

# PACIFIC STUDIES

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A multidisciplinary journal devoted to the study  
of the peoples of the Pacific Islands

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## **POVERTY AMONG PACIFIC ISLANDER AND HAWAI'IAN ELDERLY IN 1989 AND 1999**

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This study uses PUMS data from the 1990 and 2000 Censuses to investigate the economic position of elderly non-Hawai'ian Pacific Islander and Hawai'ian households. The poverty rate of Pacific Islander elderly fell dramatically in the 1990s to a rate close to the U.S. average, but the rate for Hawai'ian elderly changed little. Reduced disability and improved language skills appear to have contributed to the reduction in poverty among elderly Pacific Islander households. The characteristics of elderly Hawai'ian householders changed little during the 1990s. Real incomes of elderly households rose during the 1990s, and the sources of income changed significantly for non-Hawai'ian Pacific Islander households, which were more likely in 1999 than in 1989 to receive income from retirement and Social Security and less likely to receive income from welfare. For Hawai'ian households, sources of income changed little except that poor households were less likely to receive welfare and retirement income.

THE ECONOMIC POSITION of Pacific Islander elderly improved during the 1980s, while the economic fortunes of U.S. whites, Hispanics, and American Indians worsened (Ahlburg 2000). Despite gains over the decade, the poverty rate of Pacific Islander elderly remained high relative to that of most other Pacific Islander households and about twice the national rate. A high poverty rate among the elderly is of concern because of the association between poverty and poor health, exposure to social stress and crime, and diminished economic prospects.

While the 1980s were characterized by various economic difficulties, the 1990s witnessed a prolonged economic expansion that benefited Pacific Islanders in general (Ahlburg and Song 2006). In this paper we consider whether this economic expansion also benefited Pacific Islander elderly. We investigate the change in poverty rates during the 1990s and how the elderly poor differ from the elderly nonpoor. We also investigate how the characteristics of these groups changed over the 1990s and whether they contributed to changes in poverty. In an earlier study of Pacific Islander poverty, the reasons for the high poverty rate among the elderly were clearly identified: one-third of households reported no source of income at all and by far the most important source of income was Public Assistance (Ahlburg 2000). With economic expansion and numerous welfare reforms over the 1990s, it is possible that the sources of income may have changed for the elderly. Therefore we will look in some detail at sources of income for non-Hawaiian Pacific Islander and Hawaiian elderly at the start and end of the 1990s.

In our earlier study, we also raised concern about the impact of growing up in an elderly household for children. In this study we use the limited information on children in the Census to attempt to identify any difference in school enrollment of children in elderly and nonelderly households.

### **Poverty and Health**

Poverty is potentially a serious social issue for Pacific Islanders because socioeconomic status (SES) forms the foundation for understanding differences in health status among older adults. Whether SES is measured by income, poverty, education, occupation, wealth, or social class, and whether health is measured by mortality, morbidity, functional limitation, or mental or emotional problems, a positive relationship generally exists between SES and health (Kitagawa and Hauser 1973; Feinstein 1993; Menchik 1993; Smith 1999). Not only are those with lower SES more likely to have poorer health, they are also less likely to use healthcare services (Kahn 1994; Hurd and McGarry 1997), in part because they are also less likely to have health insurance (Hurd and McGarry 1997).

An advantageous SES profile would suggest a low need for many social welfare programs, while a disadvantageous profile would signal a cause for concern (Tanjisiri, Wallace, and Shibata 1995). It is difficult to get an accurate socioeconomic profile for Pacific Islanders because they are generally included in the Census group "Asian and Pacific Islanders." In 2000, Asians and Pacific Islanders constituted 4.2 percent of the population, but Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders were only 0.3 percent of the population. Thus the characteristics of the group tend to reflect those of Asians

rather than Pacific Islanders. For example, a report from the U.S. Bureau of the Census based on the 1990 Census presented a positive picture of the socioeconomic status of Asian and Pacific Islander elderly (Tanjasi, Wallace, and Shibata 1995). The data on poverty reported in Ahlburg (2000) for 1990, which focuses solely on Pacific Islanders, present a much less rosy SES picture of Pacific Islanders, particularly the elderly.

A number of researchers have pointed to the bifurcation of income and education in the Asian and Pacific Islander population group, with most Pacific Islander groups being found in the lower end (Morioka-Douglas and Yeo 1990; Tanjasi, Wallace, and Shibata 1995). Lower income limits the amount of resources, including health resources, that a household can command, and limited ability to speak English limits the ability of household members to fully utilize many public services, including health care providers.

Data on the relation between income and health for Asians and Pacific Islanders is extremely limited. Based on small samples from the National Health Interview survey, Tanjasi, Wallace, and Shibata (1995:758) found results suggesting that Asian and Pacific Islander elderly living below the poverty line are more likely to report poorer health status and activity limitation than Latinos, blacks, and non-Hispanic whites and, regardless of income, higher rates of being uninsured.

These findings suggest that a link from poverty to ill-health or reduced access to health care may exist.<sup>1</sup> This link for Pacific Islanders may be obscured when they are included with Asians, who tend to have different economic and social characteristics. Thus, when looking at the economic fortunes of Pacific Islanders, it is critical to look at them separately.

### Data

The data used in this study is taken from the Public Use Micro Sample (PUMS) of the 1990 and 2000 censuses of the United States. The 1990 and 2000 PUMS are five percent samples. The PUMS used were the consistent set maintained by the University of Minnesota IPUMS-USA project (Ruggles and Sobek 1997). Pacific Islanders are defined in this study on the basis of the ancestry questions in the census because the race question lacks comparability between 1990 and 2000.<sup>2</sup> The Census Bureau defines ancestry as “a person’s ethnic origin, heritage, descent, or ‘roots’, which may reflect their place of birth, place of birth of parents or ancestors, and ethnic identities that have evolved within the United States” (U.S. Bureau of the Census 2004:1). Ancestry identifies the largest samples of Pacific Islanders that are comparable over time.

The unit of observation is the household headed by an individual sixteen years of age or older, referred to by the Bureau of the Census as the “house-



holder.” The 1990 PUMS identified 1,491 Pacific Island sample households and the 2000 PUMS 2,308 sample households. In this study we will define a householder as “elderly” if he or she is sixty years of age or older. This differs from the usual definition of sixty-five years or older and was adopted in an attempt to increase sample size without introducing an unacceptable degree of heterogeneity into the sample of elderly. Results based on a definition of “elderly” as being sixty and over were similar to those using a definition of elderly as sixty-five years and over.

Just as including Pacific Islanders with Asians tends to obscure differences, so too may including other Pacific Islanders with Hawaiians. Thus in this study we investigate the poverty status of Hawaiians separately from other Pacific Islanders. It must also be noted that “Pacific Islanders” are not homogeneous by characteristics. For example, in 1990 the poverty rates of Guamanians, Melanesians, and Micronesians were only 50 percent of those of Samoans and Tongans, and poverty rates of Pacific Islanders in Hawai'i were about twice those in California (Ahlburg 2000). However, the size of the PUMS is too small to allow us to carry out a separate analysis of each separate group and location. The reader should keep in mind that estimates for “non-Hawaiian Pacific Islanders” represent an average for a “representative non-Hawaiian Pacific Island household” and that estimates for specific Pacific Island groups may differ from the average estimate as noted above.

### **Measuring Poverty**

As noted by the U.S. Bureau of the Census, poverty data “offer an important way to evaluate economic well-being” (Proctor and Dalaker 2002:1). The definition of poverty used in this study is the federal definition established by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget.<sup>3</sup> The poverty line varies for each household depending on its size, the presence of children under the age of eighteen, and the age of the householder (under sixty-five years and sixty-five years and over). If a household's total income is less than the threshold level set by the federal standard, then that household and every individual in it are considered poor. There are a number of reasons why this definition may overstate or understate “the true poverty rate.” The official poverty definition counts money income before taxes and does not include capital gains and noncash benefits such as Medicaid, food stamps, and housing assistance. The census question on sources of income includes an item for “financial assistance from outside the household.” Such assistance includes periodic payments from nonhousehold members but excludes gifts or sporadic assistance. The measure also excludes in-kind transfers such as food from family in the United States and from those at home. To the extent that

in-kind transfers are large and remittances received are not reported or are underreported, the true incidence of poverty will be overestimated. The possibility of underreporting of remittances cannot be dismissed since Ahlburg (2000:66) found that only six percent of elderly Pacific Islander households reported any income from a source other than the government or themselves in 1989. The figure is inconsistent with rates of receipt of remittances generally found in Pacific Islander households (see Ahlburg 1995; Brown and Ahlburg 1999). The poverty rate is established for the nation as a whole and does not take into account regional differences in cost of living. Because the majority of Pacific Islanders live in Hawai'i or on the West Coast where the cost of living is higher than the national average, the poverty rates reported in this study may underestimate the true poverty rate. Because of these offsetting factors, we are not able to say whether the poverty estimates given in this paper over- or underestimate "true poverty."

Ahlburg (2000) discusses various criticisms of the official poverty measure but concludes that it is useful as a means to identify the economic well-being of Pacific Islanders. The official poverty line correlates highly with other measures of poverty, and surveys in the U.S. and in Pacific Island states show that it is a concept with which respondents have no difficulty. Finally, the measure is of practical importance since it is used for allocating funds and targeting programs.

### **The Incidence of Poverty**

The poverty rate among elderly non-Hawai'ian Pacific Islander households (identified by ancestry) fell dramatically over the 1990s from 23.9 percent to 10.4 percent (Table 1-a).<sup>4</sup> This fall was much larger than the modest decrease for households headed by individuals aged sixteen to fifty-nine years. The number of persons living in elderly households increased over the 1990s but because of the fall in the poverty rate, fewer poor people were living in elderly households in 1999 than in 1989.<sup>5</sup> The same is not true of younger households, where the growth in population outweighed the fall in the poverty rate. The poverty rates used in this study are based on households rather than individuals. The reader can calculate poverty rates based on individuals using information given in Table 1-a and Table 1-b (total number of poor people living in these households divided by total number of people living in these households).

The poverty situation for Hawai'ians is quite different from that of other Pacific Islanders (Table 1-b). In 1989, the poverty rate for Hawai'ian households was considerably lower than that for other Pacific Islander households. By 1999, the rates were similar. The poverty rate of elderly households fell

**TABLE 1. Poverty in Pacific Islander and Hawaiian Households: 1989 and 1999**  
**TABLE 1-a. Poverty by Age: Non-Hawaiian Pacific Islanders**

	Age of Householder		
	1989	1989	1999
	16-59	60+	16-59
Total number of people living in these households	111,732	10,690	169,139
Total number of poor people living in these households	21,289	2,075	24,866
Percentage of households in this age group that are poor	19.05	23.9	14.8
Percentage of all poor people who live in these households	91.1	8.9	94.2
Sample size	1,357	134	2,077

**TABLE 1-b. Poverty by Age: Hawaiians**

	Age of Householder		
	1989	1989	1999
	16-59	60+	16-59
Total number of people living in these households	155,147	24,318	193,725
Total number of poor people living in these households	21,228	1,573	27,742
Percentage of households in this age group that are poor	13.8	10.2	14.7
Percentage of all poor people who live in these households	93.1	6.9	90.5
Sample size	2,241	443	3,104

Source: Calculated from the 1990 and 2000 PUMS, U.S. Bureau of the Census.

very little and increased for younger households, probably reflecting the economic difficulties faced by the state of Hawai'i in the 1990s. The number of persons living in poor Hawai'ian households rose over the 1990s. At the start of the 1990s, the poverty rate of elderly non-Hawai'ian Pacific Islander households was twice the U.S. rate (which was equal to the rate for elderly Hawai'ian households). By the close of the 1990s, the rates were equal.

Table 2 gives some insight into the possible causes of poverty. Poor household heads tend to have about a year less education than all household heads do. What is clear for Hawai'ian and other Pacific Islander household heads is that disability tends to be associated with being in poverty. Although it is possible that being in poverty led to the disability, a more likely causal path is that disability caused lower earnings and thus poverty. The lower percentage of elderly poor who work could also be due to higher disability rates. Those householders who are in poverty have lower facility with English, and this difference is particularly marked among non-Hawai'ian Pacific Islanders in 1999. Also notable is the language advantage of Hawai'ians over other Pacific Islanders that probably contributed to their lower poverty rate, especially in 1989. Poor households are also more likely to be female-headed, especially among Hawai'ian households (Table 2-b). About 25 percent of poor elderly Hawai'ian householders were married compared with about 50 percent of nonpoor householders. These rates of marriage were considerably lower than those among other Pacific Islander households. Poor households tend to be smaller than the average household although they tend to have somewhat more children. The presence of children in these poor households raises concern about the effect on the life prospects of these children.

Average household incomes for the elderly are also shown in Table 2. Real household incomes rose over the 1990s for all households but particularly for non-Hawai'ian households. A likely contributor to the differences in income is work behavior. The average elderly Pacific Islander householder was about three times more likely to work than was a poor householder. In 1989, poor Pacific Islander householders worked about half the number of weeks and hours of the average householder. In 1999, the figure was about one-quarter. For Hawai'ians, the difference between poor households and all households was even greater and did not change much over the decade. Simply put, working lowers the incidence of poverty.

### **Income Differences by Source Among Elderly Households**

Tables 3 through 6 report income by source of income for households. The first column of each table defines the income source or recipient, the second column shows the percentage of households in which the householder or

**TABLE 2. Descriptive Statistics on Pacific Islander and Hawai'ian Elderly Householders**

**TABLE 2-a. Non-Hawai'ian Pacific Islanders**

	Census Year 1990		Census Year 2000	
	All	In Poverty	All	In Poverty
Age (mean years)	67.37	68.66	67.54	67.42
Education (mean years)	10.28	9.50	11.02	9.63
Work experience (mean years)	51.10	53.16	50.52	51.79
Disability (percent)	35.80	56.25	24.68	29.17
Speak English well or very well (percent)	65.63	45.40	83.12	54.17
Female (percent)	24.63	34.40	35.93	41.67
Weeks worked (mean)	16.92	7.25	14.87	3.00
Hours per week (mean)	14.92	7.90	12.75	3.54
Household income* (mean)	34,628	5,708	46,684	7,328
Household size (mean)	3.84	3.19	3.75	3.13
Number of children (mean)	0.84	0.97	0.87	0.88
Number of adults (mean)	3.00	2.22	2.88	2.25
Employed (percent)	31.34	12.50	26.84	8.33
Married (percent)	65.67	56.25	57.14	45.83
Sample size	134	32	231	24

**TABLE 2-b. Hawai'ians**

	Census Year 1990		Census Year 2000	
	All	In Poverty	All	In Poverty
Age (mean years)	68.12	68.56	69.54	70.37
Education (mean years)	11.03	9.96	11.74	10.49
Work experience (mean years)	51.09	52.60	51.80	53.89
Disability (percent)	23.93	44.44	16.95	18.57
Speak English well or very well (percent)	98.19	93.33	98.87	97.14
Female (percent)	40.18	66.67	38.84	52.86
Weeks worked (mean)	15.08	2.36	14.11	2.34
Hours per week (mean)	12.41	2.96	14.81	1.14
Household income* (mean)	37,774	4,931	41,686	5,620
Household size (mean)	2.79	1.67	2.77	2.20
Number of children (mean)	0.43	0.18	0.44	0.53
Number of adults (mean)	2.36	1.49	2.33	1.67
Employed (percent)	28.67	8.89	25.42	10.0
Married (percent)	50.79	24.44	51.55	25.71
Sample size	443	45	708	70

Source: Calculated from 1990 and 2000 PUMS, U.S. Bureau of the Census.

\* 1990 constant dollars.

**TABLE 3. Average Income of Non-Hawai'ian Pacific Islander Elderly Households by Income Source: 1989**

**TABLE 3-a. Non-Hawai'ian Pacific Islanders: 1989 (in 1990 constant dollars)**

Income Source	All Households				
	Percent Receiving <sup>2</sup>	Householder	Spouse	Total	Percent of Total Household Income
Head and spouse					
Wages	46.3	6,865	3,078	9,943	28.7
Business	4.5	1,155	86	1,241	3.6
Social Security	49.3	2,775	647	3,422	9.9
Welfare	20.9	672	305	977	2.8
Investments	18.7	1,409	46	1,455	4.2
Retirement	28.4	2,115	446	2,561	7.4
Supplemental	—	—	—	—	—
Other	8.2	558	0	558	1.6
Head total		15,549	—	15,549	44.9
Spouse total			4,608	4,608	13.2
Children and other relatives				14,496	41.9
Household total				34,653	100.0

Notes: 1. % of households receiving no income at all: 5.2.

2. % of households with householder and/or spouse receiving income from each source.

3. Sample size 134.

**TABLE 3-b. Non-Hawai'ian Pacific Islanders: 1989 (in 1990 constant dollars)**

Income Source	Households in Poverty				
	Percent Receiving <sup>2</sup>	Householder	Spouse	Total	Percent of Total Household Income
Head and spouse					
Wages	21.9	1,167	388	1,555	26.7
Business	6.3	63	47	110	1.9
Social Security	37.5	952	554	1,506	25.9
Welfare	43.8	1,430	311	1,741	29.9
Investments	3.1	16	0	16	0.3
Retirement	6.3	65	0	65	1.1
Supplemental	—	—	—	—	—
Other	3.1	182	0	182	3.1
Head total		3,875	—	3,875	66.6
Spouse total			1,300	1,300	22.4
Children and other relatives				639	11.0
Household total				5,814	100.0

Notes: 1. % of households receiving no income at all: 21.9.

2. % of households receiving income from each source.

3. Sample size 32.

**TABLE 4. Average Income of Non-Hawai'ian Elderly Households by Income Source: 1999**

**TABLE 4-a. Non-Hawai'ian Pacific Islanders: 1999 (in 1990 constant dollars)**

Income Source	All Households				
	Percent Receiving <sup>2</sup>	Householder	Spouse	Total	Percent of Total Household Income
<b>Head and Spouse</b>					
Wages	42.4	8,785	4,120	12,905	27.7
Business	2.6	273	0	273	0.6
Social Security	54.5	3,516	656	4,172	8.9
Welfare	4.3	58	29	87	0.2
Investments	20.3	1,583	673	2,256	4.8
Retirement	45.0	5,648	710	6,358	13.6
Supplemental	11.3	513	85	598	1.3
Other	18.2	1,151	94	1,245	2.7
Head total		21,527	—	21,527	46.2
Spouse total			6,367	6,367	13.6
Children and other relatives				18,722	40.1
Household total				46,616	100.0

- Notes: 1. % of households receiving no income at all: 1.3.  
 2. % of households with householder and/or spouse receiving income from each source.  
 3. Sample size 231.

**TABLE 4-b. Non-Hawai'ian Pacific Islanders: 1999 (in 1990 constant dollars)**

Income Source	Households in Poverty				
	Percent Receiving <sup>2</sup>	Householder	Spouse	Total	Percent of Total Household Income
<b>Head and spouse</b>					
Wages	8.3	503	0	503	6.9
Business	0	0	0	0	0
Social Security	45.8	2,210	427	2,637	36.0
Welfare	20.8	321	200	521	7.1
Investments	4.2	0	0	0	0
Retirement	25.0	882	0	882	12.0
Supplemental	20.8	957	0	957	13.1
Other	4.2	0	206	206	2.8
Head total		4,873	—	4,873	66.5
Spouse total			833	833	11.4
Children and other relatives				1,621	22.1
Household total				7,327	100.0

- Notes: 1. % of households receiving no income at all: 12.5.  
 2. % of households with householder and/or spouse receiving income from each source.  
 3. Sample size 24.

Source: Calculated from 1990 and 2000 PUMS, U.S. Bureau of the Census

**TABLE 5. Average Income of Hawai'ian Elderly Households by Income Source: 1989**

**TABLE 5-a. Hawai'ian: 1989 (in 1990 constant dollars)**

All Households					
Income Source	Percent Receiving <sup>2</sup>	Householder	Spouse	Total	Percent of Total Household Income
Head and spouse					
Wages	40.0	7,344	3,071	10,415	27.6
Business	5.6	706	79	785	2.1
Social Security	64.3	3,604	813	4,417	11.7
Welfare	11.3	467	162	629	1.7
Investments	36.8	2,259	302	2,561	6.8
Retirement	49.0	5,032	788	5,820	15.4
Supplemental	—	—	—	—	—
Other	10.3	399	28	427	1.1
Head total		19,811	—	19,811	52.4
Spouse total			5,243	5,243	13.9
Children and other relatives				12,719	33.7
Household total				37,773	100.0

- Notes: 1. % of households receiving no income at all: 0.5.  
 2. % of households with householder and/or spouse receiving income from each source.  
 3. Sample size 443.

**TABLE 5-b. Hawai'ian: 1989 (in 1990 constant dollars)**

Households in Poverty					
Income Source	Percent Receiving <sup>2</sup>	Householder	Spouse	Total	Percent of Total Household Income
Head and Spouse					
Wages	11.1	282	51	333	6.8
Business	2.2	14	0	14	0.3
Social Security	66.7	2,439	132	2,571	52.1
Welfare	24.4	582	80	662	13.4
Investments	4.4	37	11	48	1.0
Retirement	22.2	480	357	837	17.0
Supplemental	—	—	—	—	—
Other	6.7	105	0	105	2.1
Head total		3,939	—	3,939	79.9
Spouse total			631	631	12.8
Children and other relatives				361	7.3
Household total				4,931	100.0

- Notes: 1. % of households receiving no income at all: 4.4.  
 2. % of households with householder and/or spouse receiving income from each source.  
 3. Sample size 45.



**TABLE 6. Average Income of Hawai‘ian Elderly Households by Income Source: 1999**

**TABLE 6-a. Hawai‘ian: 1999 (in 1990 constant dollars)**

Income Source	All Households				
	Percent Receiving <sup>2</sup>	Householder	Spouse	Total	Percent of Total Household Income
Head and Spouse					
Wages	38.3	7,002	3,664	10,668	25.6
Business	5.9	428	261	689	1.7
Social Security	71.6	4,904	1,522	6,426	15.4
Welfare	3.1	54	27	81	0.2
Investments	36.7	2,428	438	2,866	6.9
Retirement	50.1	6,294	1,182	7,476	17.9
Supplemental	6.8	329	30	359	0.9
Other	18.9	1,516	254	1,770	4.2
Head total		22,955	—	22,955	55.1
Spouse total			7,378	7,378	17.7
Children and other relatives				11,331	27.2
Household total				41,664	100.0

Notes: 1. % of households receiving no income at all: 1.1.  
 2. % of households with householder and/or spouse receiving income from each source.  
 3. Sample size 708.

**TABLE 6-b. Hawai‘ian: 1999 (in 1990 constant dollars)**

Income Source	Households in Poverty				
	Percent Receiving <sup>2</sup>	Householder	Spouse	Total	Percent of Total Household Income
Head and spouse					
Wages	7.1	177	29	206	3.7
Business	1.4	11	0	11	0.2
Social Security	60.0	2,354	397	2,751	49.0
Welfare	11.4	190	2	192	3.4
Investments	8.6	-17	0	-17	---
Retirement	11.4	434	0	434	7.7
Supplemental	11.4	489	30	519	9.2
Other	11.4	182	124	306	5.4
Head total		3,820	—	3,820	68.0
Spouse total			582	582	10.4
Children and other relatives				1,218	21.7
Household total				5,620	100.0

Notes: 1. % of households receiving no income at all: 11.4.  
 2. % of households with householder and/or spouse receiving income from each source.  
 3. Sample size 70.

Source: Calculated from 1990 and 2000 PUMS, U.S. Bureau of the Census

spouse receives income from that source, and the third through fifth columns report the average amount of income received from each source by the householder only, spouse only, and both. The eight entries in the final column show the percentage of total household income accounted for by income received by the householder or spouse from each source. The next three entries show the percentage of total household income contributed by the householder, spouse, and children and other relatives respectively. In poor households children and other relatives provide little income while in nonpoor households they are an important source of income.

As noted by Ahlburg (2000), a large fraction of elderly Pacific Islander households report that they have no income from any source. In 1989, 21.9 percent of poor non-Hawai'ian Pacific Islander households reported no income (Table 3-b), while only 4.4 percent of poor Hawai'ian households reported no income (Table 5-b). In 1999, the percentage of poor non-Hawai'ian Pacific Islander householders reporting no income had fallen to 12.5 percent (Table 4-b), but the percentage for Hawai'ian householders had increased to 11.4 percent (Table 6-b). This latter increase is consistent with the large falls in the percentage of householders receiving wage, Social Security, retirement, and welfare income.

### **Non-Hawai'ian Pacific Islander Households**

In 1999, 42 percent of elderly non-Hawai'ian Pacific Islander householders or spouses received income from wages but only 8 percent of poor households did so (Table 3-2a and b). The average wages received for all households were 26 times the value of those received by poor households. A critical factor contributing to the poverty of poor households is the relatively small economic contribution made by the spouse and by resident children and other relatives. On average, a spouse earned \$6,367 in 1999 and children and other relatives \$18,722 (Table 4-a). However, in poor households these figures were \$833 and \$1,621, respectively (Table 4-b).

In 1999, nonpoor households also received income from businesses and investments whereas poor households received little or nothing from this source (Tables 4a and b). Nonpoor households were more likely to receive retirement income, and the value of that income was seven times that received by poor households. Poor households were less likely to receive Social Security income, and the average value of this income was only about two-thirds of that of the average household. Social Security income of the householder and spouse accounted for only nine percent of income for the average household but thirty-six percent of income for poor households (Tables 4a and b). These figures indicate that not only does current work behavior of

poor and nonpoor households differ but that past work behavior that affects Social Security and retirement payments also differed.

Fully twenty-one percent of poor households received supplementary income, and it accounted for thirteen percent of household income in 1999 (Table 4-b). Although eleven percent of all households receive this form of income, it is a trivial percentage of average household income. Nearly twenty-one percent of poor households received welfare income, and it accounted for about seven percent of income.

Income by source for household in 1989 is shown in Table 3a and b. For the average household the significant changes over the decade were a dramatic decline in the percentage receiving welfare and increases in the percentage receiving income from Social Security and retirement. The poor experienced large declines in the receipt of welfare and wage income but increases in the receipt of Social Security, retirement, and supplemental income. The real value of retirement income and Social Security income for both poor and nonpoor households rose over the 1990s.

### **Hawai'ian Households**

In 1999, the average Hawai'ian householder and spouse were more likely to receive income from Social Security, investments, and retirement than were the average non-Hawai'ian Pacific Islander householder and spouse, implying better jobs or a stronger past connection to the labor market for the former (Table 6-a compared with Table 4-a). As well as being more likely to receive these forms of income, the average value of income from these sources was also higher for Hawai'ian households. However, overall, the total income for Pacific Islander households was higher than that for Hawai'ian households. The difference in household income was due to the higher income of children and other relatives resident in Pacific Islander households. Poor Hawai'ian households had lower total income than other Pacific Islander households in 1999 due principally to the lower income of the householder. Poor Hawai'ian households were more likely to receive Social Security but less likely to receive either retirement income or supplemental security income. The sources of income did not change much over the 1990s for the average Hawai'ian household but they did change for poor households. Poor households were much less likely to receive welfare and retirement income in 1999 than in 1989.

### **Multivariate Analysis of Poverty**

Poverty is associated with both economic and demographic characteristics of individuals and households (Danziger and Weinberg 1994). Insufficient hu-

man capital to meet the demands of the labor market may result in poverty and a large family size, or marital disruption can also lead to poverty. Ahlburg (2000) and Ahlburg and Song (2005) investigated the correlates of poverty among all Pacific Islander households and found that poverty was associated with lack of employment, lower education, disability, poorer English language skills, the householder being a single mother, being born outside the United States, and more recent immigration to the United States.

Table 7 shows the results of a regression of these variables on the poverty rate for non-Hawai'ian Pacific Islander households for 1989 and 1999, and Table 8 reports the results for Hawai'ian households. The first column shows the regression coefficient, the second the standard error, and the third the marginal effect. Since the dependent variable, poverty, is a binary variable (a household is either in poverty or it is not), multivariate probit analysis is used because ordinary least squares is inappropriate with a binary dependent variable. The marginal effects in this case are the effects of each independent variable on the probability that a household will be in poverty. For continuous variables such as age, the effect is the impact of a one-unit increase in the independent variable, for example one year of age. For example, in 1999 a Pacific Islander household whose head was thirty-five years old was 0.3 percentage points less likely to be poor than a household whose head was thirty-four years old. For dummy variables such as disability, the effect is the impact of being in that category relative to not being in that category. For example, in 1989, a Pacific Islander household was 18.7 percent more likely to be poor if the householder was disabled than if he or she was not disabled. The impact of education is measured by whether the householder has more education than a high school diploma relative to having less education, by speaking English well or very well relative to speaking it less well or not at all, employment by whether the householder or his or her spouse is employed relative to not being employed, occupation by whether the householder is employed in the service sector or blue-collar occupations rather than being in white-collar occupations, marriage by whether the householder is married with spouse present, and year of immigration by whether the householder immigrated to the U.S. after 1984 (for the 1990 Census) or after 1994 (for the 2000 Census) relative to the earlier periods shown in Table 7.

Many but not all of the variables that were found to distinguish poor from nonpoor households in the general Pacific Islander population also tend to discriminate between these two types of households in the elderly non-Hawai'ian Pacific Islander population. Poorer English language skills and disability were associated with a higher incidence of poverty. The effects were substantial and statistically significant in 1989, but over the 1990s the impact of English and disability decreased (the impact of disability was not significant in 1999). Edu-

**TABLE 7 Determinants of Poverty of Non-Hawaiian Pacific Islander Elderly Households**

**TABLE 7-b. Non-Hawaiian Pacific Islander Households, 1989**

Variable	Coefficient	Standard Error	Marginal Effect (%)
Constant	2.778	1.927	
Education	-0.115	0.416	-3.0
Age	-0.021	0.020	-0.6
English	-0.852	0.370**	-22.5
Disability	0.709	0.287**	18.7
Householder employed	-0.997	0.507 <sup>†</sup>	-26.3
Occupation			
Service	-1.041	0.664	-27.5
Blue-collar	-0.929	0.518 <sup>†</sup>	-24.5
Married	-0.292	0.295	-7.7
Household size	-0.076	0.063	-2.0
Year of immigration			
1981-85	0.101	0.538	2.7
1971-80	-0.215	0.473	-5.7
1961-70	-0.173	0.460	-4.6
1960 or before	-0.384	0.370	-10.1

Log likelihood: -60

Restricted log likelihood: -74

Chi-square (13): 28

Sample size = 134

\*\* denotes statistical significance at at least the 0.01 level

\* denotes statistical significance at at least the 0.05 level

<sup>†</sup> denotes statistical significance at at least the 0.10 level

**TABLE 7-b. Non-Hawaiian Pacific Islander Households, 1999**

Variable	Coefficient	Standard Error	Marginal Effect (%)
Constant	1.766	1.534	19.1
Education	-0.649	0.369 <sup>†</sup>	-7.0
Age	-0.900	0.304**	-0.3
English	-0.908	0.293**	-9.7
Disability	0.152	0.312	1.6
Householder employed	-0.614	0.444	-6.6
Occupation			
Service	0.563	0.593	6.1
Blue-collar	0.558	0.504	6.9
Married	-0.124	0.283	-1.3
Household size	-0.120	0.660	-1.3
Year of immigration			
1991-95	0.576	0.587	6.2
1981-90	-0.270	0.435	-2.9
1971-80	0.735	0.392	0.8
1961-70	-0.747	0.503	-8.1
Before 1960	-0.189	0.390	-2.0

Log likelihood: -60

Restricted log likelihood: -77

Chi-square (14): 34

Sample size = 231

\*\* denotes statistical significance at at least the 0.01 level

\* denotes statistical significance at at least the 0.05 level

<sup>†</sup> denotes statistical significance at at least the 0.10 level

**TABLE 8. Determinants of Poverty of Hawai‘ian Elderly Households**

**TABLE 8-a. Hawai‘ian Households, 1989**

Variable	Coefficient	Standard Error	Marginal Effect (%)
Constant	1.232	1.180	12.2
Education	-0.405	0.270	-4.0
Age	-0.027	0.015 <sup>†</sup>	-0.3
English	-0.336	0.482	-3.3
Disability	0.468	0.197 <sup>**</sup>	4.6
Householder employed	-0.479	0.301	-4.8
Spouse employed	-0.635	0.483	-6.3
Occupation			
Service	0.121	0.469	1.2
Blue-collar	0.592	0.303 <sup>†</sup>	5.9
Married	-0.344	0.219	-3.4
Household size	-0.266	0.081 <sup>**</sup>	-2.6

Log likelihood: -115

Restricted log likelihood: -146

Chi-square (10): 60

Sample size = 443

<sup>\*\*</sup> denotes statistical significance at at least the 0.01 level

<sup>°</sup> denotes statistical significance at at least the 0.05 level

<sup>†</sup> denotes statistical significance at at least the 0.10 level

**TABLE 8-b. Hawai‘ian Households, 1999**

Variable	Coefficient	Standard Error	Marginal Effect (%)
Constant	0.258	0.858	3.51
Education	-0.275	0.175	-3.7
Age	-0.008	0.009	-0.1
English	-0.761	0.491	-10.3
Disability	0.090	0.180 <sup>°</sup>	1.2
Householder employed	-0.457	0.232 <sup>°</sup>	-6.2
Spouse employed	-0.497	0.347	-6.8
Occupation			
Service	0.301	0.286	4.1
Blue-collar	0.365	0.229	5.0
Married	-0.505	0.159 <sup>**</sup>	-6.9
Household size	-0.066	0.039 <sup>†</sup>	-0.1

Log likelihood: -205

Restricted log likelihood: -228

Chi-square (10): 47

Sample size = 708

<sup>\*\*</sup> denotes statistical significance at at least the 0.01 level

<sup>°</sup> denotes statistical significance at at least the 0.05 level

<sup>†</sup> denotes statistical significance at at least the 0.10 level

cation and employment of the householder, which had statistically significant effects on poverty in the general Pacific Islander population (Ahlburg 2000), had less consistent effects on the elderly. The education of non-Hawaiian Pacific Islander householders had a large impact in 1999 but was only marginally statistically significant (at the 0.10 level). Employment of the householder had a very large negative impact in 1989 (26.3 percent) but a smaller and not statistically significant impact in 1999. Working in a blue-collar occupation was associated with higher poverty in 1989 (at the 0.10 level) but not in 1999. Age of the householder had a significant effect in 1999 but not in 1989. Marriage, household size, and the year in which the householder immigrated to the U.S. did not have statistically significant associations with poverty.

In 1989, a Hawaiian household was more likely to be poor if the householder was disabled, the household was smaller, and the householder worked in a blue-collar job (Table 8a). An additional family member was associated with a 2.6 percent reduction in the probability of being poor, probably because this additional family member was working. In 1999, households were more likely to be poor if the householder was not employed (6.2 percent), was disabled (1.2 percent), and was married (6.9 percent). Lower levels of education and being employed in a blue-collar job also increased the probability of poverty by amounts similar to those in 1989, but these variables were only statistically significant at levels near 0.10 in two-tailed tests.

### **Elderly Households and Children**

Ahlburg (2000: 66) noted that in 1990 the average elderly Pacific Islander household (using a race-based definition) contained one child under the age of eighteen years, and the average poor elderly household contained 1.4 children. Although multigenerational households have potential advantages for both children and the elderly, because of the generally lower income of these households there may be disadvantages as well. The Census allows only a limited analysis of potential disadvantages. Table 9 compares school enrollment rates for children under the age of eighteen years in elderly Pacific Islander and Hawaiian households in 1990 and 2000 with those for children in nonelderly households. In 1990, children below the age of twelve were almost five percentage points less likely to be enrolled in school if they lived in an elderly Pacific Islander household (Table 9a), whereas young children in elderly Hawaiian households were two to five percentage points more likely to be in school than children in households headed by a younger individual (Table 9b). By 2000, the enrollment rates for young children were quite close. For both populations, children fifteen to eighteen years of age

TABLE 9. **Enrollment of Children in School by Age of Child**  
 TABLE 9-a. **Non-Hawai'ian Pacific Islander Households**

	Percent Enrolled in School			
	Census Year 1990		Census Year 2000	
	16-59	60+	16-59	60+
Age 0-5	15.7	11.1	22.6	23.2
Age 6-12	94.8	90.0	98.9	100.0
Age 13-14	96.0	100.0	99.7	100.0
Age 15-18	87.3	88.0	92.5	88.0
Total	64.4	69.3	74.1	72.0

TABLE 9-b. **Hawai'ian Households**

	Percent Enrolled in School			
	Census Year 1990		Census Year 2000	
	16-59	60+	16-59	60+
Age 0-5	20.9	25.8	28.3	31.5
Age 6-12	95.9	98.2	98.9	97.8
Age 13-14	98.6	87.5	99.4	100.0
Age 15-18	88.6	82.6	89.5	85.7
Total	69.1	77.7	76.6	80.2

were less likely than children six to fourteen years of age to be in school if they resided in an elderly household.

Although these results are limited to school enrollment, they do suggest that there may be a human capital penalty to children who grow up in elderly households. Because the income of these households is lower than that of nonelderly households, children may be less likely to be enrolled in pre-school programs and may be more likely to leave school before graduating from high school to supplement household income. It is possible that the differences are even greater for children in poor elderly households. The consequences of growing up in a poor household tend to persist: Gottschalk, McClanahan, and Sandefur (1994:100) found that growing up in a poor household increases the chance that an individual will experience poverty as an adult. These results are merely suggestive because they are based on small sample sizes. Other approaches to studying the impact on a child of growing up in a household headed by an elderly person are likely to be more productive. The issue is important and warrants further study.

### Conclusion

The poverty rate of non-Hawai'ian Pacific Islander elderly households fell dramatically in the 1990s to a rate close to the U.S. average. In contrast, the rate for



Hawaiian elderly changed little. Although this finding holds true for the “representative” non-Hawaiian Pacific Islander household, it may mask possible differences among subgroups of Pacific Islanders. Our descriptive analysis shows that the poor differ from the nonpoor by being less educated, working less, having a greater incidence of disability, and having poorer English language skills. Some of these differences held up in our multivariate analysis. Poverty among elderly households was principally associated with disability and poorer English language skills (for non-Hawaiian Pacific Islanders). Disability may decrease the ability to work, and poor language skills may limit access to and utilization of public services and programs. The high incidence of disability and lack of language skills among the elderly and their significant impact on poverty suggest that government programs may need to be expanded to address these problems. Years of formal education played a less important role among the elderly than it did among the general Pacific Islander population.

Real incomes of elderly households rose over the 1990s, and the sources of income also changed significantly for non-Hawaiian Pacific Islander households. The percentage of non-Hawaiian Pacific Islander elderly households receiving no income fell by 3.9 percentage points. For poor households the decline was 9.4 percentage points. Among Hawaiian elderly households the respective figures were increases of 0.6 percentage points and 7.0 percentage points. These figures raise several questions. First, did these householders really have zero income, and if so, how did they survive? Second, why did the percentage of non-Hawaiian Pacific Islander householders reporting no income fall over the 1990s while that of Hawaiian householders rose? Third, what caused these changes? One suspects that changes in welfare played a role, but the impacts on Hawaiians and non-Hawaiian Pacific Islanders seem to have differed.

Non-Hawaiian Pacific Islander households in 1999 were more likely than in 1989 to receive income from retirement and Social Security and less likely to receive income from welfare. In addition, the real value of receipts from activities connected to work (wages, retirement, and Social Security) increased. For Hawaiian households, sources of income changed little with the exception that poor households were less likely to receive welfare and retirement income. These results suggest that the labor market attachment of non-Hawaiian Pacific Islanders in the U.S. is increasing and that the returns from this attachment are also increasing.

The improving economic position of non-Hawaiian Pacific Islander elderly households suggests that they may be experiencing similar improvements in their socioeconomic conditions, including health status. Declines in reported disability suggest that this is the case. However, disability is a rather broad and subjective measure, and the rates of disability are still quite high. Further study of the health of Pacific Islander elderly is needed. Although the overall

economic condition of these households has improved, there are still some areas of concern. As mentioned above, considerable numbers of non-Hawai'ian Pacific Islander and Hawai'ian elderly householders reported no source of income at all. We need to know whether these households are underreporting income or, if not, how they are able to survive. Do they exist on food stamps, housing assistance, Medicaid, and charity? What impact does this lack of income have on their well-being? The average elderly household contains one child under the age of eighteen years. We found that these children are less likely to be enrolled in school between the ages of fifteen and eighteen than are children in nonelderly households. Given the importance of education to future economic success, growing up in an elderly household may be reducing their life prospects. This too is an area that needs further study.

### NOTES

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1. It is, of course, possible that ill-health causes poverty or that both are caused by some third factor. The majority of the literature suggests that the main causality runs from SES to health (Robert and House 2000).

2. In an earlier study of poverty among Pacific Islanders, Ahlburg (2000) used race to identify Pacific Islanders. The results of this study differ very little whether race, ancestry, or race and ancestry questions are used to identify households.

3. The U.S. Bureau of the Census has been experimenting with adjustments to the official definition of poverty to take account of medical expenses and geographic variations in costs. These experimental poverty rates tend to be thirty to sixty percent higher than the official poverty rate for elderly households (Proctor and Dalaker 2000:18).

4. The poverty rate for households age sixty-five and over in 1989 was about 4 percentage points higher than households headed by an individual sixty and over, as one would expect given the lower rates of poverty among somewhat younger "elderly" households (Ahlburg 2000:57). A more inclusive definition of "elderly" does not have a great impact on the findings of this study.

5. Income data in the census refer to income in the year before the census. Thus, we will refer to income and poverty in 1989 and 1999 rather than in 1990 and 2000.

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**CIVIL VERSUS MILITARY ADMINISTRATION:  
THE INTERIOR DEPARTMENT'S POSITION ON  
U.S. PACIFIC TERRITORIES, 1945–1947**

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Between 1945 and 1947, the United States set out to, and largely succeeded in, creating an exclusive strategic sphere in the Pacific Basin. Concerned about a potentially resurgent Japan and an increasingly threatening Soviet Union, the United States was determined to turn the Pacific Ocean into an “American lake.” The United States, however, had to ensure these measures did not appear to be imperialistic. Accordingly, the War, Navy, State, and Interior Departments debated with each other about how to create the American lake effect without the United States being branded a colonial power. The Interior Department thought that it had the answer. Because of its history of territorial administration, Interior was convinced that it was best suited to Pacific Island civil administration. Its ideas would lead to Pacific Islands that became more thoroughly colonized and Americanized by the 1990s than anyone in the 1940s probably ever hoped was possible.

