Missionary Kingdoms of the South Pacific? The involvement of missionaries from the London Missionary Society in law making at Tahiti. 1795-1847

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I hereby declare that this thesis constitutes my own research and writing, and it has not been submitted in any previous application for a degree. All quotations have been distinguished and the source of the information acknowledged.

ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the involvement of members of the London Missionary Society in drafting law codes in Tahiti. It seeks to establish the missionaries' reasons for participating in the process and the explanations they gave of their actions. The thesis also considers the way in which the LMS presented these events to the public.

The role played by the Tahitian Mission in drafting the law code in 1819 assisted Pomare II in increasing his authority beyond traditional limitations. Pomare II, through the advice of the mission, appropriated Western institutions which strengthened his claim to be king. The missionary fostering of a Tahitian monarchy had its roots in earlier European descriptions of Polynesian 'monarchs' upon which cross-cultural relations had already been established.

The early missionaries developed a special relationship with Pomare II, their patron and protector, which eventually led to his adoption of Christianity in 1812. The Tahitian mission did not dominate Pomare but it did have a significant influence in the creation and presentation of Tahiti as a Christian Kingdom.

The willingness of the missionaries to help Pomare II transform himself into a Christian monarch can be traced to factors in the origins of the LMS. The genuinely ecumenical character of the LMS in its early years resulted in the presence of missionaries and directors whose acceptance of close relations between Church and State was not typical of the Congregationalists who later dominated the Society. The influence of the Anglican Rev. Thomas Haweis, architect of the South Sea Mission, was particularly important in the years before 1819.

Far from being a contradiction of the LMS regulation forbidding the involvement of missionaries in politics, the advice given by the missionaries to Pomare II can be interpreted as a result of the constant admonitions to avoid radical politics and obey lawful authority. These instructions, intended to convey and ensure

the respectability of the newly founded LMS, when read in the Tahitian context, implied a duty to support the Pomare dynasty.

The drafting of a law code for Tahiti, and the spread of the practice to other islands, reflects the Society's evangelical theology of conversion and a belief that all people had the capacity to appropriate the benefits of Christian civilisation. The law codes were briefly celebrated as a proof of the transforming power of the Gospel and the abilities of Pacific Islanders. The reticence of the LMS about the Tahitian laws in later years can be attributed to changing racial attitudes and a colonial discourse which presented Pacific Islanders as incapable of self-government. This embarrassment about the laws should not, however, be read back into the period of their composition or the years before 1847.

This thesis is dedicated to my husband and my parents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CONTENTS

ILLUSTRATIONS

ABBREVIATIONS

ABCFM	American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions.
BMS	Baptist Missionary Society.
CMS	Church Missionary Society.
HRA	Historical Records of Australia.
JPH	*Journal of Pacific History.*
JPS	*Journal of the Polynesian Society.*
LMS	London Missionary Society.
ML	Mitchell Library, Sydney.
NLA	National Library of Australia, Canberra.
PRO	Public Record Office, London.
QC	*Quarterly Chronicle of the Transactions of the London Missionary Society.*
SSJ	South Sea Journals, Council for World Mission Archive.
SSL	South Sea Letters, Council for World Mission Archive.
TMS	*Transactions of the Missionary Society.*
WMMS	Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society.

Note: References to archival material, unless indicated otherwise, are to the Council for World Mission Archive, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.

INTRODUCTION

The subject of this thesis is the work of the Tahitian Mission of the London Missionary Society in the years between 1795 and 1847.[1] It examines the role that members of the mission played in drafting the first Tahitian law code of 1819 and the development of similar codes in the neighbouring islands. The thesis considers the missionaries' own explanations for their involvement in the events; the reception of the policy by the LMS; and the way in which Christian law codes were presented to the British public.

