Pioneers and Patriarchs

*Samoans in a Nonconformist Mission District in Papua, 1890-1917**

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BETWEEN 1871 AND 1890 OVER 190 SOUTH SEA ISLAND TEACHERS ENTERED THE southern part of mainland New Guinea as employees of the London Missionary Society. Apart from two parties of Loyalty Islanders, the teachers were from the Polynesian islands of Niue, Rarotonga and Samoa, with a small number of Tahitians.[1] From the 1820s, when Tahitian teachers had begun to spread the faith of Evangelical Christianity to the Cook Islands and Tonga, the use of Islands agents had become a standard part of Protestant missionary practice. The Methodists had raised an auxiliary group of local preachers and class-leaders in the islands where they went. The Samoan pastors, or *faifeau Samoa*, whose first party arrived at Port Moresby in 1883, 12 years after the founding of the New Guinea Mission, were the last 'national' group among the L.M.S. Islands teachers in New Guinea. But on the frontiers of the western Pacific they were no less pioneers than other Islands teachers. Missionary expansion in New Guinea, as in other parts of Oceania, would have been difficult without the Samoan pastors.

As a significant strand in the Evangelical missionary movement, the work of the Islands teachers invites attention. The 1,100 Polynesian and Melanesian teachers and their wives who travelled to other Pacific islands have so far received little scrutiny by historians, and the records of the L.M.S. and Methodist missions in New Guinea contain valuable documentation of the Polynesians' contribution to culture change.[2] In particular, the mission records of what was known as the 'East End District' of the L.M.S. in New Guinea provide materials for an account of the Samoans from their arrival there until the departure of the last Samoan pastor in 1917. The purpose of this article is to explore the interaction between the Papuan people and the *faifeau Samoa* and to study some of the problems which the Samoan pastors encountered within the European L.M.S. field in New Guinea.

* I would like to thank Mr Viggo Rasmussen of Apia for translations of the Samoan letters quoted here, and Prof. Sione Lātūkefu, Mrs Ruta Sinclair, Mr Kilifoti Eteuati and the Rev. U. Nokise for reading earlier drafts of this article. In brackets after the names of missionaries and officials are the dates of their service.

[1] Loyalty Islands teachers first arrived in 1871, Rarotongans in 1872, Niueans in 1875 and Samoans in 1883.

[2] For a previous article on the Island teachers see Charles W. Forman, 'Missionary force of the Pacific Island Church', in *International Review of Missions*, LIX (1970), 215-26, and David Wetherell, 'From Fiji to Papua: the work of the *vakavuvuli*', in *Journal of Pacific History*, XIII (1978), 153-73. A list of Pacific Islands teachers is held in the chapel of the Pacific Theological College, Suva, but records of teachers' wives are incomplete.

The pioneer European missionaries of the L.M.S in New Guinea came originally from mission stations established earlier in the South Seas. Though following no rigid rule about teachers' appointments, New Guinea district missionaries tended to gather around themselves teachers whose customs and languages they already knew. Thus, the Loyalty Islands teachers settled in the Torres Strait Islands and in Milne Bay under the supervision of Samuel McFarlane, formerly missionary on Lifu. Niueans and Rarotongans worked in the Port Moresby district under W. G. Lawes who had come from Niue. Other Rarotongans went to Motumotu (Toaripi) and Suau in eastern New Guinea with James Chalmers, a former missionary in Rarotonga. Few of the European missionaries who came to New Guinea after the annexation of the territory in 1888 had any prior experience of missions elsewhere. Until these missionaries began coming directly from Britain, L.M.S. missionaries in New Guinea reproduced many of the features of earlier mission stations in Polynesia. To visit Chalmers at Motumotu, or Lawes at Port Moresby, or Albert Pearse at Kerepunu, was to see a striking similarity of procedure about their stations, an atmosphere common to them all, although they had come to Papua from such widely separated fields as Rarotonga, Niue and Raiatea. As Charles W. Abel, an L.M.S. missionary who arrived in 1890, noted they seemed to have learned their work from a common model.[3]

European missionaries usually accompanied South Sea Islands teachers on their introduction to Papuan villages. To win respect, the missionaries and their teachers commonly distributed hoop iron; at Suau the headmen were said to have been 'greatly delighted' with their gifts when Chalmers and six Rarotongan teachers landed there in 1877.[4] Villagers were also attracted by knives, red beads and fish hooks; but tobacco came to be the most coveted inducement. Sticks of tobacco were used initially by Rarotongan and Samoan teachers to solicit goodwill and to purchase food; and while handing out tobacco, some Samoans explained their origins. 'You and we have one body', said one Samoan; 'Europeans they have a different body. We are teaching you to read and write. Afterwards white people, you and we will live together.' Another story related how a leading pastor introduced fellow Polynesians to village people by telling them they all had the same 'grandfather' or ancestor, and were therefore re-united.[5]

Polynesian pastors were the pioneer foreign settlers in most places they went to. They could act as mediators between Papuans and visitors and as such enjoyed certain psychological advantages over later arrivals. In the pockets of

[3] C. W. Abel, Notes, nd, Boroko, University of Papua New Guinea, Abel Papers (hereinafter AP).
[4] J. Chalmers to W. Mullens, Suau, 23 Aug. 1878, Canberra, National Library of Australia, LMS Papers, Papua Letters (hereinafter PL).
[5] Haure Heaoa, Interview, Orokolo, 16 Jan. 1971.

coastline under their influence they brought together feuding villagers to discuss peace. There were over 30 Polynesian pastors scattered along parts of the southern New Guinea coast by the time of the first tour of duty of the Protectorate in 1885 by the Special Commissioner, Sir Peter Scratchley.[6] Because such officials as Scratchley lacked precise jurisdiction, and were short of manpower, they were obliged to use the L.M.S. pastors to provide what little administration there was. G. Seymour Fort, Scratchley's private secretary who accompanied the Special Commissioner on his tour of duty, observed the extent of the pastors' influence. He said that the pastors had succeeded, not merely in opening up communication with natives along nearly the entire littoral of the protected territory, but had 'inspired those natives with confidence'.[7] Some of the 30 pastors were Samoans but most were Rarotongans. When the Special Commissioner's vessel dropped anchor, it was usually the pastor who was first on board. Members of official parties sometimes slept in the mission buildings, and the pastor's house was occasionally the venue for meetings with village headmen.[8]

Between 1872 and 1890 the Cook Islands supplied nearly half of all the South Sea Islands teachers, but by 1890 Samoa had begun to replace Rarotonga as the main supplier of Polynesians for New Guinea. Other missions by that time were also using Samoans for pioneering work. Samoans had been among George Brown's first Methodist party to New Britain in 1875, and 20 Samoan teachers and wives were in the Methodist party at Dobu in the D'Entrecasteaux group in 1891.[9] Not far from the D'Entrecasteaux, Samoans had already begun by that time to arrive in the East End District of the L.M.S. The first three Samoan pastors in Milne Bay settled apparently in the early months of 1892. These were Filimoni, Ma'anaima and Toma, who went to the villages of Mita, Bou and Waralaia respectively, on the East Cape peninsula of Milne Bay.[10]

The communities of Bou and Waralaia were considered dangerous to visitors. Fighting was in progress at the hoisting of the British flag at Killerton Island near Bou in November 1884, and warriors had been seen at the ceremony with 'rather nasty' spear wounds in their arms and legs.[11] A single action by the government five years afterwards was probably responsible for the

[6] J. W. Lindt, *Picturesque New Guinea* (London 1887), 153.

[7] Ibid.

[8] For a photographic record of Polynesians visited by Scratchley, see J. W. Lindt, *Picturesque New Guinea* (original copy, Melbourne, La Trobe Library). This volume, though under the same title, is different from the text by Lindt quoted in fn 6.

[9] For an account of the landing at Dobu see W. E. Bromilow, *Twenty Years Among Primitive Papuans* (London 1929), 64-6.

[10] East End District Annual Report, 1892, Canberra, National Library of Australia, LMS papers. Papua Reports (hereinafter PR); British New Guinea, *Annual Report* (hereinafter BNG *AR*), 1891-2, pp 88-9; C. W. Abel to W. B. Ward, Kwato, 25 Aug. 1897, AP.

[11] A. Keyser, *Our Cruise to New Guinea* (London 1885), 51.

