THE EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF HOUSEKEEPING AND IMPORTS IN FIJI

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Women have been involved in the process of development in Fiji since missionary wives and other European women arrived there in the 1830s. The wives of Wesleyan missionaries brought with them ideas new to Fiji about running a household, many of which required goods not available locally. They introduced different foods, a new idea of work, and new considerations of health and child care, all dependent to some degree on imported items. Since these women were committed to introducing Fijians to these new concepts, we can place them among the "early developers" at the micro-economic level. I will therefore highlight the role of these early immigrant homemakers in setting Fiji on a road to dependence on imported goods.

Although the missionaries arrived in a land abundant with foods (Wilkes 1845), they saw the need to import foodstuffs and other goods better suited to their ideas of household management. The Fijian foods and housewares were not acceptable to them. So they requested these foods from overseas, Britain at first and then Australia, for their own comfort and correct living. At the same time they sought to induce Fijians to obtain these goods in the name of civilization; they were deeply committed to improving the lot of women and children by their own example (Burton and Deane 1936:98).

The emphasis here is on these women's involvement at the household level rather than on women's status vis-à-vis that of men, or the con-

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cerns of women's studies and feminist theory (Tinker 1985). Using their own ideas of correct household management the immigrant women sought to establish a need for material goods, and thus the need to work hard. They set up schools to pass on these new ideas to Fijian women. Fijian women observed and listened and adopted those new ideas that they found acceptable.

The contributions that missionary wives made more than a hundred years ago to introducing these new ideas have not been widely recognixed. Women's issues in development have become a point of focus only in the past twenty years. The need to increase women's involvement in the developments occurring in the 1960s in various Pacific societies was a key item on the agendas of South Pacific Commission conferences (for example, one in Tahiti in 1972 and one in Rarotonga in 1985) and of South Pacific Forum meetings. The issue of how best to help women participate in the development process has gained momentum in the 1980s (see the proceedings of two major conferences: "Women, Aid, and Development" [Melville 1983]; "Women in Development in the South Pacific," 1984 [Cole 1985]). Hughes has argued that "if the economic and social situation of women in the Pacific is to be improved, the household economies are the focal point" and suggests that gardening, fishing, and other areas where women's work could be more productive need to have a higher profile (1985:8). Looking specifically at women's work in Fiji, Schoeffel and Kikau have shown how missionaries tried to impose their view of women's domestic role on Fijian women, and how that view continues to be the basis of much development today: "it apparently justifies excluding women from important decision making processes, thereby depriving them of relevant supporting government services and either ignoring their activities in national economic planning or giving them only marginal consideration" (1980: 28).

By showing here that missionary women were deeply committed to changing Fijian ways of running a household and a family one hundred or more years ago, we can demonstrate their early influence on the pattern of imports and the subsequent path of development that Fiji has taken. Women were not just on the receiving end of alien values, but were also the disseminators of those values, even in the nineteenth century.

Missionary wives' contributions in Fiji have been overlooked in the literature, largely because they are not well documented. Two exceptions are Heath's thesis examining social change in Fiji between 1835 and 1874 with special attention to the life-style of Fijian women (1974)

and C. Knapman's monograph on white women in Fiji (1986). Knapman's well-documented account of the lives of missionary wives, administrators' wives, and other non-Fijian women in the early contact period (1835 to 1930) takes issue with other approaches that have sought to lay the blame for racism, in varying degrees, on white women in various colonial societies. She examines the lives of these immigrant women both in and outside their homes to show that they were "ordinary women" pursuing their lives as they would in England or America. Drawing on material from the Pacific, Australia, and India, she demonstrates that "women in mixed race situations suffer from extreme vulnerability" due to the way the interrelationship between racism and sexism has been portrayed (C. Knapman 1986:177).

Margaret Cargill is the only wife of a missionary to Fiji whose life account has been published; that account has drawbacks as it was edited by her husband after she died in Fiji (Cargill 1841; Dickson 1976). David Cargill makes little mention of his wife in his own diaries and correspondence (Schutz 1977). Thomas Williams, the missionary who has provided us with much detail about Fiji in the 1830s through 1850s, barely mentions his wife either in his ethnography or in the two volumes of his journal (Williams [1858] 1982; Henderson 1931b), except at the intervals when she gave birth to their five children. Calvert ([1858] 1983) and Lyth (Garrett 1982) tell us a little more about their wives. Burton and Deane's retrospective survey of missionary activity in Fiji devotes a chapter to "The Remaking of Womanhood" (1936). The unpublished literature of the Methodist Missionary Society of Australasia, Fiji district, compiled by Thornley (1971), includes little written by the women missionaries; the writings give only brief indications of mission trading transactions and few incidental comments.

It would seem that female missionaries wrote very little. We must thus rely on the implications of what male missionaries have recorded, together with comments by nonmissionary women such as Mrs. Wallis and Mrs. Smythe, and, later, Miss C. Gordon Cumming and Miss Grimshaw who had lived in Fiji immediately following the period when the first missionary wives were establishing themselves and their ideas. From these sources we can piece together a picture of these early women's contributions to the development of Fiji.

The writings of the male missionaries thus provide the bulk of the information about the management of the new immigrants' households. From their statements we gain an impression of a contrast between their own values and those of the Fijians whose lives they wished to change (Williams [1858] 1982; Calvert [1858] 1983).

Fiji in the 1840s and 1850s

The first missionaries arrived in Fiji in 1809 aboard a sandalwood trading ship, but only for a temporary stay on their way from Tahiti to Sydney (Im Thurn and Wharton 1925). In 1835 David Cargill and William Cross arrived to take up permanent residence, in answer to "that outcry of savage passion which reached them from 'the regions beyond' " (Calvert [1858] 1983:6). Coming from Tonga where they had been establishing missions, they arrived with their families on the outer island of Lakeba in the Lau group, where traditional ties of kinship and trading with Tonga were strong. Through the King of Tonga's social ties with the Tui Nayau of Lakeba, the new arrivals were promised land on which to build houses and a church.

These two young men and their wives already had experience living in the Pacific. Cross had spent eight years in Tonga, and Cargill had been there two years. As the Wesleyan church advised (Schutz 1977:4), they had married just before setting out from England on the long voyage halfway around the world. Cargill met his wife while he was getting an M.A. and she was a student at the University of Aberdeen in 1826; she later became his fiancee and converted from the Presbyterian to the Methodist church (Schutz 1977:4). Both Cargill and Cross developed a good working knowledge of the Tongan language, and were strongly committed later to recording and printing the Fijian language.

