

PASSAGE  
OF CHANGE

LAW, SOCIETY AND GOVERNANCE  
IN THE PACIFIC

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SECTION 1  
THE CONTEXT OF CHANGE

1. MODERNISATION AND DEVELOPMENT  
IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC

*Vijay Naidu*

*The changes that Pacific island countries are currently experiencing can largely be attributed to the impacts of modernisation. Whether modernisation is conceptualised as a process of development and progress or as a more chaotic situation during which traditional and introduced systems meet or are forced together with the result that both systems have to adjust, modernisation connotes change. These changes are far reaching. It is not only legal systems that are put into a state of flux because of modernisation, but all social systems, including political systems, family systems, education systems and religious systems.*

*The chapter by Professor Naidu aims to provide readers with some appreciation of the broad nature of changes that are currently taking place throughout the Pacific region. Such an appreciation is necessary in order to put legal change into its wider context. There are, of course, many potential interpretations of the changes and many variations in the experiences of different countries. This chapter does not pretend to be exhaustive in its exploration of the topic.*

*Complementing this discussion of change in the Pacific is a discussion of various theoretical approaches or perspectives on the nature and process of modernisation and change. The multifaceted nature both of change in the Pacific and of theoretical perspectives for conceptualising this change is thereby highlighted.*

## 1. MODERNISATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC

*By: Professor Vijay Naidu*

### KEY TERMS AND PHRASES

#### Modernisation

Modernisation is popularly used to describe a process of societal change from 'primitive' to 'developed'. 'Developed' is usually equated with 'westernised'. As such the popular concept of the process of modernisation is not neutral, but is loaded with assumptions about what a modern society should look like and the desirability of attaining this modern model of society. A number of specific academic theories have arisen around the concept of modernisation. These theories may use the term in different or more precise ways than the popular definition of modernisation.

#### Indigenisation

Indigenisation can be used to describe a process whereby the values of an indigenous culture change another (introduced) culture to reflect or incorporate the values of the indigenous group. It is often used in the context of discussing how indigenous cultures affect the model of western culture as reflected in modernisation processes.

#### Dichotomy

A dichotomy is a division into two seemingly mutually exclusive or contradictory groups. Tradition and modernisation are often viewed as dichotomous concepts.

## INTRODUCTION

Over the past century and a half Pacific island societies have undergone very significant changes. These changes are institutional, and have affected values, beliefs and attitudes and individual and group behaviour. They have transformed the political, economic and social dimensions of these societies. The extent and scope of societal change has varied from society to society but everywhere, from the remotest of villages to the not so sleepy towns, social change and its consequences are present. At the same time, however, in all Pacific island societies earlier and apparently more traditional structures, norms and values persist. The resilience of traditional institutions and their adaptations to the forces of change is remarkable. In the current era of globalisation which is driven by strong states, powerful corporate forces and the communication revolution, Pacific island countries are faced with numerous challenges as their governments seek to secure higher standards of living for island peoples. Islanders themselves have also established a transnational network of family and kin with flows of people, money and goods in an extension of socio-cultural values and institutions that is centred in the homeland and yet globalising.

Numerous contradictions and conflicts abound between established norms and new ways of doing things. Individualism exists in tension with more collective obligations; communal customary forms of land and the ownership of other natural resources co-exist with private ownership and individual accumulation of capital; market forces collide with the regulatory powers of the state; the nominal equality of citizenship underwritten by modern day constitutions conflicts with traditional and contemporary status inequality based on ethnicity, gender, status by birth and region of origin; traditional forms of authority sit uncomfortably with electoral systems and other paraphernalia of democracy; introduced systems of meritocracy conflict with traditionally ascribed statuses; inter-generational conflicts both latent and overt are ubiquitous; and disparities between urban and rural places, between regions of a country and between groups of people underlie the tensions and conflicts in the not so pacific Pacific.

The first part of this chapter briefly considers the concepts of evolution, modernisation and development and their relevance to the changes wrought in Pacific societies. The second part of this chapter provides an account of these changes and their significance for Pacific communities. In attempting to provide an overview it is likely that the unique and special experiences of some island societies may be omitted. However, it is hoped that the broad patterns of change that are identified provide insights into both change and continuity in Pacific societies.

## EVOLUTION, MODERNISATION AND DEVELOPMENT

The changes that have overtaken island societies with increasing intensity over the last two centuries have their origins in Europe. Feudalism as a mode of production based on agriculture and the manor with the labour of serfs was displaced by urban-based manufacture of finished products for private profit. Rural agrarian production largely

for consumption was superseded by industrial production for exchange. Agricultural labour coerced by the feudal lord was replaced by town and city based wage labour. In a short span of time the English landscape was changed by the massive shift of the mass of rural people to the emergent industrial towns and cities. This "great transformation" in which the "satanic mill" became central to peoples' livelihood caused widespread social dislocation, misery and hardship.<sup>1</sup> European societies underwent radical changes in their social structures and class character. A reading of the novels by Charles Dickens and accounts of poverty at the turn of the twentieth century<sup>2</sup> provide vivid images of the enormity of societal changes and the impact that these changes had on the lives of people. Agricultural revolution was followed by the industrial revolution, which was accompanied by political revolution. Scholars in Europe became preoccupied by the social, economic and political changes and events taking place all around them. To paraphrase McKee, scholars could not avoid being involved in the events of their time and this involvement always left its indelible marks on their disciplines.<sup>3</sup>

Scholarly interest in social change has led to the development of a number of theories about the nature of social change. The initial theoretical trend was to use evolutionary models to explain change. The evolutionary models were later complemented by (then superseded by) modernisation theories. Recently these models have been rejected as being too biased towards western lifestyles and a range of underdevelopment and other theories have arisen.

## Evolutionary Theories

By the mid-nineteenth century European scholars were also aware of peoples elsewhere. The latter lived in a variety of societies that exhibited different levels of technology and political organisation — from small scale preliterate hunter-gatherer bands to tribes practising various forms of agriculture ruled by chiefs or elders to relatively large civilisations in Egypt, China and India. European social and political philosophers sought to explain societal change in terms of stages of human progress from the relatively simple, small and primitive conditions of paleolithic hunters and gatherers to the complex, large and industrialising societies of their time. Adam Smith (1723–1790), Herbert Spencer (1820–1903), Ferdinand Tönnies (1835–1936), Emile Durkheim (1858–1917), Karl Marx (1818–1883) and Max Weber (1864–1920), amongst others, contributed to explanations about how human societies had changed.