BETWEEN 1945 AND 1947, the United States set out to, and largely succeeded in, creating an exclusive strategic sphere in the Pacific Basin, especially north of the Equator. The United States had been highly traumatized by the Japanese strike on Pearl Harbor as well as its defeats in the Pacific in the first few months of 1942. Moreover, the United States had been acutely aware of the Pacific War's costs, especially the bloody island-hopping campaigns of 1942–1945. Now concerned about a future, potentially resurgent Japan and the more realistic fear of an expansionist USSR, American strategic policymakers, planners, and analysts wanted to turn the Pacific Basin into a postwar “American lake” to the greatest extent possible. One major problem, however, was bureaucratic consensus within the Executive Branch. The War, Navy, State, and Interior Departments were tasked with planning for

and carrying out a postwar defense and administration of the island groups conquered and liberated from Japan. The Departments all agreed with the idea of creating an American lake in the postwar Pacific but they disagreed, sometimes vehemently, about how to carry this task out. The Army and Navy were determined that the United States annex the Pacific Island territories. The State Department, however, was acutely aware of the United States' own anticolonial rhetoric from the prewar and wartime periods, not to mention the anti-imperial tide rising in European colonies since the interwar period. State was also sensitive that anything smacking of U.S. imperialism would be used by the Soviets for propaganda purposes. Therefore, State Department officers wanted a security solution carried out under the auspices of the United Nations (UN) that gave the United States *carte blanche* in the postwar Pacific but did not make the United States look imperialistic in the process!<sup>1</sup>

The Interior Department had a dilemma similar to the State Department's. Even more distrusted by the military services than the State Department was, Interior thought it absolutely necessary, for reasons cited below, that the civilian populations of island groups such as Micronesia be administered by a civilian agency. Yet at the same time, the Interior Department had to meet criticism that if the Pacific Islands were base facilities needed for postwar U.S. strategic security, civilian administration might interfere with the military's defense of the area in time of war or national emergency. Therefore, Interior not only had to clearly assert its position on this subject, but it had to meet these criticisms from the War and Navy Departments. As the other Executive Branch Departments did at times, Interior employed a fascinating "useable history" of U.S. territorial administration as a way to argue its case. By asserting their ideas that U.S. security and prestige would be enhanced by Interior Department administration, Interior Department officials were also suggesting an even more thoroughly imperial solution to the United States' dilemma in the postwar Pacific than the other three Departments were proposing. By arguing that their Department should administer the civilian populations of these island groups, for instance, officers at Interior were, wittingly or unwittingly, outlining a situation in which those civilian populations would be more fully integrated into the American polity than they might have been if merely left under U.S. military administration.

### **Methodology and Historiography**

This article is part of my second monograph on U.S. strategic policy toward the Pacific Basin between 1945 and 1947. In the first book, I focused on analyzing U.S. policy in the context of both the origins of the Cold War and

the history of U.S. imperialism. Taking U.S. actions in the Pacific Basin to be a case of great power imperialism, I explored why the United States wanted to be the predominant power in the region in the years following World War Two. Contextualizing this history with interwar and wartime events, I found the United States intent on consolidating its military, political, economic, and cultural control over these strategically located Pacific Island groups because of fears of a potentially resurgent Japan and a potentially aggressive Soviet Union. The second book investigates American policy toward the Pacific Basin from a more bureaucratic perspective. Staying within the same time period and using many of the same primary sources, I am exploring U.S. policy from the positions of the four Executive Departments involved in Pacific Basin defense and administration. This second book, in turn, has led me to write an additional monograph on the rivalries between these Departments and on their various perspectives about the defense and administration of these territories.<sup>2</sup>

The documents I analyze in this piece are small in number and are exclusively “metropolitan” in nature because my particular focus is strategic policy history and my particular intent is to mine these sources as intensively as possible and to a greater degree than has been done before. In addition, I have chosen to limit my studies to the 1945–1947 time period because I am seeking to connect Pacific Basin affairs to larger themes of global American policy in the first two years of the Cold War. It is true that, from a Pacific Basin perspective, 1947 does not seem as logical a conclusion as the early 1950s, given the start of the Korean War, the signing of the U.S.–Japan Peace Treaty, and the transfer of Micronesian administration from the Navy to the Interior Department. The year 1947 is a key year, however, in the history of American foreign policy because of the enunciation of the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan as well as the beginning formulation of the Containment Doctrine. In addition, 1947 is a key year for Micronesian history since 1947 is the year that the United States gained UN acceptance of its strategic trusteeship idea for the former Japanese Mandates. Moreover, 1947 is significant for U.S. policy toward the Pacific Basin because 1947 represents the beginning of the “Reverse Course” in Japan. Up to that point in time, the United States intended its occupations of Japan and southern Korea to be brief and thought that its future in the Pacific would entail a defensive perimeter based on U.S. control of the Aleutians, the Ryukyus, the Philippines, Micronesia, and Hawaii. U.S. intervention in the Asian mainland was not perceived as a certainty by the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), and the U.S. Army was even in the process of withdrawing most of its ground forces from the Philippines. After 1947, however, American policy in the region became one of rebuilding Japan based on the prewar *zaibatsu*. In addition, U.S. policy

focused on the idea of a more permanent positioning of U.S. forces in Japan and a more active political, economic, and, eventually, military engagement in mainland East and Southeast Asia.<sup>3</sup>

In terms of historiography, U.S. policy toward the Pacific Basin is probably one of the most understudied dimensions of Early Cold War U.S. foreign relations. Yet U.S. Pacific Basin policy is vitally important in understanding both the origins and outcome of the Pacific War. In addition, those interwar and wartime events are important to understanding postwar U.S. policy toward East Asia given the United States' legacy of paranoia from the Japanese strike on Pearl Harbor. Finally, the region's importance is clear as an example of U.S. Early Cold War unilateralism.<sup>4</sup> Still, most works on the United States in the postwar Pacific tend to either cover a later period with minimal attention to the later 1940s,<sup>5</sup> focus on the issues of civil administration *per se*,<sup>6</sup> or concentrate on U.S. policy toward one island or island group rather than the entire Basin.<sup>7</sup> Other valuable works analyze U.S. actions from a cultural, but not necessarily strategic, policy perspective,<sup>8</sup> or analyze U.S. strategic policy over a longer time period rather than intensively exploring a shorter time period.<sup>9</sup> Additional works are simply dated. While they were valuable starting points, these earlier pieces did not have the advantage of time, perspective, or fully accessible archival material.<sup>10</sup> Thus, this study, while far from being a comprehensive account, is intended as a narrative to begin detailed investigation of the Interior Department's role in lobbying for the civil administration of U.S. Pacific territories in the immediate postwar period. This article is largely a narrative since I have allowed the historical actors in the primary sources to speak for themselves. I have, in turn, taken this tack because their words speak very eloquently to both the fears and the arrogance of U.S. policymakers and planners *vis-à-vis* the Pacific Basin in this time period. It is hoped that this study may lead other scholars to explore additional dimensions of the U.S. occupation of the Pacific Islands, both that of the immediate postwar period as well as events of later years.

### **Interior's Case for Pacific Island Civil Administration**

The Interior Department's position on the postwar administration of the former Japanese Mandates, as well as the postwar administration of prewar U.S. Pacific Basin possessions, started to become clear at least as early as November 1944, if not before. On 1 November 1944, Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes sent a short note to Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal that he had received word from a "reliable" source that the Navy was working on a bill to transfer jurisdiction of the Islands from Interior to the Navy Department. Ickes did not specify whether the Islands in question were pre-



war American possessions or the newly conquered territories in Micronesia, but he did remind Forrestal that he had mentioned the matter to President Franklin Roosevelt. He also told Forrestal that Roosevelt had expressed his opposition to the Navy having administrative control of the island groups. Ickes reiterated that he was “virtually certain” that work was being done on this—without Forrestal’s knowledge—by Captain Donald Ramsey, Legislative Counsel to Rear Admiral Oswald Colclough, the Navy Judge Advocate General (JAG). Ickes finished by asking Forrestal that he take immediate steps to put a stop to this “enterprise.”<sup>11</sup>

A few days before Roosevelt died in April 1945, Ickes also sent the President a memo about issues that had come up with the Army and the Navy *vis-à-vis* what he called the “international trusteeship problem.” Ickes began by telling Roosevelt that he was particularly disturbed about some reports that had come to him that outlined the military services’ attitude toward trusteeship. He was informed about these attitudes by Under Secretary of the Interior Abe Fortas, who had told him that the Army and the Navy wanted to have the United States insist on complete sovereignty over the former Japanese Mandates. Ickes further reported to the President that he had been told that the two services were either urging that international trusteeship not be discussed at the upcoming inaugural UN San Francisco Conference or that the matter not be discussed until the United States had a “firm agreement” about United States jurisdiction over Micronesia. Ickes additionally told Roosevelt that he agreed with the idea that the United States should be the administering power of the former Japanese Mandates and that the “arrangement” worked out by the interdepartmental State-War-Navy-Interior Committee (SWNCC) should assure for the United States Government all of the rights it could possibly desire for security purposes. He was concerned, however, that the arrangement had gone too far in providing a “scheme” by which those areas were now exempted from international accountability. He thought that if the United States insisted on complete sovereignty, an “international grab-bag” of colonial territories would result that would end in “serious prejudice” to U.S. interests and to the idea of a peaceful world organization.<sup>12</sup>

As an example, Ickes argued that the British might respond to U.S. sovereignty over Micronesia by claiming “absolute title” to certain areas of the Middle East that reflected their security interests but that would interfere with U.S. strategic interests because of the United States’ great stake in Middle Eastern oil. He also thought it would be a mistake to fail to reach an agreement on the subject of mandated territories at the San Francisco Conference. He said that the elimination of the topic would arouse suspicion and be a continuing source of hostility and distrust, and he did not think the new

international organization or any international organization could be successfully launched until these vital issues had been "boldly confronted" and dealt with by way of "practical idealism." In conclusion, Ickes urged to Roosevelt that the mandated territories and any other territories separated from Japan be placed under the trusteeship system, with only such safeguards as might be necessary for U.S. national security. He then thought that the United States should make a prompt decision as to a policy and be "vigorous" in its efforts to gain acceptance for that policy in San Francisco.<sup>13</sup>

It was clear, however, that President Harry Truman was not prepared after the end of the war to discuss these matters with Ickes. No doubt consumed by rising tensions with the Soviet Union, Truman nevertheless received a letter about trusteeship from Ickes about a week and a half after the Japanese surrender in September 1945. Ickes began the letter by asserting his belief that immediate attention should be given to the question of civil administration in the former Japanese territories. He first argued that it would be in keeping with American traditions to devise "suitable" means by which civilian administration of the Islands could take place while providing for the security interests of the nation. Ickes understood that some time would pass before decisions would be made about the disposition of the former Japanese Mandates, but he had already asked the Interior Department's Division of Territories and Island Possessions to make a general study of Pacific Island issues and be prepared to make more detailed plans as well. He asserted to Truman that full use should be made of the "expert" opinion in the Department of the Interior, the Federal agency he claimed had long been responsible for the "well-being" of indigenous peoples in U.S. territories. Ickes then provided Truman with a historical lesson about the Federal administration of these indigenous peoples. Reiterating that military administration of civil affairs had prevailed at various times in the Philippines, Alaska, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands, he argued that in all of these cases civil administration had later been transferred to the Interior Department. Only Guam and American Samoa remained under military administration. In addition, the Interior Department was administering Baker, Howland, Jarvis, Canton, and Enderbury Islands in the Pacific Basin. Furthermore, the War Department's Bureau of Insular Affairs had become part of Interior's Division of Territories and Island Possessions, and Interior had been administering the Philippines toward independence since the 1930s.<sup>14</sup>

Ickes therefore thought that there was every reason to believe that the "sound" conduct of civil administration in inhabited areas adjacent to strategic bases would support, not handicap, the military services. He argued that neither U.S. security nor prestige would be served by a policy of military rule in the former Japanese Mandates since such a policy would appear to be akin

to the militaristic policies of the old colonial powers and it might even appear more militaristic than that of the Japanese, who at least staffed their South Seas Bureau with civilians. He similarly pointed out to Truman that the British Army and Navy had also worked closely with civilian administrators and tolerated local “self-rule” in vital outposts such as Ceylon, Singapore, the Fiji Islands, and the Northwest Frontier of India. Ickes admitted that differences of opinion between military and civilian personnel could arise in such situations, but he thought that adequate safeguards could be made for military and policing functions. He thought that if the military services were given strict control of the actual base areas in the Islands, just as they were in the mainland United States, and that if the military and civilian departments maintained close liaison, joint administrative efforts could work. Ickes was, accordingly, going to ask the Division of Territories and Island Possessions to draft a detailed report along these lines and he thought that the War, Navy, and State Departments should be consulted. Truman returned a quick note the next day, however, asserting that he had read Ickes’ letter with great interest but that it was too early to discuss this subject and that he would be “glad” to talk it over with Ickes at a later date.<sup>15</sup>

Later in the month, Fortas, at this time Acting Secretary of the Interior, wrote Truman, telling him that he had been informed that the President had referred the subject to the other three Departments. Fortas stated to Truman that he was sure the President intended to draw upon the Interior Department’s long experience in “handling” the problems of indigenous peoples. Fortas even cited how the Interior Department had dealt with Indian affairs for over one hundred years as well as carrying out the civil administration in nearly all U.S. possessions! Fortas also pointed out to Truman that by having the Navy continue to administer Guam and American Samoa, the United States took on the “dubious” distinction of being the only Pacific power that governed an inhabited colonial area as if it were a military base. He did not think this was a status that could be justified or welcomed by the American people in lieu of “enlightened” opinion about the administration of dependent peoples. Fortas said he recognized the vital interests of the State Department and the military services in determining the policies and methods of administration of these strategic areas. In fact, he thought it best to treat the issue as a single U.S. problem and he realized that world attention would be focused on what the United States did *vis-à-vis* the administration of the Pacific Islands. Fortas thought that if the United States committed itself to Civil Government, the action would strengthen the United States’ case before the world for exclusive retention and control of strategic areas such as Micronesia. Fortas then told Truman that the Interior Department would like to assist in this process by provid-

ing "expert" opinion on Civil Government that was oriented toward the ultimate attainment of democratic institutions and economic stability in these areas. In addition, he thought Interior's experiences in these areas would help in creating an organization to administer the Islands that met both U.S. security needs and UN obligations. He ended the letter by asking Truman to advise the other Departments about Interior's obvious role in the deliberations.<sup>16</sup> This time, Truman responded to Ickes. Again stating that final decisions would be a long time in coming, Truman also said that solving the administrative problems should begin at once. Accordingly, Truman invited the Interior Department, in light of its long association with the governance of dependent peoples and territories, to take part in the administrative planning for the Pacific territories.<sup>17</sup>

By October 1945, Truman had established what has been variously called the Cabinet Committee, the Committee of Four Secretaries, and the Quadripartite Committee. This body was comprised of the Secretaries from the four Departments or their representatives and it was tasked with discussing the issue of Pacific Island administration. Though the four Secretaries apparently did not meet at this time, they did start exchanging various ideas about how U.S. security and political interests in the Pacific could be met.<sup>18</sup> One example of these exchanges was a late December 1945 letter from Ickes to Forrestal. Ickes began the letter by stating to Forrestal that the administrative problems in the Pacific Islands were not hypothetical future ones to solve but immediate ones arising from U.S. control of the area. He assumed that interim measures taken in this first period of administration would go far in determining for some time to come the administration, trade, and relations with the indigenous peoples of the region. He was also sure that awaiting a formal international agreement about the disposition of the former Japanese territories without providing for orderly administration would probably not serve the United States' best interests. Ickes also told Forrestal that he was unaware as to why disputes over trusteeship or sovereign control were having any bearing on the problem. According to Ickes, the United States had, for the time being, assumed actual governing responsibility for the area. Even if island groups such as Micronesia were eventually assigned to another power, Ickes maintained that the United States still had the current responsibility for the inhabitants' welfare. He also assumed that the islands would be under continuous international scrutiny and that U.S. actions therefore acquired an importance out of proportion to the islands' small size and population. He thus thought that it was in U.S. interests to "assist the natives of the islands toward a better way of life within the limits of their capabilities and the potentialities of their environment." Ickes additionally thought that in "terms of ultimate economy and goodwill,

such a policy would benefit our relations with peoples far beyond the limits of the island area.”<sup>19</sup>

Ickes was sure that the American people would favor Civil Government of the Pacific Islands in order to achieve these goals. Not only did he think American traditions were opposed to military rule, but he argued, as he had to Truman a few months before, that even a colonial power like Japan had “outgrown” it. Ickes was certain that Forrestal must be concerned about so many people at home and abroad perceiving the U.S. military as more focused on its strategic interests in the Pacific Islands than its concern for the civil rights and economic welfare of the inhabitants. In fact, Ickes seemed to recognize that the strategic position of the island groups was as significant from a political perspective as it was from a military point of view since he thought that the United States could “gain a great advantage if we can go to the peace table with a record of interim civilian administration that clearly demonstrates the democratic, nonimperialistic attitude of this Government toward the island peoples.” Ickes concluded the letter by claiming that he could not understand why attention should only be focused on the United States acquiring its bases in the region when “local human problems” also constituted an immediate and pressing responsibility of the United States Government. He even reminded Forrestal that Truman’s memos on this subject referred to “islands,” not “bases.” He therefore thought that the four Departments needed to begin work on these immediate and long-term issues in a similar kind of context, and he requested that Forrestal have the Cabinet Committee draft an interim report for the President by 1 February 1946. He also told Forrestal that he was sending a copy of this letter to Truman.<sup>20</sup>

It is unclear if such a report from the four Secretaries ever got to Truman by February 1946. It was, however, apparent to Wesley Clark, Assistant to the Secretary of the Interior, that the State Department agreed with the idea of civil administration in the Pacific Islands. It was also apparent to Clark that the military services still desired these “bases” to be under their control.<sup>21</sup> Clark had also been supplied with further information on the subject for Ickes by Eric Beecroft, Special Assistant to the Secretary of the Interior. Beecroft made the argument that the United States should carry out its responsibilities in the former Japanese Mandates in accord with the “basic objectives” of the trusteeship system as outlined in the UN Charter. To him, this meant that Military Government should be replaced by Civil Government as soon as possible so that the economic, educational, and public health measures needed for the local inhabitants’ welfare could be provided for. He thought this replacement of Civil for Military Government should also take place in Guam and American Samoa and that these latter two locations should have organic acts of legislation with standards consistent with other

American territories. Beecroft, claiming that he had taken his information from military officers who had served in Micronesia, thought that the abilities and intelligence of the local inhabitants meant that they could “progress” rapidly toward self-government, as he thought the Hawai’ian people had. Not surprisingly, he believed that the Interior Department, through the Division of Territories and Island Possessions, should be the agency to conduct this American supervision of Pacific Island territories. Citing Interior’s over 100 years of experience in U.S. territories, he thought it was the agency best suited to meeting the international standards of the UN. Again citing Fortas’ earlier note about the United States being the only Pacific power to govern civilian populations as if they were part of a military base, Beecroft stated that he was sure that American opinion would not justify the continuation of a policy that even the Japanese had avoided.<sup>22</sup>

Edwin Arnold, the Director of Interior’s Division of Territories and Island Possessions, continued to call for the civil administration of the former Japanese Mandates by his Division in a late February 1946 report, even as the War, Navy, and State Departments agreed on deferring the question until the status of Micronesia had been determined by the UN. Apparently, Interior was the only one of the four Departments to disagree with this decision as it was submitted to Truman in heavily revised form by Secretary of State James Byrnes, Chairman of the Cabinet Committee.<sup>23</sup> Arnold instead proposed that Military Government be replaced by Civil Government in all of the Pacific Islands under control of the U.S. armed services except those islands or parts of islands that had been designated as military reservations. He meant the proposal to apply to Guam, American Samoa, the Pacific Islands already under U.S. sovereign control, all of the Micronesian Islands formerly under Japanese Mandate, and the Ryukyus, Bonins, and Volcanos. He further thought that this policy should apply to any Pacific Islands that may come under U.S. administration “from time to time.” Of course, the administrative agency was to be Interior’s Division of Territories and Island Possessions. Citing the previously noted “evidence” of Interior Department experience in territorial administration, Arnold also pointed out the Interior Department’s administration of the Philippine Islands as that archipelago prepared for independence. In addition, he brought up Interior’s efforts in Hawai’ian and Alaskan preparations for statehood, the Department’s assistance to Puerto Rico as that island territory set about to determine its future status in the U.S. polity, and Interior’s role in the Virgin Islands’ “increasing” amount of self-government. He repeated the need for the United States to avoid being the only Pacific power that governed civilian populations as if they were military bases.<sup>24</sup>

Arnold further argued that even if some delay in transferring the eventual jurisdiction of the Pacific Islands did take place, the United States should im-

mediately make and announce the decision to employ civil administration in the Pacific. He asserted, again, that this action would strengthen U.S. claims for military and administrative supervision of the region, belying beliefs that U.S. interest in the region was narrowly military, and allow the United States to insist on “proper standards” of civil administration by other powers over their territories. Arnold admitted that even an immediate interim civil administration might be subject to change because of later international agreements. However, he still thought that sound military use of the Islands could be provided for concerning both the current civil administration of these territories as well as future trusteeship regimes. In addition, Arnold asserted that an immediate change to civil administration would ease the necessary final adjustments that would have to be made by the Executive Departments when the final disposition of the Pacific territories was determined. He also argued that an immediate change would alleviate the problem of civil affairs personnel thinking the current administration was only a temporary one. He further thought that an immediate change in administrative regime would provide for a continuity of responsibility among those carrying out island administration. Finally, he asserted that American experience in Micronesia already indicated that any division of the Islands for administrative purposes would multiply problems of administration. Therefore, Arnold thought that if American taxpayers were to be relieved of the cost of island administration and if the Island populations were to enjoy adequate conditions, all of Micronesia, including Guam, should be under a single administrative unit. Arnold also thought that treating the entire region as a single administrative entity would allow for a more economical management of problems such as transportation, communication, food distribution, public health, and public finance.<sup>25</sup>

### **Interior's Plan for Pacific Island Civil Administration**

Another Interior Department position paper from this time period quite specifically outlined the issues that Interior had with the State, War, and Navy Departments over the administration of the former Japanese Mandates. These differences, in turn, give the reader a fairly detailed picture of Interior's position on the whole issue. The position paper began by calling for Civil Government over all civilian populations under the American flag in time of peace. Such Civil Governments were to be founded on organic legislation or constitutions wherein Congress would prescribe the form of government over the area concerned. The paper also called for the type of government to be “democratic” in form in the sense that the local population would participate to the fullest degree possible, or at least to the “fullest

capability” of the population in question. Organic acts, in turn, needed to contain a bill of rights whereby Congress extended guarantees to the local population against the infringement of basic liberties. These personal freedoms were to be guaranteed to inhabitants of the United States and its territories by the Constitution and laws of the United States. It was also argued that these Civil Governments should be “reasonably true” to American political traditions, i.e., they were to consist of a checks and balances system of executive, legislative, and judicial branches that were free and equal to each other. The position paper did talk, however, about the right and power of the U.S. military to take, use, and exclusively occupy such land areas and harbor and anchorage facilities as were needed for the national defense. Moreover, these military rights were to be “confirmed and safeguarded.”<sup>26</sup>

Administrative responsibility was to be centralized in one office or agency of the United States Government, and that agency had to be given a status of “sufficient importance” in the structure of government and enough access to the highest councils of government in order to give power and effects to its policies. The author of the position paper assumed that the agency in question needed some access to the President at the Cabinet level so that it could treat the other Departments on an equal basis. This independence in position would supposedly allow the agency in question to “effectively” look after the interests of the people under its charge. The position paper also reiterated many of the points put forth earlier by Ickes, Fortas, and Beecroft. Since the Interior Department had such long experience and working knowledge of U.S. dependent areas, it was assumed by the author to be the agency of choice. The author also called for the Department’s Division of Territories and Island Possessions to be combined with a new office for territorial administration if Guam, American Samoa, and the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands (TTPI) were not put under Interior Department jurisdiction. The author preferred, however, that instead of having the Government create some new agency, all matters having to do with the civil administration of the Pacific territories should be placed with the Division because of its long record of territorial administration and its small budget.<sup>27</sup>

Several points were made in detail as well about the organic legislation in question. There was a call for separate pieces of organic legislation for Guam and American Samoa since Guam was seen as “more advanced” economically, politically, and socially than American Samoa. Guam’s population, for instance, was supposedly more familiar with American political structures and philosophies because of contact, training, and association with Americans. In addition, its Spanish-Filipino-Chamorro population allegedly had a closer affinity “to western (modern) civilization than do the native (Polynesian) Samoans.” It was also thought that the organic legislation should



grant United States citizenship to both the Guamanians and the American Samoans without any kind of test or naturalization proceedings. It was further thought that the idea of a bill of rights be made more explicit in terms of the right of trial by jury if the defendant wanted to be tried in such a manner. The author of the position paper was not so concerned whether locally elected legislatures were one- or two-house chambers, since Guam had a two-house body and American Samoa had a one-house body. The fact that these bodies were locally elected, however, was considered important, but the author was concerned that Samoa's legislature or Fono was largely composed of hereditary chiefs, something the author attributed to American Samoa's "lack of concept" of Jeffersonian democracy, Western suffrage, or democratic election processes. It was thought that the answer to a legislature for American Samoa was quite difficult because of this situation, but that having a two-house body with one being hereditary and one being elective might be the answer. Legislation that set up an independent judiciary, including a system of local courts and a separate Federal court or a right of appeal to the Federal courts, was also thought necessary. The position paper was prepared for the organic act to be drafted by the Navy Department for American Samoa but not for Guam. Several bills on Guam had already been introduced in Congress and the author felt that it would be easier to get one of these passed and then propose changes later on where desirable. The author did not, however, think that the State Department should be solely responsible for drafting the organic legislation for the TTPI since Interior did not think that TTPI administration should be regarded as a "foreign affairs" issue under the purview of the State Department. The paper argued that Interior and "other interested departments" should have a hand in drafting such legislation but that the legislation should follow the basic premises mentioned earlier in the paper.<sup>28</sup>

Interior obviously wanted the laws to authorize the President to determine which agency of the U.S. Government should have permanent administrative responsibility. Interior wanted the President, however, to have all of the points listed before him when he made such a decision. Interior was willing to see the Navy have interim responsibility for the TTPI-pending determination of a permanent agency for such administration—as long as "interim" was clearly spelled out in terms of the number of years. Interior specifically did not want the "interim" administration of Guam and American Samoa to be more than one year since the Islands had already been U.S. possessions under naval administration for more than fifty years! Along these lines, the position paper agreed with the other Departments that an Executive Order should be issued with Congressional approval that terminated Military Government in the TTPI and instituted interim civil administration

responsibilities to the Navy. Again, however, the position paper called for "interim" to be clearly defined.<sup>29</sup>

### **Krug's Report**

Between the spring of 1946 and the spring of 1947, it was finally decided within the Truman Administration that the United States would unilaterally offer to administer the former Japanese Mandates as a UN strategic trusteeship, with the United States as the sole administering power. While the JCS still wanted annexation, Truman was not prepared to go that far. Nor, however, was he prepared to fully entrust the UN with administering territories that were seen to be vital to future U.S. security in the Pacific and East Asia. Accordingly, the United States offered a strategic trusteeship under the terms developed by Abe Fortas in March 1945. While many of the Great Powers were not happy with what they took to be U.S. unilateralism, they were also not prepared to oppose U.S. actions at this time. Also within this time frame, Harold Ickes left government service in February 1946 over policy disagreements with Truman. While Under Secretary of the Interior Oscar Chapman became Acting Secretary for a few weeks, Julius Krug became Secretary of the Interior by the spring of 1946. Within this context, there were attempts by Interior Department officials in 1946 and 1947 to build coalitions with certain State Department personnel over the issue of the UN strategic trusteeship. Specifically, this coalition building related to the fact that Truman had not yet determined which U.S. Executive Department was to administer the TTPI since the Navy had only been given interim authority to conduct Naval Civil Government.<sup>30</sup> For instance, in mid-April 1947, Assistant Secretary of the Interior Girard Davidson wrote a quick note to Krug, reminding the latter to talk to Under Secretary of State Dean Acheson about the civilian administration of the Islands. Davidson thought that the "lower echelons" of the State Department favored civil administration, as the Interior Department did, but he thought that the intermediate group of State Department personnel and the Secretariat were opposed to this and "rather friendly" to military control. Davidson assumed Acheson himself favored civilian administration, but he thought that the latter would want to have the Interior Department "carry the ball" on this point.<sup>31</sup>

One month later, Krug also sent a report to Truman about his ideas concerning Pacific Island civil administration after he paid a visit to Guam, American Samoa, the former Japanese Mandates, and Okinawa. The report was sent to Truman at the same time that a Navy report on the same Islands was being released to the public. Krug hoped that both reports would go far in maintaining and "arousing" American public interest in the issue of Pa-

cific Island governance. At the same time, the report clearly portrays Krug's ideas for governing the Islands as well as Interior Department notions about the Pacific Islands that reflect the imperial perceptions noted earlier in this article.<sup>32</sup> Krug began his report by stating that it was his firm belief that the United States had to practice democracy in the Pacific as it practiced it at home. He also said that the United States had to convince the rest of the world that the United States practiced democracy as part of the American way of life, just as it advocated that concept to the global community. He further asserted that if the United States was to stand before the world as a champion of free and representative government, it had to practice in its own dependent areas what it was preaching abroad. He complained that the United States was currently imposing on the Guamanians, the American Samoans, and the Micronesians a form of government that Americans would not stand for on the mainland and which the United States would probably criticize another government for. He complained in further detail that all power in these areas was held by the American military governors and that the Pacific Islanders were being denied such basic civil rights as trial by jury, right of appeal, and taxation with representation. He asserted that since the military governors held all executive, legislative, and judicial power in their hands, the Pacific Islanders had no voice in matters such as education, public health, or the economic aspects of their community's lives.<sup>33</sup>

Krug's answer to this dilemma was to establish Civil Government for all civil populations under the U.S. flag in time of peace. He was therefore asking Truman to seek legislation from Congress to establish local self-government in Guam and American Samoa, provide for civilian governors on those Islands, and extend U.S. citizenship and other basic civil rights to the Islanders as was afforded to mainlanders by the United States Constitution. In addition, Krug recommended that the United States declare at the earliest possible moment its intent to administer the TTPI through civil administration. He also wanted Congress to define just what "civil rights" would mean for the Pacific Islanders in the TTPI and to define the political status the Islanders would have. In addition, Krug wanted the Islanders to be granted the maximum degree of political rights by Congress. He therefore wanted civilian administrators to replace the military governors, civil courts to replace the military provost courts, and local municipal bodies to become legislative assemblies. Krug thought that it was equally important that these political changes be accompanied by a program of economic reconstruction and development. He thought it was vital that the inhabitants of the former Japanese Mandates in particular receive economic assistance in the form of trade good programs and the development of local markets for products such as copra. Since their economic ties with Japan had been completely severed

and those with the United States had not yet been established, Krug thought that there should be an economic program tied with the political one that was geared to the well-being of the Micronesians. In addition, Krug saw an American political and economic development program being supplemented by an educational one that was "designed to assist these island peoples in raising themselves to a reasonably modern social and cultural level." Krug admitted there were many aspects of indigenous culture that should be preserved but he thought that the United States had more responsibility in this matter than just "preserving" the Pacific Islanders as an "exhibit" of "by-gone" culture. Krug outlined for Truman the degree to which this program would require cooperation between the many specialized Federal agencies. He envisioned the Navy or Coast Guard furnishing transportation and communication facilities in these territories. Moreover, the central administering agency would have to have the coordinating authority to ensure that Federal agencies specializing in education, public health, agriculture, and fisheries were cooperating and performing. Therefore, he thought that a "fully coordinated" organization was dictated from the start for reasons of economy, sound administration, the Pacific Islands' needs for development, and the special responsibilities that the United States was assuming under the UN Trusteeship Agreement.<sup>34</sup>

Krug also told Truman that there was no doubt in his mind about the strategic importance of the Pacific Islands and their value to the United States as forward outposts of defense. He knew the military services had to be afforded free access to all of the Islands at all times and that the military must be allowed to set aside and exclusively control islands or parts of islands and their surrounding waters as was necessary for the establishment and maintenance of military and naval bases. He also understood that the military services needed to have exclusive jurisdiction over its bases and reservations. He did not think, however, that civilian administration of the nonmilitary areas of these military reservations was incompatible with an effective national defense. For instance, Krug pointed out that military and naval "mastery" of the Civil Governments of Puerto Rico, Alaska, and the U.S. Virgin Islands had not been necessary during the war. Moreover, he thought that the emergency in Hawaii demonstrated that military control could be extended to an entire strategic area when necessary and then withdrawn to the military reservations once the emergency had passed. He further asserted that the war had provided many examples of close cooperation between civilian and military agencies for the good of the national interest. In his view, to now keep the Pacific Islands under permanent military administration would admit a basic weakness in American governmental principles. He thought that instituting Civil Government in the Pacific Islands as soon as possible and

actually practicing democracy there would be the best way for the United States to “overcome the nondemocratic philosophies of government which today are bidding for control of the whole of Asia.”<sup>35</sup>

Krug then went into more detailed observations about specific areas of the Pacific Islands that he had visited. On Guam, he found a people who “appear to be cheerful and well-fed but somewhat impatient with the lag in the rebuilding of their communities and in the reconstruction of their economy.” In addition, he found that their recent experiences had caused them to develop a “political consciousness” supposedly “far beyond” that which existed on the Island before the war. He specifically said that Guamanian political leaders wanted Guam’s political status and civil rights “fixed” by Congress, a pledge made by the United States on repeated occasions since 1898. Krug next discussed the destruction on the Island, especially from the American naval and air bombardment and the ground fighting needed to liberate Guam from Japanese control. Structures of all kinds, as well as breadfruit, coconut, and timber trees, were down; devastation was highly evident everywhere he went; livestock was largely gone; and permanent housing construction had not yet begun. Krug told Truman that the Island had never been economically self-sufficient in its modern history and that there was no industry, but that in peacetime the soil had at least been fertile and the livestock plentiful. He also reminded Truman, however, that about fifty percent of the Island was to be turned into military reservations, creating a situation where many of the Guamanian farmers would be made landless. Moreover, many had been forced into temporary refugee camps operated by the Naval Military Government.<sup>36</sup>

Krug again criticized the present situation in which neither the 23,000 Guamanians nor the American civilians on the Island had an effective part in enacting the laws that governed them since all power was vested in the U.S. Naval Governor, Rear Admiral Charles Pownall. He admitted that Admiral Pownall occasionally sought advice from what Krug saw as an effective Guam Congress, but he also related that that local body was without authority. Krug went into detail about Pownall’s powers, including the authority to tax, the power to appoint and remove judges who presided without juries, and the ability to sit in review of the judges and their decisions. There was apparently no right of appeal for either local inhabitants or American citizens residing on Guam other than Pownall’s decision to submit capital cases to the Secretary of the Navy for review. In addition, Pownall was obviously in control of the Navy and Marine Corps personnel as well as the Guamanian policemen who enforced the laws. While Krug said he was not trying to imply that Pownall had been out of line in his actions, he thought that any system that vested so much power in one person was intolerable and completely out of character for people living under the American flag.<sup>37</sup>

Krug went back to the economic needs of the Island, in particular to the fact that so much taxable property such as buildings had been destroyed, that so much land was reserved for the military, and that all of the Island's financial needs had to come from Federal funds and local taxes levied by the Navy. Krug saw a definite need to change this situation so that private businesses were revived that could supply the food, clothing, and other needs of the local economy. He also reported that the Bank of Guam, owned and operated by the Navy, was the only institution of commercial credit on the Island but that this institution did not take the risks normally associated with private banking ventures. In a related manner, Krug informed Truman that the Navy and a shipping firm known as American President Lines supplied most of the local freight transportation needs and that the shipping firm had taken care of some postal business until the reestablishment of the U.S. Post Office on Guam. The Post Office now shipped much of the light consumer goods that came to Guam, but he still thought that passenger service to and from the Island was inadequate. Pan-American Airways had recently reestablished its facilities on Guam, which would connect Guam with the Philippines, China, Japan, Hawaii, and the mainland United States, as had been the case before the war. Shipping for civilian passengers was not adequate, however, as American President Lines was soon to end service and military craft could not accommodate much civilian traffic. Still, Krug saw a positive development in the establishment on Guam of a trans-Pacific commercial cable relay station since this gave the civilian population access to cable facilities at commercial rates.<sup>38</sup>

While Krug thought the Navy was extending adequate health care to local American civilians and the Guamanians, he also pointed out that these were functions normally carried out by local governments or the medical profession in most American communities of Guam's size. He did have praise for both the Army and Navy in ensuring sanitation, pest control, and medical education but he thought that the Guamanians could take over these functions from Navy personnel. Krug did, however, have praise for the state of education on Guam. Apparently, the Naval Government prescribed the curriculum and selected the teachers, spent a considerable portion of its funds on education, and had done quite a bit to "raise the cultural level of the people and to teach them the general principles of the American way of life." He remarked on the prolific use of the English language by the Guamanians and the general "progress" that had been made in this area. In summation as regarded Guam, Krug thought that the people of Guam were ready for autonomy in their local affairs under a civil governor. According to Krug, the Guamanians "have made remarkable progress under American sovereignty. They speak our language with facility; they understand our political philoso-

phy and have the same social organization and institutions on the island.” Moreover, Krug praised the Guamanians for being devout Christians for generations and for demonstrating their loyalty to the United States during the war. Because the Guam Congress had been in operation since 1931, he thought it was well qualified to assume legislative powers and that the people of Guam were ready to enact local laws and have a voice in determining how their tax dollars were spent. Finally, Krug thought that the Guamanians were entitled to these rights. He was especially receptive to the idea that they have a role in creating the laws under which they lived. For this reason, he wanted U.S. Marines withdrawn as village policemen, the local courts freed of the “heavy hand” of executive control, and the Guamanians and local Americans to have the right of appeal to the U.S. Federal court system.<sup>39</sup>

Krug thought that the American Samoans were likewise healthy, well fed, and “adequately housed according to native standards,” but he was also convinced that the American Samoans had had less contact with mainland Americans. He admitted that the Samoans who lived and worked around the American naval base at Pago Pago spoke English, practiced American religious and social forms, and had a “good understanding” of American political philosophy. Samoans of the “back country,” however, still lived in a “native” society of handicrafts economy and the cultivation of tropical crops, and he found that they still retained their tribal customs and only spoke “our language” with difficulty.<sup>40</sup>

Krug reported that the laws of American Samoa, like those on Guam, were promulgated by the Naval Governor, Captain Vernon Huber, who had absolute and final authority. Like Pownall on Guam, Huber had control of the court system, though he too referred capital cases to the Secretary of the Navy if this was requested by the defendant. As on Guam, there was no right of appeal to the U.S. court system. Huber also had complete authority in local matters, including taxation, just as on Guam. Failure to pay the poll tax levied by the Naval Government, for instance, was punishable by imprisonment. The Naval Government also had control over the funds from customs levied on all food and clothes imported into the Island. Imports and exports were also apparently regulated by a Commodity Administrator who was appointed by Huber. Further, Huber had complete authority over a six-person Department of Samoan Industry, a governmental cooperative marketing agent for Samoan products that was to oversee fair trade practices. According to Krug, an example of Huber’s control was the fact that copra and related palm products could not be exported unless they were consigned to persons in the United States, except upon specific authority of the Naval Governor. Apparently, profits from these activities were deposited to the credit of the Naval Government of American Samoa.<sup>41</sup>

Krug also related, without any editorial comment, that health and sanitation in Samoa were the responsibility of the Naval Government and that naval medical personnel were providing care at a newly completed hospital. In addition, he related how the Naval Government maintained and operated the school system and that there were a number of church schools on the Island. He found the schools in Pago Pago to be sufficient, but he thought that those in the rural areas were "somewhat primitive" and needed higher physical plant and teaching standards. While he favored the American Samoans providing some of the funding for their school system through local taxation, he thought that the United States needed to continue to bear some of this cost itself.<sup>42</sup>

Krug also described the Bank of American Samoa in terms similar to those of the Bank of Guam, with the addition that non-Samoans could not extend credit to Samoans in excess of twenty-five dollars without the permission of Huber, something Krug did not mention in relation to the Bank of Guam. Krug further pointed out another difference with Guam: that of a complete lack of civilian communication facilities on American Samoa. Navy radio facilities were sometimes made available to the Samoans. In addition, a passenger line named the Matson Line carried civilian passengers and mail and took care of freight needs on an unscheduled basis. According to Krug, there was also an interisland freight and passenger service that had been privately owned before the war but was now operated by the Naval Government at a substantial profit. He understood, however, that the Naval Government meant to return this line to private ownership in the near future.<sup>43</sup>

Krug then returned to indigenous politics. The only "semblance" of a legislative body that he found in American Samoa was the annual "Fono" or general meeting of chiefs and native officials. This body was presided over by Huber but was no more than an advisory council. Although he thought the Samoans should be given a greater role in making the laws they live under, Krug was convinced that the Fono, as presently constituted, could not be transformed into a democratically elected legislative body. He thought the chiefs and family heads would be able to "unduly" influence any voting by members of their clans. Yet at the same time, Krug did not think that the American Samoans should be governed by executive fiat. He wanted to establish an elective legislature "without delay" and without regard for the present-day "hierarchy." He thought that for a time the new assembly would be dominated by bloc voting under the family heads. He also thought, however, that with experience in the use of the voting franchise the American Samoans "would soon adapt themselves to democratic institutions."<sup>44</sup>

In conclusion, as on Guam, he wanted to afford the full protection of civil liberties to the American Samoans. This meant having local courts freed from



the purview of the Naval Governor, extending the U.S. Constitution and laws to the American Samoans “so far as they can possibly be made applicable,” and divorcing local executive power from local legislative and judicial functions. Krug thought that all of these changes needed to be legislatively enacted by Act of Congress. Finally, he wanted a civilian governor who was to be appointed by the President, with the advice and consent of the Senate.<sup>45</sup>

Krug admitted to Truman that his visit to the former Japanese Mandates was brief and, in fact, limited to visiting Kwajalein Atoll in the Marshall Islands. While he said he did not have an opportunity to converse with the local inhabitants, he was informed that they were glad to be rid of their Japanese masters and that they were quite friendly to the United States. He was also informed that the Micronesians were law abiding to a “remarkable degree.” He further understood that while their affairs were administered by the Naval Military Government, Micronesian local government was largely carried out through local chiefs, though military provost courts tried the more serious criminal cases. Krug also told Truman that he had been informed that the Island economies had been completely disrupted and were in a “chaotic” condition. In addition, he thought that action to improve these economic circumstances was long overdue. As an example, he described a situation in which prewar Japanese sources of consumer goods and prewar Japanese markets for Micronesian goods no longer existed. Communication and interisland shipping were also largely unavailable. Because of this, he thought it was necessary that the U.S. Government continue to assist the Micronesians in procuring trade goods and in disposing of copra, shells, handicrafts, and other local products. He also thought, however, that this aid should be gradually withdrawn and replaced by forms of private enterprise in which the locals acted as owners and operators. In the interim, he thought “reasonable” regulation of non-Micronesians needed to take place so as to prevent exploitation but he did not think the area should be kept permanently closed to “legitimate” non-Micronesian traders and commercial enterprises.<sup>46</sup>

