afternoon we drove to the fields with Nabenu to observe the harvest in progress and visit two camps set up to house and feed laborers. There were two or three men and one woman present at each camp. In the cane field a crew of fourteen laborers, all young men from Tailevu and Nadroga, was supervised by one Lami member. The crew was split in half, each loading two trucks during the day. Since the fields were suffering from drought, workers had to cover an unusually large area. A crew of young men from the Ba hills and Sigatoka Valley was loading ten rail cars in another location. The cars moved along portable tracks laid down in rows in the field. Men worked in pairs, while a boy carried a bucket of drinking water to the loading area.

The Lami goal was not only to feed and house laborers, but also to encourage them to save what they earned, thus ensuring that economic

benefits would accrue to their home villages. Farms served by the Lami were located in the Sigatoka Valley as well as in Ba. The Lami made their crews competitive by guaranteeing a labor supply well in advance of the harvest and by relieving farmers of the responsibility to provide food and personal articles such as clothing and tools. Farmers still had to provide transportation to and from workers' home villages and maintain permanent camps with sleeping quarters. Lami women went into the camps to prepare meals. Due to a shortage of Lami women who could be sent into the camps, crews sometimes brought their own cooks. In 1983 thirty women came in from outside. Unlike Lami women, the outsiders were paid for their work. Altogether eighty women were employed as cooks throughout the harvest season.

Each crew of cutters was led by a Lami member who was expected to set an example of hard work and thrift. Cutters did not have to spend their own money for necessities and were encouraged by the crew leader not to spend money on drink. Lami members themselves were forbidden to drink alcohol at any time under any circumstances. A ban on drinking *yaqona* for Lami members went into effect several weeks before the start of the sugarcane harvest and remained in place throughout the season. The purpose of this prohibition was not only to save money but also to keep work performance from being impaired. The Lami banned tea and coffee, mainly for cost savings, but also for reasons related to overall health. They claimed that the good health of field laborers increased their work capacity. The Lami said they paid their workers F\$5 per day compared with F\$4 per day paid by farmers to other workers. The Lami deducted the cost of food from wages, but this amount was less than that paid by non-Lami workers for their own food. The spokesman explained that better wages and benefits had a widespread effect.

We make sure that our laborers go back to their villages with something to show for their work. Their earnings will not have been used up on daily expenses. In this way village people not living in sugarcane areas can receive some of the benefit from Fiji's major industry. Our main interest is in helping Fijian villagers to share in the wealth of the country and not in balancing revenues against expenses. Farmers prefer the Lami system. Now farmers who do not have contracts through the Lami are switching to the \$5 per day system for their own cutters. They are feeling the competition from the Lami. If they want to keep

the cutters that they depend on from year to year, they must offer similar benefits. Otherwise, the cutters will sign with the Lami.

One crew hired from the interior of Ba Province was reported to have made a particularly good impression for the Lami upon returning to their home village. On the way home their truck, loaded with rice and other goods, broke down. Another truck stopped to help, and the driver asked if they were carrying goods for a store. The crew replied that they had purchased their cargo with a surplus from harvest wages. When the crew arrived in the village, they distributed the goods to individual households. Villagers told a Lami member who had accompanied the crew that in the whole history of cutting cane, workers had never before brought home so many provisions or saved as much money.

The Lami tried to discourage field laborers from perceiving incentives in terms of tonnage cut, because this would promote individualism and selfishness. Instead they emphasized the importance of cooperative effort and communal work. In other words, they downplayed material incentives and sought motivation from the moral value of helping each other.

The Lami created greater efficiency by better harvest management, providing their own transportation, and using food obtained directly from farmers. Farmers paid the Lami on the basis of tonnage rather than a daily rate. Ordinary laborers normally received F\$4 for loading one truck in one day. The possibility of additional earnings was restricted either by not having a second truck available or by the fatigue of the laborers. The Lami, however, owned one cane truck, which they used to supplement trucks sent from the mill, thus allowing some crews to load two trucks in one day. In flat fields the harvest was increased by using portable track to load small railroad cars. Presumably, well-fed and healthy Lami workers were capable of handling the extra workload in either case. If a crew is able to load the equivalent of two trucks in one day, this means that the value of the total labor input is F\$8 per worker. The difference between F\$8 and F\$5 actually paid out to crew members then was used to provide food and other necessities.

Lami crews first established their reputation by working seven days per week while other crews took Sundays off for church. The Lami realized a savings in not having to feed idle workers on Sundays. However, what works in theory does not always work in practice. Lami leaders stated that money spent providing food, clothes, and cane knives cut deeply into their own earnings. They also pointed to the highly perish-

able nature of vegetable and root crops sold in the market as another liability that reduced their income. Maintaining an austere standard of living for their own members was necessary to provide others with social services.

In 1982 the Lami recruited four hundred cane cutters from villages in various parts of Fiji, including many from Nadroga, their own district of origin. They negotiated contracts with thirty-six groups of farmers to harvest a total of eighty thousand tons of cane. At this level of activity Lami crews accounted for about 10 percent of the cane processed through the large Rarawai Mill in Ba. Contracts for the next year were signed soon after the harvest. Gangs had to pay a F\$2,000 advance to guarantee the return of a Lami crew. A consultant who had left the group remarked that the Lami were surviving on advance payments and had fallen behind in debt payments on the purchase of vehicles and rented housing. The Lami planned to recruit additional field laborers needed for the following year through radio advertising. The slogan was "Anyone who can get two hundred men should contact us."

In the off-season Lami crew leaders returned to Ba and were given a reduced workload. They periodically assisted with produce marketing, occasionally participated in logging with the use of horses, and sometimes cleared and weeded cane fields. Recreational and leisure activities included volleyball, soccer, and storytelling. Several men organized an electric band, which raised extra money by playing in the nearby towns of Ba and Lautoka. Women who were employed as cooks in the harvest season kept busy making woven handicraft items such as mats and baskets to fill wholesale orders from marketing outlets in the capital city of Suva and other centers of tourism. Fifty-five Lami women belonged to the Soqosoqo Vakamarama, a nationwide women's organization for sewing and weaving of traditional handicrafts. In June 1983 Lami women hosted the annual crafts fair for this organization. A female extension agent in Ba worked with them on this activity.

### **Consumption and Investment**

The Lami managed their finances from the Ba headquarters. They reported keeping records of income and expenditures by saving receipts. Individuals assigned to manage market stalls or housing would total up their receipts and report back to the group. Leaders indicated that they kept track of expenses connected with the sugarcane harvest and measured them against the income received from farmers. However, they maintained no overall set of books.

The Lami preferred to treat money as a customary item of exchange similar to food, pottery, or whales' teeth, which are valued primarily when given away or distributed to others. The giver acquires social prestige, but the goods themselves are worthless if hoarded or kept as personal possessions. Lami leaders specifically mentioned a "principle of uniform consumption," which they believed to be essential to the traditional Fijian way of life. Leaders gave no money to individuals beyond what was needed to meet basic needs. Members received no wages. Instead, they used a common fund to provide communal meals, rented housing, and individual expenses for clothing, medical treatment, and incidentals on a first-come-first-served basis.

The Lami pooled the earnings of individual members along with the income of the group as a whole. There was no relation between the income earned by a particular individual and the amount allowed for individual expenditure. Leaders, in consultation with the membership, budgeted fixed amounts periodically for clothing, cigarettes, and other personal items. Members were able to withdraw what they needed from the appropriate account. Nobody kept track of individual expenditures. When an account had been used up, further withdrawals were postponed until the next budget period. In other words, when a budget of F\$100 for a particular week was used up, no requests for money were honored until the following week. The consensus of all members assembled together was needed to make an exception to this rule. In such a case, the person responsible for managing the account would make a report and recommendation. The Lami provided for the needs of the nonworking elderly, treating them in the same way as other members. Leaders took responsibility for allocating funds for group projects, consulting with members before making decisions.

With the help of Burns Philp, the Lami established a store called Bula Tale (New Life) General Merchandise. Located on the main road into Ba, the store was communally operated and stocked with basics, such as rice, tinned fish, sugar, soap, and a few shirts. No luxury items were evident on the shelves. Members were allowed to take merchandise free of charge, but leaders frowned upon this practice, and if repeated too often it could result in a reprimand. Leaders viewed the store as a business enterprise that should be kept solvent, even if some individual needs went unmet.

The Lami attitude toward consumption was consistent with the Fijian custom of *kerekere*, in which mutual borrowing is allowed without strictly calculating individual gains and losses. To conserve capital, though, they limited what could be requested. A Lami member explained the internal allocation system this way:

Individuals usually ask for only \$1 or \$2 unless they need \$20 or so for medical treatment. Someone must withdraw funds for several days in a row in order to accumulate enough money to purchase a \$10 item. When no money is available in the fund, the person must take what is needed from the shop. Emosi [the spokesman] controls the money and keeps a record of people who take items from the shop. He keeps no record of withdrawals from the common fund.

The Lami did not pursue business activities in order to achieve private or corporate ownership over land and resources. In fact they did not see ownership of any kind as important for Fijian advancement. The Lami owned no land or buildings, not even their own homes and headquarters, and no machinery except for eleven trucks used for business purposes. These vehicles included nine three-ton vegetable trucks, one large cane truck, and a small pickup. The Lami regarded ownership as necessary in this case because it was the only means available to accommodate their transportation needs. The Lami refused to follow advice from outsiders about registering as a legal corporation. Consequently, legal title to all Lami vehicles was held in the name of the son of the prophet. A substantial sum of money borrowed for purchase of the vehicles was still owed to creditors. The Lami had no investments other than the trucks, but said that they were not philosophically opposed to the general idea of investing their money. They claimed to be exploring such possibilities.

### **Family and Education**

The Lami had no formal marriage ceremony; couples lived together by mutual consent. This practice may have caused domestic pairing to be somewhat fluid, but rumors among outsiders about the existence of polygamy could not be substantiated. Lami leaders said that they recommended keeping to one partner and tried to keep marital relationships as stable as possible to avoid jealousy and interpersonal conflict. Physical violence between members was, by all indications, completely absent. The only instances of assault were among outsiders hired to work in the cane fields. Nuclear families lived in their own quarters. Housing rented from Indo-Fijian landlords was completely subsidized by the organization, so that individual families did not have to pay rent. Members walked to the headquarters building, a distance of up to one mile, for meals scheduled at 7-8 A.M., 11 A.M.-1 P.M., and 6-8 P.M. It was against Lami rules to use trucks for transporting members to and

from meals. During the harvest season, four or five women were assigned on a rotating basis each day as cooks. During the off-season, a mixed group of men and women shared cooking duties. Flour and rice were the staples for all three meals, with occasional supplements of *tavioka* and *dalo*.

Field laborers from other villages sometimes joined the Lami for a short time and then left. In one case an outside laborer married a Lami cook and stayed on permanently. In three other cases Lami men married women cooks brought in from outside. Overall it seemed that few new members were recruited except through biological reproduction.

A general antiestablishment attitude precluded the Lami from participation in many mainstream institutions. On the basis of principle, the Lami did not register births and marriages with the government and refused to send their children to school (birth certificates are required for entering school in Fiji). With the possible exception of the prophet, Kitione, Lami adults were illiterate and had not learned English. Kitione himself went through only four years of formal schooling as a boy. Not only did Lami children fail to learn English, they were also unfamiliar with the standard Bauan dialect of Fijian; they spoke only their own western (hills) dialect. The Lami believed that formal education undermined morality by teaching children to lie and steal. Young people break laws, explained the Lami spokesman, because they are not members of a communal group where they can share in the resources of the community and are "not left out." He reasoned that "each human being is born with a brain given by God, and each person can use his brain for any purpose. We should not taint the pure brain given by God. Ideas picked up from education lead to shop-breaking and delinquency." The Lami educated their own children in the course of daily life by interpreting and explaining adult activities--why they do their work and why they believe as they do. Lami children were taught to be disciplined and not to squander money. They were supposed to learn enough mathematics, spoken English, reading, and writing as was necessary from on-the-job training helping adults in the market stalls and the store. As the spokesman stated:

The difference between our children and other children is that a child of six or seven years of age is already an income earner. Other children who attend school wait until they are twenty years old to find a job. A Lami teenager will run a business better than a teenager who has been to secondary school because the latter is likely to steal from the market stall.



### **Business and Politics**

The Lami stated a preference for taking direct action to solve social problems without waiting for government officials and politicians to do it for them. Lami activism began early in the group's history and was directed toward economic development, using members' own experience as a model. The Lami became philanthropists by donating business profits to encourage grass-roots development among Fijian villagers. Between 1962 and 1967 they spent F\$100,000 on aid projects, including many small stores and transportation businesses, mostly in Nadroga villages. They helped villages to build simple store structures and purchase stock, after which the villagers themselves took over as managers. Inevitably, many of these ventures failed, and Lami aid subsequently tapered off. One cause of failure was lack of maintenance and the subsequent rapid deterioration of assets in the absence of new capital outlays. In one such project the Lami were forced to reclaim a poorly maintained truck and sell it for junk.

Business aid projects were one way in which the Lami maintained ties to Nadroga. As they became more successful in business and increased their income, they also began to contribute to their home villages for ceremonial events, such as births, funerals, and marriages. Contributions were small, as they believed that the use of resources for ceremonies and church activities must be kept to a minimum. The Lami made the donations as a group, not as individuals, and what was given was always for a group purpose and not for individuals. They felt that providing assistance for individuals, regardless of the need, would be counter to their ideals.

Consistent with their views on ownership, the Lami strongly identified with those who sold their labor or the products of their own labor. They saw themselves as middlemen who did not use access to markets for their own gain, but rather to help village farmers and field laborers to obtain better rewards for their work. In essence the Lami goal was to alter the well-known circumstances of geographical isolation and lack of organizational strength under which rural people are most often at a disadvantage. Moreover, the Lami viewed themselves as working people and attributed their own success to hard work and personal sacrifice rather than to control of resources. In contrast to the political rhetoric often heard in Fiji, the Lami expressed no concern about protecting native land ownership. Their lack of interest in this issue contains a note of realism; the fact that 83 percent of native lands remain communally owned has done little to alleviate poverty in Fijian villages.

Despite their skeptical attitude toward the postcolonial government, the Lami viewed politics as a potential means to bring progress and improve the lives of the majority of people in Fiji. Following independence in 1970, the Lami were known to have supported the National Federation Party, the leadership of which was dominated by Indo-Fijian merchants. In the national election of 1982 they switched to support the ruling Alliance Party candidate and prominent national political figure Apisai Tora, perhaps because of his earlier association with the labor movement. In the April 1987 election the Lami appear to have supported the newly formed and victorious Labor Party. The new prime minister, Timoci Bavadra, was from the Western District and was a commoner who had challenged the chiefs in electoral politics. A few months earlier the Lami also supported the winning efforts of the Labor Party candidate in the Ba Town Council election. That election was of practical importance to the Lami because town council officials regulated market stalls, set town rates and garbage rates, and granted direct favors.

While recognizing the inevitability of politics, the Lami were especially cynical about the many politicians who frequently changed party labels to maneuver themselves onto the winning side. The Lami spokesman commented: "Political party affiliation does not matter. The important question is progress and welfare--not whether a politician switches parties. If another party gets into office and there is no improvement, we must question what politics is all about."

The Lami believed that the food they provided for field laborers was a service that the present government should take over. The spokesman commented, "Government should begin to look after the needs of workers in the sugarcane harvest. The workers need good housing, sanitation, and food." He complained that the government looked after interests of the sugar mills and commercial farmers while neglecting village farmers and workers. Furthermore, he regarded government as remote and ill-informed about rural problems. "Government officials sit in their offices and think that rural people live in 'primitive affluence.' But if they were to visit rural areas, as your USP [University of the South Pacific] researchers are doing, they would find that people are not well off." Another criticism he leveled at the government was its failure to recognize the necessity of cooperative effort and communalism in bringing about development. He was convinced that the root of Fiji's problem was the kind of noncommunal development already carried out:

Leaders in government sometimes say they believe in communalism and cooperative effort, but they have not put this into practice. These leaders have their stomachs satisfied because they are getting benefits from the present system. This is why their words are mere rhetoric. The answer to the problem of development remains with the masses of people and answers will come from the masses. Fiji must follow a communal path or else the problem will get bigger. Government leaders may say this or that, but if the masses don't follow, it will come to nothing. The masses should lead while the leaders act on the wishes of the masses. The leaders should not dictate policy from the top. It is the masses who have the direct experience which should be translated into policy. If the masses are allowed to determine the objectives of development, then the masses will be more effective in carrying out the details of development. Only if the masses set the objectives can government make laws that the masses will follow to implement policy.

The Lami spokesman asked us, the researchers, to bring a leader from the present government to learn from them and then go back to implement communal policy for all Fijians. He said that the Lami had been engaged in discussions on how to influence national policy, but that they had just begun thinking about it and would let us know their thoughts on our next visit. He added that because Fiji is a small country, it should be easier to implement cooperative policy. Workers at the Ba mill who lived at Naidradra and Rarawai settlements near Ba had met with the Lami at their headquarters the day before our visit to discuss how to expand the Lami effort to help Fijian workers. He promised to reveal the contents of this discussion the next time we went to see them. Despite my intention to return, time ran out on my stay in Fiji and the next time never came.

### **Leadership**

The internal organization of the Lami, at least in principle, was based on an egalitarian ethic. Lami leaders attempted to keep followers highly committed to the group and sufficiently motivated to work by allowing universal participation in group decisions. They conducted general discussion in a group assembly to develop a consensus before

reaching a decision. The Lami spokesman said that Fijian chiefs used this method of leadership in precolonial times in contrast to the arbitrary authority exercised by present-day chiefs. He explained that authoritarian leadership was not effective because people who are not consulted will be less willing to cooperate. The egalitarian ethic of the Lami was further reinforced by rotating members between jobs within the organization (e.g., driver, market manager, crew leader, logger) so that all would share the same skills and experience. Job rotation also was designed to prevent members from forming close ties to any constituencies or individuals outside the group, thus maintaining greater solidarity and mutual reliance within the group itself.

The Lami did not readily admit to any titles or hierarchy of leadership positions within the organization. They identified leaders according to the special duties they performed for the group. In reality, however, leadership positions seemed well defined; they were divided into an inner, sacred circle and an outer, secular circle. The inner circle consisted of the sixty-year-old prophet, his twenty-year-old son, his son-in-law, and their wives. They lived in a house only a few feet from the headquarters. They bought their own food and ate separately from the rest of the group. The bases for Kitone's authority were his original vision, his status as group founder, and his demonstrated supernatural ability to predict the future. A former member elaborated on the last of these gifts.

Kitone has mystical powers to make prophecy. For example, he predicted that there would be a change to dollars from the system of pounds, shillings, and pence. In 1961 he predicted the 1983 drought in the west. He said that the time will come when people will eat flour and rice instead of *dalo* and *tapioka*. Last year he took a load of flour and rice to a Nadroga village and warned that they would be eating this food next year, too. This statement was taken as a kind of prophecy.

The reference to flour and rice is symbolic of the store-bought food and inexpensive rations that people would eat instead of root crops if there was a drought. Also, these are the foods eaten by Lami followers and any other people who might switch from subsistence production to wage labor. Kitone's son was said to have inherited the same prophetic ability and was being groomed as successor. He held a position of second in command. When Kitone was absent, the words of his son had to be obeyed by group members. Kitone's son-in-law at one time held a lead-

ership position in the outer circle as supervisor of field labor for the sugarcane harvest. Later he was replaced, but he continued to live in association with the inner circle. The primary function of the inner circle was to control the finances, which were not well understood by ordinary members.

The outer circle was managed by the same person who acted as spokesman. This spokesman/manager stayed in close communication with the prophet and had no delegated authority to make policy on his own. In running the day-to-day affairs of the group, he had the help of one general assistant and a supervisor placed in charge of field laborers during the sugarcane harvest. One of his primary responsibilities was to manage the food service for field laborers. The use of a spokesman is a reflection of Fijian custom in which a designated orator speaks for the chief at ceremonial events and acts as a village herald announcing news and important activities. The spokesman and not the prophet handled all Lami business with outsiders. The prophet himself never discussed Lami affairs or his role in the organization with outsiders and did not seek public attention. We were told that he conducted himself in public "like an ordinary man." He had never met with Ratu Osea, who was at that time the most important political leader in Fiji's Western Division. In public Kitone would talk to anyone about everyday matters, but on organizational matters he always referred people back to his spokesman. On infrequent occasions Kitone would choose to meet in person with assembled Lami members and speak about issues of special importance. We did not discover Kitone's existence, his exploits, or his prophetic powers until making a visit to Togovere where knowledgeable outsiders volunteered this information.