Many of them used evolutionary precepts in their explanations. Sahlins and Service<sup>4</sup> provide a comprehensive account of evolutionary theories. At the core of these explanations was the idea that human societies change from small and simple to become large and complex and from having the one institution of kinship playing multiple functions — including economic, social, political, legal and religious functions — to specialist institutions carrying out each of these functions. Mechanisms of change varied: population increase and competition over resources, environmental adaptation, warfare, new technology, literacy, political centralisation,

class struggle and religion were some of the various mechanisms, instruments or catalysts for change identified by different theorists. For the evolutionists all human societies could be put at different stages of evolution, with contemporary European society being the most advanced. The adaptability of European societies together with their technology and social organisation made it possible for Europe to subordinate the rest of the world. In its extreme form evolution took the garb of Social Darwinism which not only perceived the manifest destiny of the white man to dominate the world but also rationalised the demise of indigenous peoples as losers in the competition for the survival of the fittest. In short, evolutionists chalked out the stages and mechanisms of change in human societies from 'primitive savagery' to post-enlightenment European 'civilisation'.

An evolutionary conceptualisation of human development was applied to Pacific island peoples by different categories of Europeans who arrived in the Pacific during the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. While there was a tendency to regard island societies as being at a more 'primitive' stage, early explorers commented positively on the relative health, tranquility and openness of islanders. Rousseau's conceptualisation of the noble savage living in harmony with nature was commonly used. Missionaries discerned the difference between the centralised chiefdoms of Polynesia from the relatively egalitarian Melanesia. Many early clergymen assumed the lighter skinned Polynesians with their aristocratic classes were closer to their own feudal origins. They sought to save the souls of island people by converting them to Christianity, an obviously superior religion from the heathen paganism that prevailed. Early Victorians believed that islanders had been lost to Christendom because of the influence of the devil and that it was incumbent on the missionaries to save them.

Islanders also had to be protected from evil Europeans who sought to exploit them and who brought wicked and corrupting influences. In this regard island peoples were seen as children who could be led into harm by unscrupulous adults. Missionaries campaigned against the sale of alcohol, arms and ammunition to islanders. They also firmly opposed immoral behaviour such as prostitution.

Settlers who came in the late nineteenth century saw island people as occupants of land that could be better utilised commercially and as potential plantation labour. They tended to regard islanders as an inferior race impeding progress. Openly racist organisations such as the British Settlers' Mutual Protection Society and the Ku Klux Klan were formed in Fiji.<sup>5</sup>

### Modernisation

During the 1950s and 60s American and European social scientists sought to use Weber's ideas to explain the disparities between western and non-western societies and to chalk out road maps for modernising or developing the latter.<sup>6</sup> Their approach was a model of development that perceived change as the transformation of traditional social order through a process of modernisation. This meant the changing of values and attitudes, institutions and societal orientation to those prevailing in the industrialised liberal democracies of the West. Modernisation essentially meant

Westernisation. The theoretical perspectives included Parsons's pattern variables, various elite theories, modernising institutions, Easton's input-output model and empirical development indicators.

In general modernisation theories from the different social sciences stressed the significance of changes in values, norms and beliefs and individual motivations. These changes had fostered industrialisation and development of mass consumption societies in Europe and North America.<sup>7</sup> With suitable changes in values, institutions, leadership, technology and rates of savings, post-colonial societies could follow. These changes could be made possible through the diffusion or transplanting of ideas, institutions, values, capital and technology to the less developed world. Modernisation through diffusion had already begun to take place with education, urbanisation, nuclear households, increased awareness through mass media, heightened political awareness and participation in democratic systems, replacement of traditional authorities with national system of laws coupled with representative government and the increase in earnings and savings for investment.

Most writings on change in the Pacific between the 1950s and 1980s can be placed in the modernisation paradigm. Teo Fairbairn, the prominent Samoan economist, epitomises this approach:

...the individual communities in the region have much in common. The force of tradition has tended to remain strong despite increasing exposure to the outside world; economic patterns are dominated by agriculture with subsistence production playing a major role though an ever-increasing demand for the goods and services of the cash economy is evident... Throughout the region the dominant physical disadvantages are isolation from large metropolitan centres, the highly dispersed nature of many individual groups, smallness of population and with a few notable exceptions, lack of basic mineral and industrial raw materials. On the economic side one is confronted with generally low levels of income and rates of savings, indigenous populations lacking in all but the most rudimentary managerial and technical skills, and methods of land tenure and social organizations that have their roots in traditional systems. In addition, heavy dependence on one or two agricultural export products renders them vulnerable to fluctuations in world markets for primary commodities as well as to the hazards of adverse weather. The combination of rapidly growing populations and rising expectations for the goods and services of the modern monetary economy, poses further challenges.<sup>8</sup>

More recently he has remarked that:

In general, the severe shortage of skills experienced by most of the island countries weakens their capacity to absorb and apply modern technology and undermines the growth potential of all sectors, particularly the private sector which is potentially the most dynamic in promoting growth. In addition, cultural traditions are still a powerful force and tend to weaken the modernisation process and slow the development effort. The constraining influence of customary land

tenure systems on agricultural development is a notable example, while traditional beliefs often dominate attitudes towards savings, business endeavours and population control.<sup>9</sup>

### Underdevelopment Theories

The modernisation perspective of blaming tradition within a country was turned over its head by underdevelopment theorists who blamed external forces for constraining and impeding development in the Third World.

'Dependency' and Underdevelopment Theories (UDT), which emerged in the late 1960s, maintained that metropolitan Europe's progress relied heavily on the exploitative chain-like relations with post-colonial satellite states. In its extreme form UDT maintained that the development of Europe led to the underdevelopment of the Third World. The notion of an expanding metropolis (core) and exploited post-colonial countries (periphery) was incorporated in Immanuel Wallerstein's World System's Theory. Wallerstein maintained that a world system emerged with the expansion of European capitalism. Former mini-systems (tribal societies) and empires (for example, China) were penetrated by and integrated into the capitalist world system. The world system itself comprises core countries that are industrialised and powerful, semi peripheral states which are partially industrialised but still dependent on agriculture and forms of non-wage labour and peripheral countries which are entirely dependent on agriculture and raw material production based largely on 'unfree' labour. The world system was managed by powerful states for their own benefit.