Samoans' safety. This was the public hanging in January 1889 not far from Bou of a villager named Hannewanna for his part in a trader's murder at Awaiama.[12] Visiting the partly subdued villages on the peninsula three years after the hanging, Abel reported that the three Samoans had 'gone into their new work with something like the soul of the Salvation Army'.[13]

None of the Samoans met violence in eastern New Guinea, and apart from the deaths of four Rarotongans and their families at Kalo near Rigo in 1881, few Polynesians died at the hands of the people they came to convert. Yet death, and illness, dogged the teachers from the start. The major causes of death among Polynesians in New Guinea seem to have been malaria and pneumonia, but the full nature and scope of ailments contracted by the teachers is a matter of conjecture.[14] Eight of the Samoans or their wives sent to the station at Kwato died before 1900, three of them within a few weeks of their arrival. 'How terribly they suffer!' wrote E. Pryce Jones from the Papuan Gulf, 'It is a wonder that any work is accomplished, seeing what a number of breaks there are through illness'.[15] The memorial window in the chapel at Vatorata training village near Kapakapa in 1901 reminded Papuan students that in the 30 years of the mission's existence, 82 Polynesian missionaries had died in the attempt to convert their countrymen. By 1916 another 40 Polynesians had died.[16]

The high death rate among Polynesians was undoubtedly due partly to ignorance of conditions in the western Pacific. Without proper attention to quinine, a Samoan in fever was apt to walk in the rain, or in Abel's words 'sit for half an hour on his verandah in the teeth of a strong wind'.[17] When the cause of malaria was diagnosed, some teachers began acting with greater caution as they endured the trials of life in a swampy area. The *faifeau Samoa* Neru explained:

> We have now met the most difficult of enemies, the mosquito. . . . Numerous mosquitoes have bred and fallen down on wherever people live. Uninhabited places too, houses filled with mosquitoes day and night. We're sure there are more mosquitoes in Pastor Kuki's house in Moru than in the whole of Upolu. There is only one rescue here—the mosquito net. There are more hours spent inside the mosquito net than outside it.[18]

[12] BNG *AR* 1888-9, 16; C. W. Abel, *Savage Life in New Guinea The Papuan in Many Moods* (London [1901]), 170. Hannewanna is variously spelt Hanewai.

[13] C. W. Abel to R. W. Thompson, Kwato, 28 June 1892, PL.

[14] For estimates of mortality among South Sea Island teachers, see *Australasian Medical Gazette*, VI (May 1887), 144.

[15] C. W. Abel, op. cit., 167; see also George Cousins, *The Story of the South Seas* (London 1895), 193; E. Pryce Jones to R. W. Thompson, Moru, 10 May 1905, PL.

[16] *Missionary Chronicle* (hereinafter *MC*), Mar. 1911; Frank Lenwood, *Pastels from the Pacific* (London 1917), 218. The window was inscribed with the names of men only, and not wives or children whose deaths would have brought the total up to 1899 to a minimum of 130.

[17] C. W. Abel, op. cit., 169.

[18] *Samoa Sulu* (Apia), May 1914.

Such letters as Neru's circulated widely in Samoa, where the difficulties of life under mosquito nets were translated into story and song. When Mrs Edgeworth David of Sydney accompanied her husband on a geology expedition to the Ellice Islands in 1898, she recorded a simple children's song at the Samoan mission station at Funafuti: 'New Guinea, place your mosquito net of kaka leaves to protect you from the mosquitoes! Chalmers, make strong your work in Kabadi!'[19]

Two striking characteristics of the Samoan teachers in New Guinea emerged quickly. The first was the high death rate: the Polynesians, including Samoans, were debilitated by fever more quickly than other foreigners in the new land. Secondly, Samoans appear to have used a considerable degree of physical mastery in their dealings with Papuans. For heavily built men, the Samoans were surprisingly fleet-footed. Their muscular energy enabled them swiftly to overwhelm brawling Papuans, separate opposing warriors, and enforce conciliation.[20] The records of mission stations in southern New Guinea provided ample acknowledgement of the peacemaking activity of the Samoans and Rarotongans. Even the explorer Theodore Bevan, no friend of the L.M.S., noted the 'considerable influence' of the South Sea Islands teachers.[21] Gifts acquired by individual Polynesians during the period of the Protectorate—a silver watch, a signed testimonial, a rifle bearing an inscription—were given in recognition of the teachers' conciliating influence and the risks they sometimes ran in rescuing people in difficulties.[22]

Not all the energy of the Polynesians was used in seeking peace and ensuring it. The Islands teachers known in the 19th century as 'pioneers' were expected to use their influence to break down traditional religious systems. Among John Williams's instructions to the pioneer L.M.S. Island teachers in Rarotonga was to cast down 'lewd dances' and to 'stop people going in a State of Nudity or nearly so'—instructions that Samoan pastors in New Guinea would have understood very well, for some of their own night dances in Samoa had been considered by missionaries to be obscene.[23] In general, Samoan pastors in New Guinea did what they could to prevent night dancing. Sometimes they cut down posts in the villages embellished with carvings which were erotic in detail. At other times Samoan pastors entered dwellings and threw out sacred

[19] Mrs T. W. E. David, *Funafuti or Three Months on a Coral Island: An Unscientific Account of a Scientific Expedition* (London 1899), 74.

[20] Percy Chatterton, Interview, Port Moresby, 17 Feb. 1971; Robert Toleau, Interview, East Cape, 26 May 1972.

[21] *Townsville Daily Bulletin*, 17 May 1886.

[22] BNG *AR* 1886 (I), 38; see also H. H. Romilly, *The Western Pacific and New Guinea: notes on the Natives, Christian and Cannibal, with some account of the old labour trade* (London 1886), 241-2; see also Marjorie Tuainekore Crocombe, 'Ruatoka: A Polynesian in New Guinea History', in *Pacific Islands Monthly*, Nov. 1972, 69-75, and Dec. 1972, 69-76.

[23] Niel Gunson, *Messengers of Grace: Evangelical Missionaries in the South Seas 1797-1860* (Melbourne 1978), 319; George Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians Their Life-histories described and compared* (London 1910), 347.

objects to test the ability of the sorcerers, saying, 'If your god is stronger than mine, let him kill me!'[24] As carvings were believed to embody magical potency, early Polynesian pastors destroyed many objects of art which Papuan people had cherished.

In their approach to dancing and art in New Guinea the Samoans were influenced by the Evangelical traditions of 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 pastors were acting upon lessons learnt during their mission training. But the pattern of behaviour of the pastors was also grounded in their Samoan background, and it is probable that non-mission influences were also at work in shaping their responses. For, beneath the religious training of the pastors was what Norman Goodall described as a characteristic mode of reaction to certain demands and loyalties incompatible with any other way known as the *fa'asamoa*, the 'Samoan way'.[25]

The *fa'asamoa* was the name given to the whole range of behaviour accepted by the Samoan people, and it is difficult to decide how much the assault upon New Guinea carvings was due to the negative sanctions of the Old Testament, and how much of it was derived from the customary responses of a particular Polynesian society.[26] Certainly some of it reflected the identity between Polynesian and European missionaries. In 1879, seven years after the arrival of the first Polynesians in New Guinea, some of the teachers had joined Samuel McFarlane on Murray Island in the Torres Strait for a 'ceremony of burning the idols'.[27] Whatever the reasons for such destruction, one matter is beyond dispute. There is no evidence to support the case, as has been argued, that the Polynesians came mainly from the lowest class and that their iconoclasm was a vicarious revolt against 'oppression' in their own society.[28] On the contrary, some of the Samoan missionaries came of chiefly families or had been chiefs before becoming pastors.

The South Sea Islands teachers from Tahiti, Rarotonga and Samoa had originally received the *lotu* (gospel) from L.M.S missionaries belonging to the intellectual lineage of the Evangelical Revival. The training colleges established at Papeete by George Pritchard, and at Rarotonga by Aaron Buzacott, instilled into Polynesian students the teachings of such dissenting academies as Cheshunt College in Hertfordshire and Gosport in Hampshire, where Prit-

[24] Vaoita Alesana, Interview, Leone Samatau, Tutuila, 1 Oct. 1971; T. Afatoa, Interview, Saroa, Papua New Guinea, 16 Feb. 1971.

[25] Norman Goodall, *A History of the London Missionary Society 1895-1945*, (London 1954), 378-9.

[26] For a psychological analysis of Samoan behaviour see W. E. H. Stanner, *The South Seas in Transition A Study of Post-War Rehabilitation and Reconstruction in Three British Pacific Dependencies* (Sydney 1978), 315-23.

[27] S. McFarlane to W. Mullens, Murray Island, 31 Jan. 1879, PR.

[28] See V. G. Kiernan, *The Lords of Human Kind: British Attitudes in an Imperial Age* (London 1969), 258.

chard had been a student.[29] The largest of these institutions was the college at Malua, or the 'Samoan Missionary Seminary', which had been established on 50 acres of ground about 12 miles from Apia on Upolu in 1844. Instruction at Malua was in such subjects as scripture history, systematic theology and pastoral training, combined with courses on Roman Catholicism or 'Popery' and natural philosophy.[30] In its first 40 years, Malua took in students from Samoa, Rarotonga, Niue and the Loyalty Islands, as well as the Gilbert, Ellice and Tokelau groups. By the time Samoan pastors began leaving for New Guinea the college at Malua occupied several hundred acres and was made up of stone cottages arranged in a quadrangle with classrooms and hall. The main missionary tutors of the *faifeau* in New Guinea were the Revs George Turner (1844-82), John Marriott (1878-1905) and J. E. Newell (1887-1910).[31] Newell and Marriott had served apprenticeships under their immediate predecessors in the South Seas, who in their turn had passed on the earlier teachings of the English academies.