### **Social Control**

The Lami strongly believed that only communalism and cooperation would lead to development and progress among Fijians, and that individualism would lead to social conflict. They recognized the need for having material things, but they took firm measures to insure that this aspect of life was subordinated to the need for cooperation and social harmony. A member whose work performance was deficient was subject to recall and reprimand by the leaders, after which the person would be given a chance for vindication at the same job. A member who consistently violated the ethical standards of the group would be called in for counseling. In the absence of behavioral improvement, violators would eventually be asked to leave the group.

During our visit to Togovere, the village chief became extremely uneasy about answering questions. After narrating his story about the origins of the Lami movement, he left the room and was not present for much of the remainder of the interview. Meanwhile, we were able to question Ananaiyasa Neirube, a first cousin or "Fijian brother" to Kitione. Neirube had gone to Ba with the Lami in 1961. He was expelled from the group and returned home to Togovere early in 1983. He reported that two emissaries had come to his house to convey the order to leave. They told him that there had been a general meeting where the membership decided to exclude him. He himself felt that it was only the leaders who were against him, but nonetheless accepted his fate and took his wife and five of his six children with him back to Togovere. The eldest child, an eighteen-year-old son who had developed a strong affiliation to the group, stayed in Ba. Neirube estimated that a total of ten households had left the group since 1961.

Neirube complained that the prophet did not do any work: "As leader he hands down decisions without first holding meetings of the entire group for discussion and consultation. The group almost always agrees to carry out Kitione's decisions. I was the only one to buckle and resist. Even if the members as a group amend one of Kitione's decisions, he ignores it." Neirube viewed this style of leadership as a contradiction to the expressed egalitarian ethic of the group. When he had disagreed on several key issues, he found Kitione to be uncompromising. Neirube favored the idea of purchasing land and houses, which he said was desired by members, and supported the recommendation of government officials to register the group either as a cooperative or as a business. He criticized some Lami members for being lazy and not doing their fair share of work, and felt that the food served to members was of inferior quality--mostly *tapioka* and water--and did not provide sufficient nourishment for hardworking people. Moreover, he disliked walking more than a mile each way with his wife and children for meals at the Lami headquarters.

The above criticisms must be evaluated in context. While still a member in good standing, Neirube was caught taking market revenue and spending it on beer. He admitted to us that he did not like the rules against drinking *yaqona* and beer. It was undoubtedly as a result of his individualistic behavior and unrepentant attitude that he was asked to leave the group. Although his views offer insight into the actual workings of the organization, they were not necessarily shared by those who remained members. What is remarkable is not this exceptional case but the relatively long survival of a prophet-led organization with its dis-

tinctive ideology attempting with some success to become involved in the modern market economy.

### **Comparative Ideology**

Lami ideology is a complete contrast to that of the indigenous elite who capitalized on their high status as bureaucrat chiefs under colonial rule to transform themselves into businessmen and politicians in post-independence Fiji. Having adopted a capitalist ethic, they gradually accumulated more wealth and power for themselves, while Fijian commoners, treated as a source of abundant and inexpensive labor, became an underclass struggling to survive. In this context the priestly tradition of egalitarianism and opposition to the rule of chiefs takes on new meaning in the struggle between well-defined social classes. Hence the Lami strongly identified with those who work for a living as opposed to those who derive income as property owners. They represent a response both to the widespread emergence of Fijian villagers as an underclass of poor peasant farmers and seasonal agricultural laborers and to increased social antagonism created by differences in wealth and competition for limited resources. The Lami directly addressed economic problems arising from the transition from a subsistence to a market economy (i.e., providing access to market for peasant farmers and improving wages and working conditions for agricultural laborers). Most importantly, perhaps, they overcame obstacles to the accumulation of investment capital by refusing to contribute to the upkeep of a burdensome social hierarchy. They dealt with increasing individualism and social conflict around them by emphasizing an internal morality featuring interdependence within a communal living arrangement. The Lami emphasized the importance of the group over the individual and attempted to minimize the impact of external cultural influences. The chiefly elite, on the other hand, had adopted the individualistic values of the external system, stressing the Fijian tradition of communalism only as a means of requiring unquestioning obedience from followers. Moreover, the chiefly elite camouflaged their preoccupation with protecting their position of power by linking their individual successes symbolically to that of all ethnic Fijians (Durutalo 1986:46-47). Unlike the chiefs, the Lami dealt with the external system in such a way to fit their own internal moral order.

Lami ideology resembles that of predecessor movements in several ways. Followers opposed the government and the missionaries and eliminated the ceremonial obligations that drained their resources and

supported the rule of the chiefs. While demonstrating their resistance, they also emphasized forward-looking elements that would give them a brighter future economically. Kitione's program of action was designed according to the nature of his personal experience and knowledge, just as were Apolosi's attempt to control the banana trade and Emosi's move into selling firewood in Nausori. The Lami enterprises--marketing village products to urban markets and negotiating contracts for cutting sugarcane--reflect Kitione's earlier activities in raising crops and livestock primarily for market sale rather than for subsistence use.

Like their predecessors, the Lami remained aloof from mainstream social institutions, but with less visible provocation. After being forced to evacuate their base in Togovere, the Lami regrouped in Ba and adopted a live-and-let-live policy. By escaping from the village environment and becoming urban tenants, they were able to avoid provincial taxes and social pressures for conformity. Like the movement in Daku the Lami used the term *Bula Tale* to describe their social and cultural transformation. In both cases "the new life" was founded on a strong belief in the traditional morality of a small-scale society as opposed to the immorality, deviance, and conflict typically found in large-scale industrial society. In effect, the Lami established political independence, but without the flags, military drilling, and ceremony associated with earlier movements. The prophet Kitione further exemplifies the pattern of low-profile separation. It is reasonable to conclude that his desire to maintain anonymity in public and project a secular image for his organization was a strategy designed for protection against the harsh treatment earlier prophets had received at the hands of colonial authorities. In their business activities the Lami interacted successfully with commercial farmers, truck dealers, and landlords. No setbacks arose to cause them to turn toward excessive ritual and become supernaturally preoccupied.

As with the previous Fijian movements, one feature missing from the Lami's implementation of their forward-looking ideology was a system of formal accounting appropriate to modern business. In all cases they collected funds centrally and then disbursed or spent them as the leader saw fit. This arrangement is consistent with the system of exchange in the traditional subsistence economy characterized by egalitarian redistribution. Financial accountability does not exist in such a system except in a social sense; the leader is expected to look after the welfare of the community. Details on the handling of funds are not available for any of these groups, but we do know that responsible financial conduct was controlled by a sense of moral duty and small-group sanctions typi-



cal of a subsistence economy rather than by formal legal requirements. In no case was the organization, enterprise, or company legally registered with the government. This manner of handling of funds was, of course, consistent with self-proclaimed, sociopolitical independence and a strategy of adapting the money economy to their needs rather than vice versa. AS a result, all leaders, including Kitione, were vulnerable to detractors, who accused them of financial abuse as defined in Western terms. Moreover, the lack of intricate accounting and investment procedures necessary to maintain solvency in the market economy constitutes an element of vulnerability in the Lami experiment, both in relation to the external threat of bankruptcy and the potential for internal dissention.

### **Conclusion**

The appeal of the Lami is related to providing a new organizational framework and eliminating various customs and communal obligations that inhibit capital accumulation and investment. This break with custom was made possible by introducing a comprehensive substitute for the multipurpose organizational framework of the village that governed every aspect of people's lives.<sup>6</sup>

The advantage in providing a single framework for all aspects of social life is that the commitment of the participants must be total and without competing external interests to interfere with the collective effort. Those who join may feel free to donate all of their personal wealth and time because they see no use for it outside of the single framework. This type of organization, like the village, serves multiple purposes; political, economic, religious, and social relations are all subsumed under the same framework. In Fiji it is common for entire villages to embrace foreign institutions such as the Methodist Church in this single framework. Like the church, any economic organization established in the village context will be absorbed and co-opted into the single framework (see Young 1984). In contrast, an organization such as the Lami group, which is established as a complete alternative to the village, can be effective in implementing change. The lack of competing demands on the individual and the internal solidarity of the organization constitutes its strength.

What is a strength from one perspective, however, may be seen as a weakness from another. The structure of social movements in Fiji and elsewhere tends to be authoritarian despite professed egalitarian ideology to the contrary. Loyalty is to a single leader and his vision.

Lawrence observes with respect to similar movements in the Madang area of New Guinea: "There was no sense of what we might call 'civic responsibility' " (1964:258). Thus, the personal strengths and weaknesses of the leader will be magnified as the strengths and weaknesses of the movement.

The Lami certainly fit this leadership style, but at the same time cannot be said to be totally lacking in a sense of civic responsibility. They contributed to village development projects without government help and tried single-handedly to improve working conditions and wages for Native Fijian agricultural workers. Their women were involved in an islandwide organization and government extension program for handicraft workers. They also participated to a limited degree in party politics in 1983, stating their intention to move toward concern with broader issues affecting Fijian commoners. Moreover, at the conclusion of my study they had plans to meet with a group of sugar mill workers to discuss ways of mutual assistance and cooperation. The Lami obviously saw themselves as contributing to Fijian development as a whole and were searching for ways to address social needs they felt were ignored by leaders in government. Civic-mindedness along with concealing the role of prophecy in their organization gave them a degree of credibility with outsiders, greatly reduced the threat of persecution, and contributed to their longevity.

The lack of influence actually gained by the Lami in the larger society, however, is evidence for the limitations of this type of movement. In being totally committed to a single organization, Lami members had only superficial contact with outsiders and little impact on other organizations or groups cross-cutting geographical regions and other segments of Fijian society. Inquiries in nearby villages revealed that the Lami, though respected for their business achievements, still were regarded suspiciously as a kind of counterculture, as "Fijian hippies." Thus their single organizational framework carried with it an inevitable liability in regard to their self-imposed mission of societal reform.

Following political independence in 1970, many Fijians increased their participation in wage labor and lost their need to belong to the single framework of the village; they gradually began to free themselves from constraints against economic advancement associated with the control exercised by the colonial-based, chiefly hierarchy over the village environment. But the economic setbacks and reassertion of chiefly control that has been on the Fijian political agenda since the 1987 coup could once again aggravate tensions that have existed throughout Fijian history between hereditary chiefs and those who would claim leader-

ship based on moral authority. Social movements similar to the Lami, either in Fiji or in other Pacific societies, may still arise as alternatives to challenge postcolonial social hierarchies that violate traditional values and at the same time stifle the possibilities of ordinary citizens for desired economic innovation and change.

### NOTES

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1. Navosavakadua means "he who speaks but once." This was the term used by Fijians in reference to the colonial chief justice, who could give the death sentence against which there was no appeal (Brewster 1922:239).

2. Parallels exist with other Melanesian movements with respect to the relationship between ill-treatment and supernatural emphasis. For example, Lawrence (1964) observed that Yali, the leader of a post-World War II social movement in the Madang area of New Guinea, began to impress followers with his knowledge of native deities as a source of power after the government humiliated him by failing to deliver on promises related to his economic development objectives. Similarly, the accounts of Mead (1956) and Schwartz (1962) indicate that Paliau, the leader of the New Way movement in the Admiralty Islands, changed his focus from developing a community business enterprise before World War II to making supernatural predictions based on dreams and visions when, after the war, the Australians punished him for being a Japanese collaborator.

3. *Kerekere* is the practice of borrowing from kinsmen at the will of the borrower. This custom was a form of security against misfortune; it contributed to the solidarity of kinship ties, equalized consumption, and, most importantly, prevented the accumulation of wealth from becoming a threat to the social hierarchy. *Kerekere* was recognized early by the colonial government as a detriment to individual initiative and a drain on Fijians endeavoring to accumulate investment capital (Spate 1959:24).

4. All five sites occupied by Togovere belonged to Voua village, which is located near the main coastal highway. The landowners' kinship group affiliations were said to be the *toka* or sublineage called Betobalavu and the *yavusa* or clan called Leweinaoroga.

5. A namesake is a person who is given the name of an older relative with the permission and future guidance of that relative. A namesake is expected to follow in the footsteps of the elder.

6. The term "multipurpose organizational framework" is used by Cochrane in describing the social system of the Solomon Islands where big-men controlled a single organizational structure that performed multiple functions (1970:71-72). The original concept comes from Lawrence's description of the salient features of New Guinea societies: "In contrast to the relatively flexible structure of Western pyramidal society with its separate systems for economic, political and legal, and religious activities, the same structure performed multiple functions in all these fields" (1964: 11).

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**EDITOR'S FORUM**

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**RASCALS IN PARADISE: URBAN GANGS IN  
PAPUA NEW GUINEA**

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This article identifies indignation, a sense of injustice growing out of Papua New Guinea's colonial past and continuing into the present, as a basis for urban gang activity there. This sense of injustice grows out of violated personal expectations regarding benefits and opportunities associated with urban life. Unfulfilled expectations lead gang members, called Rascals, to redistribute opportunities through gang activities. In other words, as the supply of labor is unable to be absorbed by the formal structures, workers move to the nonformal structures --that is, gangs--where the demand for labor is greater. The very use of the term "Rascals" by Papua New Guinea's urban youth gangs itself captures the normative deviance that accompanies the shift into the informal sector.

Urban gang activity in Port Moresby, the capital of Papua New Guinea, began to be noticed in the late 1950s and early 1960s. In retrospect a pattern of expanded activities and organizational change has come to characterize the growth and institutional viability of these urban gangs, whose members are collectively called Rascals. The term "Rascals" was used first during the early 1960s to describe youth gangs in the Port Moresby area and was appropriated by urban gangs themselves as a badge of notoriety and respect (Dorney 1990:301). Rascals now exist in virtually all urban areas of this relatively new Melanesian country.<sup>1</sup>

Though describing the emergence of urban gangs in the rapidly growing areas surrounding Port Moresby is easy, stating much categorically about Rascalism is more difficult. At this juncture we know pre-

cious little about one of the most important social movements occurring in this resource-rich and socially complex island state (Harris 1988b). Nevertheless, our knowledge and information base has grown over the last fifteen years so that we may now begin to speculate about the sources of Rascalism, why Rascalism is important, what may affect its growth, and how this fledgling country will be able to cope with Rascalism and the transforming effects of rapid urbanization in its cities (Mannur 1987; Munro 1987).

Most observers agree that gang activity in Papua New Guinea has increased in the last ten years. Yet those same observers admit this conclusion rests on inadequate data (Clifford, Morauta, and Stuart 1984: ii). For example, crime levels and criminal activities connected with Rascals are difficult to assess accurately, because most authoritative studies of law and order reveal that the police understate the crime rate throughout the country (Morauta 1986:6; Dinnen 1986:85; Taison 1986). Police crime statistics contradict the general perception in the community that things have gotten much worse, not better (Morauta 1986:28-44). This suggests that at best police information on criminal activities is suspect; more likely it is seriously flawed. One close observer estimated that less than 3 percent of breaking and entering cases resulted in arrests (Harris 1988b:20-21). As murky as our factual lenses are, we can still assert that urban crime and related urban gang activity appear to be increasing. Correspondingly, the police seem to have little or no impact on what urban gangs do.

This article seeks to identify the sources of Rascalism in Port Moresby, describe organizational change within the gangs and link these changes with changes in Rascal activities, and finally speculate on the future of Papua New Guinea's urban gangs. Although there are multiple reasons for the development of urban gangs (Dinnen 1986:81), what is stressed here is the significance of the nation's recent colonial past and the sense of injustice or indignation that continues to fuel the activities of young men adversely affected by the modern cash economy.

This is also a time of crisis for the new indigenous elite who assumed the instruments of government after what appeared to be Australia's hasty retreat from its brief colonizing mission. This still-nascent elite appears still to lack an authority replacement capacity--that is, the power to effectively enforce authority--especially with regards Papua New Guinea's urban masses. We know from experience elsewhere that the urbanization process not only loosens existing traditional structures, but also inhibits the development of emerging modern institutions.<sup>2</sup>

Knowledge of this contemporary context, underpinned by reference



to a recent colonial past, enables us to approach an understanding of the emergence and growth of urban gangs in Port Moresby and in other cities as well. Framing the discussion in this way further illuminates the adaptive capacities of Rascal organization and the indignation driving that process. Indignation--the internalization of historic wrongs, a heightened sense of injustice--is the emotion that provides the bridge from the social psychological state of relative deprivation to its political expression. Seen from this perspective, Rascalism also takes on a comparative dimension and provides insight into male youth behavior in urban contexts around the globe.

### **Rascal Activities and Organizational Complexity**

Since the late 1950s and early 1960s, Rascal activity in and around Port Moresby has increased to the point that in 1985 a national emergency was declared. As the scope of the gangs' activities has grown, so have their capacities to organize and direct those activities. Rascals, along with the army, constitute one of the few viable interethnic organizations in a country continually threatened by ethnic separatism and the centrifugal pulls of regionalism as evidenced by the Bougainville crisis, which threatens the economic viability of the national economy (Larmour n.d.). But it was not always that way. In the earliest phases of gang formation, Rascals came together haphazardly and for short periods of time to engage in ad hoc petty street crime, vandalism, and mutual protection (Harris 1988b:4). Gang leadership likewise took on an ad hoc character befitting the discontinuous formation of gangs themselves. That is to say, leadership during the early stages of gang formation appeared to be changeable and prevailed only as long as individuals were able to dominate others and remain active in matters at hand.

This pattern of domination is reminiscent of the traditional role of the big-man in many, if not most, of the traditional societies that still constitute approximately 80 percent of Papua New Guinea's human landscape (Chowning 1977:42-46). The gang leader, like the traditional big-man, was involved not only in dominating others, but in sharing as well. Thus, the gang leader is a modern restatement of a traditional system of authority. Having command over physical resources, themselves perishable and not consumable by an individual, he distributes these resources as a means to maintain power and press obligations on others (Griffin 1988).

Yet, in the earliest days of gang formation in Port Moresby, there were few if any organizational structures to speak of, either to perpetuate

leadership or to give individual gangs what we have come to recognize as a source of their strength: organizational adaptability and internal coherence. If organization follows function, then the weak, loose organizational structures characteristic of the early 1960s correspond to what Rascals were about: the acquisition of self-esteem for members and formation of an organizational basis for occasional forays into the world of street crime to acquire food, cash, and beer. The consumption of alcohol, especially beer, in short time came to define manhood. In retrospect drinking seems to be linked with the explosion of Rascal activity in the early 1960s.<sup>3</sup>

Noticeable changes in Rascal activities appeared between 1968 and 1975 in Port Moresby and its neighboring communities of Boroko, Gehrehu, Cordons, and Hohola. Although acquiring reliable crime-rate statistics is difficult at best, the number of children charged with breaking and entering appears to have suddenly escalated (Harris 1988b:11). Rascals not only increased the volume of their activities, they expanded the scope well beyond the settlement areas in and around Port Moresby, a clear indication that Rascals were into more lucrative hunting grounds, the "better neighborhoods." This sounded a warning that no part of the Port Moresby area would be safe from organized criminal activities.

The movement into more affluent and respectable neighborhoods seemed motivated less by aggressiveness and more by potential economic gain. This change in the locale of "*bisnis*" activities was based on commercial calculation, itself an indication of growing sophistication among the leadership, and set the stage for more concerted, if ill-planned, attacks on Rascal organizations by the police constabularies. To some the police themselves constitute part of the problem of containing criminal activities. The police were not prepared for independence, especially for the rapid urban development so characteristic of a new nation's capital, and certainly not prepared for the rise of organized urban gangs (Clifford, Morauta, and Stuart 1984:28-44).