Several scholars of Pacific island societies have used UDT in explaining change. Amarshi, Good and Mortimer<sup>10</sup> have pointed to how Papua New Guinea's natural and human resources have become increasingly harnessed to the exploitative interests of transnational, often Australian capital. In his analysis of law and the state in Papua New Guinea, Fitzpatrick has noted that the pre-capitalist modes of production subsidised emerging capitalist enterprises in the country.<sup>11</sup> Rokotuivuna,<sup>12</sup> Utrecht<sup>13</sup>, Narsey,<sup>14</sup> Narayan,<sup>15</sup> Durutalo<sup>16</sup> and Sutherland<sup>17</sup> have pointed to the extraction of monopoly profits from Fiji, the emergence of a class of collaborator capitalists or compradors and the emergence of the country as an Australian economic colony. Shankman<sup>18</sup> concluded from his study of Samoan emigration that (Western) Samoa was being underdeveloped by the loss of its skilled and professional human capital to metropolitan countries. The Cook Islands was examined by Bellam<sup>19</sup> using a similar perspective and he reached a somewhat similar conclusion that this country's interests had been subordinated to the interests of New Zealand capital. For all the smaller international migration and remittance dependant economies, referred to as MIRAB countries, the UDT approach can be applied. On a region wide basis, Howard et al<sup>20</sup> have used this paradigm as well as the perspective of world system theory and the articulation of modes of production. Naidu has used a similar approach in his analysis of Samoan and Fijian political economy.<sup>21</sup> On an individual country and region-wide

basis the story told is similar, there has been a subordination of island economies and societies to transnational capital and interests.

### Alternative Development Perspective

Most recently post modernist writers have attacked attempts at meta or grand theorising and have instead advocated for accounts that capture the diverse and complex character of human experiences. Alternative development perspectives vary in their emphasis on particular aspects of development and in their orientation. Writers such as Amartya Sen, Dudley Seers, Paul Streeten and Mahbulul Huq have sought to emphasise poverty eradication, employment generation, social justice, equality and human development aspects over preoccupation with economic growth. Still others have seen an attempt by the West to impose its values and norms upon non-western societies in the push for development. Schumacher's 'Small is Beautiful' type of approaches in turn have emphasised the role of small communities based on small scale agriculture and appropriate technology providing a more nurturing environment for all creatures. Eco-development and sustainable development advocates have pointed to the need for sound environmental management and social integration for long-term survival. They publicise the potential dangers posed by unsustainable capitalist industrial development. Intergenerational and international equity issues have been raised by them. Feminist writers have identified gender inequalities in policy and decision making, property rights, legal systems, access to opportunities, division of labour and the double burden of paid employment and unpaid domestic labour.

A number of Pacific writers have been most critical of the changes brought in the wake of capitalist development in the South Pacific. A number of them do not see any material gain in the transition of island people from small holder farmers or peasants to wage workers.<sup>22</sup> Others have pointed to the dangers of moving away from biodiverse and environmentally friendly horticulture to mono-cropping.<sup>23</sup> Sectoral development in tourism, mining, forestry, fisheries and physical infrastructure has come under critical scrutiny. Regional organisations such as the South Pacific Regional Environmental Programme (SPREP), the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) have been pushing for sustainable development of natural resources as well as for community development. Scholars who use these approaches tend to be very critical of elements of capitalist development but do not provide systematic and viable alternatives.

Evolutionary, modernisation and other development theories have sought to explain societal change. Their wide diversity is indicative of the complex and multifaceted nature of change. It is also indicative of the lack of theoretical unity or of a dominant theoretical perspective in the area of development studies.

## SOCIAL CHANGE AND DEVELOPMENT IN PACIFIC ISLAND COUNTRIES

No society is static. However, social change was gradual until the advent of European incursion from the seventeenth century onwards, and has been especially apparent since the early nineteenth century. By this stage some Pacific societies, such as those in Polynesia, had evolved into centralised chiefdoms and proto-states. In Tonga and Hawaii certain chiefly lineages were deified while others were bestowed with rights to secular rule. Specialist craftsmen, canoe makers, warriors, priests and rulers emerged. The ranks of nobles, priests, subjects and slaves existed.<sup>24</sup> Politics in the Pacific ranged from those with a few dozen people in hunter and gatherer bands, to a few hundred in smaller chiefdoms to as many as several thousands in the centralised proto-states of Polynesia.

It is evident that in the post-contact period societal changes intensified over time. These changes can be divided and periodised into pre-colonial, colonial, post-colonial and contemporary changes. Changes during the pre-colonial period varied but generally did not cause significant transformation of Pacific island societies, with the possible exception of communities that were involved in the so-called labour trade.<sup>25</sup> In contrast, most significant structural changes were brought about in island societies during the decades of direct colonialism by metropolitan powers. The post-colonial period saw a resurgence of supposedly indigenous values but underlying structural changes persisted. In the contemporary era, economic and technological forces have engendered greater integration in the global market and significant social changes are causing political instability.

In this part of the paper, changes during the pre-colonial, colonial, post-colonial and contemporary periods will be outlined sequentially. Obviously, structural changes in one period will overlap into other periods. This division into periods is to help in the understanding of the nature and extent of change.

### PRE-COLONIAL CHANGES

Pacific historians point to the fur hunters, whalers, sealers, ship wrecked sailors, castaways, escaped convicts, beachcombers, traders, missionaries and settlers arriving in the island in the 1800s as being the first outside agents of change. Up to the mid-1850s their impact on island societies was minimal in the sense that these societies remained intact. Indeed trading activities tended to reinforce existing social structures. Even the large scale collection and processing of sea slug or *beche-de-mer* did not alter island communities. However, many island societies were seriously threatened by the large increases in mortality rates and the population depletion that occurred as they had no immunity to diseases of European and Asian origins.<sup>26</sup> Alcohol and warfare also contributed to their demise. Iron and steel tools, knives and axes, rifles and double barreled guns, ammunition, and other manufactured commodities including clothes, drapery and items of adornment were in great demand in the islands. The ubiquity of these goods led Thurston, a settler and future

Governor of Fiji to declare that "the bow and arrow and stone age [was] disappearing at an astonishing rate."<sup>27</sup> Beachcombers and missionaries contributed to a change in local balance of power between chiefdoms, coastal and rural people. The sites for new exploitation of natural resources such as sandalwood and *beche-de-mer* made local rulers and their allies more powerful. Thus Bau and Bua in Fiji emerged as powerful chiefdoms by the 1830s. Missionaries backed the more powerful chiefs to extend their authority over neighboring polities. During this period several theocratic kingdoms backed by Wesleyan, London Missionary Society (LMS) and Catholic missionaries sprang up. The growing numbers of Europeans and their often disruptive activities drew the attention of their respective countries. These imperialist countries soon became embroiled in a scramble for colonies, which led to the carving of Oceania amongst them.

### COLONIAL PERIOD

Colonies have been divided in terms of colonies of settlement, colonies of partial settlement and colonies of exploitation. All three forms of colonies were to be found in the Pacific. Australia, New Zealand and Hawaii became colonies of settlement with the almost complete displacement of indigenous peoples. Fiji, New Caledonia, Samoa and Tahiti were only partially occupied. Colonies of exploitation included Nauru and Ocean Islands, which were stripped of their topsoils, and Solomon Islands, which was depleted of its labour resources.