Krug then provided a historical lesson to Truman about the civilian administration of Micronesia by relating that the Japanese naval squadron commander who took possession of Micronesia from the Germans in 1914 established a military administration as part of the garrison force. However, Krug told Truman that the military administration was transferred to a civilian administration in July 1918. Although this civilian administration remained under the command of the local Japanese naval garrison commander, the naval garrison was abolished in 1922 upon Japan’s award as administering power of the League of Nations Mandate over Micronesia. A civilian agency, the South Seas Bureau, then presided over Micronesia until just a few years before the outbreak of the war. Krug used this example of Japanese admin-

istration to then argue that while Micronesia clearly had to be kept under U.S. control for purposes of American national security, it did not follow that this governance had to be by way of military administration. He thought that the civilian populations of the Islands were entitled to a civilian type of government in which they were encouraged to participate. In fact, he thought it best if the Micronesians were given a "maximum measure" of local self-government. He envisioned this self-government not necessarily as the imposition of American political processes and institutions in all cases, but the continuance of indigenous customs on some Islands. The bottom line for him was that the establishment of local municipal councils be based on a democratic franchise. He also wanted a situation in which TTPI administration was subject at all times to public criticism and responsible to the "democratically expressed" needs of the people. Since Article Eleven of the proposed Trusteeship Agreement granted the Micronesians the status of TTPI citizens and afforded them diplomatic and consular protection when they were outside of Micronesia or the United States, Krug assumed that there was nothing in the proposed Agreement that prevented the United States from extending all American citizenship rights and protections to the Micronesians! He thought that these rights should be guaranteed by Act of Congress and that the Micronesians should be given a system of civil courts to replace the military ones. Finally, he thought that all of these measures could be realized without danger to U.S. military security. In his view, "a local society of self-respecting human beings, imbued with the love for democracy ... can be the greatest asset to our own security and a forward bulwark of the American way of life."<sup>47</sup>

Krug then made comments on Okinawa in the final section of his report. He reminded Truman that the Island was part of the sovereign territory of Japan, along with the rest of the Ryukyus, and that it was also under the military administration of the United States. He reported that much of the Island had been "utterly" devastated, that the population had suffered much physical hardship, and that they were in such a pitiful state that they could use whatever economic aid the United States would provide. Krug also saw the Army's Military Government as quite able, especially in regard to its ability to return the Okinawans to their lands. In turn, he thought that the Okinawans were quite adept at starting to restore these lands, sometimes even without the benefit of draft animals. Additionally, he said that the Okinawans were providing themselves with temporary housing, with the assistance of the Army. Schools had also been started and he thought that, with the guidance of the Army's Military Government officers, "these industrious people are learning the ways of democracy and are participating to a limited extent to their own government."<sup>48</sup>

Krug concluded his report to Truman by asserting that he was supported by General of the Army Douglas MacArthur, Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP) in Japan, in the idea that Military Government be withdrawn as the Okinawans proceeded down the road to democracy. To Krug, an early withdrawal of the Military Government would entail its replacement by a civil administration in which the Okinawans would be given more responsibility in the conduct of their own affairs. "We must be prepared to permit these people to practice the democracy we preach." In addition, Krug thought that the "form" and not only the words of "our way of life" must be established in Okinawa as proof to the people of the Far East "that democracy is suited to oriental peoples living in an oriental economy. A truly democratic Okinawa and Japan, lying as they do off the mainland of Asia, can serve as a spearhead of our way of life."<sup>49</sup>

In fact, eventual civil administration of the Pacific Islands was assumed at this time by some White House officials. Later in the same month that Krug's report was submitted, a memo from John Kingsley, White House Office Program Coordinator, to John Steelman, the Assistant to the President, talked about Krug's report as an interesting and valuable one that was arguing for "probably the only sound policy in the long run." It seemed to Kingsley that the only question about military versus civilian control over the Pacific Islands was the matter of timing that transfer of control. While he did not think that the present was the right time for Civil Government, Kingsley thought there would be an advantage in publicizing the fact that the Truman Administration was considering the possibility. Accordingly, he favored the publication of Krug's report.<sup>50</sup>

### Conclusion

The Interior Department did not take over the civil administration of Guam, American Samoa, and the TTPI in 1947 when the strategic trusteeship came into effect. In fact, what took place between 1947 and 1951 was an interim Naval Civil Government. During this time period, the Navy and the Interior Department both lobbied the President for long-term administrative control over the Islands. In addition, Congress held hearings, with testimony by officials from both Departments. Eventually, all three territories were transferred to Interior Department authority between 1950 and 1951, but not before there was quite a bit of bureaucratic haggling between the Navy and Interior. Truman, in fact, convinced Congress to leave the Navy with the authority to prevent any foreigners that the Navy thought might be national security risks from entering these territories, and Truman himself was able to keep sole authority in determining which areas were closed for security

reasons. Nor did the matter end there. Probably because the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) wanted to use the Northern Mariana Islands for training purposes, President Truman ordered the Marianas, minus Guam and Rota, back into Navy Department control in 1952. The Northern Marianas stayed under Navy control until 1962 when they were transferred back to the Interior Department. Moreover, the Department of Defense (DOD) took control of various islands that were being used for strategic purposes, such as Kwajalein, which became part of the United States' Pacific Missile Test Center and still is today. Interior carried out a civil administration role in the remaining islands of the TTPI into the 1960s, but in that decade civil administration by both Departments began to give way to "free association" status negotiations between the United States and separate areas of Micronesia, such as the Northern Marianas, the Palau Islands, the Marshall Islands, and what eventually became the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM). Into the 1980s, the United States negotiated separate political status agreements with the remainder of the Islands that, in turn, became either U.S. commonwealths or nominally independent republics that still relied on the United States for military security.<sup>51</sup>

The United States' legacy in Micronesia has not been a stellar one. No matter which bureaucracy was responsible, Micronesia today is a highly urbanized, congested, and overly populated group of islands. Moreover, its population is experiencing tremendous social and economic problems because it has become accustomed to a mainland American material lifestyle that has been subsidized by the U.S. Government but that cannot be sustained without those subsidies. In particular, there are significant ecological problems ensuing from urbanization and the creation of an American-style infrastructure, and there are extraordinarily high rates of alcoholism and teenage suicide. One suspects, in fact, that the United States' legacy in Pacific Island groups such as Micronesia is highly similar to its disastrous results in the administration of American Indian reservations in the United States itself. This legacy is why the Interior Department's position for administering the Pacific Basin territories is such a fascinating study of useable history. Interior's arguments are a case study in the Department's own assumptions about its alleged past successes. In addition, Interior Department officials were making strong assumptions about the failures of the other Executive Branch Departments when it came to the future administration of the Pacific territories. Probably most intriguing from this author's perspective is that the Interior Department, contrary to beliefs in the War, Navy, and State Departments, did not ignore U.S. security interests in the Pacific or the political dilemmas the United States encountered in turning the Pacific Basin into an American lake. In their own imperialistic way, Interior Department

officials created an argument for the civil administration of the Pacific Island territories that eventually succeeded in coupling and integrating those territories into the American polity more thoroughly than they would have been under strictly military administration. For better or worse, post-1951 Interior Department administration in places such as Micronesia succeeded in creating an American lake in the Pacific Basin more than U.S. military and diplomatic officers probably ever imagined.<sup>52</sup>

### Endnote

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11. Ickes to Forrestal, 1 November 1944, folder 16-1-18, General Correspondence 1944–1947, Records of Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal, 1940–1947, box 50, Record Group 80, General Records of the Office of the Secretary of the Navy (hereafter cited as RG 80), National Archives II, College Park, Maryland (hereafter cited as NA II).
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13. Ickes to Roosevelt, 5 April 1945, *FRUS 1945*, 1:199.

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27. *Ibid.*, 1–3.

28. *Ibid.*, 3–5.

29. *Ibid.*, 5–6.

30. It is not entirely clear why other interested powers such as the USSR acquiesced to U.S. demands. In my first book, I speculated that the Soviets may have given in to U.S. demands since their continued protest of U.S. actions probably would have resulted in U.S. annexation of Micronesia, a situation that would have left them without any real mechanism by which to protest U.S. actions. In addition, the War Department's *Intelligence Review* argued that the USSR sacrificed its claims to a voice in Pacific Island trusteeships so as to gain U.S. support for Soviet claims in Eastern Europe and East Asia. It may also have been that Soviet awareness of international support in the UN General Assembly for U.S. actions or fear of other unilateral U.S. trusteeship claims may have caused the Soviets to accept the American *a fait accompli*. Most likely, however, the Soviets ceased to resist the idea of a prepeace treaty agreement because if the matter was kept within the UN, the USSR could suggest changes to the document's wording that, if rebuffed, would have allowed it to renew charges of American imperialism in the Pacific Basin. See Friedman, *Creating an American Lake*, 88–89. Moreover, there is documentary evidence of Soviet fears of U.S. interference in the Kuriles and Sakhalin during the negotiations for a Japanese peace treaty. In August 1947, State Department Counselor Charles Bohlen thought that the USSR was objecting to a large number of nations being included in the negotiations over the Japanese Peace Treaty out of fear that the Yalta Agreement, which gave the Soviets the right to occupy the Kuriles and Sakhalin, would be reopened. See Bohlen to Under Secretary of State Robert Lovett, 12 August 1947, *FRUS 1947*, 6:487. Perhaps this fear caused the Soviets to concede to the U.S. earlier in the year. Nor is it entirely clear why other nations such as Great Britain and Australia gave in to U.S. demands, since they too had issues with the unilateral manner by which the U.S. presented its Draft Trusteeship Agreement. In the greater scheme of diplomatic issues in that time period, however, it is easy to see why those two nations, as well as powers such as France and China, "allowed" the U.S. a free hand in the Western Pacific in return for U.S. aid for their numerous domestic and international problems. See Friedman, *Governing the American Lake*, 59–64; and Wytenbach, "Micronesia and Strategic Trusteeship," 193–246.

31. Davidson to Krug, 17 April 1947, folder Civil Government in the Pacific, box 74, Papers of Julius Krug, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.

32. Krug to Truman, 12 May 1947, folder OF 85-L, Trusteeship of the Pacific Islands, May 1945–1950, box 572, WHOF, HSTL.

33. Krug, "Report To The President, Pacific Island Inspection Tour Of J.A. Krug, Secretary Of The Interior, February-March 1947," folder OF 85-L, Trusteeship of the Pacific Islands, May 1945–1950, box 572, WHOF, HSTL, 1.

34. *Ibid.*, 1–3.

35. *Ibid.*, 3.

36. *Ibid.*, 4; see also Maga, *Defending Paradise*, 1–200.

37. Krug, "Report To The President, Pacific Island Inspection Tour Of J.A. Krug, Secretary Of The Interior, February-March 1947," folder OF 85-L, Trusteeship of the Pacific Islands, May 1945–1950, box 572, WHOF, HSTL, 1 and 4–5.



38. *Ibid.*, 5–7.

39. *Ibid.*, 5–7. The reader should also understand that American officials from the Interior Department were not the only individuals protesting the Navy's actions on Pacific Islands like Guam. The Guamanians by this time had been protesting American naval governance since the 1920s at least, both informally and through official bodies such as the Guam Congress. The Guamanians, in fact, had offered quite sophisticated arguments as to why they should be accorded basic civil rights such as U.S. citizenship granted by Congress and self-rule on the order of a mainland U.S. state. For obvious reasons, these prewar protests and arguments became ever more emphatic after the end of the Pacific War. Thus, if Krug thought that he was rushing to the defense of the Pacific Islanders, he was quite mistaken since the Guamanians had already been defending themselves for the past few decades. See Maga, *Defending Paradise*, 113–149 and 186–216 as well as Howard Willens and Deanne Siemer, *National Security and Self-Determination: United States Policy in Micronesia, 1961–1972* (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger Publishers, 2000), 19–24.

40. *Ibid.*, 7.

41. *Ibid.*, 7–8.

42. *Ibid.*, 8–9.

43. *Ibid.*, 9.

44. *Ibid.*

45. *Ibid.*, 9–10.

46. *Ibid.*, 10.

47. *Ibid.*, 10–11.

48. *Ibid.*, 12.

49. *Ibid.*

50. Kingsley to Steelman, 19 May 1947, attached to the Krug Report, folder OF 85-L, Trusteeship of the Pacific Islands, May 1945–1950, box 572, WHOF, HSTL.

51. Wyttenbach, "Micronesia and Strategic Trusteeship," 247–275 and 277–297; Willens and Siemer, *National Security and Self-Determination*, 4–5, 6, 8–12, 15, and 27–49; Gary Smith, *Micronesia: Decolonization and U.S. Military Interests in the Trust Territories of the Pacific Islands* (Canberra, Australia: Australian National University, 1991), 80–93; and Hanlon, *Remaking Micronesia*, 158–240.

52. Dirk Ballendorf, "An Historical Perspective on Economic Development in Micronesia, 1783–1945," *Asian Culture (Asian-Pacific Culture) Quarterly* 19 (Summer 1991): 56; *idem.*, "Micronesia: Retrospection and Introspection," *Asian Culture* 22 (Spring 1994): 43; *idem.*, "A Historical Perspective on the Adaptation and Addition of Western Technology and Its Transfer in Micronesia," *Asian Culture (Asian-Pacific Culture) Quarterly* 18

(Autumn 1990): 41; Robert Kiste, "Termination of the U.S. Trusteeship in Micronesia," *The Journal of Pacific History* 21 (October 1986): 132; Ellen Boneparth and M. James Wilkinson, "Terminating Trusteeship for the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of the Marshall Islands: Independence and Self-Sufficiency in the Post-Cold War Pacific," *Pacific Studies* 18 (June 1995): 68, 69, 70, and 72; Francis Hezel and Michael Levin, "New Trends in Micronesian Migration: FSM Migration to Guam and the Marianas, 1990–1993," *Pacific Studies* 19 (March 1996): 91–114; Kate Gailbraith, Glenda Bendure, and Ned Friary, *Micronesia* (Melbourne, Australia: Lonely Planet, 2000), 35; Thomas Pinhey, Daniel Lennon, and Nicholas Pinhey, "Consumer Debt, Alcohol Use, and Domestic Violence in Guam," *Pacific Studies* 20 (September 1997): 51–60; and Donald Rubenstein, "Love and Suffering: Adolescent Socialization and Suicide in Micronesia," *The Contemporary Pacific* 7 (Spring 1995): 21–53. For the extent to which Micronesia was at least partially Americanized under both the Navy and Interior Department administrations and then free association with the U.S., see Hanlon, *Remaking Micronesia*, passim.

## GLAMOUR IN THE PACIFIC: CULTURAL INTERNATIONALISM AND MAORI POLITICS AT PAN-PACIFIC WOMEN'S CONFERENCES IN THE 1950S

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This paper sets out to consider the reception of Maori woman delegate Mira Petricevich who attended Pan-Pacific Women's Association (later Pan-Pacific and South East Asian Women's Association) conferences as a New Zealand delegate in 1952 and 1955. She utilised both tradition and modernity in her self-promotion as a key conference figure. A member of the Maori Women's Welfare League, Petricevich was one of a post-war generation of Maori who promoted cultural difference towards indigenous resilience within settler colonialism. Petricevich and other Maori delegates brought Maori cultural identity politics into dialogue with Pan-Pacific women's internationalism as they set about interrogating the cultural internationalism it promoted. As members of the pakeha-dominated New Zealand delegation, their identification with indigenous women in the region registered a powerful counter-narrative to the interracial harmony promoted by the PPWA in the post-war decade.

IN 1955 MAORI DELEGATE Mira Petricevich was featured in a Manila press report of the Pan-Pacific Women's Association (PPWA) conference meeting in the Philippines. One of several members of the Maori Women's Welfare League (MWWL) attending as part of the New Zealand delegation, Petricevich attracted particular press attention as a recent winner of the Miss New Zealand beauty contest. According to the *Manila Times*:

All is not 'brains' at the current Pan Pacific Women's conference in Manila. Among those contributing the 'beauty' part is Miss Mira Petricevich, delegate from New Zealand, and who is shown above in a modernized version of her native Maori costume...Miss Petricev-



FIGURE 1. Mira Petricevich in 'modernized' traditional dress. *Manila Times*, January 24, 1955, p. 6. (Permission of National Library of Australia)

ich is a six-footer with dark, wavy hair...holds a B.A. degree, [and] speaks fluent English ....<sup>1</sup>

Petricevich had established her reputation three years earlier at the 1952 conference in Christchurch. Not only "beauteous", but also an excellent public speaker,<sup>2</sup> Petricevich was voted the "glamour girl" of the conference.<sup>3</sup> This article sets out to investigate the striking presence of Petricevich at the PWWA during the 1950s. Like her 'modernized' outfit, Petricevich was welcomed as an example of tradition in modernized form: an indigenous woman of a settler colony who shared the PPWA vision of world cooperation.

Recent histories of women's internationalism have noted the presence of non-western women within western-dominated international networks, particularly from the early twentieth century, as expressing the increasing readiness of white women to engage with their non-western counterparts.<sup>4</sup> This engagement was one of the stated aims of the PPWA. From 1928, conferences were designed to allow women from the Pacific Rim to meet and

develop friendships across racial and cultural divides. PPWA delegates were thus to model the ways in which the 'less advanced' might join with the 'advanced' nations in international cooperation. Hostilities inspired by 'race' or nationalism were to be replaced by a world perspective cemented upon the shared appreciation of cultural diversity.

Although claiming a preparedness to cast all cultures as different from each other, PPWA internationalism remained situated within a hierarchical notion of cultural progress. Delegates from Asian countries or later from Pacific Island nations were invited into internationalism on the very grounds of their difference *from* an emerging western globalising culture that remained largely hegemonic within PPWA discourse. Numbers of historians of cosmopolitanism and internationalism amongst western progressive women at the turn of the last century have noted the New Woman's delight in culturally exotic objects, such as Oriental handcraft, dress, or furnishings, sought by them to express their interest in an expanded worldview. In her study of white women and American Orientalism, Mari Yoshihara has shown how 'the Orient' formed a central element of progressive gender politics in the U.S. at the turn of last century, and that white women contributed to its construction.<sup>5</sup> In her study of 'cosmopolitan domesticity', Kristin Hoganson has argued that the consumption of exotic objects for domestic display expressed a progressive outlook intimately interpolated in the new imperialism enjoyed by elite white women and men in the U.S. at this time.<sup>6</sup> And Laura Wexler extends the notion of the domestic to include photographs in which, she argues, everyday scenes become 'highly manipulative weapons' in the arsenal of middle-class white American imperialism.<sup>7</sup> In each, the spaces and concerns dominated by women are deeply implicated in the project of empire. Similarly, PPWA conferences, with their delight in appearance, culture, and discussion, particularly between 'East' and 'West', need to be understood as scenes in which imperial questions of progress and civilisation were far from absent.

In the PPWA, the turn of the century imperial nostalgia of the New Woman noted above entered a new era, one marked by the increasing presence of other women. At the PPWA cultural objects already valued within this progressive economy were given new valency, such as the kimono worn by women from Japan, or the carvings and weavings presented by Pacific Island women to conference audiences. Moreover, the political interests of these women leant cultural objects a strategic significance. The politics of culture, played out also in the burgeoning of tourism and in a global economy in indigenous art and craft,<sup>8</sup> was enacted daily in a variety of ways at PPWA conferences – at cultural events in which non-western delegates might perform dances and songs, in the traditional outfits they wore to social events, or in

the displays of handcraft they brought with them. This political and strategic engagement with cultural identity politics was given added significance by the fact that delegates from the U.S., Australia, Canada and New Zealand, were also settler colonial women and were thus themselves directly implicated in global systems of inequality.

By the 1950s, the PPWA emphasis on cultural internationalism found new valency in the Cold War era when western nations looked to world hegemony. While the Cold War has been typically characterised as an era of U.S. isolationism, Christina Klein has shown that integration was promoted in popular texts such as *'The King and I'* and by key commentators advocating knowledge of other peoples and cultures. Decolonisation was a critical feature of this post-war context. Thus middle-level State Department official Francis Wilcox in 1957, only two years after the Manila conference, told a meeting of educators in Philadelphia that decolonisation in Africa and Asia was changing the world forever. The new task for the U.S. was to provide leadership around the world and to engage with the perspectives in particular of newly decolonised nations.<sup>9</sup>

Situated within this larger move to engage cultural exchange in a western civilising project, a project it had sought to carry out from the late 1920s, the PPWA illustrates the contradictory, partial and contingent nature of any meta-narrative such as cultural internationalism. Its conferences provided not a linear progression towards internationalism through cultural exchange (the new world order), but heterotopic spaces in which multiple accounts of progress were given voice. As we will see, women from decolonised nations would prove of great interest to Maori women attending 1950s conferences as they sought to draw international attention to the conditions of colonisation faced by their people in New Zealand.

While the PPWA had welcomed Maori delegates since the 1930s,<sup>10</sup> in the post-war era a new generation of MWWL women (with Petricevich leading among them) began to interrogate the place of indigenous women within this Pacific Rim-based women's community. Historian Barbara Brooks has argued that the MWWL inherited the combination of integration with cultural identity promoted by Maori leaders in the post-war generation, during decades of enormous demographic and social change, not least precipitated through the 1945 Act 'to make Provision for the Social and Economic Advancement and the Promotion and Maintenance of the Health and Social Well-Being of the Maori Community.' Petricevich was herself a Department of Maori Affairs Officer well used to advocating what Brookes has termed the 'necessarily contradictory position' of integration at the same time as promoting Maori culture<sup>11</sup> by the time she was attending PPWA conferences in the 1950s. While the domestic world of childrearing, education, and health

issues were crucial to Maori politics in the 1950s, the MWWL's involvement in the PPWA raises the obvious question of the value of women's internationalism to Maori women activists engaged in promoting reform within New Zealand. In the following, I argue that the post-war engagement between the MWWL and the PPWA suggests the strength of leading Maori women's interests in a version of internationalism. They utilised the PPWA women's cultural internationalism as a way of accessing an international context for the Maori bi-culturalism they advocated as a way forward for the Maori people.

### **The Pan-Pacific Community of Women**

From its beginnings as the Honolulu-based Pan-Pacific Women's Conference of 1928 and then as the PPWA from 1930, the Pan-Pacific women's network was dominated by a social reform politics promoting interracial friendship and cross-cultural exchange as the foundations for world peace. PPWA internationalism began as an experiment in facilitating the meeting of Western women with the women of the East 'on their own ground'.<sup>12</sup> Delegates from America, Australia, New Zealand, but also from the newly 'civilised' nations of Japan and China, had been considered most able to lead the way forward, and they continued to dominate organisational hierarchy post-World War Two. Initially the capacity of Chinese and Japanese women for international conference work impressed and even surprised women from Australia and other western countries. Encouraged to wear their regional or national dress at conference social events, these women were recognisably 'other' in their colourful outfits. Cultural difference expressed in dress constituted a pleasure that white women could enjoy during conferences, even as they rejected 'race' as one of the obstacles to internationalism.<sup>13</sup> The limited but none the less notable agency exercised by non-white women in choosing when to wear 'traditional' costume for their white colleagues is most aptly illustrated in the case of Japanese delegate Tsune Gauntlett. An experienced internationalist with a British husband and a western lifestyle, Gauntlett had first learned of western women's assumptions concerning Japanese femininity while attending a White Ribbon League of Nations Conference in London in 1920. Advised that she would be expected to appear in a kimono, she borrowed one from another Japanese delegate, and always wore one when she gave speeches.<sup>14</sup>

The PPWA promoted a pacifist and anti-racist international agenda in which women were to be central agents for change. Attracting Pacific Rim women already involved in promoting women's status and conditions in their own countries, its membership was dominated by representatives of women's organisations already established across the Pan-Pacific, among them

the National Councils of Women, Young Women's Christian Associations, Leagues of Women Voters, and Federations of University Women. While representatives of these and other organisations, PPWA delegates attending conferences became members of composite national delegations. Not until after World War Two did these Christian women's networks, some with missionary involvement in Pacific Islands, consider Island women able to represent their selves.<sup>15</sup> In the Cold War era of the 1950s, Christianity was remobilised as a force uniting women delegates in a shared opposition to Communism. According to the welcome message to delegates attending the 1955 Manila conference, Communism was the central challenge facing the "peoples of the free world".<sup>16</sup>

New Zealanders had become leading figures in the PPWA from the inter-war decades. By the time Petricevich attracted particular interest during conferences in the 1950s, numbers of pakeha women were well established in the association hierarchy. Amy Kane, a former president of the National Council of Women of New Zealand, was the president of the national PPWA and a member of the International Council from 1949 to 1958. Elected a life member of the association in the 1960s, Kane continued to participate in Annual Meetings into the 1970s. Mary McLean, a physiotherapist and long-time member, contributed an interest in the United Nations (UN) that "enabled her to give members an insight into the problems faced by the developing countries."<sup>17</sup> A president of the New Zealand Women Writers' and Painters' Society and an executive member of the United Nations Association, Mary Seaton attended conferences from 1928. She was International Program Chair from 1949 until 1952, providing impetus for the re-convening of the PPWA following World War Two.<sup>18</sup> Ellen Lea (National Council of Women, Country Women's Association, Women Teachers' Association, and Business and Professional Women's Association) was International Secretary of the PPWA in the 1950s. And Fanny B. Taylor (Women Teachers' Association), who became another life member of the PPWA, was a specialist in educational reform.

In addition to Maori delegates Mira Petricevich and Victoria Bennett, of whom more in the following section, Maori women present in 1955 included social worker J. Emery. Although not an official delegate, leading the Maori cultural entourage in 1952 was Mrs U. R. Zister (Ngeungeu Te Irirangi) who represented Princess Te Puea Herangi, a sponsor of the MWWL. Zister extended a traditional welcome to delegates in Christchurch.<sup>19</sup>

Reflecting the vibrancy of the PPWA in these years, the 1952 conference attracted 110 representatives from 18 countries, and in 1955, 149 delegates arrived from 20 countries.<sup>20</sup> The significance of this vibrant women's community in the Pan-Pacific was recognised by the League of Nations and



the International Labour Organisation, and then by the UN following the war. These institutions welcomed the international women's network in the region. The League sent Dame Rachel Crowdy, its Director of Traffic in Women and Opium, and the Social Question Section who was an observer at the 1930 conference in one of her last missions before her retirement. Along with the presence of renowned world feminists such as Jane Addams (honorary president of the first conference), Crowdy endorsed the PPWA as one of the leading women's international networks of its time.<sup>21</sup> By the 1950s, the PPWA was one of several women's international organisations awarded consultative status by the UN, its representatives stationed in the Pacific regularly attending conferences. Where League of Nations' assertions of guardianship towards native peoples had influenced PPWA "East meets West" internationalism before the war, now the United Nations' focus on social justice and development impacted its post-war aims. In 1945, the UN asserted that all peoples were entitled to a "peace founded ... upon the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind," the development of new nation-states being crucial to international cooperation.<sup>22</sup> In 1954, New Zealander and PPWA international secretary Mary Seaton visited the United Nations, an experience she described as "thrilling" and "fascinating."<sup>23</sup>

Of particular significance, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) forged a close relationship with the PPWA, the two holding parallel approaches on the question of world progress. UNESCO promoted culture and knowledge as a basis for international exchange and world peace from its formation in 1945, just as Pan-Pacific Women's Conferences had since 1928. For its first post-war conference in 1949, the PPWA chose the UNESCO theme of promoting education for international understanding, along with human and social relations, health, welfare, race relations, minorities and land tenure, as conference themes.<sup>24</sup> In preparation for the conference, study groups were to research the measures in their own country designed to "combat ignorance and prejudice" including museum exhibits or artistic expression.<sup>25</sup>

One practical outcome of this strengthening relationship was the securing of UNESCO funds for delegations from under-developed countries to attend conferences. Early conferences attracted mostly wealthy women from such countries as the Philippines, Siam (Thailand), and Ceylon (Sri Lanka). By the 1950s, with the help of UNESCO, participation dramatically expanded to include Cambodia, Burma, Samoa, Tonga, New Guinea, Vietnam and Indonesia. Delegates from these nations reported diverse political rights for women across South East Asia and the Pacific. Mrs Kyan Myint, for example, advised that for 500 years equal rights for Burmese women had been enshrined within traditional law. Miss Soesolawate described the need

for more women in Indonesian parliament. And Mrs N. Holu reported that Tongan women would vote for the first time in the next elections.<sup>26</sup> Where the Pacific Rim had dominated the organisation in the interwar years, in the post-war era South East Asian and Pacific Islands women emerged as a dominant force, determined that the desire for friendship and agreement between women should not veil over difference.

Significant numbers of these non-Western delegates from countries recently liberated from colonial regimes participating in conferences were determined to convey their own version of women's internationalism to the PPWA. Interest in the PPWA as a forum for a new indigenous women's voice in internationalism was clearly evident in 1955, when over 600 Philippine women paid for the opportunity to sit in the conference audience and listen to papers and discussions.<sup>27</sup> At the end of the Manila conference, the PPWA membership acknowledged their influence by adopting the new name of Pan-Pacific and South East Asia Women's Association.

Representation by indigenous women living under or recently liberated from colonialism increased also during this decade, notably from the Pacific Islands and Hawai'i. Increasing numbers of Pacific Island women attended conferences, several describing for the first time to an international women's audience the relatively low status of women in their countries where traditional culture and mission Christianity had combined for negative effect.<sup>28</sup> Thus Papuan delegate and mission schoolteacher, Miss A. Wedaga, remarked upon the low status and education of women in her country. In contrast, Miss S. Malietoa asserted a relatively high status in Samoa, due, she claimed, to the influence of New Zealand's education system - New Zealand being the colonial power. The civilising impact of colonialism mirrors earlier histories of how western missions impacted on traditional femininity in Hawai'i and elsewhere. (Arguably, we can see an equivalent to the historical modification of Maori women's dress, like that of the hula, in the modernised version of traditional dress Petricevich was said to wear to conferences.)<sup>29</sup>

Although Hawai'ian delegations had early proclaimed their intention to include members of all races living on the island,<sup>30</sup> it was not until 1952 that the first Indigenous Hawai'ian, social worker Clorinda Lucas, joined Haoles on the delegation. Reflecting increased recognition of the role of Indigenous Hawai'ian women in social reform in Hawai'i, Lucas became their team leader.<sup>31</sup>

In contrast, Maori women had been members of the New Zealand delegations since before the war. A leading figure among them was Victoria Bennett who joined the New Zealand delegation to the PPWA in Honolulu in 1934. Already a Vice President of the New Zealand Young Women's Christian Association, Bennett was not only a trailblazer but also a remarkable asset to

the New Zealand delegation. According to its pakeha leader, Elsie Andrews, the bilingual and cross-cultural performances she helped to present (including dance, song and welcome speech) in 1934 provided an extraordinary example of the potential for interracial harmony.<sup>32</sup> During the 1950s, Maori delegates including Bennett continued to combine cultural performance (including song, dance and chanting) with the presentation of conference papers and at times heated participation in conference debates.<sup>33</sup> Of the Maori delegates in the 1950s, Petricevich was the most remarkable.

### **A Maori Woman Internationalist**

Miraka (Mira) Petricevich (later Szaszy) was born on the North Island of New Zealand in 1921. Her mother was connected to several important iwi (including Ngati Kuri and Aupouiri), while her father was Yugoslav-born. She was educated at one of the several elite schools for Maori girls in New Zealand, before leaving to study social work in Honolulu at the University of Hawai'i in 1948, probably the first Maori woman to do so.<sup>34</sup> While in Honolulu, she attended the first PPWA conference convened after the war, becoming known to the New Zealand delegation and seeing the organisation at work. On her return Petricevich became a Department of Maori Affairs Welfare Officer. From here, she joined the Maori Women's Welfare League (MWWL) in the early 1950s and remained one of its most important executives until 1977. She has been a leading member in various Maori Congresses, the Maori Fisheries Commission, and the Maori Women's Development Fund Trust, and remains a well-known figure.<sup>35</sup>

In 1947 Petricevich was a runner-up in the Miss New Zealand contest. Maori women had participated in the contest since before the Second World War, as the winners of the Pacific Queen competition. From the early twentieth century, contestants ideally of British-origin were judged for their attractiveness as the future mothers of the white race.<sup>36</sup> By the 1950s, however, racial integration dominated public policy resulting in greater opportunities for Maori women competing in the New Zealand title. Writing of a 1961 Maori beauty queen, Maureen Kingi, historian Megan Woods argues that despite the oscillation between 'traditional' and 'modern' she was required to perform, the contest provided her nonetheless with an opportunity to promote Maori culture and the role of Maori women in its preservation.<sup>37</sup> A similarly contradictory outcome would eventuate at the PPWA.

At first rejected by her peers as too qualified and overly westernised, Petricevich became the MWWL's secretary and worked closely with Princess Te Puea, one of the most important and highly revered Maori women of her generation.<sup>38</sup> She would later recall her appointment to the MWWL as



**FIGURE 2. Petricevich poses with a group of conference delegates at the 1955 conference in Manila.** (Permission of PPSEAWA, Honolulu)

profoundly life-changing. Just as the re-vitalisation of Maori as a spoken language was an important issue to Maori in the 1950s, so it was through traveling around New Zealand and visiting Maori communities that Petricevich discovered a capacity for oratory in her own language.<sup>39</sup> Thus she was engaged in a significant journey of cultural and political identification when the opportunity to attend the 1952 PPWA conference first arose. Despite initial reluctance to attend, no doubt a reflection of the western-influenced internationalism it aspired to, Petricevich soon established herself within the PPWA as a commanding speaker in a different form (in English), and a striking figure.

Sophistication in style and appearance was important to Petricevich's success as a PPWA delegate. The PPWA celebrated certain attributes from its women internationalists. Its delegates admired directness of gaze, graceful posture, and stylish dress, finding in them attributes complementing the breadth of knowledge, commitment to social change, and flair in public speaking necessary to the international woman. Whiteness remained the basis against which other kinds of femininity were measured. In 1934, for example, the president of the New Zealand delegation, Elsie Andrews, described several of her co-conference delegates as "goddesses". These tall, fair-haired women embodied the classical attributes of the modern international feminist ideal.<sup>40</sup> Adopting elements of western style might win non-white women's approval, thereby marking their interest in becoming modern. In the 1930s, bobbed hair and simple pearl earrings were greatly admired when worn by Chinese delegates. Conversely, modernizing non-western delegates symbolised their difference through the ethnic attire they wore at



FIGURE 3. She gave a ‘very good paper, well read, [and] looked very well in white suit fitting well.’ (Permission of PPSEAWA, Honolulu)

social events. ‘Oriental’ women were often described as colourful, doll-like, and ‘delightful’, and surprise was expressed at their capacity to contribute to debate and to present their papers in English. Above all, their readiness to make friendships was universally noted, seemingly at odds with the widely accepted stereotype of the reticent Eastern woman.<sup>41</sup>

Neither reticent nor doll-like, Petricevich represented the Pacific woman – outspoken yet graceful, colourful yet smart in her western-style conference suit. She occupied a hybrid of conference typologies concerning femininity: although tall and striking like the white women so admired by Andrews, she was also racially or culturally not white. This duality mirrored her mixed cultural heritage as an ‘assimilated’ Maori. Moreover, Petricevich’s celebrated ‘beauty’ may be understood as an appreciation of her hybrid status in a literal sense – the relative paleness of her skin and her European-influenced features inherited from her father who was Yugoslavian.<sup>42</sup>

Appearance was important to the impact achieved by Petricevich; embodiment a profoundly significant vehicle through which the politics of cultural internationalism were given practical expression. By the 1950s, as we will see, handcraft became a feature of the cultural politics of the PPWA conferences. When worn by indigenous women like Petricevich, handmade (and thus culturally-imbued) traditional dress was interpreted as expressing a connection with cultural life that industrialisation had long denied to women in the west. In their fascination with these cultural objects and the subjects who produced and wore them, western delegates expressed a nostalgic desire for non-western women’s relationship to culture. They anticipated that



**FIGURE 4. Petricevich at the PPWA conference dinner 1955. R.M. Spoor Collection.** (Permission of Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington)

non-western culture would bring about the re-humanisation of industrialised life in advanced countries.

In her remarkable capacity to appropriate the role of the indigenous international woman prescribed by the PPWA, Petricevich drew upon the legacy of the Young Maori Party in New Zealand, dominated by a generation of Maori women and men adept at working within the parameters of integration. According to historian James Belich, the pragmatic approach adopted by these “engagers” established a ‘brilliantly subversive co-operation’ between Maori cultural identity and pakeha-dominated society.<sup>43</sup> These were years of extraordinarily rapid urbanisation resulting in large numbers of single Maori women travelling to towns and cities to find work, often in the area of health.<sup>44</sup> Maori women became leading figures in welfare and formed a formidable force in challenging negative health and educational policies.

Noting its important place in the history of Maori rights in New Zealand, Barbara Brookes finds in the MWWL the ‘one national [and government-funded] organisation giving voice to Maori concerns in the 1950s’.<sup>45</sup> The question of its relationship with the PPWA would emerge in these years as one example of its concerns to maintain a Maori identity while participating in pakeha and regional affairs. While Petricevich joined the PPWA as a representative of the MWWL, during conferences in Christchurch in 1952 and Manila in 1955 tension grew between her involvement as a member of the

New Zealand delegation (dominated by pakeha women) and as a member of the MWWL. This tension was expressed during conference debates regarding the importance of culture, tradition, and family life to the status and conditions of indigenous women in the Pan-Pacific region, and was toughened by Petricevich's experience of meeting with indigenous women from Pacific island nations. They were engaged also in social reform within westernisation, many celebrating their recent liberation from a variety of colonial powers. While membership in the PPWA may initially have reflected Maori women's interest in maintaining links with pakeha women's organisations, now that they had their own organisational base it provided also an opportunity to meet in person with similarly placed women across the region. The radical potential of this experience galvanised Petricevich who came to question the subordination of Maori women within the New Zealand delegation, and to suggest their separate representation within PPWA hierarchy. In the second half of this paper, I focus on the new relationship between cultural identity and internationalism articulated by Maori women delegates including Petricevich.

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From its earliest conference, the PPWA's policy of national delegations had posed a problem for those participating in ethnically mixed delegations, such as the Maori delegates. In 1928, for example, Chinese delegates attending the first PPWC were celebrated as modern representatives of the women of their country. Yet it was their delegation leader Eleanor Hinder, an Anglo Australian resident of Shanghai and tireless campaigner for the improved factory conditions of Chinese workers, who nominated China to host the next conference. While she hoped that Chinese women would thus be able to speak for themselves on the international stage, Hinder failed to anticipate the accusation from Chinese delegates that she was also implicated in the silencing of Chinese women. Dr Mei Ting, a Chinese national in the delegation, remonstrated that the women of China had not been asked whether they wished to host the next conference. This was a question only the Chinese women in the delegation could ask of them.<sup>46</sup>

Conversely, MWWL representation within the PPWA had been a matter of discussion from its inception. Over ninety Maori women had attended the first conference in 1951. In the presence of observers from Pakeha women's organisations, one of the first questions discussed by delegates was whether to directly affiliate with the PPWA. A member of the New Zealand PPWA Dominion Executive, Bennett supported affiliation arguing that it would facilitate their greater influence in the Pacific. She asserted that Maori women could meet "face to face" with women whose "problems [were] the same" as

their own. At the same time they could contribute their considerable powers to the larger world community of women. Now was the time to “help towards gaining peace in the world’ and they should ‘take [the opportunity] with both hands.”<sup>47</sup>

The majority of MWWL delegates were not persuaded by Bennett’s argument, however. Although they conceded that Maori women had established their influence within “European Women’s Organisations”, this involvement had attracted only integrated women. They were those: “women of the [Maori] race who were in constant touch with European life and society and to those who felt that they could be comfortable and could hold their own among European women.”<sup>48</sup> In contrast, the MWWL would provide a forum for all Maori women, particularly those less comfortable in the white world. As in the case of Mira Petricevich, it would provide a forum for those Maori women who sought new ways of being Maori. The membership of the MWWL voted against affiliation, concluding that the “time was not yet come for the Maori women to join up with other organisations direct, [...] the women felt that they must learn to run their own organisation first ...”<sup>49</sup>

In retrospect, this was a wise decision. Even at the first MWWL conference, pakeha PPWA women defended affiliation in instrumental terms. President Amy Kane asserted her qualification to speak as someone who already had “something to do with Maori groups” through her involvement with Women’s Institutes where “we have always worked with Maori members amongst us.” At the same time she supported the formation of the MWWL because “I think you can do a very great deal for your people.” New Zealand PPWA secretary Miss Mary McLean claimed affiliation would represent a return to the halcyon days of early colonisation when: “[w]e were friendly ... particularly the Maori and Pakeha women”. This renewed friendship would enhance the PPWA’s reach into the region: “In this Pan-Pacific work you people will have to help us; you will have to show us how to be one Pacific community, and I know I can rely on you during the coming year to advise us and guide us ...”<sup>50</sup>

As would become evident in following years, pakeha women in the PPWA continued to mobilise Maori women towards the success of the New Zealand delegations. Thus long time member of the New Zealand PPWA and the organisation’s international vice president, Miss Ellen Lea expressed her pleasure at attending the third MWWL conference in 1954, because “to learn from Maori women ... would be of great use to her [own]... international work ...[and] she could pass on the views of what was being done [for and by Maori women] ...to women of other countries ...”<sup>51</sup> In their reports of the 1955 Manila PPWA conference to the MWWL Dominion Executive several months later, pakeha PPWA women described a happy and united New Zealand team,



commenting that they were proud of “our Maori friends” who gave successful public addresses.<sup>52</sup> Conference discussions in 1952 added further weight to the MWWL’s insistence on autonomy. One of five round tables discussed different methods for bringing educated and underprivileged women into the public life and work of the community. They concluded that even in some western countries, it was difficult for social workers to reach women in less settled areas. Of three organisations they commended for achieving this outreach, one was in Ceylon, another in Pakistan, but the third was the MWWL in New Zealand.<sup>53</sup> Maori conditions aligned Maori women delegates with other non-western women of the Pacific rather than Pakeha in New Zealand.

