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Teachers All: Samoan, Fijian, and Queensland Melanesian Missionaries in Papua, 1884–1914

Pacific Islands mission teachers were powerful agents of culture change in Oceania, and the Christianity they taught is part of the ideological and constitutional underpinnings of several independent Pacific Island states. Their fullest impact was felt in the period between the 1880s and 1914, when vast distances were being crossed and diverse populations reached by evangelists from half a dozen Pacific nationalities. Below the common religious motivations professed by the Islands teachers there were sharp contrasts in expectations and behaviour. This paper compares the Samoan, Fijian, and Queensland Melanesian missionaries in Papua, a colony where Islanders were concentrated in larger numbers than elsewhere. The Samoans are given the greater balance of analysis in the paper, because the 187 male Samoans outnumbered both the Fijians (110 males) and Queensland Melanesians (46), and because the Samoans' expectations diverged more sharply from those of their European colleagues than was the case with their Fijian and Queensland Melanesian contemporaries.[1]

I

Throughout most of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the grand strategy of Protestant missions in the Pacific was bound up with the diffusion of South Sea Island teaching influence. The ultimate fruits of evangelism in the western Pacific, it was hoped, would fulfil Henry Venn's mid-nineteenth-century century vision of indigenous churches which would be self-governing, self-supporting, and self-propagating. But, for the indefinite future, church propagation would depend less on indigenous members and more on imported teachers from the Pacific Islands whose ethnic similarity to the people they contacted would smooth the introduction of a new religion. During the peak period of Island evangelism, the most prominent spokesman for this strategy was the Reverend George Brown, Methodist missionary in Samoa

1. For a detailed analysis and description of Queensland Melanesian teachers, see also D. Wetherell, *Reluctant Mission: The Anglican Church in Papua New Guinea, 1891–1942* (Brisbane: University of Queensland Press, 1977), 96–121.

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and New Britain (1860–81) and general secretary of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Board (1887–1908). Brown's studies of Pacific languages led him to believe in the essential similitude of all races; in particular that the people of the South Pacific descended from a common origin; that they were all varying forms of one great Oceanic or "Polynesian" race.[2] In the footsteps of the London Missionary Society (LMS) pioneers, he envisaged Samoans, Rarotongans, Tongans, and Fijians moving west as teachers among peoples of similar culture and outlook. The first Methodist South Sea Island parties to New Britain (1875), British New Guinea or Papua (1891), and the Solomon Islands (1902) were each led personally by Brown.

Beginning with such journeys as that of Tahitian teachers to Aitutaki in the Cook Islands in 1821, the use of Islands agents had long become standard practice in Protestant missions in Oceania. Brown's landing with Samoans and Fijians in New Britain in 1875 had been preceded in 1871 by LMS parties from the Loyalty Islands and Rarotonga in the Torres Strait and Papua. In the opening years the Rarotongans in Papua were the pioneers, Piri and Ruatoka at Port Moresby being the best known. After 1884 the largest LMS contingent in Papua was from Samoa, with the total of nearly 200 in Papua being part of a migration of educated Samoans to various destinations in the Pacific. Altogether some 416 Samoans volunteered for mission work beyond Samoa in the ninety years after 1840; wives and children would have brought the total to over 1,000. In Papua, the first Samoan LMS teacher, Timoteo Mose, went to Kabadi near Port Moresby with his wife Si'u in 1884. Within five years Samoa had overtaken Rarotonga and Niue as the main supplier of Polynesians for the LMS mission in Papua.

Samoans left for mission work with a social and educational background combining pre-Christian beliefs and European theology. Their understanding of the church's mission and their attitudes to the Melanesians were determined by this fusion of metaphysical ideas from two distinct cultural backgrounds. The Samoan version of a "Polynesianized" Christianity went unchallenged in other Polynesian groups such as Niue and Tuvalu, where the relative cultural homogeneity of the Polynesian world gave the ninety Samoans who went there (1857–1920) a definite advantage compared to the 256 Samoans who went to the western Pacific (1841–1930) with its sharp contrasts in social structures and language.[3] In Polynesian areas, where cultural similarities gave the Samoans a degree of familiarity, the presiding and chiefly role of the Samoan mission teacher was readily understood and accepted. But

2. G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians: Their Life Histories Described and Compared* (London, 1910), 18–20. Accounts of Fijian teachers in New Britain and other New Guinea Islands are to be found in N. Threlfall, *One Hundred Years in the Islands: The Methodist/United Church in the New Guinea Islands Region, 1875–1975* (Rabaul: United Church, 1975). A recent study of George Brown is Helen Gardner, *Christians and Colonial Subjects: George Brown's Representations of Islanders From Samoa and the Bismarck Archipelago* (Bundoora, Vic.: La Trobe University, 1999), microfiche.

3. Uili Nokise, "The Role of London Missionary Society Samoan Missionaries in the Evangelisation of the South-West Pacific, 1839–1930" (PhD thesis, Australian National University, 1983), 191–2. The remaining seventy Samoan teachers went to Micronesia.

in the New Hebrides and New Guinea, languages were radically different; and power was achieved, not inherited, by the active energy of "big men" whose authority was demonstrated by prowess in magic, warfare, and dispensing of wealth. Coming from a society upholding a rigid chiefly system, the Samoans found that no such system existed in Melanesia with the exception of New Caledonia. In Melanesia the Samoans were confronted by social structures which did not adapt readily to Polynesian expectations of respect for chiefs whose status was determined largely by genealogical connections.

In these circumstances, the Samoans tried to modify Melanesian culture to assimilate their version of Christianity; they sought to "Samoanize" as well as Christianize. Believing their mission was ordained and blessed by God, and proud of their language and culture, they saw the creation of Samoan missionary culture as a fitting honour to God and country. The mission field provided a framework within which they could implant the *fa'akerisiano*, or Samoanized Christianity — the culture of Christian Samoa. Coming from a relatively homogeneous culture, and one in which the village pastor held a status unrivalled by all others except title holders, the Samoan church and school were not only Christian in intent, but also testimonies to a concern for the pastor's rank and status, with their size intended to display his prestige and influence. In the mission field, this sometimes led to an impression of "egotism" which damaged them in the eyes of European witnesses. One European resident's outburst to a missionary at an LMS station was: "I hate the Samoans. They are a bumptious, conceited crowd. But there is no doubt that they are the best teachers you have in your mission."[4]