Looking back, it appears that as long as confined within the boundaries of native settlements and as long as the victims were nationals, Rascal criminal activities excited little alarm from the privileged. This changed, however, when Rascals expanded the scope and contagion of their activities, generating in turn pressures for containment from individual and institutional sources of community power.<sup>4</sup> One has to impute some degree of rationality here. The move outside settlement areas was willful, organized, and calculated. What is difficult to ascertain are the details in the calculation to expand the boundaries of their

activities without incurring the additional attention and costs of intense police response as a result of pressures from the more privileged segments of society.<sup>5</sup>

The movement of gang activities out of the settlement areas prompted important changes in the organizational structures as well as changes in the organization of task-force activities. Rascal assault units had to adapt to new urban turf. Expansion made new demands on gang leadership also. It necessitated the creation of more clearly defined and formalized leadership structures. Increased risks begged for more calculation and prediction of likely outcomes, including estimating the character and quality of the police response. New command hierarchies emerged during this phase of organizational development, ones that were more flexible, disciplined, and specialized (Dorney 1990:304).

Recruitment patterns also reflected the expansion of Rascal activity into more affluent sectors of the community. During this period the social base of Port Moresby's gangs enlarged to include young men from "better homes," what in Papua New Guinea would be called "middle class." Male youths of higher social status who had the security of a home life and prospects for a future were attracted to Rascalism (Griffin 1988), whereas earlier recruits were drawn predominantly from urban settlement villages, the lowest rung on Port Moresby's social ladder. What explains this change in recruitment pattern, and what was the significance of this change?

Middle-class youths were attracted to Rascalism for several reasons. One was the sheer excitement of "running with the boys," a practice called "wilding" in the recent attacks by urban youths on unsuspecting joggers in New York City's Central Park (Sturz 1989). The main attractions, however, were that crime was beginning to pay and that the accompanying risks were acceptable, particularly in view of police ineptitude. The *raison d'être* of Rascal formation--ethnic and male bonding--and mutual benefit were joined to and then superseded by the impulse to commercialism. Commercialism, *bisnis*, appears to be driving and transforming virtually all structures of Rascal organization, including the social backgrounds of members. The money economy, colonialism's lasting contribution to measuring status and privilege, became enmeshed with the growth and ultimately the direction of urban gangs. Opportunities to obtain valuables were not lost, for instance, on male students at the University of Papua New Guinea, who sought to augment their stipends with occasional Rascal forays into the compound where the largely expatriate faculty was housed.<sup>6</sup>

The inclusion of recruits from higher-status families has benefited

Rascals in several ways. The new entrants brought a degree of sophistication about business and commerce that had not been a part of gang activities previously. These recruits also brought a familiarity with and entrée to the legitimate business community. In business, as in other life ventures, having the right connections often means the difference between struggling and succeeding. Such was the impact of extending the social base of Rascal membership; it made a difference in the "bottom line." Had this change not occurred, gangs in the Port Moresby area would have been severely limited both in their ability to generate new profitable ventures and to pose additional challenges to the government to contain them (Harris 1988b:16).

The late 1970s marked a period of rapid expansion in Rascal activity and with it a surge in deference from various segments of the community. Money and its promise of greater access to the "good" life had become the driving force that attracted larger numbers to Rascal membership. Regardless of their successes, however, Rascals remained outsiders. If a discernible, though begrudging respect was accorded them from the legions of young men who shared a sense of alienation and separation from the established norms, as well as from many who constituted the establishment, collectively Rascals remained marginal and effectively blocked from the higher rungs of achievement and status. Thus, an unmistakable indignation drove them and added intensity to their activities. They seemed to have expressed that indignation "constructively" by channeling their energies into stronger and more flexible organizations.

### **The 1980s and Beyond**

As the 1980s began there seemed to be a correspondence between Rascal organization and the character of their activities. Better organization paid dividends that counted: expanded operations with greater profits. Likewise, gang membership grew during the early 1980s, accompanied by horizontal integration. Smaller gangs were absorbed by larger ones and, as a result, by the mid-1980s there were fewer, though larger, gangs, with more recruits.

Rascal organization was also being integrated vertically. Defined hierarchical lines of authority were increasingly evident (Harris 1988b: 16). As these internal changes took place, Rascal activities expanded with little regard for police interference. Rascals began to sense that they were relatively immune from police intrusions and to see that organization and planning paid dividends. The community at large also

began to believe that Rascals could come and go as they pleased. This led to the routinization of criminal activities, which in turn resulted in the government declaring a national emergency in 1985.

The belief that anyone at anytime could be victimized by urban gangs hung like pall over the national capital. Chain fences, burglar alarms, and large dogs patrolling homes soon became part of the urban landscape. A siege mentality spread to virtually all areas of the city. The home of Rabbie Namaliu prior to his becoming prime minister had been robbed and sacked on several occasions. This only heightened the impression that no one was beyond the pale of Rascal intent (Griffin 1988). Victims and potential victims adjusted to the situation in various ways. Most appeared to be coping with the imminent danger. But appearances are often deceiving. There was a social and psychological toll from living in such conditions. Periodically the government was pressured to "do something" about crime. Such an atmosphere hastened plans to leave the country for some. In any case, economic and social development were hampered.

There is a circularity in this situation as well. As Rascals continued to rationalize their organizational structures and improve the efficiency of planning operations, the more success they achieved. The community itself became complicit in shaping the myth of invincibility surrounding Rascal gangs as it acknowledged this success and adapted to what it believes to be "inevitable." This lends further support to the "realistic" appraisal of local constabulary forces that they are not equipped to combat Rascal criminal activities and that people will have to rely on their own devices for protection and security.

### **Continued Shifts in Rascal Activities**

Breaking and entering remains the staple Rascal criminal activity. More recently, however, vehicular theft has increased, indicating a shift in commercial ventures. More vehicles are being stolen and broken down for parts then sold to a growing vehicular-parts market. This understandably adds to the police burden of apprehension and enforcement. Rascal leaders seem to be aware that adding to the authorities' already overtaxed capacities helps them remain one step ahead of the police (Harris 1988a).

It did not take long for Rascals to widen their distribution outlets for stolen goods nationally and internationally. It is not easy to gain a clear sense of this network, but a few things are clear enough. Rascals have been able to use local businesspeople to "fence" their stolen goods; in a

few instances they have used outlets owned and operated by gang members themselves to sell directly to the public (Dorney 1990:304). As is often the case when gangs expand to new territories, turf wars ensue. Where powerful gangs set about to consolidate smaller and presumably weaker gangs, inevitable clashes for territorial and economic dominance result. As commerce, profits, and territorial aggrandizement merge, the stimulus for intergang rivalry all too often develops into destructive gang wars. Thus, the gangs achieve among themselves what the police were not able to accomplish: their own destruction.

During this period of gang expansion and consolidation "payback" crimes between rival gangs reached a peak. Paybacks have deep cultural roots in Papua New Guinea's traditional societies (Dorney 1990: 304). The crossover to gang retribution was made easier given its historical and cultural familiarity. When one gang's territory, members, or someone related to them was "violated," those concerned would often feel obliged to seek violent retribution, frequently in the form of rape.<sup>7</sup> The ability to establish control over an enemy's women amounts to establishing dominance (Griffin 1988). Rape is not unusual in Papua New Guinea, but now it has become a Rascal trademark in the public's mind, especially pack rapes.

### **Indignation as a Moral Basis of Rascalism**

The question remains: Why did urban gangs first emerge in Port Moresby and only later in the other main cities--Goroka, Lae, Madang, Mt. Hagen, and Wewak? Blocked mobility and relative deprivation are among the most significant reasons. Sociological and psychological explanations assist us in understanding the factors that create mounting frustration and aggressive behaviors. But these explanations do not go far enough in bridging the gap between living with feelings of deprivation and giving those feelings an outward, political expression. I suggest that indignation, a strongly felt sense of the utter unfairness of life directed at those who share disproportionately in its rewards, a feeling of being unjustly excluded from life's benefits, bridges the two domains and emotively drives Rascal behavior.

To more fully appreciate this, one must examine the changes wrought from Papua New Guinea's colonial past, especially those aspects cementing a status-conscious society with structural inequalities. The introduction of a money economy, the suppression of warfare, the institutionalization of Western-style education, and the penetration of both traditional and urban society by a bewildering number of missionaries

--all set the social and economic parameters for the emergence of a new nation-state in 1975 and along with it the rise of urban gangs (Griffin, Nelson, and Firth 1979:140). Highlighting aspects of Papua New Guinea's recent colonial past helps us understand certain social conditions that have contributed to Rascalism and shaped its character. Relatedly, we might gain insight into the question of under what conditions Rascalism will persist into the future.

One view of the causes of Rascalism advocates that it is best understood as an urban phenomenon, in this case involving primarily male youths, and is seen worldwide (Bruntin 1988). According to this generalized view, the fact that Rascals break laws is less significant than the fact that laws have been constructed to hold urban youths in place. Additionally, such laws reveal more about their creators than about the groups they are intended to restrain. This view of Rascalism rejects the notion that Papua New Guinea is unique and asserts that the development of urban gangs is a remnant of a recent colonial past, pure and simple.

Furthermore, carrying this perspective further, there is in Rascalism something present in all male-driven youth cultures. Papua New Guinea, like many if not most Melanesian societies, is male-dominated, both in its traditional and modern sectors. That is to say, men regard women as inferior and seek to exclude them from the reaches of male privilege (Chowning 1977:58-59). Young males grow up and, like most males, want to "find themselves" and make their mark "where the action is." Furthermore, new arrivals to the urban scene quickly sense that they have new strengths, both physical and mental. They try new endeavors and experiment with making a new life for themselves, something bourgeois society encourages and admires in its own youths but rejects in youths of others.

Before long, however, these young males realize that places like Port Moresby are alien to them and that this new world, one dominated by a money economy, is not what they had anticipated. They run headlong into existing social, economic, and political structures and the values that underpin them. They find themselves in an unwelcomed learning process. Some learn quickly that the existing economic structures are "oppressive" and that they are either ill equipped educationally to enter the urban workplace or that there are no jobs regardless of how well equipped they are. In a word, they learn rapidly and apparently all too well that they have little or no chance of being absorbed and integrated into urban life as it is set up and administered. They have little in common with these structures or the people who benefit from them. This

argument suggests that little has changed from what used to exist when Australia ruled what has become Papua New Guinea. Ted Wolfers echoed Frantz Fanon's (1963:30) insightful observation--about the colonial world as a world of compartments--when he stated: "the fact of belonging or not belonging to a particular group has tended to determine the range of opportunities open to each individual, the roles he or she might play and his or her status" (Wolfers 1975:2). Wolfers's observation, it might be argued, applies to a postcolonial world as well. In any event the implication is clear: little has changed in independent Papua New Guinea save the integration of indigenous elite and international and business classes. There is no mystery here; "blocked" urban youth perceive a less-than-desirable future for themselves.

According to this view, Rascalism corresponds to other social phenomena found worldwide. It is caused by the frustrations of being denied the benefits of modern urban society. So interpreted, Rascalism is little more than a response of youthful males to the hostility of an urban setting by which they have been attracted and rejected.

I agree with much in this view of Rascalism, especially the notion that a hostile urban environment both attracts and repels many who are drawn to it.<sup>8</sup> Blocked mobility is part of the cornerstone on which to build an understanding of the rise of Rascalism. I do not agree, however, that Rascalism is little more than an urban phenomenon derived from similarities with male-driven societies the world over, especially in Third World countries. The point is overdrawn and as such misses an opportunity to investigate the historical and social underpinnings that give Rascalism its own identity and integrity as a social phenomenon. For that we will have to reassess aspects of Papua New Guinea's colonial past that have recombined to form new structures perpetuating Rascalism.

### **Making Money, Saving Souls, and Exploration: Colonialism in Papua New Guinea**

Papua New Guinea's recent colonial past, especially the period of Australian dominion and tutelage 1884-1974, provides the context for understanding those forces that have stimulated, shaped, and furthered the indignation that continues to fuel Rascalism (Wolfers 1975:8). Much of the impulse to form urban gangs stems from this colonial past and complements male dominance and blocked mobility as explanations of Rascal behavior.

As an Australian colony, what is now Papua New Guinea was a caste



society first and foremost. This singular factor not only defined race and status relations within Australia's only colony (if one overlooks the subjugation of its own aboriginal people), but also continues to impress its legacy on access to the cash economy (Wolfers 1975:8).

Port Moresby, the nation's capital and largest city, was founded as a colonial town in 1885 and was described appropriately by one observer at the time as little more than a European society with a slight Australian flavor, not unlike any of the several remote British colonial communities.<sup>9</sup> As in other European colonial centers, virtually all indigenous Papuans were scrupulously restrained from access to the money economy and for the most part consigned by law to the hardship of indentured plantation labor. A visitor today would be struck by the resilience of much of Australian colonialism in present-day Port Moresby. Just as in the past, the modern cash economy appears to be the playground of the European expatriate community, high government officialdom, and, since independence in 1975, the new indigenous bureaucratic and entrepreneurial elite (Connell and Curtain 1982:467-470). In sharp contrast to these groups are the majority of people, who walk without shoes and remain at modernity's doorstep (Oram 1976:28).

From the time of Port Moresby's founding as a most unlikely location for a colonial capital, native Papuans were considered the lowest rung on the social ladder, even lower than nonnative "colored" immigrants. Virtually all movement of indigenous people was tightly controlled within the immediate Port Moresby area (Oram 1976:39). Most migrants attracted to the area were males who spent a short time in the colonial capital and who returned to their traditional villages when enough money was earned or when "pushed" to more secure places (Connell and Curtain 1982:467-470). This phenomenon of movement from rural traditional settings to the urban center, a cumulative process (May 1977:21), has been the unending source of recruits to Port Moresby's underclass--and to the various urban gangs.

An assumption prevails in Port Moresby that migrants from the Highlands are more prone to violence and aggressive behavior, largely because aggressiveness is part of Highland culture.<sup>10</sup> A better explanation may be that they tend to be more aggressive because they follow in the wake of migrants from the central and gulf provinces. Highlanders may be prone to more violence less by their inherent cultural tendencies than by the fact that they are even more removed from the modern cash economy than their closer-in neighbors (Harris 1988a). A kind of urban stacking occurs, with the last to arrive pushed even further to the urban periphery.

When World War II engulfed the Pacific, Port Moresby was a little port city in the south of what was then the Territory of Papua. It had for all intents and purposes the appearance of an Australian town, with a largely resident population who enjoyed the exceptional privileges found in their homeland. On the other hand, indigenous Papuans were rigidly segregated and excluded from the town itself. In 1914 the Native Labour Regulations had been established to restrict native mobility as much as possible. Curfews prohibited native Papuans from remaining in town after 7 P.M. without written permission from employers; no indigenous Papuan could be on the premises of an employer after 9 P.M. In part this was to curtail gambling, but the real intent lay much deeper: to control any behavior deemed unsuitable to whites. A fine and imprisonment were the costs for breaching these regulations.

Native Papuans were presumed to be racially inferior even by some of the most enlightened Europeans. This assumption, coupled with the fact that the native Papuans constituted a servant class, confirmed self-serving beliefs that their privileges were somehow justified. These "racist" sentiments cemented the status of master and servant, setting the course for social relations that in some respects endures today. Sexual fears bordering on hysteria further rigidified relations between European and native groups. From the mid-1920s onward, sexual assaults by outcast males became an ever-present preoccupation of settler Europeans in Port Moresby. This white male hysteria so common after the 1920s was linked directly to the increased presence of white women (Inglis 1974:22-23).

White Australians saw themselves surrounded by a hostile black world. Not unlike white settlers in Africa, they clearly let it be known that while they were in Papua they would not be submerged or encumbered by that predicament. They were in Papua, not among Papuans. When contemporary migrants come to urban centers like Port Moresby, they find much in common with their historical kith and kin (Inglis 1974:47-48).

In summary, Port Moresby in its early days was a white Australian town with a preponderance of men. When European women began arriving in appreciable numbers in the 1920s, a white male hysteria developed surrounding their safety. Laws to protect white women subjected indigenous Papuans, largely males, to increasing regulation: of their mobility in and around Port Moresby, of the circumstances under which they could remain in town, of what they could wear and how they could comport themselves. Historical parallels with race relations in the American South and contemporary South Africa are striking and

help us recognize a source of indignation that colors underclass perceptions of their condition.

Colonial Port Moresby crystalized into two separate and self-conscious communities: separate and unequal, European/white and native/black, rich and poor (Larmour 1990). Outcast migrant males locked out of urban opportunity drew deeply from the well of historical oppression. Some were convinced for a variety of reasons to accept the status quo; others, the subjects of this article, did not. We owe a debt to Bruce Harris when he suggested that to fail to examine the sources of indignation among Rascals is to fail to understand what continues to fuel their activities (Harris 1988a). Understanding the political and historical context of Rascalism at once helps us identify Rascalism as an urban expression and gives it its special identity.

### **The Future of Urban Gangs in Papua New Guinea**

It is one thing to piece together a description of gang development in the greater Port Moresby area and make warrantable assertions about the multiple sources of them. It is another to predict the future of urban gangs in a country laboring under the strains of economic and political development. Nevertheless, we can build upon what we know and suggest the factors that will condition this development over time.

Harris sketches three possible futures of Rascalism: (1) the continuation of present patterns of criminal activities, the "organized-crime scenario"; (2) the development of Rascalism into social protest movements, the "revolution scenario"; and (3) the emergence of alliances between the political and economic elite in various parts of the country, the "political co-optation" scenario (Harris 1988a). While there may be manifestations of each of these scenarios in the future, the organized-crime scenario appears most likely to dominate. This future will also be conditioned by the economic viability of the country as a whole, the rate of urban migration, as well as the perception of corruption within officialdom.<sup>11</sup> Rascals have demonstrated the ability to develop suitable organizational responses to their growing criminal activities. This should continue, albeit manifesting adaptations to new and profitable ventures.

Economic and financial limits will affect the character of these ventures as well. The kinds of criminal activities will depend on how much money people have to spend on what Rascals produce. While the economic future of Papua New Guinea is projected optimistically at times, it is still a developing country with enormous problems. Regardless of

how sophisticated Rascal distribution systems have become, the sale of stolen goods will be limited by the number of people who can afford them. At this point most stolen goods are probably dismantled, packed, and sent to Australia (Griffin 1988).

If the most optimistic projections concerning Papua New Guinea's economic benefits from mineral exploitation are realized, it is plausible that Rascals will benefit correspondingly. With increased public and private wealth, with the continued weakness of government control over what occurs within the economic realm, Rascal activities are likely to flourish. Either way, criminal activities are likely to continue. There will always be an underside to capitalism and underclass groups to respond to the opportunities this underside provides.

Less clear is whether Rascals will develop either the inclination for or the linkages with existing political organizations for mutual benefit or co-optation into the political system. There is scant evidence that Rascals played an important role in any of the elections over the past several years (Griffin 1988). Elections in Papua New Guinea appear to be remarkably well run under the circumstances, despite problems associated with a relatively new electoral system.<sup>12</sup> But the question is hardly settled. There may still be opportunities for Rascals to merge politically and sustain relationships with political organizations over time. That will depend on other factors: the perceived legitimacy of elections and the people who run them, the resources of politicians to co-opt gangs, and the level of ethnic competition in national and provincial elections. Lastly, if Harris's provocative observation is correct--that Rascals have developed highly organized and sophisticated organizations over time--then it is unlikely that the Rascals will allow themselves to be swallowed up by the political machines and dubious ambitions of politicians, or participate in any enterprise that would reduce their power and influence. It is not too farfetched to speculate that, instead, Rascal organizations may themselves swallow up those political parties.

Much of this argument hinges on the growing sophistication of Rascal leaders and their demonstrated abilities to adapt and expand their enterprises. Demonstrating "street smarts" is different than demonstrating the capacity to forge sophisticated political alliances. In the end commercial self-interest may dictate that conducting business as usual is more advantageous than absorbing the additional costs of close association with the political community.

The revolution scenario has its own appeal and logic as well. This scenario correctly assumes that Rascals constitute one of the few pan-eth-

nic organizations in Papua New Guinea. It assumes as well that in the event of the disintegration of the political order, Rascals will be among the few organizations left to fill the political vacuum. Herein lies its plausibility. If the national government is immobilized, a kind of warlordism may emerge to take advantage of such a situation. The frequent problems of governance--threat of preexisting cultural, linguistic, and religious divisions hardening into political structures; ministerial corruption (Dorney 1990:220-227); frequent change of government; and emergence of irredentist movements--all suggest windows of opportunity for Rascalism. If political authority breaks down, Rascals could be among those seizing such an opportunity (Larmour n.d.); what they might do remains a matter of conjecture.