The decision to send a mission to the South Seas Islands, including Tahiti, was made during the first week of the existence of the London Missionary Society in 1795. A vessel was purchased and in 1796 a party of thirty men, six women and three children sailed in the *Duff* to establish missions in Tahiti, Tonga and the Marquesas. In 1797, nineteen men, five of whom were married, settled at Tahiti. It was not until 1811, however, that the missionaries received their first indications of progress, yet by 1815 the entire island professed Christianity. The swiftness and scale of this movement made a great impression upon contemporaries and became an archetype for Nineteenth Century missions in the Pacific.[2] In 1888 A W Murray wrote:

> The fact that the grand missionary experiment of modern times was made at the Tahitian group invested everything connected with that group with undying interest…A system of idolatry …was swept away with a rapidity and completeness which confounded and silenced adversaries, [and] confirmed the faith of wavering friends..[3]

The methods adopted by the missionaries there influenced the work of other missionary societies in the region.

In 1819 a code of nineteen laws was promulgated under the authority of King Pomare II of Tahiti. The laws were approved by a large gathering of chiefs and people in the 712 ft. Royal Mission Chapel opened two days previously with its three

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[1] Hereafter LMS.
[2] Charles Forman, *The Island Churches of the South Pacific: Emergence in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Orbis, 1982), 2.
[3] A. W. Murray, *The Bible in the Pacific* (London: James Nisbet & Co, 1888), 1-3.

pulpits. In the same building on the following Sunday Pomare was the first Tahitian to be baptised. The members of the mission advised Pomare on the subject of laws and Henry Nott and John Davies helped him to draft a code. The Tahitian Laws were clearly Christian in character and gave Pomare II a tool with which to confirm his position as ruler of the entire island. The mission contributed to the creation of a Tahitian monarchy through their co-operation in the composition and printing of the laws and through the images of the Tahitian Kingdom which they projected in their accounts of the island.

The law making in Tahiti established a pattern which recurred across the Pacific. A code was drafted for Raiatea, Tahaa, Borabora and Maupiti in 1820 and in Huahine in 1822.[4] A version of the Raiatean laws was taken by LMS missionaries to Rarotonga and adopted in 1827. In Hawaii the missionaries supported by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions introduced the ten commandments in 1820 and a code of laws in 1827; these were applied to resident Europeans in 1829. The Wesleyan Methodist Missionaries on Tonga also assisted with law codes. There too a law code was adopted following the rise to pre-eminence of a strong indigenous leader, Taufa'ahau. He established a code on the island of Vava'u in 1839 and these were extended to over the entire archipelago in 1845. Laws were also passed with the help of LMS missionaries at Tutila in the Samoan islands and at Bau in Fiji with the aid of the Wesleyan Methodists.

A study of the involvement of the Tahitian Mission in law making, therefore, provides an insight into the early work of the LMS and into the earliest Protestant mission in the Pacific. The purpose of the study is to establish how mission assistance to indigenous leaders with law codes became an established mission practice in Polynesia within the LMS.

Two principal areas of interest emerge from previous studies of the subject. The first question raised is whether the making of law codes was an instrument of missionary dominance in the islands. The second concerns the attitudes of missionaries and LMS Directors to relations between church and state; a point which has implications for the assessment both of the churches which the missionaries

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[4]The Tahitian laws were revised in 1824 and the laws at Huahine and Borabora in 1823. There is a description of Tahiti and the Society Islands below see also figures 1 and 2.

founded and the subjects upon which they offered advice. That is, did the activities of the missionaries in Tahiti conflict with the principles of the LMS?

The idea that the law codes were imposed on the people of Tahiti or that missionaries dominated island affairs is one that is found frequently in older literature on the subject of missions in the Pacific.[5] This view is found in works written to confirm and commend the role of missionaries in the nation's imperial project, in which the efforts of missionaries to introduce laws are seen as doomed to failure.[6] Authors such as Ward argue that indigenous leaders were not capable of imposing order upon the increasing numbers of unruly Europeans and that colonial intervention was inevitable.[7]

Missionary dominance was also assumed in works which were critical of missions or of the destructive impact of European interventions in the Pacific.[8] The latter perspective is sometimes referred to as the "Fatal Impact" school as a result of Alan Moorehead's well known treatment of the topic.[9] It was only with the advent of island centred approaches to Pacific History, advocated by Alan Davidson at the Australian National University, that recognition of Islander agency in the formation of law codes in the Pacific Islands emerged. Studies such as Sione Latukefu's *Church and State in Tonga* began to emphasise the strength of indigenous leaders and that the alliances they forged with Europeans were a "marriage of convenience".[10] The role of indigenous missionaries has also been increasingly recognised. Tahiti and the Society Islands provided a large number of missionaries who, with their wives, endured lonely and harsh conditions to carry the gospel throughout Polynesia and Melanesia.[11]

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[5] W. Allen Young, *Christianity and the Civilisation of the South Pacific* (London: LMS, 1922; Aarne Koskinen, *Missionary Influence as a Political Factor in the Pacific Islands* (Helsinki, 1953), 67.