Neither the Methodist Fijians nor the Anglican Melanesian teachers possessed the level of education enjoyed by the Samoans. All 187 Samoan pastors or *faife'au Samoa* in Papua were graduates of the theological college at Malua. Established in 1844 on fifty acres of land near Apia in Upolu, Malua was the most advanced Protestant seminary in the Pacific. It also trained students sent to it from the Cook Islands, Niue, the Loyalty Islands, and Tokelau as well from the Gilbert (Kiribati) and Ellice (Tuvalu) groups. Though Takamoa LMS seminary in Rarotonga had been established five years before Malua, it lacked its extensive and specialized curriculum.[5] By the time Samoans began leaving for Papua New Guinea in the mid-1880s, the college at Malua occupied several hundred acres of garden land and was made up of stone cottages around a quadrangle with classrooms and hall. The original curriculum at Malua was based on such subjects as scripture history, systematic theology, and pastoral training as well as natural philosophy and astronomy. Teaching methods were added to these before the turn of the century. The leading missionary tutors of the Samoan teachers between 1844 and 1910, George Turner, John Marriott, and J. E. Newell, had served apprenticeships

4. L. Loria to M. Parkin, 8,17 December 1896; see also L. Loria to M. Parkin, 28 December 1901. Box 1 File 25, Abel Papers, University of Papua New Guinea. The Abel Papers had not been catalogued at the time the research was carried out.
5. *Samoan Reporter*, March 1845, March 1861; Niel Gunson, *Messengers of Grace: Evangelical Missionaries in the South Seas* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), 324–5.

under their immediate predecessors in the South Seas, who in their turn had passed on the earlier teachings of such English Dissenting academies as Cheshunt in Hertfordshire, which George Turner had attended. The standard of education available at Malua had made the college "the envy" of other seminaries in the Pacific. Missionary volunteers, most of whom were destined for Papua, were among the best in Malua's final year class. The pioneer Samoan pastor Timoteo Mose had been winner of college prizes before leaving for Papua; and students knew their chances of being selected for mission work depended on their academic record.[6]

Less striking were the educational attainments of the Fijians. The most influential of the 110 *vakavuvuli* or Fijian catechist teachers in Papua were sons of Fijian converts who had been nurtured in Wesleyanism from infancy. The first Tahitian LMS teachers came to Lakeba in 1830. From the arrival of William Cross and David Cargill at Lakeba in 1835, five years after the Tahitian teachers, Wesleyan teaching in Fiji had been marked by a note of prophetic urgency. At all levels geography, arithmetic and written Fijian were subordinate to scripture history.[7] The Methodists looked for physical toughness, practical usefulness, and moral consistency in their teachers rather than any high level of intellectual training. They boasted that not a Fijian was sent who could not "pull an oar, sail a boat across a stormy sea, swim like a fish . . . light a fire without matches, cook without a pot, write a sermon, or teach a school."[8] In canoes and whaleboats, Fijians in the village stations could cover the Papuan islands in much the same way as Wesley on horseback had travelled the country circuits in England.

The forty-six Queensland Melanesians who joined the small Anglican mission in north-east Papua were the least well educated of the three groups. They came from the Solomon Islands and New Hebrides (Vanuatu). The Anglican teachers were among the 62,000 Islanders recruited for colonial sugar plantations between 1863 and 1904, taking part in a circular migration pattern between their home islands and the Australian colonies, having been engaged (or, in the early years, taken by deception) for work in Queensland.[9] The earliest pair of Melanesian teachers, Harry Mark and Willie Miwa, arrived in Bartle Bay in north-east Papua in 1893, the Wamira village people shouting a loud "Kaion" (greeting) as they landed. They had only the scantiest formal education: most of them had attended night schools conducted by Anglican clergy and laypeople from the early 1880s at Brisbane, Bundaberg, Mackay, and the Herbert River. The largest school was run by Mary Goodwin Robinson of Tekowai plantation near Mackay, later known as the Selwyn

6. Nokise, 51.
7. A. J. Small, "A Short Account of the Educational Work of the Methodist Mission in Fiji," Suva, 1909, Fiji District Correspondence, Suva, Fiji National Archives (hereafter cited as FDC); Gunson, 326. For an account of the pioneer Tahitian LMS teachers in Lakeba, Fiji, see A.Thornley, "The Legacy of Siloam: Tahitian Missionaries in Fiji," in *The Covenant Makers: Islander Missionaries in the Pacific*, ed. D. Munro and A. Thornley (Suva: Institute of Pacific Studies and Pacific Theological College, 1996), 91–115.
8. *Australasian Methodist Missionary Review* (hereafter cited as *AMMR*), August 1897.
9. P. Corris, *Passage, Port and Plantation: A History of Solomon Islands Labour Migration, 1870–1914* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1973).

Mission.[10] Beginning with the first teachers Harry Mark and Willie Miwa, the Queensland Melanesians were severely impaired by lack of classroom training and, in the words of inspector of Anglican schools A. K. Chignell, were probably as ill-instructed and incapable a body of men who ever handled a piece of chalk or flourished a duster. They knew no more about teaching children than they did "about running a steam laundry or making boots."[11]

If the quality of classroom teaching was uneven among the Islanders, physical endurance and stoical example was significant in all the groups. Most strident in these soldierly qualities were those of the Fijian Methodist volunteers. The Methodist general secretary George Brown had gone to sea and worked before the mast, and his emphasis on physical vigour was part of a broader warrior theme which permeated much Wesleyan mission preaching of the day. In speaking of Fijian teachers, an English missionary in Fiji referred to Balaclava and the Charge of the Light Brigade. Such metaphors reveal how readily missionaries and Fijians alike saw their work as compatible with physical confrontation. It underlined conventional descriptions of Fijians as "soldiers," "heroes," or "fearless braves." There is striking evidence that Fijians themselves were fascinated by the prospect of mastering physical danger. Likewise, the memorials to the Anglican Melanesian teachers at the mission headquarters of Dogura continually use the imagery of soldiers "fighting the good fight of faith" and becoming "more than conquerors through Him that loved us." Even the more intellectually polished Samoan teachers referred to themselves in military rather than educational terms: "We are preparing ourselves like soldiers ready to attack a fort"; or, "we still hold on to the English saying from the Boer War, 'The death of one will be replaced by a hundred others'"; or, "O soldiers of Christ in Samoa, rise up, this is our time."[12]

Two enduring hallmarks of the South Sea Island soldier-teachers emerged quickly. The first was the high death rate: illness and sudden death dogged teachers in all missions from the start. In the LMS field, malaria appears to have been the major cause of death among Polynesians. The memorial window installed in 1901 in the Vatorata LMS training college near Kapakapa reminded Papuan students that in the thirty years of the mission's existence, eighty-two Polynesian teachers, mainly Rarotongans and Samoans, had died. From 1901 to 1916, another forty had been added. Samoan volunteers knew that their chances of survival were not high. In Samoa, relatives called out to departing teachers, "it is better for us to see you return in a black box [coffin] than to see you having failed to do the work."[13]