They landed in Lakeba on 12 October 1835 in the company of a group of Tongans aboard the trading vessel *Blackbird.* Communications between Tonga and the Lau islands in the eastern part of the Fiji group were well established in pre-European times (Lessin and Lessin 1970; Macnaught 1982) as well as during the days of whalers and sandalwood traders. There were regular patterns of trade, exchange of goods, and generally friendly relations as well as kin ties between Fijian and Tongan people. Cargill and Cross were fortunate in having some familiarity with Fijians living in Vava'u. This made the establishment of the Wesleyan mission easier. Cargill found some similarity between the languages (Schutz 1977) and compared the life-styles.

From Lakeba the mission eventually spread out to other mission stations in the eastern part of Fiji at Somosomo, Ono, and Bau, and also at Rewa and Viwa. The numbers of mission families in the 1850s and 1860s did not exceed a dozen at any one time (Garrett 1982). Mission families were thus few in number and scattered in remote parts of Fiji. Only later was mission work begun in Levuka on Ovalau, where several British and American traders had established themselves. Levuka eventually became the capital and government center in 1875.

Margaret Cargill and Mrs. Cross were the first European women to take up residence in Fiji for any length of time. They had been together in Vava‘u. Margaret Cargill does not appear to have enjoyed good health throughout her stay in the Pacific; she had been “the subject of severe distress. . . . The heat is very relaxing to her constitution . . . and during the last three months she has been often reduced to the debility and helplessness of an infant. I leave her in the hands of the Lord, who doeth all things well,” noted her husband in his diary (Schutz 1977:53). While in Vava‘u she had had a difficult pregnancy and had given birth to a son who died within a few hours. Poor health marked her subsequent stay in Fiji, though she was more fortunate in the pregnancies, bearing four daughters: Jane Smith, Augusta Cameron, Margaret, and Mary. When Mrs. Cargill died on 2 June 1840 at Viwa of dysentery and severe hemorrhaging after the birth of another daughter who “died in a fit” (Schutz 1977:183-186), David Cargill returned to Scotland with their daughters as it was not possible for him (or any other missionary) to raise children and run a mission without a wife to help. He subsequently remarried and returned to Fiji with his new wife.

The land to which the missionaries came was generally rich in produce. Fijians grew taro, yams, bananas, and breadfruit in plantations and collected seafoods from the rivers, the reef, or the ocean (Ravuvu 1983; Pollock 1985). Starchy foods were generally plentiful, except when storms and hurricanes damaged the crops. Special foods such as pork, turtle, or chicken were eaten only at feasts and special occasions. Most foods were cooked in an earth oven, though breadfruit and fish might be grilled in the coals. Building materials were readily available as were pandanus for thatching roofs and weaving mats, and bark cloth for clothing.

The Fijian foodstuffs were either cultivated or gathered in the wild. Yams and taro were planted. Breadfruit could be gathered in season (see Seemann [1862] 1973 for a detailed description of Fijian cultivation practices). In addition to the abundance of cultivated food, there was also a range of species of yams and *ivi* nuts that could be gathered in the forests where they grew wild. As Williams noted, “the Fijian has an exhaustless store of food in the uncultivated districts of the larger islands” ([1858] 1982:97). This abundance and ease of access were in contrast to the hard work necessary to grow corn and other cereals that were the basis of the food supply in England.

In addition to this ready abundance of planted foods, the Fijians also set aside some of their breadfruit, taro, bananas, and *kawai* (yams) in pits to ferment (Seemann [1862] 1973). The paste, *madrai*, was taken

from the pits, kneaded with water, and baked in the form of loaves. This product was labeled "bread" by English visitors (for example, Wallis 1851: 132). Even so it was not considered the same as the bread the missionaries were used to and was used only as a substitute for the real thing. To Fijians it was a delicacy.

The missionaries were impressed by this abundance, but considered Fiji to be otherwise poor. As Calvert recorded in his mission history, the missionaries brought with them a far greater boon,

> which at the same time awakened and satisfied new desires; began to lift up the people from their almost hopeless degradation; enriched them with an imperishable wealth; and set in motion a renewing and elevating power, which has already changed the aspect of Fiji; pressing forward in spite of all resistance; triumphing over treachery, persecution and blood-shed; smiting the structure of a false and horrible religion, and proving its rottenness in its ruin; leading tens of thousands from among the foulest crimes and deepest social wretchedness into virtue and domestic comfort; and, in short, carrying out, in the only sure way, the work of civilization. ([1858] 1983:5)

Such were the changes that missionaries sought to bring about in Fiji. And their wives played their part in introducing the "domestic comforts" and other "virtues" of civilization.

The first homes the missionaries were allowed to establish in Fiji were described as rude even by comparison with what they had left in Tonga. Two small houses of local materials with earthen floors were built for them in three days. Into these they were able to transfer from the ship the embellishments that would make them seem more like a home, namely "furniture, articles for barter, books, clothes, doors, windows and various stores," and on the evening of 17 October 1835 "the families took possession of their new homes" (Calvert [1858] 1983:8). These hastily erected homes were blown away in the first storm, thus necessitating the construction of more comfortable housing (Calvert [1858] 1983:14).

For the wives, housekeeping in these circumstances must have been a major concern. They had few of the items usually found in an early-nineteenth-century English kitchen nor the other household niceties with which they were familiar. Furthermore the foods they believed to be necessary were unavailable; none of the local starches made a "proper" flour and beef was unobtainable. So they could not make the

breads and soups that were the mainstay of their British diet (Oddy 1976).

Missionary wives had been brought up to expect that their role in life was to look to their husbands as the decision makers and to serve them (Oakley 1976:47). In the Bible their role was clearly stated--"Wives submit yourselves as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the Church" (Eph. 5:22-23). To be a good wife meant to be strongly committed to one's own household as the first responsibility, with the husband as the dominant figure. In Fiji they found these commitments took an inordinate amount of time and energy.

Their dedication to household tasks was in marked contrast to the Fijian women's commitment to a much wider social group, which included many relatives as well as persons of status in the village, and the community beyond the village. They also worked extensively outside the household. They had major work commitments such as planting, fishing, weaving mats and baskets, and participating in public meetings (Schoeffel and Kikau 1980:22). Much of their commitment was expressed through food exchanges, which were a joint responsibility of both men and women of the community.

The domestic responsibilities to which missionary wives were committed were those that they had learned informally in England from their mothers and other women. In nineteenth-century England their tasks included providing "good' foods in the right form at the right time, caring for children, and looking after the house and the clothes (Oakley 1976:43-56; Roberts 1984: 152). Their work was to run a smooth household and thus ease the lot of the husband. The men expressed little outright sympathy for their wives' difficulties in running a household in a culture so far from their home base.