Many of the seeds of future changes were planted in the previous period of contact with European missionaries and traders. Missionary enterprise aimed at inculcating islanders with work ethics consistent with commerce. Coconut oil, copra, bananas, cocoa, coffee, pumpkin and other vegetables were cultivated and poultry, pigs and cattle raised for sale so that congregations could shave regularly and meet missionary dress codes, purchase the Bible and give generously to the mission. It became a matter of course for the colonial state to introduce a head tax, poll tax or hut tax to ensure that the islanders extended their revenue generation activities for government coffers as well. Islanders also engaged in commercial production of copra and coconut oil, bananas and other produce to meet their own needs of items of clothing, iron and steel tools, pots and pans, cutlery, matches, *et cetera*. Money in the form of colonial currency became increasingly the medium of exchange. In this manner islanders become peasant producers subjected to market and state pressures.

#### Economic and Social Changes during the Colonial period

With the establishment of colonial rule, government officials did not regard either native or small European settler productive activities as sufficient to meet the needs of the state for revenue. Merchant houses such as Godeffroy and Sons, Burns Philip and the Colonial Sugar Refining Company of Australia were drawn into setting up plantations and agricultural processing operations in the islands. In New Caledonia, settler plantations were overshadowed by the mining of nickel. Plantations required five ingredients to be successful — a plentiful supply of arable land, a plentiful supply



of cheap labour, efficient management and capital, a secure market for products and necessary infrastructure. Plantation agriculture, and to a lesser extent mining, changed the face of some island colonies. Other island colonies were changed as they formed a vast pool of labour for these plantations and mines.

#### *Land in the colonial and contemporary eras*

Land ownership as in freehold private property for the exclusive use of the individual property rights holder in perpetuity was an alien concept amongst island people. It was first introduced by Christian missionaries who sought to maintain the exclusivity of their land acquisition by fencing it. Some small scale land alienation had taken place before the 1860s but trading in land together with disputes and outright conflicts over land escalated during the 1860s and 1870s. The American Civil War was accompanied by the blockade against cotton producers in the South. European textile mills starved of cotton sought it elsewhere in the world with high prices. Settlers arrived in Fiji and Samoa in their thousands to make a fortune in cotton. The South Seas Island variety of cotton proved initially to be a favourite. Acquisition of land was made possible by the rivalry amongst ambitious chiefs who sought to subordinate their opponents. They willingly parted with some of the best arable lands of their subjects as well as their opponents.<sup>28</sup> In return they received European goods, guns and ammunition and boats as well as assistance in warfare. Ironically, as the Civil War ended in America, arms and ammunition were collected by the Central Polynesian Land and Commercial Company (CPLCC) from the battle fields for sale to island chiefs.

One of the first acts of colonial governments in the island colonies was to regularise land deals as these were causing disputes and outright conflicts. In Samoa, where the total land area amounted to 950,000 acres, settlers claimed 1,691,893 acres.<sup>29</sup> Land Commissions were established to investigate land claims being made. The authenticity of property sales and legal documents were investigated and finalised. The flexible and fluid nature of customary ownership of land, which reflected demographic changes amongst lineages in a locality and their respective strengths, was lost with the documentation of ownership. This loss of flexibility together with the alienation and commercial leasing of some of the best lands contributed to land shortages among islanders. Land remained a major source of disputes during the colonial period.

#### *Labour*

The second significant act of some colonial governments was to regularise the recruitment, engagement, terms and conditions and repatriation of migrant labour. As the colonial enterprise in plantations and mines took root in the islands much of the western and central Pacific was converted into a large labour reserve. Blackbirding and labour trading took thousands of labourers from Melanesia and Micronesia to Queensland and New South Wales in Australia, Hawaii, New Caledonia, Samoa, Fiji and to central and south America. By the 1870s it was realized that island labour was inadequate for further plantation growth. The colonial governments of Fiji, Samoa

and Tahiti readily engaged in recruiting labour from Asian sources. In Hawaii the plantocracy also opted for labour from neighbouring Asia. Thus immigrant labour for producing cotton, sugar, coffee, bananas, pineapples, nickel and gold contributed to the further growth in multi-ethnic societies in the islands. Melanesian labourers were followed by and worked together with Chinese labourers in Samoa and Indian labourers in Fiji. Chinese, Japanese, Filipino and Portuguese labourers were imported to work in Hawaii's plantations. Chinese were imported into Tahiti. Arabs, Indians, Chinese, Indo-Chinese, Ni-Vanuatu and Wallis and Futuna people were drawn to the mines and plantations of New Caledonia.

#### *Urbanisation*

Port towns began as trading outposts grew in number and size throughout the island world from the 1800s. Some of the 'hell holes' of yesteryear, such as Apia and Levuka, settled down to being modest centres of government, trade and commerce, education and other services. Besides government officials and merchants a professional class of surveyors, lawyers, doctors and teachers emerged in these urban centres as did a category of waged workers, domestic servants and garden boys.

#### *New Social Categories and Classes*

Wage labour and urbanisation had a considerable impact on social organisation. During the colonial period new categories of people emerged in the islands. Apart from colonial officials, planters, a smattering of merchants and professional people who were whites occupying the apex of society, there appeared in these societies new groups of island people. Catechists, pastors and missionaries trained by the various Christian denominations increased amongst islanders. Employment as interpreters, court clerks, policemen, low ranking civil servants, stevedores, public works departments labourers and in merchant houses produced islanders with different work habits, life styles and orientations to their rural cousins. To these were added, particularly in the post World War II era, teachers, nurses, medical officers (then doctors), higher level civil servants, businessmen (usually mixed race, European or Asian) and just before the end of colonialism, politicians. Professional bodies, trade unions and social clubs were formed to enhance these new categories of islander interests and aspirations.

#### *Infrastructure*

Plantation and mining enclaves also impacted on island economies by their demand for infrastructure. Wharves, jetties, lighthouses, beacons, roads, railway lines and bridges had to be built and maintained. In order to fund the building and maintenance of infrastructure and to sustain the nascent government institutions — the civil service, police force, magistrates and other law enforcement officers, prisons and the governing executive — revenue had to be collected. Direct and indirect taxes, excise duties and import-export taxes were imposed. The colonial state also became the sole determinant of colonial currency and its value.