### **Culture, Home and Handcraft**

During the 1955 conference, Maori women embraced the opportunity to broadcast the needs and concerns of the Maori community. Interviewed by local press, Mrs J. Emery, MWWL member of the New Zealand delegation, explained the extent of the settler colonial impact on her people: “[A]fter the first contact between Maoris and Europeans there had been a period of transition for 100 years and transition is often a painful process.” Its repercussions extended into the present as: “10 times more Maoris were dying of tuberculosis than Europeans in New Zealand, and inter-race relations were no-where near perfect.” In addition to warfare, disease and racism, loss of cultural identity endangered Maori: “There was a danger of the native language dying out, but the Maori people had decided that they must meet the problems before them or perish.” Where pakeha PPWA women had expressed the desire to make Maori heritage part of their own, Emery reversed this order to give Maori ascendancy: “The Maori has a priceless heritage and with the high ideals of the two peoples in New Zealand the Maori race would reach out and go forward . . . .”<sup>54</sup>

This reversal of cultural ascendancy—from pakeha to Maori—held considerable implications for PPWA Western-style feminist internationalism. Mrs Whitelaw, President of the Women’s Committee, National Council of Churches in Wellington was one pakeha member of the New Zealand delegation concerned to engage with this new Maori women’s voice. She reported to the New Zealand PPWA following the 1952 conference of its impact during a round-table discussion concerning the reform of the regulation of alcohol. One of the (unnamed) Maori delegates present refuted recent changes to the liquor act in New Zealand that allowed Maori women to drink in hotels alongside their men. She asserted that this progressive legislation had resulted not in the equal rights of Maori women, but in the diminution of their standing within the Maori community. Maori women in the MWWL and elsewhere

fought against the deleterious health and social effects of alcohol within the Maori community. Non-Maori participants in the discussion responded by insisting that differentiating between men and women was discrimination, while distinguishing between white and Maori women was regressive. Mobilising a racist discourse of the advancement of the native child races, they contended that reinstating the restriction would “be a step backward preventing the adult Maori making free choice” and would “retard the growing up process, bringing a basic loss in development of personality.”<sup>55</sup>

Reflecting on her involvement in this exchange, Whitelaw concluded that in order “to promote better understanding of the difficulties that may still arise in adjusting the relationships between Maori and Pakeha in New Zealand”, members of the PPWA should contact the newly formed Maori Women’s Welfare League. While the MWWL would thus act as a source of knowledge for Pakeha women, it would also be possible, with greater understanding, to “co-operate with them and give them support in their undertakings” presumably regarding the control of alcohol in their communities. Ultimately, however, she effectively overlooked the undoubted fact that one of her Maori co-delegates had spoken against alcohol reform. In her view, PPWA internationalism’s preference for national delegations absorbed the potentially divisive politics of cultural difference: “It is time we thought of ourselves not as Maori and pakeha,” she stated, “but in terms of New Zealanders.”<sup>56</sup> A social justice response to imperialism and settler colonialism in the Pacific was problematic for white women in the PPWA who promoted the idea of an interracial community between women. In conference debate, this disjuncture was illustrated further in disagreements over the significance of two key themes dominating 1950s conference discussions, the home and handcraft.

As early as her 1930s League of Nations’ report, Rachel Crowdy had been pleased to note that the conference theme of ‘women in political life’ included the study of home and community. Jean Begg, New Zealand chair of the Social Service Project, and International Project Director in 1930, had asserted that healthy home life produced happy citizens, and thus greatly improved the possibilities for world peace. While domestic education was useful, housewives should be recognised as holding the future of world peace in their hands. They had to bring the values of home and family into the public sphere, in order to humanise the world. For the MWWL, however, reform in the conditions of the Maori home represented the core of their social justice campaign, complexly inter-woven in the uplift of their race as well as the rights of their children to freedom from racism, to better health, education, and cultural expression.<sup>57</sup>

As well as home, handcraft was imagined by the PPWA to unite women beyond cultural difference. In her 1939 address to study groups preparing



**FIGURE 5. Indigenous Hawai'ian PPWA President Clorinda Lucas (far left) and other delegates admire the handcraft exhibition.** (Permission of PPSEAWA, Honolulu)

for the next conference, anthropologist of the Pacific Marie Keesing recommended that delegates bring along examples of handcraft representative of the women in their country. "Cultures", she advised, "have different values, not more or less." Modern and traditional women might transcend language, racial and national divides through the cross-cultural appreciation of creativity.<sup>58</sup> In the 1940s, study groups were advised to bring a commercial or cultural product such as batik or "Oriental embroidery" to share with colleagues as a way of increasing understanding of the region.<sup>59</sup>

Reflecting the popularisation of contemporary anthropological accounts of culture clash and the role of culture in the survival of native peoples,<sup>60</sup> one of the central themes at the 1955 conference was the revival of handcraft and home industries in non-western cultures.

Handcrafts brought by Asian and Pacific Islanders were displayed in a mini-exhibition, including woven cloth, shell work, printed fabric, embroidery and pottery. A collection of dolls in national costume was also prominent. According to pakeha delegate, Beryl Jackson, in her report to the PPWA of New Zealand following the conference, interest in the display was intense, including radio, press and a television broadcast, during which Mira Petricevich was interviewed.<sup>61</sup>

But as Maori delegates were keen to explain, culture was not just a means of cross-cultural exchange, but also crucial to indigenous survival in the face of colonisation. Both Petricevich and Bennett discussed the importance of

culture and handcraft to indigenous people in their conference presentations. Speaking on “Traditional Maori Craftmanship”, Victoria Bennett stated that: “the arts and crafts of a people can develop only when there is a measure of security and prosperity, when life is not merely a struggle for survival, but has a purpose and a sense of freedom.” Occupation by Europeans had brought about a “confusion” that had threatened to engulf the Maori people. With the “clash of cultures”, arts and crafts had all but disappeared as the population decreased. A “spirit of fatalism” had infected their communities until the Young Maori Party had restored “confidence” in recent years, and as the “regeneration” of race and culture gained momentum.<sup>62</sup>

Indigenous women were central to cultural renewal. In her 1955 conference address about the MWWL, “The Sympathy of Today is the Justice of Tomorrow”, Petricevich linked the significance of women to the survival of her people, and in their progress towards greater cultural achievement. Asserting the need to “reach the most backward members of the race” while at the same time to “cater to the more advanced by providing them with cultural outlets,” she asserted that women were most influential in the solution of problems in the community. Hence the MWWL was a crucial organisation far beyond its engagement with the PPWA. Petricevich went on to advise that:

In order to understand the real purpose for the existence of [the MWWL] ... it is necessary to know the present-day setting of the Maori race within New Zealand – its stage of progress in modern civilization ... The bewilderment and disillusionment created by the clash both in culture and in aims resulted in the breaking up of Maori society and with it the mind and character of the people. An overwhelming sense of hopelessness and fatalistic resignation set in and the race literally began to die.<sup>63</sup>

Representing the rejuvenation of Maori culture to the international women’s community, Petricevich embodied a complex web of ‘traditional’ and contemporary meaning encoded in her articles of clothing and in the objects she wore and carried. Survival was woven into her cloak (*kakahu*) and her *pari* or bodice, and carved into the green stone (*pounamu*) pendant she wore. Her outfit may have been reported as “a modernized version of her native Maori costume”<sup>64</sup> but its potency was no doubt recognised by Polynesian women in audience. Elsewhere the MWWL attached great importance to the authenticity of Maori dress in the representation of Maori in contemporary film.<sup>65</sup> PPWA delegates from around the world were educated also in the significance of Maori clothing: the ceremonial cloak worn by Maori cultural representative Zister in 1952 was described in conference reports as “a mag-



**FIGURE 6. Detail from a group photograph of the 1952 delegation in Christchurch: Rachel Zister wearing a feather cloak; to her left another Maori delegate, Victoria Bennett. Photographer: William George Weigel. R. M. Spoor Collection. (Permission of Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington)**

nificent ancient Maori cloak of woven kiwi feathers edged with tui feathers. Her headdress was composed of huia feathers ....<sup>66</sup>

Something of the impact of this new cultural politics on western settler colonial women can be gauged in the reflections of two leading Australian women delegates. Their assertions of a new civilization in the Pacific point to the contradictory nature of their response to non-western and Indigenous delegates. Silent on the lack of Aboriginal delegates on their team, members of the Australian delegation contributed to debate about culture by reporting on Aboriginal culture in Australia, remarking that white Australia was increasingly calling this ancient cultural heritage as its own. They sought to relativise the notion of 'civilisation' and advancement dominating the PPWA in the inter-war period, positing in its place a new-world civilisation drawing on non-western cultures for its vibrancy. Reflecting a degree of discomfort at the displacement of advanced women from centre stage, Australian delegation leader in 1952, Ruby Rich (Feminist Club, Racial Hygiene Association) expressed a desire to contribute to the new civilisation emerging in the Pan-Pacific:

[T]he Pacific is really the cradle for a new civilisation, and with the present upsurge of education and improvement in the status of

women, the women of the Pacific are to wield a tremendous influence ... We [Australians and New Zealanders] must be prepared to get rid of a number of preconceived prejudices, and to look more at the humanitarian side of these peoples, and place less stress on racial superiority. We call ourselves an advanced country, but your Australian delegates were humbled on many occasions by the wisdom expressed and the advances made by delegates from those countries we are pleased to call the 'under developed'.<sup>67</sup>

Following the 1955 conference, Australian Thelma Kirkby (Business and Professional Women) reported that the relativisation of cultural advancement had been crucial in overcoming the superiority complex of westerners. She asserted that: "[t]hose of us who had come in a spirit—not of arrogance but perhaps of slight smugness, because we were members of the so-called 'advanced' countries—very soon developed a humble admiration" for their non-western colleagues.<sup>68</sup>

The indigeneity articulated by Maori delegates, however, extended far beyond the admiration it received from white women. In her report to the MWWL after the 1955 conference, Petricevich revelled in the central role of indigenous women in the region. She reported on "a momentous occasion in the history of our people" that had marked "a forward step in our thinking, in the broadening of our horizons and the awakening to a consciousness of the need to participate in world concerns ...." She continued by confirming that the MWWL was "evidence of the need and desire of Maori women for separate identity as a people" no matter the degree of "goodwill, understanding and friendship" from pakeha PPWA members. The most important desire of Maori women was to "identify themselves as self-determining individuals, with the right to choose what was best for themselves in this ever-changing world." As a result, she recommended that the MWWL consider whether they were "prepared to sink their identity as a people within the larger [PPWA] group of New Zealanders." Thus, indigenous not pakeha women should give the Maori welcome on behalf of the delegation. Manila was a particularly propitious "awakening" for Maori women for there had "awaited a people whose history has been one of subjugation for over 500 years [by Spain and the US]." More than friendship and cooperation - those "meaningless words [designed] to touch the gullible" - such women needed immediate international economic aid. Likewise, Maori women would need henceforth "tangible evidence" from the PPWA that they would work to "overcome the discrimination which exists" at home.<sup>69</sup>

The international implication of these sentiments was reflected in indigenous women's criticism of the pakeha women hierarchy, the hierarchy that

had welcomed women from Eastern civilisations before the war, and in 1955 extended its scope to recognise the women of South East Asia. Indigenous women demanded greater recognition also, calling for their right to sit at the conference high table among conference delegation leaders. Still living under New Zealand mandate, the Samoan delegate joined with Maori delegates in calling for separate indigenous representation beyond national delegations. New Zealand as a colonial and settler colonial power was not the only focus of their critique. According to Victoria Bennett, PPWA recognition of indigenous women should extend to the Aborigines of Australia, yet to make an appearance at conferences. Bypassing the Australian delegation entirely, Bennett suggested Maori women should travel to Australia to encourage their inclusion in the international community of women.<sup>70</sup>

### **Conclusions: Inter-racial Harmony**

For the cultural internationalist PPWA community, the integration of Indigenous and western styles of femininity suggested a new era in inter-cultural and inter-racial relationships between women. Given the growing anti-colonialism in the Pacific of the 1950s,<sup>71</sup> the involvement of indigenous women delegates such as Petricevich seemed to offer hope that interracial relations could be reformulated even where colonialism continued to function (as it did in the settler colonies). Indeed, the calibre of such delegates as Petricevich suggested that New Zealand itself, like the New Zealand delegation, might offer a model for future inter-racial global cooperation. Sophisticated in her dealings with western delegates yet celebrating her cultural difference, the beautiful Petricevich seemed to promise the realisation of this new cultural politics, advocated by western international feminism since the nineteenth century and promoted earnestly by the PPWA since its inception in the late 1920s. According to this cultural politics, racism would be overcome through inter-cultural exchange. Henceforth, particular aspects of non-western culture would be utilised to re-humanise an overly modernised western civilisation, and would re-establish human values so recently undermined by the madness of world war.

One of the first examples of the new indigenous woman to be welcomed by the PPWA was First Nation representative Alice Garry. Garry attended the first Pan-Pacific Women's Conference in 1928 as a self-funded representative of her people, the Spokane. Crowned Princess America in 1926, like Petricevich a beauty queen and an ambassador for her people, she appeared in 'traditional' dress on the cover of the *Mid-Pacific Magazine* in its first special conference issue.

Writing about a First Nation woman who met with the U.S. president at the turn-of-the-century, historian Laura Jane Moore has argued that such



**FIGURE 7. “An American Indian Princess, Miss Alice Garry, great-grand-daughter of Chief Spokane, to be sent by her people as their delegate at the Pan-Pacific Women’s Conference, Honolulu, August, 1928”, *Mid-Pacific Magazine*, front cover, July 1928. (Permission of Mitchell Library, Sydney)**

figures have been overlooked as “central actors” in the rearticulation of colonisation as global capitalism, a process actively promoted by western governments such as the US during the early twentieth century.<sup>72</sup> Asserting the centrality of the improved status of women and children in the development of a post-war world economy, women’s cultural internationalism espoused by



the PPWA was inevitably also engaged in the modernisation of colonialism. As Margaret Jacobs has shown in her study of feminism and Pueblo cultures, a strong historical connection exists between feminists' desires to preserve elements of native culture and to uplift native women. White women claimed that native culture was both potentially progressive in its attachment to cultural and spiritual life, yet backward in its treatment of women, and thus required the discriminating judgement of white women like themselves who proclaimed their own capacity to speak for native women.

In the context of the PPWA during the 1950s, modernising non-western women were considered sufficiently expert in both their own and western culture in order to represent themselves at the international level. Moreover, they were to offer leadership in the process of their own integration. Being committed to the survival of Indigenous culture, modernised women like Petricevich could act as conduits leading western women towards a greater understanding of non-western cultural and social life. It was their capacity to appear one day in traditional dress and the next in fashionable suits that secured their remarkable cache in this role as bi-cultural conference subjects. Ultimately, Petricevich was admired because of the combination of western modernization and 'traditional' life she managed so glamorously.

The indigenous internationalism for which Mira Petricevich was valorised in the 1950s articulated a complex politics of culture in the Pan-Pacific context. Petricevich's example was celebrated by the PPWA as embodying a new era in world cooperation. For Petricevich, PPWA conferences offered an international audience her knowledge of Maori culture, and her MWWL work to improve Maori conditions in New Zealand. Petricevich's international politics were grounded by the resilience of her own people and culture. She and other Maori delegates asserted two essential requirements of women's internationalism in the region: They were to motivate pakeha women to spearhead the reform Maori status and conditions in New Zealand, and to provide indigenous women with the means to emerge as a world force.

## NOTES

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**BOSE VAKATURAGA:  
FIJI'S GREAT COUNCIL OF CHIEFS, 1875–2000**

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The Great Council was a product of the interdependence of the British and Fijian governing hierarchy. Fijian chiefs used it to defend their status and privileges; governors used the Council to control provinces and legitimate their policies. From 1904, the Council nominated representatives to the Legislative Council and provided personnel for statutory boards and commissions. From 1944, these precedents and the Council's own initiatives entrenched Fijian Administration as a branch of Fiji's increasingly centralized government. The Council played an important consultative role in negotiations prior to independence but failed to grapple with the financial reform of rural administration. After 1970, the Council increased its elected representation from the provinces and served as a political caucus and a pressure group of Fijian parliamentarians, notables, and commoners, nominating members of the Senate, confirming policies favoring ethnic Fijians, and maintaining close ties with central government through the Ministry of Fijian Affairs.

*The Governor is the root of the Council.*

Regulation No. 1/1877

*It is a Fijian Council of State.*

Governor Jakeway, 1965.<sup>1</sup>

*I respect the Chiefs. I do not like the composition of the Great Council of Chiefs. There are so many non-Chiefs there who will try to dictate the resolutions of the Great Council of Chiefs.*

Brigadier-General Sitiveni Rabuka.<sup>2</sup>

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### The Council as an Imperial and Fijian Artifact, 1875–1880

Fiji's Council of Chiefs was a product of local hierarchy and Crown Colony government. There had been occasional assemblies of high chiefs in pre-Cession Fiji as when, for example, Cakobau was elected "president" of a confederation at Levuka in 1865. Cakobau gathered chiefs formally into a privy council under the 1871 Constitution. There were precedents for gatherings of chiefs well before annexation under the Cakobau-settler government, more particularly in meetings of the Privy Council and in negotiations leading to the annexation itself.<sup>3</sup>

These precedents and a strong element of continuity with practices begun pre-Cession ensured that Council chieftainship was based on the status of hereditary chiefs within their own political units (*vanua*) and on British recognition of their role as a source of authority. The chiefs who signed at Levuka represented provinces as territorial groups of clans.<sup>4</sup> A number of other provinces had disputed paramountcies or were signed for by "outsider" (*vilagi*) chiefs set over them by Bau/Tailevu, with British approval.<sup>5</sup> Nobody signed for the interior valleys of Viti Levu.

On the Fijian side of the new hierarchy, as defined in Robinson's provisional government in 1874, the notion of preserving rank and enlarging privilege was a strong motive for acceptance of the Cession. Thurston's notes on draft proposals reveal chiefs preoccupied with the status of themselves and successors as clients of British overrule.<sup>6</sup> Cakobau was pensioned off, but his sons were given positions—superintendence of Viti Levu on £800 a year, while the Tui Cakau would rule over Cakaudrove on £600 a year, with boundaries expanded to include Bua and Macuata. Thurston as a former minister in Cakobau's government and a leading official under Gordon argued strongly, moreover, for association of chiefs with the government executive and their employment as administrators of Fijians. European commissioners would administer to Europeans. Thus, both Robinson and Thurston proposed continuity of Fijian aristocracy and its governance within a British dispensation. There was to be a cession, not an annexation.<sup>7</sup> What was on offer in 1874 was a joint government of Fiji, not possession of all the land or people. There were strong inducements to accept. In Robinson's provisional budget at the end of 1874, nearly a third of total expenditure was earmarked for stipending twelve chiefs as *rokos* of provinces, eighty-two district *buli* as subordinate chiefs, a dozen Fijian magistrates, and an armed Fijian constabulary to back them up.<sup>8</sup>

With sovereignty transferred to the Crown, the islands fell under the provisions of the British Settlements Act of 1843, by which Parliament empowered the Queen's representatives to set up courts and prescribed for a



governor and an executive council assisted by a legislature, in which officials predominated. The government was in theory an autocratic hierarchy, but severely underfunded and with little in the way of coercive force beyond a locally recruited armed constabulary. An additional burden placed on the governor was supervision at long range of illegal activities of British subjects in islands where there was no European jurisdiction. To support this outpost of British overrule, growth of taxable trade through local production was essential by encouragement and control of immigrant settlement and local Fijian agriculture, as foreseen by Thurston and sponsored by Gordon.<sup>9</sup> The formal structure of governor, officials, magistrates, and clerks looked more impressive in the first *Blue Books* of the colony than the realities of isolation, uncertain markets, and Treasury parsimony warranted. It would not be allowed to go bankrupt; it could call on Imperial forces in emergencies. But, as elsewhere in the new Empire, its economic and political fortunes depended on the cooperation of local societies. Fiji became, therefore, by necessity as well as by design, an early example of ruling through a co-opted indigenous hierarchy. The reasons for this solution to local administration lay in practical limitations to the power of the first administrators—Robinson, Gordon, and their successors—and in the bargaining ability of chiefs who already had some experience of the advantages of codified regulations and formal conciliar structures for reinforcement of their own positions.

By far the best introduction to the establishment of their Council of Chiefs as part of that system is Gordon's neglected article published at the end of his governorship.<sup>10</sup> This enthusiastic account claimed continuity for village, district, and provincial assemblies under colonial regulations and completion of the chain of authority between Fijians and government "by the institution of an annual meeting of the Roko Tuis themselves, and of representatives chosen from all districts of Fiji, presided over by the Governor. This assembly has, however, been called into being almost undesignedly, and has assumed its present social and political importance rather by natural development than of set purpose."<sup>11</sup>

There was a "design" to the assembly, however, which lay in the need felt by Cakobau and the leading chiefs to establish protocols for receiving a supreme "chief" of Fiji and assuring their place in the new order. Shortly after Gordon's arrival on 24 June 1875, the *Vunivalu*, Cakobau, made his own unprecedented *tama*, or salutation to a superior, at Government House, Nasova. The chiefs of provinces followed this example and met with Gordon on 9 September for a *yaqona* ceremony [drinking] and ceremonial obeisance. Sir Arthur Gordon, ever the aristocrat, rose to the occasion and laid down his own protocols, lecturing the chiefs on their duties and administering an oath to the queen from each recognized chief (roko tui) as a mark of appoint-

ment to provincial office.<sup>12</sup> Gordon does not say whether this opened the first Council of Chiefs (it was a week before the full assembly). But he took the opportunity to ask their advice on communal services (*lala*), marriage and divorce, taxation in kind, and recruitment of village labor—all of which had been brought to his attention in memoranda from Wilkinson and Thurston.

The proceedings of the first Council show in much more detail that the provincial rokos and their subordinate chiefs took this agenda further and displayed considerable initiative in exploring questions that preoccupied them and in devising a format for keeping order in a very large gathering of some 300 chiefs, officials, and followers. They imposed discipline on meetings that lasted longer than either side envisaged, 16 to 29 September, before they reconvened at Government House and read their memorial of conclusions and resolutions for Gordon's judgment.<sup>13</sup> What worried them most was not commoners' services or taxes, but the status of chieftaincy itself in a society where sanctions could no longer be so rigorously applied, where there were alternative sources of authority in magistrates' courts and missionary churches. Labor recruiters offered escape from village life and its communal obligations to social superiors. Clarification about ways of keeping order *vakaturaga*<sup>14</sup> in changed circumstances was called for. After Gordon withdrew, the immediate agenda of the roko, the provincial buli, and magistrates was to determine status and privilege, who could be present and speak and who could not. Much of the first two days of open discussion was taken up with reasserting forms of respect for chiefs and their right to services. It became clear that Gordon was treated as a "high chief" by incorporation at the upper level of the Fijian hierarchy. He was, therefore, expected to rule "Vaka Viti" through chiefs and people and enforce laws against "disobedience"—a term of considerable elasticity, given the vague line (as chiefs admitted) between orders issued for the general good and for a chief's personal benefit. Suitable punishment was agreed to be forced labor for two or three weeks.

But not all could be chiefs benefiting from the governor's protection, though many might have high social rank, even hereditary titles, without holding public office. On 18 September, official chiefs were defined as "Rokos, Magistrates, Bulis, and all chiefs owning land and people called Turaga Taukei, or Turaga ni Mataqali and Chiefs of Towns."<sup>15</sup> This inclusive set of the privileged would cause difficulty later, as duties and rewards were disputed. But on one point all were agreed: there was a need to check the insolence of commoners and put a stop to their excuse that only European magistrates were to be obeyed. This could be done, it was decided, by regulations incorporated into the printed Native Code of Laws inherited from the previous regime.<sup>16</sup> Having settled matters of precedence to their satisfaction, they turned their attention to marriage and divorce, which exercised them

over three days;<sup>17</sup> they accepted Gordon's plan for a "culture system," which was strongly preferred to taxes in cash "as obtaining it threw the people more or less into the hands of unprincipled traders."<sup>18</sup>

When Gordon heard their "memorial"—in essence their answers to the agenda he had proposed—it contained much else besides in other resolutions. Limitation of communal services to rokos and bulis was accepted, while other cases were left for the roko to decide (which added to his power of patronage over Fijian magistrates and scribes). Nasova itself as the "high chief's residence" was deemed to be "a sacred spot on chief's land." For the rest, Gordon agreed to their recommendations on punishment for disobedience, their wish to retain current codes of laws and regulations, the need to regulate labor recruitment, and their acceptance of a produce tax. Importantly, they approved the governor's selection of a roko for Macuata Province and advised how he was to be installed, but they allowed his rival to be returned to the province. As would become more frequent, they permitted rival chiefs within a cluster of villages to form a new settlement by segmentation from a wider group to end a local intraprovincial dispute.

Clearly, it had not been a one-sided encounter between the governor and Fijian representatives. To give effect to their request for a civil law code, Gordon expanded the membership of a Native Regulations Board (NRB) to include Cakobau and three other chiefs, the chief justice, two members of the Legislative Council, a missionary, and Carew, Thurston, and Wilkinson.<sup>19</sup> A steady flow of Council resolutions aimed at order and social control built up a body of new laws and amended old ones. With some justification Gordon felt he had helped to create an institution that was more than an administrative rubber stamp. He acknowledged there were practical reasons for this solution to provincial management and supervision: "when a native population also outnumbered, by more than fifty to one, the strangers dwelling among them, it is not safe, even if it be practicable, to deny to the natives a large measure of self-government."<sup>20</sup>

The wisdom of this pragmatism was borne out, moreover, when the support of chiefs was required, as had happened in 1873, to help Gordon confront 7,000 Kai Colo "mountaineers" of the Viti Levu interior in April 1876. To avoid sending for West India regiments or Indian sepoys, the rokos were enlisted to raise 2,000 volunteers. By July, the campaign was over; thirty-seven prisoners had been tried by a court of two rokos with Fijian assessors, fourteen were executed, and Gordon was considerably indebted to his auxiliaries. The sons of Cakobau had already begun to further the political ambitions of Bau over the Wainimala and upper Sigatoka, before the campaign began.<sup>21</sup> They were joined by the coastal chiefs of Serua, Namosi, and Nadroga provinces to subordinate the Kai Colo and enforce the Christian *lotu*.

At the end of the campaign, clients of Bau and the governor were appointed as official chiefs and stipendiary magistrates to provinces of Viti Levu, while collaborating leaders among the Colo themselves were placed over defeated clans. If Gordon was adroit in settling this war, so were his chiefs.

As a result, there was a change in the rokos present in the Council of 1876.<sup>22</sup> Gordon did not refer to the politics of chiefly alliance in his article, but the bargaining position of the Council underlay the major topics of his governorship until his departure at the end of 1880.<sup>23</sup> These were taxation, the definition of Fijian land tenure, indentured labor, casual labor, industrial schools, and a series of lesser resolutions covering the conduct of local courts and councils. There was much that he did not mention such as the use of prisoners for provincial labor, the reluctance of rokos to accept inspection of provinces by European officials, the increasing difficulty of prescribing suitable produce tax crops, payment of minor district officials, depopulation and health, and wrangles over the definition of “fornication.”

What impressed Gordon more than the variety of business were the ways in which the Council conducted itself. From 1876 meetings were held in different provinces and followed a set procedure. Gatherings opened with *yaqona* followed by a speech from the governor that raised topics but did not always lay down a fixed agenda. Assemblies lasted as long as a month, often with three sittings a day to deal with provincial reports in great detail, local grievances and inter-district or provincial disputes, and any resolutions arising from those discussions. From 1876, too, the Council took care to record its own report and prepare a letter to the queen signed by the rokos. From its second meeting the problem of numerous and noisy representatives and their friends was dealt with by constituting a subcommittee for bulis, scribes, and minor chiefs—“an elementary separation of the assembly into two ‘houses’—the more remarkable because perfectly natural and spontaneous.”<sup>24</sup> This probably owed something to the fact that only rokos voted on the rare occasions a vote was called for, and it was difficult for bulis to speak their minds in the presence of high chiefs, especially if they were critical of affairs in their provinces.

From the beginning, too, governors replied to resolutions on the concluding day, making an immediate decision on minor matters and referring others to the NRB or the Legislative Council. Gordon claimed this enabled the Council to influence Fijian affairs more immediately than a minority presence of Fijians in the legislature. He cited as prime examples the Native Lands Ordinance of 1880, which contained material from the resolutions of three annual meetings, and the Native Labour Ordinance of 1877. He might have added the Native Taxes Ordinance of 1876 and supplementary regulations on tax assessment and collection arising from provincial complaints in Council about how the system worked in its early years.

Two other features of the Council impressed Gordon: its ability to find ways of reconciling provincial disputes arising from boundaries and the segmentation of clans into mobile groups who transferred their settlements and allegiance to other chiefs and the ways in which it handled “delinquent chiefs.” “Above all, the questions *are* decided. They are not left to fester and rankle, and break out subsequently in perhaps serious disturbances.”<sup>25</sup> Secondly, Gordon recognized (as few of his successors did) that the formal business of the Council was accompanied inseparably by ceremonial and *solevu* exchanges.

The guests or strangers present goods to their entertainers, the entertainers present goods to their guests. This portion of the *Bose* is looked at with very jealous eyes by those who do not understand it; but, not to mention that it would be almost impossible to render intelligible to Fijians the severance of an interchange of property from the interchange of ideas at the Council, it should not be overlooked that these interchanges lead to the manufacture of a vast number of articles, and a corresponding increase of what to the Fijians represents wealth.<sup>26</sup>

In addition, as Gordon pointed out, provinces were responsible for provisioning this assembly, guests, and entertainment—a task that became more burdensome in later years, requiring restriction of the numbers of chiefly followers and occasional subsidies from Fijian administration funds.

A large deputation brings in the contribution from each village, piles it up on the “*rara*,” or public square, goes through the usual ceremonies attending the presentation of food, dances a formal dance, and withdraws. A High Chief and the Governor’s Mata-ni-vanua [spokesman] superintend the division of the pile into sixteen or seventeen heaps for the Governor, the ex-king, the constabulary, etc. The Mata-ni-vanua of each province superintends the further division of each provincial heap into portions for the Rokos, Magistrates, and Bulis of the province, whose own attendants again subdivide each minor heap among those dependent upon them. It is astonishing with what order, regularity, and speed these distributions are accomplished, and how much less waste than might be expected takes place.<sup>27</sup>

Accordingly, Gordon took pains to defend the institution and its procedures against criticism from settlers and missionaries.<sup>28</sup> His final justification for its existence, unusual in a Crown Colony, was a practical one:

Its maintenance is a necessity if the system of government through natives is to be kept up. It acts as a safety-valve to many a grievance that might otherwise rankle and swell to dangerous proportions; it furnishes a touchstone of feeling of the utmost value in gauging the tendencies of the native mind, and it is a most powerful auxiliary in carrying out the wishes of the Government.<sup>29</sup>

### **Decline and Revival: the Council as Broker of Fijian Resources, 1880–1940**

The corporation of Fijian leaders and officials that gained experience in the formal ceremonial of annual meetings with the governor and his representative in the 1870s was, therefore, a novel artifact of Crown Colony administration. Its prescribed role under Fijian Regulations did not derive from Fijian custom, but from interaction of Fijian leaders with settlers and administrators and from the need for chiefs to speak as a body in dealing with foreign representatives.<sup>30</sup> Up until 1900, the existence of the Council depended largely on governors' judgment of its usefulness. But if the governor was its "root" (as the Regulation of 1877 put it), the institution also enabled Fijian chiefs to extend informal influence into the formal sources of power in colonial government at the level of the Provincial Department, the Legislature, and the Executive Council through the governor as "supreme chief" and his *talai*, the Native Commissioner.<sup>31</sup>

The primary purpose of the Council from 1880 was to monitor regulatory control of a rural Fijian population through Fijian magistrates and bulis, while acting as guardian of their lands and use of their manpower in conditions of settler pressure and demographic decline. To achieve this, Gordon's three layers of councils provided a mechanism for representation and a chain of command and redress. Tikina (district) councils under bulis were designed to keep headmen accountable for the order and cleanliness of the villages; provincial councils met once a year and set rates and taxes to meet a budget of expenditure, but the management of that budget was handled by provincial commissioners, European magistrates (as tax inspectors), and scribes attached to the Provincial Office. As long as Gordon's produce tax continued till about 1912, senior Fijian officials were paid through the Provincial Office from central funds as part of the budgets for the Provincial Department or the Secretariat for Native Affairs. Neither district nor provincial councils exercised judicial functions. Stipended rokos, either as hereditary chiefs, or in their subordinate positions as assistants to commissioners, were, therefore, not exactly "Native Authorities" with prescribed judicial and executive powers, courts, and councils of elders, as in African protectorates. They did not

run “native treasuries.” But they had authority and status to influence application of Fijian regulations through bulis, headmen, magistrates, and lesser officials if they cared to apply themselves to routine affairs, agricultural projects, or fund-raising. More often they did not. Within this structure there was room to maneuver, but not much for initiative at village level, unless the *vanua* chief of the district gave his support. As responsibility for district and provincial affairs passed increasingly into the hands of commissioners in the later nineteenth century, the hierarchy of official chiefs and buli executives became less effective in administration and more defensive in complaints about status, pay, pensions, and appointments in Council Proceedings.

The greatest weakness of Fijian administration was that Gordon’s prescribed system left a number of loose ends that did not mesh with extended family and subclan leadership at village level.<sup>32</sup> Provincial councils meeting infrequently were a gathering of district bulis, appointed village headmen, magistrates, and scribes under the chairmanship of the roko or the commissioner. Their purpose was general “welfare and good order,” as laid down in a detailed list of questions to bulis. In districts under bulis there were, in theory, monthly meetings of *tikina* councils consisting of appointed village headmen to regulate general matters of health, the conduct of officials, and census registrations. Their relations with family and village leaders as heads of *i tokatoka* and *mataqali* were left vague. Nearly a century after Gordon’s prescriptions, when the system of rural administration came under pressure for further bureaucratization, there was still a wide gap at grass roots between village headmen, as agents of the buli, and village and family elders and titled chiefs of *mataqali*.<sup>33</sup>

For one thing, the neat demarcations of districts and provinces on the maps of the Colony did not keep pace with changes in the population of rural settlements. Frequent requests through the Council for approval of migration by subclans segmenting from the main stock to other districts or provinces suggests “boundaries” were porous. *Mataqali* could expand into *yavusa* clans with a common ancestor, but the kin components of a *yavusa* might be concentrated or spread among different village settlements. Furthermore, there was a subhierarchy of family heads, ranked *mataqali* chiefs (sometimes acting as village heads) who might or might not provide the “official” village headmen and buli personnel. If they did not, there was a disjunction between official and customary leadership. To complicate matters further, in the subordinated interior provinces and districts of the Kai Colo, the idealized pattern of local administration existed as a layer of “foreign” (*vulagi*) appointees well into the next century, and there the gap between official and grass-roots authority was even greater.<sup>34</sup> Other forms of Fijian mobility such as a steady defection by young men and some women from the obligations

of communal village life were regulated but did not stop. By the end of the century, a number preferred to earn wages and pay their fines. There were lesser issues confronted by the Council concerning relations with missionary societies, health, and education in conditions of population decline. But these required intervention and resources outside the immediate command of the chiefly hierarchy, until the period of postwar welfare spending and central planning complemented Fijian political aspirations in the 1950s.

What concerns us here are the practical effects of the inability of the administrative hierarchy to translate its policies through enforceable regulations all the way down to the village level with assurance they would be carried out. The problem of effective authority in action was continuously reflected in the Proceedings of the Council of Chiefs. Through the reports of bulis, there were rumblings of discontent from below, usually about taxes and constant revisions of regulations on marriage, divorce, public health, mission recruitment, and absenteeism from villages that headmen could not deal with. From time to time, and more especially in the 1890s, there were undercurrents of religious and political resistance in the *tuku* and *luve ni wai* cults and a search for better methods of marketing produce in response to the challenge of the "Viti Company" movement from 1914.<sup>35</sup> Disputes over the division of *solevu* and other presentations between provinces and debate on whether they should be banned altogether considerably modify Gordon's portrayal of ceremonial harmony in the circulation of goods during Council meetings, when bulis and lesser officials failed to deliver.<sup>36</sup> At a basic level, therefore, in nineteenth century Fiji the gap between regulation and executive action was usually laid at the doorstep of the unfortunate *turaga ni koro*, unpaid, untrained, unsupervised, and caught between a layer of official bulis and mataqali and family heads.<sup>37</sup> Councils and governors failed to resolve this fundamental difficulty, and administrators turned more frequently to supervision through commissioners. In Council Proceedings, chiefs and governors concentrated their agendas instead on the main topics inherited from the 1870s: use of land resources, creation of rents and revenue, and the authority and status of chiefs in the face of this intrusive administrative supervision.

Underlying much of the cooperation of Gordon and the chiefs had been a common resolve to determine who could alienate limited areas of Fijian land.<sup>38</sup> Instructions on holding Fijian lands in trust given by Lord Carnarvon in 1875 and the pronouncements of the Council of Chiefs on the ownership of Fijian lands by mataqali, 1878-9, were reinforced by Gordon's 1880 Ordinance according legal tenure by custom to Fijians. One of the reasons why Council chiefs entered willingly into this complex exercise of definition of territory and social groups was that a letter from Cakobau at the end of 1878 had called their attention to the work of the earliest Land Commis-



sion set up by Gordon to investigate European pre-Cession claims,<sup>39</sup> which promised a division of monies from sales of Crown land between the government and Fijian owners. A second was the question whether chiefs' own lands would fall under the provisions of the produce tax of 1876. On both these points chiefs were in the dark.<sup>40</sup> They were reassured on the methods of examining European claims pre-Cession; and the question of taxation and shares of rents concentrated their minds, when they set about basing their definition of territorial "ownership" by mataqali subclans and elaborated a procedure for handling registration after settlement of disputes in 1879 and 1880, formulating, in effect, the draft land Ordinance No. 21 of 1880.<sup>41</sup> Des Voeux, as lieutenant governor, took part in the council session at Bua and made it clear there would be no alienation without consent. But he saw no obstacle to Fijian sales through the Crown, with provision for a share of the price to the owners. On any count, the recommendations were generous to the political chiefs of provinces and to government. Gordon made only a perfunctory minute on all of this and did not go into detail. At the end of the 1880–81 Council held in the Lau group at Mualeva on Vanuabalavu, Gordon took his leave on his way to his New Zealand governorship, confirming that land alienation would be curbed and registration of lands would begin, as required under the regulations formulated by the chiefs.<sup>42</sup> It is worth noting, however, that on 28 March 1881 he gave an opinion on mataqali lands, questioning whether they were quite so "inalienable" as decided by Council resolutions. Such resolutions, Gordon observed, were not laws but "merely declarations of Native Custom." Gordon minuted that the Crown was free to sell Crown lands as "the property of a Mataqali not then making use thereof." But this was special pleading for a special case: on this tenuous ground Gordon covered his decision to make a sale to the Colonial Sugar Refinery before the Ordinance came into force, though no further concessions would be made thereafter.<sup>43</sup>

As a consequence of the Council's long-debated definitions of territorial ownership based on agnatic social groups, chiefs in the provinces were now saddled with the difficulty of finding out what the boundaries were for lands whose usehold rested not on territorial demarcation, but on a bundle of land rights acquired by farmers, rights vested in descent groups—with contingent rights for nonresidents—and important tributary rights arising from the incorporation or conquest of mobile clan and subclan groups.<sup>44</sup> Having decided that the lands of hamlets and villages fell under *tikina* councils and boundary disputes between districts were the business of provincial councils, the chiefs exempted their own private lands from any such arbitration. Indeed, for a while they seem to have aimed at making their Council into a court of appeal for disputes at provincial level. A case involving the Province of Serua and

the interior of Colo in 1884 was examined and referred by their resolution to the NRB for decision. In 1885, the Council felt confident enough to judge a land dispute between Moala district and Lakeba and set up a small commission to deal with the case. By 1888, however, the Council recognized (and Governor Thurston agreed) that the 1880 Ordinance did not provide ready ways of settling Fijian boundary disputes. Indeed, the Council could hardly bring itself, after two hours of debate, to decide the land rights of Tongans in the Lau group, following the death of Ma'afu as paramount of the group, when local resentments at their presence surfaced. To their credit the chiefs resolved to respect Tongan claims to remain as integrated and historic settlers. That charitable attitude did not extend to Indian settlers in May 1888, when for the first time the consequences of the end of indenture were raised. Some village chiefs and buli had been fined for harboring Indians; and most agreed with the warning of Magistrate Jonacani: "They will stamp us out."<sup>45</sup> But a resolution to end settlement of Indians in Fiji merely resulted in a long explanation from Thurston that they were British subjects, few in numbers, and would have to pay taxes.

Governor Thurston steered the agenda back to the topic of land in 1892, when he outlined his objections to paying anything more than a token rent from the government for "waste lands" taken over by the Crown.<sup>46</sup> In return for continued communal services for chiefs, the Council caved in on this issue. On the other hand, Thurston amended Gordon's Land Ordinance in 1892 by requiring commissioners to sit with provincial councils to settle boundaries. At the same time, he slipped in a clause making it easier to lease Fijian-owned lands with the consent of councils and the governor.<sup>47</sup> But little more was done for the next decade. Thurston's attention was taken up from 1894 by a major tax revolt on Macuata led by two cult movements in the Seaqqa hill villages combined with a secession movement from the authority of the Roko Tui Macuata to Cakaudrove Province. In addition, he had an important dispute with Ratu Epeli, Roko Tui of Tailevu and surviving eldest son of Cakobau.

Following Thurston's chiefly paramountcy, the Council entered the lowest period of its influence, as the practice of using provincial inspectors—condemned by the 1902 Council as "enemies of the Rokos"—spread.<sup>48</sup> Inspectors interfered with the chain of command and complaisance running from bulis to rokos and their *matanivanua* personal officials. There had been dismissals of bulis without consultation of the hereditary chief. Inspired by the Roko Tui Tailevu, Penaia Kadavu Levu, the Council solemnly debated replacing all European commissioners and inspectors by chiefs on the grounds that they had not given Fiji to the queen in order to be eased out of authority. Commissioners were to be limited to judicial work. Surprisingly, the Assis-

tant Native Commissioner who accepted their resolution agreed to lay the matter before the incoming governor, Sir Henry Jackson.

Jackson took the Council seriously. He thought it should meet annually, although it was “a rather tedious and costly proceeding” to assemble at Suva.<sup>49</sup> For the first time since Gordon, he began an appraisal of the chieftaincy system in relation to Fijian taxation, communal services, and land availability for lease.<sup>50</sup> The taxation system he planned to “modify” further in the direction of cash payments. The communal system of prestations for chiefs and other officials might stay in place, if not pressed too far and encouraging defiance of chiefly authority, as had happened in Colo districts and in Lau, where food donations to officials were resisted. *Lala* services were in some confusion in the Regulations of 1877 and 1892 by requiring commoners’ labor for house-building, road-building, planting gardens, feeding strangers, making canoes, turtle-fishing, and works of “public good.” The English version made it clear that only *rokos* and *bulis* could exercise such authority. The Fijian version was vaguer, leaving interpretation open to “local custom.” The injunction to obey was backed, however, by fines and prison for disobedience.<sup>51</sup> Persons complaining of excessive *lala* might appeal to the governor, but that was very unlikely to happen in Fijian society. There were undoubtedly abuses of the system, and some chiefs added considerably to their official incomes by forced services.<sup>52</sup>

Moreover, Indians and Pacific islanders were free from communal services and the produce tax. This was deeply resented, Jackson argued, by young men who abstained from communal labor as much as possible by periodic absence. But Jackson saw the main obstacle to such “individualism” in the land tenure system. The Land Commission had made some progress in registering family lands of *mataqali*. At family levels, plots were individually worked and trees were individually owned. This tendency might be strengthened, he concluded, by making tax refunds payable to individuals. But policies in different spheres—chieftaincy, taxation, land, labor—although connected, had been discontinuous in detail, and Fijians played off several authorities against each other. To remedy this defect, Jackson proposed to reform the Native Department by reinforcing the Native Commissioner’s role through touring inspections as the governor’s *talai* (spokesman), and in this way to circumvent resentment of provincial inspectors. Thus, a direct link from provincial *rokos* to the source of power might be restored. Finally, Jackson planned to transform the produce tax by commutation into cash payments because the Revenue Department had zealously required production of crops not always suitable to different districts and provinces. The result had been travel over long distances to find suitable plots hired from other districts. Tax had been harshly administered.<sup>53</sup> Above all, tax work conflicted with subsistence pro-

duction. Fijian objections took the intelligent view that they were subject to Customs on goods like everybody else, in addition to their special tax in produce. Jackson agreed with Fijians that many areas were overassessed in terms of population and production.