David Cargill did observe that, in contrast to Tongan women, Fijian women were subject to bad treatment and their work was drudgery, "making little more of them than if they were beasts of burden. She is required, nay, compelled to undertake the labourious duties of tilling the ground; she digs the earth; she sows the seed, dresses the plantation, reaps the harvest, cooks the food, and in fact takes the man's place except in war, while he lounges away his time in idleness or employs it on something worse" (Schutz 1977:38). These tasks were in direct contrast with those he expected his wife to perform. To this drudgery he added the practice of widow strangling, which was so abhorrent to many missionaries. Yet neither he nor other missionaries appear to have seen how hard their own wives had to work just to maintain a home in

Fiji or the toll of ill health, both the women's own and that of their children.

It is clear that missionaries had to adjust their own life-styles somewhat. As Calvert noted, "Peculiar qualifications are needed for a Missionary. Besides a head well stocked with general knowledge, he must have a ready hand, fit for any work, or he will have a poor time of it among such people as these Fijians" ([1858] 1983:14). Their wives, though not mentioned, had to be equally--if not more--versatile to maintain homes for their husbands and families, and to maintain standards of living based on values originating many thousands of miles away. The only clue we have to missionary women's reactions to life in Fiji is Cargill's account of his wife's feelings: "The ignorance and depravity of the people in general . . . excited her commiseration and induced her to become a cordial abettor of every plan that was adopted for the amelioration of their circumstances" (1841: 108). Margaret Cargill and the other missionary wives thus became involved in introducing a new set of values, European ones. These formed the basis of their efforts to change Fijian ways of housekeeping.

Homemaking Principles

These immigrant women's homemaking concerns were designed to replicate in Fiji as nearly as possible the way of life in which they had been brought up in England. As new brides they were dedicated to maintaining the welfare of their husbands and children, a task that took up much of their time. Mrs. Cargill's husband noted that "her attention to domestic duties, and her constant solicitude to promote the comfort and happiness of every member of her family still attracted notice" (Cargill 1841:235). Running a household in Fiji, they found, required new skills and resourcefulness. The local foods were new and very different, and required different modes of cooking. There were ants, cockroaches, and other insects that got into the house, the food, and other undesirable places. Any imports they wanted for the house had to be ordered a year ahead to arrive on one of the trading ships. New forms of sickness hit these Europeans and their babies, and young children were all too often unable to survive the tropical environment. Household worries were a full-time consideration.

Missionary families' domestic needs could only barely be satisfied from what they could obtain locally. They found that the so-called abundance of foods that Fijians used were not the kinds of foods they themselves were used to eating. The British diet of the times centered on

bread, potatoes, and meat as the essentials, but this varied among socio-economic classes. Animal foods were expensive and thus working-class families used cheaper cuts that were high in fat, such as bacon and ham. The man of the house was fed a greater proportion of whatever food was available (Oddy 1976:223-226). The diet of the upper classes was more varied: "Before the 1840s to 1860s well to do people enjoyed heavy breakfasts, often as late as 10 a.m. and had dinner at the early time of 4 to 5 p.m. This left little room for luncheon which even if taken was an informal cold meal. . . . Tea and cakes could be served in the late evening, or alternatively as a light supper" (Corley, quoted in Oddy 1976: 220). When Williams visited the trader Whippy in Levuka, he shared what he called "a plain breakfast" of an egg with a little yam and boiled pork (Williams, quoted in Henderson 1931a:425). Such a meal would have been in line with what they would have had at home.

The yams, taro, breadfruit, and green bananas that made up 80 percent of the Fijians' daily food intake did not satisfy English palates in the way that potatoes, bread, and parsnips did. The meat that was normally part of a meal, at least for British men, was very hard to find. So, "Yams and salt with cakes of arrowroot, accompanied by some pork when they could bargain for it, and an occasional fowl, formed the main part of their diet" (Dickson 1976:97). Sometimes even these were hard to obtain, especially after storms when crops were damaged. "But they have caused David to turn gardener, and we have been kept from feeling want by the many conveniences which the garden has yielded us" (Cargill 1841:141). The so-called abundance that Wilkes and other earlier visitors had reported consisted of a wide range of foodstuffs for Fijians, and usually a large supply, but they were not suitable for the English diet.

While the missionaries tried to cling to their familiar foods, they found they had to change their own food habits out of sheer necessity. When supplies of flour and salt beef ran out they had to rely on whatever they could obtain locally. To do so they traded the precious goods they had brought with them. Mrs. Cargill notes that "I had to sell some of my own dresses and the children's frocks, and David's shirts for food and firewood' (Cargill 1841: 137). And that food was not all that desirable. But bartering for local produce was the only means of tiding the household over while waiting to obtain the "right" food from overseas when the next trading ship called. Alternatively, they could rely to some extent on what grew in their gardens.

They were thus very dependent on the shipping contacts with England initially, and later Sydney, as the only sources of the goods needed

for keeping house in the manner to which they were accustomed. The missionary support vessel was supposed to bring them supplies, but it called irregularly. The ships that were trading in Fiji waters for trochus and bêche-de-mer only occasionally carried the kinds of supplies missionary wives wanted; they in fact were also seeking supplies with which to victual their own crews (Young 1984). Communications with Sydney and with London in the 1840s and 1850s were all too infrequent to meet these needs. When the missionary supply ship *Active* arrived in 1836, supplies "were spoiled before we received them, and the rest are nearly consumed, so that we have now to live principally on the produce of the island; such as yams, and pork and a fowl now and then by way of a treat. Provisions are scarce on this island; and are much scarcer this year . . . on account of three dreadful storms which destroyed the plantation" (Cargill 1841:141).

The missionary wives also considered certain items such as cooking pots, china, and cutlery as essential to civilized living. But Fijians used disposable woven-leaf plates. So to obtain new household items the missionaries had to import them. By demonstrating the importance of these goods in a properly run household, they strove to impress upon Fijian women how necessary they were and thus to educate them about the uses to which European goods could be put. This, however, was at the expense of their own supply of these goods.

As the only white women in Fiji in the 1840s, living away from the main ports of call in remote villages, the first missionary wives must have felt very alone (C. Knapman 1986). Their husbands were away a considerable amount, traveling to bring new converts to the church and to explore possibilities for establishing mission stations in other parts of Fiji. David Cargill refers briefly to the difficulties in his own household when, after living close by in Lakeba, his fellow missionary Cross took his family to set up a new mission in Rewa (1841:169). Williams also mentions some concern about leaving his wife, particularly when she was sick or nearing the time of delivery of another child (Henderson 1931b). Calvert recorded his concern on leaving his "wife and little one" and asked,

> "How can I. . . leave you alone?" Let her answer be remembered: "It would be much better to leave me alone, than to neglect so many people." . . . The heart from which that strong word came was as gentle and loving, as warm and as womanly, as any that ever crowned a man's life with wealthy joy. But it was "strong in the Lord." . . .