While Rascals evidence an awareness of how the political system works and have demonstrated an ability to take advantage of it, there is little to suggest that they have developed a coherent political consciousness or ideology that could be imposed in the event of an institutional breakdown of the capacity to govern. As sophisticated as Rascals have become, it is difficult to imagine that they would be able to cope with total system disintegration and the new demands this would entail (Griffin 1975). More likely, the governing system will hold, adapt, change over time, and maintain sufficient legitimacy to continue political and economic development. In the end not only Papua New Guinea's future, but the future opportunities of Rascals as well, will be determined by how the national government manages the financial bonanza from its mineral exploitation, the periodic irredentist movements that are bound to continue, how governing elites manage these opportunities, and the resulting social transformations. The future of Rascalism may lie less in the hands of the Rascals and more in the hands of constituted public authority.

### **Conclusion**

Relations between urban gangs and governing institutions are essentially about authority. As such the emergence of Rascalism in Papua New Guinea's urban areas reveals not merely an urban crisis but a systemic crisis as well. That is to say, weak authority institutions coupled with severely restricted operational capacities break down the moral fabric of the new order. Police inability to maintain effective law and order is an example of the state's operational weakness. This weak authority seems to have been fatally joined with the failed personal expectations of the many youths pushed and pulled by the bright lights

of urban Port Moresby. This is the "mechanism" for the deeply felt indignation described here. For indignation to occur something has to be violated (Shklar 1990:83-126). That something was personal expectations, first by a colonial system that allocated advantage and disadvantage via a status system based on skin color and national origin and then by a weak state authority that failed to secure law and order in its urban centers. This results in a deepening sense of injustice and moral outrage (Shklar 1990:87).

From this perspective urban gangs are the predictable outcomes of systemic rigidities. Accordingly, their emergence and expansion provides insights into how they adapt to the new order. Hence we see functional rationality in their behavior. Adding to the state's burden of delivering a secure urban environment is the additional burden of finding use in the mainstream economy for the skills gained by Rascals in the informal underground economy, which not only continues to expand but, as suggested here, also stimulates changes in Rascal organization, providing some gang members with management and leadership skills.

The passing of colonial authority in 1975 involved, among other things, the loss of systematic political control in Papua New Guinea's urban centers. The last ten to fifteen years have revealed the failure as an authoritative replacement of the succeeding indigenous political elite to substitute functionally for the political control previously linked to Australian colonial hegemony (Dorney 1990:319-328). On reflection it seems as if, following the transfer of governing authority in 1975, the fragile social bonds, held together and imposed by Australian *kiaps* (patrol officers), were loosened by Australia's hasty withdrawal from its colonial mandate, which then produced a crisis in hegemony (Dinnen 1986:86-87). The old patron/client relations fostered a weak and somewhat ill-prepared indigenous elite who assumed the framework, if not the substance, of an imposed authority system. The rapid removal of that colonial authority system set off changes in all authority relations: by the weakening of the hegemonic status subordination; by the social dispersion captured under the rubric of urban drift; by the lack of authoritative replacement capacities of newly elected governing elites; and by changes in community and social structures associated with urbanization, which weakened traditional and patriarchal authority.<sup>13</sup>

These changes in greater Port Moresby began in the early 1960s and were fully expressed in the early 1980s. As the pace of urban drift accelerated, it became increasingly difficult for the new civil authority to

deliver educational and social services to a growing urban lower stratum. All of these changes conspired to weaken connections between the lower strata and new governing hierarchies. In contrast with life in traditional settings, urban life took on a more ambiguous aspect, a redistribution of claims to authority. This is the context, fueled by a sense of injustice, in which an analysis of Rascalism must be situated.

The sense of injustice and indignation grows out of the violation of personal expectations regarding urban life. So Rascals redistribute opportunities through gang activities. In other words, the supply of labor moves away from formal structures and towards the nonformal--gangs--where demand for their labor is greater. The very term "Rascals" itself captures both the normative in response to expectations and the behavioral deviance that accompanies the shift into the informal economy.

More research is needed and should concentrate on the process by which indignation arises and why urban gangs form. Correspondingly, research should concentrate on how leadership emerges from this process or is constrained by it. The cognitive maps of Rascals should be studied: how they describe and interpret their social realities, and how these perceptions become part of the conceptual building blocks by which they react to feelings of outrage against violations of personal expectations in these fragile urban environments.

But caution is warranted as well. Rascals are socialized imperfectly in the economic and social order. They may themselves be transitional and reproducible outcomes of that social order. As such, we cannot claim a better understanding of all of the consequences of their activities. They have at best an imprecise awareness of aspects of the wider society and as such have limited capacities for ascertaining and predicting outcomes. Like many of us, they see society through the bottom of broken bottles.

What we are witnessing is an attempt on the part of institutions of authority, themselves weakly rooted, to replace the order established under Australia's tutelage and control those whom they attempt to regulate. The enduring question is whether this Melanesian country occupying half of a kangaroo-shaped island will do so without its own destruction.

## NOTES

1. Melanesia runs from New Guinea to Fiji. The term means "black islands" and refers to "racial" characteristics of most of their people (see Larmour n.d.).

2. For an insightful discussion on urbanization and inequality in Melanesia, see Connell and Curtain 1982.
3. For the best discussion of the effects of alcohol on social development in Papua New Guinea, see Marshall 1982.
4. There is little reason to assume, as many do, that the rich and privileged are victimized more than poorer residents of settlement villages. See Morauta 1986:10.
5. Robert Clark, who has done extensive research on Basque nationalism, reminded me that urban gangs--not unlike insurgent organizations--confront similar tactical decisions.
6. The author, while a Fulbright Professor at the University of Papua New Guinea, lived in the faculty compound for several months in 1988.
7. For an account of the history of mistreatment and abuse of women in Papua New Guinea, see Kivung, Doiwa, and Cox 1985.
8. See May 1977:1-26 for an informed discussion of internal migratory patterns in Papua New Guinea.
9. Professor James Griffin stressed to the author that a "balanced" history of Australia's colonialism is yet to be written.
10. See Counts 1990, especially her discussion of the findings of the Papua New Guinea Law Reform Commission on the relation between modernization and social change and domestic violence.
11. There is considerable agreement that the pace of urban development will continue unabated. Some suggest that urbanization should be encouraged (for example, R. Ward 1977; M. Ward 1977).
12. See Lucas 1988. The author participated in the seminar.
13. See Morauta 1986: 13-17 for a discussion of the state in modern Papua New Guinea.

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**BOOK REVIEW FORUM**

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Patricia Grimshaw, *Paths of Duty: American Missionary Wives in Nineteenth-Century Hawaii*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1989. Pp. xxiii, 246, bibliography, index. US\$25.00 hardcover.

*Review:* CLAUDIA KNAPMAN  
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Patricia Grimshaw's *Paths of Duty: American Missionary Wives in Nineteenth-Century Hawaii* is a welcome addition to the growing feminist literature on women in the Pacific Islands. The book, organized into an introduction and eight chapters, draws together and extends the content of her earlier articles (Grimshaw 1983, 1985). It includes notes, bibliography, index, and illustrations.

Each chapter is introduced by an apposite quotation, effectively an introductory signpost. Most are the voices of the women themselves. The entry for the fourth chapter on "Pious Wives" provides a succinct example (p. 74):

In whatever situation in life a female may be placed, ardent piety is the jewel which above all others adorns and beautifies her character; but more especially is this the case, in the wife of a missionary. Indeed, without it, all other gifts and graces would be comparatively worthless. It is the mainspring which should set in motion her every action, and guide and regulate all her conduct. (Mercy Whitney, Waimea, 1837)

This quotation incorporates two of the most powerful themes of the study; a study that demonstrates in the mission context, first, the moral

dimensions of nineteenth-century American prescriptions of femininity and, second, the expected subservience of wives to male endeavors. The exploration of the tension between female virtue and male authority in ideal and practice, among missionary women, is the most significant contribution of Grimshaw's work. Her analysis leads to the conclusion, well substantiated by evidence, that these missionary women failed to negotiate this tension in a manner that they evaluated as "successful." This brings us to the opening quotation, taken from H. A. Carter's *Kaahumanu*, published in 1899 : "It has been said that the lives of *happy women*--like happy nations--are never written" (p. xi). Thus, Grimshaw neatly foreshadows her finding at the outset.

The introduction, "Changing Worlds," paints a wider canvas for the more detailed scenes to follow. Grimshaw points out that eighty women were involved in the work of the American Protestant mission to Hawaii from its inception in 1819 to the mid-century. She argues for their centrality in their own, predominantly New England, social worlds and for the enthusiastic nationalism of their spiritual and cultural endeavors overseas. She touches on the impact of economic transformations on women's traditional labor patterns, and the "subtly related reformulation of definitions of femininity and masculinity [that] took shape within a particular religious context" (p. xii). The division between public and private life, the location in the home of the moral sphere and spiritual influence of wives and mothers, and the supportive and complementary role wives assumed in relation to their husbands are noted. The incorporation of single women into this ideal of femininity was assisted by the defining of teaching in moral terms. Grimshaw finds New England Protestantism's emphasis on evangelism legitimated women's involvement in spiritual outreach and social reform, and fitted nicely with the increased participation of women in teaching and in charitable activities more generally. Within this context, the broadening of women's roles as moral crusaders to those outside of Western Christian culture was a logical extension. The raising of the status of the female in heathen societies was regarded as the direct concern of American women.

The beginnings of mission interest in Hawaii and a brief introduction to the complexity of Hawaiian society follow. Grimshaw notes gender relations were part of class, work, and family relations embedded in a culture that was to remain inaccessible to the American missionaries. The mission concentration on the inferior position of Hawaiian women resulted in a distorted view of their life experience, with implications for mission work that are addressed later in the book.

Finally, the introduction outlines the objectives of the study. Grimshaw's assertion that scholarly accounts have depicted the mission enterprise as a male undertaking occurring in the public domain is incontrovertible. These histories rendered the lives of women and the private (or unofficial) transactions between Hawaiians and American missionaries invisible. Her aim is to put those lives back into history, at least for the period 1826 to the 1850s, because they are "a valuable human record," provide a deeper understanding of the Hawaiian mission's activities, and might lead to the reorienting of aspects of Hawaiian history (p. xx). Grimshaw intends to demonstrate that the American women were pursuing vocational ambitions independent of male aspirations, and that marriage to a departing male missionary was the criterion for entry to that career. The resultant inherent conflict noted in my opening remarks is pointed out. As well, Grimshaw hints at the conflict resulting from the Americans' intentions to change Hawaiian society and the reality of their contact experiences.

I have dealt with the introduction at length because it is more than a prelude to the study. It raises the general and the more theoretical issues at the outset, it outlines the major findings and, in many respects, the ensuing chapters provide the evidence for the analysis presented here.

Chapter 1, "Christian Brides," documents the way in which finding a "suitable" wife was a condition of male missionary service. The emphasis in these initial and metropolitan negotiations was on the women as objects, the requisite property, enabling the men to get on with the real work: "there was negligible sensitivity to the needs and plans of the particular women involved" (p. 10) and "[t]he male missionaries' courtships were decidedly unconventional and placed their own ambitions center stage" (p. 12). From the women's perspective, however, marriage to a missionary was an opportunity for self-fulfillment, and helps to explain why these women were prepared to marry strangers.

Grimshaw carefully demonstrates just how well qualified these women were for independent work as missionaries. Moreover, it becomes clear that their professional outreach to Hawaiian women was expected by the missionary authorities and supportive public at home. It might appear that this convergence of the women's own aspirations and the expectations of the mission community proved a happy coincidence. But, Grimshaw states, "however much the brides set themselves center stage in their own life projects, they lived in a male-dominated world which limited their potential in a fashion they dimly understood" (p. 23).

"Intrepid Pilgrims" describes the voyage, arrival, initial efforts to

secure a foothold, and early mission successes. The focus of this second chapter is the importance of the mission wives in these early encounters. The new arrivals were taken by surprise by the status of the female chiefs and, Grimshaw argues, the conjunction of the powerful Hawaiian women with the forceful American women "was of incalculable importance in the complex intercultural negotiations and in the resulting balance of power by the end of 1825" (p. 30). The burdensome domestic skill of sewing proved the most direct means of securing chiefly approval and fitted with the domestic labor that dominated the women's lives. Opportunities for engaging in the principal work for which they had come to Hawaii were subordinate to the domestic duties, turned to "with relief" (p. 35), and further eroded by the arrival of babies. Although "the mission wives were so obviously crucial in the process of persuading chiefs to the cause . . . the women themselves were losing their early buoyancy and optimism" (p. 42). Grimshaw attributes their despondence to their own ethnocentrism and inability to adapt to other behavior patterns rather than to threats and confrontations with members of the host society.

Chapter 3 explores relationships: between husbands and wives, among the missionary women, between the women and their families and friends at home, and the absence of friendships between the women and Hawaiian women. The difficulty of traveling in mountainous country, especially with children, rendered the American women extremely vulnerable to isolation. According to Grimshaw, the mission wives' inability to tolerate cultural difference led to their finding Hawaiians and foreign residents unacceptable as friends. If Hawaiians had been acceptable companions, then they would not have been defined as "other" and the purposes of missionary endeavor would have been unnecessary. Another consequence of what Grimshaw depicts as self-imposed loneliness was the heightened importance of letters from home. She shows how the missionary women remained attached to American communities, as they were in the past, but were unable to capture the reality of family processes and social change. Mission society was another source of support, but under isolated mission station conditions, marriage provided the single source of continuous emotional support and companionship. The women's increased dependence on their husbands, and their husbands' dependence on them, resulted in very close relationships. The social and emotional support, and the sexual and romantic love, together provided a protection against anomie.

The analysis of marriage is continued in chapter 4, "Pious Wives,"

where the complexity of the relationships between responsibility, companionship, spiritual support, and female submission and dependence are explored. Publicly, marriage was represented as a partnership rather than being based on sexual intimacy. The women were clearly aware that active sexuality placed them in a decidedly unequal position. Reproduction dominated their fertile years and was complicated by sickness, medical ignorance, and iatrogenic illness. There is the usual catalogue of grim tales of childbirth and miscarriage familiar to readers of mission journals. Grimshaw notes that although men loved their wives, "models of companionate marriage . . . could not counteract the effects of women's reproductive experience . . . [and] did not alter the gender division of labor in the marriage" (pp. 98-99).

Women's work within the home and in relation to mission life is the subject of chapter 5, "Prudent Helpmeets." The reproduction of a New England-style gender division of labor posed far greater problems for women in the Hawaiian Islands than in America. It was on the women's ability to recreate this domestic model--as a comfortable home base for the missionary and as an alternative to Hawaiian domestic organization--that the missionary enterprise largely depended. The difficulties of housework, servants, household economy, and supplies required to maintain an American lifestyle are described. The additional labor this necessitated, the networks of reciprocity women had to establish, and the domestic, agricultural, and trading skills involved all placed further restrictions on the women's abilities to engage in the mission work to which they aspired. The subordinate role of women in the mission hierarchy and the resulting male agenda and priorities are also considered. Clarissa Armstrong's efforts to take a central role in mission work, and ignore the gender proscriptions on teaching and praying with men, led to criticism from the mission community. She was forced to relinquish her work, despite her own confidence in God's blessing. Domestic work came first; women's missionary work was marginalized and firmly contained within gender-defined limits.

Chapter 6, "Faithful Mothers," deals with childrearing and the dilemmas women faced about their respective responsibilities to their children and to the Hawaiians. The ease with which their babies adopted the other culture remained a source of concern: their childrearing practices were the subject of constant discussion in Hawaii and America. As with domestic labor women shouldered an unequal burden, the fathers' mission duties absorbing the bulk of their available time and energy. The extra stresses of trying to raise godly American

children in this environment, the tension over the constraints on their teaching, the domestic labor entailed, and the lack of practical support from the fathers again took a toll on the wives' well-being.

The seventh chapter, "Devoted Missionaries," is a discussion of the women's direct mission work. Their ambitious goals of reforming the Hawaiian family were doomed to failure, covering as they did every aspect of daily life from sexual practices to household organization and the division of labor. Nevertheless, Grimshaw argues that they were more successful than their own evaluations indicate. One significant offering to Hawaiian women was a range of skills that enabled them to negotiate their changing environment.

The final chapter, on "Family Fortunes," takes a longer view, placing the aging mission women's life experiences within the context of a new materialism, new laws, and the prosperity and success of the mission children as adults. Their American economic individualism is contrasted with the economic and social marginalization of the Hawaiians. The defeat of the women's mission endeavor is attributed to their ethnocentrism, male dominance, and failure to understand the connection between the model they wished to impose and specific forms of economic organization. They made an immense effort, but died without a victory.

The book is likely to be criticized by some for failing to address Hawaiian women, except as the objects of American women's endeavors. Grimshaw has attempted to convey the Hawaiian viewpoint in particular contexts and she defends herself, in advance (p. xxi), in terms of the focus and constraints of her research. There is nothing inherently ethnocentric about limiting one's topic, and most researchers select or investigate areas that are both accessible to them and worthwhile subjects in their own right. So little has been done about any women in the Pacific that this type of criticism is more political--conforming to prevailing ideological positions--than substantive.

Grimshaw is more vulnerable in relation to her analysis of gender issues. The women are far too often discussed in isolation: *their* idealism, *their* ethnocentrism, the unreality of *their* aspirations being examined with sensitivity but without being located sufficiently in relation to the parallel views of the male missionaries. In some respects this reinforces a stereotypical view of white women and denotes a tendency to assign responsibility for failure to their peculiar idiosyncrasies. The dangers of this have been demonstrated with reference to race relations and white women in Fiji and white women in colonial situations more generally (Knapman 1986). The accounts of the mission women's commit-



ment and the hardships endured in physical, social, and emotional terms; the evidence that these women did not conform to narrow, prudish stereotypes in relation to sexuality within marriage; and the location of their dependence in American social and economic organization dispel such a narrow reading. However, there is an ambiguity in much of the text. A comparative approach would have allowed for an assessment in context and avoided the possibility of retrospective and unrealistic judgments of what was or was not possible for people of their time and culture. A pertinent example of this problem is the treatment of the women's revulsion at Hawaiian habits (pp. 59-61). What about their male counterparts? The emphasis on women's ethnocentrism fits more with nineteenth-century readings of women's "character" than with feminist reconstructions exploring women's behavior and attitudes in a wider sociocultural framework. Travel is another instance. The "female" requirements on an "expedition," and assumptions about Hawaiian women's physical capabilities, American women's weakness, and American men's strength (pp. 52-53), reflect male and ethnocentric assumptions. The accuracy of such assumptions and context is not explored, nor do they match up with the tenacity, the sheer "guts and determination," of the women, which is demonstrated in chapter 1.

The treatment of cultural differences is limited by resorting to the concept of ethnocentrism. Although Grimshaw provides examples throughout of ways in which the American women's understanding of social organization was tested by Hawaiian social practices, it is not quite sufficient to dismiss the missionary wives' reactions as ethnocentric. The public/private dichotomy of American life, and its attitudinal and practical hold over the mission families, is drawn upon for explanations of the division of labor, women's lack of autonomy over their own lives, and their thwarted ambitions. More detailed attention to the organizing principles of Hawaiian society, and closer examination of how actual practices and cultural assumptions of both groups differed, would have allowed for a firmer grasp of the problems these women faced in personal terms and for their reformist goals. Nancy Pollock's (1989) examination of missionary housekeeping in Fiji provides the type of detail and evaluation that is needed to avoid assigning blame. There is also something more to be said about the challenges that Hawaiian women's behavior in the public domain, and chiefly women's status and power, provided to the American women: women who lacked access to public life and these attributes themselves, but assumed Hawaiian women's inferiority.

The importance of women in intercultural negotiations is one of the

major conclusions that has relevance for the objective of shedding new light on mission history. Apart from the roles women played in establishing positive relations in the early days, this conclusion is not adequately demonstrated. There is only scattered evidence throughout: their trading, network development, teaching, and personal contacts with Hawaiians warrant more detailed attention and the threads to be drawn together. Strengthening this analysis would enable the problems of the public/private dichotomy discussed above to be addressed in more depth, also. Much of the evidence for redressing the devaluation of women's contributions to economic survival and for the existence of the nineteenth-century "double day" lies in this area. One might argue that these women, in attempting to serve as active missionaries, were confronting a "triple day."