Thus, he edged towards a graduated tax according to types of production with greater reductions in assessments for minor crop producers and the poorest provinces. In all, Fijian taxation would be reduced from over £19,000 to about £16,000 a year. Individual cash payments would end gifts to rokos from the annual refunds of tax money and outright retention by some bulis. The Council had already made a request in Resolution 22 of 1902 for payment of all assessments in cash, and Jackson agreed with rokos on how to apply this.<sup>54</sup> The Colonial Office approved these proposals.

With this program circulated to chiefs in advance, Jackson took a relaxed attitude towards the Council when it met in September 1903. He agreed to reinstate some of the chiefs and officials dismissed by his predecessors. He supported Nadroga Province in its request for a young roko, Ratu Tavita Makutu. A bargain was clearly in the making. For, in this atmosphere of goodwill, he secured government control of more unused lands with the consent of the Council. In return, he accepted the Council's division of rents.<sup>55</sup> And this was followed by his acceptance of a panel of Fijian names for selection for the Legislative Council.<sup>56</sup> The Colonial Office allowed all this to stand, accepting a reduction in produce tax, because it was clearly a tradeoff for the Council's Resolution 6, "which practically hands over to the Government the entire control of the whole Waste Lands of the Colony," and Resolution 13, "which in adopting the family subdivisions of the Mataqali, as the proprietary unit in registering the Native Lands, makes a very long step in the direction of individual ownership."<sup>57</sup>

That conclusion was overoptimistic. But Jackson's successor, Sir Everard im Thurn, reluctantly had to accept the reduction of tax as well as the scale of rents and call the Council together for a few days in 1905 to confirm nominations of Fijian Unofficial Members of his legislature. That was about as far as that devious governor was prepared to consult the chiefs.<sup>58</sup> Consequently, they played no part in the minor drama over the Native Lands Ordinance of 1905 intended to make Fijian lands freely alienable on perpetual leases, end the work of the Lands Commission, and end registration of mataqali boundaries.<sup>59</sup> As is well known, the legislation was scotched by Lord Stanmore (Gordon) amid mutual recriminations, but not before a number of the high chiefs had taken advantage of the opportunity to obtain Crown Grants and Native Grants, which provided a good income from subsequent leases.<sup>60</sup> There is also evidence that several of the highest chiefs were alive to the possibilities of extracting improved incomes from rent and sales monies by ex-

plotting their positions as titular heads of political *matanitu* and laying claim to the shares accorded to former *qali* as tributary dependencies.<sup>61</sup>

The long-term result of Thurn's abortive attempt to "reform" land tenure by more flexible conveyance was to "traditionalize" a flexible system long subject to group mobility and extraction of tribute from the most basic Fijian resource. But that process took time—at least until the 1940s, and in the meantime the Land Department and Lands Commission officials proceeded slowly to enshrine "ancient" land rights into a form of protection accepted by Fijians without meeting future difficulties over contingent rights of Indians to extended leases or suitable Fijian units for land management.<sup>62</sup> In the shorter term, the immediate effect was to hold up the registrations and boundary surveys begun through commissioners and provincial councils under the provisions of the amended Land Ordinance of 1892. The new governor, Sir Francis May, set about reviving the Lands Commission in 1911 and continued Jackson's policy of encouraging Fijian provinces to release lands for lease, while extracting a hefty ten percent fee from the annual rents (some £23,000 a year) to cover the work of Native Department and Lands Department officials.<sup>63</sup> On both counts it became necessary to recall "the Great Council (or gathering) of Chiefs" to approve selection of two Fijians for the new Commission and the new method of channeling rent monies and tax refunds more frequently through the Native Deposit Account—less administration fees. There was a further motive for consultation: without fixing ownership and boundaries, the government could not introduce a land tax, as May planned, or progress towards individual ownership on the model of the governor's very partial understanding of Maori land ownership in New Zealand.<sup>64</sup>

When the Council met once more at Suva in 1911 and 1912, it nominated for the first time *rokos* as members and assessors to the Land Commission, but it conceded no more than five percent in fees for handling rents. May accepted this for the moment, and with easy revenue in mind the Council agreed to persuade provinces to make over more unused lands for lease.<sup>65</sup> There was a battle over the size of the rents committee (the Council wanted thirty-three chiefs to carve up the income), but it was kept to a few officials and nominated Fijians. The argument continued into future sessions, raising chiefly claims to "ownership" of all lands as clan trustees. As a consequence, by 1917, very little of Fijians' land was handed over for further lease. The work of the Land Commission slowed down, even as it expanded into one of the largest departments of government by the early 1920s. On two other matters the Council won and lost points. The government wanted to tap into land rent monies as a source for funding forestry officials. This was refused (the Council preferred to share any costs). Second, there was constant pres-

sure from the Council for reversion of the lands of extinct *mataqali* to remaining subclans of a maximal descent group (*yavusa*) and not to the Crown. In 1928, the governor of the day laid down that the purpose of *mataqali* had been to provide protection for families of land users. This function had been taken over by the Crown: "It follows that right of overlordship as well as the right to the extinct *mataqali* land passed at the same time to the Crown."<sup>66</sup>

For the time being the Council was content with this, so long as it was able to increase its official representation within the Lands Commission and among the employees of the Land Department. *Mataqali* lands continued to revert to the Crown, and Fijians fell into arrears of payments for the Commission's surveys.<sup>67</sup> More Fijians were extending their own land use by leasing. The trend by the 1930s was towards protecting the stock of expiring leases, rather than renewing them. To counter this trend Ratu Sukuna, as a high chief in the Council and Member of the Legislature, proposed to the 1936 session at Bau that:

all lands (including leases) not required for the maintenance of Fijian owners, be opened for settlement; that to further this end a committee be appointed to enquire into and determine the amount of land needed for the proper development by native owners; and that all land (including leases) not so required be handed over to the Government to lease on behalf of the Fijians.<sup>68</sup>

On the evidence of Sukuna's previous career, this was a strange initiative for such a prominent Fijian to take.<sup>69</sup> He had supported chiefs' petitions against further Indian settlement in 1921; his views on the development of Fijian society were, according to his biographer, "amazingly static"; and after the entry of the first elected Fijians into the Legislative Council in 1929, he had allied himself with the principal European Members to oppose easier conditions of access to land.<sup>70</sup> Moreover, his proposal to the Council of Chiefs was opposed by at least two of the high chiefs present and was not approved by resolution immediately until the text of Sukuna's proposal had been circulated to provincial councils.

Provincial councils supported the idea of government-administered leases with the promise of more rents, as it became clear that Sukuna's proposal was less generous to Indian lessees than it seemed. Seen in the context of legislation in 1933 to allow extension of leases and compensation for improvements at the end of expired leases, the initiative was a preventive measure against the government taking powers for extended control of "surplus" Fijian lands.<sup>71</sup> In 1938, therefore, the Council of Chiefs in Resolution 40 asked the government to take Fijian lands "in trust," as suggested by Sir

Arthur Richards in his opening address. On this basis Richards drafted and forwarded a Bill for approval in London.<sup>72</sup> The details of the new proposal lay in the Regulations of the Native Lands Trust Ordinance, 1940, which created the category of Fijian Native Reserve Lands with no possibility of lease to non-Fijians by direct negotiation with owners. The remainder of Fijian land available for lease (pre-Cession “waste” lands and land from *mataqali* held by the Crown) came under a new statutory body, the Native Land[s] Trust Board, staffed by officials and Fijians, including some from the Council. The terms of leases were laid down. Proceeds from sale of leases, after deduction of ten percent by the administration, were divided 8s. in the £1 to chiefs and provincial funds and 12s. to *mataqali* owners. Thus began a centralization of Fiji’s land leasing system under an institution that became a target of criticism for its lengthy procedures, its lack of qualified staff, its “deplorable” land-filing system, and lack of personnel training.<sup>73</sup>

The more immediate question here in the context of growing Council influence before and during the 1940s is just how the originator of the measure, Ratu Lala Sukuna, managed to sell to Richards and the Colonial Office the idea of a seemingly liberal and rational method of opening Fijian lands for further settlement, while vesting all control over Fijian lands in a statutory board that made settlement difficult through its monopoly over leases.<sup>74</sup> The issue of land, moreover, is a sensitive indicator of the changing structure of administration and politics of Fijian society, where other new statutory bodies paved the way for a concentration of executive and civil service power and authority in the decades leading up to independence.

Sukuna had more experience than most Fijian chiefs or administrators of the variety and difficulties of Fijian tenure, so his knowledge of the factors inhibiting Fijian small-holder development of cash crops is not in question. He was aware of the relative shortage of good farm land in Fiji in relation to population.<sup>75</sup> And he was aware, because of his unusual education, practical training in the Secretariat, the Native Lands Commission, and as administrator of Lau Province, that there was a wide gap between his conviction that Fijians were happiest in their ascribed roles as rural farmers and the quality of chiefly leadership needed to guide them in that desirable status.<sup>76</sup> Rokos were not able administrators, even as assistants to commissioners. Provincial finances had been under fire from the Audit Department for a decade; provinces fell consistently into arrears on tax collection and payment of fees to the Land Commission over the period from the 1920s to 1940, and in 1931 there had been the spectacular dismissal and imprisonment of Ratu Joseph Mataitini, Roko Tui Rewa, for misappropriations from provincial funds.<sup>77</sup> Sukuna had dealt with dangerous cases of chiefly misrule and opposition to custom arising within the chiefly hierarchy between Verata and Bau in the

1920s and 1930s.<sup>78</sup> He was also aware that many of the hereditary chiefs were far from opposed to freeing up Fijian lands for sale or lease, against the best interests of commoners.<sup>79</sup> Some of the governors, too, had begun to tire over the denial of land to Indian settlement and recommended the outright sale of areas held under government lease.<sup>80</sup> By birth, upbringing, and experience a natural autocrat, Sukuna's reaction to the challenges facing Fijians by the end of the 1930s was to safeguard their interests within the institutions of Crown Colony government, if necessary by creating new ones, using the Council of Chiefs to staff them. Moreover, by the early 1940s, Sukuna had the political weight to do this. He had been singled out for promotion quite early in his career, and his selection for the Legislative Council confirmed the confidence of governors in his influence (as well as confirming the unusual practice of using Fijian officials as legislators).<sup>81</sup> By persuading Richards to take Fijian Reserves into trust, Sukuna removed leases from the informal market for "auctions," bribery, and negotiation between Indians and Fijians into government management under the NLTB in which chiefs could establish a monopoly of expertise. It was the first step toward centralization of other functions of Fijian administration, a re-establishment of provincial *rokos*, and a confirmation of the Council of Chiefs as a source of nominated legislators and officials of statutory bodies.

### **The Council as a Political Caucus, 1943–1970**

As in many other territories, the exigencies of wartime administration and postwar planning initiated a re-examination of Fiji's Constitution. In response to a survey begun within the Colonial Office, Governor Sir Harry Luke supplied a perfunctory account of the communal electoral and nominating system for the Legislative Council and accorded an important place to the Council of Chiefs as the principal assembly for Fijians.<sup>82</sup> But he had few ideas to offer. It was left, instead, to Sir Philip Mitchell, transferred from service in East Africa in 1942, to take in hand in mobilization of Fiji's manpower and production and commit his officials to serious thinking about an overhaul of multiracial representation and local administration. Mitchell's own thinking took him in the direction of promoting communal leaders to the Executive Council on the model of Fiji's wartime "Cabinet," which co-opted European members of the legislature.<sup>83</sup> But first he had to assess the communities he was dealing with.

Mitchell's initial impressions in July 1942 were not all that favorable, after ceremonial greetings on the lawn of Government House and a lecture to a rather "bored" assembly of chiefs on the business of his appointment—war and work, by compulsion if necessary.<sup>84</sup> But he did meet Sukuna in the first few



days and was “much taken with him.”<sup>85</sup> It is clear, however, that once he got around to drafting his “Fiji Reorganisation Report” in mid-August, the ideas in it were his own, based on his African experience and his briefing from C. E. de F. Pennefather, Adviser on Fijian Affairs. When he met with the Council of Chiefs at Nadroga, on 16 September, there was a full turn-out of seventeen *rokos* and notables, nominees of the Adviser, and nineteen representatives of the provinces, with a full exchange of courtesies and a *taqa* (military parade).<sup>86</sup> Once more his spoken message was short and to the point: the governor required a thousand more men for the army and a labor corps. His written and circulated address dealt with education, forestry, agriculture, welfare, and demarcation of Fijian reserves. But it was too soon to announce any constitutional program. His decisions on the 1942 Council’s resolutions revealed, instead, a cautious policy of toning down the aspirations of chiefs for annual assemblies, official recognition, payment for the *Vunivalu* of Bau, increase of salaries, and exemption of Fijian soldiers from tax. There was an unusual resolution, however, put forward by Sukuna and Ratu George Cakobau supporting his “proposal” for “Provincial Financial Autonomy” (which does appear in his address). In fact, this was merely an indication on Mitchell’s part that there would have to be a rationalization of central funding and provincial finances. To further this, the Council resolved to set up a committee, and Mitchell agreed.<sup>87</sup>

This was a straw in the wind, rather than a revelation of his thinking about the relationship between government and Fijian administration. The council meeting was short—no more than five days. Privately, Mitchell was disappointed in the chiefs and called off a dinner for them, when “six out of ten got tight and failed to turn up.”<sup>88</sup> Indeed, he did not call the Council together again during his governorship. His priorities were his War Council, the Production Board, and the Fijian Defence Force. It was only in May 1943 that he again discussed some of his draft on reconstruction with Sukuna, who liked the “new big plan” and agreed at once to accept the post of Secretary for Fijian Affairs. The following day he outlined its details to a full meeting of district commissioners and district officers:

They were all strongly in favour, and as they explained the existing system it could be seen to be even better fitted to my plan than I had realized. But we were agreed that we must keep posts for the men now at the war, and needed not to be in too much of a hurry to appoint *Rokos*.<sup>89</sup>

More surprisingly, Mitchell revealed that some of his model for change was based on an outdated Native Authority Ordinance for Tanganyika fairly irrelevant to the circumstances of Fijian provinces, districts, or villages.<sup>90</sup> If

there were any dissenters, they kept quiet. But all were agreed that a larger government subsidy would be needed to make his reforms work.

Mitchell's dispatch on Fijian affairs in July 1943 contained two main ideas: existing local government structures would remain intact but would be tied more closely to central government, and, second, confusion over Fijian finances and departmental expenditure on the provinces would be clarified by combining accounts in a new Secretariat for Fijian Affairs.<sup>91</sup> Both of these intentions would be met by reconstituting the Native Regulations Board into a Fijian Affairs Board (FAB) under the new Secretary, with five Fijian Members of the legislature as officials, assisted by a legal adviser.

This will automatically tie into the Legislative Council in one direction and to the Great Council of Chiefs, from which the Fijian Members are derived, in the other; while the Secretary for Fijian Affairs, as a Member of the Executive Council, will hold what will amount to a Ministerial Office in the Government of the Colony, and will be directly responsible to the Governor and, in appropriate matters, to the Legislative Council, for Fijian local government in all its aspects.

It may well be that the 1942 committee set up by the Council of Chiefs had some input into this. In any case it was a bold move to make the new Board into a virtual extension of the Council through its nominated legislators. At a stroke, too, Fijian leadership won back direct access to the seat of power in the Colonial Secretariat, which now housed the Fijian Office and to the Governor's Executive Council, where Sukuna took his place. The Board, moreover, would have wide quasijudicial and executive powers over Fijian legislation, over all appointments below the grade of roko, and over Fijian revenues and expenditure. There would, in short, be two administrations in rural Fiji, one falling under the Colonial Secretary, departmental officers, and Accountant-General, and one responsible to the Secretary for Fijian Affairs and his Board. Indian affairs were left, as before, to commissioners and district officers. But commissioners were also responsible to Fijian Affairs for supervision of the provinces and their councils. Fijians living in periurban "villages" and all Pacific islanders would come under the Secretary "for local government purposes."

How to finance this new model Fijian administration was left unclear. Mitchell recognized that his theoretical separation of "Fijian Affairs" could not be watertight in practice, when commissioners or district officers carried out rokos' functions in some provinces and other departmental officers carried out common services such as public works and agriculture. How would

allocations be decided? Nor did Mitchell touch on education funding, partly departmental and in part supported by Fijian taxpayers. The work of the Medical Department was common to all. Where did that leave support for Fijian Medical Practitioners?

His rough assessment of Fijian-sourced revenue amounted to some £53,200. This was based on a variable Provincial Rate, in fact a male poll tax levied by councils “according rather to the enthusiasm of the moment,” and it included a central government tax of about £10,000. There was some revenue from court fees and fines. Total expenditure on Fijian administration Mitchell calculated at a gross figure of £58,249, covering all personnel emoluments from rokos to minor officials and “other charges” (left unspecified). Net expenditure by government on Fijian administration was given as £9,402. This left a large part of expenditure on Fijian affairs unaccounted for, because of the difficulty of assigning salaries of departmental officers (judicial, treasury, public works etc.) to provincial accounts.<sup>92</sup>

This lack of clarity made the Colonial Office nervous about Mitchell’s proposal to make the Fijian Affairs Board “a self-accounting body for which the Accountant-General need have no responsibility.”<sup>93</sup> Otherwise, officials welcomed his plan and approved of the appointment of Sukuna. But they could not see how centralization of finances would do anything to encourage responsibility in provincial administration, and they insisted on making the Fijian Affairs Board subject to the Director of Colonial Audit. Defensively, Mitchell argued that Fijians deserved the measure for their war effort and that the operation of a centralized board by Fijian members of the legislature was a matter of politics and not of great constitutional or financial significance.<sup>94</sup> In any case the final Ordinance was approved without difficulty by the Legislative Council in 1944, and Mitchell was obliged to concede that the FAB would operate its “Central Fijian Treasury” subject to audit control, before it came into force.<sup>95</sup>

Mitchell’s measure also replaced Gordon’s Ordinance and Regulations of 1876 and 1877, which had consolidated the Fijian conciliar system, but indicated that the Council of Chiefs would continue to meet at least once every two years with its current proportions of chiefs as official or nominated members plus provincial representatives. Its immediate business was a meeting under Sukuna at the end of 1945 to give a laudatory approval to his paper on the new Ordinance and agree to his lists of amalgamated provinces and districts. This reconfiguration reduced provinces to fourteen by enlargement of Ba, Naitasiri (which swallowed up Colo East), Ra, and Tailevu, which took over *tikina* from Colo East. A combined province of Nadroga and Navosa took over the remainder of the Colo interior. The four geographical divisions (Northern, Central, Western, and Southern) in place

since 1938 and grouping provinces under commissioners with responsibility for Indian advisory committees, towns, and townships, as well as Fijian affairs, were not changed. But all provinces were part of a separate "Native Administration" for the Fijian population with councils, courts, treasury, and executive officers, retaining the whole of the provincial rates and the central tax assessment, separately from personal rates and taxes levied on other social groups.<sup>96</sup> More vaguely, it was stated local treasuries would be "coordinated" under the FAB's Central Treasury, but apart from fixing an annual tax once a year, provincial councils and their rokos did not manage these funds—paid into commissioners' subtreasuries. The line of authority now ran from the Secretary through the commissioners of the western, southern, eastern, and northern divisions to the rokos, 181 bulis, 28 Fijian magistrates, scribes and 17 agricultural assistants—for the most part centrally funded. But Mitchell's promise of posts for servicemen was honored. Five of the new rokos appointed had served as commissioned officers overseas, and they moved into posts formerly occupied by provincial commissioners.<sup>97</sup>

On the whole, the reform of 1944 strengthened the position of the Fijian chiefly hierarchy within central government. As Mitchell had intended, Sukuna's secretaryship provided a direct link to the governor's Executive Council—the equivalent of a "ministerial office"—and gave Fijians an extra *ex officio* representative in addition to the three Fijian, Indian, and European representatives selected from the Legislative Council from the late 1940s. The Council of Chiefs now had to be consulted on any regulations touching Fijian affairs. But effective power lay not in that consultative body, still meeting once every second year, but in the Fijian Affairs Board, meeting five times a year and charged with financial as well as general executive powers.<sup>98</sup> The FAB, moreover, did not take long to record opinions on a highly political topic in a resolution of 19 July 1946, expressing alarm at Indian settlement and influence and requesting protection from "domination."<sup>99</sup>

Clearly, over the next two decades the issues of deciding and defending the conditions of legislative representation and the authority of statutory bodies—the FAB, the NLTB, the Land Commission—took priority, at the expense of further reform of local government. The Council closely reflected this shift toward dealing with the problems of constitutional advance to greater internal self-government, rather than the concerns of its provincial membership with the more mundane problems of financing rural development. Yet the two—local development and the politics of central decision-making—were closely connected, as visiting specialists and local administrators made clear in the numerous reports and planning conferences of the 1950s and 1960s.<sup>100</sup> On the whole, the conclusion of the economic and political surveys of the period lay in the direction of modification, even

abolition, of the edifice of “Fijian Affairs,” in favor of greater integration of common services, an end to separate divisional and provincial taxes, and encouragement of interethnic local government councils for rural populations, as existed for urban populations. By the end of the 1950s divisional commissioners and district officers supported such integration, as did the governor, Sir Ronald Garvey. Most Indian and Fijian political leaders did not, fearing a loss of influence over their provincial constituencies in the villages and the cane fields. Garvey’s reluctant conclusion was that “local government” through mixed rural councils would be resisted: “I think it fair to say that Fijian hereditary chiefs and senior officials are opposed to such change as they fear it would not be best for their people, as well as undermining their influence and eroding their privileges.”<sup>101</sup> Coming from a governor who from 1956 favored a majority of unofficial members in the legislature and direct elections on a common roll, this was a significant warning, reinforced by evidence from his Special Branch of hardening resistance among Fijians to any suggestion of open electoral competition.<sup>102</sup>

Thus, the paradox in Fijian Administration from the late 1940s lay in its vastly improved administrative position at the heart of central government coupled with its failure to meet the challenge of rural development and reform of Fijian councils at the periphery. As Garvey well knew, the mounting dilemmas of Fijian ethnic politics and constitutional advance stemmed also from the consequences of placing Fijian finances under the FAB. The problem was how to pay for the separate structures of rural administration, while, at the same time, channeling departmental expenditure for infrastructure and developmental services into the divisions and provinces. From 1946 to the early 1960s, Sukuna’s promise of autonomous management of “our funds” was undermined by maladministration at the provincial level and by lack of supervision from above. Increased demands by provincial councils for higher rates—up to £3 per head—were met by greater arrears and a high level of embezzlement. Nearly £900 disappeared in this way in 1946, despite new pay scales for bulis. As explained by Sukuna in his report for the year, scribes were supposed to inform subtreasury accountants or commissioners about such leakages—“but this is just what a Provincial Scribe of lowly status is loath to do against officials having high rank.”<sup>103</sup> Cost of entertainment and requests for financial assistance were blamed instead. An example was made of the Roko Tui Lomaiviti, dismissed from office in 1949. The consequences were accumulative and compounded by shortage of local auditing staff and by loading onto councils a large share of provincial teachers’ salaries. The short-term remedy was to increase government subsidies to the FAB to cover its own costs, salaries of provincial officials, and subsidies to councils. At the same time, there was considerable “hoarding” of unspent monies

(called “surpluses”) among councils because of their lack of authority to draw down on provincial accounts held by the FAB and inability, therefore, to plan ahead for a realistic budget once a year.

The problem was not aired much in the Council of Chiefs, though the provincial representatives knew what was going on. They were lectured instead by the FAB’s financial adviser in 1950 on the need for a better understanding of monetary values (“a weak point in your armour”).<sup>104</sup> That did not prevent the FAB venturing into schemes for the development of Fijian lands, housing loans for Fijian officials, and arranging tax exemptions for servicemen in Malaya. But they could not hide the growing crisis in Fijian local administration funding because it surfaced in Legislative Council debates, where Fijian pressure to permit deduction of provincial rates against income tax was disallowed. By 1955 the provinces had to meet a gross expenditure of some £85,000, requiring a subsidy of no less than £75,400.<sup>105</sup> An expert in local government finance was called in to examine the reasons for this seeming penury, which contrasted with record returns from sales of Fijian produce and from rents in 1956. R. S. McDougall, who had much experience in West Africa, advised application of a land tax supplemented by levies on produce sales.<sup>106</sup>

Although much of McDougall’s report was welcomed by the Council of Chiefs and in the provinces, it was sidelined by the FAB, which resented it as an attack on its centralized management.<sup>107</sup> Sukuna’s administration ended in 1954 and fell into the hands of G. K. Roth and his deputy C. R. H. Nott, who were equally unwilling to make changes.<sup>108</sup> Worse followed. For much of the early 1960s, the secretaries for Fijian Affairs failed to deliver annual reports to the legislature in order to conceal the extent of widespread resistance to any taxation in the provinces. As Fijian Affairs entered a critical phase, they were administered by A. C. Reid, 1960–65, together with his deputies Ratu E. T. T. Cakobau and Ratu P. K. Ganilau (who replaced Reid in 1966). By then, the auditors confessed that “the majority of the Provinces collected less than 50 percent of the rates actually due for the year.”<sup>109</sup> Rural Fijians refused to meet the rising costs of provincial government, especially for salaries of minor officials and a share of the salaries for provincial schools. Provincial tax mattered for a Fijian population in which 61 percent of adult males were employed in agriculture.<sup>110</sup> There were signs that the *taukei* felt they had to “reassert themselves in their own country.”<sup>111</sup> But that observation by Reid failed to explain why the *taukei* came in ever-increasing numbers before *tikina* courts, where well over half of the 19,000 criminal offenders were tax defaulters.<sup>112</sup> The line was held, however, against what amounted to a crisis of Fijian confidence in their leaders and a near-collapse in provincial funding by the costly expedient of increasing subsidies for expenditure on current account in the 1960s and by suspending the very large debt of £131,000

owed by provincial councils to the Education Department.<sup>113</sup> In 1969 it was written off altogether.

It was against this background of deterioration in the management of the Fijian Administration and rising political tensions that the Council and its leaders were asked to make decisions on administrative and economic questions raised by the *Spate Report* and the Burns Commission and on Fiji's system of government and its future constitution. From 1956, chiefs and provincial representatives held their meetings, after the usual ceremonies at Government House, suitably entrenched in the Board Room of the new Native Lands Trust Building on Victoria Parade within the bulwarks of Fijian affairs—the Land Commission, the Fijian Treasury, the Fijian Office, the Fijian Development Fund Board, and, of course, the labyrinthine NLTB itself. In 1960 rokos, notables, and elected representatives were afforded by “four representatives of workers in the industrial areas,” in order to co-opt Fijian unions into the political caucus of Fijian representation.<sup>114</sup>

Their main business was to confront some of the choices put before Fijians as a result of Colonial Office pressure for political change, as Governor Maddocks and London officials toyed with electoral models from Tanzania and elsewhere in a search for an acceptable compromise between a common roll and a communal franchise.<sup>115</sup> Like officials in London, they were wary of the recommendations in Professor O. K. Spate's report, and they would certainly have rejected (as did the Colonial Office) his unpublished submissions urging an end to “tradition” and the introduction of direct elections.<sup>116</sup> Governor Maddocks did not support a common roll either. Nor did he perceive local politics solely in ethnic terms, but attributed hardening Fijian attitudes to the formation of the Fijian Association strongly backed by the chiefs and to commoner discontent with taxes paid for so little in return.<sup>117</sup>

Having rejected Professor Spate (whom many Fijian leaders liked personally), the Council turned its attention to dealing with the triumvirate who prepared the important Burns Commission report of 1960.<sup>118</sup> For the first time since 1877, the formal address to Sir Alan Burns and his colleagues was presented in English by the Hon. Ravuama Vunivalu. He laid down entrenched political positions—communalism and custom centered on the *mataqali*, not the individual; protection of resources coupled with development of Fijian lands for Fijians. He repeated the demand of the 1954 Council for NLTB control of former mataqali and other Crown lands, provision for more Fijian leases outside the reserves, better care of lands under Indian leases, and control of immigration (including Pacific islanders). As part of this manifesto, the Council also demanded more generous financing of loans through the NLTB and the Development Fund Board, marketing through registered companies, and an increase in Fijian scholarships.<sup>119</sup>

As the rift between Indians and Fijians grew wider during the strikes and riots of December 1959, there was an even more hostile reaction to Burns following the report's publication, particularly its recommendation to scrap Fijian Administration and its criticism of the FAB.<sup>120</sup> Refusal to pay rates, even at the risk of prison, continued, especially in Macuata and Ba Provinces.<sup>121</sup> There was growing resistance to renewal of Indian leases. The situation was not helped by hostility to the appointment of the first Indian district officer in November 1961. In the face of this reaction, the Colonial Office judged the local response to Burns "rather embarrassing."<sup>122</sup>

At a different level, the Council also had to grapple with its own provincial administration. By 1962 the shortage of revenue from the failed rating system was sufficiently serious for both Governor Maddocks and Acting-Secretary Ganilau to make it a major issue. Maddocks refused any further rise in subsidies and threatened the existence of Fijian Affairs.<sup>123</sup> The Council was asked to consider "which of the functions of the Administration are still essential and which can now be shed." For the moment a chastened Council made no proposals, except to set up a committee.

In effect, the problem was handed over to the FAB and the upper layer of the Fijian hierarchy to investigate, while the Council was drawn by Maddocks into the protocols of ministerial visits and the timetable for constitutional talks and full internal self-government. The governor had begun to regard the assembly as a possible mechanism for safeguarding entrenched Fijian rights. It was clearly a political body and would influence the choice of candidates in district constituencies in elections planned for 1963. The Colonial Office, too, began to cast around for solutions to the problem of representing Fijian interests in what might be a minority government. Officials looked to the example of Malaya's Council of Rulers with built-in privileges under the Constitution for land holding and civil service positions. Maddocks in a secret dispatch stressed that there was no demand for self-government in Fiji, though he recognized that British overrule would not last more than ten years. He warned against pronouncements about a "multiracial" state.<sup>124</sup> It would be possible to have a First Minister, if Fijian, but a mixed local government system he now considered impossible outside urban areas. On the other hand, demarcation of Fijian reserves was complete. Assurances on their restriction to Fijians might harness enough goodwill for a timetable leading to a full ministerial system followed by full internal self-government shortly after.

In pursuit of this agenda the Council of Chiefs spent good deal of time in official ceremonies for a procession of colonial undersecretaries in the 1960s, and the FAB acted as its executive committee to lobby them about a special relationship with the United Kingdom (on the model of the Channel Islands),



Fijian land ownership, and “parity” in the civil service. Such concessions were not ruled out. In return, the Fijian leadership accepted the proposal for a constitutional conference in 1965. Moreover, when Maddocks took his leave of the Council at the end of his governorship, he charged it with the responsibility for approving the Fijian agenda for negotiations in London and required that Fijian politicians would report back to them on the compromises they reached.<sup>125</sup> For this reason and the intelligence reports summarized in Maddocks’ dispatches, the Colonial Office was reassured about Fijian acceptance of constitutional change.<sup>126</sup> The new governor, Sir Derek Jakeway, confirmed this policy of working to persuade Fijian commoners through their own leaders in the hope they might even accept a common roll, if a large measure of communal representation was included in the electoral system. Fijian leaders, in his view, were readier for this kind of change than Fijian commoners were. It was essential, therefore, that both Mara and Ganilau as senior chiefs should have their status confirmed in top positions within the ministerial system to counter any internal opposition.<sup>127</sup> After the 1963 elections, they were brought into the Executive Council as Member with the portfolio for Natural Resources and as Deputy-Secretary for Fijian Affairs, respectively. Reid then vacated the secretaryship and Ganilau became Secretary for the joint office of Fijian Affairs and Local Government and a full minister from 1968.

That gradual elevation left Ganilau, the FAB, and the Council (with Ganilau as chairman) free to deal with their promised “reform” of Fijian administration and its finances in their own way. The committee set up in 1962 combined its work with a survey of rural government by Fiji’s only anthropologist, Dr. Rusiate Nayacakalou, employed as a Rural Planning Officer and made a temporary Council member. He wrote two reports in 1964. One contained a proposal for multiethnic local government, and this was delayed for revision within the FAB.<sup>128</sup> Governor Jakeway insisted, too, that none of his recommendations should be discussed at the London Conference. On the whole, Colonial Office officials welcomed the idea of mixed councils and approved his central proposal to apply a graded system of rates with a land tax. Fijian chiefs and politicians in the FAB, however, excluded any consideration of mixed councils from the final report delivered to the Council of Chiefs, and they limited the land tax experiment to a trial in three provinces only on the unimproved capital value of mataqali lands.<sup>129</sup> In effect, too, provincial rates dwindled further, though provinces still organized voluntary contributions for specific projects.<sup>130</sup> For the rest, Nayacakalou’s final report retained district councils and proposed election of provincial councils by local franchise in the same manner as elections for Fijian Members of the Legislative Council. Councils would elect their own chairmen and appoint their own staff from rokos downwards. Bulis would be abolished.

When all this was introduced to the Council of Chiefs in 1965 by Ganilau, the main proposals were left intact, but "rural district councils" responsible to a Fijian provincial electorate stopped at the provincial council level. *Tikina* councils under their headmen were to be phased out, along with the bulis and minor officials. Moreover, staffing of the provincial councils with officials—rokos, assistant rokos and scribes—would be on the advice of the Secretary for Fijian Affairs. Other officials—commissioners, medical officers, teachers—might attend by invitation. The task of councils was defined as administration of social and public services, and for this they would have to rely on central government funding. The Fijian magistracy and district courts were abolished. Surprisingly, the Council accepted all of this without questioning its effects at district and village levels. Twenty years later, when the operation of the new system had revealed a deterioration in district law and order and a disjunction between provincial council management under ministerial direction and grass-roots participation at the village level, an examination of Fijian rural government would have to undertaken again.<sup>131</sup>

The Council then dealt with politics and lands. It laid down in recommendations for the London Conference that Fijian delegates were to argue for association rather than independence, and it requested guarantees on keeping communal rolls for electing equal numbers of European, Fijian, and Indian legislators, plus two elected by the Council of Chiefs. They agreed with the proposed membership system in the Executive Council. If there was to be a chief minister eventually, he should be a Fijian. For the rest, the role of the FAB was to be retained, and they agreed with phasing out Fijian civil servants from elected memberships by retirement with the exception of the Secretary for Fijian Affairs, who could remain a civil servant in a highly political role. For the time being they saw no need for an Upper House. Finally, the Council dealt at great length with the clauses of lands under customary tenure under the Native Lands Ordinance and provisions for leases under new Agricultural Landlord and Tenant Legislation.<sup>132</sup>

In all, it was a mammoth session crowded into five days and made possible by the technique of handing down outline papers prepared in advance by Ganilau's secretariat and the FAB. The short length of sessions and the bureaucratic method of preformulating material for resolutions during the 1960s marked a considerable change in the management of Council business from above. More effectively than any of the governors or his predecessors, Ratu Penaia Ganilau turned the Council of Chiefs into a caucus for amendment and approval of policies formulated by senior Fijian politicians within the statutory bodies of Fijian Affairs. For that reason it is hard to agree with Governor Jakeway's judgment in his report on the 1965 session that the chiefs and commoners represented had become "a Fijian Council

of State.”<sup>133</sup> More accurately, the Indian politician, S. M. Koya, discerned that effective authority over Fijians had passed since the late 1940s to the Fijian Affairs Board “which ... amounts to an official political party,” passing judgment on constitutional affairs, handing down regulations, and authorizing by-laws of provincial councils.<sup>134</sup> Greater representation from below had been effectively managed ever since Mitchell’s and Sukuna’s reforms by greater centralization from within the offices of the NLTB on Victoria Parade and greater dependency on government subsidies, after the collapse of Fijian administration finances.

There is no indication that the Council objected to this dependency on central government. In 1968, as a consequence of the advance to a ministerial system there was a reconstitution of the Great Council (as it was now officially titled). All fifteen Fijian Members of the Legislative Council replaced the provincial *rokos*, reinforced by fifteen notables appointed by the governor or the minister. Twenty-eight members elected by provincial councils attended as a mixture of *ratu* and commoners along with half a dozen other invited commoners and chiefs. Jakeway regarded this as a triumph of the elective principle. Fijian members of the Council preferred to see it as entrenchment of their hierarchy and a path for untitled notables into higher office by patronage, given that well over half of provincial representatives, half of the politicians, and all of the governor’s appointees were *ratu*. They voted accordingly to have Ganilau’s post of Minister for Fijian Affairs and Local Government recognized as a political rather than a public office, and Jakeway could hardly refuse.<sup>135</sup> The combination of Fijian Affairs and Local Government under one minister was a curious hybrid but an endorsement of Fijian rights to separate administration. It was allowed because it was in line with a Foreign and Commonwealth Office interpretation of past promises made to Fijians for separate treatment within general administration and was urged on local officials.<sup>136</sup> More immediately, such “pledges” were applied in new legislation on land leases and by refusal of the governor, backed by a resolution of the 1968 Council, to make nominations of non-Fijians to the NLTB.<sup>137</sup>

By 1968, therefore, officials in Suva and London sensed that Fijian leaders would go along with the final stages of Fijian decolonization. They had consolidated their hold on key institutions and reformed (they thought) provincial government so as to relieve the burden of taxation and entrench their control over lands. Although a persistent Indian boycott of the Legislative Council forced by-elections in 1968 and hardened Fijian attitudes at the outcome, feelings were kept in check by Mara and Ganilau. Jakeway reported that “self-government with a built-in Fijian paramountcy should be sought as quickly as possible.”<sup>138</sup> As the Federation Party forced the pace by build-

ing on Indian solidarity, the Fijian Alliance agreed to early independence, before Jakeway adjusted the number of seats on communal rolls in favor of cross-voting (as he indicated he might). The Council of Chiefs, too, became openly a much more a political organization, issuing press releases and policy papers (through the FAB) on the theme of total ethnic control of government.<sup>139</sup> The theme of "paramountcy" was repeated in its recommendations on constitutional matters at a second session in November 1968.<sup>140</sup>

Moreover, the Council began to turn its attention to remedial measures to improve the competitive position of Fijians in education and commerce. But it looked for financial remedies at the tertiary, rather than the primary, end of Fijian education through scholarships and in-service training overseas for ethnic Fijian students and civil servants.<sup>141</sup> And in business it focused not on small-scale entrepreneurship or technical training but on corporate investment through an ethnic Fijian parastatal with shares open only to "Provincial Councils, Co-operatives, or any other purely Fijian corporate bodies." The Fijian Development and Investment Corporation was to be registered as a public company with a capital of F\$2 million. The Council nominated its first board of chiefs and notables, including Ratu Mara's wife and Rusiate Nayacakalou.

On constitutional issues there was still much unfinished business at the end of 1969 and wide differences between party leaders of Alliance and the Federation over safeguards for Fijian "rights" and types of electoral systems. The Council's policy over this period was to consult "Fijian public opinion" through the mechanism of a special committee of the FAB and the provincial councils. But there is not much evidence that this committee played a part in the talks between Mara, Koya, and Sir Leslie Monson, sent by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in October 1969 to rough out a timetable for a handover of power.<sup>142</sup> By the end of the year there was agreement on a conference followed by formal independence in 1970 and elections afterwards. The electoral system would only be settled shortly before or after the conference.<sup>143</sup>

But the Council did play a role in this end-game of maneuvers during the more public talks conducted by Lord Shepherd at the beginning of 1970.<sup>144</sup> Its anxiety over the future of Fijian lands still held by the Crown was met by the reply that this would be a matter for the future government of Fiji. Shepherd was more convincing about the continued existence of a Ministry of Fijian Affairs. But on many of their other points and search for reassurances, he was unable to help. Altogether, it was a worrying confirmation of the uncertainties of political power. Finally, the Council of Chiefs made it clear that if they did not get a large quota of nominated seats in an Upper House they would demand seats in the Lower House, and this was conceded.<sup>145</sup>

The final constitutional conference took place in April 1970, after the Legislative Council had endorsed the official report of Lord Shepherd's visit. It was agreed to retain a large number of seats on a communal roll and three general seats on a general communal roll plus five on a national roll.<sup>146</sup> There was to be a Senate of twenty-two members with eight nominated by the Great Council of Chiefs, seven by the Prime Minister, six by the Leader of the Opposition, and one by the Rotuma Council. The Council, therefore, would have a role under the new Constitution of Fiji, though it was still defined by ministerial regulation and the Ordinances of 1944 and 1966, rather than by constitutional enactment.<sup>147</sup>

### Epilogue and Conclusion

For the remaining three decades of the century, the quality of the sources available for the Council decreases. Much can be gleaned from primary published material produced for the MFA, which enlarged through its subsidies to the FAB and other statutory bodies the range of services in business and agricultural finance available to Fijians, as the Council had intended in the late 1960s.<sup>148</sup> It became possible to raise money for any Fijian project from a beauty salon to a wholesale firm. Popular choices in the provinces and urban centers were small retail businesses, garment manufacture, sea-going vessels, machinery, and "working capital" (unspecified).<sup>149</sup> This was serious investment of up to F\$1 million annually, without much indication, however, of success and failure rates in MFA reports. In addition, the Development Fund Board (derived from Sukuna's scheme for compulsory savings from Fijian sale of crops in 1951 and endorsed by the Council) handled over 10,000 applications and F\$8 million for every type of personal investment in the three decades after its foundation. The Council left the details to the FAB, which continued to hand down policy papers for formal discussion and approval and was in the hands of Fijian parliamentarians. In effect, the FAB acted as an executive council, subject only to its paymaster—the Ministry of Fijian Affairs—allocating funds to the provinces, appointing and paying their senior chiefs and officials. But it was not responsible in any formal sense to the Council of Chiefs, in which it had a strong presence.