A number of Malua students married girls from the mission high schools at Papuata near Apia and at Atauloma in American Samoa. Papauta provided an academic education and its curriculum emphasized traditional Samoan customs and etiquette. The school was founded in 1892. Up to 1907 about 20 Malua students had married girls from the high schools, some of whom took further instruction at Malua. A number of Samoan wives in New Guinea from Papauta received their education from Valesca Schultze (1890-1916) and Elizabeth Moore (1890-1920).[32] A few pastors' wives were trained nurses, and occasionally a pastor was chosen for missionary service because of a well trained wife who could deputize for him in his absence from the station.[33] In New Guinea the Malua-educated Samoans and their wives formed a seigneurial group, using their common school background, their knowledge of scripture, dress, and the singing of Polynesian hymns as comforting tokens of their Samoan origins. Thus the Samoan pastors were able to blend the virtues of the *fa'asamoa* with the Evangelical values of their L.M.S. upbringing.

The role adopted by the Samoans in New Guinea, then, derived from the form of churchmanship which had been distilled from the mainstream traditions of British Dissent into the *fa'asamoa*. Evangelical Christianity thus was fitted into the 'Samoan way'. A serving pastor in Samoa was referred to as the *feagaiga*, a word meaning literally a 'contract' or a 'covenant'. The implication

[29] Niel Gunson, op. cit., 323.

[30] *Samoan Reporter*, Leulumoega, Mar. 1845; ibid., Mar. 1861; Niel Gunson, op. cit., 324-5.

[31] V. A. Barradale, *Pearls from the Pacific Being Sketches of Missionary Life and Work in Samoa and other Islands in the South Seas* (London 1907), 142-3, 145.

[32] Ibid., 137, 138; Hilda E. A. Small, *Papauta The Inland Rock. 1892-1967* (Auckland 1967), 16; Norman Goodall, op. cit., 359.

[33] Vaoita Alesana, Interview, Leone Samatau, Tutuila, 1 Oct. 1971.

was clear: 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 matters such as food and money, and to provide a furnished house.[34] This was in harmony with Samoan village society in which each person's role was clearly defined and where a major 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. In short, the village *faifeau* was given a position regarded as appropriate for one responsible for the spiritual welfare of the villagers.

As in Samoa, so it was in New Guinea. The Samoan missionaries expected and received presents during the annual *Mei* mission collections; were given a prime share in the fishing catch, eggs, meat, and birds killed in the hunt; and were given a place of honour in the villages. In the Ellice group, also a Samoan missionary dependency, the position of pastors appears to have been the same. The description given of the Samoan pastor at Funafuti by Mrs Edgeworth David in 1898 seems to typify also the European impression of Samoans in New Guinea: 'he gives himself a few airs, lords it, in fact, over king, magistrate, and natives just like an old-fashioned rector-squire in a country parish in England'.[35] European residents in New Guinea recalled the Samoan *malaga* or travelling party proceeding along village tracks in Milne Bay, the pastor in white coat bearing a Bible, his wife with woven fan aloft in one hand and umbrella in the other, followed by a file of Papuans carrying cases and chairs.[36]

The presence of Samoans was distinguished particularly in their emphasis on dress. The *lava lava*, a length of cloth wrapped around the waist and reaching to the ankles, was introduced to parts of New Guinea by teachers from Samoa. When Samoans abandoned the leaf girdle or the tapa cloth and wig (*malo*) for western dress during the conversion of their islands, cloth had become for them as tobacco was for Papuans, an article of barter.[37] In one area of New Guinea coming under intensive L.M.S. influence, a Samoan pastor wrote to his supporters at home: 'Seldom anybody is naked; everyone seems to compete in displaying his clothes and appearance, as in a Christian country; and whole rolls of materials in stores are bought by villagers for this purpose. It conveys the idea that paganism is fading.'[38]

An interest in clothing seems to have been regarded as synonymous with the adoption of the values of the mission. The original Polynesian teachers in New Guinea had been clad only in regatta or white shirt, trousers and necker-

[34] Pers. comm., Kilifoti Eteuati, 28 Feb. 1979.
[35] Mrs T. W. E. David, op. cit., 79-80.
[36] Marjorie Smeeton, Interview, Daru, 5 Jan. 1971.
[37] *Samoan Reporter*, Leulumoega, Jan. 1851.
[38] *Samoa Sulu* , Sept.-Oct. 1933.

chief, but with the passage of time the professional *faifeau Samoa* appeared dressed in trousers, collar and tie, with occasionally frock coat and watch chain.[39] Photographs of Samoan wives—bare headed or hatted, wearing dresses of black muslin or patterned print—reveal a similar emphasis on female clothing. Visiting Lilihoa in Milne Bay in 1912, Abel noted the Samoan pastor's annoyance at his own simple garb of shirt and trousers. He wrote tartly that he had forgotten to take his black coat on shore. In fact he had left his boat with his shirt sleeves rolled up.[40]

Clothing was one mark of the Samoan presence. Another material sign was in the design of their houses. The Samoan pastor's house was intended as a centre of instruction in cookery and housekeeping, a place for choral singing, and as a schoolroom. As the anthropologist A. C. Haddon remarked, the home life of the South Seas teachers was perhaps of more value than that of Europeans, for it was easier for Papuans to copy.[41] The home was also a place for the dispensing of Polynesian hospitality. In Samoa the *matai* had two houses, the *fale afolau* and the *fale tele*, the latter being reserved for important visitors,[42] a custom apparently followed in parts of New Guinea. After staying with some teachers who had vacated their house for him, Abel noted that he confessed to a feeling of shame when he saw his Samoan teachers crowded into a little native hut while he quietly took possession of their commodious home.[43] In New Guinea the designs of Samoan houses varied. The Polynesians at Kwato lived in a replica of a European South Seas house, probably built by the Rarotongan teacher Ono, with verandah, stumps, iron roof and gables, and surrounded by a wire fence.[44] However, in such Methodist mission stations as Dobu the pastor's house was in an architectural style reminiscent of the Samoan *fale*. The house was elliptical in shape, and Papuan villagers burnt lime and carried gravel for the floor, covering the basket-like roof frame with a leaf shield. The *fale* being a partly open building, villagers could see that Samoans ate and slept on woven mats and that they rested their heads on bamboo stands or kapok pillows in the hot afternoons.[45]

The Samoan *fale* does not seem to have been imitated to a great extent in Papuan Christian building styles. More important than dress or house design in its effect on Papuan culture was the introduction of foodstuffs from the

[39] See e.g. George Cousins, op. cit., 191, 224; C. W. Abel, op. cit., 173; R. W. Thompson, *My Trip in the 'John Williams'* (London 1900), 51.

[40] C. W. Abel to B. Abel, Koeabule, 30 Aug. 1912, AP.

[41] Alfred C. Haddon, *Head-hunters Black, White and Brown* (London 1901), 98.

[42] Pers. comm., Ruta Sinclair, 30 Mar. 1979.

[43] C. W. Abel, Diary, ?Oct. 1904, AP. The entry though undated was probably made in early Oct. 1904.

[44] For a photograph of this house see David Wetherell, *Reluctant Mission The Anglican Church in Papua New Guinea 1891-1942* (St Lucia 1977), facing 154.

[45] Noel Baloiloi, Interview, Dobu 2 May 1972; Kaliton Weyalulu, Interview, Kiriwina, 17 May 1972; pers. comm., Olive Dixon, 16 Nov. 1978.

eastern Pacific. The Samoan teachers knew the value of breadfruit as a food supply and planted it round their houses. As the demand grew from villagers for the new food, sections of the root were packed in earth aboard the L.M.S. vessel *John Williams*, and sent to Papua.[46] Such varieties known in eastern Papua as 'breadfruit Samoa' and 'banana Samoa' referred to the strains of those garden foods introduced by the pastors.[47] In the growing and preparation of new foods the pastors made a permanent contribution. Samoans transplanted a number of strains of citrus fruit, bananas, yams and coconuts—Samoan coconuts so lightly encased that Papuans could husk them with their hands—and they brought new ways of preparing food. Papuans could already bake pork and fish in earth ovens.[48] They acquired a taste for flour and bread, and some Samoan pastors were excellent bread makers. They learnt new dances to perform after feasts. They could perform new technical feats; use new tools of iron and new methods of weaving baskets, mats and hats pleasing to the eye or suitable for personal adornment.[49]