> Let the Church thank God that He has provided such women for such a work as that of the Fiji Mission. In all cases they have been helps meet for men engaged in that great and perilous enterprise. They have never hindered their husbands; but, as in the case just given, from them has come a cheering voice, urging on the work. ([1858] 1983:60-61)

He gloried in her strength and recognized her commitment to the job at hand. His commitment, though, was to a wider family, the family of God.

At the times when the missionary wives were left at home with their young children they became more dependent on the local village community, both for their food supplies and for moral support. (This was less necessary later when the numbers of Europeans in Fiji increased, but even in the second half of the ninteenth century many missionary wives were living away from the main centers on islands and in the interior with no other Europeans close by.) It can thus be argued that their presence in rural communities had a considerable impact on Fijian women because of their close interaction with the village people. Exposure to new ways of running a household, however, did not necessarily mean these ways were adopted.

The missionary wives undertook to teach the Fijian women the arts of homemaking. Those included cooking, sewing, child welfare, and simple hygiene. Some of this they expected the Fijian women to pick up through contact with the missionary families, either through barter or working in their homes. As one missionary recorded, “The intercourse with a civilized home could not have other than an elevating influence on these heathen savages” (Calvert, quoted in Vernon 1890:40). Such a strong statement underlines the differences that were perceived by the Europeans between their own life-style and that of the Fijians among whom they were living.

The missionaries also taught classes in mat making, sewing, cooking, and child welfare and encouraged what they called skill in garden-craft so that households were well supplied with their own food. We can only wonder at what the missionaries could teach from their temperate climate background, and with the shortage of materials familiar to them. Cloth in particular was hard to come by, yet their sewing classes depended on this. To see those who had joined the church dressed in white cloth on Sunday was a symbol to these bearers of new values that they had been successful.

Thus they sought to change the domestic values not only informally

but also formally. That they recognized little worth, other than curiosity value, in the ways that Fijian women had cared for their families for centuries is very obvious.

The degree of acceptance of these new values throughout the households of Fiji is hard to assess, for we have only the missionary and other European reports. "As the result of the impact of our Western civilization, new values were given to their lands . . . the Fijian's wants had been excited. Earth and sea no longer supplied all his needs for the needs had multiplied enormously" (Burton and Deane 1936:108). But this is only a general assessment written from hindsight. Tables of items imported to Fiji are the most tangible evidence of the degree of commitment to these new values; but the consumers were as likely to be members of the increasing band of foreign residents as the Fijians themselves (*Fiji Blue Book* 1875-1930; see Pollock n.d. for a discussion), as discussed below.

The strength of conviction about the desirability of these new domestic values was an underlying factor in the request to the Methodist mission to send out trained teachers in 1852. Mr. and Mrs. Collins were appointed with the sole task of training women so that these principles could be more widely known (Burton and Deane 1936:76). "Our great object in evangelizing and then elevating these natives into a state of civilization, cannot be attained without educating the youth of both sexes; and the education must, if possible, be general" (quoted in Heath 1974:78). Thus the mission formed a Ladies Committee for ameliorating the conditions of women in heathen countries, female education, and so on (*Mission Reports* 1859). The schools and the women's committees associated with the church focused on this education task, directed particularly at the Fijian women and young girls.

Child Care

The missionary wives were committed to preparing Fijian girls for motherhood; however, they paid little attention to the fact that Fijian women had been producing children for several hundred years before they arrived, as that did not seem relevant to them as they attempted to introduce their own European philosophy. And since these European children were not very strong, and died all too frequently (C. Knapman 1986:21), their own practice of motherhood was not very encouraging for Fijian women.

Missionaries gained an impression fairly early in their stay that Fijians lacked feeling for their children (Williams [1858] 1982; Calvert

[1858] 1983). These ideas were based partly on what they saw as little outward demonstration of affection and partly on their observations of young children being left in the care of any one of a number of children aged ten or twelve or older. With what seemed to them a loose-knit family system, a child's needs were taken care of by one of its many relatives. This included feeding, weaning from the breast at the appropriate time, and treating them when sick. The birth mother did not carry the sole or major caring role. This was interpreted by missionaries as neglect, or at least uncaring attitudes.

In contrast, the missionary mother was committed to the total care of her children and her husband--a task for which she had sole responsibility. Missionary wives did help one another with difficult tasks, including childbirth, but after the initial period when two missionary families lived together, the wives were on their own, separated by many miles from another white woman. Cargill lamented the departure of Mrs. Cross at the time when his fifth child was due in 1838 and noted: "We have had none but natives to assist us at this critical juncture. Our native female servant has been very attentive." He adds a note in a letter to the Reverend Beecham: "I had no human aid, but had to act as accoucheur, nurse &c.&c. I am sure you would have smiled had you seen me trying to dress the lovely babe. I succeeded in getting on two of its garments with the back in the front, & was obliged to desist; and having wrapped it in an abundance of flannel the little stranger soon fell asleep & allowed me to take care of the Mother" (Schutz 1977: 112). His ineptitude with number five can only give us some indication of his lack of involvement with the earlier births and with any care of those infants, even to dressing them.

Fijian women in their turn were shocked at how European women gave birth at annual intervals, and how their children died so easily (Seemann [1862] 1973). Their own custom forbade sexual contact between husband and wife until a child was weaned. Missionary teaching against polygamy and against separate dwellings for husbands and wives had a major effect on birth intervals, family size, and thus population growth (reviewer's comment).

Bread of Industry

Good work habits were fundamental to the changes the missionaries sought to introduce. They felt that in a land where food was so abundant, and houses easily constructed, there was a real danger of idleness. So they endeavored to encourage good work habits, beginning in the

household. As Thomson noted, giving a biased view of differences between European and Fijian work habits:

> They have none of the steady application of those who must compete with others for their daily bread. Industry and thrift are hardly to be looked for in a luxurious climate among a sparse population, but rather among those races whose climate and soil yield food only at stated seasons of the year, and then grudgingly in return for unremitting labour, or in those crowded communities whose local supply of food is insufficient. When we blame the Fijians for their thriftlessness we are prone to judge them by too high a standard, and to forget that they are land-owning peasants, a class which even among ourselves is exempt from the grinding necessity of perpetual toil--a state that has come to be regarded as the natural lot of the poor. ([1908] 1968:2)

The missionaries sought to disseminate their ideas not only to those women who were working in their houses with them, but to other women who joined the church *(lotu).* The Sunday feast was a significant innovation that has become an integral part of the Fijian weekly cycle. It began when nine Christians partook of an abundant repast of baked hogs, yams, fish, and so on, which their own liberality had provided after the conclusion of the morning services (Cargill 1841:189). It can be seen as a continuation of old feasting patterns in a new social environment, and thus became more readily acceptable to the Fijians than some of the other new ideas.