In being cast among barely contacted peoples, the Samoan teachers in particular showed tremendous courage. The reader marvelling on their stoicism

10. J. O. Feetham and W. V. Rymer, eds, *North Queensland Jubilee Book, 1878–1928* (Townsville: Diocese of North Queensland, 1929), 38, 64–5.
11. A. K. Chignell, *An Outpost in Papua* (London: Murray, 1915), 104; Wanigela Log, 2. November 1914, Anglican Archives, University of Papua New Guinea (hereafter cited as AA).
12. *Samoa Sulu*, January 1892; see also, Nokise, 110.
13. Cited in Munro and Thornley, 72.

and willingness to suffer may wonder whether pre-Christian values, re-directed by Christianity of a heroic kind, were the real forcing-house of Samoan valour. For Samoans, more was at stake than the ideals of Christian self-abnegation; the eyes of God, their *aiga* (family), as well as their *nu'u* (village) and *atunu'u* (country) were upon them. So honouring clan and country were well mixed with a sacrificial missionary impulse. Be that as it may, a strong religious metaphor appears to have been in evidence. For example, when asked about heavy Samoan mortality in Milne Bay (four deaths during December of 1894) the Samoan pioneer Ma'anaima, teacher in the bay, roundly replied: "We are not afraid to die for Christ. If it is His will that we should live, it is good; if it is His will that we should die, that also is good. We have come to New Guinea to do His work, and we give ourselves to Him." In the nearby Anglican sphere, the teachers' resignation in the face of death paralleled the Christianized stoicism of the Samoans. The Queensland Melanesian teacher Alfred Rerep in Mukawa used a phrase from Psalm 19 to express his last thoughts before dying of tuberculosis: "Tabinewau e botubotu" (the bridegroom cometh).[14]

It was only to be expected that the death rate among Queensland Melanesians, Samoans, and Fijians would exceed European mortality. In the Anglican Mission the death rate among the sixty-four Europeans in service 1891–1909 was 17 per cent among clergy and 8 per cent among laypeople. By contrast, the death rate of Queensland Melanesians was 25 per cent for the same period.[15] A dozen of the seventeen missionary graves dug in this period were for Melanesians. The causes of death have not been comprehensively analysed. However, of those who survived their first wet season in Papua, longevity became proverbial. Five old Islanders were left in the mission at the beginning of World War II. Some Melanesian teachers survived more than thirty years; Harry Locar and Johnson Far of Malaita in the Solomons each died in the mid-1950s after forty-five and fifty-six years in Papua respectively.

The second South Sea Island characteristic, physical confrontation with Papuans, was more in evidence among the Polynesians than among the Queensland Melanesians, whose method of communication was other than by physical assertiveness. Pioneer Island teachers from the Loyalties, Rarotonga, and Samoa used a considerable degree of physical mastery in their dealings with Papuans. In the pioneering period before the coming of British rule there was need for it. Already, in 1873 near the Fly River, the Loyalty Islanders Cho and Mataio with their wives in 1873 had been sent to their graves bearing fearful wounds, as had seven Rarotongans murdered at Kalo east of Port Moresby in 1881. It was true, as LMS foreign secretary Frank Lenwood said, that many of the pioneer pastors "lived in face of constant insults from the

14. Nokise, 112; G. Cousins, *The Story of the South Seas* (London: London Missionary Society, 1895), 193–4; S. Tomlinson to H. Newton, Mukawa, 17 September 1922, AA.
15. D. Langmore, *Missionary Lives Papua, 1874–1914* (Hawaii: University of Hawaii Press, 1989), 250–4; for a study of the death rate consequent upon entering a new disease environment, see P. D. Curtin, "Epidemiology and the Slave Trade," *Political Science Quarterly* 83 (1968): 190–216.

fighting bullies of the village." Even in the early twentieth century, when conditions were far safer, Samoan pastors in one or two places were threatened with death, with bows and arrows made ready for attacks on the Samoans, as at Kikori in the Gulf of Papua in 1914.[16]

To counter aggressiveness, teachers such as the Loyalty Islander Guceng addressed Parama islanders on Darnley after the murder of Cho and Mataio: "Do you think I am afraid of you? I come from a country of warriors . . . I come here to teach you, but remember I can fight . . . Don't forget I have a gun . . . the first man who approaches my house after dark will be shot."[17] Similarly, when a Milne Bay villager told the LMS teacher Mataika he was afraid of being killed, the teacher said bluntly, "The man who kills you, I will kill." Many Island teachers seem to have relied upon their physical strength to command respect. The LMS missionary James Chalmers described a Polynesian pastor as "a very powerful man, far stronger than any New Guinean I have met," and the same might have been said of others. Mataika, who worked in the Torres Strait and Milne Bay, was a strongly built man and his beatings were spoken of with awe long after his departure. Nevertheless, he was universally regarded as a good man.[18]

Differing attitudes are revealed in the teachers' behaviour towards traditional dancing and art. The Polynesian teachers known in the nineteenth century as "pioneers" were expected to use their influence to break down traditional religious systems. Their muscular energy enabled them unopposed to cut down posts in the villages embellished with carvings which were erotic in detail. In 1879, eight years after the arrival of the first Polynesians in the Torres Strait, some of the Loyalty Island teachers joined the first missionary Samuel McFarlane for a "ceremony of burning the idols." McFarlane ordered that some of the carvings be sent to the LMS museum in London, as earlier LMS missionaries had done in Tahiti.[19] At other times the Polynesian teacher entered sacred dwellings and threw out sacred objects to test the ability of the sorcerers, saying, "If your god is stronger than mine, let him kill me!" In Milne Bay, the Samoan teachers Timoteo, Naiti, and Isaia killed the snake which the Keneo people of Milne Bay believed was the embodiment of the spirit Oarove; they gave the snake to their church members to cook and eat; and Isaia presented a wooden statue of the Keneo people to a visiting government official.[20] Similarly, Samuelu, an LMS pastor in Torres Strait, removed a stone effigy on the island believed to be endowed with magical powers, and

16. F. Lenwood, *Pastels from the Pacific* (London: Oxford University Press, 1917), 215; Namau District Annual Report 1910, LMS Papua Reports; H. C. Cardew to B. T. Butcher, Kikori, 11 May 1914, United Church Archives, University of Papua New Guinea.