### Political Changes during the Colonial period

The Pacific has been called a European artifact in so far as its exploration, extent and identification have been a recent European endeavour.<sup>30</sup> In another and even more direct sense it is a European creation as the countries of Pacific have largely gained their territorial integrity and their names through direct colonialism. The partition of the Pacific took place in tandem with the carving up of Africa. Indeed at the Berlin Conference (1889) Britain and Germany exchanged parts of their Pacific and Africa possessions! The territorial boundaries of most Pacific island countries reflect the maps drawn by their colonisers. All Melanesian countries were fragmented into much smaller tribal polities until direct colonialism. The division of the island of Papua New Guinea between the Dutch and the British/Australians remains to this day as Indonesian occupied West Papua and the independent state of Papua New Guinea. Bougainville, which is culturally related more closely to Solomon Islands, was ceded by the British to the Germans. Fiji had forty more or less powerful chiefdoms and polities at the time of European contact. It took the British a war of pacification to subdue the fiercely independent interior people of Viti Levu. Samoa was divided between Germany and the United States and remains split between American Samoa and the independent state of Samoa. Tonga's expansionism and incorporation of parts of the Fiji group was stalled by the British. Colonial rule ended the internecine warfare that erupted throughout the Pacific during early contact.

#### *The Colonial State*

With the possible rare exception most Pacific island states' political boundaries are no more than a hundred years old and established by the colonial power. In virtually all cases there has been an expansion in the size of the polity from pre-colonial times. Local and island-based autonomy gave away to centralised systems of political control. The declaration of crown colony, protectorate or trusteeship by colonial powers as well as treaty agreements not only defined the territorial limits of the colonial possession but also established the new politico-administrative and legal order. Colonial rule was about law and order as perceived by the representative of the imperialist state, the colonial governor. The colonial state imposed an administrative order and a legal framework, including a system of courts and police. Autocratic and authoritarian rule prevailed until almost a decade before independence. Politics was discouraged. However, the exigencies of ruling remote colonies and the balance of forces in the colonised territories required in most cases the co-optation of indigenous chiefs and aristocracy.

Although chiefs had some advisory function and influence in the executive of colonial Government, political representation and participation by the majority of islanders came fairly late in the period of colonialism. It was not until the 1962 independence constitution that voting for the Fono of Faipule was introduced in Samoa, but even then only on the basis of exclusive matai suffrage. Adult ethnic Fijians voted for the first time in 1965. By this stage Westminster-type institutions were transplanted to island countries that were ruled by the British, Australians and New Zealanders.

Similar transfer of political institutions occurred in American and French territories. Executive, legislative and judicial branches of the state were more clearly identified and separated and a civil service established.

#### *Indirect Rule*

In Fiji and Samoa, councils of chiefs were established at the colony-wide level. Local chiefs were used to provide a relatively inexpensive but effective administration through systems of indirect rule. The incorporation of the chiefly order within the colonial state meant that although the chiefly structure remained ideologically traditional, in reality it was being transformed into a foreign-controlled instrument of domination over 'commoners'. But this point should not be taken too far as earlier governors remained sensitive to chiefly interests. Thus Fiji's Governor Des Voeux (1880-1885) maintained that, "...the chiefs represent the army and navy, and practically the police of the country. The maintenance of their interest is therefore necessary even on these somewhat selfish grounds alone."<sup>31</sup> Pre-existing political entities such as hamlets, villages, districts and confederacies were modified and consolidated through the system of indirect rule. Likewise, while labour services, tributes and other presentations to elders and chiefs were either prohibited or modified to suit the colonial authorities (for example the taxation in kind imposed by Governor Sir Arthur Gordon in Fiji), 'customs of respect' to those in authority were reinforced.

#### *Anti-Colonial Struggles*

The centralised colonial order was also a racist one. A system of racial hierarchy was established based on differential incorporation, economic stratification and racial segregation. A racial division of colour situated managers of merchant houses, traders, plantation owners, senior public servants and other owners of capital who were generally white at the highest rank. In the middle were Asians, chiefs and mixed race business people and at the bottom of the pile were immigrant workers and indigenous peasants whose involvement in the mainstream economy was subject to strict controls. Taxation and restrictive controls over day-to-day life proved to be irksome to many. Anti-colonial struggles took many forms: restorative rebellious of an atavistic kind attempting to reassert past social order; religious movements that syncretised Christian teaching with indigenous beliefs and rituals predicting the arrival of a redeeming (liberating) leader; economic and industrial protests by urban workers, small holder farmers, plantation workers and peasant producers over what they earned from their labour or produce; and political struggles (which combined elements of the other types of struggles) calling for an end to colonial rule.

### POST-COLONIAL AND CONTEMPORARY PERIODS

These economic and political changes, which had their roots in colonial rule, have continued to affect contemporary Pacific island societies in a number of ways, as discussed below.

## Social and Economic Change

### *Multiethnic Societies*

During the colonial era, changes had taken place in the population composition, residential and work patterns, marriage and family structure, social mobility and gender relations in the islands. To begin with, over the last century demography patterns have been transformed. Fiji, Hawaii, New Caledonia, Samoa and Tahiti became more complexly multi-ethnic with the settlement of peoples of Asian and European origins. Categories of mixed race people have now emerged in virtually all the islands. Most PICs have become multicultural.

### *Land*

In the contemporary era changes in land tenure rooted in colonial history have led to outright conflicts. Relatively small parcels of alienated free hold and state owned land (in many islands, the British concept of state ownership dubiously exists and extends to the tidal water mark) sit amidst customary owned land. Where land boundaries among indigenous landowners have not been surveyed and documented there are many disagreements over where one group's land rights end and another group's begin. Such disputes often become violent. Land tribunals and courts have been established to handle such problems in most Pacific Island countries (PICs). In Fiji Islands the Native Land Trust Board (NLTB) was formed in 1940 to oversee the usage of customary owned land and its leasing to agricultural and other commercial interests. However, group ownership of such land has led to difficulties over decision making and the sharing of rent monies. Where customary title holders or chiefs are the primary recipients of land rents the succession to chiefly title has increasingly become contentious. These disputes continue to be dealt with by land and titles tribunals established by the colonial state. Communal or collective ownership has also made it almost impossible to obtain credit from commercial banks because customary owned land has little value as collateral. Disagreements also occur over the amount of rent that ought to be charged. Some members of the land-owning group have taken it upon themselves to seek additional payments in cash and in kind from leaseholders. In some instances, as in Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands, individuals have legally sold customary land to Malaitans. This has put the buyer in considerable hardship as the group itself has refused to accept the legality of the transaction. With the recent violent political conflict, many migrant islanders have found their property rights seriously jeopardised.

In many Pacific countries there is potential for serious tensions and conflicts between resident land owners in urban and peri-urban areas and localities of enclave development and migrant islanders. Informal traditional or customary arrangements between owners and migrants place the latter into a category of tenants at will. With a growing number of migrants there has been pressure on resident groups. The competition over land for housing and gardening and over neighbouring marine resources is likely to spill over into open conflicts.