The "habits of industry" the missionary wives were encouraging applied to the domestic scene as well as to the village and beyond. They were concerned at the lack of furniture and bedding within the Fijian home and particularly at the lack of the ordinary utensils for serving and cooking food. They let it be known that they considered knives and forks, china and cooking pots, and bed linen as basic essentials that all civilized people owned, and that the exertion required to obtain these items was an important part of civilized existence. Hence industry is greatly promoted, as Pritchard (1844:170) so cogently phrased it. By promoting needs in the household, toil on the land could be promoted to bring the means to satisfy those needs. As Calvert noted:

> The arrival of these strangers was a new era in Fiji. Many now obtained an axe or a hatchet, or plane-iron, or chisel, or knife,

> or razor, or iron pot, or some calico or print, or other article, for which they had often longed hopelessly before, and which was given in payment for fencing, building, gardening, or other services; as also for pigs, fowls, crabs, fruits, and vegetables. Thus, too, were purchased wooden bowls, mats, curtains, etc.; for in no other way could these or other items be procured. . . . A new stimulus was thus given to native industry, and new comforts were introduced among the people. . . . The natives took notice of everything, and could not help admiring the domestic comforts, regularity of meals, subjection of children, love of husband and wife, and general social enjoyment, which could only be taught by a practical exhibition of them in every-day life." ([1858] 1983:12-14)

Thus promoting the virtues of hard work was a message the missionary wives felt it their duty to advance vigorously, But it had to be proper work, not just working in the fields. The new ideas of work were associated with material goods and seeking a cash return, not just food. But first they had to create a need in this land of abundance.

Material Goods and Trade

Missionaries thought that by increasing their work and productivity, Fijians would be excited to obtain those items the missionary women considered essential for running a civilized household, If they produced more goods, they could use these in trade for the cotton and pots and pans they were told they needed. These items were obtained initially by bartering with the missionary families. But the need in this case was on the missionaries' side. Margaret Cargill describes a desperate situation when she had to barter clothes, cooking utensils, and china to obtain yams, bananas, and firewood for her family's welfare (Cargill 1841:137).

They soon realized they would need more supplies to enter into these exchanges. "An early letter to London asked for 8 doz. broad axes, 8 doz. fell axes, 4 doz. spades, 4 doz. adzes, 16 doz. hatchets, 16 doz. chisels, 16 doz. pinions, 3 doz. iron pots, 3 doz. Fry pans, 3 doz. sauce pans --some of them cast iron, 16 doz. knives, 24 doz. P. knives, 8 doz. razors, 16 dozen [scissors?], 16 doz. gimlets, 16 pieces print, 16 pieces calico, 16 oz. slate with pencils, 16 lbs. beads, 4 doz. japanned lamps with cotton 12 lbs., 4 doz. hand saws of different sizes and kinds" (Schutz 1977:93). This marked the beginnings of imports to Fiji from

Europe of items to be used in barter for the foodstuffs the new arrivals needed to demonstrate their efficacy in the household. The mission society, however, took steps to eliminate the barter system in the 1840s.

We must remember there were only four or five missionary families in Fiji in the 1840s and 1850s, so the stimulation to trade was not great. At the same time this factor served to enhance the scarcity value of European goods. Calvert recounts that "a new stimulus was thus given to native industry, and new comforts were introduced among the people." The purchase for home use and not for gain "made a favourable impression on all who came" and stimulated many others "to see, as well as to sell. . . . Thus the great object of the Mission was helped forward, and the fame of the new religion spread in every quarter" (Calvert [1858] 1983:13).

Exchanges between missionary families and Fijians were in marked contrast to exchanges between Fijians and traders. The latter gave guns and iron in exchange for Fijian sandalwood and bêche-de-mer that they then sold for a profit. But the stimulus to trade had some negative effects as well. Both Calvert and Cargill wrote of what they termed "theft" of family household goods early in their stay: "For several months we have been annoyed by some malicious and ill disposed persons,--who have come to the mission premises through the night, and stolen pots, ovens and other kitchen utensils. Last night they stole two tea kettles" (Schutz 1977:141). Cargill appealed to the chief to prevent the repetition of such robberies and was given an assurance that the stolen property would be found. Some of the goods were returned, together with the tips of four little fingers the king had caused to be cut off as a punishment to the thieves (Schutz 1977:142). Whether the goods were taken out of genuine desire to use them or just "borrowed" in accord with local custom is hard to know.

Flour for bread making was the one item for which the missionary wives could find no adequate substitute in Fiji. The *madrai* made from fermented breadfruit and other starches formed a paste (Pollock 1985), but this was unsuitable for bread or pastries. Thus flour had to be imported from Sydney. But it kept poorly in the tropics. As Williams noted, "Yesterday I opened a new flour cask and unhappily it contains very indifferent sour flour" (Henderson 1931b, 2:321). Flour also became infested with weevils: "Our bread was occupied by living tenants" (Wallis 1851:207). Such were the hazards of trying to maintain standards of household fare based on imported foodstuffs.

Only with the increase in the number of European families in Fiji in the 1860s and 1870s was the demand for imported goods large enough

to warrant the carrying of flour, meat, vegetables, and housewares by trading vessels to meet these new domestic needs. The goods were destined mainly for the European population, not the Fijians. The Fijians became acquainted with the new goods and were curious about them, as Calvert reports ([1858] 1983:14). If obtained in barter, that was good, but many Fijians did not see great need to make enough money to be able to buy them. This is clear from the fact that they have continued to rely heavily on their local foods and cooking in the earth oven for another hundred years (Ravuvu 1983; Pollock 1985).

The success of missionary endeavors to get Fijian families to buy these goods can be gauged only indirectly. The new goods appear to have been regarded as windfalls or luxury items, rather than as essentials to the running of a Fijian household. Fijians did not consider them important enough to warrant producing more trochus, bêche-de-mer, or copra to sell for the cash to buy these items. Perhaps a few Fijian women valued the prestige associated with having china and cutlery to put on a table when serving food to an honored guest, but there is little evidence from the comments of visitors, such as Miss Grimshaw (1907a, 1907b) or Thomson ([1908] 1968) or Quain (1946) some fifty to a hundred years later, that Fijian households had changed their practices drastically to become totally reliant on these new goods. The *lovo* (earth oven) was still in everyday use, and woven-leaf plates and coconut-shell cups were far less fragile than the European equivalents. A china cup might be a prestige item for its short lifetime, then the household could revert to more readily available drinking utensils such as a half coconut shell. Cloth goods were in the greatest demand. These were imported from Britain via Sydney, even though Fiji itself was producing South Seas cotton during the American Civil War (Forbes 1875).