Grimshaw's analysis of the marriage relationship and its central importance for sustaining the American men's and especially women's sense of identity, purpose, and reality provides a significant insight for future work on mission history and many other situations involving physical and cultural isolation. Indeed, its impact may be more far reaching. This example appears to provide an excellent illustration of Donald Denoon's argument in relation to Australian history and Australians overseas, if we take the liberty of transposing it to a different arena. He suggested "that the essence and the implications of many Australian ideas became manifest *only* in those extreme situations which Australians encountered abroad" (Denoon 1986:258). The essence and implications of nineteenth-century American gender relations in marriage are clarified in the extreme situation analyzed by Grimshaw. Illumination of the critical importance of the marriage relationship for women--their lives privatized, their domestic work trivialized, and their ambitions frustrated--is a major contribution to understanding the structural nature of women's social and emotional dependence.

Grimshaw dissects the tensions and contradictions inherent in the position of the missionary women, but she could have distinguished more clearly between their personal frustrations and their failure to meet the more general goal of the mission community that they convert Hawaiian women. The crux of the personal problem was that in efforts to reproduce Western patterns of domesticity and "Christian patriarchy" (Jayaweera 1990:323), they were advocating models they found inadequate for themselves. The division of labor and their allegedly companionate marriages neither reflected the real mutuality they sought nor allowed them independent aspirations and careers.

Much of the foreign women's effort to convert Hawaiians was moti-

vated by compassion. Grimshaw's study minimizes this aspect of the missionary endeavor, and the genuine desire of the American women to "help" Hawaiian women--I reserve use of the word "sisters" for reasons that will become apparent--deserves more attention. In Fiji, my research shows that even those women who were not motivated to convert Fijians or Indians, on either religious or broader cultural levels, were often moved to compassion (Knapman 1986). They acted on their behalf or at their request.

Another viewpoint here is provided by Marjorie King in her study of American missionary women in China. She suggests that foreign missionary women "saw themselves as *mothers* to weak and wayward Chinese women more often than as *sisters* sharing common experiences and burdens" (King 1990:375). This parental role is consistent with the notion of "maternal cultural imperialism." In her work on British women in India, Barbara Ramusack uses the image of "maternal imperialists" to refer to the cultural evangelism of concerned women "preaching a gospel of women's uplift" based on British models of womanhood (1990:309). The notion of "maternal cultural imperialists" might be developed as a concept to be applied to analyses of white women in the Pacific Islands. It is clearly relevant to Grimshaw's research and to female missionaries more generally. It is reinforced by the general image of the (male) imperialist as father to the "native child" (McClure 1981:107), which is based on a patriarchal family model, and the common depiction by Europeans in the nineteenth century of Pacific Islanders as children. The maternal perspective would also help account for the American women seeing little need to understand the way of life of the "other."

Ramusack argues that British women were "most able to cross the boundary of race as feminist allies when their skills most suited the needs of Indian women" (1990:309). This is pertinent to white and indigenous women's contacts in the Pacific. In Fiji, the case can be illustrated by the demand for European women's sewing and by Fijians' and Indians' seeking medical help and help in childbirth from European women (Knapman 1986). The example of sewing supports this generalization in the Hawaiian context as well. Analysis matching needs and skills in other areas of interaction might well strengthen Grimshaw's claims, first, about women's importance in intercultural contacts and, second, about facilitating Hawaiian women's adaptation to change.

There are many other interesting aspects to *Paths of Duty*, but one final point on presentation (which applies equally to my own book) must suffice. The inclusion of vignettes and examples is integral to the

work, but the breaks in continuity in the life stories of the main actors leave the reader without a firm grasp of the individual characters. An appendix with biographical profiles, such as is found in Dea Birkett's study of Victorian women explorers (1989), would be a worthwhile inclusion.

Many of the more theoretical issues raised here have emerged from recent feminist studies of white women in other colonizing contexts. That Grimshaw's work has not addressed or utilized this material is largely a result of timing, her research having been undertaken some years ago. The critical application of feminist insights from other contact and colonization situations can only benefit and extend the analyses of those working on Pacific Island histories. The excellent groundwork laid by scholars such as Patricia Grimshaw is essential to this process.

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*Review:* JOHN YOUNG  
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Like the women who form the subject of Patricia Grimshaw's illuminating study, my mother shared with her husband a vocation inspired by the commandment of the Upper Room, to "Go ye forth into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature" (Matthew 28: 19). She did not see herself as a "missionary wife"; rather, she was a missionary. Sierra Leone, where she worked, was not the Pacific Islands, and the 1920s and 1930s were not the 1830s and 1840s; but she had much in common with those whose paths of duty took them to Hawaii. My reading of this important book is inevitably influenced by what I know of her experience. For her, as for them, missionary work overseas was a career uniquely open to talent, regardless of sex, at a time when, for most women, the choice between career on one hand, and marriage and children on the other, was mutually exclusive. The mission field offered an opportunity, on the face of it, for complete personal fulfillment in a satisfying career, while at the same time exemplifying, in dark places, the virtues of Christian family life.

Like her nineteenth-century Hawaiian counterparts, my mother's main work was teaching, though, unlike them, and greatly to the benefit of her health, she chose not to be left behind in the bush travels on foot that formed a large part of the missionary experience. She was perhaps more fortunate than her predecessors in being able to contrive the postponement of her first pregnancy through the first five years of marriage, but like them she found that having young children inhibited her vocational fulfillment. In a colony founded by freed slaves, as in a society torn by abolitionism, the problems of conscience raised by the use of local domestic labor were resolved in the light of the influence it guaranteed over those who became members of the missionary household. It also gave women missionaries freedom to pursue their calling and enabled them to overcome any fears they may have had for the spiritual safety of their own children in the hands of local people.

Missionaries of both sexes have usually found that Christianization has been a social, political, and economic process before it can become,

for the majority, a spiritual experience. Grimshaw quotes Laura Judd, of Hawaii, "I do not *know* that I have been the means of saving *one* soul." Judd might have been replying to the adolescent question I should not have asked my father, "How many people do you reckon you've actually converted, then?" It was the process of cultural transformation that facilitated the institutionalization of Christianity; and in this process, the role of missionaries as settlers was as vital as their evangelical function. And as settlers, the role of women as wives and mothers was as important as their role as teachers, if not more so; to perceive this was to experience frustration.

The psychological displacements that resulted in my personal interest as a historian in settler, as opposed to missionary, communities and in the role of white women within them, in Fiji rather than Africa, are not for me to interpret. Suffice it to say that my 1968 thesis, published in revised form sixteen years later as *Adventurous Spirits* (St. Lucia, 1984) included, I believe, the first serious attempt to assess the historical importance of white women in the Pacific Islands.

My argument was that, in coming to the islands, women were conscious of a cultural responsibility. They were therefore critical of the single men who preceded them for allowing, as they saw it, their standards to drop, for cohabiting with island women, and for their tendency, after a few years, to tolerate and sometimes to respect the authority of a chiefly society and to adopt many of its norms. I was at pains to demonstrate the existence of double standards that enabled men to consider Fijians racially inferior while serving their chiefs and maintaining sexual relations with Fijian women. But I argued that the arrival of white women, some of whom were of an independent and outspoken disposition, in significant numbers made men ashamed of their double standards and made them, and settler society as a whole, more *consistently* racist. The arrival of white women thus led to the transformation of a number of individual settlers into a settler *society*, with a conscious collective identity, and so to a deterioration in race relations at a political level.

Every year for fifteen years I encouraged students to find fault with this interpretation, and it is an indication of the male dominance of Australian university life in the 1970s and my own failings as a teacher that I was rarely taken seriously. I had nearly given up hope of the matter being properly discussed when Claudia Knapman's *White Women in Fiji* was published (Sydney, 1986), beginning what has become a fruitful vein of writing on the subject from a feminist perspective.

In contrast to Knapman's book, which seeks to correct a perceived stereotype, *Paths of Duty* addresses the problem of a historiographical

vacuum. It does not encourage us to see its subjects as unsung heroines, but it explains and analyzes their tragedy, largely in terms of personal conflict between the various "paths of duty"--as Christian brides, prudent helpmeets, devoted missionaries, and the foundations of family fortunes--that unfolded themselves as the process of cultural transformation proceeded. Like all women who have partnered exercises in cultural transformation, the missionary wives were crucial not only to the attempt to Christianize the Hawaiian Islands but to the nature of that attempt. Left to themselves, male missionaries would undoubtedly have failed as abjectly as their precursors in Tahiti. Women alone might have failed just as convincingly since, as Grimshaw has shown us, their sexual appetites were no less well developed. It was the nuclear family, cultural product of the industrial society that had developed on both sides of the Atlantic, that was a guarantee of successful cultural transplantation, if not of successful evangelism.

*Paths of Duty* demonstrates that the missionary wives were essential to the success of the mission. It is ironic that they were, at the same time, the unconscious creators of the major obstacle to their own self-realization: "The defeat of this female mission endeavor was effected in part by patriarchal notions of male dominance; yet nowhere were such ideas embedded more usefully than in many mission women's consciousnesses themselves" (p. 194). The wives were, she points out, victims of "intense ethnocentricity, amounting in late twentieth-century evaluations to racism" (p. 194). It was the women's "cultural rigidity" combined with a division of labor--a division reflecting the reductionist thinking characteristic of industrial society--that placed men in a position of advantage and defeated the women's hopes of genuine partnership in the evangelical enterprise.

Convinced that spiritual conversion was dependent upon a cultural transition and fearful, in the meantime, of the influence of Hawaiian society upon their own children, missionary women first sought to isolate their children from its corrupting influence. They were consistent in their support of the Great Mahele through which land tenure was individualized, the universal goal of white-settler communities throughout the Pacific. The purpose may have been to transform Hawaiians into preindustrial peasants and artisans, but by enabling their children to acquire Hawaiian land, missionaries facilitated the transformation of the next generation into plantation owners and employers of an imported industrial work force that marginalized the Hawaiian population that had been the objects of these women's youthful sense of vocation.

Missionaries and their families achieved an identity of interest with

secular white society in Hawaii that was unusual. Like their settler counterparts in Fiji they understood their own history as a story of social Darwinism at work, with the establishment and dominance of Western industrial culture as the inevitable product of the historical evolutionary process. It was an interpretation that has only recently become questionable in Hawaii, along with the rest of the industrial, wealthy, northern world to which it belongs; but in Fiji, the aspirations of the white-settler community of the nineteenth century, and the part women played in it, rapidly reached a historical dead end. Fiji was not to become a white man's country, nor a white woman's either.

Now, as the military glue that has so far held together the political structures created by industrial society begins to melt, in both East and West, and as regionalism, often based on a renewal of cultural ties with land, sweeps the world from Bougainville to Azerbaijan, Hawaii rather than Fiji seems historically exceptional, and the tragedy that Patricia Grimshaw analyzes becomes more complete. Indeed, it may be that because women's history in the Pacific has been a reflection of the rise of feminism in the industrial world it has taken a false lead.

Where, then, will the mainstream of "contact history" run, and women's history in the Pacific as part of it? As indigenous women's history fast becomes a major field in the Pacific, crosscurrents may well develop into whirlpools. Bonnie Maywald, for example, an Adelaide postgraduate student, has shown that in Tonga the role played by indigenous women in the conversion process was one of positive initiative rather than of reception and reaction. She reveals the "convert the chiefs and the people will follow" theory as the product of male bias in historical perception. It is likely that the twentieth-century process whereby Christianity became, throughout the Pacific, a central expression of indigenous rather than imported culture has been largely the work of indigenous women.

If women can be credited with the incorporation of Christianity into the fabric of island society, then they have, ironically, accomplished the mission that inspired and ultimately frustrated generations of missionary women. They have succeeded, however, at the cost of the cultural hegemony of industrial society that male missionaries often thought they saw, and took to mean, that they had succeeded. The feminist perspective of Pat Grimshaw and her predecessors has been a valuable means of redressing the historical balance and in reaching an understanding of the tragedy of nineteenth-century white women in the islands. When it comes to an attempt to appreciate the importance of indigenous women in this century, an eco-feminist perspective may prove equally instructive.



*Review:* NANCY F. COTT  
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Patricia Grimshaw's history of the American women who first went as Protestant missionaries to Hawaii is a fascinating account, full of poignant ironies. Grimshaw restores to these women their full measure of humanity and active agency, while also showing how constrained and insulated they were by the very belief system that motivated them to transport their lives halfway around the globe.

Refusing the assumption that the eighty female missionaries who traveled to Hawaii between 1820 and 1850 were simply useful tag-alongs, Grimshaw succeeds very well in her aim to establish the independent ambition of these daughters of New England, who were driven as fervently as their pious husbands to become Christian educators, to "be up and doing" in the mission field. Both the force of their piety and of the sexual division of labor in antebellum New England are conveyed in the opening discussion of the hasty marriages of convenience made--to total strangers--in order to join the venture to evangelize the islanders, since the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions would send no one out unmarried. Just as interesting, and worth pondering, is the evidence Grimshaw finds that these marriages of convenience were by and large solid, loving, and long-lasting--testimony not only to the conjugal intimacy enforced by leaving family and friends for an alien terrain, but also to the basic similarity in values and expectations of those young men and women who felt the motivation to go.

Besides their own zeal for the effort, Grimshaw wants also to make plain the missionary women's central role in what was accomplished, which is a trickier matter. She does not slight the reality that the missionary board and supporting churches presumed male superiority and preeminence in the evangelical endeavor and an auxiliary role for the wives. But she claims with apparent warrant that the presence of women missionaries was crucial in establishing a foothold in a society that was (to the missionaries' surprise) ruled by a female regent. As much as she can show that female missionaries' educative ploys turned the Christian tide with certain female chiefs (who shared power with elite males) and star pupils of both sexes in Hawaii, she also acknowledges--indeed makes the underlying counterpoint to her major theme--the time-consuming and mind-occupying labors of wifedom, motherhood, and housekeeping, which diverted them from their ostensible mission.

Much of the book is devoted to a sensitive portrayal of the mental

conflicts and emotional as well as physical burdens felt by these well-meaning if stilted women, who intended to show the natives by example as well as by precept the superior civilization and salvation to be gained by well-ordered monogamous households, three cooked meals a day, elaborate clothing, book learning, and faith in a Christian god. Scared of the ocean, unable to appreciate the alien natural beauty around them, on the Hawaiian islands these women attempted to set up households like the ones they had known in New England towns and to bear and rear their own numerous children as if in sight of a white painted church steeple. They had set themselves down in a society where people gathered their food from the sea and the trees without farming or cooking, where near-nakedness was the norm, leisure was abundant, the body was celebrated, and what the missionaries called adultery, polygamy, fornication, and divorce were neither horrors nor sins. As Grimshaw reveals, the effort to keep their own offspring free of the natives' sexual expressiveness and play became as major a goal for the missionary wives as the effort to convert the Hawaiians to Christian faith and habits. The conversion effort became itself a mission to establish family domesticity. Oblivious to the fact that European- and American-borne diseases were depopulating the islands (although distressed at losing some of their "best" converts), missionary women claimed small victories: native couples walking arm-in-arm to church, adults clothed (the women wearing all-important *hats*), sleeping mats of adults separated from those of children in thatched-roof cottages, native servants obedient and apparently Christian.

What seems perhaps most amazing, in the perspective that Grimshaw's study provides, is the extent of missionary success in gaining Christian conversion. It remains amazing--or, rather, puzzling--because Grimshaw gives us little enlightenment from the Hawaiian side. The book leaves the reader curious as to what incentive Hawaiians felt, what reward they saw in adherence to Christian behavior. Why would they put aside the traditional and functional ways of their island paradise? To missionaries the explanation was self-evident: once understanding of the Christian eschatology was achieved, adherence would follow. But to a present-day nonbeliever, this cause-and-effect is not self-evident. No doubt, Grimshaw found no Hawaiian sources equivalent and comparable to the extensive personal documents from which she drew her analysis of the missionaries' outlooks and experiences; but are there no sources--later memoirs, perhaps, or even more inquisitive or creative use of missionaries' own accounts--from which she could delineate a firmer picture of Hawaiians' experience on the receiving end? In a

more recent book, which treats the submission of the Pueblo Indians to Catholicism at the hands of Spanish Franciscan friars in New Mexico about 1600, Ramon Gutierrez provides a model for such interactive study of evangelical missions, utilizing the friars' reports and ethnologists and anthropologists' later studies of the worldview of the traditional Pueblos. Pueblo nakedness and patterns of expressive sexuality resembled the Hawaiians', stimulating in the friars the same kind of fascinated repugnance and urgency for drastic change that Protestant missionaries in Hawaii felt. In this work, *When Jesus Came, the Corn Mothers Went Away: Marriage, Sexuality, and Power in New Mexico, 1500-1846* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1991), Gutierrez's revelation of the friars' calculated use of Pueblo cosmology, and their deployment of sacred drama to insinuate their Catholic worldview, enables US to understand their methods of inspiring fear and devotion and the Native Americans' response to force and charisma. Despite the obvious difference between Catholic and Protestant aims, between Spain's imperialism in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and America's in the nineteenth, and between male friars and married women missionaries, what stands out in juxtaposing these two studies is the overriding similarity of the habits and practices that missionaries in both cases attempted to impose on New World natives by means of Christian force and belief.

Grimshaw's book has appeared just as a priority for studies exploring the interaction of women of different ethnic, class, or racial groups has superseded an earlier historiographical focus on white middle-class women's experiences. (The recent publication of an anthology of articles, *Unequal Sisters: A Multicultural Reader in U.S. Women's History*, edited by Ellen DuBois and Vicki Ruiz [N.Y.: Routledge, 1990], may be taken as a benchmark in this development.) Grimshaw's study is situated to enable this sort of intercultural investigation, but rather than making that a principal goal, she has persisted with the earlier model, which is in keeping with her major point that the missionaries fended off and refused to be influenced by Hawaiian modes of living. Her creditable inclusion of some discussion of Hawaiians' lives and incidents of interaction with individual missionary women whets the appetite of the reader for a more fully intercultural history, one that would devote (or at least attempt to devote) the same psychological attention to the Hawaiians' minds as to the missionaries'.

In more than one way, comparative perspectives would have enhanced the value and force of Grimshaw's book. Although two major histories with similar intent have preceded hers--Patricia Hill's *The*

*World Their Household: The American Women's Foreign Mission Movement and Cultural Transformation, 1870-1920* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1985), and Jane Hunter's *The Gospel of Gentility: American Women Missionaries in Turn-of-the-Century China* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984)--Grimshaw does not even cite the former and does not use the latter to any comparative purpose, which it might well serve since its documentary sources and approach are parallel, although setting and generation differ. The paradoxes of Hawaii missionary wives' lives joined them with, as much as they separated them from, the lives of their contemporaries back at home, as Grimshaw knows; equally true, the aims and burdens of those in Hawaii were not unique amid the missionary endeavors of American women. By placing them in the comparative context of their "sisters," Grimshaw might have illuminated their particularities even better. The plainest comparison in Grimshaw's book is that between husbands and wives, between male missionaries and female, but even here, the comparison is often by implication, an intensive examination of the women's outlook premised on the tacit assumption that their husbands' differed. Do we know, however, that husbands felt any differently about their successes and failures, without comparative investigation? The juxtaposition of Gutierrez's book on Catholic missions among the Pueblos with Grimshaw's study of Protestant missions to the Hawaiians strongly suggests that the aims and momentum of Christianization overwhelmed significant male-female differences in the implementation of it. A concerted focus on the male-female axis of comparison would have placed Grimshaw's study more squarely within the upcoming trend to remake the field of women's history into the history of gender relations.