[6] K. L. P. Martin, *Missionaries and Annexation in the Pacific* (Oxford, 1924).

[7] John M. Ward, *British Policy in the South Pacific 1786-1893* (Sydney: Australian Publishing Company, 1984).

[8] Louis B. Wright and Isobel Mary Fry, *Puritans in the South Seas* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1936).

[9] Alan Moorehead, *The Fatal Impact: An account of the Invasion of the South Pacific 1767-1840* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1966).

[10] Sione Latukefu, *Church and State in Tonga: The Wesleyan Methodist Missionaries and Political Development 1822-1875* (Canberra : Australian National University Press, 1974).

[11] Doug Munro and Andrew Thornley, *The Covenant Makers: Islander Missionaries in the Pacific*, (Suva, Fiji: Pacific Theological College, Institute of Pacific Studies, University of the South Pacific, 1996); Mark Gallagher, "The Tahiti Connection: Planting Christianity in Hawaii," *Pacific Journal of Theology* 14 (1995): 23-30; Sione Latukefu, "The Impact of South Sea Island Missionaries on

The mutual exploitation of European missionaries and indigenous leaders has been explored by Howe, Scarr and Denoon.[12] These general histories, however, share with Newbury's *Tahiti Nui* a tendency to reduce religious experience to social and political factors.[13] Similarly, studies such as Edmond's *Representing the South Pacific* have examined colonial discourse and highlighted instances of indigenous resistance and subversion of colonial hegemony.[14] However, there is little consideration of the reasons why Pacific Islanders adopted Christianity at a particular moment in their history. This thesis will attempt to take the religious perspectives and motivations of individuals seriously, a point which is particularly important in discussions of the reasons for the adoption of Christianity in the islands.

The importance of understanding the perspectives of Pacific Islanders has been stressed by Sahlins and Dening.[15] Dening has emphasised the strangeness and incomprehensibility of the respective beliefs and practices of Europeans and Islanders to the other and the difficulty with which ideas could cross the metaphorical beach.[16] Thomas, however, has emphasised exchange and the development of new meanings. In *Entangled Objects* he outlines the mutability of the objects, and by implication the ideas, which were exchanged between Europeans and Pacific Islanders.

Thomas highlights the way in which objects took on new values according to the uses found for them and meanings ascribed to them in the cultures into which they were received. This, he argues, was as true of European collections of shrunken heads as it was of the reception of trade goods such as nails and clothing by Pacific

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Melanesia," in *Mission, Church and Sect in Oceania*, eds. Boutiller, Hughes, and Tiffany (Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1978), 92-108.

[12] K. R. Howe, *Where the Waves Fall: A New South Sea Islands history from the first settlement to colonial rule* (Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1991), 137; Donald Denoon, "Land, Labour and Independent Development", in *The Cambridge History of the Pacific Islanders, ed.* Donald Denoon et al., (Cambridge: University of Cambridge, 1997), 152; Deryck Scarr, *The History of the Pacific Islands: Kingdoms of the Reefs* (Sydney: Macmillan, 1990).

[13] Colin Newbury, *Tahiti Nui: Change and Survival in French Polynesia* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1980).

[14] Rod Edmond, *Representing the South Pacific: Colonial Discourses from Cook to Gauguin* (Cambridge University Press, 1997), chapter 4.

[15] Marshall Sahlins, *How "Natives" Think: About Captain Cook, for example* (Chicago and London; University of Chicago Press, 1995); Greg Dening, *Islands and Beaches: Discourse on a silent land, Marquesas 1774-1880* (Chicago: Dorsey Press, 1980).