17. S. McFarlane to J. Mullens, Murray Island, 31 January 1879, Canberra: National Library of Australia, LMS Papers, Papua Reports.

18. P. Dilomi, "The Gospel in China Straits," photocopy held by author; James Chalmers, "Notes for Lizzie," Canberra: National Library of Australia, LMS Papers, Papua Personal Box 1, PL.

19. McFarlane to Mullens, 31 January 1879; N. Thomas, *Entangled Objects: Exchange, Material Culture, and Colonialism in the Pacific* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1991), 154.

20. Timoteo, cited in *Samoa Sulu*, Apia, August 1909.

later had it smashed; its pieces were then used as an oven. And on Murray Island the Samoan teacher Finau "often preached loudly against native dancing, and consigned those who attempted a little of it to hell." A European resident of Murray Island added perceptively: "really the South Sea teachers know the kind of God to depict to the native far better than the white missionary does; his God of love is beyond their comprehension . . . you find the God of wrath is their ideal of what God is. He takes the place of Bomai (local god) etc, which they have lost."[21]

More clearly and consistently than the Fijians and Queensland Melanesians, the Samoans saw the culture being introduced as an extension of their home church. The Fijians and Queensland Melanesians lacked the cultural homogeneity which gave the Samoans their consistency. In their approach to art and dancing in Papua, the Samoans' identity of culture and religion was reinforced by the traditions of mid-nineteenth-century British Dissent. Masks, paintings, and carvings of various types were assailed because they were held in Old Testament teaching to be an offence in the eyes of God. Thus the early British LMS missionaries in Samoa from the 1830s had destroyed idolatry and introduced clothing and education as part of the conversion of Samoa; and the same methods were carried through by Samoans in the western Pacific, regardless of more liberal attitudes then prevailing among their European LMS supervisors. But, while the Samoans were imitating procedures learnt from an earlier generation of Europeans, it is probable that non-mission influences were also at work. For, beneath the religious training of the teachers, was a range of behaviour which belonged only to the Samoan incompatible with any other "way" making them Samoans, known as the *fa'asamoa*, the "Samoan way."[22]

The Queensland Melanesians in north-east Papua were less iconoclastic and more tolerant of traditional culture. By a strange twist of fortune, the culture where the Queensland Melanesians were sent provided less scope for their toleration. In the Anglican sphere there were no elaborate carvings or ceremonial such as those which had characterized the cultures of the Torres Strait and the Papuan Gulf. Large communal men's houses did not exist in north-east Papua and the people lived in dwellings meant for the use of nuclear families. "Life is dull, very dull in this division," sighed an assistant resident magistrate whose previous experience had been in the gulf.[23]

Only a few kilometres from the Queensland Melanesian postings lay the Methodist station on Tubetube Island in the Engineer group. Here, communal dwellings existed: they were burned down by the Polynesian teachers of the Methodist church. In particular the Fijians Josepha Malamu and Poate Ratu

21. Cited in Nokise, 145; A. C. Haddon, *Headhunters: Black, White, and Brown* (London: Watts, 1932), 27; J. S. Bruce to A. C. Haddon, Murray Island, n.d., Cambridge University Library, MS Room, Haddon Collection, Env 1004.
22. N. Goodall, *A History of the London Missionary Society, 1895–1945* (London: Oxford University Press, 1954), 378–9.
23. Resident Magistrate North Eastern Division, Official Journal, 15 July 1915, CRS/G91, Australian Archives.

were horrified at burial customs associated with long houses, and not only burned down such houses but also smashed the skulls of ancestor and enemy alike, as objects of devil worship.[24]

It must be emphasized that the Queensland Melanesian volunteers (1893–1907) drew their theological emphasis from a later period than that learnt by the Samoans and Fijians from the 1840s. Even to the younger LMS missionaries, the early nineteenth-century language used by the Polynesians seemed to belong to a vanished age. One listener referred to the "red hot Calvinism" of his Polynesian teacher's sermons. By contrast, English and Australian candidates for the Anglican Mission at the end of the nineteenth century were imbued with a theology that was placing little emphasis on the Atonement and, like their liberal Evangelical neighbours in the LMS and Methodist missions, were giving a greater role to the Incarnation of Christ. Ernest and pious, the Anglican Melanesians favoured long sermons; but unlike their Polynesian predecessors in the LMS and Methodist missions, they did not speak much about the Old Testament, of which, said the Reverend Copland King, they were "absolutely ignorant." With New Testament topics some Queensland Melanesians were thought "excellent and reliable."[25] As a result, the Papuans of the north-east coast were never exposed to the kind of fire-and-brimstone Christianity favoured by the Polynesian missionaries of the LMS and the Methodists in southern mainland and Island Papua up to about 1914.

The European mentors of the Queensland Melanesians tended also to be sympathetic to traditional Melanesian cultures, not seeing them as part of a "lost creation," but stressing continuity with the pre-Christian Melanesian past. They held that the scriptures, the creeds, and the episcopacy were essential features of Catholic faith and order. But at the same time they were persuaded, as the Lambeth Conferences of 1897 and 1908 had argued, that no church had the right to produce a replica of its culture in the society which it evangelized. There had to be an adaptation of Western ways to traditional cultures.[26] This represented a radical departure from attitudes held by students imbued with the *fa'asamoa* and the teachings of mid-century Malua.

II

Of all the ultimate domestic questions facing a young male Pacific Island teacher, that of sex and marriage was the most persistent, and this affected those Fijians and Queensland Melanesians who were bachelors. Practically all the Samoan teachers were accompanied by wives. Some Samoan Malua students had married girls who trained with them at the college. Others took

24. M. Jolly and M. Macintyre, *Family and Gender in the Pacific Domestic Contradictions and the Colonial Impact* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 10, 162–3.
25. C. King to G. Sharp, Ambasi, 13 September 1910, AA.
26. R. Davidson, *The Six Lambeth Conferences, 1867–1920* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1929), 202, 375–6.

wives from the LMS girls' school at Atauloma in Tutuila in American Samoa. Papauta Girls' School in western Samoa (founded in 1892) provided a primary-to-lower-secondary academic education and its curriculum emphasized traditional domestic customs. A number of Samoan wives in New Guinea from Papauta received their education from Valesca Schultze (1890–1916) and Elizabeth Moore (1890–1920). A few teachers' wives were trained nurses. Occasionally a Malua student was chosen for missionary service because of a well-trained and suitable wife who could deputize for him in his absence from the station.[27]