*Review:* MARY CATHERINE BATESON  
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This book can be read as the story of a small group of women who played a significant historic role over a thirty-year period. At another level, it is the case study of an entire, unique population. Eighty women were connected with the American Protestant mission in Hawaii during the period 1819-1850, and of these roughly a third are sufficiently documented to require more than a line's worth of references in the index of this study. A smaller group emerge as individuals, with names that evoke a whole era of American history--Mercy, Fidelia, and Clarissa--

along with still familiar names like Mary, Laura, and Sarah, and these are presumably the ones who are most fully documented, through their letters and journals. The events in which they were involved, albeit less visibly than their menfolk, make up a critical period in the history of Hawaii, from immediately after the abolition of the *kapu* laws by King Liholiho to the Great Mahele restructuring of land tenure that allowed ordinary Hawaiians and foreigners, including the missionaries, to become landowners. At the same time, this study is of great anthropological interest because of the light it casts on the functioning of gender roles and on one kind of culture contact.

The women of the Protestant mission represent a sort of overlay of two different periods of gender relations in the United States. On the one hand, they arrived in Hawaii already shaped by the nineteenth-century cult of true womanhood that accompanied industrialization. Many of the traditional activities of women, like spinning, weaving, and candlemaking, were taken up by industry, so that essential work in the home was much reduced. Increasingly, the work of men was taking them away from the home, and substantial numbers of women were also going out to work in factories. Many women were also becoming teachers, and levels of education for women were rising. During pioneer days, men and women had divided the tasks to be done, worked more or less side by side, and coped--with little time to puzzle about the relative value of the tasks to be done. In the new context, there was a veritable flood of propaganda glorifying the role of married women who remained in the home as wives and mothers, promoting new vistas of perfection (and anxiety) and advising ever more scrupulous attention to the details of child development. During the same period, another order of tasks was defined for women: raising levels of virtue and civility, campaigning for abolition and sobriety. The aftermath of this process became the modern "feminine mystique," with myriad voices glamorizing housework and ready to explain to women how every potential efficiency should increase their effort and obligation.

The women who came to Hawaii as wives of missionaries brought this new consciousness with them into a situation where the actual physical tasks to be done replicated the pioneer situation. The women of the Hawaiian mission were like contemporary "superwomen," trying to meet the combined standards of two different eras and two different fields of aspiration. Nineteenth-century standards of propriety and gentility were superimposed on eighteenth-century or earlier conditions. Grimshaw writes as if the ruling of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions that there should be no single missionaries,

male or female, were a response to the sexual temptations of Polynesian culture. But the same view of the complementarity of gender roles existed in colonial New England where any single individual, male or female, was required to belong to a household at whose core was a nuclear family, not only for propriety but also for practicality.

At the time of the Hawaiian mission, patterns of gender complementarity were changing, and there were beginning to be single women living independently or with other women and pursuing careers. The insistence on married couples, pursued so awkwardly and even comically by aspiring missionaries who had quickly to find themselves wives, often women they hardly knew, echoed the adaptive needs of an earlier period. Even so, Protestant missionary work is one of a group of professions that have tended to require that male candidates be equipped with suitable wives, although the requirement has been wavering. Ministers, college presidents, and politicians as well can hardly fulfill their callings without wives. A larger group of professions require that if a man is married, his wife be committed to supporting him and conform to a set of expectations of her role: the foreign service, senior officers in the military, and many corporations evaluate wives as stringently as the husbands who are actually on the payroll. Until very recently, when women began to be ordained and to hold other independent positions, it was the case that marrying a divinity student was for many women the nearest they could come to fulfilling their sense of vocation to ministry and represented a full-time job. Not surprisingly, there is a considerable denominational research literature on the ambivalences and problems of modern clergy wives. For the women of the Protestant mission, marrying a missionary was the only available path to the fulfillment of their own individual vocations to proclaim the gospel.

The most interesting contribution of Grimshaw's work lies in her analysis of the effect of ethnocentrism on gender roles. The mission wives brought their New England standards and gender expectations and their deep commitments to evangelism to a society where the relative standing of women was higher than their own and the labors of housekeeping and childrearing far lighter. Such are the forces of cognitive dissonance, however, that it was apparently impossible for the New Englanders to learn anything in the area of gender roles and family life from the benighted pagans they came to save. It would have been useful and interesting if the author had made an inventory of what the missionaries, male and female, did learn from the Hawaiians. We do hear of the adoption of local foodstuffs and materials, for instance, and there were undoubtedly other subsistence techniques passed on that would have been remarked in letters home.

What the women did *not* learn comes through loud and clear: any alternative ways of fulfilling their roles. This is most striking in the area of childbirth, where the mission wives described the easy births of the polynesians as if these were an impropriety and continued to insist, for instance, on minimum activity in late pregnancy. The participation of men in domestic tasks, the lack of corporal punishment of children, the sharing of child care, clothing and construction suitable to the climate--none of these examples was seized. Even though, toward the end of the period, the ideas of the suffragettes were beginning to reach Hawaii, the mission wives continued to regard the ways in which Hawaiian women held authority over men as a sign of inferior civilization.

The ethnocentrism of the mission wives, combined with their rigid standards for female roles, was what finally frustrated their efforts to pursue, as wives of missionaries, their own missionary vocations. After a period in the field (this was not a prejudice they brought with them) they became convinced of the urgent need to protect their children from all contact with Hawaiian culture. What this meant was that their children were raised without supplementary caretakers, without non-sibling playmates, and largely confined inside the house or in closed yards. This in turn meant that the wives (who produced large numbers of children) had to cut back, sometimes eliminate, their teaching and visiting.

The women who arrived in Hawaii as missionaries were extraordinarily highly motivated, well educated for their time, and, because of their "middling" background (many came from farms), used to hard work. After a few years they were careworn, defeated, old before their time (although Grimshaw's figures show they did not die particularly early for that era), above all convinced that they had failed to carry out their lofty missionary vocations and that their only merit would be to have been good wives and mothers. What defeated them was a combination of the gender roles of two different eras, combined with extreme ethnocentrism. They were vastly proud of the very ideas about gender and family life that insured their subordination, They were made prisoners by their ethnocentrism. Their conviction of their own rightness gave them authority and influence over Hawaiians whose own culture was already crumbling.

Often, at the meeting place between cultures, or during times of transition, there are individuals who end up with the worst of both worlds. *Paths of Duty* is an important contribution to the literature of culture contact because of the vivid and individual images of a small and valiant group caught at such an interface.

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### **Problems in Writing Women's History in the Pacific**

Historians have every reason to be duly humble about the fruits of their labors. History writing is an extraordinarily difficult task, based on painstaking, laborious, and time-consuming archival research, without which academic studies can claim little legitimacy, while it demands, as well, an engagement in contextual reading, the boundaries of which may be very wide. Sources offering evidence of past life are unevenly available in terms of time, place, and characters, and disparate in the bargain. When we construct some focused narrative of our own making from the confusion of possibilities gained from theory and empirical research, we offer problematic coherence to situations, placing closures on other potential avenues of discovery in order to communicate a central interpretation of distinction and force. But the critical academic reader will, of course, wish other paths had been explored, and see the inclusive, rather than exclusive, possibilities of the subject.

At the 1989 Berkshire women's history conference at Rutgers University, I attended a roundtable discussion of *Family Fortunes* by the British historians Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, a study that explores the construction of femininity and masculinity among the middle class of early nineteenth-century England.<sup>1</sup> The book, a substantial one, was the outcome of eleven years' research by two experienced academics, and could only be described as a major achievement. The criticism offered was many-sided. One panelist said that it was impossible to understand the making of the middle class without considering at the same time the making of the working class; another said that one could not understand the making of the middle class or the working class without a context of developing attitudes on race derived from empire building; another thought what was needed was a view from outside England looking in, as well as inside England looking out; and so on. The truth is, that unless the historian selects, shapes, and takes control of a central narrative, a book may never be finished (as countless are not) *or* may never find a publisher (if it is), or may be unreadable. Yet we writers know that others will fill the spaces we vacated, subject our work to rigorous evaluation, and thereby, very often, contest our most meticulously developed theses.

Increasingly, of course, devotees of postmodernism view the historian's offering as simply one authorial voice among multiple voices, part



of the play that is history, with the interest of a study lying not in some positivist contribution to knowledge but in the artifice and positionality writers bring to it. Feminist historians, however, have had an ambivalence towards postmodernism, given their conviction that history is deficient without the acknowledgment of the presence of women and that women's history itself can be written in more clarifying and constructive ways. I share that conviction, and find it worthwhile responding to the reviewers of my book as part of an ongoing dialogue through which, despite the problematic craft of history, some more valuable interaction of present authors and past events may become possible. This exercise, meanwhile, has pushed me to an exposure of my reaction to sources, actors, and debates such as postmodernists would have historians make an integral component of the crafting of histories as a usual practice.

My writing of *Paths of Duty* had its genesis during the first visit I made, in the Christmas vacation of 1980-1981, to the archive of the American missionaries in Hawaii, held in the exquisitely housed and efficiently run Hawaiian Mission Children's Society Library in Honolulu. I was seeking sources for work on the earliest white women to live among Polynesian peoples in the Pacific. This particular group of white women interested me immediately. The American mission women had been dedicated writers and their descendants, enthusiastic collectors. The material was rich and very extensive for women who, after all, had no official appointment to the mission (except for a few single women), and whose papers therefore had been obtained from relatives back home, not from collections of the metropolitan mission body, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, who kept the men's communications.

The subject excited me because it brought together a cluster of scholarly interests that could be explored in fresh terrain. I had recently begun teaching American history at the University of Melbourne, and like most women's historians in the West, I was deeply impressed by the lively, energetic, and innovatory feminist writing that had emerged in the United States in the 1970s. Studies of white middle-class women in the nineteenth century, including Nancy Cott's own *Bonds of Womanhood*,<sup>2</sup> were prominent among these pioneering texts. Somewhat unexpectedly, the self-representations of these mission wives soon pointed to a close connection between the new scholarship on antebellum women in the American Northeast. This was surprising, because when mission wives were not totally ignored in Pacific history, they tended to be treated as oddities, misfits, absurdities, or a comic element occasionally

trundled out for light relief, not as serious subjects for analysis. The archive offered me the opportunity to follow through the life cycle from youth to old age a considerable number of women reformers whose formative period had been that of early Northeastern industrialization and "the Second Great Awakening," and whose migration to Hawaii was motivated by a uniquely feminine project on behalf of Hawaiian girls and women. So often, I realized, American studies picked up such reformers at some point of time when they came into prominence briefly in records, but historians less often had the opportunity for a longitudinal study. At the same time, the American women's frontier environment pointed up, even intensified, aspects of American culture in ways potentially useful for understanding American women's history more broadly.

Prior scholarly and personal interests also prepared me to be particularly engaged by the possibilities of these subjects. A New Zealander by origin, my first extended research was on the women's movement in nineteenth-century New Zealand, where women obtained the vote in 1893.<sup>3</sup> The major New Zealand activists were members of the Women's Christian Temperance Union. While the work of the American mission women predated that of the New Zealand suffragists, there appeared in the Hawaiian story a similar intersection of evangelical Christianity, with its impetus to moral reform, with a self-consciousness about women's social status. This seemed an intriguing comparative opportunity. It was also my New Zealand background that had stimulated an awareness of early intercultural encounters of Europeans and Polynesians, given the importance of the Maori political movement there and the Maori's various interpretations of history. Influenced strongly by the New Left, feminist historians in my adopted country of Australia were inclined to models of history emphasizing conflict and oppression rather than consensus and progress, and they made issues of race and class central to their revisionist historical interpretations. The intellectual context to which I was attached entertained some skepticism of reformers' declared philanthropic objects and a sense of the multiple ways by which a colonial presence can oppress an indigenous population. Such influences offset the generally positive interpretation of white middle-class women shaped within the woman-centered analysis of American feminist history.<sup>4</sup>

In *Paths of Duty* I attempted to develop, by an ethnographic methodology of detailed description, a portrayal of the American mission wives that juxtaposed what I saw as both the positive and the negative aspects of their experiences-- that is, some with which I could empathize, cer-

tain of which I found unfortunate--without constantly offering an explicit evaluation allotting praise or blame. I did believe that the American women were among those, as Catherine Bateson suggests, "at the meeting place between cultures, or during times of transition, . . . who end up with the worst of both worlds." Yet one needed to stay aware of the alienation they were unleashing within the Hawaiian community. I attempted to sustain two narratives. One was centered on a group of essentially well-meaning and self-sacrificial women who left their homeland armed with a set of ambitions and expectations about meaningful work and gender relationships that were thwarted or denied in a painful exile. The other narrative centered on the outcomes of the women's deliberate positioning of themselves within an alien culture with a stated aim of changing the culture of others. In the first narrative I showed the American wives trapped within a *mentalité* by which they experienced their evangelical goal in altruistic terms. In the second narrative I denied a privileging of the American wives' intentions over the outcomes for Hawaiians.

The reviewers have raised significant and interesting issues in their comments on *Paths of Duty*. Of the specific points, an important one is Nancy Cott's suggestion that as a reader she wanted "a firmer picture of Hawaiians' experience on the receiving end." This criticism was foreshadowed by her fellow reviewer, Claudia Knapman, who thought the book was "likely to be criticized by some for failing to address Hawaiian women, except as the objects of American women's endeavors." Knapman continues: "SO little has been done about any women in the Pacific that this type of criticism is more political--conforming to prevailing ideological positions--than substantive." Cott's critique deserves, however, some extended discussion. Her own first monograph, *Bonds of Womanhood*, said little about the privileges uniformly shared by her white middle-class subjects on the basis of race, or indeed class; but attitudes have changed since her significant early work and, as Cott points out, historical scholarship has moved on.

A frequently cited feminist historians' quip is that, in relation to the analytical concepts of gender, class, and race, white women appear to have more gender, working-class women more class, and black women more race. American feminists in the later 1980s have become painfully aware that their depiction of women's worlds in the nineteenth century prioritized and valorized one segment of women over those others for whom sources were far fewer and with whose lifestyles they less readily identified.<sup>5</sup> This imbalance was tellingly exposed in the lawsuit involving Sears Roebuck and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commis-

sion (EEOC) in 1985 to 1986, when Rosalind Rosenberg's testimony for the company, based on considerable recent feminist scholarship, placed women historically as consistently asserting family concerns over work advancement. Unfortunately for the EEOC, this argument proved decidedly more persuasive than Alice Kessler-Harris's case for the commission, when Kessler-Harris, in the absence of a rich store of secondary sources, had to rely on published primary sources to demonstrate working women's readiness to embrace nontraditional work when opportunities were offered them. Added to this realization of the skewed nature of women's history as it had developed, African American women were complaining insistently that their experiences were thinly explored by white feminists, whether as waged workers or not. Feminist historians, they believed, saw black women as exceptional to mainstream America rather than integral to its central historical culture and its transformations.<sup>6</sup>

Without question I believed the impact of the mission women's activities should inform an evaluation of their project. The challenge posed by Cott is, however, whether I should have pursued this in more detail, to attempt a description of the Hawaiians' responses, which she suggests as the correct position for aware modern feminist historians.

Far more than I pursued in this study, I was certainly concerned with Hawaiians' responses to the American intrusion, and read a good deal of early ethnographic sources, as well as anthropological studies, dealing with models of precontact Hawaiian society and nonmissionary accounts of Hawaiians after the first European intrusion in the late 1770s. Apart from the missionaries' own writing there were, however, few accounts about Hawaiians, let alone by Hawaiians, for the main period of my study, 1820 to the 1850s. As for the chroniclers themselves, their total lack of any respect for, and therefore recording of, specific details of Hawaiian lives was astounding. Prior to exposure to the American archive, I had read my way through the mission records of British and Irish Congregationalists, Methodists, Anglicans, Presbyterians, and Roman Catholics operating in various other parts of the Pacific. Never had I encountered anything approaching the total dismissal of an indigenous culture that emerged in the Americans' papers. Admittedly, the American mission was established some forty years after Europeans commenced living in Hawaii. When the missionaries arrived Hawaiians had already begun adapting to alien ways including abandoning their traditional religion, and since some foreign settlement was in place, the mission could relate to outsiders rather than face a totally Hawaiian social environment. But essentially the silence resulted from American

rigidity. The wishes of successive reviewers that I had included more information on what the Americans learned from Native Hawaiians were vain hopes indeed. The missionaries despised Hawaiian customary ways, condemned their hesitant transitions to American forms, and found the only potential saints among the (numerous) dead. Their references to Hawaiians was hence unsubstantive and distanced. Cott refers to Gutierrez's study of the Spanish Franciscan friars in New Mexico, who utilized Pueblo cosmology to give their Catholic worldview validity. Roman Catholic missionaries characteristically adopted such practices, although there is no evidence, of course, that practitioners of indigenous religions caused friars to alter *their* cosmology. All missionaries were not alike. All Protestant missionaries were not alike. What would have been possible for a historian, if one was working from mission accounts in (Maori) New Zealand, Tahiti, or Tonga, was made virtually impossible by the Americans' stunning ethnocentrism. Despite their capacity to inspire sympathy in other areas, towards Hawaiian culture they were dogmatic and judgmental, which did not augur well for interpretations of Hawaiian adaptive strategies. If I wished to sustain academic conventions of evidence--and I was too dutiful a historian not to do so --I could make little headway on the Native Hawaiian responses unless I used more than a fair amount of "historical imagination." The subject's discipline restrained me from the free-flowing and impressionistic account (interesting, no doubt, but problematic) that I might have constructed if I had been bolder.

But if I were to write the study again, I would still be restrained by another factor about which I felt uneasy when I undertook the primary research, but which has become more politically explicit in the meantime. That is the right of white historians to construct the histories of once-colonized peoples in postcolonial worlds. Cott's reference to the vogue for "multiculturalism" in the United States is not one favored by the oppressed indigenous Maori, Aboriginal, and Native Hawaiian populations of settler societies such as New Zealand, Australia, and Hawaii. As descendants of the original inhabitants, Aborigines, Native Hawaiians, and the Maori expect to take priority over later migrants, whether of European origin or not. Among their political claims is the right to define their own past, a privilege that white historians and anthropologists have previously, and sometimes arrogantly, assumed.<sup>7</sup>

In this case, the history of the response of Native Hawaiian women to mission wives, and to Christianity, goes to the heart of their present-day sense of identity. It is also a painfully contested arena. Among Native Hawaiians themselves, women (as John Young points out in the Tongan

study) clearly played a pivotal role in the conversion process: the church became of the utmost importance to many of them, and current Native Hawaiian Christians place the female missionaries among their pantheon of saints. Other Native Hawaiian women--Hawaiian nationalist activists--are more inclined to vilify the American missionaries, women and men alike. Historians cannot ignore the fact that their work may be used politically, even if this was far from their intention and even if they feel themselves far removed from those circles. Would one intervene constructively in this charged situation by portraying nineteenth-century Hawaiian women as dupes, fools, and victims; as pragmatists, warily assessing their best interests; as spiritual beings matching metaphysical needs with valid choices? At the August 1991 conference of the Pacific Branch of the American Historical Association in Hawaii, the Native Hawaiian nationalist Lilikala Kame'Eleihiwa of the University of Hawaii commended *Paths of Duty* for informing Native Hawaiians of the very peculiar character of the American mission women without intrusive commentary on the history of Native Hawaiians.<sup>8</sup> White historians, like white anthropologists, will no doubt continue to engage in the task of explaining "others" for Western readers, but they can no longer expect to be loved for it by their protégés and they are increasingly confronted with the political consequences of their endeavors. It would seem to me a distinct deficiency if certain negative outcomes for indigenous peoples were not part of an evaluation of a missionary study. Given that, however, it seems legitimate to focus on one particular human element in an intercultural encounter, and not necessarily pursue another evenhandedly; that is, for a white historian to write of white people's lives, without presuming to describe the identity formation of preliterate indigenous peoples.

I turn now to a second significant point raised by Claudia Knapman: that the discussion of the American wives should have been couched more fully in a comparative framework of gender relations. The mission women, she argues, are far too often discussed in isolation "without being located sufficiently in relation to the parallel views of the male missionaries. In some respects this reinforces a stereotypical view of white women and denotes a tendency to assign responsibility for failure to their peculiar idiosyncrasies." The absence of sufficient detail on the men, she concludes, resulted in my having dealt somewhat harshly with the American women, when a comparative framework might have shown them in a more favorable light. Cott also felt that gender comparisons ought to have been further pursued.