[16] Ibid. 271.

Islanders.[17] Thomas' approach which examines the transfer and appropriation of objects while stressing the diversity of perspectives held by members of the communities on both sides of "the beach", is a useful starting point for an examination of mission in the islands.[18]

The description "missionary kingdom" or "theocracy" has been used surprisingly widely of the islands where missionaries were involved in law making.[19] This thesis, therefore, will assess whether Tahiti was a kingdom dominated by the mission or a kingdom in which Western concepts of kinship and national institutions were appropriated with the assistance of missionaries.

The use of the term "theocracy" also raises questions about the kind of church which the missionaries established in Tahiti. Christianity was initially accepted by individuals in numbers small enough for lists of those who had turned to the new religion to be kept. The victory of Pomare II after the battle of Fei Pi in 1815, however, led to a mass rejection of the old religion and profession of Christianity.[20] Garrett described the members of the Tahitian Mission as the "regretful architects of the Tahitian establishment" and Morrell wrote of them being forced to abandoned their independent tradition of church government.[21] In *Missionary Influence as a Political Factor in the Pacific Islands* Koskinen suggested that the missions had attempted to replicate the democratically governed independent churches of home but had failed to do so and as a result resorted to legislation.[22] He asserted that the law codes in the islands should, therefore, be judged on spiritual not judicial grounds as they were intended to deepen religious and ethical values.[23]

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[17]Nicholas Thomas, *Entangled Objects: exchange, material culture, and colonialism in the Pacific* (Cambridge, Mass. and London: Harvard University Press, 1991).
[18]See chapter 3.
[19] Forman, *Island Churches of the South Pacific,* 10; Neil Gunson, *Messengers of Grace: Evangelical Missionaries in the South Seas 1797-1860* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1978), 291; Koskinen, *Missionary Influence,* 51; Martin, *Missionaries and Annexation;* Stephen Neill, *Colonialism and Christian Missions* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1966), 244; Colin Newbury, *Tahiti Nui: Change and Survival in French Polynesia.* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1980), 52; Young, *Christianity and the Civilisation of the South Pacific,* 20;Wright and Fry, *Puritans in the South Seas,* 323.
[20] See chapter 5.
[21] John Garrett, *To Live Among the Stars: Christian Origins in Oceania,* (Geneva and Suva: World Council of Churches in Association with the Institute of Pacific Studies, University of the South Pacific, 1982), 20; W. P. Morrell, *Britain in the Pacific Islands,* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1960), 42.
[22] Koskinen, *Missionary Influence,* 54.
[23] Ibid. 128.

These comments raise two questions for attention in research on the subject of church government. First, did the missionaries intentionally create a national church in Tahiti and use legislation as a method of Christianising the people? Second, the implication of these comments is that the LMS missionaries belonged to a predominantly independent tradition and that the relations between church and state which developed at Tahiti compromised their dissenting principles. Gunson, for example, refers to correspondence following the coronation of Pomare III which suggests unease on the part of LMS members at events in Tahiti.[24] This prompts questions about the backgrounds of the missionaries, the composition of the LMS and prevailing attitudes to relations between church and state.

The chapter entitled "Advisers in Affairs of State" in *Messengers of Grace* is the most detailed study to date of missions and law making in the Pacific. His treatment of the subject raises a number of further questions about the involvement of missionaries in politics. Gunson highlights the LMS statements and rules forbidding involvement in politics. This principle was repeated in sermons, articles and correspondence when the society was first founded in 1795 and was included in the list of printed questions for missionary candidates which were produced in 1820:

> Do your principles lead you to yield all due respect and subjection to the civil authorities instituted in the country to which you may go, and consider it your duty to abstain from all interference in the political concerns of such country?[25]

Gunson has asked whether the actions of the mission at Tahiti contravened this principle.[26]

A reading of LMS publications written around the centenary of the society in 1895 might seem to confirm the view that the actions of the missionaries in Tahiti did not conform to official policy. Lovett's *The History of the London Missionary Society 1795-1895,* minimised the missionary role in framing the laws. He stressed the consent of the chiefs to the laws and introduced the topic without reference to the discussions with the missionaries. The impression of the missionaries' role is, therefore, ambiguous:

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[24] Gunson, *Messengers of Grace,* 286.
[25] Printed questions to missionary candidates. Candidates Papers 1796-1899 Box 13.
[26] Gunson, *Messengers of Grace,* 281.