The amount of goods that the missionaries could import, and thus have available for trading purposes, was very limited. They did ask the mission to help supply some goods, but there were long delays due to the irregular visits of trading vessels. Their own missionary supply vessel was supposed to bring items they had ordered both for their own household use and for use of the mission. But it too was very irregular. As Williams noted, “Could the *Triton* have come when more needed. We were out of sugar, had flour enough for one loaf and several of the stores were in the same low state. Praise the Lord for His kind oversight of us” (Henderson 1931b, 2:357). With shipping far from regular (Cargill 1841:91), they had to spin out what supplies they had by using local products. This meant compromising some of their ideals.

Shortage of these goods was also due in part to the very limited

amounts of money that missionary families had. The salary of between £120 and £150 a year was reduced after 1844 (Henderson 1931a:100). Given their needs for bread, meat, and other "necessities," there was little money to spend on replacing the kitchen items bartered for local foods. So they relied on the mission to supply some of these goods. On 15 August 1838 Cargill wrote reprovingly to the mission:

> Our financial accts are quite a chaos, and now our privations are unnecessarily increased [since a shipload of goods had failed to arrive]. Our supply of trade is a mere pittance notwithstanding the large quantities of articles of barter with which you have from time to time furnished the Brethren in the Friendly Is. We have been obliged to sell our trunks and many articles of wearing apparel, & are still under the necessity of giving up to the Mission print & Calico which have been ordered for family use. We are badly off for kitchen utensils--crockeriware &c. We have only one tea cup, & that by the by has lost the handle. Please to send us a supply of such things as soon as convenient. (Schutz 1977:116)

Although the number of trade vessels increased in the 1840s and 1850s with the demand for sandalwood, trochus, and copra (Young 1984), Fijians were not overly committed to this trading. They did bring sandalwood from the interior to the coastal areas and collected bêche-de-mer to be dried and traded, but they did not see fit to increase the amount of foodstuffs for sale, particularly pigs, to meet the new demands. A similar situation had greeted John Davies, one of the London Missionary Society missionaries, who spent some three weeks in Fiji in 1809-1810 on the way from Tahiti to Sydney. He was greatly concerned about the difficulty in obtaining food either from the Fijians or from the sandalwood traders: "Dec. 13 The Fijians do not now bring much for barter, so that our stock of provisions begins to be very small"; "Dec. 20 The Fijians brought a quantity of taro, uru and cocoanuts to sell. It is very hard to deal with them and we are destitute of proper articles of barter"; and "Dec. 26 Our provisions, except pork, are nearly expended, and we can get nothing to buy at present. In a few days it will be hard with us" (Im Thurn and Wharton 1925:140-144).

Thus while Fijians quickly became familiar with the trading habits of sandalwood traders, whalers, and others seeking to buy what Fiji produced, that did not necessarily "promote industry," as the missionaries hoped. The items most in demand were guns, metal goods, nails, and

cotton. So these were the items carried on trading vessels. Fijians did not increase their production to obtain these goods; difficulties in trying to obtain sufficient pork to victual the trading ships are well recorded (Wallis 1851; Ward 1972). Thus the stimulus to trade that missionary wives sought to induce had minimal response. Fijians did not see a need to buy household goods with their trading money, and barter was a sufficient means of exchange for many.

Traders' demands for local foodstuffs also did little to stimulate greater production. The pigs, yams, and bananas were supplied from whatever stores a village had at the time, not by producing more. This was partly because Fijians did not need the goods the Europeans offered; the goods were just a bonus. But it was also due to the negative value the missionary wives placed on these foodstuffs. They made it clear that taro and yams were not as healthy as the bread and meat they liked to eat, and also that these were not foods a civilized household ate. So Fijians saw little need to increase production of items that the resident Europeans said were not equal to European foods. Nor did the Fijians see a need to try to obtain the new flour and salt beef that did not suit their palates as well as their own yams, taro, and coconut. Why work to produce more items for sale if the goods were considered inferior and uncivilized and were unappetizing? The missionaries did not seem to appreciate the paradox.

As more ships called at Fiji in the late 1860s both to obtain sandalwood and bêche-de-mer and to meet European planters' increased demand for trade goods, trade increased in scale. Cotton goods for the clothes the missionaries considered necessary apparel for church-going and also for pillowcases and other household linens became items that Fijians who had joined the church were compelled to buy. It is hard to know how many pots and pans and how much china and silverware they bought. It seems likely that the imports of these items to Fiji were to service the needs mainly of the European households.

In sum it can be argued that a strong stimulus to overseas trade resulted from missionary needs for material goods, not Fijian needs.

Health and Hygiene in the Home: Missionary Ideas

Missionary wives stressed the need for cleanliness, good food, and careful treatment of sickness as the bases of a healthy home. They consciously tried to introduce these ideas to Fijian women in order to improve their way of life. But the missionary families were not good examples. They all suffered from time to time from dysentery, head-

aches, colds, and ophthalmological problems, and lost many of the children that they bore in Fiji.

The new arrivals brought strong alternative beliefs in curing that they used as a powerful tool in conversion (Calvert [1858] 1983:115). That those beliefs were based on very limited medical knowledge was recognized back in England, and the Protestant Missions' Medical Aid Society was formed in 1856 to help missionaries help themselves and their own families "as well as the people among whom they are placed, where there are no medical men" (Calvert [1858] 1983:116). That knowledge of medicine came from another cultural system--knowledge that was as limited as that of the Fijians, and perhaps less useful. Nevertheless it was used as an important tool in gaining converts. New ideas of child care and of medicine were their contribution to what they considered to be improvements to the Fijian way of life. They did not see that Fijian women were more successful in raising children, nor that healing involved more than the application of one kind of potions and pills. This mission curing was just the beginning of one hundred years of Western ideas of medicine and nutrition designed to replace the indigenous system, without evaluating the merits of the latter.

They also spent what time they could spare from their own households caring for sick Fijians. That was one way in which they could prove that the Christian god was more efficacious than the local gods--as Calvert demonstrated with the healing of Tangithi (Calvert [1858] 1983: 115). Their ability to perform such services either in their own households or in the wider community was severely hampered by the sequence of pregnancies the missionary wives endured. And such nursing of others must have exposed their families to even more sickness. The missionaries' ideas of health, developed in another cultural setting, were inappropriate in Fiji, and yet they believed so strongly in those principles that they continued the practices even though they suffered by doing so.

Cleanliness consisted of washing and starching clothing and household linens weekly, and also washing and cleaning pots and pans, china and silverware in the kitchen. None of those were necessary tasks in a Fijian household. Such tasks were particularly difficult in places such as the small outer islands where fresh water was in short supply.

By contrast, Fijian women's household chores consisted of sweeping leaves from around the houses, rolling up sleeping mats, and washing clothes. As sleeping and cooking areas were separate in some parts of Fiji, the former had less heavy use. Sleeping mats were renewed when necessary. Weaving mats was one of the Fijian women's main tasks, both for household use and for exchange.