This criticism emerges in part from an ongoing dispute over whether

gender, or the relative positions of men and women, ought to be the appropriate focus for feminist history, rather than women themselves. Feminists initially asserted the legitimacy of posing women as a category of analysis as an essential for the recovery of women from historical invisibility and as part of a political act to restore a sense of past identity to women in the present. In the eighties Joan Scott, among others, has urged the notion that gender should be a basic analytical tool in any study of the past and that it opens up important possibilities for integrating women's experiences into mainstream history. Otherwise, women's history might remain in a ghetto.<sup>9</sup> I would not in the slightest deny the force of this argument, and do not respond to this somewhat polarized debate in any partisan fashion: both "gender" and "women" may appropriately be the basis of a study. If feminist historians had not first explored women's lives, however, I do not think gender history would now have seemed feasible; and studies focusing on women can be illuminating in themselves and assist the integrationist project. When I read for *Paths of Duty* I was alert to the comparative aspect of the mission women's, as opposed to the men's, role in the enterprise of proselytization, and certainly here an evenhanded analysis would have been possible if I had chosen to do so. I wanted, however, to make the mission women my focus, but tried at the same time, to some extent, to evaluate them implicitly in a relational sense.

Knapman, however, has another point of reference for her criticism other than the gender history/women's history debate. She signals this when she writes that my inadequate attention to the male missionaries minimizes the extent to which the American women's "effort to convert Hawaiians was motivated by compassion," that is, "the genuine desire of the American women to 'help' Hawaiian women." To understand her comment, we need to recall a debate about the relative impact of white women and white men on British imperial frontiers to which Knapman herself has made a notable contribution with her monograph *White Women in Fiji, 1835-1930: The Ruin of Empire?*<sup>10</sup> Knapman's exploration of the lives of European women in Fiji challenged the suggestion embedded in British colonial history that white colonial women were the chief architects of racism. This was a hypothesis first articulated about British India, although arguably it was one more evocatively described by novelists such as Somerset Maugham, Rudyard Kipling, and E. M. Forster than by historians. This was the basis of the perception in John Young's early work, where he argued that racism did not emerge in Fiji from the attitudes of male settlers or from the Fijian hierarchy, but from the first appearance of an influential number of Euro-

pean women. With the advent of white women, interracial conviviality ceased, and the white mistress of the household now defined the boundaries of social contact on racist lines.

Knapman, as did feminist historians of other parts of Britain's erstwhile far-flung empire, set out to rescue women from their role as scapegoats for the loss of an empire. First, she looked at the variety of behaviors of white women, which defied facile categorization. Then she posed an alternative view about sexuality and race. White men in many colonial situations drew an exaggerated portrait of white female purity, she suggested, making unthinkable sexual relationships between white women and indigenous men. White men could then conveniently blame white women for being racist. Knapman's work has been widely reviewed alongside a study published at the same time by Helen Callaway of European women in colonial Nigeria, *Gender, Culture, and Empire*,<sup>11</sup> where another intriguing hypothesis was proposed. Within systems of thought about gender, wrote Callaway, men have often been equated with the civilizer, the truly human, and hence the worthy sex, in contrast to women who have appeared closer to nature, the animal, and "the wild": less civilized, less important, perhaps even potentially destabilizing of established cultural norms. The frontier of the British Empire, however, saw a reversal of such ideas. The empire was the site of adventure, courage, and feats of endurance by men, who were here associated with nature and "the wild." Women intruded into this heroic world, taming the enterprising male, confining him to domesticity with all its dreary suburban banality, including snobbish distinctions based on class and race. White women received the blame for racism as part of a range of hostile attitudes dealt out by free-wheeling men reacting against the piercing of the fragile bubble of their heroic myth. (In the writing of Pacific history, and the fate of mission wives at the writers' hands, one might suggest that the fact that such women sharply questioned the sexual encounters of supposedly free-wheeling, happy white males with indigenous Pacific women seemed to do the wives no good in the eyes of workaholic, sedentary, aging, and usually married male historians who enjoyed, vicariously, the Pacific exploits of their uninhibited historical brothers.)

In this context of imperial history, treating the Americans in Hawaii intersected, therefore, with a major debate outside of American history but important in Pacific and British history. It is true that I did not address this debate explicitly, but since both Knapman and Young make this fundamental to their reviews, I will restate a response which I made subsequently in a journal little known outside Australia.<sup>12</sup> (Per-



haps most academic journals are little known, and even then more often bought than read!)

At first sight the mission women do, in fact, appear to fit the earlier interpretation of Young and others of the relationship between gender and racism. The missionaries expected initially to mix freely with Hawaiians, took Hawaiian children into their homes, and relied on Hawaiian servants and nurses. Once the American young evinced strong attraction for Hawaiians, however, began speaking Hawaiian and imitating their ways--pagan and obscene ways in mission eyes--the American women, disciples of new ideologies of moral motherhood, reacted strongly. They shut their children off from contact with the surrounding people, reducing drastically their own capacity to teach Hawaiians yet leaving their husbands free to move unimpeded about their outer-directed tasks. It was not the reputed fear of sexual liaisons between husbands and Hawaiian women, but the fear of sexual liaisons between American and Hawaiian youth that sparked off this policy of exclusion. Given the importance of the mission as a whole to the modern history of Hawaii, the mission wives could readily be scapegoated as those responsible for an early social construction of race that weighted the scales heavily against a respectful and sympathetic reading of indigenous Hawaiian culture and society that might have resulted in a less unequal outcome in terms of power.

But the complexity of the intercultural and intracultural relations of Americans and Hawaiians, and of American men and American women, militates against a schematic rendering of the gender and race debate. My own study discovered the situation in which American women and Native Hawaiians found themselves as involved, complex, and resistant to ready formulas. I felt, in the first place, a decided reluctance to brand the Americans unambiguously as racist. Viewed from late twentieth-century society, racist the missionaries undoubtedly were. Yet in terms of their own society--when arguably, all white Americans and Europeans were racists in some sense--these were people who upheld strongly the essential dignity and equality of every human soul in the eyes of God. To characterize the mission as ethnocentric leaves out the element of unequal power with which the American actions were imbued. On the other hand, the use of the term "racist" leaves the historian grasping for a word to use for Southern plantation owners who beat their slaves and sold slaves down the river. Certainly the mission members allocated superior and inferior evaluations to American and Hawaiian cultural characteristics. But they did not suggest that Hawaiians should occupy inferior roles in the new Hawaii or

that there was any overarching biological or genetic explanation that justified continuing American dominance.

In terms of gender, the interesting issues relied on an understanding of the dichotomy of gender that existed within the mission group itself. Such questions in abolitionist circles are, of course, a source of considerable historical interest within American history. The questions do not become negligible because these particular abolitionist women were thrust into a situation where intercultural issues appear of dominant importance. The American wives arrived in Hawaii believing themselves to be in an advantaged position in their own society and that there was an essential equality, described spiritually and enacted within their marriage contract, between their husbands and themselves.

Yet in practice the wives' experience of the mission was one of disadvantage. In theory both partners were welcome to be active in the mission. In practice the women discovered that, even on a distant, exotic frontier, their responsibilities to their menfolk--keeping their homes, caring for their children--took precedence over their responsibilities to God. Work they could, but they worked with an enormous burden from which their husbands were free. And their active mission work had to be kept within sharp boundaries, addressed only to Native Hawaiian women and children. Any attempt to teach the men or to usurp the mission male leadership role, even in the husband's absence, was to merit a severe reprimand from the mission hierarchy. Men taught men, preached to all Hawaiians, and treated with the Hawaiian political hierarchy and with the male Europeans, such as traders and officials. Wives taught women and children, could lead only women in prayer and train them in European styles of work. They could translate a man's sermon but not deliver a sermon. They could find ways to pressure a chief, or indeed, a mission male, in informal conversation but not in formal forums, and if successful, they needed to attribute the success to a man.

Any notion that the context of shared biological characteristics might promote a sense of natural sisterhood, that gender identity might overcome ethnicity, was slow to emerge in the Hawaiian situation, despite the fact that the American women had arrived buoyed up by such an expectation. The early experiences of the American mission women extinguished their enthusiastic hopes about a global sisterhood or any chance that issues of shared gender would overcome barriers created by ethnicity. To begin with, the Americans soon realized the enormity of the gulf that existed between high-born Hawaiian women and women of nonchiefly rank. Women as well as men of the chiefly class wielded

enormous power; rank superseded gender in terms of power, status, and authority despite the fact that certain symbolic representations of gender referred to all women. But in the second place, and more seriously, the Americans could scarcely discover the Hawaiian women to be feminine at all, judged by the only standard they knew. Hawaiian women's behavior in terms of sexuality, childbirth and childrearing, and notions of work baffled the Americans. To be genuinely human meant to be a gendered human being. To recover their full humanity, Hawaiian women had to be reconstituted in terms of gender. And so the American wives struggled to recreate Hawaiian women in their own image, to make them into sisters whom the Americans could embrace.

The complexities of gender and race in this human situation militate against easy and superficial generalizations. Nevertheless, in relation to the initial proposition about the influence of women in frontier situations, one might perhaps make some observations. I would suggest from this case study that the American mission women shared the ethnocentric perceptions and attitudes of the men in their own group, but there was a difference in approach and outcome based on the prevailing gender division of labor. It would be nonsense to suggest that these American women could be seen as the major architects of racist structures in Hawaii, when it was the mission men who carried out the functions imbued with the greater overt public power, alongside other American and European men. By the end of the nineteenth century one would see racism as having emerged, as it did elsewhere, from a competitive drive for Hawaiian land and resources, a struggle in which white men were the chief actors, mission men and their sons (albeit with the best of intentions) among them.

The American women had been essential agents in the social transformations that emerged in the new Hawaii. They were not nonentities; they were not victims; they were not heroines. They contributed significantly to a shift in the balance of power in Hawaii, which undermined the likelihood, eventually, of autonomy for Native Hawaiians. Knapman's study, I believe, underplays this factor in Fiji.<sup>13</sup> But I would argue, nevertheless, that because of the work and channels of influence assigned to the American woman, their presence was less destructive; and in one important aspect, it had constructive elements. The Hawaiian people who survived the onslaught of Western diseases were subjected to increasing pressure from Europeans, a fact for which mission women were not personally responsible. Native Hawaiians now needed avenues for understanding Western ways if they were to withstand physical or cultural annihilation.

It was the American mission wives who pressed that Hawaiian women, along with the men, should gain entry into understanding the necessary skills to be competent in Western social forms and to recognize hazards implicit in the darker side of European behavior. Through the education they offered Hawaiian women in the formal skills of reading and writing, and in the avenues for leadership among their own sex, the Americans ensured, at least, that Native Hawaiian women were not heavily disadvantaged vis-à-vis Native Hawaiian men in negotiating the new world that was emerging. Those high-born women who sustained prominence in the new Hawaii did so after a thorough apprenticeship in the American women's system.

The American women impressed upon Native Hawaiian women the negative character of certain Western practices that they had grafted so readily onto their traditional styles of behavior. Hawaiian women's initial ready entry into sexual encounters with transitory European males often brought havoc in its wake. Venereal diseases, the sores of which flourished in the tropics, took a dreadful toll on the health of Hawaiian women and often resulted in heart-breaking sterility. Children of such unions were left unprovided for when the European male deserted, as so often happened. What might appear good, clean, egalitarian fun to American and European men, and to subsequent American and European historians, was in fact behavior that had destructive implications for Native Hawaiian women. It was reasonable that mission wives should have perceived the situation in these terms. This was true, also, for the Americans' campaign against female and male use of imported drugs, alcohol, and nicotine. Alcohol brought distressing domestic violence and a multiplicity of accidents. Smoking put lives at risk, as houses built of combustible materials burned down when fires were left alight at night, so that occupants could light their pipes if they awoke. Small babies could crawl from their mothers' arms at night to fall into such fires and be horribly burned. A later, distant generation of academics might describe the Americans who opposed these practices as strait-laced. One could argue that the American mission wives assisted at least some Native Hawaiians of their own sex to deal with life-threatening situations, the introduction of which the mission wives could not be held responsible for.

Embedded in the intercultural experience of American mission women was a dichotomy based on sex, on a gender division of labor, which led to a division in the social construction of race and the practices that flowed from it. Simply because of prevailing formulations of femininity and female roles within the American group, the women,

while undoubtedly “racist” judged by the standards of today, nevertheless played a less destructive part in this drama than the men.

For my next project I plan to write a comparative study of the place of indigenous women in the creation of colonial discourses in settler societies of the Pacific, Australia and New Zealand. I am grateful to the reviewers for their close attention to my work, and, as I set about fresh research, carry their interesting comments with me.

## NOTES

1. L. Davidoff and C. Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780-1850* (London: Hutchinson, 1987).

2. N. Cott, *Bonds of Womanhood: “Woman’s Sphere” in New England, 1780-1835* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977).

3. P. Grimshaw, *Women’s Suffrage in New Zealand* (Auckland: Auckland University press, 1972, rev. ed. 1987).

4. See P. Grimshaw, “Writing about Women in New Societies: Americans in Hawaii, Anglo-Australians in Colonial Victoria,” *Australasian Journal of American Studies* 9, no. 2 (December 1990); P. Grimshaw, “Writing the History of Australian Women,” in *Writing Women’s History: International Perspectives*, ed. K. Offen, R. Pierson, and J. Rendall (London: Macmillan, 1991).

5. See N. Hewitt, “Beyond the Search for Sisterhood: American Women’s History in the 1980s,” *Social History*, no. 10 (October 1985).

6. For example, E. Higginbotham, “Beyond the Sound of Silence: Afro-American Women’s History,” *Gender and History* 1, no. 1 (Spring 1989). For discussion of the Sears Roebuck case, see R. Milkman, “Women’s History and the Sears Case,” *Feminist Studies* 12, no. 2 (Summer 1986); “Women’s History Goes on Trial,” *Signs* 11, no. 4 (Summer 1986).

7. For example, C. Mohanty, “‘Under Western Eyes’: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses,” *Feminist Review*, no. 3 (1988); Haunani-Kay Trask, “Natives and Anthropologists: The Colonial Struggle,” *The Contemporary Pacific* 3, no. 1 (Spring 1991). Two ethnographic descriptions of Hawaiian women by white scholars have appeared recently: J. Linnekin, *Sacred Queens and Women of Consequence: Rank, Gender, and Colonialism in the Hawaiian Islands* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1990); C. Ralston, “Changes in the Lives of Ordinary Women in Early Post-contact Hawaii,” in *Family and Gender in the Pacific*, ed. M. Jolly and M. MacIntyre (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

8. Lilikala Kame‘Eleihiwa, “Foreign Diseases and Calvinist Missionaries: Allies of American Colonialism in Hawaii” (paper presented 15 August 1991 at 84th Annual Meeting of the American Historical Association, Pacific Coast Branch, Kona Coast, Hawaii), comment made in discussion period.

9. J. Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis," in *Gender and the Politics of History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988); cf. J. Bennett, "Feminism and History," *Gender and History* 1, no. 3 (Autumn 1989).

10. C. Knapman, *White Women in Fiji, 1835-1930: The Ruin of Empire?* (Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1986). For John Young's position, see his "Evanescent Ascendancy: The Planter Community in Fiji," in *Pacific Island Portraits*, ed. J. Davidson and D. Scarr (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1970).

11. H. Callaway, *Gender, Culture, and Empire: European Women in Colonial Nigeria* (London: Macmillan, 1987).

12. P. Grimshaw, "Gender, Race, and American Frontiers: The Hawaiian Case," *Australasian Journal of American Studies* 7, no. 1 (July 1988).

13. P. Grimshaw, Review of *Gender, Culture, and Empire*, by H. Callaway, and *White Women in Fiji, 1835-1930*, by C. Knapman, *Gender and History* 1, no. 1 (Spring 1989). For further discussion, see J. Haggis, "Gendering Colonialism or Colonising Gender: Recent Women's Studies Approaches to White Women and the History of British Colonialism," *Women's Studies International Forum* 13, nos. 1/2 (1990); and other articles in that journal's special issue on "Western Women and Imperialism," vol. 13, no. 4 (1990).

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## REVIEWS

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Jocelyn Linnekin, *Sacred Queens and Women of Consequence: Rank, Gender, and Colonialism in the Hawaiian Islands*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1990. Pp. xxiv, 276, illus., glossary, bibliography, index. US\$15.95.

*Reviewed by Judith Huntsman, University of Auckland*

Several years ago, in reviewing a collection of ethnohistorical essays about gender relations among elite Polynesians, I asked the question: "would further informed examination of the evidence provide insights into the lives of ordinary women?" From Linnekin's book I have an affirmative answer. The "women of consequence" in her title are ordinary or commoner women of Hawaii, and it is her elucidation of the lives of ordinary Hawaiian women and men in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that makes her book unique. The better known "sacred queens" and kings of the Hawaiian elite receive their measure of attention, too.

The book is structured as an answer to an apparently simple question (p. 3): Why in the mid-nineteenth century was there "a statistical shift in the inheritance pattern such that land increasingly came into the hands of women"? The explanation takes the form of a series of chapters, all providing clues of different kinds. In the end the question is answered--only to raise other questions. The reader, increasingly informed, begins to anticipate the author's answer, and this reader found both the investigation and the answer convincing.

It may all sound very straightforward, but it is not. In fact, the great virtue of Linnekin's work is that she does not treat her question as a simple matter. She examines it in a broad historical and theoretical context, so that the book is an ambitious excursion of elucidation and critique in

the course of which propositions and arguments concerning Hawaiian history and society are reviewed and reinterpreted, and new evidence is brought to bear. The ambiguities in the received interpretation of pre-contact Hawaiian woman as *noa* ("common, 'free' of *kapu*"; p. 252) yet "vessels of highest *kapu* rank" are scrutinized, and the notion of "female pollution" critically revisited. Turning from the abundant literature on ritual and rank, women (mainly chiefly ones) are portrayed as actors--as producers and exchangers "vying for control of resources and jockeying for relative status" (p. 58). Moving away from an examination of chiefly Hawaiian society, the patterns of chiefly and commoner lifeways are both contrasted and related to one another; then the patterns of local or ordinary or commoner social relations teased out from the evidence of statements made by claimants in the land records and an informed consideration of the ethnohistorical literature. The Hawaiian political economy from 1778 to 1860 is examined as it changed both economic and social relations between elite and ordinary people. With her own interpretation of these aspects of Hawaiian history and society firmly grounded, Linnekin returns to her initial question of women and land. She argues that the statistical increase in women's land-holding was a pragmatic and conservative response under the circumstances and one that was compatible with Hawaiian cultural concepts. In the absence of male cognates and on behalf of their families, women claimed land as guardians or "place-holders"--an apt coinage. However, the story does not stop here, for this conservative response in turn brought about a transformation in women's social roles. In conclusion she addresses the wider issue of how women fare (*vis-à-vis* men) in colonial situations, arguing against the proposition that they are inevitably "devalued."

I leave to other reviewers more familiar with the abundant literature on Hawaii to uncover whatever holes there may be in the trees of Linnekin's complex argument. For me, the forest she has constructed is both plausible and illuminating. My competence is in the general area of Polynesian social relations, structure, and organization; and in this regard I record my particular appreciation of the book.

Linnekin's explorations of the lives of Hawaiian commoners in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries is enlightening and intriguing. Enlightening because there is so little sophisticated analysis of commoner lives (compared with those of chiefs) and intriguing because her analysis resonates with features of the ordinary lifeways of other Polynesians past and present, rural and urban. There, in nineteenth-century Hawaii, were older women who stayed put, holding the land



and the family (however defined) together. There was the salience of the mature sister and brother as together the core of a cooperative group of kin (whatever its actual membership). There were mobile youth in casual unions and settled adults raising their valued grandchildren. There was a tendency towards local endogamy and uxorilocality. There was a strong sense of "place," of where people were born and raised, and ultimately belonged, which was associated with their attachment to the land. I find this a far more plausible picture of "Ancestral Polynesian Society" than the neatly ramifying conical clan (see Kirch 1984) or the "hypothetical ancestral Polynesian pattern" of paternalistic chiefly encompassment (Thomas 1989). The society that Linnekin depicts may be less exotic, but it makes a good deal more sense. Perhaps the picture does not apply to the chiefly minority who have received so much attention, but it probably does apply to the commoner majority.