A GOOD example of almost everything the *faifeau Samoa* was said to be was the pastor Ma'anaima, who worked at Milne Bay and on the head station of Kwato between 1891 and 1910. Like his colleagues Toma and Filimoni, he was recommended for mission service by the Rev. John Marriott.[50] Volunteering at Malua, where he was an outstanding student, Ma'anaima was described as 'stout, with good features, dignified and intelligent, looking every inch a typical headmaster'.[51] His first encounter with Papuan people at the village of Bou illustrated the strength of opposition among some Papuan people to missionaries. When Ma'anaima tried to speak, his words were drowned out by the beating of village drums. Abel, who accompanied Ma'anaima, recorded the ensuing hostility:

> At Bou we had great difficulties in beginning our work. The people did not want a teacher, and they frankly told us so. When they found we studied their needs before their wishes they became very offensive, and showed considerable opposition to our settling amongst them.[52]

Undaunted by threats of poison and warnings of violence, Ma'anaima remained at Bou until his influence was established. He once showed Marriott a tree marked with 30 notches, each for a cannibal meal formerly held at Bou.[53]

[46] H. M. Dauncey, *Papuan Pictures* (London 1913), 138-9.
[47] Dipori Inaina, Interview, Wagawaga, 29 May 1972; Kama Nanumea, Interview, Divinai, 2 June 1972.
[48] Noel Baloiloi, Interview, Dobu, 2 May 1972; Daniel Sioni, Interview, Kwato, 25 May 1972; Merari Dickson, Interview, Port Moresby, 10 June 1972.
[49] Sikaru Apalakaia, Interview, East Cape, 27 May 1972; *Australasian Methodist Missionary Review* (hereinafter *AMMR*), 8 Jan. 1889; pers. comm., Ernest A. Clarke, 13 July 1971.
[50] J. Marriott to J. Chalmers, Apia, 19 May 1891, LMS, Western Outgoing Letters (hereinafter WOL). Filimoni appears to have been an Ellice Islander.
[51] R. W. Thompson, op. cit., 15; *MC*, Oct. 1899.
[52] C. W. Abel, op. cit., 170.
[53] *MC*, Jan. 1894.

The few records which survive from Ma'anaima's period at Bou provide hints of his acrimonious relations with the sorcerers. One fragment relates a contest of strength with the sorcerers, which ended when Ma'anaima picked up a sorcerer's *haitabu* or magic stone, and heaved it into Milne Bay.[54]

One mark of the Samoans who had been taught at Malua was their fine display of biblical erudition. It was generally agreed that in spite of their limitations the Samoans were the best school masters in the mission. As a scion of a chiefly family,[55] and a leading Malua student, Ma'anaima probably possessed some of the traditional excellence of the Samoan *tulafale* or orator. His preaching appears to have been of high quality. During a visit to Samoa during furlough in 1905, Ma'anaima preached on the subject of Samoa's mission in New Guinea to such effect that he reported 13 Malua men volunteering to join the mission.[56] As is shown in his written accounts, Ma'anaima's style was markedly reminiscent of the English Evangelical fervour of earlier times. It is significant that his writing was developed during the period he spent as Marriott's private secretary.[57] He gave one account of his own, of a clash over dancing and revelry at Maivara village in Milne Bay. At Maivara the headman was in Ma'anaima's words 'like a demon' and 'the ringleader in every evil, and wicked thing':

> I tried to forbid their evil practices, but I was unsuccessful. One day they grasped their weapons to injure me, but their hands were restrained from above . . . The [demon] stood before me with an axe in his hand and said: 'We do not wish to *lotu* (pray); we desire to imitate the European traders whose habits no one seems to forbid.[58]

Afterwards, the headman's son asked Ma'anaima to let him be his son, and the dancing faction renounced their follies. Then the Samoan preached a sermon on forgiveness and the 'demon' made a suitable confession:

> He told the people that he intended to cast away all his evil practices, and give himself to the religion of Jesus. He also addressed all the people of his end of the village and told them to cease their evil contentions and give themselves to the *lotu* . . . My heart burst forth with prayer and praise to God.[59]

In 1895 Ma'anaima went to Kwato where he replaced the Rarotongan teacher Ono who, although a 'splendid missionary', had been removed to Isuleilei for trading against the orders of the L.M.S.[60] Ma'anaima became

[54] C. W. Abel, Diary ?11 Feb. 1906, AP.
[55] J. Marriott to J. Chalmers, Apia, 19 May 1891, WOL.
[56] C. W. Abel to R. W. Thompson, Kwato, 2 Sept. 1905, PL.
[57] J. Marriott to J. Chalmers, Apia, 19 May 1891, WOL.
[58] *MC*, Jan. 1893.
[59] Ibid.
[60] Isuleilei Annual Report, 11 Dec. 1898, PR; Papua District Committee (hereinafter PDC) Minutes, 19-22 Mar. 1906, PR.

headmaster of the 'village school' on Kwato, teaching scripture, writing, geography and singing. Twelve of Ma'anaima's 54 pupils formed the choir at L.M.S. church services on Samarai. The practical abilities of Kwato students were valued by the government: the first Lieutenant-Governor of British New Guinea, Sir William MacGregor (1888-98), ordered 100 police uniforms sewn by the girls taught by Abel's wife Beatrice. It is probable that the 'pleasant Samoan woman', as MacGregor's successor G. R. Le Hunte described Ma'anaima's wife, also instructed the Kwato girls in sewing. Le Hunte himself joined in the students' sports on Kwato, saying that 'Ma'anaima appears to be an excellent man for the work, instructing his scholars well, and joining heartily in their games, of which cricket is the chief'.[61]

If Ma'anaima's sporting prowess impressed visitors to Kwato, his clashes with the village elders were long remembered on the outskirts of the mission. In 1906, over 10 years after Ma'anaima had hurled the *haitabu* into the sea on the other side of Milne Bay, the people at Wagawaga reminded him of his earlier behaviour. One man said, 'You are the teacher that used to be at Bou who interfered with the *Haitabu'*. Ma'anaima retorted that he was the teacher who had touched the *haitabu*. Had it hurt him or given him a swollen leg? Ma'anima was sensitive about his size, and his statement drew some derision. One of the men rejoined that Ma'anaima had not only a swollen leg but a swollen body; he was swollen all over. Recalling this incident later before an audience of Papuans Ma'anaima declared that it had been 10 years since he had thrown the *haitabu* into the sea and he was still alive. The others who told him his action would kill him—Haki, Solu, Nanaka and Pusuri—had all died years ago.[62] When the meeting at Wagawaga was over, the village people followed Ma'anaima down to the beach, wished him goodbye, and asked him to see them again.

The episodes at Bou and Maivara vividly demonstrated the force of the first contacts between Evangelical pastors and the traditional holders of power. Methods used in New Guinea by such men as Ma'anaima echoed missionary procedures used by the L.M.S. pioneers and introduced by South Sea Island teachers wherever they went. As an opponent of dancing and hammer of sorcerers, Ma'anaima reinforced the influence of the L.M.S. along the coast of Milne Bay. His relations with European district missionaries, however, appear to have been placid, a contrast to the abrasive relations between some Samoan and European mission agents. Abel described him as most docile.[63] The Samoa District Committee recorded that Ma'anaima had 'proved himself in every way

[61] BNG *AR* 1898-9, 35; Kwato (East End) District Annual Report, 1898, PR.
[62] C. W. Abel, Diary, 11 Feb. 1906, AP. A shorter account appears in Russell W. Abel, *Charles W. Abel of Kwato Forty Years in Dark Papua* (London 1934), 117.
[63] C. W. Abel to B. Abel, Kwato, ?26 Jan. 1897, AP.

worthy of the trust placed in him by Mr Abel'.[64] Some English colleagues went to the length of giving him a little patronizing approval. W. J. V. Saville of the L.M.S. mission at Mailu said it was 'a pleasure to talk with the intelligent and humble Samoan'.[65] On occasions of both praise and blame, Ma'anaima possessed a sense of diplomacy that some of his Polynesian colleagues lacked; in short, he knew how to handle a European.

Ma'anaima was a family man with two wives, Toe and Eme, buried in Samoa and New Guinea, and a third, Safua, who survived him.[66] Safua spent some time teaching in the district after his death in July 1910. At home on Kwato, Ma'anaima, like his colleague Ono before him, lived at close quarters with Papuan children. Abel seems to have found the atmosphere of the evening circle at Kwato reminiscent of his own childhood in Bloomsbury, London, as the following vignette suggests:

> After prayers their games are brought out, and, squatting about the large room in little groups, some play at marbles, some grind tunes out of an organette I bought some time ago, some play bagatelle . . . or I teach them a hymn, or perform a clumsy conjuring trick, much to their delight.[67]

Here were Papuan and Polynesian children engaged in mutual amusements; and here, in the evening, the cultivated elegance of the *faifeau Samoa* shone forth in conversation and music. Ma'anaima's third wife was the mistress of several languages and a good calligraphist. He himself was a fine penman and passed on his gift to Papuan children, as did other Polynesian teachers. Described as a 'splendid linguist', Ma'anaima spoke easily in both the Tavara and Daui dialects in the East End district of Kwato, and the translation of the four gospels into Tavara was largely his work.[68] For relaxation he could sing, preside at a feast, and hunt with a fowling piece. Occasionally pastor and wife amused Papuan audiences by teaching Samoan games, guessing competitions and riddles, as well as singing. The Polynesian song and feast was one of the cultural legacies of the *faifeau* in eastern New Guinea.