### *Urbanisation*

Residential patterns have changed. Over the last forty years and especially in the last two decades there has been an intensification of population mobility. Islanders have moved from outlying islands and inland areas to coastal regions and urban places. Several PICs are predominantly urban. Much of Polynesia and Micronesia has experienced an urban shift and the rate of urbanisation throughout more rural parts of Micronesia and Melanesia is double the rate of population growth. Ward points to how urbanism — town and city life — has become integral to the lives of islanders.<sup>32</sup> This has involved shifts away from agrarian livelihoods to employment in government, business, manufacture, transportation and tourism. Being well connected to metropolitan centres, urban centres are places for new ideas, life styles and fashions. Segregated residence has been replaced by socio-economic division as the major determinant of residential patterns.

The attraction of opportunities in towns and cities has led to rapid urbanisation and associated problems. Inadequate housing has resulted in the growth of squatter settlements and informal housing. Public water supply and the disposal of garbage and sewerage in towns and cities have become critical environmental and community health matters. Other infrastructural bottlenecks include roads, electricity supply, transport connections between islands and to remote localities in larger islands as well as educational and health services.

As indicated earlier, the pressure on urban land is causing tensions between landowners and immigrant groups. Most Pacific states do not appear to have the capacity to address this very serious problem.

A consideration of urbanisation and urbanism will be inadequate without reference to international migration of islanders. Auckland has become the largest Polynesian city and Vancouver has more Indo-Fijians than the second largest city of Lautoka in Fiji. Emigration and remittances have become critical in the lives of Micronesians and Polynesians. Bertram and Watters<sup>33</sup> have coined the acronym MIRAB to describe societies dependent on migration, remittances, aid and relatively large bureaucracies. Micronesians have been migrating to Guam, Hawaii and the west coast of mainland USA. Cook Islanders, Niueans, Samoans, Tokelauans and Tongans have sought opportunities in New Zealand and Australia. Samoans and Tongans have also settled in the United States. International kinship networks have emerged with flows of people, goods and services as well as money. Going abroad and making a living as well as supporting families back home in the islands has become a pivotal strategy for many island people. In this regard island people not only avail themselves of the opportunities in metropolitan rim countries for education and training, employment and improved material standards of living, they are also exposed to stresses of urban life styles and to the problems of substance abuse, urban gangs, gambling and inter-generational conflicts. Most islanders find themselves in an underclass of semi skilled and unskilled workers in Auckland, Sydney, Los Angeles and other cities.<sup>34</sup>

*Classes*

The dominant classes that inherited state power on the eve of independence comprised educated chiefs, a coterie of professionals (teachers, lawyers, ministers of religion and former civil servants) and businessmen politicians. These elements continue to control the contemporary state. During the first decade of political independence there was much euphoria and rhetoric about following a unique Pacific style of development. Leaders and writers spoke about the "Pacific Way" and "Melanesian socialism". However, after the initial expansion in the economies of island countries and their labour markets the limitations of being small, isolated, vulnerable and poorly governed micro-states have thwarted development prospects.

In most PICs' constitutions the position of traditional chiefs is entrenched. This is another reason why in several instances there has been intense rivalry for prominent chiefly positions. In Fiji the *Bose Levu Vakavanua* (BLV) or Great Council of Chiefs has played a retrograde role in holding back political development. The chiefs with their allies in the state and in the private sector have supported three military coups that have toppled left of centre governments or coalitions. On each occasion the justification for the extra-legal military intervention has been ethnicity when in fact the real reason was to maintain and even extend the privileged position of chiefs, senior civil servants and certain business interests. Rampant racism has been the cover for maintaining class privileges. In virtually all PICs political power has led to and is perceived as the most potent avenue for acquiring economic wealth. In the short term it has allowed state power holders to enjoy lifestyles well beyond the imagination of their fellow country people. In many instances, those who are politically powerful sit as members of corporate boards of large local and international companies. Private companies in Fiji Islands have tended to employ persons of chiefly status as personnel and public relations managers because of their standing and influence.

During the post-colonial and contemporary periods there has been a tendency on the part of first generation state power holders to extend their privileges to their children. The latter have been sent to local elite schools and to secondary and post-secondary institutions abroad. The children of other sections of the middle class have also been educated. Prominent among the socially mobile are children of church ministers. The competition for employment in the public service is relieved by international migration but nepotism affects selection based on merit. There is some indication of 'elite closure' in this regard as those in privileged positions seek to reserve similar privileges for their offspring.

The class of wage earners has increased only slowly in the post-colonial period because of limited expansion in the labour markets of island countries. This has been due to depressed economic conditions in virtually all the island states for the last thirty odd years. Small local markets and limited resources have stifled growth in the smaller countries. Environmental degradation and conflict arising over the sharing of proceeds from resource exploitation has damaged prospects in the larger PICs. However, in many island countries the workers have organised themselves in trade

unions which have sought to better their wages and terms of employment in spite of the adverse economic situation.

Slow growth or no-growth has meant that many young people have to turn to agriculture and other informal sector activities to make their livelihoods. Semi-subsistence small holder farming has continued to absorb and support growing populations. In one sense there is a large army of reserve labour in the islands. Other informal sector activities include roadside vending, domestic work, shoe shining, the selling of garlands (leis), backyard garages, commercial sex and retailing of drugs.

*Status changes*

New livelihoods, the acquisition of new knowledge and skills, alternative life styles, the changing status of women and socially (and physically) mobile young people have somewhat modified the pre-existing forms of power, prestige and wealth.

Decision-making is no longer the exclusive preserve of male elders, chiefs and aristocrats. It is more diffused with educated common people and women having a role in positions of power and influence. Employment outside villages and agriculture has given a whole lot of people incomes and purchasing power beyond that of village headmen and district chiefs. Remittances have reinforced this trend. In some cases those of chiefly origins have acquired education and are in very powerful positions but in many instances tradition bound chiefs have had limited education and their influence limited to the local level. Urbanisation has also changed values and norms of people. A degree of anonymity and impersonal relations have led to changes in attire, as well as behaviour patterns not envisaged in village surroundings. Young people especially value the freedom of towns and cities.

*Education*

The introduction of formal education, beginning with largely mission and community run primary schools, then a few secondary schools, followed by teachers' colleges, nursing schools and other post-secondary institutions had a profound effect on island peoples' levels of knowledge and skills, perceptions, aspirations and orientation. One's future was no longer entirely dependent on one's kinship group and that group's access to land. Education opened up a new world of opportunities, initially in the public service but later on in the professions, in business and overseas. Whilst most islanders spent only a few years in schools, enough to read the vernacular Bible and return to their family plots, others in ever growing numbers sought the highest levels of education available. A fortunate few went abroad for further education. Regional tertiary institutions such as the Fiji School of Medicine, Universities of Papua New Guinea and the South Pacific, the Pacific Regional Seminary and the Pacific Theological College have contributed to regional awareness. In the islands of Polynesia, education was especially valued and literacy rates are generally above 80 percent. Melanesian countries have much lower literacy rates because of the later introduction of formal education and the shortage of facilities in the context of larger fragmented populations.