This Fijian manner of household care, it can be argued, was far healthier than one devoted to washing, especially in areas where water was scarce. When missionaries introduced the new fetish of washing everything, they introduced a whole new set of principles that led to time-consuming work habits and another possible means of spreading disease.

Cooking in the earth oven required no utensils, and was the work mainly of Fijian men. The one concern was that the starch foods such as taro be properly cooked: "The acrid taste of the raw root is removed by cooking, which renders the taro a useful and delicious food, the substitute for bread to the natives, and greatly esteemed by foreigners. As a vegetable, it is served up entire, and, made into paste, forms the chief ingredient in many native puddings. The leaves, when boiled, eat like those of the mercury, and the petiole is little inferior to asparagus" (Williams [1858] 1982:62). If not properly cooked taro left an unpleasant stinging sensation around the mouth, reflecting poorly on the household. Plates were plaited from coconut leaves and cups were made from half a coconut shell; these could be made each day as needed.

Food Concerns

That missionary women and Fijian women had very different views of what foods constituted a healthy diet is clear both from the missionary reports and from the attempts the Europeans made to change Fijian habits. It is not clear, however, whether they realized just how drastic a change they were trying to bring about.

To the missionaries a healthy diet consisted of three meals a day, of which two should be bread or potatoes and meat (Oddy 1976). Bread was the one food that was hard to replace in Fiji. They had to substitute yams for potatoes and were limited to pork out of necessity. Meat in the diet was considered necessary, especially for the man of the house, and was a symbol of good household management and thus of a good wife. In Fiji they blamed a lot of the sickness and ill-health of children on the lack of these "proper" foods. The amounts served at any one meal were modest, and each person was expected to clear his or her plate, wasting nothing. The mother, cook, and housewife determined what was "good" for the family. The control of health was in her hands.

Even though the trading situation improved as more families from Europe and the States settled in Fiji, they still suffered in their diet. Litton Forbes, a cotton planter in the early 1870s, recounted that "the food they are obliged to eat is of the coarsest and most unpalatable kind. Salt beef, as salt and tough as beef can be, that has been several years in

cask, and has circumnavigated the globe; ship biscuits swarming with weevils, a boiled taro or yams, and a few bananas are their usual fare" (Forbes 1875:88). This is hardly an attractive picture of domestic life in the tropics. The poor supply of meat lasted through to the end of the century (Grimshaw 1907a). By the 1930s "the colony had become self-supporting in the matter of beef and also had abundant supplies of milk and butter" (Walker 1936:22).

Vegetables were not so highly regarded by nineteenth-century Europeans as essential for a healthy diet as they have become in the 1960s and 1970s. Nevertheless missionary families liked to have green vegetables and also sought fruit. Despite a profusion of local fruits, small luxuries such as apples were welcome, as Williams recorded: "The Hobart Town whaling brig brought us a dozen or so apples. Mrs. Williams and the boys had a rare treat" (Henderson 1931b, 2:351).

Reliance on those foodstuffs so far from their point of production may have accentuated digestive problems, rather than providing the healthy properties with which the missionary wives endowed them. They would have been physically (but not mentally) healthier eating local foods.

Lack of variety in their daily meals was felt keenly by these new settlers. It was a point of contrast with Fijian eating habits that struck several European observers. As Seemann, a visiting botanist who lived in Fiji in 1860 and 1861 and was something of a cook himself, noted, "In the tropics to eat day after day pork and yam, the usual food of Fiji, is not very tempting and we therefore endeavoured to introduce some diversity into our mode of living, by obtaining as many fowls as we could. Eggs were but seldom seen. The Fijians consider it babyish to eat them" (Seemann [1862] 1973:37). For special events such as Christmas a leg of mutton and a turkey besides, concluding with an excellent plum pudding, was a rare luxury, according to Mrs. Smythe (1864:148). Mrs. Wallis described a special meal put on by the captain of a new mission ship, the *John Wesley,* which arrived in Fiji in 1850 bringing new missionaries and supplies: "Our dinner was excellent--thanks to the art of preserving meats, vegetables and fruits. The green peas and beans, the currant, gooseberry and damson tarts did not come amiss to those who had been in Feejee some two or three years" (Wallis 1851:277-278). These special treats stood in marked contrast to the daily fare, but happened only three or four times a year.

However, when the occasion warranted, the missionary wives dug deep into their remaining stores of imported foods to put on a notable meal. As Mrs. Smythe, a visitor in 1860, remarked:

> And now a word about Wesleyan teas. We have all heard of Scotch breakfast and Russian dinners, but for tea we can unhesitatingly affirm that nothing can surpass a Wesleyan Methodist tea. Imagine in Fiji tea, coffee, excellent homemade cakes, preserves, honey and delicious bread and butter! We are, I may add, pretty well disposed to these social repasts, as dinner takes place at a very early hour. The Missionaries wives tell me that if they did not adopt these primitive hours they would have a very good chance of getting no dinner at all; for their half-domesticated native servants consider the afternoon of each day as their own in which to bathe, gossip, go to the reef, or otherwise amuse themselves. (1864:32)

Such events took their toll of the sparse supplies of flour and meat, but did much to break the monotony of daily fare.

Some diversity could have been achieved by incorporating more local foods into their diet. But missionary wives were so attached to their own dietary practices as part of their commitment to maintaining healthy household standards that Fijian foods were regarded as second best, though a necessary standby. Gifts of food such as turtles, pork, and rich puddings were welcomed as chiefs became more accustomed to their presence (Williams, quoted in Henderson 1931a:293). Such gifts helped to add diversity and to alleviate some of the catering problems that missionary wives faced, but could not be counted on. And they never supplanted the strong desire to have proper English food.

"Good Food": The Fijian View

Fijians considered that eating the right foods, sharing food, and performing the appropriate ceremonies were all part of the process of maintaining good health. Their health practices were an intricate part of their belief system, involving the gods, the ancestors, the spirits that lived in rocks and plants, and the manifestations or signs that these gave (Spencer [1941] 1966). When something went wrong in that system, a healer was consulted. That was often a woman who was loathe to disclose her secrets, certainly to a foreigner. Seemann did record the use of certain plants for ailments such as rheumatism, coughs, and colds; for purifying the blood; and for procuring abortion ([1862] 1973:341-342). They did not need fancy potions imported from overseas.