THE MISSIONARY activity of Samoans in New Guinea coincided with a time of expansion in the pastors' authority in Samoa. During the period when Samoan pastors were volunteering for the mission field, the prestige of their profession

[64] Samoa District Committee (hereinafter SDC) Minutes, 21 Dec. 1910, Apia, Congregational Christian Church of Samoa.

[65] Kwato Report, 1901-2, PR.

[66] Vaoita Alesana, Interview, Leone Samatau, 1 Oct. 1971; Dalai Kitalapu, Interview, Kwato, 31 May 1972. However, according to the PDC obituary notice, Ma 'anaima's third wife was known as Fafine. PDC Minutes, 6-11 Apr. 1911, PR.

[67] C. W. Abel to J. Hills, Kwato, 4 Dec. 1910, PL.

[68] C. W. Abel to Secretary, SDC, Kwato, 25 Aug. 1910, Papua File, SDC (hereinafter PF). For a further account of Ma 'anaima, see George Cousins, op. cit., 194.

was rising. In 1875 the *Fono tele* or general meeting of pastors had been instituted in Samoa as a consultative body; 18 years later the *Fono tele* was strengthened by the addition of laymen from the village churches.[69] In 1906 the *Au Toeaina* or Elders' Council was created with 45 members, most of whom were elected by the 150 ruling pastors.[70] More markedly than elsewhere, the pastors in Samoa developed an independence which placed them on a footing comparable with English missionaries.

In the mission field the position of the *faifeau Samoa* in relation to his English colleagues was very different. The pastor's status was lower than it was at home. He was not autonomous in his district; in the words of R. W. Thompson, foreign secretary of the Society (1884-1914), he was only 'the eyes and hands and ear and mouth of the European missionary'.[71] Samoan pastors in New Guinea were treated simply as 'pioneers' and ministerial status was long withheld. In particular, the Islanders' salary of £23 in the New Guinea Mission compared badly with the average salary of £32 of pastors in Samoa, an allowance in any case exclusive of the food provided free in Samoan villages as part of the *feagaiga*.[72] In Papua the salary was paid in goods from the mission store and not in cash.[73]

Samoans on the mission were governed by regulations of the district committees both in New Guinea and Samoa. Trading, bartering and selling of any kind were forbidden in order to prevent secularization of the pastors' position; they were not to communicate officially other than with the secretary of the New Guinea District Committee. The Samoa District Committee could supplement the income of a Samoan pastor only after the district committee in New Guinea had given consent; furlough was granted only once each 10 years.[74] Some Samoans chafed beneath the yoke of European supervision and began trading in defiance of regulations. They organized competitive *Mei* meetings between villages to enhance their status. Many Samoans made representations to the mission for higher stipends. A few asked for ministerial ordination.[75] Some tried to have a Samoan nominee appointed to the New Guinea District Committee.

[69] Norman Goodall, op. cit., 367; SDC Minutes, 3-8 May 1909.
[70] Norman Goodall, op. cit., 36.
[71] R. W. Thompson to J. H. Holmes, London, 6 Jan. 1899, LMS, WOL.
[72] New Guinea District Committee (hereinafter NGDC), 27 Aug. 1888, PR; PDC Minutes, 19 Mar. 1906, PR; R. L. Turner to J. Hills, Vatorata, 3 Oct. 1911, Papua File, Congregational Christian Church of Samoa (hereinafter PF).
[73] W. G. Lawes to R. W. Thompson, Vatorata, 16 Feb. 1905, PL.
[74] PDC Minutes 12/92, 13/94, 36/97, 14/03, 41/07, PR.
[75] 'Petition from the Samoan Teachers to the Papua District Committee', in PDC Minutes 12-16 Mar. 1912, PR; Secretary SDC to H. M. Dauncey, Malua, 12 Oct. 1912, PF; H. M. Dauncey to J. Hills, Delena, 13 Apr. 1906, United Church Archives, University of Papua New Guinea (hereinafter UCA); see also J. W. Bleakley, *The Aborigines of Australia Their History – Their Habits – Their Assimilation* (Brisbane 1961), 257.

Such discrepancies between conditions in the mission field and in the home church were complicated by a further difficulty: apart from A. E. Hunt, appointed to Port Moresby in 1894, there was no Samoan-speaking L.M.S. missionary in the L.M.S. district committee in New Guinea.[76] Although English was taught as a subject at Malua and Papauta, not all Samoans were proficient in written English and few Samoans spoke it fluently.[77] Consequently, the bond of familiarity which existed between Chalmers and the Rarotongans, or between Lawes and the Niueans, scarcely existed in the case of the Samoans. With no experienced older missionaries left with whom grievances could be discussed, the *faifeau Samoa* were made to feel their lower status than their English supervisors. Frank Lenwood, Thompson's successor as foreign secretary of the Society (1912-25), noted a characteristic of the Samoan teachers in 1916: 'While we were on Deputation we could not shut our eyes to a certain superiority, not to say disparagement, in the attitude of the South Sea men to their Papuan colleagues, which naturally brought resentment on the Papuan side'. But Lenwood added that had he been a Samoan, the impulse would have been 'almost irresistible' to make quite clear that if he were not an equal with the white man, he was at least much superior to the Papuan.[78]

Nevertheless, it is evident that the impulse to assume superiority was not fomented purely by lack of equality with Europeans who could not speak their language, but was a characeristic firmly engrained in the attitudes of many Samoan pastors. It had been evident earlier in the 19th century in other islands where Polynesians went, particularly of the Society Islands teachers in the Australs and of the Tongans in Fiji. The Wesleyan missionary John Watsford had noted of the Tongan pastors in Fiji in 1847 that they 'thought too much of themselves' and wished to ride over the people.[79] When Polynesians moved further west to New Guinea, the tendency to develop centres of command became more strikingly apparent. Papuan villagers gave the pastors the titles *amua* or *taubada*, names given only to older men, which reflected the chiefly role the villagers accorded to the Polynesians.[80] In both L.M.S. and Methodist missions, European supervisors observed the tendency among Samoan pastors, as one missionary put it, to 'lord it over the poor natives'.[81] At Kwato for example Abel wrote guardedly to London about the attitudes of his teacher Peni:

[76] A. E. Hunt had previously worked in New Guinea 1887-90. For a resolution that only English-speaking Samoans be sent to Papua, see SDC Minutes, Nov.-Dec. 1925.

[77] Vaoita Alesana, Interview, Leone Samatau, 1 Oct. 1971.

[78] *L.M.S. Report of Deputation* (London 1916), 41. Lenwood's and Thompson's terms of office as Foreign Secretary appear to have overlapped between 1912 and 1914.

[79] Quoted in Niel Gunson, op. cit., 321.

[80] Haure Heaoa, Interview, Orokolo, 16 Jan. 1971; Pastor Faolio, Interview, Pago Pago, 29 Sept. 1971.

[81] H. Fellmann to B. Danks, Raluana, 29 July 1905; B. Danks to E. Shackell, Sydney, 19 Jan. 1910, Sydney, Mitchell Library, Methodist Overseas Mission (hereinafter MOM); see also B. Danks to H. Fellmann, Sydney, 27 July 1905, MOM 52.

> He is a man of great ability, and might do well under my eye at Kwato. For a Samoan he is active, and could easily be made industrious, but the natives tell me he holds them in *contempt*, and unless I can disabuse their minds of this idea he will do no good where he is.[82]

The ascendancy of the missionary's position in a village was linked to the type of work considered appropriate for a Samoan pastor. Physical labour in the garden befitted a man without a title, but not a *matai* or a pastor. Once a man gained a title his role changed from being a gardener to supervizing or organizing the untitled men who did the digging.[83] This specialization of occupations was transferred to the mission field, with the villagers filling the position occupied by the untitled men in Samoa. Generally speaking, the Samoan pastors disdained manual work and looked askance at gardening. They favoured the mission pulpit and the schoolroom.

The Samoan predilection for purely clerical work offended Protestant missionaries who taught that man lived by the sweat of his brow and who were quick to detect sloth in different patterns of work. Besides the artisan background of many early L.M.S. missionaries, there was the new phenomenon of the industrial school which was later to have far reaching effects on Christian missions. The later 19th century trend towards industrial missions—a response, in part, to social Darwinist pessimism about dying races—led to growth from 29 to 160 in the number of industrial schools registered among Christian missions between 1880 and 1900.[84] Samoans did not seem to perform well when measured by this yardstick. Rather than converting Papuans into industrious Protestants, most Samoan pastors settled down to implant a sedately Polynesian model in their mission stations. Of all missionary groups in the western Pacific, the Polynesians were perhaps the least fitted to cultivate Protestant ideals of hard work in Papuan soil.