Her discussion of the commoners and the land is subtle, and tolerant of some ambiguity. She contrasts the wandering of chiefly personages (p. 93) with the people's attachment to the soil, quoting Kamakau: "Strangers move about but native sons remain" (p. 85)--shades of Fijian "stranger-kings" and "land people" (Sahlins 1981). In jural terms, she confirms the hierarchy of chiefly rights to land, but then, again quoting Kamakau, contrasts the transience of chiefly control with the people's continuity based on burial sites. This connection to the land through ancestral burial places resonates all over Polynesia and is something that has not been attended to sufficiently. Linnekin does not pursue it either--but then it is not the subject of her book.

Linnekin's explanation is predicated on an open, analytical framework. She asserts right at the beginning that any social system provides alternative patterns and practices, but these "alternative practices are never random . . . [and] may accord well with other cultural premises" (p. 5) and, at the end, that the answers to the questions must be complex and specific (versus simple and global)--her series of *because* phrases (p. 238).

Linnekin takes issue with propositions of several of her colleagues--Valeri, Gailey, Pukui, etc.--with grace and tact. These are not straw-people whom she is setting up to play off of, nor is she asserting that she is absolutely right and they are dead wrong. This is indeed refreshing and I hope it is indeed one of the features of feminist scholarship (see Linnekin's comments on this [p. 229]).

I have one criticism, or better put, something I found irksome, though it is related to comments above. Repeatedly the author makes brief comparative references to Samoa (where she has been doing

ethnohistorical research) of the ilk "like Samoans," "as is found in Samoa," "similarly, in Samoa," "echoes of the Samoan," and so forth. These "just like" throwaway lines do not really illuminate or support her argument, even though they do suggest something of the basic nature of the social patterns that she describes. If comparisons are to be made they should be sustained explorations of differences as well as samenesses and based on some rationale of comparison, that is, why are these particular societies being compared?

This, however, is a minor quibble about a major contribution to Polynesian studies--both in substance and theory. Furthermore, my quibble points to a task for other scholars, who, following Linnekin's lead, might investigate with similar ethnohistorical sophistication the lives and social arrangements of the nonchiefly men and women in the hierarchical societies of late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Polynesia.

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Laura Thompson, *Beyond the Dream: A Search for Meaning*. MARC Monograph Series, no. 2. [Mangilao]: Micronesian Area Research Center, University of Guam, 1991.

*Reviewed by Leonard Mason, University of Hawaii*

A truly remarkable person--Laura Thompson! In this deeply moving autobiography she recounts in detail both personal and professional experiences, from her childhood in Honolulu in the early part of this century until her eventual return to her birthplace to write this work in

her retirement years. Her life goal has been to help people wherever they live on this Earth. Her learning through countless field studies of the functional relationship between culture and nature and of the way in which peoples adapt to changing social and physical environments has given her the basis for proposing remedies for the global concerns of humanity about overpopulation and deteriorating resources.

Thompson grew up in a conservative, disciplined, Episcopalian household. Her father, William Thompson, an Englishman, migrated to America as a young adult and ended up in Honolulu. Valuing American freedoms, he adopted U.S. citizenship in 1898. Her mother, Maud Balch, a Californian, met him on a visit to Honolulu a few years later. They married in San Francisco and returned to Honolulu, establishing a permanent home in the Punchbowl area above the city. Laura, born in 1905, was the younger of two daughters. The household included a Hawaiian nanny and a Japanese handyman. Punchbowl was a racially mixed neighborhood. Thus, Laura learned early to understand and to accept cultural differences. After a year in a one-teacher private school in Punchbowl, Laura enrolled in prestigious Punahou School. She continued there until completion of her secondary education, enjoying an intellectual independence in contrast to her home environment. Piano lessons stirred an early interest in music, but this gave way to a fondness for writing when she became editor of the school's weekly newspaper in her senior year.

After graduation from Punahou, she entered Mills College in Oakland, California. Propelled by a humanitarian concern to help people, she earned a bachelor of arts degree in sociology and economics. Local field trips introduced her to the depression of needy persons in institutional care. A month-long workshop in New York City, as a junior, involved her in visits to the city's slums; the poverty and crime she observed deepened her commitment to a goal of social and cultural understanding. She completed her studies at Mills in three and a half years, and in 1926 she returned to the family household in Honolulu.

She gained hands-on experience as a field-worker at the Shriners Hospital for Crippled Children. Her assignments brought her into close touch with the families of physically handicapped children, who reflected the broad range of Hawaii's ethnic and economic diversity. Although she acquired greater sensitivity to human needs as a social worker, she soon realized the necessity for a more comprehensive approach to present-day social problems. A return to academic studies seemed to be the answer.

An interview with Kenneth Emory at the Bishop Museum suggested

that anthropology was the field most likely to satisfy her search for a deeper understanding of humankind in a changing world. He recommended Harvard University and off she went to Cambridge, aided by a Bishop Museum scholarship. She enrolled at Radcliffe, a nearby women's college, which allowed her to study under Harvard's famed anthropologists, including Roland Dixon who taught her about peoples in the Island Pacific. Although she greatly respected the strong emphasis on fieldwork and museum research at Harvard, she rebelled at the department's discrimination against female students and left after one year to return to Honolulu.

In 1929, as an assistant ethnologist at the Bishop Museum, she spent six months studying the Hornbostel archaeological collection from Guam and the northern Mariana Islands. The museum's Pacific Islands focus and its strength in field research, together with the opportunity to work with Pacific anthropologists, left an indelible impression on her studies in cultural ecology.

Later that year, she enrolled at the University of California at Berkeley to complete her graduate work in anthropology. Even though the UCB department favored American Indian ethnology, Thompson devoted much time to the Pacific. It was at Berkeley that she experienced the transition in theoretical anthropology from a "culture traits/complexes" emphasis to the "functionalism" of field researchers like Malinowski and Thurnwald, an approach to culture as a process by which an ethnic group constantly adapts to changes in the social and physical environment.

It was also at Berkeley that she became involved with Bernhard Tuetting, a German citizen, who tutored her to meet the German-language requirement for the doctor of philosophy degree. After she completed graduate studies in 1933, the two were married. They departed in that same year for fieldwork in Fiji, Thompson's first venture into the South Pacific.

They traveled by ship to Suva and explored the interior of Viti Levu while waiting two months for transport to the southern Lau Islands to the east. There they established a base on Kambara Island for the next eight months. They island-hopped by outrigger canoe to other islands in the Lau group to broaden the context of the primary research on Kambara. Laura was especially interested in interisland trading. Her UCB doctoral dissertation had been based on library research about traditional trade in southeastern New Guinea. The Fiji research was aided by a Bishop Museum grant to collect handcrafted artifacts. Laura and Bernhard observed local subsistence practices, ceremonial exchanges,

“black” magic, and the conflict between British/Western culture and the indigenous way of life. This field experience convinced her that direct personal contact with the people being studied was essential to good ethnology, and she began her lifetime search for the meaning behind their overt behavior.

In the summer of 1934, Laura returned to Honolulu to write up her field notes. Bernhard went directly home to his family estate in north-western Germany. She joined him in the fall and found herself involved in another field study--the rural countryfolk of an Old Saxon village north of Osnabrück. She came to appreciate even more the strong ecological tie between humankind and the natural environment as evidenced in this farming community. She also marveled at the cultural integrity of these villagers when they were threatened by the Nazi propaganda of that decade.

In 1935 her husband suffered a nervous breakdown and they went to Berlin for psychiatric help. She did some library research at the Museum für Volkerkunde and renewed an earlier acquaintance with Professor Richard Thurnwald, a Pacific Islands specialist who had long been her model of professional anthropology. In Berlin, she came to wonder about the success of Nazism in the urban setting in contrast to its rejection in rural Lower Saxony.

The trauma of Nazism and the abusive behavior of her mentally troubled husband plunged Thompson into deep depression that finally led to divorce and a return to Honolulu in 1938. While recovering from the Germany experience, she revised her manuscript on southern Lau ethnography and worked hard to complete her first publication, *Fijian Frontier* (Shanghai, 1939). The latter was her initial attempt to engage in the emerging field of applied anthropology, as she used her southern Lau material to critique the British colonial administration in Fiji. Later that year, she accepted an offer from the U.S. naval governor of Guam, in the Mariana Islands, to serve as his consultant on native affairs.

Her Guam assignment was a six-month field study of the native Chamorro population, their daily life, land use customs, changing economy, schooling, cultural values, and local government under American military rule since 1899, when Guam was ceded to the United States after the Spanish-American War. Her observations were intended to help the Naval Administration better understand the problems faced by the Chamorro community.

Thompson was stationed in Agana, Guam's capital, but she soon set up field headquarters in Merizo, a village at the island's southern end,

There she was assisted by two helpful Chamorro men in learning the language and initiating contact with local families. She had fruitful discussions with the naval governor and his staff as her work progressed. A two-month leave to travel on a Navy supply ship to cities in the Philippines, China, and Japan proved valuable in providing a more global outlook on social and economic problems. While on Guam she had become much concerned about the potential threat of a foreign takeover, as she observed visits to Guam by Japanese fishing boats from Saipan in the northern Mariana Islands, which Japan had ruled since World War I.

Thompson returned to Honolulu in 1939 and invested the next two years in writing her second book, *Guam and Its People* (New York, 1941). She also sought to learn more about Hawaiian culture with aid from the Bishop Museum staff, including Mary Kawena Pukui. Early in 1941 she traveled to the mainland United States to attend the first meeting of the Society for Applied Anthropology, which she had helped to found. In the nation's capital, she talked with federal officials about her conviction that a Japanese attack involving the United States was imminent. She got little audience.

However, the Washington trip did result in an introduction to John Collier, commissioner of Indian affairs. He had lobbied, since the 1920s for liberation of tribal Indian groups from restrictive federal regulations. During the Roosevelt administration, Collier accepted an offer to become commissioner in order to implement his plan for an "Indian New Deal." In 1941 he set up the Indian Personality, Education, and Administration Project in cooperation with the Committee on Human Development at the University of Chicago, where Laura was studying at the time. The project was intended to determine by social science methods the effects of New Deal policies on selected Indian reservations. He asked Thompson to head up the project, as a professional who was committed to "action research."

As project coordinator, Thompson worked with anthropologists and psychologists in a multidisciplinary approach. Beginning in 1942, the team conducted field studies on the Hopi, Papago, Zuni, Navaho, and Dakota Sioux reservations. Team members eventually authored books on their respective tribal assignments; Thompson's publications concentrated on the Hopi. Working closely with Collier on the project, she found that they had many interests in common; they married in 1943. After the Indian project ended in 1947, Collier left the Indian Service to teach at the City College of New York; their married life lost its appeal and later they divorced. She continued to write books and articles

expressing her views about human needs, and taught as a full professor in a number of term assignments in colleges across the country.

Thompson now wanted to extend her field studies from the tropic and temperate climatic zones to better appreciate the relation of ethnic lifeways to natural environments. So in 1952 she headed north to Iceland, just below the Arctic Circle. She combined library research on the historical background of Icelanders with field observations of their present lifestyle, values, and adaptation to the rigors of the subarctic habitat. She was ably assisted by a prominent Icelandic woman about her age, who guided her around the island and introduced her to local family households. Thus Laura finally ended her lifelong search for a “genuine living democracy” where a people over the years had achieved a strategy for survival by their “perceptiveness, industry, perseverance, and grit.” She concluded, from all of her field experience, that local groups of people, each in their own way, draw from nature what is needed to develop a uniquely patterned culture and group personality adapted to changing circumstances.

Continuing to write and to teach, Thompson found new enrichment of her personal life in 1963 through marriage with a long-time friend, a relationship that dated back to their shared high school years at Punahou. Sam Duker, of Dutch parentage, had majored in education and psychology as a graduate student and was *now* a professor of education at Brooklyn College in New York City. They lived in Brooklyn and managed to build a rich personal relationship despite Sam’s Old World conservatism and Laura’s dedicated liberalism. While he was busy teaching, she had time to review her many field studies, which she summarized in *The Secret of Culture: Nine Community Studies* (New York, 1969).

In the early 1970s, after Duker’s retirement, the couple moved to northeastern New Jersey, near the Hudson River, Duker died in 1978. Thompson then moved to a condominium at Hilton Head Island, South Carolina. Early in the 1980s, she returned to Honolulu where she now lives in restful retirement. Her autobiography, with its profound message about humanity and the environment, represents her ultimate attempt to “help people” as she shares what she has learned from her lifelong search for the meaning of human life.

In this chronological review of her life, Thompson interposes a number of enlightening vignettes of people she came to know, which readers will surely appreciate. Included also are thirty-six photographs of family and friends. A recommendation in this regard is that pictures of her fieldwork settings might well have been added, to document the geo-

graphic breadth of her studies and to demonstrate the ecological differences of human habitation. Similarly, large-scale map inserts would have been helpful to readers not familiar with the sites of her field research. And, finally, for a writer as productive as Thompson has been, an autobiography might be expected to have a complete list of her publications--books, articles, and reports--many of which are cited in her notes but not always easy to identify if a reader wishes to pursue the subject in library collections.

The basic message in Thompson's presentation for future action is best conveyed, in my opinion, by a quotation in one of her last chapters, "Beyond the Dream." She writes, "Our hopes lie . . . in supporting forms of large scale organization, population planning, birth control and natural resources conservation based on apparently incompatible cultural differences between nations and between ethnic groups within states" (p. 135).

Olaf Blixen, *I te matamu'a: Fundamentos de la cosmovisión Polinesia* [Basis of the Polynesian cosmovision]. Moana, Estudios de Antropología Oceánica, vol. 3. Montevideo, 1987. Pp. 399. US\$20.00.

*Reviewed by Mario Califano, Centro Argentino de Etnología Americana, Buenos Aires*

The title of this book, *I te matamu'a*, which in the language of Easter Island means "in other times," sums up Olaf Blixen's two main objectives: to understand the spiritual life of the Polynesians by means of the mythical narrative corpus and to erect a framework to interpret the basis of the "cosmovision" (worldview, *Weltanschauung*) of these skillful sailors. As regards the former, undoubtedly *I te matamu'a* refers to the early days when the ancestors of the deities took part in the events that laid the foundations of the future cultural facts. The latter has a methodological purpose that goes beyond application to the Polynesian religion, albeit this subject provides a convenient groundwork.

The author starts by making clear that the term "Polynesian" is an abstraction comprising a group of singular peoples including the Tahitians, Hawaiians, Samoans, Easter Islanders, and many others scattered over the vast surface of the Pacific Ocean. This concrete viewpoint is accounted for by an existential conception of the cultural phenomenon centered on W. Dilthey's *Erlebnis* (a personal experience,



something revealed “in the psyche through internal experience”; see his *Das Erlebnis und die Dichtung* [1907]). Hence the great significance Blixen gives to the mythical narratives in which the characters are presented as archetypes of social and individual action as they determine the life, the general ways, and the very feeling of the ethnographic group, which in contemporary ethnology has come to be known as the “structures” of the mythical conscience.

Due to the special nature of the bibliographical sources, the author has been compelled to resort to an heuristic approach to contend with the following difficulties: inaccuracy in the gathering of data, removal of repeated words and paragraphs, concision for the sake of aesthetics, fictitious reconstructions, periphrastic translations. To these problems affecting the hermeneutic level, we may add the profound changes suffered by the Oceanic cosmovisions as a result of the acculturation process.

Blixen is clear in this epistemological formulation of the purpose of ethnology, seen as the study of barbaric cultures in the classical Greek sense or, better, “strange” as they differ from the Western axiological and logical assumptions. As such, this “strangeness” circumscribes a particular ontological region that defines the foundations of ethnology as a science. These assumptions are based on E. Husserl’s phenomenology and on the theoretical and methodological formulations of the Argentine ethnologist M. Bórmida (*Etnología y fenomenología. Ideas acerca de una hermenéutica del extrañamiento* [Buenos Aires, 1976]), who is constantly quoted in *I te matamu’a*, resulting in a fruitful scientific dialogue.

The mythical conscience, understood as an anthropological structure, has certain principles--or forms or structures--of a very general nature, states Blixen, which are probably shared in the emotional thinking of all barbaric peoples. Further on he adds that, because of its philosophical character, the discussion of the ontological nature of these principles goes beyond the objective of his work.

The ideas of participation and mystical experience, structure, category, and essence, among others, have been analyzed on the basis of Lévy-Bruhl’s memorable formulations about the meaning of the “pre-logical” (an unfortunately misleading word), and have been further complemented through consideration of the works of a number of different authors who have critically developed these concepts. Finally, Blixen notes that the structures examined in the various chapters of his book are but a portion of the molds that condition the spiritual life of

the Polynesians. Also, the exposition of "molds" is not exhaustive, and the purpose of his work is to better understand the cosmivision of the members of this Oceanic ethnic group.

The principles considered and through which the mythical conscience is manifested are: causality, the social conception of nature and the reciprocity principle, qualified space and time, the soul conception, divination, *mana*, taboo, magic, name, *te Po* and *te Ao* (day and night), participation, and culture as a gift. Other possible structures are also mentioned. In this review I shall comment on the concept of retribution and on *mana*, which, to me, constitutes the most remarkable principle of the archaic mind.

The Polynesian religious horizon, like those in most societies studied by ethnographers, consists of retributive codes that present criminal offenses and legal procedures to punish them. Moreover, these types of formulations include ethical axiological formulations. This legality is the result of a basic conception that views nature as a series of social relations; retribution works by means of actions that pretend to be a merited requital for an evil done or a deserved punishment for an injury. This is aimed at restoring the previous situation and to make return for the offense or the wrong inflicted. In Polynesia, points out Blixen, there are ceremonies where the first fruits are offered to the gods before using the produce of fishing or gathering, or before catching or using the beings under the protection of, or belonging to, a god. Other examples are the rites of bestowing the first fruits and gifts, such as the *inasi* in Tonga, with the corresponding distribution among those present, and the exchange of gifts at weddings. These practices were real ceremonial barter. In short, the myth, insists Blixen, is a conveniently significant field for putting forward the principle of retribution, which is found in the exemplary action and determines fate and the existence of things.

In Polynesia, *mana*, asserts Blixen, is the structure of power, a formulation he analyzes in detail as taken from the second half of the nineteenth century, when Max Müller published the famous letter written by the missionary R. H. Codrington. That description of *mana* enlarged ethnological knowledge. It not only gave a new word to the ethnographic repertoire but also introduced a conceptual element that permitted identification of its existence in other ethnic groups in the inhabited world. The scientific formulation of *mana* made it possible to go beyond its Melanesian specificity to the universality of the essence, to power as the general structure of meaning--from the cultural concept or idea to the ideal unit of meaning. For this reason, I have considered

power the outstanding principle of the mythical conscience, because it surpasses the perception of objective relations and reality becomes imbued with a qualitative dynamism.

In what we may regard as the second part of his book, Blixen transcribes and analyzes forty-seven mythical narratives from Tonga, Samoa, Niue, Futuna, Uvea, Tokelau, Rennell, Kapingamarangi, the Marquesas Islands, the Society Islands, the Tuamotus, Rarotonga, New Zealand, Chatham, and Easter Island. The technique used upon the application of a correct hermeneutics consists of three steps: first, transcribing the text translated into Spanish, except for the narratives from Easter Island, which were collected by Blixen himself; second, clarifying it with a large number of notes that provide an accurate interpretation, especially regarding the meaning of words in the native language; and finally, making an ethnographic comment with ample bibliography where the religious content is particularly analyzed.

A comprehensive bibliography and two indexes, one of names and another of topics, complete this contribution.

With *'I te matamu'a*, Olaf Blixen not only has more than reached his objectives but has also provided theoretical and methodological resources proper to the canons of a phenomenological ethnology, a contribution that takes shape through the fascinating Polynesian spiritual world. This knowledge shall undoubtedly be of great scientific interest to the Spanish-speaking reader as the author has chosen to write his book in this language.

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## BOOKS NOTED

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### RECENT PACIFIC ISLANDS PUBLICATIONS: SELECTED ACQUISITIONS, NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 1991

This list of significant new publications relating to the Pacific Islands was selected from new acquisition lists received from Brigham Young University-Hawaii, University of Hawaii at Manoa, Bernice P. Bishop Museum, University of Auckland, East-West Center, University of the South Pacific, National Library of Australia, South Pacific Commission Library, and the AIDAB Centre for Pacific Development and Training. Other libraries are invited to send contributions to the Books Noted Editor for future issues. Listings reflect the extent of information provided by each institution.

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