In Papua the Malua-educated Samoans and their wives formed a seigneurial group, using their common school background, the singing of Polynesian hymns and, above all, the virtues and values of the *fa'asamoa* as comforting tokens of their Samoan origins. If a Samoan wife died, her husband returned home in search of a new wife, though sometimes a bereaved Polynesian teacher married the widow of a dead colleague in Papua. At the LMS station of Kwato at the turn of the century lived Mireka, a Rarotongan woman. Mireka had come as wife of a Rarotongan teacher. Following his death she had married two other Rarotongan teachers in succession; both had died also. After burying three husbands Mireka had remained in Papua single. The LMS vessel was frequently greeted at anchorage by a flag fluttering at half mast to announce the death of a Polynesian pastor or wife on a lonely station. There were very few Samoan males who, through the death or absence of a wife, found solace in the arms of a Papuan woman. When one Samoan *faife'au* married a Papuan, his fellow Samoans petitioned the lieutenant-governor to have the teacher deported.[28]

While marriage with Papuans was well-nigh unknown among Samoans and Rarotongans, it was fairly common among Fijians: nine of the first fifteen Fijian teachers in 1891 were bachelors. In the Papuan islands, there is evidence that Papuan women initiated some of the alliances with the Fijian males. A mission sister wrote of the "sheer persistence" of the women of Dobu in soliciting marriage proposals from the bachelors.[29] Most marriages seem to have confirmed the desire of Fijian teachers to stay in their adopted land, and most wives and the twenty-three part-Fijian children born before 1911 remained in Papua. At Bwaruada on Fergusson Island the Fijian-Papuan son of the teacher Molitikei Mata occupied a pulpit as late as the 1970s near the school where his missionary father Mata had arrived sixty years earlier. There were other Fijian-Papuan sons who succeeded their Fijian fathers in the Methodist district in Papua.[30]

Intermarriage between Fijians and Papuans was common enough; between Queensland Melanesians and Papuan women it was all but universal. Of the

27. H. E. A. Small, *Papauta: The Inland Rock, 1892–1967* (Auckland: Small, 1967), 16; N. Goodall, 359; V. Alesana, interview, Leone Samatau, Tutuila, 1 October 1971.
28. J. H. P. Murray, diary, 14 June 1915, Mitchell Library, Sydney.
29. J. Benjamin, *Victoriana: A Missionary Sister in Papua-New Guinea* (Geelong: Thacker, 1907), 26.
30. M. Mata, interview, Bwaruada, Papua New Guinea, 25 February 1971.

forty-six Queensland volunteers, only one, Willie Kyliu, was accompanied by a wife, Annie. The ethos of celibacy in the Anglican Mission involved a rejection of matrimony for many, but this affected the white staff more than the black. No objection was made by the Anglican Mission to Queensland Melanesian staff marrying Papuans. On the other hand, mixed-racial marriages were not permitted (two bachelor white laymen on the staff who fell in love with Papuan mission girls were not permitted to marry). By the same token some Melanesian volunteers were rejected because they had married white women in Queensland and would bring their wives with them ("a *white* wife seems impossible to me" wrote the bishop's commissary).[31] Unmarried Islander teachers worked in a milieu of sexual permissiveness and some succumbed. The Anglican layman P. J. Money was sensitive to the matter of sexuality: "Many of the S.S.I. [South Sea Islander] teachers have had trouble of this kind; they are very close to the Papuan in sympathy and general living in their native homes and I am not surprised that they fall into a sin which I, a foreigner in every sense . . . find so hard to keep clear from. To me the temptation is severe. What must it be like to them? I make no boast of having withstood it for wicked lustful thoughts have often filled my mind." The atmosphere of Collingwood Bay villages where the Anglicans worked, according to Money, was one of "fornication and abortion with occasional clouds of adultery and infanticide." Most teachers who found the strain unendurable were treated with compassion. When Willie Pettawa had a sexual relationship with a favourite girl at Wanigela, he had a dream in which Jesus Christ appeared to him, telling him to repent and saying he would have to suffer some time for his sake. Pettawa died unmarried the next year.[32] His comrades' search for wives did not upset matrilocal inheritance procedures in which a husband worked his wife's land. Because the teachers were absorbed into village clans, these Anglican Melanesians made a less distinctive impact on their host societies than did the Samoans.

Samoan and Fijian wives as well as husbands contributed to the gardening repertoire of Papuan villagers; they altered dietary patterns in the homes (making bread; baking rather than roasting meat); and they added to the material culture of the people. The Samoan teachers in particular introduced new varieties of plants, breadfruit and taro, oranges, lemons and limes, apples and mangoes. Papuan coastal people refer to "Samoan bananas" which embedded themselves more deeply in the soil than indigenous bananas and thus withstood the ravages of tropical storms. This improved plant was the variety *Musa cavendishii*, originally introduced by John Williams into Polynesia from England in 1838.[33] The variety known in the Islands as "Fijian bananas" may have had the same origin. Exactly when the first Fijian root crops were introduced is unknown, but the Fijian minister or *talatala* Ponipate Vula, who

31. H. M. Shuttleworth to M. J. Stone-Wigg, Brisbane, 5 August 1904, AA.
32. P. J. Money to M. J. Stone-Wigg, Uiaku, 5 April 1907, AA.
33. A. W. Murray, *Forty Years' Mission Work in Polynesia and New Guinea, from 1835 to 1875* (New York: Carter, 1876), 270–1.

had arrived in Papua in 1902, claimed to have been responsible: "I took to New Guinea some Fijian yams and five *voivoi* suckers . . . then it was decided to distribute the *voivoi* suckers to all the circuits." Fijian wives were able to instruct Papuan women in the use of the new foodstuffs to cook Fijian food known as *monapiti* — sugar added to a mixture of green scraped coconut and taro with other root crops. Vula's wife Kesaia taught villagers to plait mats from the newly introduced *voivoi* leaves, using Fijian and Samoan plaiting styles in vogue in mission villages since the late 1890s. Similarly, Samoan pandanus mats and baskets, woven fans as well as seating and bedding were taught by Samoan wives in the Port Moresby district. In such Methodist strongholds as Panaeati Island, Fijian feasting customs and a few items in burial ceremonies were incorporated into local observances. There was not much reciprocity: Papuan wives who returned with their Fijian husbands to Viti Levu introduced their own Papuan weaving patterns in some villages near the Rewa River delta.[34]