In Polynesia and much of Micronesia education is very highly valued. There is a good spread of primary schools and a few secondary schools. Elite mission and public schools draw the top students from primary schools. These tend to be the children of upper and middle class families. Upon finishing high school a large number of them are sent abroad for tertiary education. Most of them do not go to tertiary institutions and universities in the region, preferring metropolitan country institutions. Many of them do not return to their island countries. Indeed, with public sector reforms and the huge cuts made in the number of positions, overseas education is seen as a passport to life abroad.

In Fiji Islands a large proportion of non-ethnic Fijian students attending the University of the South Pacific as well as those going abroad for further post secondary studies do so to obtain qualifications that will get them abroad. The reason for this state of affairs is that the Fijian state practises institutionalised racism. There is systematic discrimination in the allocation of scholarships, in employment in the public sector and in the prospects for promotion. The periodic and what appears to be regular extra-legal interference of the Fijian military in national politics, reinforces uncertainty and the inclination to emigrate.

Unlike the grave shortage of teachers in schools in Fiji Islands because of emigration, the shortage of teachers in Melanesian countries is a consequence of a poorly developed educational system. There has been a lack of trained teachers at all levels because not many people have gone beyond primary school. Indeed, as indicated above until recently more than 50 percent of school age children did not attend school. With the relatively high population growth rates and the demand for education, there is a severe shortage of both schools and teachers in Melanesia. The prospect for girls being educated in larger numbers continues to be limited in the Melanesian countries.

#### *Family and Marriage*

Education and the new modes of social and physical mobility have changed the life styles of educated islanders. Clubs, dance halls, nightclubs, cinemas and pubs have become centres for socialising. Whilst wider kinship ties remain significant, over the last 30 years nuclear families have gained distinct identity and importance in urban and peri-urban localities. In Fiji Islands more than half the total households are comprised of nuclear families. In the context of the financial demands of urban living, larger families and wider kinship network obligations are perceived as burdensome. Arranged marriages have been increasingly displaced by love marriages. Marriage partners in urban areas can be from distant regions and different linguistic and ethnic groups. The status of women has also undergone change. With proselytisation to Christianity, polygamy was proscribed and eventually prohibited by law. Monogamous families were encouraged, although not entirely successfully. Women who had earlier had been major producers of food and artifacts as well as 'beasts of burden' (in Melanesia) were pressured towards behaving like Victorian housewives. They were required to learn how to cook, sew, clean their homes and raise children

along European patterns. This was in contrast to the considerable amount of female out-door livelihood activities in indigenous lifestyles. Previously with the men being responsible for cooking the day's large single meal in the earth oven the kitchen was not women's responsibility. Employment, albeit in particular professions relegated to women such as nursing, teaching and secretarial work, liberated women and also gave them higher status. A new generation of women professionals, senior civil servants, businesswomen, women in civil society organisations and women activists have been active in breaking gender barriers. Contraceptives and growing awareness of reproductive health have also helped in the liberation of women.

#### *Cultural Change*

The term culture is usually defined as the way of life of a people comprising material and non-material aspects. Material culture denotes technology, buildings, canoes and other artifacts, including personal possessions. Non-material culture denotes the symbolic, value, belief and institutional dimensions of the way of life. Whilst one may think that the changes discussed above would have negatively impacted on Pacific culture, this does not seem to be the case. Instead, as discussed below, Pacific cultures have continued to adapt and Pacific societies have retained cultures that, whilst not purely 'traditional' are still uniquely 'Pacific'.

#### *Resilience of Tradition*

Recently Anthony Hooper observed that "culture plays a much more significant role in national economies and national life of Pacific countries than it does in most other regions of the world."<sup>35</sup> This is because in most Pacific countries, "around 80 to 90 percent of land resources are under customary tenure, and the traditional sector accounts for around 50 percent of national GDP."<sup>36</sup> The entrenchment of customary land tenure and traditional social structures in national constitutions ensure their perpetuation and insulation from both market forces and state coercion. With customary control over most economic resources essential for development it is not "simply a matter of engineering a transition from substance to dynamic monetary economies."<sup>37</sup> In any case Hooper has argued that it is erroneous to characterise the traditional sector as subsistence because production is geared to fulfilling a diverse range of reciprocal and redistributive exchanges in networks of mutual obligations that integrate island people. Economies in the traditional sector for Hooper are "embedded in the society", with a large moral and ideological content.<sup>38</sup>

A second reason for the significance of culture in the island countries of the Pacific is because of its role in national politics. Hooper has pointed to the fact that politicians have to win the support of electors reliant on livelihoods in the traditional sector where "matters of custom and tradition carry considerable political clout."<sup>39</sup> National constitutions in Hooper's view assert legitimacy in terms of "distinctive culture and traditions" as much as they attend to "notions of democracy and individual rights". "In these ways", Hooper claims, "culture in one form or another is right at the heart of national and political life."<sup>40</sup>

*Indigenisation of Modernity*

Marshall Sahlins, in his chapter in the same book, has also argued that indigenous cultures have been resilient to change and that there has been an indigenisation of modernity. These cultures have not simply been transformed to being a mere reflection of the West but have adopted new technologies, money and goods in diverse ways to invigorate traditional values and norms, customary ceremonies and exchange relations. Far from being passive victims of colonialism and modernisation, indigenous people have responded positively "to harness the good things of Europeans to the development of their own existence."<sup>41</sup> Rural-urban, and even international migration streams are perceived as circulatory in nature. While the physical geography of the indigenous village is limited, there are no limits to the social geography of the village. In this regard even globalisation is seen as making possible the enlargement of the complex social network of kinship reinforced by flows of goods, people and cash. Purely rational economic decisions related to the maximisation of the return to labour are geared to the fulfillment of traditional obligations to family and kinsfolk in accord with cultural values.