Consistent, too, with its entry into corporate investment in the late 1970s, as a way of encouraging Fijian capitalism, the Council at its meeting on 16 February 1984 discussed and approved a ministry plan to raise F\$40 million to purchase 50 percent of Burns Philp through provincial councils and other groups and use the Native Land Development Company (NLDC) as a holding corporation. Unfortunately, the NLDC did not have the skills to do this, so Fijian Holdings Limited was incorporated with participation of Australian

capital to manage investments and take shares in trust for Fiji's statutory bodies—the FAB, the NLTB, and the provincial councils—and for private Fijian clients from the upper reaches of the hierarchy. But it would be too much to claim that the venture was a responsibility of the Council.<sup>150</sup> The line of power and responsibility lay, as it had since 1944, through the FAB to the MFA, and this continuity can be seen in the grandiose, but abortive, “Corporate Plan” constructed within the MFA and approved by the new minister, Adi Litia Samanunu Cakobau Talakuli, on her first day in office as part of “the newly formed and strengthened Chiefly Fijian Political party-dominated government” in 1992, in the aftermath of the coups of 1987.<sup>151</sup>

For, from 1987, the Council was taking its orders more than ever from those in command of military and civil government. After the first coup in May 1987, which removed Prime Minister Bavadra and his Fiji Labour and National Federation Coalition from office, Colonel Sitiveni Rabuka convened a Council for 10 July 1987. Meeting under the chairmanship of the relatively unknown Meli Vesikula, as minister, they brought together an *ad hoc* assembly of fifteen appointees and some thirty of the elected provincial council members. It is not known how many of the Fijian ex-parliamentarians attended the single meeting convened to support Rabuka's actions. From then on their composition changed. Before 1987, in the last precoup assemblies, there had been only 45 chiefs out of a total of 110 present. But once Penaia Ganilau, after considerable resistance, resigned his governor-generalship to become President of the Republic and Commander-in-Chief, he and Ratu Mara as head of the Interim Administration, December 1987 to May 1992, took care to reaffirm the position of the chiefly hierarchy by reconstituting the FAB and selecting a new Minister of Fijian Affairs, Ratu V. S. Navunisaravi (a military man who had not been in Rabuka's Military Government). By 1990, there was a pronounced predominance of chiefs over commoners elected by provincial councils.<sup>152</sup> Similarly, in the slimmed-down Council of 1991, nearly three-quarters of elected provincial members were chiefs, while all of the members appointed by president or minister (with the sole exception of Rabuka) were chiefs, including Ganilau, Mara, and other high-ranking title-holders. Compared with precoup Councils and prior to the elections of 1992 and 1994, which brought in a new batch of Fijian parliamentarians, the republican Council had all the hallmarks of a “packed” assembly.

Did it matter in a patently illegal regime, before Ganilau and Mara's “regularization”? Probably not during Rabuka's regime. The approval of his program on one day in 1987 carried no legal authority (though it was confirmation of Rabuka's support among Fijians). But the Council took no part in drafting a new Constitution in 1988 or 1989 and met for only two days to confirm FAB business. While the 1990 Constitution was being drafted, the

MFA took over Rural Development once more—thus ensuring restoration of grants and subsidies to provincial supporters. It was not until 1990, 21–25 June, that the Council got sight of a draft of the Constitution already passed by an advisory committee and by Mara's Cabinet and endorsed it.

As well it might, for the Council features for the first time in the Preamble with its full Fijian title. The appointment of a president and acting-president (or their removal) required approval of three-quarters of its members; its advice was required for appointment of nine senators; entrenchment of laws on Fijian Affairs, Development Funds, lands, and customs was further strengthened; and along with other Fijian statutory bodies, the Council was excluded from any probing by the Parliamentary Ombudsman.

There was only one small hitch. The legal position of provincial councils (and therefore their corporate standing) was in doubt during 1987 to 1994, and for that period they received their MFA subsidies illegally—a matter rectified by inserting a notice in the *Fiji Gazette* much later in 1996.<sup>153</sup>

But the Council was not called together any more frequently in 1991 or 1992, when its political wing—the *Sogogo Ni Vakavulewa Ni Taukei* (SVT or “Fijian Political Party”), founded as a demonstration of Fijian unity—did well in the May elections with Rabuka as leader and formed a coalition in government with the Fiji Labour Party.<sup>154</sup> Meetings were brief—for one day only in 1992 in the less dignified location of the National Gymnasium, rather than the Trade Winds Centre. On the other hand, the avenue for advancement for chiefs and elected commoners through Mara's patronage now included seats in the Senate, as well as the usual statutory bodies and corporations. But maneuvers between parties in 1994 to agree to a Constitutional Review Commission and subsequent recommendations of the Joint Parliamentary Select Committee were simply endorsed, rather than debated by the Council.

What is clear is that there were divided views on the actual and potential role of the Council arising from its performance in these years. Rabuka in his tense relationship with Mara was very ambiguous about the composition and value of the Council as a support for government.<sup>155</sup> Submissions to the Review Commission that prepared the way for the 1997 Constitution were also divided between those who thought (mistakenly) that the Council embodied some kind of “sovereignty” to speak and act for all Fijians, and those who thought it should keep out of politics with no more than symbolic functions under the Constitution.<sup>156</sup> The further cultural shock of the Speight coup in 2000, and the patent failure of the Fijian army to contain and end it for so long, further tested the Council and found it wanting in political gravity, when it deliberated for three days before making major concessions to Speight's demands. Although the chiefs formally backed Mara as a way out of the political impasse, they ruled out a return to office by Mahendra

Chaudhry's elected Fiji Labour Party government and accepted the need for substantial revision of the 1997 Constitution—in the direction of a return to the more discriminatory instrument of 1990. Like Fijian political parties, the chiefs were fractious and fragmented, capable of descending into obsequious parleying with the rebels.<sup>157</sup> On the whole the evidence of the Council's conduct during this period suggests it would do well to keep to its advisory and constitutional roles, rather than serve as a platform for populist politicians. While retaining their hierarchy's role in high office, constitutionally and politically, the chiefs sacrificed *mana*.

That, too, was the conclusion of the investigation conducted by Price Waterhouse Coopers, 2001–02, that the *Bose* as part of a reformed Fijian Affairs structure should keep to management of Fijian's cultural heritage.<sup>158</sup> It is more likely the Council will remain a part of the “protective paramountcy” established by the Review Commission, accepted by Rabuka, the Parliamentary select Committee, and embodied in the Constitution of 1997. And it can be argued that such protection implies allocation of resources to the Council and other Fijian statutory bodies—which is one definition of political action. Those who claim a role for the Great Council in “reconciliation” in times of crisis are on weak historical ground, given the record of the chiefs and provincial representatives, 1987–2000. It is true Rabuka did rely on their legitimation, though the value of that expedient is questionable. The fact that Jai Ram Reddy, as leader of the Federation Party, was invited to address the chiefs in Council in 1997 is a tribute more to his and Rabuka's brokering skills than to any willingness to enlarge representation to include other ethnic groups.<sup>159</sup> Furthermore, the Council is only partly elected and has contained a large proportion of government-appointed chiefs and notables placed there as acts of patronage in return for political support in the provinces. It was not and never has been a constitutional forum or a substitute for the Parliamentary Senate. It is in no sense responsible to the House of Representatives. Under British overrule the governor was the “root” of its establishment and continuity. To some extent its position has been improved by constitutional recognition of its functions. But the Fijian President and Minister of Fijian Affairs have taken over much of the governor's patron role, so far as the chiefs are concerned.

But it has developed and survived after more than a century of variable fortunes. Fijian chiefs were fortunate that their first governors saw a complementarity between local British and Fijian hierarchies, and they were quick to exploit this for their own benefit. In return, Fijian leaders formed a military reserve drawn on before and after Cession in local campaigns and overseas. At the same time, they established their bargaining power over the use of Fijian lands, in return for commutation of taxes, continuation of



communal services, and adaptation of the Council of Chiefs from 1904 and 1911 as a form of electoral college for representation in the legislature, the Native Land Commission, and other statutory bodies. In 1927, the chiefs had the good sense to enlarge this advantage by opening the Council to more provincial councilors, and this enabled them to find favor with an otherwise hostile Public Service Committee of 1936. By then, the Council was well placed for Mitchell and Sukuna to use it as a centerpiece within their reformed edifice of Fijian Affairs, while ensuring that real power passed to the FAB and other bodies under the control of Fijian legislators, and to an executive secretary, promoted within an emergent ministerial system. The Council's survival then became a matter of politics, rather than administration, where it failed to meet the organizational and financial challenge posed by separate rural Fijian government. Unlike "Native Authority" councils elsewhere, Fiji's hierarchy embraced protective centralization, rather than the devolution of responsibility to local assemblies with judicial and financial functions. Through the Council and the FAB, they concentrated instead on safeguarding "paramountcy" of Fijian interests at the center of power in a rapidly developing political argument over the details of decolonization and on preparing the way for forms of "affirmative action" through public funding. By 1970 the Council was part of the new Constitution and even more so in 1990 and 1997, far exceeding in longevity similar assemblies in French Polynesia, the Hawai'ian Kingdom, Buganda, Asante, Nigeria, and the Princely States of India.

## NOTES

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1. Public Record Office, London. Colonial Office (CO) 1036/216, Jakeway to CO, 3 May 1965.

2. *Rabuka: No Other Way*. Eddie Dean and Stan Ritova, eds. (Sydney, 1988), 141.

3. For Cession details, W. P. Morrell, *Britain in the Pacific Islands* (Oxford, 1960), 167; and for the preliminary administration under Sir Hercules Robinson, Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers, *Correspondence Respecting the Cession of Fiji & the Provisional Arrangements made for Administering the Government*, 1875, liv, C. 1114.

4. The major political chiefdoms represented were: Bau/Tailevu, Rewa, Lau, Bua, coastal Nadroga, Namosi, coastal Macuata. For a discussion of clans within "provinces," centered

on chiefdoms under early settler and Fijian government: David Routledge, *Matanitu: Struggle for Power in Early Fiji* (Suva, 1985), 145 ff; Deryck Scarr, *The Majesty of Colour*. Vol. 1, *I, the Very Bayonet* (Canberra, 1973) chap. 1; Simione Durutalo, "Internal Colonialism and Unequal Regional Development: the Case of Western Viti Levu, Fiji" ( Ph. D diss., University of the South Pacific, 1985), 91–2. See the boundaries in Commodore J. G. Goodenough's map of the twelve "Provinces in Fiji, 1874" which left much of Ra, Ba, the "Colo Hill Country," and the Yassawa group in western Viti Levu outside of any Fiji-wide authority. *Correspondence Respecting the Cession of Fiji, 1875*.

5. Serua by Tui Namosi (Ratu Matanitobua); Ra (by Ratu Isikeli Tabakaucoro who was not a hereditary chief in Ra); Kadavu Island (Ratu Kinivuai Nacagilevu, a chief of Tavuki district in Kadavu); Ba and Nadi (signed for by Ratu Epeli Nailatikau, eldest son of Cakobau and so-called "Lieutenant-Governor of Ba and the Yassawa"); Macuata (signed for by both Ritova and Katonivere—rival claimants to the paramountcy of the province). The Seaqqa people in Macuata recognized no chief of Macuata—certainly not Katonivere when appointed roko tui in 1875—and revolted against both the roko and the British in 1897 over the issue of taxation.

6. Scarr, Vol. I, chap 13.

7. *Ibid*, Vol. I, 292–4.

8. In all, nearly £9,000 out of a projected expenditure of £17,900. For the salary scales, *Correspondence Respecting the Cession of Fiji, 1875*, Schedule B.

9. Rhodes House Library, Oxford (RH) 919 s. 5, Fiji Miscellaneous. John B. Thurston, "Memorandum upon the establishment of District Plantations in the Colony of Fiji for the purpose of enabling the Native Population to provide their Taxes in a manner accordant with Native customs" [1874].

10. Sir Arthur H. Gordon, "Native Councils in Fiji. ('Na Veimbose Vaka Turaga.') 1875–1880," *Contemporary Review*, 43 (1883), 712–31. It is noted, however, by J. D. Legge, *Britain in Fiji, 1858–1880* (London 1958) and by Morrell.

11. Gordon, 714; the point is reinforced by David Wilkinson's account of the first meeting at Draiba. RH 919 5.5, "Notes of the Proceedings of a Native Council," in which he remarks on its "freeness and candour of speech which is uncommon in an Assembly of so many High Chiefs, the Fijian customs being that high Chiefs seldom, if ever, meet each other in Council."

12. CO 83/6, Gordon, 20 September 1875.

13. National Archives of Fiji (NAF). "Proceedings of the Native Council or Council of Chiefs, Sept. 1875 – Aug. 26, 1960." University of Hawai'i, Manoa, Hamilton Library Microfilm S53303. The series is continued to 1970 and for some years of the 1980s at the NAF, Suva.

14. Respectfully, legitimately. See Asesela Ravuvu, "Fijian Ethos as expressed in Ceremonies." (Ph.D. diss., University of Auckland, 1985), 679.

15. Literally, chiefs of landowners, subclan chiefs and chiefs of hamlets (*qali* tributaries or *koro* villages)—an incomplete denotation of the relative grades of *turaga*, as distinct from

“landsmen,” “true owners” (*taukei*), and *kaisi* (“people,” “inferiors”). Michael H. B. Walter, “Aspects of Political Evolution in Fiji” (D. Phil. Diss., University of Oxford, 1966), 245–6.

16. Resolution 8, Proceedings, 29 September.

17. Contentious divorce issues were not settled at this assembly, though chiefs made an interesting survey of reasons (failure to consummate and “living apart” were the more usual). The problem of Fijian women living with Europeans they passed to the governor. A detailed discussion of all aspects of the Council’s Proceedings will not be attempted in this paper. For a useful survey of topics in the early assemblies, Dayna Dias, “The Influence of the Fijian Council of Chiefs in 19<sup>th</sup> Century Colonial Fiji 1874–1897” (BA diss., University Hawai’i, 1977).

18. Proceedings, 23 September 1875; see, too, RH 919 s. 5, Fiji Miscellaneous. Thurston, “Memorandum.” Thurston estimated taxable males at 23,000 and the tax at about £11,000—not far from returns of produce sales after 1877. The idea was not Gordon’s, but taken over from Robinson’s preliminary reduction of Fijian taxes in October 1874 and, perhaps, from their knowledge of the system applied in the Dutch East Indies.

19. *Fiji Royal Gazette*, 1877, 60.

20. Gordon, 713.

21. Durutalo, 92, 107, 115.

22. They now included Ratu Vuki, a Bauan ally appointed over Ba and Yassawa; Ratu Isikeli Tabakauoro appointed roko tui over Ra; Ratu Matanitobua appointed over Namosi; Ratu Luke Natulanikoro appointed Roko Tui Nadroga.

23. Gordon continued to receive copies of Proceedings and other dispatches. CO 83/25; 83/33.

24. Gordon, 716.

25. *Ibid*, 722.

26. *Ibid*, 722–3.

27. *Ibid*, 728.

28. For chiefs’ relations with the Methodist Church, Andrew Thornley, “Fijian Methodism 1874–1945: the emergence of a national church” (Ph. D. diss, Australian National University, 1979), 107, 108, 124, 184, 210–12.

29. Gordon, 731.

30. The formal prescriptions were set out in Native Affairs Ordinance No. 35, 1876 which constituted the NRB and the Fijian judiciary and defined councils and their composition under Regulation 1/1877.

31. The title of this official changed several times after 1916. The post was left vacant 1921–23, and then was restored as Secretary for Native Affairs under the Colonial Secretary's Department with an Acting-Secretary, while Fijian provincial and district officials, except for six provinces, came under provincial commissioners. In 1934, there was a restoration of the Secretaryship with a "Native Section" in the Colonial Secretary's Office. In 1936, it was downgraded to Adviser once more and then restored with expanded functions as Secretary for Fijian Affairs after 1944.
32. Subordinate to *rokos* and *bulis* were native magistrates (usually *ratu*), *qali* ("town") chiefs, or headmen of large hamlets nominated by *tikina* councils and better known as *turaga ni koro*; scribes; overseers of tax gardens; village police under the *turaga* of a hamlet; and the district chief of police (*ovisa*). Lesser officials below magistrates and *bulis* were paid after 1912 not from central funds but locally raised rates (set by provincial councils) from which an annual "tax" (set by government) was extracted for central treasury funding of senior Fijian officials.
33. R. R. Nayacakalou, *Leadership in Fiji* (Melbourne, 1975) 86–7.
34. For Colo East (Naitasiri) see A. L. Abramson, "Culture, Contradiction and Counterculture in the Life-world of a Fijian Chiefdom" (Ph. D. diss., University of London, n.d.; A. D. Ravuvu, *Development or Dependence. The Pattern of Change in a Fiji Village* (University of the South Pacific, Suva, 1988). For the tension between group identity and territoriality in standard works: Nayacakalou, *Leadership in Fiji*; Cyril S. Belshaw, *Under the Ivi Tree. Society and Economic Growth in Rural Fiji* (London, 1964). But none of that disposes of the problem of the historical evolution of rural government in Fiji as an underresearched topic. See F. N. Bole, "Fiji's chiefly system and its pattern of political self-reliance" in R. Crocombe, U. Neemia, A. Ravuvu, and W. Vom Busch, eds., *Culture and Democracy in the South Pacific* (Suva, 1992) for current definition of the hierarchy and its terminology.
35. Thornley, "Fijian Methodism," chap. 5; Martha Kaplan, "Luve ni wai as the British saw it: Construction of Custom and Disorder in Colonial Fiji," *Ethnohistory*, 36, 4 (1989), 349–71; Timothy J. Macnaught, *The Fijian Colonial Experience: A Study of the Neotraditional Order under British Colonial Rule Prior to World War II*. Pacific Research Monograph Series No. 7 (Australian National University Press, Canberra, 1982) chap. 6.
36. For example, Proceedings for 1896.
37. Proceedings, 13–14 May 1885; July 1894.
38. Proceedings, 1878, letter by Cakobau, 10 December and Wilkinson's reply on the activities of the Lands Claims Commission; Morrell, 378–9, 385, 388; Peter France, *The Charter of the Land: Custom and Colonization in Fiji* (Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1969) 115–6. Despite the valuable contribution by Peter France, Fiji lacks a thorough history of land tenure, particularly for the twentieth century. See the useful survey by D. T. Lloyd, *Land Policy in Fiji*. University of Cambridge Department of Land Economy Occasional Paper No. 14, 1982. No more than an overview of the Council's role will be attempted here.
39. Proceedings 1878, Resolutions 8, 23. Claims were settled by 1883, and Crown grants were issued for some 400,000 acres. Morrell, 389.

40. Proceedings 1878.
41. Proceedings 1880–1881, report by bulis and Resolution 18, 10 December 1880. Bulis recommended a rent share-out of 10s. in the £1 to the *mataqali*, 8s. to the *vanua* chief, 1s. to the roko, 1s. to the buli. Proceedings 1881, Resolution 8 (monies from sale of Crown lands—two thirds to government, one third to *taukei* owners). As the *vanua* was in lineage terms an association of villages under a common roko tui, the provincial roko was the most likely to benefit in his dual capacity as “customary” and “official” chief.
42. CO 83/25 Des Voeux 1 March, 25 March 1881.
43. *Ibid*, Gordon, 28 March 1881. For the CSR concession arranged by Thurston at Sydney 1880 for a 1,000 acres on the Rewa, Morrell, 384.
44. Tony Chapelle, “Customary Land Tenure in Fiji: Old Truths and Middle-aged Myths,” *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, 87, 2 (1978): 71–88; and for the Lau group Michael A. H. B. Walter, “The Conflict of the Territorial and the Traditionalised: An Analysis of Fijian Land Tenure,” *Journal of the Polynesian Society* 87, 2 (1978): 89–108.
45. Proceedings, 11 May 1888.
46. That is land of extinct *mataqali* reverting to the Crown as “ultimus haeres” (later known as Schedule A lands) and land declared by the Native Land Commission to be unoccupied at the date of Cession (later known as Schedule B lands). Lloyd, 28–31.
47. CO 83/55, 2 March 1892. At that date some 25,000 acres of Fijian land were under lease, about a third of which was pre-Cession contracts.
48. Proceedings, 1 and 5 July 1902. Behind the increased supervision through commissioners lay a deeper issue of accounting for taxes increasingly paid in cash rather than produce.
49. CO 83/77, Jackson, 18 June 1903.
50. Parliamentary. Papers. *Correspondence Relating to Native Taxation and the Communal System in Fiji*, 1905, liv, Cd. 2240, Jackson to Chamberlain, 23 April 1903.
51. Anthony J. Chapelle, “Land and Race in Fiji: the Administration of Sir Everard im Thurn, 1904–1910” (Ph.D. diss. University of the South Pacific, 1975), 68–9, 102.
52. *Correspondence Relating to Native Taxation*, Jackson, 23 April 1903, 8.
53. *Ibid*, 16.
54. *Ibid*, 17–18 for the details of this method.
55. Proceedings, 1903. The scale of rents adopted finally in 1906 was: 12s to the *mataqali*; 1s each to the provincial roko, district buli and the *turaga ni taukei*; 2s to the *qali* and *mataqali* chiefs. The balance to the *mataqali* could be further subdivided to pay *tokatoka*. There was still a possibility of receipts for dual chiefly functions, and altogether 30 percent went directly to chiefs, while *mataqali* monies were invested on behalf of members. Lloyd, 148–50.

56. Requested by the Council of Chiefs as early as 1881.
57. CO 83/77, Minutes on Jackson, 7 October 1903.
58. im Thurn has been fairly reassessed by Tony Chapelle, but the impression remains that he listened more to some of his officials than to Fijians, and his claim that the Council of 1905 resolved to abolish *lala* was untrue. CO 83/80, im Thurn, 14 April 1905. Nor did he forward the Proceedings of that Council.
59. For the details, France, chap. 9; Lloyd, 135–6. Lloyd claims many chiefs were not opposed to lease or sale of unoccupied lands, but no *mataqali* chose to divide lands among members, as im Thurn's Amendment Ordinance of 1907 enabled them to do before it was withdrawn in 1912.
60. Chapelle, "Land and Race in Fiji." 340.
61. Ibid, 264–8 for the claims and counterclaims of Ratu Kadavulevu and Joni Madraiwiwi. The matter was decided by Native Lands Commissioner, Allardyce, who refused to allow shares over several provinces to the highest Fijian titleholders.
62. France, chap. 10; John Overton, "The Limits to Accumulation: Changing Land Tenure in Fiji," *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 19, 2 (1992): 326–42; and for a defense of the system, R. Gerard Ward, "Land in Fiji," in Brij V. Lal and Tomasi R. Vakatora, eds., *Research Papers of the Fiji Constitutional Review Commission*. 2 vols. (Suva, 1997) Vol. 1, 241–57; Lloyd, Conclusion, 387.
63. CO 83/101, May to Harcourt, 11 May 1911.
64. May had paid close attention to the work of Judge F. E. Maning but not enough to the workings of the Land Courts. See Alan Ward, *A Show of Justice. Racial "Amalgamation" in Nineteenth Century New Zealand* (Australian National University Press, Canberra, 1974): 181, 107–8, 151–2, 186–7. By 1911 Fijian lands under lease amounted to 140,974 acres. Lands held by the Crown ("waste lands") amounted to 160,608 acres yielding a small rent of £643; and the government held unconditionally a further 160,000 acres. Fiji Legislative Council Papers (CP), 1911.
65. In 1912 May insisted, however, on the original ten percent fee.
66. Proceedings, 1928, Resolution 7; see also CO 83/185/9, Hutson, 10 November 1929.
67. By 1937 the provinces owed £58,278 to the Commission. CP No. 42/1938 Secretary for Native Affairs Report for 1937.
68. Ibid. Sukuna at this date was among the governor's appointments to the Council. There was very little recorded discussion of his proposal.
69. Deryck Scarr, *Ratu Sukuna: Soldier, Statesman, Man of Two Worlds* (London 1980): chap. 7.
70. Ibid, chap. 12.

71. Lloyd, 166.
72. CO 83/227/7. Native Lands Trust Ordinance, 1939.
73. CP No. 31/1955, "Report by Sir Geoffrey Clay" 1954, 6–7; T. L. Davey, *Report on the Native Land Trust Board*, Fiji Parliamentary. Paper No. 25/1977.
74. Ibid. Davey's main criticism was that the NLTB was founded as a "trust" but confused its role by adding other functions.
75. See Ward's comments on this restrictive factor: "Land in Fiji," 51–2.
76. Macnaught, 62–4; Scarr, *Ratu Sukuna*.
77. Proceedings, 1930, Resolution 9; CO 83/95/5, J. McOwen, "Memorandum" (he had been twice dismissed before in 1901 and 1914 for similar offenses, but was reinstated as a near relative of Cakobau); for taxes, *Blue Books of Fiji*; Audit Reports in Council Papers, No. 36/1935, No. 31/1936, No. 30/1937.
78. Macnaught, 73–4.
79. For the debate on leasing policies in the 1920s and 1930s under pressure from Indian farmers, Brij V. Lal, *Broken Waves: A History of the Fiji Islands in the Twentieth Century* (Honolulu, 1992): 98–9, 100–102.
80. CO 83/185/9, Hutson, 10 November 1929. Desire for outright sales applied particularly to his predecessor, Sir Cecil Rodwell (1918–1925).
81. See Colonial Office minutes on the reorganization of Fijian administration in 1943, where Sukuna is described as "the most outstanding Fijian figure since Thakombau the 'Tui Viti' (King)." CO 83/236/15, Trafford-Smith, 19 May 1943.
82. CO 83/235/4: "Memorandum for Lord Hailey's Committee on Post-War Problems."
83. CO 83/235/5, "Memorandum on Problems of Post-War Reconstruction in Fiji," 23 August 1943.
84. RH MSS Afr: R. 101. Sir Philip Mitchell Diaries, 24–25 July 1942.
85. Sukuna explained to him the outlines of Fijian social structures.
86. C.P No. 11/1942, "Report of the Proceedings."
87. Ibid, Resolution 27. The committee consisted of Sukuna, four rokos, and the Adviser on Native Affairs as chairman. There is no full record of the 1942 Council's discussions in CP No. 11, or in the NAF volumes of Proceedings.
88. Mitchell, Diaries, 16 September 1942.
89. Ibid, 15 May 1943.

90. Mitchell drew on the Tanganyika Ordinance of 1926 (mainly for powers of commissioners): M. Hailey, *Native Administration in British African Territories*, 5 vols. (London, 1950–51), Part iv, 16–17. There were more contrasts than similarities between the two systems. See A. J. Dixon, “The Evolution of Indirect Rule and the Development of Rural and Urban Local Government in Tanganyika under British Administration, 1940–1961” (B. Litt. Diss., University of Oxford).

91. CP No. 24/1943, Mitchell to CO, 16 July 1943. CO 83/235/5, Mitchell, “Memorandum on Problems of Post-War Construction in Fiji,” 23 August 1943 and minutes.

92. For a critique of these figures, Shanta Davie, “Accounting for Imperialism: a Case of British-imposed Indigenous Collaboration,” *Accounting, Auditing and Accountability*, 13, 3 (2000), 19–24, 39–40. Lack of any financial series for provincial administration in this and other studies makes it difficult, however, to reach conclusions about this aspect of government in Fiji. But Mitchell’s low level of central funding was wildly optimistic. See the rising levels of provincial emoluments and government subsidies reported in CP 24/1943, 22/1944, 4/1947, 52/1948. For a general survey (also without a section on finance) see Ropate Qalo, *Divided We Stand. Local Government in Fiji* (Suva, 1984).

93. CP No. 24/1943, 3; CO 83/236/15, Mitchell, 16 July 1943 and enclosed Bill for the Regulation of Fijian Affairs and CO minutes.

94. CO 83/241/3, Mitchell to Gent, 29 November 1943.

95. Ordinance No. 3/1944 “For the Regulation of Fijian Affairs.” See, too, Sukuna’s “Reconstruction Paper,” CP No. 22/1944, which repeats much of Mitchell’s 1943 dispatch.

96. Income tax applied to all social groups, though very few Fijians reached the required threshold in the 1940s.

97. CP No. 4/1947, Report for the year 1945.

98. In addition to its five Fijian Members there were two Europeans—G. K. Roth as secretary and Sir Henry Scott as legal adviser.

99. CO 83/244/, Grantham, 28 August 1946.

100. NAF, C4/42-2, Administrative Officers’ Conferences; CP, District Commissioners’ Reports, 1949–1957; RH MSS. S. 73, Papers of J. A. C. Hill, “Development of Local Government”; Guy Hunter, “Rural Development (Organization and Administration),” CP No. 6/1969.

101. Papers of J. A. C. Hill; Garvey to CO, 29 August 1958. A notable exception to the opinions of European provincial officials was Ratu Penaia Ganilau who, as a district officer, feared “that the general administration of the Colony would become increasingly Indianized.”

102. CO 1036/10, Garvey, 11 February 1956; CO to Garvey, 16 January 1957. For changes in official attitudes in response to Fijian reactions, see Robert Norton, “Accommodating Indigenous Privilege: Britain’s Dilemma in Decolonising Fiji,” *Journal of Pacific History*, 37, 2 (2002) 133–56.

103. CP No. 18/1948.



104. Proceedings 1950.
105. CO 1036/259, "Fijian Administration Finances."
106. CP No. 35/1957, R. S. McDougall, "Fijian Administration Finances."
107. CP No. 38, Fijian Affairs Report for 1955; CO 1036/417, District Commissioners' Reports, 1957--59.
108. Sukuna's time had been largely taken up with Land Commission investigations and demarcation of Fijian Reserves.
109. CP No. 17/1966, 3.
110. CP No. 9/1968, Fiji Census, 1966, 65.
111. CP No. 4/1962, Report for 1960; see, too, CO 1036/701, Intelligence Report, April 1961.
112. CP No. 3/1961, report for 1959.
113. CP No. 14/1968, Report of the Auditor-General for 1967.
114. As Secretary for Fijian Affairs, A. C. Reid's nominees. CP No. 33/960. They attended until 1967.
115. CO 1036/307, minutes; Maddocks, 24 June 1959; Norton, 136-8.
116. CO 1036/307, Spate, "The Fijian Political Scene. Some Reflections," September 1959; CP No. 13/1959, "The Fijian People; Economic Problems and Prospects." For reactions to Spate in the provinces, CO 1036/79 (reports of commissioners).
117. *Ibid*, Maddocks, "Fiji: Political Situation and Trends," August 1959.
118. CP No. 1/1960, "Report of the Commission of Enquiry into the Natural Resources and Population Trends of the Colony of Fiji."
119. Proceedings, 1959, 1960.
120. CO 1036/700, Maddocks, 14 March 1960. Maddocks, however, endorsed much in Spate and Burns.
121. CO 1036/701, Intelligence Report, April 1960; CO 1036/791, District Commissioners' Reports, 1960-62.
122. CO 1036/817, minutes 2 November 1961. See, too, Proceedings 1959, Resolutions 3, 10, 12-14, for the main points of the Council's opposition.
123. CP No. 9/1965, Council of Chiefs 1962; CO 1036/1287, "Fijian Administration," 1963-65. Secret., Maddocks, 19 June 1962.

124. Ibid, Maddocks, 10 Oct. 1962.
125. CP No. 19, 1965, Proceedings, 1963, resolution 5.
126. CO 1036/1214, esp. Dec. 1963.
127. Ibid, Report March 1963.
128. CO 1036/1287, Nayacakalou, "Interim Report," 16 June 1964; "Final Report," 1964; Jakeway, 17 March 1965.
129. Ibid, FAB Minutes, 5 April 1965.
130. RH collected Ministry of Fijian Affairs and Rural Development reports for the years 1971–79. No series are given for rates or voluntary contributions, but there is a series for subventions. See, too, Fiji Parliamentary Papers No 36/1983, No. 59/1984.
131. CP No. 18 1966, Council of Chiefs 1965; for the revision of 1985, Rodney V. Cole, Stephen I. Levine, Anare V. Matahau, *The Fijian Provincial Administration: A Review* (East-West Center, Honolulu, Hawai'i, 1984); and for a critique of this revision Fiji Parliamentary Paper No. 70/2002, "Culture and Heritage. Review of the Fijian Administration" 2 vols. February 2002. A detailed comment on this outcome is outside the scope of the present paper.
132. For the historical background to ALTA under the Native Lands Trust Board, John Davies and Courtney L. Gallimore, "Reforming the Leasing and Use of Agricultural Land in Fiji," 8 June 2000: Te Karere Ipurangi/Maori News on Line (<http://maorinews.com>).
133. CO 1036/216, Fiji Intelligence Committee report and governor's report.
134. Leg. Co. Debates 1966, 87. Two other points were also features of the final legislation. In future, provincial councils might act as corporate bodies with powers to own property, deal in land, and raise loans. Finally, too, the Council was titled in law "the Great Council" as an acceptable translation of the more modest Fijian phrase—*Bose Vakaturaga*. (Chiefly Council). See Ratu Mara's explanation, *ibid*, 92.
135. CP No 5, 1968, Recommendation 8.
136. FO 32/410 "Pledges to Fijians."
137. CP No. 5, 1968, Recommendation 1. An Ordinance of 1968 did make provision for non-Fijians, but was suspended until after British departure: FO 32/406.
138. FCO 32/401, Jakeway to Galsworthy (private), 12 November 1968. For details of the end-game, Robert Norton, "Seldom a transition with such aplomb: from confrontation to conciliation on Fiji's path to independence," *Journal of Pacific History*, 39, 2 (2004): 163–185.
139. Special Branch copy of Conference paper, Council of Chiefs, FCO 32/401, encl. in G. P. Lloyd to Morgan (FCO), 15 Nov. 1968; Special Branch report 30 Sept. 1968 "1968 By-Elections."

140. CP No. 3/1969, Council of Chiefs 1968, Recommendation 3.
141. *Ibid*, Recommendation 8; CP No. 24/1969, Recommendations 1, 2.
142. Koya had replaced A. D. Patel as Leader of the Opposition.
143. FCO 32/571, Minute (Secret) Jan. 1970.
144. *Ibid*, Shepherd to FCO, 18 Feb. 1970. For full minutes of Shepherd's meetings with the Council of Chiefs, Feb. 1970 in the Council Board Room (without ceremonial) FCO 32/594; and also the list of public bodies heard, local settlers—the sensible and the cranks.
145. FCO 32/570, Minutes, 2 Feb. 1970. The Federation had supported this concession.
146. The formula was: 12 Fijians to be elected on communal roll, 10 on national roll, and same for Indians. FCO 32/572 Conference report.
147. *Constitution of Fiji 1970*. Apart from appointment of senators on the advice of the Council, there were no other formal functions defined.
148. For the fate of early investments, Fiji, *House of Representatives Debates*, 1984, September; 1986, April-May (loans to the NLDC).
149. NAF, Ministry for Fijian Affairs and Rural Development, Reports, 1971–79.
150. Steven Ratuva, "Ethnic Politics, Communalism and Affirmative Action in Fiji: a Critical and Comparative Study" (D. Phil. Diss. University of Sussex, 1999), 198–221; USP Library, Pacific Collection, Fijian Holdings Ltd. Annual Reports.
151. NAF, MAF, "Corporate Plan, 1994–1996" (with detailed flow-charts and projections for the Fijian Development Fund Board, the Fijian Commercial Development Unit, and much else including 100 percent government funding of provincial councils by 1996).
152. *Fiji Republic Gazette*, 13 March 1990, 13 February 1991, 18 May 1992.
153. *Fiji Gazette* No. 24, 3 May 1996; *Fiji Parliamentary Papers* No. 35/1996, "Report of the Auditor-General on Accounts of Government for the Years 1993–94," 88–9.
154. For the politics of this period, Brij V. Lal, "Chiefs and Indians: Elections and Politics in Contemporary Fiji," *The Contemporary Pacific*, 5, 2 (1993): 275–301; Robert Norton, "Reconciling Ethnicity and Nation: Contending Discourses in Fiji's Constitutional Reform," *The Contemporary Pacific*, 12, 1 (2000): 83–122; Virginia Horsecroft, "The Politics of Ethnicity in the Fiji Islands: Competing Ideologies of Indigenous Paramountcy and Individual Equality in Political Dialogue" (M. Phil. Diss., Oxford University, 2002).
155. *Rabuka*, 141. Which did not prevent him accepting honorary membership in the hope of using the institution.
156. Norton, "Reconciling Ethnicity and Nation," 94–103.

157. Jon Fraenkel, "The Clash of Dynasties and Rise of Demagogues; Fiji's *Tauri Vakaukauwa* of May 2000," *Journal of Pacific History*, 35, 3 (2000), 297.

158. "Culture and Heritage. Review of the Fijian Administration," Vol. 2 for the evidence of provincial and other workshops, 148–50, 204–6, Macuata Provincial Council thought the GCC should only have a cultural function.

159. Reddy was the first Indo-Fijian to address the Council as part of his deal with Rabuka to promulgate the 1997 Constitution and contest the 1999 elections in coalition with Rabuka's SVT. Independent financing for the Council would seem to have been met by a Fijians' Trust Fund Bill debated by both Houses at the end of 2004 and is especially interesting for Senators' views on the GCC.

## THE NATURE AND LIMITS OF TRADITIONAL DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESSES IN CONTEMPORARY SAMOA

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Samoa has enjoyed enviable social and political stability since it attained constitutional independence as Western Samoa in 1962. This is attributed by many Samoans to the incorporation of elements of "tradition" in the nation's constitution, and of elements of social organization in its local governance structures. Among these is the retention of "traditional" values and procedures for the management of village order and the resolution of local disputes, as outlined in this article. Rapid social change, including the emerging tensions between individuals and collectivities, between local entities and the nation state over their respective rights, and over the appropriate mechanisms for adjudication of disputes, is putting pressure on these "traditional" processes. This, in turn, raises the question of whether Samoans will continue to use these processes, either in their present form or in some modified one, and the article concludes by exploring their future role in dispute resolution.

MANY SAMOANS are justifiably proud of the resilience of *fa'a samoa* or Samoan custom and practice. They argue that incorporation of a number of its key elements into the political structure and organization of the independent state of Samoa, formerly Western Samoa, lies behind the political and social stability that have characterized the country in the period since its constitutional independence in 1962. Central to this stability, it is argued, was the availability of a coherent culture that values unity; defines social roles and the relationships between them clearly; embodies participatory decision-making processes; and provides comprehensive dispute resolution procedures and bodies that administer these (Le Tagaloa 1992). These elements of traditional social organization, it is argued, have been responsible for the manage-

ment of tension and resolution of grievances and, indirectly, for the relative social and political stability that has existed since independence (Va'ai 1999). Broad-ranging and rapid social change is, however, producing new sources and forms of tension, and the traditional dispute resolution procedures may be increasingly unable to satisfy contemporary Samoans, whose interests and expectations are being redefined by the rapidly evolving political economy of the state (Va'ai 1999; So'o 2000; Huffer and So'o 2003). This, in turn, raises the question of the future of these "traditional" dispute resolution processes in the modern Samoan state.<sup>1</sup> These issues frame this article.

This paper sets out to establish the value that Samoan society has attached to social cohesion, to explain why this is so, to explain the means by which social tensions have traditionally been "managed" and the means by which interpersonal and intergroup conflicts have been resolved when these have failed. It then explores some sources of tension that have emerged in Samoan society since large-scale migration commenced in the 1950s, and outlines some recent events in which these have tested "traditional" processes' capacity to resolve disputes. It concludes by asking whether traditional mechanisms will remain effective in a rapidly changing social and economic environment in which there is greater, and more open, debate about the values and processes at the center of Samoan society and the appropriate means of resolving disputes over them.

### Unity as an Ideal State

Social unity is an ideal state and Samoans will, where at all possible, avoid overt social conflict and division. Conflicts and disputes are likened in proverbs to head lice, which are to be sought out and crushed before they become established. Where head lice are not controlled, they become a source of continuing irritation that distracts the sufferer and eventually infect the scalp and cause more general illness.<sup>2</sup> Social entities are, ideally at least, united, *maopoopo*, and act as one, *'autasi*, and both proverbs and passages of scripture are routinely invoked to explain the benefits of social solidarity.<sup>3</sup> This, in turn, rests on the ideal of *soalaupule*, which embodies respect for authority, (Huffer and So'o 2003) and participatory decision-making (Le Tagaloa 1992:122–123), in which individuals are recognized but in which consensus is sought (Huffer and So'o 2003).

The foundation of Samoan social organization is an ideal of *va fealoa'i* or mutual respect, which rests in turn on the social values of *fa'aaloalo*, or appropriate respect and deference,<sup>4</sup> and of *usiuisita'i* or obedience, in interpersonal conduct, which are central themes in socialization. Samoan culture is considered, by many Samoans at least,<sup>5</sup> to be synonymous with respect,

an idea that is reflected in the claim, *o le aganu'u o Samoa o le fa'aaloalo*: Samoan custom rests on decorum and politeness.

These values are embodied and reflected in a clearly defined set of relations, known as *va tapuia*, that define the rights and obligations of people within these relationships. These have been defined by Le Tagaloa (cited in Va'ai 1999:54) as relationships between

The brother and sister ...; the *va-tapuia* between the parent (especially father/mother) and offspring; there is the *va-tapuia* between male and female; between male and male-female and female; there is the *va-tapuia* between host and guest, there is the *va-tapuia* between *matai*; there is the *va-tapuia* between the dead and the living; there is the *va-tapuia* between man and his environment — sea and sky, flora and fauna; then there is the *va-tapuia* between the created and the Creator.

Elaborate speech (Milner 1976; Duranti 1990) and behavioral codes (Shore 1982) structure and regulate relations between individuals and social entities<sup>6</sup> in ways that make cooperation, *fai'faima fa'atasi*, possible and that minimize the probability of conflict arising. Conversely, the disruptive consequences of disobedience and a lack of respect are spelt out in proverbs, or *alaga'upu* (Penisimani and Brown 1914; Schultz 1985), and in fables or *fagogo* (Moyle 1981:45–47).

### **The Social and Economic Foundations of a Social Value**

In pre-Christian Samoa and indeed until the 1870s, the more-or-less absolute power of the chieftaincy ensured that villages lived in an order that rested on fear of extreme, and often arbitrary, punishment by the all powerful *ali'i* or high chiefs, who, as Meleisea (1992:16–17) notes, controlled the spiritual, material, and physical resources of families and villages. Their control of natural and supernatural resources established their power over human resources. One hundred eighty years of steadily intensifying contact with the West has brought about significant changes in Samoan social organization. Since contact with the West commenced, the absolute power of the chieftaincy has been progressively constrained in various ways. The imposition of various measures by Christian churches since 1830, by colonial powers between 1900 and 1962 and, since 1962, by a national constitution, the formal offices of the nation state, of courts, and an evolving jurisprudence, have all constrained the formerly considerable power of chiefs in various ways and in different spheres of social organization. The decline of absolute power has

seen the parallel emergence of a model of authority known as *soalauipule* (Le Tagaloa 1992:122–123), and founded on complementary authority and on social consensus that is, at least ideally, achieved through participatory decision-making (Huffer and So'o 2003).

Samoa's incorporation into the global political economy has produced very significant changes in a number of spheres, including some central ones such as the *matai* system (Meleisea and Schoeffel 1983:85114); the land tenure system (Meleisea and Schoeffel 1983; O'Meara 1987, 1995); the kinship system (Macpherson 1999); the justice system (Anesi and Enari 1988; Epati 1988; Sapolu 1988; Va'ai, 1988); economic organization (Asia Development Bank 1999; Shankman 2001; Sialaoa 2001, 2003); and demography. Despite these very significant changes, the value placed on social order and unity remains central. Even in the modern, mixed economy, the maintenance of social cohesion and the management of tension remain significant.<sup>7</sup> The stability evident in Samoan society no longer rests solely on the power or authority of chiefs as it did in precontact Samoa, and its roots must be sought elsewhere in the Samoan political economy.