This is not to say, however, that physical hardship was outside the experience of the pastors. On the contrary, the Samoans must have been vividly aware of the harshness of their lot in New Guinea compared to the comforts of their homeland. The journey from Samoa to New Guinea cannot have been an agreeable experience for the pastors and their wives. After a particularly trying passage, one English missionary wrote of

> the terrible and wretched discomfort of the teachers. The hold would not contain half of them, though they were huddled together like nigger slaves. The rest had to remain on deck, washed by the sea, squatting anywhere they could find a place.[85]

[82] C. W. Abel to R. W. Thompson, Kwato, 2 Sept. 1905, PL.

[83] Irving Goldman, *Ancient Polynesian Society* (Chicago 1970), 256; pers. comm., Ruta Sinclair, 30 Mar. 1979.

[84] *Report of the Ecumenical conference on Foreign Missions, Held in Carnegie Hall and Neighbouring Churches April 21 to May 1*, II (New York 1900), 165.

[85] A. Pearse to R. W. Thompson, Port Moresby, 26 Sept. 1887, PL. See also *Queenslander*, Brisbane, 15 Dec. 1883.

From the moment the *John Williams* dropped anchor in Papuan waters, dignity was reaffirmed. Unlike the English missionaries, who carried their own accoutrements ashore, some Samoan *faifeau* preferred these to be carried by others. However, later European missionaries had their belongings carried, and it is possible that the Samoans were imitating what was being done for Europeans. At the beginning of missionary contact, Polynesians revealed a strong reluctance to yield in any particular way to changes to the *fa'asamoa*. 'They can't seem to realize that they are not in Samoa', Lawes once complained in a letter to London.[86] Culture contact after a long sea voyage often tended to harden resistance to change.

Polynesians living in New Guinea affirmed a gospel of spiritual rather than social brotherhood. Missionaries noted that the 'sprightly little Papuan', as the first Administrator described him,[87] had little in common with the stout dignity of his Samoan mentor. The formality of Samoan behaviour among Papuans added to the contrast in modes of life. Villagers in mission areas were aware of the difference between the easy gregariousness of such a missionary as Chalmers and the comparative aloofness of the settled Samoan *faifeau*. Thompson wrote after a visit to New Guinea in 1897 of the difference between the missionaries' 'frank and easy English manner' and the Samoans, who were 'stiff, and standing on their dignity constantly'. On a number of occasions Chalmers noted that the pastors tended to 'ape the Popish system' or imitate the 'solemn neck tied missionary' in their insistence on the title Reverend.[88]

A GOOD deal of the folk traditions of coastal Papuans relate to the muscular prowess of the Polynesians. Many Island teachers seem to have relied on their physical strength to command respect. Chalmers described a Polynesian pastor as 'a very powerful man, stronger far than any New Guinean I have met',[89] and the same might have been said of many. The *faifeau Samoa* resorted to physical chastisement as a method of child correction in their own households in Samoa, and there must have been great temptation to do the same in New Guinea. As the L.M.S. missionary H. M. Dauncey said, the Samoans found, and did not at first understand, that they were in a country 'where the children please themselves whether they obey or not, and where the word of the Teacher carries little weight in the village'.[90] Certainly the overbearing attitude adopted by many Polynesians was sometimes extended to a show of physical force. In some

[86] W. G. Lawes to R. W. Thompson, Port Moresby, 20 Nov. 1893, PL.
[87] BNG *AR*, 1890-1, 61.
[88] R. W. Thompson to H. M. Dauncey, London, 10 Mar. 1905, WOL; see, e.g., J. Chalmers to J. J. K. Hutchin, New Guinea, 1 Apr. 1884, PL.
[89] James Chalmers, 'Notes for Lizzie', in Papua Personal Box 1, PL.
[90] Moru District *AR*, 1906, PR.

Papuan villages the beatings of the Polynesian pastors were spoken of with awe, although the pastors were described as good men.[91]

The use of force may be explained by conditions on the western Pacific frontier. At an early stage in the contact there was always the possibility that the influence of the pastor could be destroyed. The story of Ma'anaima at Bou suggests that occasionally there were real dangers to life. It was probably true, as Lenwood said, that many of the pioneer pastors 'lived in face of constant insults from the fighting bullies of the village'. The L.M.S. missionary J. H. Holmes of Namau wrote of a 'tidal wave' of Papuan fighting men who were 'so wild, reckless and indifferent to discipline' that they threatened to sweep restraint before them. As late as 1914, the Samoan pastor at Aird Hill in the Purari Delta was threatened with death, and hundreds of bows and arrows were found in the course of manufacture for an attack on the mission station.[92]

However, in those parts of British New Guinea which had been pacified by government force, a display of aggression by Samoans was used simply to expedite obedience. The recollections of some Papuan people near mission stations are of tempests of anger by Samoans when available food supplies dwindled:

> The Samoans used to beat 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'. The Samoan man was getting cross now. Afterwards the head man talked hard to the people and made them give him food.[93]

With Samoan authority established in a village, orders from the pastor's house were quickly executed. As one Papuan witness recalled, 'The Samoans were the big boss when they were in the village. They could take anything they liked from people's gardens.'[94] When villagers were told to collect 100 crabs each for the church collection, according to witnesses, 'if anyone hadn't got the mark [number], he was in trouble'. Defiance was checked by force:

> If a village man disagree, Samoan man . . . goes straight to his house and hit him, pull out of his house and bang him. Sometimes he only talk, sometimes he hit him . . . All the people were afraid of him and whatever words he say the people do it quickly.[95]

To understand why this physical conflict took place it is necessary to refer again

[91] See Albert Maori Kiki, *Ten Thousand Years in a Lifetime* (Melbourne 1974), 57; interviews with: Samson Ravo, Daru, 31 Dec. 1970; D. Wainetti, Daru, 2 Jan. 1971; Haure Heaoa, Orokolo, 16 Jan. 1971; Baia Lohia, Tatana, 22 Feb. 1971; Kahu Wamgoahe, Wagawaga, 28 Apr. 1972; Kama Nanumea, Divinai, 2 June 1972.

[92] Lenwood, *Pastels from the Pacific*, 215; Namau District *AR*, 1910, PR; H. C. Cardew to B. T. Butcher, Kikori, 11 May 1914, UCA.

[93] Nabu Baea, Interview, Daru, 12 Jan. 1971.

[94] Baia Lohia, Interview, Tatana, 22 Feb. 1971; Merari Dickson, Interview, Port Moresby, 2 Feb. 1971.

[95] Sulu Samisoni, Interview, Orokolo, 15 Jan. 1971.

to the *feagaiga*. The pastor's requirements in matters of shelter, food and welfare had to be satisfied for the *feagaiga* to be honoured. If a Samoan village or a section of a village failed to meet the obligation, it was regarded as a serious insult. This was usually resolved by negotiation, but if diplomacy failed it could lead to a schism in the village and even to physical violence.[96] Thus the reason for Samoan retaliation in Papuan villages lay in Samoan assumptions. If deprived of food the *faifeau* probably felt their position was threatened, and by using physical force attempted to protect their status. Some Samoans assumed a position which Papuans did not usually ascribe to people responsible for their spiritual welfare.

The pastors' exercise of direct authority was also at odds with the dissenting traditions to which most L.M.S. agents belonged. Where English missionaries commonly felt obliged by the nature of their office to abstain from political action, the Samoan pastors tended to regard worldly and spiritual power as inseparable. In British New Guinea, a colony with no established church, such tendencies brought the Samoans into conflict with government officers. During the period of the Protectorate the Polynesian pastors had been useful to European officials in the maintenance of a semblance of law and order. With the establishment of full civil government, the magistrates, if they sought missionary advice at all, preferred to get it from missionaries who shared their own language and culture. Gradually and imperceptibly, the limits allowed to the Island teachers shrank, until in official writing their stations were regarded merely figuratively, as 'oases in the desert' or as the 'pledge of good order and civilisation'. Where in 1886 the pastors had been praised for creating peaceful conditions, in 1896 they were being criticized for taking a politically active role.[97] F. P. Winter, chief judicial officer of the Possession (1888-1902), was among those officials who observed that Polynesians did not 'quite understand the distinction between actions that are contrary to law and actions that are contrary to the views of their mission'.[98] On Murray Island in Torres Strait the Samoan teacher Finau levied fines and, for a time, appointed his own 'magistrates'. John Douglas, Queensland government resident on Thursday Island (1885-1904) commented tersely that Finau 'like all the Samoan teachers' was fond of power, and had quite exceeded the bounds of his legitimate authority.[99]