Thus, in their agricultural and cooking repertoire, as well as in sport, the Samoans and Fijians enlarged the material culture of the people among whom they lived. Cricket was popular in Samoa, and its introduction was probably partly due to the readiness of Samoan teachers to reconstruct various facets of their own recreation at home to alleviate loneliness or depression. Sports meetings between former enemy villages were arranged by the Samoan teachers to cement good relations: they often coincided with the annual LMS "Mei" meetings, and ended with feasting and Samoan-style dancing. Nor was the church motif absent from cricket. In some Samoan districts in Papua — as in the Samoan districts of Tokelau, Niue, and the Ellice Islands — only communicant church members were allowed to participate.[35]

Nearly all Papuan people were described as being fond of hymns, and they welcomed the hymnodies of Handel, the Wesleys, or Ira D. Sankey. As late as 1915, a villager was able to chant the words of hymns introduced on Woodlark (Murua) island by Marist fathers between 1847 and 1852. "When the drum beats for practice not a young man or woman can be found at home," wrote a Fijian teacher in 1899, "they are so eager to acquire the new melodies."[36] In the Central or Port Moresby District *peroveta* or prophet songs were bequeathed by the Rarotongan teachers. Along the LMS coasts settled by Samoans the people sang hymns written in the vernacular by Samoans to tunes that came from the English Nonconformist tradition. Samoan hymns were characterized by a two-part harmony with the parts moving independently, sometimes in antiphon and sometimes overlapping. In north-east Papua, claimed by the Anglicans, harmony and the antiphon had been elements in pre-mission singing, but there was nothing to approximate the

34. Vula, cited in *Missionary Review*, May 1939; R. Sinclair, ed., *Polynesian Missions in Melanesia From Samoa, Cook Islands and Tonga to Papua New Guinea and New Caledonia* (Suva: University of the South Pacific, 1982), 32.
35. Nokise, 157–8.
36. *AMMR*, January 1911; see also, Methodist Missionary Society, *Annual Report*, 1898–9, xxi.

metrical bar and the semitone was unknown. More popular among the seaboard populations of north-east Papua were the revivalist harmonies which had been introduced by Samoan pastors to the adjoining LMS field and carried back by returning plantation labourers. The Queensland Melanesians, too, preferred revivalist compositions. Most clergy thought the revivalist jingles sung by the teachers vulgar and sentimental, and some sought to counter Evangelical emotion with the more austere Anglican hymnody. C. G. Robertson wrote that he spent Sunday afternoons "playing a concertina on the beach to teach Kelham plainsong to counter the Moody and Sankey tunes that the natives seem to take to so readily." The response, however, was disappointing: "The boys stand about . . . saying 'Agi' when I play, but not one of them will touch a note." At Wanigela, A. K. Chignell commented, "Every one . . . sings flat . . . The children are better pleased by hymns of the Moody and Sankey order . . ."[37]

III

Disenchantment with Island teachers became a recurrent theme in the writing of Europeans in all three missions. Mutual dissatisfaction between Europeans and Samoans arose partly from problems of communication. The pioneer European missionaries in Papua (1871–88) had come originally from LMS mission stations established earlier in Polynesia, and they tended to gather around themselves teachers from islands whose languages and customs they already knew. But only a few of the European missionaries who came to Papua after the annexation of the possession in 1888 had any prior experience of missions elsewhere in the South Seas. They arrived directly from Britain. Thus the Samoans lacked the comforting presence of an English missionary who had previously lived in Samoa and knew their language. A. E. Hunt, appointed from Samoa to Port Moresby in 1894, was the only Samoan-speaking LMS agent to work in Papua. Consequently the bond of familiarity which existed between W. G. Lawes and the Niueans, or James Chalmers and the Rarotongans, scarcely existed in the case of the Samoans. Hunt's departure in 1902 left the Samoans without any English colleague with whom they could discuss problems in their own language.

Mutual disenchantment also sprang from lowered status in the mission field. The movement of Samoans to Papua had coincided with a time of expansion in the pastors' authority in Samoa. A campaign for ordination of Samoan teachers which began in Tutuila in 1850 had culminated in the achievement of ordination in 1875. This made the ordained *faife'au* (pastors) eligible for membership of the *Fono Tele* (general meeting). In 1906 the *Au Toeaina* or Elders' Council was created with forty-five members, most of whom were elected by the ruling pastors. By this time the *faife'au* had established a

37. *Occasional Paper* 48/8 (Christmas 1915); A. K. Chignell, 362–3.

prestige unrivalled by that of their LMS counterparts in the Pacific. In the words of A. E. Hunt, "They had almost equal positions with the European missionaries. They were consulted on all points . . . and were allowed full power in their churches."[38]

This contrasted with the limited power of the pastors in other LMS districts. In the Cook Islands, for example, the *orometua* (pastor) worked under the authority of the church assembly, being accountable to the assembly rather than to his congregation. The Samoan pastor consulted only the *matai* or titled head men of the village congregation. In Samoa, pastors and titled head men were bound by a mutually beneficial contract called the *feagaiga*. This required the *matai* to provide for the food and other daily material needs of the pastor, and the latter to care for the spiritual needs of the village community. The people undertook to recognize the position of the pastor and respect it. Part of that recognition was the obligation to look after the pastor's worldly requirements in food and money, and to provide a furnished house. This was in harmony with Samoan village society in which each person's role was clearly defined and where a preoccupation was to ensure that status was recognized and respected. The people agreed to respect the pastor: the pastor undertook to recognize the position of the chiefs.[39] In the village, the *faife'au* and *matai* assumed theirs was the role of making decisions and of being obeyed.

When the Samoan pastors travelled to the Papua field, they discovered their status was lower than at home. They were not autonomous but were merely "the eyes and hands and ear and mouth of the European missionary."[40] In particular, their salary of $40 p.a. compared badly with the pastor's salary averaging $64 in Samoa, an allowance to which was added food provided free as part of the *feagaiga*. Congregations in the Gilbert and Ellice Islands districts staffed by Samoans likewise complemented the pastor's stipend with lavish contributions of food and money. In Papua in addition, the $40 was payable in goods from the mission store rather than in cash, as in Samoa.[41] Moreover, oral and written records confirm that many pastors experienced difficulty in gaining free access to Papuan garden produce. In Samoa, the pastor's requirements in matters of shelter, food, and welfare had to be met for the *feagaiga* to be honoured. If a Samoan village section failed to meet the obligation it was regarded as an insult. This was usually resolved by negotiation, but if diplomacy failed it could lead to physical violence. In Papua the Samoans had to deal with an expectation very common among Papuans that payment in money would be given for food. It was an expectation for which previous experience had not prepared the pastors. As Hume

38. A. E. Hunt to R. W. Thompson, Port Moresby, 9 April 1895, PL, cited in Nokise, 64.
39. Personal communication, K. Eteuati, 28 February 1979.
40. R. W. Thompson to J. H. Holmes, London, 6 January 1899, Canberra: National Library of Australia, LMS Papers, Western Outgoing Letters.
41. W. G. Lawes to R. W. Thompson, Vatorata, 16 February 1905, PL; D. Wetherell, "Pioneers and Patriarchs: Samoans in a Nonconformist Mission District in Papua, 1890–1917," *Journal of Pacific History* 15, nos 3–4 (1980): 143.