Good food to a Fijian meant adequate amounts of one or more of the several starches *(kakana dina)* that grew locally in abundance, together

with a little coconut or fish as an accompanying dish *(i coi)* (Pollock 1985). The starch might include yams (*Dioscorea* sp.), taro (Colocasia *esculenta),* breadfruit *(Artocarpus altilis),* or green bananas. As Mrs. Wallis noted, "The principal and most loved article of food in Feejee is yams, which are to a Fijian what bread is to us" (1851:131). The starchy food formed the largest portion of the daily intake and was consumed both on a daily basis as well as at any feast. Only one or two kinds might be cooked for the household's daily fare, This combination of some yams, or taro or bananas, eaten together with some coconut or fish made a Fijian feel well fed and healthy (Pollock 1985).

Fijians had to have this combination at least once a day in order to feel satisfied. As one missionary noted: "The natives usually take two meals in the day; the principal one being in the afternoon or evening. Where ovens are chiefly used, they cook but once a day, but twice where boiling is most in vogue. Their general food is light and plain, fish being highly esteemed. Contrary to the taste of civilized gourmands, these people will have all their meat quite fresh, and some small kinds of fish are eaten alive as a relish" (Williams [1858] 1982:139). Other foodstuffs such as puddings made of grated taro and coconut might be eaten, but they were not considered "real food." Williams gives us a clear differentiation between his own principles of food consumption and those that he viewed as uncivilized. It was not just the food, but the mode of cooking and the way the food was eaten, that struck him as less than civilized.

Another contrast with European ways was the large amounts that Fijians ate at one sitting: "In times of plenty a full grown man will eat as much as ten pounds' weight of vegetables in the day; he will seldom be satisfied with less than five. A great quantity, therefore, is required to feed a very few people" (Thomson [1908] 1968:334). He implies that eating large amounts when food was available was a means of tiding them over the less bountiful times. It was thus one way of evening out irregularities and balancing times of abundance with times of scarcity. This was the positive view. Others saw it as gluttony.

At feasts enormous amounts of food were prepared. That was part of the Fijian view of a healthy society where food was shared with a wide range of people. The abundance of foods available most of the year was essential to Fijians' mental well-being. It was their assurance of caring for the extended family. It was the symbol of the wealth of the land over which the ancestors and the gods maintained a watchful protection. By performing the appropriate rites of planting, nurturing, and harvesting, as well as the presentation of first fruits, the continuity of the food

supply--and thus the health of the whole community of Fijian people--was assured. Maintaining the supply was a social responsibility so that all would share in the health of the society.

The missionary and Fijian views of a healthy diet were thus very different. One included meat and bread, but stressed variety and limited amounts, while the other stressed "real" starchy food and its accompaniment of coconut or fish shared in abundance with anyone who happened to be visiting. These contrasting views were based on two very different approaches to food and how it contributed to health.

It is ironic that the European nutritionists' view of a healthy diet today recognizes the high value of Fijian foods over European processed foods and sees them as high in fiber and low in fat and salt. So-called uncivilized diets are now being promoted to the confusion of Fijians and others (Coyne et al. 1984). What about all those milk products, canned foods, cakes, and pastries that the missionary wives longed to serve visitors?

Sharing food with a wide group of people was an integral part of a Fijian's social commitment. It marked a whole range of social relationships. Food was the concern of all members of the society. Also, within the structure of the language, food was a separate category of possession, drink another (Williams [1858] 1982; Pollock 1985), thus indicating that they had a strong cultural value. Treating yam or taro as just food, as missionaries did, missed this wider significance.

How Effective Were Missionary Development Ideas?

The efficacy of any development program is open to debate; it depends on the criteria used. Missionary wives had a broad motive: to help their husbands bring civilization and Christianity to Fiji. Their aim was not just economic development, but broad social development. We must consider that breadth when choosing criteria to judge their effectiveness.

Missionary wives brought to Fiji new principles of housekeeping that depended on imported goods, including food. Their influence on Fijian women had great potential for change as they lived alongside them in rural areas, interacted closely on a day-by-day basis, and tried to pass on their ideas through formal teaching. They genuinely believed Fijian lives needed changing if they were to become good Christians, for the wives' view of Christianity included good housekeeping, caring for children, and being a good wife. Hence we can call them the first development agents in Fiji.

Fijians' acceptance of these new ideas was highly selective. Because they were living in their own environment surrounded by the resources they had been using for generations, their own cultural practices were stronger than the need for these new ideas. The value of hard work; of "good" food that included bread, potatoes, and meat; of "good" health practices and child care; and of concern for the household before the community were all alien to Fijian beliefs.

Missionary women's demonstrations of these new values were not too effective, either. Fijian women did eventually take on the art of boiling food on a fire as an alternative to roasting in the earth oven, mainly when rice was imported to feed the Indian laborers in the 1880s. This new food was quicker to prepare than their own starches.

Some Fijian women no doubt sought to emulate the ways of the pastors' wives, and women who lived with European men accepted more of the new-fangled ideas because they had the cash. But on the whole the need was not demonstrated in Fiji. The main demand for imports came from the growing European and Indian communities. Latterly, post-World War II Fijians living in the urban centers buy some goods in supermarkets and this has helped to push up the import bill.

The demand patterns that the missionaries established have now become a liability for Fiji. The import bill for foodstuffs had grown to some 25 percent of total imports in the 1970s (B. Knapman 1976). The demand over the years has increased due in part to the growing non-Fijian community of Europeans, Indians, and Chinese, but in the last twenty years Fijians have participated increasingly in the cash economy and purchase of some imported goods.

The legacy that Mrs. Cargill, Mrs. Cross, and other missionary wives have left for Fiji is an imposition of alien values. Their attempts to civilize Fijian women--by downgrading local practices, such as cooking in the earth oven and eating raw fish, and by supporting the subservient status of women--had only minimal success. In the new era of the 1980s those original Fijian practices and food values are being lauded as providing better food and thus leading to lower incidence of heart disease and diabetes. And women are being urged to assume more nearly equal status with men in their communities. The women's groups, Soqosoqo Vakamarama, are a potent force in channeling messages to women in rural areas; their base is more in traditional ties than in European ideas. Development today is designed to lead to greater self-reliance.

Thus while missionary wives started a trend in reliance on imported goods needed for the household, that trend is being reversed since independence in 1970. The values symbolized in their message of how

households should be run were reinforced by the growing numbers of other European colonizing families. And yet Fijians maintained their cultural integrity by borrowing selected items from the new inventory, trying them out, and, where acceptable, making them part of their own life-style.

These early developers delivered the European message as the best path to follow. But that message was received and transformed into something distinctly Fijian. Today Fijian women are feeding their children and husbands local food and asserting their standing in the community. The result is that their households are run on Fijian principles that have incorporated such European ideas as found acceptable. The early development agents have left their mark, but more in unintended ways.

NOTE

A version of this paper was read at the Pacific History Conference in Fiji in 1985. I am grateful for comments by anonymous reviewers; these have been incorporated as appropriate.

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