Though the alteration in the pastors' role was due to factors beyond their control, it must be conceded that there was some cruel and capricious behaviour on L.M.S mission stations. At Keabada, two Papuan dancers were

[96] Pers. comm. Kilifoti Eteuati, 28 Feb. 1979.
[97] BNG *AR*, 1898-9, xiii.
[98] Ibid.
[99] John Douglas to J. Chalmers, Thursday Island, 27 Nov. 1898, PL; See also Fly River Report, 1898, PR. For a further reference to the pastor Finau, see Alfred C. Haddon, op. cit., 79-81.

imprisoned by the pastor for nine weeks for refusing to stop dancing.[100] At Kerepunu two teachers were sentenced to four and six months' gaol respectively for assaults upon Papuans.[101] In Milne Bay, Tuata, the Samoan pastor at Duabo, was accused by villagers of punishing their children unreasonably.[102] Shotguns were occasionally misused. At Maipua the Polynesian teacher Latoro, seeing Papuans fishing on Sunday, discharged his shotgun with the subsequent remark, 'Well, they had no right to go fishing on Sunday—besides it was only number five shot'. A boy was shot by a Polynesian for singing on the Sabbath. He later recovered after his assailant had nursed him back to health.[103] In addition, there were references in government reports to Polynesian interference in village carving and dancing.[104]

Formerly lavish in praise of Polynesian peacemakers, L.M.S missionaries became increasingly critical of the manner in which some Samoan and Rarotongan pastors imposed conformity. Complaints made by L.M.S. supervisors echoed those criticisms being sounded in the Methodist field. George Brown who had accompanied the pioneer Methodist party to Dobu was shocked by the action of a Samoan pastor in driving an axe through a Papuan canoe. 'It meant far more than the mere destruction of the canoe', wrote Brown. 'To a Samoan it meant driving the axe through the man who had offended or an imprecation that he the offender should be killed by an axe in the same way'. According to W. E. Bromilow, first superintendent of the Methodist mission (1891-1908), some Samoans had been arrogant with the natives and treated them contemptuously.[105] In Kiriwina there was continual tension between Samoans and village people. One pastor on Kiriwina was removed for severely beating villagers and another dismissed for 'unfair dealing' with pigs. Some Samoan pastors were astute men of business, and in the view of a missionary on Kiriwina, remained in Papua only to 'advance quickly'.[106] Those Samoan ministers remembered in the Methodist District for their outstanding ability—pastors such as Filimoni Faitele, Isaia Pati and Isaia Siatua[107]—remained in Papua after the earlier pastors who 'smacked' the Pa-

[100] BNG *AR*, 1898-9, 67.
[101] A. Pearse to R. W. Thompson, Kerepunu, 11 June 1906, PL.
[102] C. W. Abel to R. W. Thompson, 21 Nov. 1910, PL.
[103] J. H. P. Murray, Diary, 3 Feb. 1906, Sydney, Mitchell Library.
[104] BNG *AR*, 1898-9, xiii, 67; W. G. Lawes to J. A. Blayney, Vatorata, 14 July 1898, Canberra, Commonwealth Archives Office, Commonwealth Record Series (hereinafter CAO/CRS). However in some villages the initiative for having the dances banned came from the Papuan deacons who worked with the Samoans. Solomon Makora, Interview, Saroa, 30 Jan. 1971.
[105] G. Brown to W. E. Bromilow, Sydney, 10 Mar. 1896, MOM 44; W. E. Bromilow to A. J. Small, Dobu, 11 Oct. 1900, Fiji District Committee inward correspondence, Suva, National Archives of Fiji; pers. comm., Earnest A. Clarke, 13 July 1971.
[106] G. R. Holland to B. Danks, Kiriwina, 9 June 1911, MOM 119; pers. comm. Olive Dixon, 16 Nov. 1978.
[107] Papua District Synod minutes Res XXIII 1912, UCA; Noel Baloiloi, Interview, Dobu, 4 May 1972; Maisie Balciloi, Interview, Dobu, 2 May 1972.

puans had left. Oral and written reports bear testitmony to their kindness, gentleness and tact. However, even Isaia Pati was once cautioned in 1915 concerning 'his attitude to the native teachers' and told that any repetition would result in two years' suspension from the pastorate.'[108]

Notwithstanding the number of Samoan and Rarotongan pastors regarded as 'successful', disenchantment with Polynesians became a recurrent theme in L.M.S. reports in New Guinea. By 1910 English missionaries openly questioned whether the advantages of the Polynesian pastors were not outweighed by their defects. The conflict was particularly acrimonious at Kwato. Abel was solicitous for the Samoans' welfare and tried once to have their stipends increased.[109] Yet within two years of his arrival he was asking the Foreign Secretary to relieve him of his *faifeau*, for they were men who could not be trusted to carry out his instructions. If the directors of the Society were to take away the Samoans, he wrote, he was ready to try the interesting experiment of making his mission 'almost entirely' a Papuan-taught one.[110] In 1894 Abel was reported to have said he could not 'do with the Samoans at all', and so vexed was the situation in New Guinea that the Committee requested the appointment of a Samoan-speaking missionary to relieve the 'very serious friction' in the field.[111] In the same year, A. E. Hunt, whose personal influence had helped prevent an outbreak of hostilities in Savaii, was despatched to New Guinea.[112] Hunt's retirement eight years later removed from the field the only L.M.S. missionary with a knowledge of the Samoan church.

In retrospect Abel tended to look upon the Samoan pastors as a scourge whose exit he regarded with relief. He compared Samoan mission stations to trees which had contracted a disease.[113] But these judgements were made after the passage of time had obliterated some of Abel's earlier opinions. At the time Abel seems to have been selective in his assessment of individual Samoans, and occasionally he admired their achievements. Thus he wrote of Vaiea, the sister of Toma and widow of another Samoan pastor, Maene:

> I desire the church in Samoa to welcome home a missionary full of honours. [Vaiea's] work here ranks with that of Ma'anaima, Mataesi, Filimoni, and Peni. Will you be careful to let Papauta [girls' school] know how highly we esteem her.[114]

[108] Papua District Synod proceedings, 2 Oct. 1915, UCA.

[109] See J. Chalmers to R. W. Thompson, Saguane, 15 Feb. 1898, PL; R. W. Thompson to J. Chalmers, London, 27 May 1898, WOL.

[110] East End District Annual Report 1894, PR; see also C. W. Abel to R. W. Thompson, Kwato, 25 July 1892, PL.

[111] W. G. Lawes to R. W. Thompson, Port Moresby, 18 Dec. 1894, PL.

[112] W. G. Lawes to R. W. Thompson, Port Moresby, 6 Dec. 1894, PL; R. W. Thompson to J. E. Newell, London, 25 Jan. 1895; R. W. Thompson to A. E. Hunt, London, 15 Mar. 1895, WOL. Hunt had previously served in the Torres Strait district 1887-90.

[113] C. W. Abel to P. D. Abel, New York, 8 Sept. 1923; see also C. W. Abel, Letter Diary, 24 Sept. 1929; C. W. Abel to family, New Jersey, 1 Mar. 1930, AP.

[114] C. W. Abel to J. Hills, Kwato, 4 Dec. 1910, PF.

In Abel's view, Vaiea and her husband had done 'a *truly great work*' at the village of Lilihoa, and the Samoan teacher Peniata was said to be a 'thoroughly good man' for the station at Bou. Penina the wife of Alefaio had done work 'as good as her husband's' on Killerton.[115] Yet the pastors who drew Abel's commendation were in a minority, and it seems to have been the Samoans who 'failed' who were remembered the longest. The last pastor from the Samoa District, another Peniata, was described in 1916 as 'a man I shall be very glad to dispense with'.[116] Peniata was transferred to the neighbouring station at Isuleilei, where he retired 13 years later.[117]

The conflict between Samoans and Europeans in the L.M.S. marked an important epoch in the development of mission strategy in Papua. It revealed the degree to which the gospel, as understood by English and Samoan missionaries, was identified with the values of the English middle classes on one hand and those of the *fa'asamoa* on the other. If the Samoans were unbending, they were no more so than some of their supervisors. The Kwato reports indicate a growing intransigence by English leadership which was placated only by Samoan apology, and a Polynesian pride which was preserved only by reducing contact with Europeans to a minimum. The exception was Ma'anaima, who, according to a missionary at Kwato, had been 'de-Samoanized'.[118] In 1893 the Samoans were 'an exceptionally fine lot of young men and women'; in 1894 they were in disgrace;[119] in 1901 they were obdurate; and by 1912 Abel had conceived a horror of employing some of them again. Much of his subsequent missionary strategy in using Papuans was based on a determination to avoid a native agency resembling that of Samoa in any detail. The chief causes of complaint varied from individual to individual. In one case it was 'laziness'; in another it was, according to W. J. V. Saville, 'a terrible dislike for Papuans'; in a third, a court conviction for adultery.[120] But in general, the lack of energy in Samoan teachers was an intermittent source of despondency for Abel. After visiting the Samoan teacher at Lilihoa, he wrote with humorous resignation that the teacher was too tired to articulate his words, the only sign of animation being his complaint that the people were troublesome and that the village was overgrown. Abel added that this teacher could scarcely be a good leader of youth at Lilihoa.[121] To an energetic mis-

[115] C. W. Abel to R. W. Thompson, Kwato, 2 Sept. 1905, PL; C. W. Abel to secretary, SDC Kwato, 4 Apr. 1917, PF.