Nisbet recorded in 1888, "The Papuan being close-fisted and yielding nothing out of charity, these poor South Sea Islanders come with their wives among a people callous, if not regarding them as intruders. They spend their year's allowance in less than four months, and then half starved [*sic*] the rest of the year."[42]

Deprived of food, Samoan exasperation at what was perceived as Papuan hardness of heart could find relief in outbursts of uncontrollable rage and physical beatings. As a Papuan recalled, "The Samoans used to hit the table, saying 'Why don't you bring me food? I leave my country far away, I come to Papua to bring you good news about God, but you bring me no food' . . . Afterwards the head man talked hard to the people and made them give him food."[43]

Expressions of anger did not mark Samoan exchanges with Europeans. In the presence of white missionaries, the Samoan always maintained a posture of amiable equanimity. A Samoan maxim which applied to pastors and *matai*, was "hold on to your dignity" (*taofi lou mamalu*). The Samoans had acquired the ability to hide their true feelings behind an impregnable mask of controlled aloofness, assuming, as the occasion demanded, an outward demeanour pleasing to those in authority. But feelings of deep resentment and anger against those in authority could lie behind the façade.[44] With Britons who spoke no Samoan, feelings were even more deeply concealed.

Thus the Samoans in Papua chafed in silence beneath the restrictions imposed by the Papua District Committee (PDC) made up of British missionaries. The issue of salaries dominated Samoan items on the committee agenda: pastors appealing for higher stipends to offset the Papuans' failure to respond to the *feagaiga*; pastors trading in defiance of regulations, some to pay school fees for children in Samoa; pastors inciting envy among Papuan villagers to increase contributions. Competitive Papuan giving came to a climax in the annual "Mei" meetings, where the pastors' status as good and generous leaders was being put to the test. Europeans were well aware of the use of inter-village or inter-island competition to exalt the Samoans but no-one knew quite how to stop it. "He is afflicted with deafness," acidly wrote E. B. Riley about the Samoan pastor at Daru, "unless the subject is money, on which his hearing is quickened in a marvellous manner." But a Samoa missionary, J. W. Sibree, noted the reasons why he thought New Guinea was losing the sympathy of the Samoans. "What inducements have they had?" he wrote. "Take salary for example. We white missionaries get better pay than the average home minister, and we get help for our children, and a prospect of pension, also furlough stipend. Samoan missionaries have been in the very reverse position on each of these points."[45]

42. Personal communication, K. Eteuati, 28 February 1979; Hume Nisbet, *The Land of the Hibiscus Blossom: A Yarn of the Papuan Gulf* (London: Ward & Downey, 1888), 55–75 passim.
43. Nabu Baea, interview, Daru, 12 January 1971.
44. Nokise, 36.
45. J. W. Sibree to J. H. Holmes, Leulumoega, 5 September 1917, Papua File, Congregational Christian Church of Samoa, Apia.

Steadily throughout the long conflict between English and Samoan missionaries in Papua, the Samoa District Committee of English missionaries (SDC) came to adopt the position of protagonist of the Samoans. It is significant that A. E. Hunt, the only member of the Papua District Committee (PDC) with Samoan experience, objected to the way Samoans were regarded in Papua: "as I pointed out to the Committee our Samoan pastors are accustomed to be treated as colleagues & not servants. We discuss plans with them and decide *with* them as to which course to take."[46] The high death rate among Samoans during their first twenty years of employment in Papua from 1884 also aroused suspicion among European missionaries in Samoa that their pastors were not being given adequate medical care. In turn, the Papua District Committee blamed its Samoan colleagues for sending "unfit" men to New Guinea.[47] When the SDC proposed in 1893 that a Samoan district be set aside to be worked entirely by Samoans "to obviate the difficulty of intercourse now experienced by Samoan teachers in New Guinea and the missionaries of their districts" the PDC rejected the advice as impracticable.[48] The Papua District Committee later passed on a government demand that only Samoan teachers "with a very good knowledge of English" be employed. "They [the Samoan pastors] have all had to learn German not English," replied a nettled Samoa District Committee; did not the PDC realize Western Samoa had been under German control for the past fifteen years?[49] It is possible that the English-in-schools ordinance was interpreted by the Samoans as an insult to their pride as Samoans, as well as their status as *faife'au*. But the friction over salary was the reason for gradually ending the recruitment of all but a handful of Samoans.

In 1914 the Papua District Committee began to reduce the number of Samoan pastors. Those returning were not replaced and requests for Samoans were thenceforth made only for specialist pastors such as carpenters, or those with a knowledge of English. With the reduction of Samoan numbers from 1914, there was an immediate rise in stipends for those who remained. Though Samoans continued to volunteer for the mission for many years, the age of migration of Polynesian pastors in Papua had passed its peak.

As with Samoan–European relations in the LMS, the language of communication was at the heart of white Anglican disenchantment with the Queensland Melanesians. A. K. Chignell wrote that Island teachers conversed "with that complete elimination of mood and tense and number and concord" that was "characteristic of the right 'pidgin' English." When Montagu Stone-Wigg, first bishop of New Guinea, declared in 1900 that "on one point I am sure we all agree — we will have the Queen's English, if any, and not that Mongrel tongue

46. A. E. Hunt to R. W. Thompson, Port Moresby, 3 September 1895, Canberra: National Library of Australia, LMS Papers, Papua Letters.
47. Cited in Nokise, 245.
48. Samoa District Committee Minutes, 28 May 1893 (hereafter cited as SDC); New Guinea District Committee Minutes, 4 December 1893, Canberra: National Library of Australia, LMS Papers, Samoa and Papua Reports.
49. Cited in Nokise, 247.

which the white man usually introduces"[50] he unwittingly reduced enormously the potential for communication between racial groups on the mission staff. Having spent years mastering the major tongues of north-eastern Papua — Wedauan, Ubir, and Binandere — white Anglican missionaries steadfastly refused to learn the Pidgin spoken by their Melanesian colleagues. As a result, the annual staff conference was divided, Europeans meeting at one annual conference, the Queensland Melanesians and Papuan teachers meeting at another.