The desirability of unity, stressed in many secular and religious contexts, is not stressed for its own sake. United social entities are able to cooperate to mobilize human and physical resources and to compete effectively with other like units for social and political influence. Effective mobilization and management of groups' resources by competent leaders permit them to increase both their material and social-political capital bases. This, in turn, allows a group to increase its influence and sociopolitical prestige among other like units (Pitt 1970). In Samoa a united group becomes the subject of positive public discussion and admiration, not simply because it is united, but because such groups typically become more politically and economically influential than those that are divided.

Unity and cooperation reflect well on the leadership of the group, and its members benefit indirectly by association with an effective group. Samoans may choose to live with one of at least four kin groups with which they have links and in which they have rights. They are more likely to reside with and contribute to the activities of stronger, more effective groups because they stand to gain more, materially and socio-politically, from such associations. Thus, larger, united families are able to contribute more in both cash and kind to church and village activities and, in so doing, to earn and enjoy the respect of other similar entities and the prestige that follows from association. This respect and prestige can be converted by effective leaders into social and political influence in a range of contexts. As a consequence, in the past and even now, strong, united groups generally became progressively larger and stronger.<sup>8</sup>



Conversely, unresolved conflict can disrupt social, economic, and religious activity within the social entity within which it arises. Divided households, *fua'ifale*; family groupings, *aiga*; villages, *nu'u*; and districts, *itumalo* have difficulty maintaining routine social, economic, and religious activity. A group that is internally divided is unable to mobilize its resources effectively and is described as *le pulea*, or unmanaged, and likened to a broken stone fish trap that can no longer catch fish.<sup>9</sup>

Furthermore, this condition tends to deteriorate and to lead, over time, to increasing sociopolitical impotence. Members desert such groups for more effective ones and, as a consequence, the pool of human and material resources available to the leaders of such groups declines. Without resources, even effective leaders are unable to increase the group's material and sociopolitical capital bases and to arrest the declines of support and influence. Protracted internal conflict reflects badly on the leadership of the social entity in which it occurs, and its members may suffer indirectly by association with it. With weakened internal authority come leadership challenges from other would-be *matai*, whose claims to be able to arrest the decline may be more readily embraced in such circumstances than would be the case in times of growth and prosperity. Such challenges often further divide an already-weakened group as these challenges are mounted in semipublic settings such as the family or in public ones such as the Lands and Titles Court. A divided entity risks losing ground to others and its ability to influence the affairs of the larger groups of which it is part.

Its affairs also become the subject of critical public discussion by others, which brings with it the possibility of open conflicts emerging as divided groups are forced to respond to public criticism. As a consequence of all of these factors, in precapitalist Samoa and now, weak and divided entities generally became weaker and more divided.

### **The Promotion of Unity**

For these political and economic reasons then, the maintenance of collective unity or, more accurately, the management of tension within collectivities assumes considerable importance in Samoan society. Again, both Samoan proverbs and passages from scripture are invoked to explain the benefits of peace and the social value of those who make or maintain it.<sup>10</sup> Leaders are judged, in part, by their ability to promote and maintain unity and to manage intragroup conflict as it arises. Samoans are reminded of the Samoan and Biblical heroes who used their wisdom to promote unity and to manage tension.<sup>11</sup> Indeed, many gatherings in which the potential for new or renewed conflict exists are opened with prayer in which God's guidance is invoked to

ensure a peaceful and productive outcome that will strengthen the group. Those who would endanger the unity of a group are likened to a poisonous fish, *le unavau*, that is said to poison the schools of fish with which it swims, making them inedible (Schultz 1985:22). These values are given form and meaning in social processes.

Throughout childhood, and even in later life, Samoans are taught the central importance of respect for those entitled to it. In a gerontocracy, the entitlement to respect is relatively easily established: virtually everyone who is older is entitled to respect, deference, and obedience.<sup>12</sup> Parents, guardians, members of households, and in some cases extended kin groups become the primary agencies in the process of establishing the importance of both *fa'aaloalo* and *usiusita'i*. The importance of these attributes is learned, largely informally, in day-to-day interaction and from the observation of the speech and conduct of other, more experienced members of the family. The recounting of *fagogo*, or fables, and extended public discussion of the failings of others and of their causes and consequences help the young to define and operationalize these values, and to comprehend the relative importance and consequences of various types of breaches. The ready approval of conformity, and the equally swift punishment of violation of norms, ensures that these values and the associated conduct become relatively rapidly established.

The importance of the value of respect and its corollary, obedience, is also promoted by Samoan Christian churches, and particularly the more established and usually more conservative denominations. Pastors, especially in the long-established major denominations, which enjoy the support of the majority of the population, regularly remind their adherents of the benefits of obedience and the costs of disobedience to those who are entitled to it.<sup>13</sup> Congregations are regularly reminded of the need to honor and obey God, parents, leaders, and agencies of state.<sup>14</sup>

Entities have an incentive to instill these values in their members. The positive consequences of successful socialization of members are obvious. Groups whose members show respect and the capacity for "appropriate" judgment and conduct are well regarded by others. They are less likely to suffer internal conflicts or to become embroiled in disputes with other groups and are free to exploit available material and human resources without interruption and to prosper economically and socio-politically.

Conversely, failure to instill these values has potential costs. Those who fail to show appropriate respect are described variously as being *le mafau-fau* or unthinking, *valea* or stupid, *fia sili* or wanting to be better than others, and *fia maualuga* or wanting to take a social status to which one is not entitled. The term chosen to describe the failure, and reaction to it, varies with the significance of the act in which it is revealed.<sup>15</sup> Failure to show

due respect reflects not solely on the “offender” but also on those other members who have failed to instill this central value.<sup>16</sup> Individuals who are ignorant of social conventions cannot alone, as Shore (1982:174–175) notes, be held responsible for their acts. Parents and guardians are also held responsible for their failure to instill the capacity for moral judgment in their offspring. This connection is apparent in both the wording of judgments and the fines handed down in village *fono*, or *matai* councils, which are responsible for the management of the village and the maintenance of village order. These councils pass judgment on and punish those whose activities breach accepted principles of respect and obedience and are considered to threaten village order. The *fono* establishes the “facts” of the matter, identifies the wronged party, determines the seriousness of the breach and determines how its perpetrator is to be punished. The semipublic hearing, at which all village families are represented by their *matai*, is characterized by extended, and often repetitive, confirmation of the “facts,” and of their significance for social relations both within and beyond the village.<sup>17</sup> The councils then punish not only offenders, but also their families, whom they hold indirectly responsible for the misconduct of members. In certain circumstances, the *fono* will state explicitly its belief that the family must share the responsibility for failing to teach its members. Even where this sentiment is not made explicit, the *fono* frequently levies fines in cash, taro, and pigs that are so heavy that the offender alone could not possibly pay them. Families faced with finding resources with which to pay a fine incurred by a member are reminded of their collective responsibility for their members’ conduct.

Where both the individual and his or her family are held responsible, all must bear some responsibility for the act, any resultant conflict, and the costs of its resolution. Thus, when a man insulted and then assaulted the village pastor, the village council acted not simply on behalf of the pastor but the rest of the village whose *mana* and capacity and willingness to protect its “servant of God” from insult had been offended. The *fono* levied a fine that could not possibly have been paid by the offender himself as a public indication to all in the village that families must take responsibility for the conduct of members and must bear the costs of their failure to do so. But the direct costs of the act are only part of the “punishment.” The accessibility of the proceedings, the high level of representation, the exposure of one’s family to public scrutiny and criticism, the public expressions of contrition by or on behalf of the offender, may also explain why families place considerable emphasis on “appropriate respect” and on the maintenance of “orderly” conduct.

The failure to show appropriate respect may also have consequences for the internal unity of a family that becomes drawn into a dispute in this

way. The discussions of the man's conduct that followed the assault outlined above focused on its impact on the family's hitherto high regard in the village and its future political aspirations. This "analysis" led, in turn, to recriminations that reawakened resentment and division within the family as more distant relatives were required to assist in paying the fine; led to criticism of the existing leadership; resulted in renewed claims by factions for the *matai* title of the group; and led to the revisiting of contested events in the family's history. The formerly united group quickly became divided, and considerable amounts of energy were expended first in internal conflict and then in conflict resolution.

Given the social, political, and economic consequences outlined above, it is probably not surprising that such careful attention is paid to "managing" the conduct of people in Samoan society. This extends in some cases to expelling those who cannot be controlled to places where their conduct will not rebound on the groups to which they belong. Adolescents whose conduct has breached norms and caused continuing embarrassment to their *aiga* are routinely sent to other villages or abroad to cities in which others would bear the responsibility for managing their conduct. These extreme measures made possible the retention of the illusion of order without addressing the structural features producing the tensions and the breaches. They also reflect the importance that villages and families placed on the appearance of order and balance.

### The Failure of Order

Despite all of these processes and the general commitment to the values of respect, obedience, and social unity and solidarity, tension is always present in Samoan society. Tension, like the head lice to which it is compared, comes and goes. It may develop in the relations between individuals who stand in particular relationships to one another. This usually occurs when one party exceeds what the other considers to be the limits on rights that are prescribed for those in that role. Thus, an untitled man who accepts that he must accept reasonable directions from his *matai* may nonetheless resist when these directions are no longer considered reasonable.

Similarly, tension may develop between subsections of social entities that stand in particular relationships to one another. This may develop into overt conflict when subsections become convinced that others have exceeded their rights within a relationship. Thus, the *tamatāne* or men's line may accept that the *tamafafine* or women's line has important rights in the selection of a new *matai* for the entire *aiga* of which they are both part but will resist strenuously when these are exercised in ways that are considered unreasonable.

Tensions, in both interpersonal and intergroup relations, may escalate until a point at which the relationship itself is threatened.

Interpersonal and intergroup tensions are often connected. An individual's reaction to his neighbor's personal conduct, such as the use of bad language in a plantation, can escalate into a conflict between their families and assumes much greater significance for both short- and longer-term village order. The essentially personal incident that provoked a particular episode becomes relatively insignificant as the history of relations between the families is reviewed, past disputes between the groups are revisited, and the initial act is linked with a whole series of "related" events that together justify the growing anger on each group's part.<sup>18</sup>

Such disputes can and do occasionally escalate to a point at which the entire village is forced to take one side or another. In such circumstances, the village *fono* may no longer be able to maintain the unity necessary to preserve order in the village itself, and may face public challenges to its highly valued autonomy. This has occurred on at least two occasions in the recent past. In the first case the state, in the most public way, challenged the village's valued autonomy over its internal affairs<sup>19</sup> and in the second, a village's two pastors publicly challenged its leadership's authority.<sup>20</sup> For all of these reasons, Samoans prefer to manage tension as soon as it becomes apparent and minimize the risk of escalating disruption and the associated weakness. Small wonder then that Samoans stress the management of the relationships between individuals in proverbs like *teu le va* or maintain the relationship and celebrate good, stable relationships in proverbs such *va lelei* (Schultz 1985:14).

But despite the elaborate attempts, outlined above, to regulate relations between individuals and groups in these ways and to manage the tension that arises out of the competitive ethic that is at the heart of *fa'a samoa*, overt conflict periodically breaks out between individuals and groups, and wrongs have to be righted. Although, as noted above, interpersonal and intergroup tensions and resultant conflicts are usually closely related, they are treated here as separate problems. For the purposes of this discussion, interpersonal conflicts are those that involve relations between individuals as individuals and not individuals acting as representatives of designated groups. By contrast, intergroup conflicts involve disputes between collectivities over their respective rights and obligations.

### **Resolving Interpersonal Conflict**

Tension is ever present in interpersonal relations. The sources and nature of tensions are structured by the character of relationships. Symmetrical relationships involve parties of equal social status, such as siblings, and the ten-

sions that characterize these relationships are open and negotiable (Shore 1982:98–202). Asymmetrical relationships, which Shore refers to as complementary, involve parties of unequal social status, and the tensions inherent in these are connected with the unequal rights and obligations of the parties. Although rights and obligations are interpreted in different ways by individuals, the fundamental asymmetry is sanctioned by society and is not negotiable.

Many who have grievances with the conduct of those who stand in dominant relationships, that is those to whom they must accord respect, or at least obedience, are prevented from openly expressing their grievances and from seeking mediation of their concerns. The persistence of asymmetrical relationships depends on both a culture that legitimates them and on their not being publicly challenged. The child who feels that he or she is being unreasonably treated by parents or guardians cannot publicly challenge them. The same sorts of limits on expression exist with respect to younger siblings and older siblings, wives and husbands, women living with their husbands' kin group or *nofotāne*, men living in their wives' kin group or *fai ava*, untitled persons and titled ones, and indeed in all relationships in which the asymmetrical distribution of power is accepted. People in these situations must seek other means of righting the wrongs and thus relieving the tension.

The prospect of having a complaint of this type acted on and resolved in a person's favor by others will depend on their acceptance that the conduct complained of does indeed exceed that which could reasonably be expected in a given relationship. Where an individual's complaints are considered frivolous, he or she is likely to be accused of being unreasonable and will be shown little sympathy. In many cases, vexatious complaints will simply annoy others who have, or have had in the past, to accept similar treatment and may lead to more general impatience with the complainant on the part of others. Their reactions to frivolous complaints may in the long run make the complainant's life more difficult and unpleasant. This knowledge undoubtedly discourages many from raising matters that may be considered "borderline" and means that only incidents that clearly exceed acceptable canons are brought into the public sphere. But there is recognition that excesses in the conduct of dominant parties do generate frictions within relationships and do produce legitimate complaints about conduct and that these deserve attention.

In some cases, these are "resolved" where the aggrieved party leaves the situation and stays temporarily with relatives either in the same or in another village. The willingness of others to accommodate a person leaving such a situation reflects a degree of acceptance of the strength of that person's claim to have been unreasonably treated. The move signals publicly, but silently, the existence of a dispute. Where this option is available, depar-

ture may relieve the immediate tension and the prospect of failure of the relationship, either in a violent confrontation or, more frequently recently, self-destructive conduct such as suicide and parasuicide (Macpherson and Macpherson 1987).

Such departures in themselves, however, do nothing to resolve the more fundamental problem of the asymmetrical distribution of power in the relationship and the way in which this was exercised. Unresolved conflict and lingering resentment may resurface at another time with serious consequences. Occasionally, however, either the “facts” of a case or the broader social and political consequences of its nonresolution may lead to interest in and intervention by those with whom the person has sought shelter. They may in time seek some form of formal reconciliation on behalf of the aggrieved party. Not all people, however, are free to leave a situation in which they feel they are being unfairly treated, and they must seek a resolution of their concerns. Although there may be little public sympathy for general overt challenges to authority and little support for the complainants, most Samoans know, often from personal experience, that from time to time the duties required of those in subordinate positions in a raft of relationships are unpleasant and irksome.<sup>21</sup> It is not difficult then to find a third party who will listen to the grievance and confirm the complainant’s view that a particular pattern of treatment seems harsh and unfair.<sup>22</sup>

The most likely outcome of such complaints is an acknowledgment that the treatment complained of is indeed harsh but that in time it will cease. The mentor may argue that the experiences are all part of *tautua* or service to a collectivity, and that ultimately such service is the path to power.<sup>23</sup> Mentors may argue that the experiences will be judged by one greater than the person complained of, and that judgment will be absolute.<sup>24</sup> A mentor may even, in certain circumstances, intervene on the complainant’s behalf to mediate the conduct of the dominant party but is unlikely to attempt to modify the basic asymmetry in any significant way.<sup>25</sup> However, as with the departure strategy, the sources of the tension remain intact even after the immediate “symptoms” of tension have been “managed.” Whether or not a mentor will choose to seek some formal reconciliation will depend on the social costs of allowing matters to go unresolved.<sup>26</sup>

In some cases, conflict between individuals is resolved in these ways but in others, an individual is so aggrieved that some change in the conduct of the other party is required to resolve the conflict. As Freeman (1983:219) notes,

On occasion the demands of this stringent system generate such internal resentment and stress that an individual can take no more and becomes intractable.

The subordinate party may then enter a state known as *musu*, which Pratt (1911) translates as unwillingness, indolence, but also admits has no equivalent in English. Mead (1981:102–103) and Freeman (1983:218–219), while disagreeing on the significance of this state within the structure of the Samoan character and personality, agree that it is widespread and that it is most widely seen in children and adolescents. In the first version of this strategy, the victim effectively suspends a relationship with the perpetrator or perpetrators while maintaining more normal relationships with everyone else. In this version of *musu*, victims do all that is required of them by the source of their anger, but mechanically and with as little acknowledgment or emotion as is possible. One person said,

It's as if you try to put that person out of your mind. You try and make them invisible so that they can't affect you or make you angry. You have to do what they want or else you will be disciplined, but you do only that and nothing else.

In the second form, described by both Freeman and Mead, there is an element of disobedience so that the aggrieved party is both intractable and unwilling and actively resists the directions of those entitled to give them. Freeman describes this as “psychopathological stubbornness” (Freeman 1983:222). This strategy draws the attention of both the perpetrator and others to a particular relationship and to the problems in it. Considerable attention is paid to the problems by both the target of the resistance and those around them. Where there is general sympathy for the complainant, pressure is exerted in different ways, and with various degrees of subtlety, on the dominant person to attend to the relationship or to *teu le va*.

Where there is general recognition that the complainant's case is a reasonable and just one, someone with higher status may direct the other person to resolve the matter and to do so quickly.<sup>27</sup> In other cases, those around may show open sympathy to the complainant and in so doing, make their position in the matter known indirectly. A certain amount of pressure may be exerted by people asking why the complainant is *musu*. There is also general pressure for resolution because people are aware that unresolved cases have led eventually to suicide which, in turn, reflects negatively on the family. There is, then, considerable social pressure on individuals to resolve the problems in an interpersonal relationship.

The final resolution in these cases may take a variety of forms. It may, in some cases, involve a formal apology in which one who would not normally be required to admit to errant conduct will do so. The person is likely to admit recognizing the error, *iloa le sese*, and to apologize, *fa'atoese*, to the victim. The process concludes when the aggrieved party forgives, *fa'amagalo*, the



other, which may be done in more-or-less public contexts. The expression of contrition may be less formal and simply involve a change in the conduct at the center of the complaint. This is particularly likely where there are significant differences in the status of those involved.

In still other cases, the aggrieved party may become “unwell.” Illnesses raise larger issues of agency and draw general attention to establishing the causes of the illness, which frequently has weakness, headaches, and lethargy as some of its symptoms. In some cases, the person exhibits the symptoms of possession, and the voice of some deceased relative outlines the circumstances that have produced the illness and may reveal, either directly or indirectly, the name of a person who is implicated. The disclosure of the “cause” of the illness may point to the appropriate resolution of the matter. The possibility that supernatural agency is involved leads often to the involvement of a person skilled in diagnosis of this type of illness (Macpherson and Macpherson 1990). This person, known in this role variously as a *taulaāitu* or *taulasea*, may be from outside the family and may be free to speak more frankly about the possible causes of the friction in relationships and to canvass various resolutions, in ways that are not available to those close to the “victim.” Thus, when an adolescent became ill, her deceased mother spoke through the daughter’s mouth and accused the stepmother of ill-treating the girl and of favoring her own children. In the case of the stepmother-stepchild relationship, the “therapist” drew on past experiences with similar cases to suggest removing the child from the household and sending her to live with her deceased mother’s family. This threat put pressure on the relationship between the stepmother and her husband and led to the stepmother apologizing to the stepdaughter for the past treatment, and the husband to watch the demands that the new wife made of his child from that point on.

Samoan social organization has a set of procedures for identifying and resolving the interpersonal disputes that arise between people in particular, usually asymmetrical, social relationships which, by their nature, tend to generate tension. These allow for the “resolution” of particular disputes in ways that do not fundamentally alter the asymmetrical distribution of power and authority or challenge the cultural logic that supports it. This has, until recently, allowed many individuals to accept that the system contains procedures for making and resolving individuals’ grievances and has blunted the inclination to challenge its foundations.

### **Resolving Intergroup Conflict**

Intergroup conflict has, as noted above, the potential to disrupt social and economic life for protracted periods.<sup>28</sup> Serious attempts are made early to

control it.<sup>29</sup> Conflicts within families are in themselves serious because these threaten the public standing of the *aiga*, and all members suffer by association. The responsibility for resolution of these matters rests with the *matai* or head of the family, who must deliver a solution that preserves the basic unity of the family on which his or her power rests. While provision exists for the removal of ineffective *matai* by members of the *aiga*,<sup>30</sup> it may be less this sanction than the possibility that failure to manage effectively will expose a *matai* to criticism, both within and outside the *aiga* and the village, which leads a chief to act quickly.

Although in many cases the process may seem somewhat autocratic, certain factors limit the chief's ability to impose a settlement without concern for the parties to it. The most obvious of these is the necessity of unity for cooperation across a range of social, religious, and economic activity. The second factor is the status of the chiefly title involved. Some titles carry significantly more prestige and command more respect and obedience than do others.<sup>31</sup> While some titles command respect that allows their holders to impose a decision unilaterally, many titles are of less significance, and those who hold them will be required to negotiate their plans. The third factor is the fact that many titles that were once held by one person are now held jointly by multiple holders. Thus, although each title holder represents the *aiga* to which the title belongs, most also represent a particular subgrouping to which he or she is most closely connected and that has selected and actively promoted his or her candidacy at some time. The creation of multiple holders of some titles has effectively diffused power and reduced the probability that any one holder will be in a position to exercise autocratic leadership. The final factor is the personal qualities and social talents of individual chiefs. Those who are popular and show concern for all interests are likely to be more effective in dispute resolution than those who show partiality for particular groups and their interests.

The disputes are typically resolved in discussions between representatives of various sides of the *aiga* that are convened by the *matai*. These usually occur only after *matai* have canvassed opinions and possible solutions informally with the subgroupings at the center of the matter. A variety of linguistic and social strategies are employed to reduce tension and to reconstruct a unity. The speeches made in these contexts use the term *tatou*, that is the inclusive form of the pronoun "we," which reminds those involved of the fundamental unity that they seek to protect and restore. The availability of a foundation for unity provides both the opportunity to protect the group's reputation from those who would capitalize on their misfortune and the motive to resolve the conflict.

When a member of a family commits an offense against another family in the same village, the order of the village is threatened and a higher level of authority is necessary to manage and resolve these matters. The body, the

*fono a matai*,<sup>32</sup> will move to resolve this type of dispute as quickly as it can. Allowing a matter to go unresolved for any length of time will reflect their political impotence; disrupt village social, political, and economic activity; and lead to spontaneous acts that will make permanent resolution more difficult. Where the village council exercises jurisdiction in such a matter, the hearing of the case and the delivery of a judgment is a semipublic<sup>33</sup> event in which all parties are heard, and in which all families, through their *matai*, contribute to the final determination. The formal purpose of this type of hearing is to provide public resolution of disputes. The process itself confirms the authority of the *fono* to make and enforce laws of the village, and affirms the value of these in the restoration of public order.

When a member of a family commits an offense against a village ordinance, the order of the village is threatened and the authority of its duly constituted government is challenged.<sup>34</sup> In such cases, the family of the offender may find itself ranged against the rest of the village, which comes to the support of the *fono a matai*, whose authority has been challenged. In these circumstances, the offending family may decide to seek early resolution of the matter before the rest of the village's anger mounts and results in a punishment that reflects not only its displeasure with the offense but also the family's lack of appropriate contrition. Early admission of guilt and public expression of willingness to accept punishment may be offered in order to demonstrate a family's recognition of its collective responsibility for the offense and its desire to accept punishment and to restore unity.

In the case of very serious crimes, including deliberate and accidental acts that result in death or serious bodily harm, the possibility of escalating violence between the offending and offended parties increases very rapidly. These typically develop suddenly<sup>35</sup> and, while involving individuals initially, have the potential to develop into disputes between the *aiga* or the villages from which the individuals come. In these circumstances, quick, decisive, and public reactions are required to prevent a protracted feud.

### The Ifoga

In such circumstances, representatives of the family, or in some cases, the village, of the offender may offer an *ifoga*, or public apology, to the offended family or village. (Macpherson and Macpherson 2005) This is the most visible and most dramatic form of dispute resolution.<sup>36</sup> It involves significant social and material costs to those who offer it and is undertaken only when the cost of failing to offer such a gesture is the possibility of continuing instability and escalating violence.<sup>37</sup> It is, as a consequence, relatively rare.<sup>38</sup> The *ifoga* involves a public act of self-humiliation as a form of apology and

a gift of *ie toga*. *Ifoga* were once offered as a token gesture of submission by groups defeated in wars (Pratt 1911). The term now means, according to Milner, a “ceremonial request for forgiveness made by an offender and his kinsman to those injured”; it comes from the word *ifo*, which means literally to bow down or to make a formal apology (Milner 1976:82–83). It may be offered in various circumstances from serious acts of violence against the person such as murder, manslaughter, or accidental wounding to acts against an individual’s honor such as adultery and slander.

There are two possible outcomes: the acceptance of the apology, *ole taliga ole ifoga*, or its rejection. Apparently, few *ifoga* are rejected even where the acts that gave rise to them are serious ones. Rather, the seriousness of the act will be reflected in the amount of time taken to accept the *ifoga*. The amount of time that supplicants spend in the rising sun and exposed to the public gaze is an indication of the seriousness of the offense offered. Eventually, in most cases, the supplicants are invited into the house, where speeches of reconciliation are made and food shared. The focus of both of these activities is the creation of a public agreement on the terms of settlement, and on the fact the matter is formally closed. This is essential to ensure that later retaliation is not considered and that “normal” social relations can resume.<sup>39</sup>

Thus, even when all of the other practices fail to maintain the highly valued social order, and social and economic relationships are disrupted, Samoa has a procedure that can circumvent the total breakdown of relations and the social and economic costs of this possibility.

### The Future of “Traditional” Dispute Resolution

Thus far, we have set out cultural foundations of social processes that may, collectively, explain the relative political and social stability that Samoa has enjoyed since independence. The righting of many interpersonal and intergroup wrongs within these arrangements continues to satisfy the needs of many living in rural villages in Samoa. As a former Chief Justice, Falefatu Sapolu, notes (1988:60), the system has delivered stability for Samoans,

Through the exercise of their customary authority, the FONONO ... have been most effective in maintaining peace and civilised life at the village level. A measure of their effectiveness is the small size of Western Samoa’s Police Force of about 300 constables in a population of approximately 165,000.

Guy Powles, a leading legal scholar of Samoa, highlights some specific features of the “traditional” process that may explain its acceptance.

These include the familiarity of elements of the process itself and includes such things as communication styles, standards of evidence, “ownership” of the process and the fact that unlike formal courts, which are “dealing once-and-for-all with the particular act or offense in isolation,.... traditional processes.... address the wider context of disputes, often without attempting to achieve finality” (Powles, 1989:8). For these reasons, and for the present at least, it seems that many people in villages acknowledge certain central social values and accept that the procedures outlined above are appropriate ways of maintaining these and of managing conflict associated with them.

Villages have demonstrated their desire to maintain these means of resolving conflicts in cases where individuals have challenged their right to do so (Meleisea 2000; Tuimaleai’ifano 2000). When a chief in the village of Lona in Fagaloa challenged the right of the village council to make decisions that constrained certain individual freedoms, the council forbade people to buy from his shop or to ride in his bus. His wife was told to remove their personal effects and vehicles from the village because the village had decided to burn their property and vehicles. When the chief chose to ignore the warning and openly challenged the authority of the *fono*, the village acted in concert against him. He was shot and his property destroyed.

The police report filed after the Lona incident gives some indication of the depth of feeling in villages about the nature and extent of their autonomy in local affairs. The report states, *inter alia* (Police Report 12/10/93), that

The high chief of Lona Fagaloa known as Tupuola Sami spoke in behalf of the village. He presented his view of the matter. He stated that the murder was the final decision of him and all the chiefs of Lona Fagaloa. He further stated that it is God’s commandment not to kill and so as the Criminal Law, but for Lona’s [part] it is not an illegal killing. The deceased has been disobeying the village decisions for many times. Again he stated that if the Police wish to bring the people responsible for the murder, then bring all the chiefs of the village and all the village residents be charged. Tupuola stated that the law of the village is if someone disobeys the village council’s decision the penalty is death and that was the case from their forefathers.... Tupuola was the only chief who spoke strongly to object to the Police.... In fact he was the only chief who spoke for the village and to defend it the whole time we were at the village.

In this statement, the high chief seems to be suggesting that the law of the village takes precedence over the laws of the land and those of God and, even allowing for the circumstances in which the comments were made, the

absence of dissent suggests that his view of the village's rights to formulate and implement local law was widely shared in the village.

The case, however, also raises some very significant issues that are likely to become more widely contested. The first and most obvious issue is why, when, as Powles (1988:6-9) notes, varying degrees of legal pluralism have existed in Samoa for some considerable time, have these types of issues become so significant only now? Part of the answer lies in the fact that only since the adoption of the Constitution, which embodied the concept of "fundamental rights," was there a basis for explicit conflict between two sets of rights. As Sapolu (1988:61) puts it,

Fundamental rights are founded on the philosophy of individual liberty while communal rights and obligations are based on the philosophy of collectivism.... The two underlying philosophies and the systems of rules derived therefrom are seen to be in competition with each other and, as the Constitution has expressly incorporated the philosophy of individual liberty in its fundamental rights provisions, the philosophy of collectivism as manifested through the customs and usages administered by the *fono* has to give way where conflict occurs.

The second part of the answer is that in the past forty-five years, the rate and extent of social change have increased dramatically. The political economy has undergone profound changes as a consequence of its increasing integration into the world capitalist economy. Over the period, increased levels of migration, formal education, and an extended range of media have increasingly exposed Samoans to "non-Samoan" world-views and lifestyles. Awareness of these alternatives is leading to challenges to the right of one group to define and enforce a single set of values and practices to the exclusion of others. Over the same period new sources of wealth have transformed earlier rank-wealth correlations and have redefined the contours of both influence and interest. This is not to argue that a rapid, dramatic transformation of traditional Samoan dispute resolution procedures is about to occur, but rather that changes in Samoan society are raising a series of issues about their formerly largely unchallenged status. Some of the issues raised by each of these changes are canvassed below.

### **Individual vs. Collective Rights**

Samoan society always recognized rights of individuals, but these rights were structured by age, genealogy, socio-political status, and gender and ensured that while all had rights, not all had equal rights. Where these rights were con-

tested, before Christian teaching took hold in the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the outcomes were determined by force or the threat of force, rather than by reference to principle. The Constitution of the Samoa formally established a set of individual rights, which are guaranteed to all Samoan citizens, and created another category of “wrongs” that were not envisaged in arrangements derived from precontact social organization. The Constitution established that all citizens irrespective of age, status, and gender had equal rights before the law of the land. The two sets of rights are, as Sapolu (1988) has noted, potentially conflicting and may generate increasing numbers of disputes.

If, for instance, many citizens choose to exercise their constitutional rights, which include, *inter alia*, the freedoms of speech and religion, they would rapidly create a situation of civil disorder. If, for example, a group of people in a village were to use their freedom of religion to form an atheist community and their freedom of speech to promote that community’s beliefs publicly, they would soon generate huge tension and the possibility of extreme violence within the village.

In fact, the challenge need not be so direct. In March 1997, in Samalaeulu, Savai’i, Lupe Lio sought to assert his rights to freedom of worship (Constitution of Western Samoa, section 11) (Samoa, 1988) to establish a Mormon congregation and to offer membership and instruction (Constitution of Western Samoa, section 12) to others in a village in which two denominations had already established churches. The Samalaeulu village *fono* rejected the individual’s right to worship in that way in the village, and petitioned the Lands and Titles Court to prevent him from doing so. When he persisted in his course of action, representatives of the village, exercising rights they assumed to exist under the Village Fono Act (1990), took Lio to the middle of the village, where they tied him to a stake and threatened to burn him publicly. In exercising what they believed to be their rights under one act, the leaders of the village appear to have deprived the individual of the right to liberty (Constitution of Western Samoa, section 6) and the freedom from inhuman treatment (Constitution of Western Samoa, section 7).

The village *fono* attempted to use its powers, which are presumed to exist under the Village Fono Act of 1990, to remove the “offender” from the village in hope of banishing the problem to some other jurisdiction. But in exercising those rights they would, in turn, have denied the individual rights guaranteed under the Constitution of assembly, association, movement, and residence (Constitution of Western Samoa, section 13). When Mr Lio opted to assert his rights and to persist with a plan that he seemingly had every right to do, he set the scene for a clash between two sets of rights.

The existing village mechanisms for resolving these types of disputes could not easily cope with this situation because they are designed to

regulate activity to meet standards of conduct on which there is substantial agreement. In an age in which contact with alternative world-views and lifestyles is increasingly available to Samoans as a consequence of travel, greater formal education, and the availability of an expanding range of media,<sup>40</sup> it is likely that more individuals will wish to adopt world-views and to pursue lifestyles that are not acceptable to the majority of those with whom they live.

This has been avoided in the recent past because many who wish to articulate world-views or pursue lifestyles that are at variance with dominant ones tend to migrate, and in some cases are “persuaded” to move, to places where these are more readily tolerated.<sup>41</sup> This tendency, rather than the success of existing dispute resolution processes, has insulated Samoa from the potential difficulties of resolving new categories of dispute with traditional devices. As long as individuals who wish to adopt world-views and/or lifestyles that are not “accepted” in villages leave for either urban centers or for overseas centers, their decisions do not constitute “threats” and will not generate the sorts of conflict that cases such as the above have. As long as this occurs, the villages are less likely to come into open conflict with the state over the limits of each’s authority because those who might precipitate such action choose to remove themselves rather than pursue their rights. But should an individual or group choose to remain and pursue its goals, as a matter of principle, several potentially serious destabilizing problems may arise.

This may be occurring already. A young woman was raped by a man from the same village. His family presented an *ifoga* to the young woman’s family and it was duly accepted. The offender’s family accepted responsibility for the act, exhibited public contrition, and offered substantial gifts. The offender was required to leave the village as part of the settlement. This might formerly have closed the matter, but in this case, the victim refused to accept this “resolution” and sought, against some members of her family’s advice, to lay a criminal complaint with the police against the rapist. She argued that while the *ifoga* might have resolved issues of family honor involved and had restored order, it did not resolve her personal violation and humiliation or the threat that the offender posed to other women. Her pursuit of a formal legal remedy set the stage for competition between the traditional and introduced systems of dispute resolution over the rights and obligations of each in this sphere.

### Consequences for Village-State Relations

The village that finds itself in conflict with the state must eventually “lose” to the state, for as Sapolu notes, “the Constitution is the paramount law and any law inconsistent with the Constitution is void to the extend of the inconsistency” (Sapolu 1988:61). The application of this principle “will gradually but



eventually destroy the authority of customary adjudicators” (1989:61). In the Lona case, some chiefs and some untitled men were tried and convicted and sentenced in the state’s courts despite their beliefs about their rights. In such cases, the courts are forced to clarify the limits of villages’ power and autonomy publicly. The court’s action may have two unforeseen consequences: it may undermine the authority of the village councils at local levels and limit their effectiveness in local government and the administration of justice and ultimately their role in the maintenance of public order. Given that, as both Powles and Sapolu note, these bodies and procedures are indispensable to the maintenance of public order in the villages, such a course of action may lead to difficulties in replacing them in this role. But such a conflict of wills would not only highlight the limits of the village’s authority.

If the individual petitioned the state to enforce his or her right to freedom of worship and the state chose to “right” that “wrong” by using its available mechanisms, that is the application of force to guarantee the person’s right to reside in the village, it would in turn create a situation in which the limits of the state’s power were exposed. In the Samalae’ulu case, the “solution” organized by the police was to persuade the council to cancel the burning and counsel the victim to accept the banishment order and move away from the village. In the Lona case, the lawyer for all 28 defendants who pleaded guilty to various charges argued that all had committed the offenses because they had been ordered to do so by the village council, and had been threatened with banishment if they disobeyed. The court convicted all and handed down sentences which, despite the court’s intention, may well have been interpreted as a sign of at least partial acceptance of the argument. Twelve men were sentenced to twenty months of jail of which eighteen were suspended on the condition that each pay the deceased’s family \$US250 and serve one hundred hours of community service. Five were sentenced to ten months of which nine were suspended on condition they pay the family \$US50, and eleven of the youngest received two years probation and 350 hours of community service.

The Samalae’ulu case demonstrated that the state does not have the force at its disposal to enforce individuals’ rights for any length of time in the face of determined opposition by a united village. Nor is it clear that the state would enjoy the support of the electorate for such a course of action. In each of the cases outlined above, public opinion tended to support the village leadership. One commonly expressed view was that if people weren’t prepared to accept the authority of the village, they could and should live elsewhere. There is always a risk that in enforcing an individual’s rights against those of a village, the state might turn public opinion against itself. In such cases in the recent past, the state has found a means of affirming the individuals’ rights while avoiding denying those of the village. In the case of

Lotoso'a, where ten people were exiled from the village for joining an evangelical church rather than one of the two established denominations in the village, a court declared that "the exiles had the right of religious freedom but should hold their Bible meetings outside the village" (Islands Business 2004:12). But these are not the only disputes that highlight the limitations of traditional resolution processes.

### Commercial Disputes

The monetization of the Samoan village economy, the commodification of an increasing range of activities, and the increasing value of cash-based exchanges within families and villages has created a category of "wrongs" that were not envisaged in arrangements that derived from precapitalist social organization. Can these commercial wrongs be righted within traditional arrangements? Many small, village-based businesses must take into account the social context of their operations and the social and economic consequences of pursuing available commercial remedies.<sup>42</sup> Most, therefore, try to avoid situations in which disputes are likely to arise. Thus, suppliers seek advance payment for certain goods and services to avoid the problem of later collection, and set credit limits at levels at which goodwill is maintained, while potential losses are contained and the need to pursue large debts is avoided. Where debts are incurred by relations, business people may turn to traditional processes to recover debts or convert them into socio-political capital in the form of indebtedness on the part of the debtor.

Such remedies are, however, unlikely to work in all cases. Unrelated people are less likely to be able to bring "informal" pressures to bear through relationships to ensure recovery of a debt and have less reason to worry about the consequences of their action for family or village cohesion. This is already the case around Apia, where some 37 percent of the total population of Samoa now resides and where the parties to a dispute are less likely to be related to one another. A young man explained how he ran his auto repair business in a peri-urban area,

When I have to deal with people to whom I am not related, I have to take another approach. I leave one small thing to do and say that I am waiting for a part and assure them that I should have it by the time they come over to pay for the work. It's called in Samoan a "fisherman's lie" and most people understand the message but no one's pride is hurt in the process. If they want the car but can't pay, I have to resort to another strategy and get tough. But I'm always polite. I always treat my customers with proper respect. I always

discuss the matter of payment in private. I would never suggest that they are unable to pay the bill because an insult like that won't get me anywhere. But I have a business to run and I have to worry about cash flow, and they have to know I will take them to court for the money and I do but only after I have tried all the other ways.

Thus, while small businesspeople attempt to deal with commercial matters within a Samoan cultural framework, they are prepared to take defaulters to court when this fails to deliver commercial remedies.

However, the increasing complexity of the Samoan economy means that more transactions involve larger commercial entities that are managed for profit and have no obvious interest or stake in the maintenance of interpersonal or intergroup cohesion. For these commercial entities interpersonal and intergroup cohesion in groups with which they deal are only valuable in as far as it serves, or impedes, their freedom to conduct uninterrupted commerce profitably. Where a business is one of a number of suppliers of a service or commodity, such as generic auto parts, it may have to temper its pursuit of profit to preserve market share. Where a company enjoys a monopoly of a service or commodity, as in the case of branded auto spare parts, it has no need to consider the social consequences of enforcement of contracts. Even in such situations, Samoan-owned and/or Samoan-managed companies will attempt to avoid creating disputes by credit control and prepayment, and go to courts for remedies to commercial wrongs only when these processes fail.

As the Samoan economy becomes increasingly complex, and as the number and value of commercial transactions increase, so too will the necessity of seeking formal legal redress for disputes around these. Where larger businesses succeed in the courts, their actions may point the way to other, smaller businesses, who find the remedies available within Samoan institutions either inadequate or inappropriate. The garage owner noted with some envy that large businesses invoked commercial law and went straight to court and avoided cash flow problems, but then as he also noted, they didn't have to live in a village. As the number of commercial entities taking legal actions in civil courts increases, such solutions may become the norm. If this were to occur, traditional dispute resolution procedures would become increasingly insignificant in a rapidly growing area of social transactions.

### **Conclusion**

Rapid social change in Samoa is producing new and potentially destabilizing tensions. The state will have increasingly to consider the means of resolving

the conflicts that will emerge as individual rights come into conflict with the rights of collectivities. The events in Lona, in which the village *fono a matai* took action against a *matai* businessman who challenged its right to restrict the conduct of his business, resulted not only in his death but a very public demonstration of the difficulties that confront the state as it seeks to clarify the “traditional” rights of collectivities and the “new” rights of individuals (Macpherson 1997). The state will be challenged to find appropriate devices for resolving conflicts between the two spheres if people choose to insist on the enforcement of their constitutional rights. The events in Samalae’ulu brought these matters to the surface yet again. The dilemma that the Samoan state faces is neither new nor unique to Samoa. It is a generic consequence of “modernization” and “postmodernization.” The resolution of such matters will, however, be difficult if, as the former Police Commissioner Tanielu Galuvao told the *Samoa Observer* in 1993, most villagers continue to believe that the law of the land is the *matai* law, while the agencies of the state enact national laws that necessarily conflict with it. The roots of the problem are, however, much easier to find than are the solutions. However, in the Lotoso’a case, in an act of formal reconciliation, the ten exiles were permitted to return to the village (Islands Business 2004:12), reflecting, perhaps, the overarching Samoan desire to contain and manage disputes that may yet provide the motive for the resolving these larger issues.

### NOTES

1. These “traditions” probably date to postcontact Samoa. Before then, many disputes between social entities were resolved by force and ceremonies, such as the *ifoga*, which are presumed to be a reflection of a desire for peace and were originally a means of ending or avoiding wars or of circumventing all-out retribution.
2. It is possible to argue that the proverb also acknowledges the inevitability of periodic conflict since head lice are endemic in Samoa.
3. The Biblical passages quoted in explaining the desirability of cooperation are drawn from the Psalms and the Beatitudes. The Biblical injunctions are frequently reinforced with secular proverbs that also stress the importance of cooperation.
4. In fact *fa’aaloalo* means, more correctly, to pay deference or to show appropriate respect to others. The consequence of showing either deference or “appropriate” respect to others is the maintenance of the existing sets of power relations.
5. This is ironic because, as a consequence of both academic writing (for instance Shore 1983; Gerber 1975; Freeman 1983) and popular fiction by Samoan authors (for instance Wendt 1973, 1974, 1977, 1980, 1986), Samoan society is often seen as one in which violence is endemic.