[116] C. W. Abel to F. Lenwood, Duabo, 23 Sept. 1916, PL; see also H. M. Dauncey to PDC, Delena, 10 Aug. 1920, PL. Peniata came from the Ellice Islands district of the Samoa mission.

[117] Pers. comm., Ruta Sinclair, 30 Mar. 1979.

[118] C. C. G. Abel, Interview, Port Moresby, 31 Jan. 1971.

[119] C. W. Abel to R. W. Thompson, Kwato, 13 July 1893, PL; see also East End *AR* 1892, PR; B. Abel to M. Parkin, Kwato, 11 Jan. 1895, AP.

[120] W. J. V. Saville to J. Hills, *John Williams*, 9 Apr. 1910; C. W. Abel, Diary, ?6 May 1904; W. G. Lawes to R. W. Thompson, Port Moresby, 17 July 1903; Resident Magistrate Eastern Division, Patrol Report, 1-4 Jan. 1903, CAO/CRS/G9.

[121] C. W. Abel to Beatrice Abel, Koeabule, 30 Aug. 1912, AP.

sionary like Abel, 'slow and lazy' workers were an affront. This further reflected the gulf between the strenuous, revivalist emphasis of the Kwato Mission and the comfortable churchmanship of the Samoans.

The unfavourable reaction at Kwato sprang from Abel's own energy and impatience. It sprang from the divergent aims of two groups of missionaries, one seeking salvation on earth through hard work and enterprise, and the other by the adoption of a presiding, ceremonial role. Steadily throughout the long conflict between English and Samoan missionaries in New Guinea, the Samoa District Committee came to adopt a position of protagonist of the Samoan teachers. The S.D.C. told the Committee in New Guinea that the salary paid was insufficient to meet the expenses of the teachers' positions. They gently reproved the Papua District Committee for asking for more Samoan teachers after having curbed the financial relief sent to a teacher from Samoa. Once their secretary criticized the 'cavalier treatment' meted out to two of the Samoan teachers at Kwato.[122] A similar conflict between Samoans and the resident missionary in the Ellice group in 1902-03 led to fears among the S.D.C. that the attitudes of English missionaries in New Guinea towards the Samoans might be further prejudiced.[123] Yet no crisis occurred, and the only Samoan who took his complaints outside the ranks of his brethren was suspended for three years. This pastor was Solomona, who wrote a letter critical of Abel and sent it to Wilhelm Solf, Governor of Samoa (1900-1911).[124]

Europeans were responsible for adding to the problems of the *faifeau Samoa* in several ways. They undermined the pastors' quest for security at a time of growing prestige and affluence among pastors in Samoa. They rejected the advice offered by Samoan pastors to ease tension by establishing a Samoan-administered district in New Guinea. The reason given by the New Guinea District Committee, that such a zone would be impracticable and inadvisable, was the same as the reason for the rejection by the Methodist Papua district synod of a similar scheme.[125] As a European reaction to mounting demands for greater Samoan control, this manifested a deep belief in European superiority. In Abel's case this was compounded by a belief that the difference between the 'Samoan way' and his own values posed a threat to his district. The conflict which plagued the relations between Samoans and Europeans in the L.M.S. focused on questions of salaries and conditions. A missionary in Samoa, J. W.

[122] SDC Minutes, 13 Dec. 1911; SDC Minutes, 13-19 Dec. 1916; J. Hills to H. M. Dauncey, Malua, 19 June 1913; H. M. Dauncey to J. Hills, Delena, 1 Aug. 1913, PF; J. Hills to H. M. Dauncey, Malua, 19 June 1913, PF.

[123] SDC Minutes, 12 May 1903. See also ibid., 1 Aug. 1902, 18 Sept. 1902, 23 Jan. 1903.

[124] SDC Minutes, 21 Dec. 1910.

[125] See R. W. Thompson to W. G. Lawes, London, 7 June 1889, WOL; see also minutes of NGDC meeting, 4 Dec. 1893, PL; H. M. Dauncey to R. W. Thompson, Delena, 26 Mar. 1912, Dobu Quarterly Meeting Minutes, 15 Sept. 1921, UCA.

Sibree, outlined the reasons why he thought New Guinea had lost the sympathy of the Samoan pastors. '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 of each of these points.'[126]

Many Samoans failed to fulfil missionary expectations. Because they upheld a presiding rather than active role, emphasized food exchange at the expense of industry, and sometimes used physical force, they were condemned. In claiming chiefly power, they were asserting traditional Samoan notions which Christian missionaries had failed to dislodge in a previous generation. The Samoan mission stations, which Abel characterized as dead missions,[127] were those where the *fa'asamoa* had triumphed. Perhaps the most striking measure of the Samoan performance in the East End district of New Guinea was its legacy of churches. Whereas churches in Samoa surpassed all other buildings in size and grandeur, and the pastor's house reflected the quality of his leadership, only two crude coral churches at Bou and Killerton remain to commemorate the Samoan occupation of mission stations in Milne Bay from 1890 to 1917.

Invariably, however, Papuan villagers seem to have regarded the Samoan pastors as 'good men'.[128] Since the Melanesian ethic rested heavily on material generosity, it may be guessed that Samoans were lavish in their distribution of goods. In Samoa a good man—*ole tagata agalelei*—was, as in Melanesia, one who was liberal in his dispensing of goods and food. A bad man—*ole agaleaga*—was one who was not generous.[129] In this the Samoan way corresponded fairly closely with Melanesian expectations: what the pastor lost in possessions he gained in prestige. Papuans had to endure the overbearing behaviour of Samoans, but there were some compensations, and 'good men' the Samoans were accounted because of them.

Physical assertiveness and an assumption of racial superiority were a significant part of the pattern of Samoan missionary activity in New Guinea. In asserting their authority the pastors were, in part at least, compensating for a degree of superiority asserted over them by Europeans. That they adhered to Samoan ways and nourished ideas of power may be admitted; but these features nevertheless do not impugn their contribution. For, in their personal munificence and practical innovations, their songs and their dances, the Sa-

[126] J. W. Sibree to J. H. Holmes, Leulumoega, 5 Sept. 1917, PF.
[127] C. W. Abel, Letter Diary, 1 Jan. 1928; see also C. W. Abel to family, New Jersey, 1 Mar. 1930, AP.
[128] Interviews with D. Wainetti, Daru, 2 Jan. 1971; Haure Heaoa and Sulu Samisoni, Orokolo, 16 Jan. 1971; Arisitako Mataioni, Dobu, 6 May 1972; Dalai Kitalapu, Kwato, 31 May 1972.
[129] Pers. comm., Ruta Sinclair, 30 Mar. 1979; see also George Brown, op. cit., 160.

moans enlarged the sympathies of the people among whom they lived. And, as for the air of lofty omniscience which sometimes marked their approach to the Papuans, the L.M.S. Foreign Secretary noted that it was not very different from the outlook of Europeans in a colonial society: 'they know that they belong to a higher civilisation and they feel themselves superior. We English cannot blame them, for they have merely stolen our own pet sin.'[130]

[130] Frank Lenwood, op. cit., 212.

TREVOR REESE MEMORIAL PRIZE

The first Trevor Reese Memorial Prize has been awarded to Dr John Iliffe for his *A Modern History of Tanganyika* published by Cambridge University Press in 1979. The Prize was established by the Institute of Commonwealth Studies of the University of London with contributions to a memorial fund to Dr Reese, Reader in Commonwealth Studies at the Institute from 1969 to his death in 1976, a founder and first Editor of the *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* from 1972 to 1976. It will be awarded every two years to a recent scholarly work which has made an outstanding contribution in the field of Imperial and Commonwealth History.

PACIFIC HISTORY ASSOCIATION

The Pacific History Association was formed in May 1980 at a Conference held at Martindale Hall, Clare, South Australia. Among subjects discussed were: future directions for Pacific history; oral history; the role of theory in the writing of history; visual aids for the teaching of Pacific history.

The next conference will be held in Queensland in May 1981 (just prior to ANZAAS Congress). The Association also hopes to help organize more specialized seminars and workshops. A *newsletter*, to be published three times a year, will carry reports of seminars and conferences, discussions on the state and future of the discipline, and a book purchase scheme. The first issue appeared in July; the next issue is due in November.

Membership of the Association is open to all with an interest in the history of the Pacific Islands.

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