With the dividing of the Anglican annual conference into two sections, the vicar-general of the diocese reported a "very strong feeling" among Islanders about the "cleavage along the colour line."[51] There was additional indignation among Melanesian teachers in Papua when letters arrived from scholars at the Melanesian Mission's headquarters at Norfolk Island that Mrs Cecil Wilson, wife of the bishop of Melanesia, had ended fifty years of male egalitarianism on the Melanesian Mission by refusing to eat at the same table as Islanders.[52]

In the Methodist Mission, the decline in Fijian influence did not result from linguistic problems: W. E. Bromilow, the mission head, had lived in Fiji and spoke the language fluently. The smooth functioning of the pioneering Wesleyan mission in the Papuan islands was partly due to a regard by both groups for the hierarchical nature of church and society they had known in Fiji. In the Methodist mission, as in its LMS and Anglican neighbours, the Europeans were the centre of authority. They managed the rest of the staff, made the decisions, and controlled the finances. Fijians were usually found by their supervisors to be sturdily cooperative and "loyal." One of Bromilow's cherished anecdotes came from a meeting with the teachers shortly before the beginning of mission work in 1891. When asked about preferences for teaching posts, the Fijians had replied, "Sir, tell us where . . . to go and we will go."[53] The mutual respect of Europeans and Fijians for one another did not stem from any egalitarian principles.

The unquestioning Fijian deference to Europeans tended to perpetuate a South Sea Island hierarchy over Papuans which ran counter to Henry Venn's goal of self-governing, self-supporting, and self-propagating indigenous churches. The mission leaders envisaged that when enough Papuans had been converted, the burden of responsibility for maintaining the churches would be transferred to them. But such a strategy had to be reconciled with the social structures of Papuan communities. According to the Anglican bishop who visited Dobu in 1901, Bromilow did not expect the Papuans to become ministers, as they did not seem to be able to make themselves obeyed like the Fijians and Samoans. Bromilow did not alter this opinion on his return to Papua in 1920 after a twelve-year absence. "What the Papuan needs is the Fijian or Samoan," he reiterated. "The brethren tell me the Papuans make poor leaders and will not rule."[54]

50. Chignell, 65; M. J. Stone-Wigg, conference address, 26 July 1900, AA.
51. H. Newton to M. Stone-Wigg, Ganuganuana, 8 May 1905, AA.
52. Newton to Stone-Wigg, 8 May 1905.
53. W. E. Bromilow, *Twenty Years Among Primitive Papuans* (London: Epworth, 1929), 75–6.
54. W. E. Bromilow to A. J. Small, Dobu, 6 July 1920, Fiji District Correspondence, Suva.

In the Fijian-staffed Methodist Mission the structure of authority continued to rest entirely on a few Island teachers under European supervisors. This was in spite of the warning by the International Conference of Missions in Edinburgh in 1910, where the churches were warned that the imperial power under which missions had flourished was no longer increasing and that training of indigenous churches was imperative. Reluctance to give responsibility to Papuans was due to a negative view of their leadership ability, but partly too to the excellent reputations enjoyed by Fijian *vakavuvuli*. While Islanders remained in the circuits, experiments with Papuan leaders would continue to be unhurried. This perpetuated the hierarchy. A European visitor to the mission wrote that Papuans after World War II accepted unquestioningly the leadership of the South Sea Island teachers: "Your people in Samoa and the others from the Tongan and Fijian group are dominating personalities and the Papuan has no chance against them."[55]

The Queensland Melanesian, Fijian, and Samoan teachers in Papua present deep contrasts in expectation and behaviour. The experiences of a Melanesian sugar worker in Queensland, adrift from his home society, shaped a missionary contribution very different from that of the Samoan patriarchs sent by vigorous churches in Polynesian strongholds. The Queensland Melanesian teacher had considerable gifts of enthusiasm, adaptability, and rapport with his new surroundings. He was adopted readily by villagers and often married into village clans. He was, as A. K. Chignell wrote of Peter Seevo, teacher at Wanigela, "in some ways the most prominent and popular" person in the neighbourhood, with Papuan men "at almost every hour of the day or night, seated in rows upon his verandah or around his table while he sits at meals."[56] But very few of the Queensland teachers left a striking impression on folk memories in north-eastern Papua or on the written record, and it may be guessed they were not dominating men. There are more instances of Europeans lamenting the weakness of Queensland Melanesians than in condemning their severity. They were quiet, blameless, unexceptional men of limited ability and indifferent education who were, in the words of one Australian cleric, "too easy going with the Natives."[57]

Because of the cultural compatibility between Fijians and Papuans the Fijian *vakavuvuli* were popular among their hosts; and like the Queensland Melanesians they also made less impact on Papuan societies than did the Samoans. Later Methodists confirmed a judgment of Sir William MacGregor, first lieutenant-governor of British New Guinea. From the way Papuans imitated Fijian dress, manner, gait, even the cut and style of their hair, said MacGregor, it was plain that the Fijian was the best liked and most respected of all the Island teachers in the colony.[58] George Brown's assertion of the

55. R. J. Maddox to C. Williams, East Cape, 1 November 1954, Minute Book, Methodist District Synod, Apia.
56. Chignell, 50.
57. H. Newton to M. Stone-Wigg, Dogura, 20 September 1900, AA.
58. British New Guinea, *Annual Report*, 1897–8, 47; 1892–3, 11.

cultural similitude between Pacific Islands people applied more precisely to the Fijians and Queensland Melanesians than to the Samoans.

Pacific Island teachers from Samoa introduced sweeping changes that transformed ancestral religion and local politics of the areas under their influence. They introduced new foodstuffs and taught new crafts and methods of cooking. They desacralized the traditional ancestors and converted the holders of esoteric magic, and themselves adopted a chiefly role wherever they went. Armed on one hand with the *fa'asamoa* and the *fa'akerisiano* on the other, they imparted a cultural interpretation of Christianity with a competitive emphasis on rank and status.[59] The cultural homogeneity of the Samoans gave them considerable pride, strengthening group solidarity. The Fijians and Queensland Melanesians lacked this homogeneity. And it is clear that the Samoan teachers regarded the places where they worked as extensions of their homeland and their culture. In that setting, the missionary movement provided them with a framework to promote cultural and political changes in the direction of a Samoanized Christianity.

59. Wetherell, "Pioneers and Patriarchs," 139, 153; Nokise, 90, 299.

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