6. In this discussion, group, entity, and unit are used to refer to generic collectivities. For the purposes of this discussion, group could equally refer to a household, *fuafale*; extended kin group, *aiga*; sub-village, *pitonu'u*; village, *nu'u*; or district, *itumalo*.

7. This is probably more true of those who remain in the villages and derive significant parts of their income from agriculture and fishing. The urban population, which derives significant parts of their income from salary or wage employment, is typically less involved in and less directly dependent on the unity of the village or kin group.

8. It is possible that at some point the resources controlled by a unit become large enough to generate internal competition for control, which may lead in turn to the fragmentation of the unit. The Lands and Titles Court, for example, hears large numbers of cases in which factions from within families compete for the right to exercise *pule*, or control, over the family estate. It is likely that these sorts of challenges have become more frequent as national law has restricted the range of means available to modern chiefs to head off challenges to their control.

9. It is significant that one of the proverbs used in urging reconciliation likens a disunited social entity to a collapsed fish trap, which is totally useless until it is rebuilt. The proverb, *e ta'ape a fatuati*, which means literally that the stone trap has collapsed, alludes to the fact that although all the stones that make up the fish trap may be present, they cannot catch anything until they are once again rebuilt into a trap and highlights the impotence of a divided group (Schultz 1980:15).

10. Psalm 133, which begins, "Behold, how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in harmony," is a popularly cited passage, as are others in Matthew 5:5 and 9 that assert that the peacemakers shall become the children of God.

11. It is also true that, in other contexts, Samoans are periodically reminded of Samoan and Biblical heroes who went to war to protect or restore the honor of the faith or group.

12. There are of course exceptions to this. Where, for instance, men of similar age meet, untitled people will defer to those who hold titles.

13. The theology of these denominations has been significantly influenced by Samoan social values since Samoans assumed leadership roles in the Methodist and Congregational theological colleges in Samoa (Gilson 1970:115–137). As Meleisea notes, "Christianity became part of *fa'a Samoa* and was used, like the old religion, to legitimate its institutions" (1992:23).

14. This is hardly surprising since the congregations, rather than the church authorities, engage and dismiss pastors and therefore exert, in various ways, a significant degree of control over the selection and interpretation of scripture that is delivered in the village and the conduct that it is employed to validate.

15. In a society that values individualism, promotes individuality, and accepts a principle of meritocracy these terms may seem insignificant. In a society that values the opposite personal attributes, the weight of these terms assumes very negative connotations.

16. Thus proverbs such as *ua fa'aluma tupu i fale*, which means the disgrace had its origins at home (Schultz 1985:133) are used to refer to people whose conduct has exposed their relatives to others' criticism.

17. Thus, a *matai* will say to a person, "You have brought your entire family down, but that's a matter for you and your family to resolve. But this has brought the village's name down. You and your family will always be called animals (*mea ola*) for this act, but did you even consider that all of us might also be called animals by people in other villages because of your conduct?"

18. This is made easier by the belief that behavior, and especially "deviant" behavior, is genetically patterned. The axiom "the chicken resembles the hen" is frequently invoked to link one person's conduct with that of other members of the kin group.

19. In the village of Lona, in Fagaloa District, a series of events lead to the fatal shooting of a *matai* by untitled men who claimed to be acting on behalf of the other *matai*, whose collective authority he had challenged. In this case, the state required the village to hand over the offenders who were subsequently tried and sentenced in criminal court. In so doing, it publicly suspended the village leadership's autonomy over its own affairs.

20. In a village in Savai'i the leadership, representing two established denominations, prepared to burn at the stake a villager who tried repeatedly to establish a third denomination in the village and in so doing challenged both their authority and autonomy in local affairs. Only the intervention of the pastors of the existing denominations, and heavy rain, prevented the village from executing its sentence and in the process, ironically, also challenged their authority over village affairs.

21. Thus, an informant said that serving a *matai* was natural and reasonable but that the *matai*'s unremitting political ambitions meant that he was unable to take care of personal and family needs. As he said, "it's just one *fa'alavelave* after another and he wants to show his face everywhere. He doesn't care about his village, or his family ... only himself."

22. In fact, in a number of cases of suicide, the deceased had complained of his or her treatment, usually by parents or other family members, with others shortly before taking his or her life. See for instance Macpherson and Macpherson (1987).

23. The most frequently quoted proverb in these circumstances is *ole ala ile pule ole tau-tua*, which reminds the listener that the path to power is service.

24. The scriptures are invoked to remind the complainant that while things may escape the attention of the people around them, nothing escapes the judgment of the Lord and that the promise of a just punishment is there in scripture.

25. Thus, an older brother offered to do more work for his father to lighten the workload of a younger brother who felt that the father was distributing work unfairly among his sons. A younger sister helped her older sister in her garden too so that her in-laws would stop complaining about her inability to feed them. A grandfather who discovered that his granddaughter was being required to work in the plantation took the girl away so that she could attend school more frequently.

26. Thus no attempt to address a father's treatment of his sons was attempted until one of the sons committed suicide and drew unfavorable attention to and speculation about the affairs of the family and threatened to undermine the family's reputation.

27. The minds of those who refuse to take an active part in reconciliation are likened in proverbs to the water that stagnates in discarded coconut shells and becomes brackish and eventually becomes a breeding place for mosquitoes. (See for instance, Schultz 1980:89.)

28. In the Lona village incident, where a conflict was not resolved early, another chief was shot and his home, vehicles, and property were burned by *taulele'a* acting for the village chiefs. This has led to continuing conflict within the village, exposed the village to public ridicule, and led to the authority of the village *fono* being overridden by the court, which further humiliated its members by convicting them and imprisoning their agents.

29. Unresolved disputes may escalate quickly, and the absence of a mobile police force that is able to intervene physically in sufficient numbers to guarantee a continued peace places a premium on orderly resolution of intergroup conflicts.

30. *Matai* may be removed from their positions and in some cases banished from the village or district, in what is known as *fa'asavaliga o le matai*, where they fail to manage *'aiga* affairs effectively. This is rarely done in modern Samoa.

31. The relative status and importance of chiefly titles within the village, the district, and indeed the nation, are embodied in *fa'alupega*, which clarify relationships among families when they meet. (See Kramer 1994, volume 1:660 for a definition of the term, and pp. 8-453 for the *fa'alupega* themselves.)

32. The same body is also known as the *Fono a Ali'i ma Faipule* and exists because, as Powlles notes, it is one of a set of "village organisations which are indispensable to social order [and which are] unwilling to be brought under central government control" (1989:14).

33. This style of hearing is more likely to occur in rural villages than in peri-urban and urban ones, in which many are engaged in wage work and in which local governance has taken new forms that reflect new bases for aggregation.

34. Thus, for instance, when a young man abused and assaulted his village's pastor, he was seen to have offered a serious affront to a person, and an office, that the village as a whole was bound to protect. The offense was in this case treated as an offense against the village as well as the pastor.

35. For instance the crew of an interisland vessel was playing cards and drinking beer when a dispute developed between two friends. In the struggle that developed, one man was pushed into a rail and sustained a skull fracture from which he died. In another case a truck driver collided with an unrelated motorcyclist who subsequently died from injuries.

36. For a comprehensive discussion of the form of the *ifoga*, see Macpherson and Macpherson 2005.

37. A bus operator fatally injured a child in another village. No *ifoga* was offered initially, and for eight months afterwards members of the bus driver's family were attacked when they passed through the village in which the child was killed. The bus driver's family retaliated and violence escalated progressively. When an *ifoga* was finally offered, those involved complained that the violence could have been avoided if the apology had been made early.

38. Accounts of some twenty-one that had occurred over the past ten years were collected in the course of research for this paper but an accurate estimate of their frequency would be impossible. Published accounts of contemporary *ifoga* are even rarer. Filoiali'i and Knowles (1983) detail only three cases; Shore (1983:19–20) details one and O'Meara (1990:121–125) another.

39. This is generally a statement of intent and is not always entirely successful. Some people who are closely related to the victim may, in periods of acute psychological stress and/or under the influence of alcohol, engage in retaliation, but these acts occur without the sanction of the village and are individual acts.

40. The Internet is freely available in many parts of Samoa, as are videos and DVDs and movies. While the last of these can be readily censored, there is no effective means of filtering the former.

41. Thus, while *fa'afafine*, or transsexuals, are found in living in villages, larger communities of *fa'afafine* are now found in Apia, New Zealand, and Australia where they enjoy more freedom to associate with others and pursue a chosen lifestyle.

42. Small businesses cannot afford the prospect of a protracted, village-sponsored boycott of their activities. A businessman who successfully pursued a debt against a village through the courts found that his store and mobile cinema operation were boycotted and his situation became worse rather than better.

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**BOOK REVIEW FORUM**

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Jane C. Desmond, *Staging Tourism: Bodies on Display from Waikiki to Sea World*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1999. Pp. xxv, 336, photographs, notes, references, index. US\$30.00 hardback; \$22.00 paperback.

*Review:* DEBORAH WONG  
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I FOCUS HERE on Desmond's contributions to performance studies rather than her position within Pacific Studies. I am not a Pacific Studies specialist, and I know that other reviewers for this journal will speak to the book's location within area studies. Instead, I write from my sensibilities as an ethnomusicologist and I address Desmond's contributions to performance studies. More broadly, I want to address how performance studies opens up understandings of ethnicity, racialization, and nationalism within the framework of spectacle.

I have heard informal reports that Desmond's comparison of Hawai'ian performance traditions to spectacles of animal performance has prompted uneasiness and even anger in certain circles of Pacific Island studies. Desmond's work addresses cultural representations, and her decision to put both kinds of "bodies on display" in the same book is strategic. It opens up important issues and questions, and prompts a kind of calculated discussion that offers useful handles to indigenous studies and Ethnic Studies. Her focus is squarely on issues of representation: Desmond does not align the "native" with the non-human but rather offers a critical analysis of the processes that make such elisions possible.

*Staging Tourism* offers the kind of reconsideration that productively shook up feminist studies when race, ethnicity, and class were theorized as interconstitutive with gender and sexuality. Studies of tourism have to some extent marked Pacific Studies as an area, as have considerations of how colonialism and Orientalism defined its place in the global imagination. Shifting the frame to the performing body is yet another way to open up the cultural politics of the Pacific. As an outsider to this particular area studies (I work in Asian American Studies and Southeast Asian Studies), I have long been struck by how the Pacific has been acknowledged and constructed as a heavily politicized zone in a way that other parts of the world have not been; for instance, it has taken Southeast Asian Studies much longer to begin interpolating critical models of colonial influence into its foundational ideas of modernity and history-making, even though most of that region was under colonial direction for anywhere between three and five hundred years. The ways that different spheres of area studies are defined and maintained must always be attended to—that is, a reflexive consideration of how particular area studies are imagined and prioritized must be part of the critical vigilance that we bring to any part of the globe. What is considered worth focusing on is part of the inheritance and politics of any area studies, as are critiques of work departing from it.

If the critical dynamics of Pacific Studies necessitates attention to indigen-ous rights, then it is equally important to consider the ways indigeneity is and is not a pure zone standing outside the complexities of history and culture. Certainly Ethnic Studies and Asian American Studies have been reinvigorated by the difficult questions asked by (often indigenous) scholars of Pacific Island Studies. At the time of this writing, the Association for Asian American Studies is struggling with a proposal, put forward by both indigenous and Asian American scholars (including fellow reviewer Amy Ku'uleialoha Stillman), to change its name to the Association for Asian and Pacific Island American Studies in an attempt to correct certain elisions and erasures that have marked the very construction of the Asian-in-America. This is part of the long-term, endless, and necessary effort to account for everyone in our midst, even if the effort is utopian. Accounting for multiple presences will transform the way we conceive of "ourselves," and certain shared processes may be made visible as we move toward new critical and political models for social justice.

If (the new?) Pacific Studies is thus marked by attention to power, authority, representation, and postcolonial response, then it is also necessary to attend to the ways that Western traditions of representation and constructed indigeneity have profoundly shaped some of the ways that "tradition" is maintained and rendered powerful in the Pacific. The 1980s and 1990s

were marked by a number of significant studies focused on the dynamics of Western exhibition practices, including museums, festivals, and historical reenactment (e.g., Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998; Price 1989; Handler and Gable 1997). This is the scholarly milieu Desmond is part of and responding to, and she is aware that this area was more deeply part of a critical effort to transform the hoary discipline of folklore from within by questioning the praxis of the "traditional" as an always already mediated product of control and redefinition. Folklore has gone from being a field stubbornly in search of a vanishing original to a discipline vibrant in its engagement with pressing questions of power, authority, and the control of history. Indeed, "folklore" has effectively been transformed into a matter of "folkloricization," which is understood to take place from the top down. All this has been in close conversation with the young discipline of performance studies, which emerged in the 1970s from the confluence of avant-garde efforts to redefine dramatic practice and work by anthropologists, notably Victor Turner, focused on cultural processes of performance and ritual as central to culture making in the most foundational sense. Some of these ideas came full circle. "The Couple in the Cage," a now (in)famous work by performance artists Guillermo Gómez-Peña and Coco Fusco (Fusco and Heredia 1993), featured the two confined in a cage, dressed in fantastically "indigenous" costuming, on display for hours and even days at a time; the work was staged in a number of public venues and was meant to force a critical engagement with the tourist gaze and its colonial ancestry. Other studies, including *Ota: The Pygmy in the Zoo* (Bradford and Blume 1992), *Give Me My Father's Body: The Life of Minik, The New York Eskimo* (Harper 1986, 2000), and to some extent *Ishi in Two Worlds* (Kroeber 1961) have retraced troubled histories of ethnic others elided with animals, or presented as artifacts by exhibiting them in museums, or both. An upcoming conference titled *Performing Ethnicity* will offer a reevaluation of the St. Louis World's Fair of 1904.<sup>1</sup> The critical space between the tourist venue, the museum, and the zoo is historically small, and Desmond's work is intrinsically informed by such scholarship. She knows that heritage work and tourism are not unrelated. She proceeds with the understanding that any research along these lines is informed by an engagement with this relatively new scholarship.

The thread of inquiry connecting the different parts of this book is, in Desmond's own words, "radical bodily difference." She begins by arguing that "Many, many people are willing to pay a lot of money to see bodies which are different from their own, to purchase the right to look, and to believe that through that visual consumption they have come to know something that they didn't before" (xiii). Further, Desmond attends carefully and consistently to the economies driving desires to witness spectacles of bodily

difference; no mere study of entertainment for its own sake, the book asks pressing ethical questions about “our paradigms of social classification” (266) and their relationship to race, class, and gender, and more broadly to ideologies of multiculturalism and the politics of pleasure.

One of Desmond’s primary contributions is a sustained examination of the body—what it is, how it is constructed and reconstructed, how it signifies, how to address its specificity as well as its kinesthetic commonalities across time and space, and more. The usefulness of “the body” as a critical concept is part of the deepest work that *Staging Tourism* pulls off. What inroads does “the body” offer to an understanding of particular places, people, histories? Why deploy such a generalized idea of materiality in the service of ethnographic and historical particularity? The emergence of the body as a meaningful site is one of the most significant theoretical developments in the last twenty years across a wide range of disciplines. From philosophy, feminist theory, cultural studies, dance ethnography, to performance studies, “the body” has offered a means to join considerations of discursive and material realities—in short, to push at the dialogical relationship between the discursive and the material, but without ultimately concluding that discourse is all. Whenever “the body” is evoked, much is activated, including a serious consideration of bodily knowledge, bodily memory, economies of the laboring body, the body as a site of conjoined pleasure, danger, and commodification, etc. Desmond attends carefully throughout to what she calls “the seeming prediscursive qualities of physical presence” (252).

The hula dancer is in some ways all too easy a mark, and surely everyone knows that she is a construct (because *she* is inevitably gendered despite the strong historical presence of men in the hula tradition). Desmond addresses the re-racialization of the Polynesian hula girl into a hapa-haole that rendered the native controllable and familiar: she argues that the hula dancer stands in for a primitive, original, natural native, but that its nineteenth-century tropes have been reworked into a twentieth/twenty-first century emphasis on “culture” that simply complicates earlier biological models of authenticity without abandoning them. Desmond approaches this history of representation in several ways: as an archivist and historian, as a practitioner (formerly a professional modern dancer, she studied hula for a time in Hawai‘i),<sup>2</sup> and as an ethnographer. Her participant-observation work was not confined to dance but was deliberately focused on a range of tourist activities in Hawai‘i (tours, souvenir shopping, lei-making classes, tourist shows, lū‘aus, etc.).

This first half of the book is likely to attract the most attention from Pacific Studies scholars, and in some ways it revisits work found elsewhere. Nonetheless, Desmond’s discussion of how Hawai‘ians have been racialized as charmingly, harmlessly brown (not black, not white) is informed and pointed, and

she refers constantly to the tensions between the tourist view of Hawai'i and the complexities of Hawai'ian nationalism and the sovereignty movement. She attends to the relationship between the two as a continuum, not as separate spheres, and allows for the possibility of native Hawai'ians rewriting the tourist script from within. An entire chapter is devoted to an analysis of turn-of-the-century postcards of hula dancers and the ways that this tradition of visual culture segued into mainland hula performances in the early 1900s, often by non-Hawai'ians. Her account carefully attends to how minstrelsy, vaudeville, and Broadway informed the production and reception of these performances. Her conclusion, that the hula craze in Anglo-American mainland culture of the 1900-1920s drew together "racial, sexual, and national discourses" (77), is well-documented and strongly argued. Moving into more fraught territory, she turns to the expansion of the Hawai'ian tourist industry from 1930 on and focuses on the Anglicization of the hula girl and her reformulation into a slimmer, less-brown erotic object. Her chapter on beachboy surfers and their eroticized, safely racialized access to Anglo women tourists is short but offers a good counterbalance to the emphasis on the hula girl phenomenon, and it brings home Desmond's points about the power of representational play around ideas of Hawai'ian performance.

None of these matters are passé. In the summer of 2003, an excellent new documentary about the Hawai'ian hula in California was aired on public television,<sup>3</sup> and a reviewer in the *Los Angeles Times* came up with astonishingly tired and naïve pronouncements, including the observation that the filmmakers should have featured less talking and more extended footage of the dances, or, as the reviewer put it, "more hip-moving, less hand-wringing" (Perry 2003). Indeed, the reviewer went so far as to describe hula as "that sexy, feminine, macho, ancient, modern, thoroughly captivating and expressive form of dance"—so the old tropes are alive and well.

One of Desmond's most challenging and trenchant conclusions is that the liberal conservationist impulse supposedly driving interest in animal spectacle is not innocent, and is in fact closer to the sexist and racist consumption of the hula girl than may at first be evident. She suggests that the manufacture of "the natural," whether indigenous peoples or animals, is always suspect—and that cultural tourism and animal/nature tourism are therefore linked (144). The hula girl and Shamu are each the outcome of a "culturalization of nature" that ultimately speaks volumes about the ideological values driving such markets. As Desmond puts it (250),

The celebration of the natural that Sea World sells is simultaneously a celebration of certain visions of the cultural and the fantasies that they encapsulate. This vision is ultimately a liberal one, which



through its emphasis on the heterosexual family, individuation, and unproblematic “harmony” and universalism, serves conservative political interests. It is consonant with the beliefs and desires of both the corporate backers of Sea World and the predominantly white middle-and upper-middle-class consumers who form its audience base.

If it seems a bit easy to reveal the hula girl as a problem, it is in the second half of the book that Desmond offers particularly original and pointed critique. Ethnographic thickness is nicely balanced against interpretation, and what’s more, Desmond never gives in to the simplest and most cynical analysis possible. She treats ecotourism and the pleasure of being “kissed” by Shamu the killer whale in the spectacularly artificial world of Sea World as two ends of a single continuum.

Desmond is a noted dance ethnologist and her skills in analyzing performance are constantly on display, though not always in expected ways. Her description of watching schools of fish circle in tight formation at the Monterey Bay Aquarium is a small tour-de-force: she notes that “fish do not make great trained performers” but that watching them move in the huge tank is both beautiful and the result of their confined artificial environment, resulting in “recoreographed behaviors” (184). This attention to movement and its cultural basis (even for fish, in this case) is emblematic of Desmond’s approach. An evening at Germaine’s Luau show outside Honolulu is an early high point of the book. The chapter on Shamu, titled “Performing Nature,” contains a detailed description and analysis of the Sea World show and its “heavily narrativized” (243) messages, always maintaining a seamless balance between vibrant depiction and critique of the show’s emphasis on an “Edenic” nature and anthropomorphized animals. Her point, that “the choreography constructs and presents this ideological process, staging bodily actions as symbolic practice” (242), is always glowing evident. Desmond’s attention to the behaviors more normally regarded as dance are woven into her broader consideration of performance. For example, white performer Gilda Gray’s “South Sea Dance,” published in a popular dance magazine in 1924, is described in detail, from the raffia skirt to the shimmy of the hips on an eight count, and Desmond shows how these features speak to the ideologies of race and gender that Gray was subject to—and busily constructing.

To summarize, *Staging Tourism* is an outstanding example of performance studies work. I have used it effectively to draw graduate students into some of the most pressing issues in the humanities, e.g., how racism and sexism are interconstitutive; the gaze as male, colonial, imperial, etc.; how to do gendered/racialized/classed analyses of performance and visual

culture, etc. *Staging Tourism* is solidly grounded in ethnographic research in multiple (and sometimes unexpected) sites, from the archives at the Bishop Museum, to hotel storerooms in Honolulu, to Sea World, the San Diego Zoo, and any number of tourist restaurants and nightclubs. The numerous photographs—51 total—add immeasurably to the book: the archival images of hula (including postcards covering almost a century) and Desmond's own photographs of tourists, tourist sites, and tourist consumption, are a treasure trove in their own right. The book's strongest points are its accessibility and the sophistication of its theoretical framework. "Description" is never distinct from critical analysis: the two are interwoven in compelling ways. Desmond's writing is always clear, frequently in the first person, and is often inspired. The book is beautifully, sensitively, and vividly written, with reflexive attention to how ethnography, consumption, and desire became inter-related during Desmond's fieldwork (146). Throughout, Desmond herself is a spirited, enthusiastic, and always thoughtful tourist in the best sense of the word. Yet she is fully in control of her argument and its implications, and she is at pains to ensure that she is not misunderstood. To this end, I quote her at length (xxiv):

In drawing comparisons between animal tourism and cultural tourism, I am not suggesting that viewing Hawaiian tourist performances is just like viewing animals in a zoo. I am not saying that complicated subjectivities are reducible to bodily evidence, although this is precisely what the epistemological structures of these industries imply. Nor am I saying that bodily differences are merely epistemological tropes to be overcome, that a jellyfish is really no different from a whale, that animals and humans are exactly the same. Nor am I saying that histories of genocide and animal annihilation are irrelevant predecessors to tourism, and we should just investigate the rhetorical structures of tourism that transpose such histories into nostalgia for a utopian past instead. My interest throughout is in understanding how bodily differences are marked, calibrated, measured, and mobilized politically to naturalize various social relations and how these operations are both constitutive of and constituted by certain kinds of tourism.

Finally, it is important to note that Desmond's bottom line is an effort to reimagine tourism. No mere critic, she proposes "a more embodied concept of tourism and of the tourist as consumer," with the idea that the "scholarly intervention" of her book, among others, might help to create new models for "social citizenship" (xxiv-xxv). In significant ways, this book is about

whiteness and the white American middle class. Not quite a study of tourists (indeed, Desmond offers little evidence of having solicited tourists' responses or opinions),<sup>4</sup> it certainly opens up tourist culture and its colonial and imperialist ideologies. In her conclusions, Desmond begins to map out an "alternative vision" of tourism (260-66)—a tourism that would reveal history (rather than transcend it), that would redesign what is chosen for commodification, that would draw on the co-presence and "co-contemporaneity" (263) of the resident and the tourist, that would acknowledge the economics of the encounter. *Staging Tourism* demonstrates how performance studies, at its best, is not 'just' the study of performance but in fact gets at the big questions, including the possibility of different practices and different futures.

### NOTES

1. *Performing Ethnicity, a conference marking the centennial of the St. Louis World's Exposition*, City College of the City University of New York, October 15-16, 2004.

2. Desmond is sometimes described as a dance ethnographer, which she certainly is, and her two edited collections (1997, 2001) have already made a significant impact on dance studies. Still, I see her critical orientation as more broadly situated in performance studies.

3. *American Aloha*, filmed and directed by Lisette Marie Flanary and Evann Siebens, broadcast on P.O.V. in August 2003.

4. Desmond herself notes that this entire area cries out for more research (258-59).

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Review: AMY KU'ULEIALOHA STILLMAN  
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ABOUT THE ONLY way to transcend the discomfort of Jane Desmond's provocative juxtaposition of Hawai'ian hula performances and animal theme park shows is to realize that the book is not *about* hula or animal theme parks. Rather, Desmond challenges us to consider that seemingly pre-discursive ways of naturalizing physical bodily characteristics have not only been, but continue to be, deployed in ideological ways. Thus, what appears to be a book about tourist shows and their predictably questionable ethics instead proposes an argument of far greater consequence. By excavating the prevalence of what she calls "physical foundationalism," Desmond's aim is to sound cautionary notes about its costs, and to propose critical strategies for intervening in its insidiousness.

In physical foundationalism, "bodies function as the material signs for categories of social difference, including divisions of gender, race, cultural identity, and species" (p. xiv). Desmond identifies a "tightly braided union" that naturalizes these systems of thought as follows: 1) bodies are "natural"; 2) bodies are different from one another; 3) typologies of difference are natural; and 4) what is natural is necessarily right or "true" (p. xiv).

Physical foundationalism has to do then with categories that are socially constructed—such as gender, race, culture, and species—taking on bodily-based biological underpinnings, which are then naturalized as "the way things are," so to speak. When bodily difference is put on display performatively in a tourist context, physical differences in the bodies viewed then serve to re-inforce what is "normative" and thus "better" about one's own body, and to

then maintain prevailing status quo mechanisms of power and dominance over those very others on display. This facilitates an epistemological function, prior to discourse, in which what appears “natural” is taken as fact, and is thus used to rationalize ideological formulations such as relationships between men and women, or between whites and non-whites. Desmond argues that in tourist consumption of commodified bodily display, “bodies legitimate, specify, present, and represent that which is being displayed . . . , and they do so through explicit or implicit discourses of naturalism” (p. 252).

To arrive at such a conclusion, Desmond constructs a comparative framework between “people tourism” (chapters 1-6) and “animal tourism” (chapters 7-9). Where people tourism operates by naturalizing and racializing culture, animal tourism operates by commodifying and staging the experiencing of nature. In each case, corporeality is staged, providing audiences with opportunities for direct observation of “specimens.” The methods deployed in this study are equally interdisciplinary. Where the case study of hula performance is based primarily on archival and documentary research that interrogates hula displays from the inception of organized tourism in the late 1800s, the case study of animal tourism is built on ethnographic observation and participation; where the case study of hula focuses primarily on entertainment in Hawai‘i (with a brief consideration of performances on the U.S. continent depicted in photographs from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century), the multi-sited case study of animal tourism ranges through multiple animal theme parks across the United States.

*Staging Tourism* is devoted to unmasking the workings of physical foundationalism in tourism. What makes for particularly stomach-churning reading is the insidiousness underlying how, in tourist industries that cater largely to white, middle-class, heterosexual Americans, those particular identities are normalized through gazing upon bodies of Others. Thus Desmond reads Hawai‘i’s tremendously profitable tourist industry not only as economically exploitative of Native Hawaiians, but as having an ideological underbelly, of upholding certain ideologies of race, class, and gender. Equally disturbing is her analysis of the tight staging and choreographing in animal theme park shows; indeed, audiences are lulled into thinking that behaviors such as taking one’s trainer for a piggy-back ride is somehow natural.

How hula dancers and animal performers in theme parks get to be placed within the same comparative framework, however, merits some discussion. Desmond offers her rationale for doing so on p. xxiii: “I wanted to see what would happen if I looked at issues of ‘identity’ but in realms normally not included in such discourse: not race, not gender, not class, not ethnicity, not nationality, but species.” Once over the species barrier, Desmond goes one more step, beyond mammals to marine life. Within the same book, then, the

analysis ranges from Native Hawaiians to tigers to dolphins to Shamu, Sea World's star attraction. Desmond's argument is that the conceptual thinking by which ideologies of race, gender and class get communicated through the bodily display of specimen is actually the same in people and animal tourism.

And herein lies my own personal dilemma. There is something too close to home, so to speak, when seeing one's own ancestors held up in such light. As insidious as the racialized thinking was behind the display of "primitive" peoples in the world expositions of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries (that placed the most primitive peoples nearest the animals), people and animals shared the space of the exposition, but not the analytical commentary about those expositions. Is Desmond's juxtaposition of people and animal tourism, then, tantamount to a form of voyeurism? Does she end up reinscribing that which she spent an entire book deconstructing? She thinks not, and in one paragraph of her Introduction (p. xxiv), she sets out her disclaimers: She is not suggesting that viewing Hawaiians is like viewing zoo animals; she is not suggesting that people and animals are, in the end, "same"; she is not saying that histories of tourism can be reduced to rhetorical gestures.

At least for me, there is slippage between Desmond's intellectual intent and the emotional impact of the analysis. Writing this commentary has been one of my greater challenges lately, as I struggled to articulate why I find Desmond's book so disturbing. It would be easy to set up the book as a straw man, then take swings at it. The book represents the amorphous enterprise of cultural studies at its most, so clearly interdisciplinary that signs of disciplinary conventions are virtually absent. Part I, examining the hula, is not an ethnographic account of the hula world—Desmond says so herself; nor does it even pretend to survey the history of hula, alighting only on selected moments in the past; nor does it provide any critical guidance to appreciating hula performance. Instead, Desmond examines some stuff that is pretty peripheral to the hula, such as the tourist experience (rather than the contents of the performances) at a major lū'au show in Hawai'i, visual images of hula that circulated on the U.S. mainland, vaudeville performers such as Doralina and Gilda Gray, the figure of the hula girl icon in the marketing of tourism, and beachboys as a male counterpart to hula dancers. Likewise, card-carrying anthropologists could have a merry time debating whether Desmond's ethnographic observations of animal theme parks displays any of the rigor of generating data for social analysis that is taught in fieldwork methods courses; so much of her descriptions are simply descriptive accounts of what she saw—along lines of "I was there, and I wanted to be picked to pet the dolphin." The license in interdisciplinary endeavors to pick and choose from among perspectives and methods is both liberating and limiting. While

an analyst is free to leave certain disciplinary baggage behind, the resulting analysis may produce perspectives that do not contribute to the understanding of the subject/s intrinsically.

If anything, the redeeming power for *Staging Tourism* lies in its uncovering of the ideological workings of physical foundationalism. In her conclusion, Desmond works through two strategies for critical intervention. One is for hula performers to historicize hula performances, by incorporating narration about the history of Native Hawai'ian disenfranchisement that contemporary shows efface. The other is to historicize animal displays by showcasing relations of dominance and annihilation between humans and animals that theme park shows are only beginning to address in narration on wildlife conservation. The skeptic in me sees a certain naiveté in not commenting on capitalistic corporate control of much of the tourism industry, and the efficacy (*not!*) of native Hawai'ian agency—not to mention the absence of animal agency—in starting up those steep slopes. Yet, when all is said and done, Desmond's contribution is in identifying the material and epistemological structures that maintain ideologies and hierarchies, and in correctly diagnosing the need to rewrite these very ideologies by rewriting the underlying structures. Educating tourists about the Native Hawai'ian loss of sovereignty is a step to addressing the effacement of Native Hawai'ian history common in tourist performances, and to opening dialogue on rationales for continued non-native dominance over Native Hawai'ian self-determination.

Personally, I would not choose to make these points by putting up anyone's ancestors for scrutiny the way Desmond has. Surely Desmond is taking hits for the way the comparative framework has been constructed. But now that the step has been taken to unmask such an insidious ideology, we should surely move on to other more empowering endeavors.

*Response:* JANE C. DESMOND

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I AM VERY PLEASED to have *Staging Tourism* reviewed and discussed in *Pacific Studies*, and thank the editors and my interlocutors Amy Ku'uleialoha Stillman and Deborah Wong for making this possible. I thank too all those performers, fellow hula students, kumu hulas, archivists, and scholars in Hawai'i who assisted me in my research and who are noted in the book. Without their generous help, and without the talent of the performers, my research, and these discussions, would not have been possible.

I want to add a special thank you to Dr. Stillman who agreed to take on the task of commenting on the book although she notes that writing the commentary was one of her greater challenges recently. I have learned a great

deal about hula from Dr. Stillman in the past as we have exchanged work, visited performances together, and when I had an opportunity to sit in on one of her courses on Hawai'ian music at the UH–Manoa several years ago. To discuss in print the difficult emotional resonances of the book is a generous act, and I thank her for it.

Both respondents clearly articulate the main arguments I attempted in *Staging Tourism* and I will not repeat them here. Rather, I'd like to take up some of the larger issues that emerge from their commentaries regarding the intellectual structure of the book, disciplinary perspectives, and the type of further research I hope this book will stimulate.

I knew that there was a danger in keeping the two halves of the book together. I feared that some readers, especially those outside academia and hence probably unfamiliar with related contemporary scholarship. (or worse, those who never read the book but only heard about it), might assume despite my repeated demonstrations to the contrary, that the book advances the idea that, for tourists, watching hula performances is like looking at animals in a zoo. As a scholar coming from outside Hawai'i, I knew that this danger was magnified due to my positioning given the long history of outsider's primitivizing pronouncements about life in the islands from journalism and travel accounts, as well as anthropologists' long standing interest in the Pacific. Given that history, and its many genuinely problematic instances, I was especially appreciative that so many Native Hawai'ian kumu hulas, as well as local residents involved in the hula scene were willing to help me understand the relationship between hula practice in the islands and the specifics of hula in the tourist industry. In addition, I was greatly helped by advice and critique from academic specialists on the Pacific, due to my work at the East-West Center. Despite this support, I felt at times that a much easier course of action would have been to break the work into two totally separate books, each analyzing one realm of the tourist business.

At several points in the research and writing I was tempted to expand the first half of the book into a comprehensive social and political history of hula in Hawai'i over the last two centuries. Such a book is yet to be written from an academic point of view, yet the importance of the subject demands it. But, time and again I returned to my comparative format placing a case study of "cultural tourism" side-by-side with one on "nature tourism" because only such a comparison would reveal the intertwined roots of such practices.

The profound discomfort that this structure can call forth is, I believe, due to the fact that, as Wong notes, it is still very much in operation. I propose in the book that, based on my archival research, observations, visual and rhetorical analyses, our current structures of visual pleasure and knowledge in the tourist realm are still promoting nineteenth century notions of racial-



ization, now couched in the language of “culture” but still firmly rooted in primitivizing notions of bodily difference. If I am correct, then the tourist industry in Hawai‘i as a whole will continue to serve as a negative influence on Native Hawai‘ian political gains, even while it offers opportunity for employment to many Native Hawai‘ian and local performers in the islands.

As both reviewers note, and Wong articulates in detail, the book is based on an analysis of representational practices (live performance, photographs, newspaper descriptions, postcards, photojournalistic accounts, the visual rhetoric of tourist advertisements, and so on). These are combined with research on Hawai‘ian social history, tourist bureau statistics, economic information, and oral histories to produce an analysis that falls into the categories of several scholarly practices, including American Studies, performance studies, visual studies, and cultural studies. As I note in the introduction, this work takes shape at the intersection of several modes of investigation including the ideological deconstruction of visual images and performances (i.e., how they elicit certain meanings through their visual or kinesthetic structure); ethnography (participant-observation over some period of time or through multiple residencies); and historical analysis (through archival research). As such, it mobilizes the explanatory potential of multidisciplinary work and of course simultaneously falls prey to its shortcomings.

Deborah Wong’s discussion of the book outlines with consummate clarity the situatedness of the work in a variety of scholarly practices and communities. I could not have stated it more clearly myself. She captures what I intended to do in bringing together the research questions and methodologies and writing styles that I have conjoined. But Stillman raises a very important point about disciplinarity that I want to address too. For every book is read not only for what it is or attempts to do, but also for what it does not attempt or might have attempted, and the results are weighed accordingly.

There is a direct link between the questions any scholarly work proposes and the methods it employs to generate answers. Multidisciplinary approaches not only employ different techniques, they do so with different goals in mind. Indeed, certain large issues can only emerge by tracking across disciplinary foci. By the same account, other issues will emerge best from the depths of a disciplinarily-based set of assumptions and methods.

Stillman is right in asserting the lack of disciplinarity in the work. I have purposely chosen a multi-disciplinary focus that draws on dance analysis, performance studies, critical race studies, postcolonial studies, social history, and ultimately on a set of assumptions about representation and ideology derived from Birmingham school-derived cultural studies, feminist theory, and film theory. These tools have enabled me to craft the type of work Wong analyzes with such precision in her review. But they do not, as Stillman says

and I agree, yield other, equally important results. For example, the book does not emphasize close readings of multiple hula performances based on the specifics of choreography and the relation of the vocal and or instrumental sounds to the movement. Stillman's own important work, and that of some other distinguished specialists like anthropologist Adrienne Kaeppler by contrast, sets out in exacting detail the historical development of very specific styles of hula practice. My analyses engage with movement in the broader terms of general historical style, of movement dynamics, of spatial usage, of costuming, of bodily presentation, and so on, as they relate to the larger contours of my argument.

But there is another step too which is crucial to my approach and different from Stillman's. Whereas she suggests that much of the analysis focuses on things peripheral to hula (pictorial representations, articles in travel magazines, and so on), from my point of view these other discourses are crucial to understanding the accretion of meanings that attach to tourists' viewing practices. Euro-American tourists from the continental U.S. bring with them to their encounter with hula a whole matrix of associations about the islands, about Native Hawaiians, and about tropical "pleasures" which are encountered over time in numerous discursive fields including travel brochures, old films, prints on Aloha shirts, post cards sent by friends, fashion accessories for tropical wear, etc. Analyzing such materials will not tell us more about specific hula choreographies, but it will help us grasp the presumptions that tourists bring to their viewing and hence the interpretive frames they employ.

By tracing the accrual and change of nuance over time in how the islands have been represented by non-Native Hawaiians in these multiple realms I wanted to chart in detail exactly how this accretion had developed. As Wong notes, in some ways the "hula girl" figure is too easy a target to deconstruct in the Euro-American discourses of primitivized-femininity that circulate around this fictional ideal. But the challenge for me was not only to track those connotations in motion today, and arrange them in counterpoint to living practices in the islands by hula practitioners, but also to demonstrate specifically how such powerful discourses came to be. I wanted, in a sense, to provide a blow-by-blow account of how the 19th century beliefs were built up through quasi-scientific studies of racialized difference and how they continued to reemerge over a hundred year period with renewed power in each new historical context, despite the supposed debunking of such backward ideas.

I see these different types of scholarly works—those that concentrate specifically on performance practices, and those that place those practices in a context of multiple discourses over time—as complementary scholarly

endeavors, not as two separate approaches competing for legitimacy or cancelling each other out. Rather, each approach asks and answers different questions, and does so with different criteria for what counts as evidence. The complexity of expressive practices like hula, their histories, and their multiple meanings over time and for different practitioners and audiences under different political conditions, demands *both* types of scholarship, disciplinary and multi-disciplinary. Combined with the important and in-depth knowledge of kumu hulas (which has its own histories, goals, uses within the community of practitioners, and standards of evidence), both scholarly approaches can serve as a resource for understanding this important cultural practice.

Finally, I would like to turn to the issue of the types of further research I hope my book will stimulate. Both Wong and Stillman emphasize what was one of the main goals of my work: to help us think about how things might be different. I have tried to trace historically the deep imbrication between notions of culturalism/naturalism/racism, and the commodification of physical presence through tourist performances. I have argued that the widespread naturalization of these structures of generating meaning permeates tourist industries. If I am right, this is a formidable foe for all scholars, activists, kumu hulas, and practitioners who would work toward a more just future. My goal has been to make the power of this foe, its historical roots, and its insidious ideology visible. I hope this analysis will not only contribute to further scholarly understanding, but will also prove useful for those who endeavor to change the structure of tourism.

In the book I introduce some possibilities, both in terms of extant shows (like the Cazimero Brothers) and in terms of imagined futures. I hope further research will do two things. First, I hope it will help stimulate extensive ethnographic research among tourists (and different demographics of tourists), particularly in terms of the power of performances to shape their experiences. Scholars produce a miniscule amount of such research compared to the information gathered by tourist bureaus, corporations, and so on, and that commercially-based information is not the same as what we need. Although I attended many, many performances for tourists over a three year period of conducting this research, I analyzed those situations with relatively little formal interviewing or surveying of the audience. I analyzed instead the structures of the performances in concert with my observations of audience responses, and tied this into data from tourist bureaus and corporations. As Wong accurately notes, the actual voices of the tourists themselves are rarely heard in my book with its emphasis on “staging” rather than reception.

This future research must also be broken down carefully in terms of audience demographics. In terms of cultural performances in Hawai'i, I have

focused on the Euro-American from the so called “mainland” who makes up the majority of the Waikiki visitor population. But the second largest group, Japanese travelers, also deserves separate research, as do minority travelers from the U.S. The ideological underpinnings of any cultural product can shape, but do not ultimately determine, the meanings audiences make of it. Specific reception practices must be analyzed too.

Finally, I hope scholarly work on tourism will provide a useful wedge for use by those who would restructure the public consumption of “heritage.” As one of the leading industries on the globe, tourism circulates billions of dollars a year. Rearticulating the meanings of heritage within this juggernaut of commodification is an awesome task. But the increasing political power, in the Pacific at least, of indigenous residents, acknowledged as the culture bearers of that which the industries most want to “sell,” can give us some hope that in the long run change is possible. Aggressive campaigns for more politically responsible representations of indigenous cultural practices can use tourism scholarship, when they choose to do so, to help make their case for more local control. It also sets the framework for NGO intervention bringing indigenous activists, indigenous cultural experts, foundations, and scholars together to imagine, and fund, innovative versions of tourism that emphasize rather than mask the imperial histories that so often set the stage for tourism in the first place. I hope *Staging Tourism* will help stimulate further work, debate, and discussion that takes on these challenges.

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## BOOKS NOTED

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### RECENT PACIFIC ISLAND PUBLICATIONS SELECTED ACQUISITIONS, JUNE–DECEMBER 2004

THIS LIST of significant publications relating to the Pacific Islands was selected from new acquisitions lists received from Brigham Young University-Hawai'i, University of Hawai'i at Manoa, Bernice P. Bishop Museum, University of Auckland, East-West Center, University of South Pacific, National Library of Australia, Melanesian Studies Resource Center, Center for Pacific and Asian Studies, University of Nijmegen, University of California San Diego, Secretariat of the Pacific Community Library, Center for South Pacific Studies, University of New South Wales and the Australian International Development Assistance Bureau's Center for the Pacific Development 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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