...to see a king giving laws to his people with an express regard to the authority of the word of God, and a people receiving the same with such universal satisfaction, was a subject very affecting to us all.[*]

[*]The king undertook to write a fair copy of the laws for the press, and also to send a circular letter to all governors on the subject of education.[27]

A similar tendency can be seen in the history of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society in its account of the law codes of Tonga.[28]

There is however literature, much of it produced before 1840, in which members of the LMS celebrate the laws. Individual missionaries, when writing of their experiences in Tahiti and elsewhere in Polynesia, felt the need to justify their involvement but did not hide their actions. William Ellis and John Williams, for example, advocated the use of laws explaining their necessity as a result of the changes wrought in Polynesian society when large numbers converted and arguing that it was their duty to intervene.[29] The Christian law codes were deployed as proof of the transforming power of the Gospel:

Wherever Christian missionaries successfully prosecute their labours, and exert an influence upon the minds of men, that influence speedily extends to government. Change the character of the subject, and you ultimately change the character of the laws, and the form of administration.[30]

The existence of this material suggests that LMS attitudes may have undergone a change prior to the publication of the centenary histories which requires examination.

Furthermore, Gunson's treatment of the political views of members of the various mission societies active in the Pacific in the early Nineteenth Century contrasts the LMS with the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society which is portrayed as conservative. He quotes some evidence to suggest that there was an

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[27]* an original footnote to the text. Richard Lovett, *The History of the London Missionary Society 1795-1895*, (London, 1899) vol.1 222. Lovett is quoting from a circular printed in Tahiti and also published in the *Quarterly Chronicle of the Transactions of the London Missionary Society* vol. 1 439-442. Hereafter QC.

[28] D. D. Findlay and W. W. Holdsworth, *The History of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society*, (London: Epworth, 1921-1924), 3: 327.

[29]William Ellis, *The History of the London Missionary Society* (London: John Snow, 1844), 238; John Williams, *A Narrative of Missionary Enterprises in the South Sea Islands; with remarks upon the natural history of the islands, origin, languages, traditions and usages of the inhabitants...* (London: John Snow, 1837), 129.

[30] John Campbell, *The Martyr of Erromanga; or, the Philosophy of Missions illustrated from the labours, death and character of the late Rev. John Williams*, 2nd ed. (London: John Snow, 1842), 77.

inclination among LMS missionaries and Directors towards radical views.[31] The relationship between these conflicting indications to requests for guidance made in Tahiti is never fully resolved.

This thesis will address these questions by examining the period which proceeded the establishment of the first law code in 1819 and the circumstances which led to similar codes being adopted in neighbouring islands. The focus will be on the perspectives of members of the Tahitian mission, on their relations with indigenous leaders and the explanations which they themselves gave for their actions. The study also examines changing attitudes towards the laws in representations of the events by the LMS.

The research was conducted through a detailed review of LMS sources but also with an emphasis upon the complexity of the contexts in which the members of the LMS lived. Three areas have been given particular attention: Tahitian history and politics; encounters between European and Pacific Islanders; and the early years of the London Missionary Society in Britain. This approach has allowed Tahitian perspectives to be considered and has also highlighted the extent to which missionary activity repeated but also diverged from the patterns established by other Europeans. A study of the early years of the LMS from the perspective of the South Sea Mission reveals aspects of its early character which are sometimes obscured by its later history as a predominantly Congregationalist institution.

The subject of this thesis is the contact or interaction between two groups of people; missionaries sent by the London Missionary Society to Tahiti and the inhabitants of that island. One product of their meeting was the promulgation in 1819 of a code of laws. The main focus of the thesis is an attempt to resolve some of the anomalies noted in previous works about the missionaries' participation in this venture. Of necessity, therefore, much of the material presented in the thesis is related to investigation of the motivations and explanations for their actions of the members of the mission, as a group and as individuals.