Sahlins<sup>42</sup> maintains that the dichotomy between modernity and tradition is undermined by the fact that non-western peoples have sought to create their own cultural versions of modernity. In any case what is regarded as traditional has usually been neo-tradition, already a hybrid of the old and the new. Cultures have ways of adapting, changing, disappearing and reappearing in unimagined ways — culture is not simply a heritage, it is a project and a philosophy of life. As a philosophy of life, culture "is an exhaustible reservoir of responses to the world's challenges" in contrast to development which denotes "a scale of values, norms of conduct or models of behaviour transmissible from one society to another!"<sup>43</sup>

*Language*

While the dichotomy of tradition and modernity is false and simplistic (English common law is 'traditional') and indigenous socio-cultural systems incorporate and adapt to modernisation, there nevertheless have been considerable changes in Pacific societies. Besides indigenous islanders who in the Melanesian countries have considerable linguistic diversity, there are people of Asian and European origins. Pidgin and Bislama or a dominant dialect, as in Bauan Fijian, have become the lingua franca among them. The languages of former colonial rulers, English and French, have become official languages in post colonial Pacific states. English has become the medium of communication of the regional elite. It is the language of social mobility.<sup>44</sup>

*Religion*

With rare exceptions, islanders converted to Christianity. Catholic and various Protestant denominations predominate. Just about every village and settlement boasts a church. Sabbath is closely adhered to amongst islanders, particularly in rural areas. Prayer sessions, church choirs, grace before meals and other outward manifestations of religion are widespread. Pastors and priests are highly respected

and, in most instances, very well rewarded. However, there continues to exist, in most Pacific communities, beliefs and rituals that predate proselytisation. Such beliefs range from a regard for ancestral spirits, sacredness of sites and objects, trees, totems, sorcery and witchcraft, spiritual powers of certain lineages and of chiefs as well as individuals continue to act as mechanisms for social control. Kava remains a sacred drink in Fiji Islands and Samoa at ceremonies and ritual functions. The incorporation of Christianity into the social structures and everyday lives of islanders has led to the view that there has been an indigenisation of this religion in this view. The Christian belief system, its moral codes and rituals have a distinct Pacific favour.

In multicultural Fiji Islands, 90 percent of the Indo-Fijian population are Hindus or Muslims. There has been a syncretisation of these religions with both Christianity and indigenous religious beliefs and rituals. In recent years there has been an Arabisation of Islam in Fiji and this is most evident in the attire of Muslim men and women.

*Changes in Material Culture*

At the level of material culture changes are obvious and marked. In much of Micronesia and Polynesia buildings, including family homes, have been constructed with concrete and/or wood in the western style. Corrugated iron has largely replaced thatch. Pacific style architecture such as the neo-traditional fale and the bure has been retained. In Samoa family homes, meeting places and public buildings display this architecture. Parliament buildings in Fiji Islands and Papua New Guinea have a distinct island character.

Modes of communication and transportation have changed. Traditional drums (such as the Lali and tamtam) and conch shells continue to be used symbolically and in ceremonies but telephones (including mobile phones), radio and to an extent electronic forms of communication have become more widely used. Pacific issues are discussed on line internationally. Tonga has claimed its share of satellite space and remote Tuvalu had the foresight to lay claim to its lucrative dot.com name. Land, sea and air transportation has been revolutionised in most islands. Motor cars, trucks, buses and vans crowd island roads and highways. Regular aircraft flights exist between most Pacific capitals to international destinations. In-country airline companies also operate to service inland and outlying locations. Helicopters are available in some of the bigger countries. Shipping services are provided by inter-island ferries as well as fibre-glass outboard powered boats. However, there are still island countries such as Tokelau and Niue as well as many outer islands of the larger archipelagoes where transportation continues to be irregular.

Modern communication and transport systems have facilitated cross boundary flows of people, ideas, capital, goods and services within and between countries. There is a demand on political leaders to provide higher materially comparable living standards found in metropolitan countries. The print media which exists in most countries of the Pacific, transistor radio, cinema and television together with inter-personal communication have made most islanders, particularly young people conscious of life styles and fashions in metropolitan centres. In Pacific towns and cities hair styles,

attire, personal possessions and even the language used reflect fads and fashions elsewhere. In Fiji Islands both Hollywood and Bollywood have considerable influence in these matters. The music and songs in island popular cultures also reflect external influences but local compositions and styles do impact on the island and diaspora scenes. Island cuisines have been enriched by European and Asian dishes so that roasts, barbeques, chopsuey, chowmein, and curries complement *lovo* food at most feasts.

## CONCLUSION

It is obvious that socio-economic, cultural and political changes have transformed Pacific island societies. Individualism, preoccupation with oneself and one's immediate family rather than the wider kinship network together with individual acquisitiveness has increased. It is also apparent that this transformation is not entirely in the likeness of the West, as propounded by evolutionary theorists and predicted by the diffusionist modernisation school. Development has improved standards of living (nutrition, health, life expectancy, housing, education) but has occurred in tandem with increased inequality amongst islanders. The co-existence and hybridisation of traditional and neo-traditional structures with modern institutions of the state and market have led to many contradictions, tensions and conflicts. As we look to the future these conflicts and tensions must be addressed so as to ensure the harmonious continuation of Pacific island states. However, it should be noted that addressing tensions is not the same as removing tensions through the homogenisation of cultures. The dualism and admixture that exists in Pacific societies has provided safety nets, security and equality, as well as new opportunities. There is a place in the Pacific both for countries and people both to be like Kavaliku's lokua, "small fish living in reef ponds cut off from the sea at tidal lows, but periodically replenished by ocean waters" and to explore oceans and their surrounding shores for new opportunities to sustain their homelands.<sup>45</sup>

## ENDNOTES

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- 2 See Booth, C. *Life and Labour of the People of London* cited in McKee, J.B. 1969. *Introduction to Sociology*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston Inc.
- 3 McKee, J.B. 1969. Above, n 2 at p 20.
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- 6 Max Weber's account of the transformation in Europe was based on a close examination of European social structure, culture and history. He maintained that the protestant ethic unique to Europe gave rise to capitalism. Calvinist anxiety over salvation led to abstinence from indulgence of any kind, an increase in savings and enterprise. Society became rationalised and bureaucratised with no place for superstition, magic and the satisfaction of baser needs. Society followed routines based on law and order, procedures, plans and predictability. Calculating in a rational way the outcomes of businesses and other activities became integral to the process of rationality.
- 7 Sahlins makes the sardonic observation that "Rostow must have been among the first to perceive that the culmination of human social evolution was shopping." See Sahlins, M. 2000. On the anthropology of modernity, or, some triumphs of culture over dependency theory. In Hooper, A. (ed), *Culture and Development in the Pacific*. Canberra: Asia Pacific Press, at p 46.
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## Review questions

1. Identify and evaluate the impact of the most important agents of societal change during the colonial era in a Pacific island society. (Examples of agents of change are religious missions, commercial interests, the colonial state, anti-colonial movements and trade unions.)
2. To what extent do you think it is valid to say that the personal relations found in small scale pre-European societies have given way to impersonal contractual relations in PICs? How do you think this change affects the maintenance of order in PICs?
3. "Social change is more likely to emerge from factories and towns than from farms and rural settlements." Discuss this assertion with respect to urbanisation and urbanism in a Pacific island society.
4. How would you explain or characterise the maintenance of law in order in pre colonial Pacific societies, colonial Pacific societies and post-colonial, contemporary Pacific societies?

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