The beliefs and preconceptions which the missionaries brought with them influenced the interpretations these individuals made of Tahiti society. However,

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[31] Gunson, *Messengers of Grace,* 280f.

their attitudes were formed and reformed in the context of, and in response to Tahitian society. Tahitians were not a passive body to whom things were done but were active in making choices and in shaping their relations with Europeans, whether missionaries or not. Nor, was there a single Tahitian response to the issues raised by the arrival of the mission.

The ways in which Tahitians may have interpreted their encounter with the mission are particularly important for a study in which one aim is the testing of previous accounts which have focused upon mission dominance of island affairs and the imposition of laws. This thesis is not an investigation into the complex responses of Tahitians to Europeans or of the impact of Christianity on their culture. A thorough investigation of Tahitian perspectives and of the ways in which the law codes functioned would require extensive study in Tahitian written and oral sources which has not been conducted as part of this research.

Claims to knowledge of Maohi society in the late Eighteenth and early Nineteenth Century present some methodological difficulties, including contention between the disciplines of History, Anthropology and Indigenous Religions, which will be discussed below. Some remarks upon geography and the categorisation of islands in the Pacific, however, are a prerequisite for discussion of Polynesian cultures and their representation by observers. This is followed by a brief summary of voyaging and migration patterns in the Pacific.

Geography, Migrations and Cultures

Tahiti is one of the ten islands in the archipelago, known today as the Society Islands, in French Polynesia. The principal islands of the group are Maupiti, Borabora, Tahaa, Raiatea, Huahine, Tahiti and Mo'orea.[32] The islands have, however, received a number of other designations through contact with outsiders. Captain Samuel Wallis, who 'discovered' Tahiti in 1767, named the island after King George III and Captain James Cook gave the group the collective name "Society Islands" in honour of the Royal Society, who had sponsored his voyage. In contrast to current usage, Europeans in the late Eighteenth and early Nineteenth Century

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[32] Mo'orea is referred to in early sources and many mission documents as Eimeo; and Raiatea as Ulitea.

referred to Tahiti and Mo'orea as the "Georgian Islands" and the remaining islands as the "Society Islands".[33] This division of the archipelago parallels the nautical distinction made by European sailors between the "Windward Islands" and the "Leeward Islands". The former consisted of Tahiti and Mo'orea and the latter of the remaining eight islands in the group.

The distinction between Windward and Leeward or Georgian and Society Isles does not reflect any cultural or political distinction at the time of the first contacts made between Islanders and Europeans. The term "Maohi", which in the earliest dictionaries of the language was recorded as an adjective meaning "common, native, not foreign", has become the accepted way in which the people of the archipelago refer to themselves.[34] The relationship between the islands was close and voyaging between them for political, social and religious purposes was common. The ten islands shared a common language and Maohi culture.[35]

The Society Islands fall within the region which the LMS described as the "South Seas". In the 1790s no terminology had been developed for classifying the peoples of the Pacific Ocean. Indeed, many of the islands had not been accurately charted by Europeans. The South Sea itself had only been known to Europe since 1513 when Vasco Núñez de Balboa first caught a glimpse of it from a South American hill top. It was Magellan who later gave the expanse of water the name Pacific. Neither man realised that the ocean covered over one third of the earth's surface[36] or that it contained as many as twenty-five thousand islands. Later visitors to the Pacific distinguished between the fairer people of the Eastern Pacific and the darker skinned inhabitants of the West whom they believed to be of Negroid decent. In the 1820s, three terms coined by the French explorer Dumont D'Urville, Polynesia, Melanesia and Micronesia, gained currency as a means of distinguishing the peoples of the region.

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[33] The use of "Society Islands" below follows the LMS usage.
[34] John Davies, *A Tahitian English Dictionary, with introductory remarks on the Polynesian language and a short grammar of the Tahitian Dialect with an appendix: Le Davies des Vernier*, reprint in facsimile of the 1851 edition (Tahiti: London Missionary Society Press, 1991), 132.
[35] Douglas Oliver, *Ancient Tahitian Society,* vol. 1 *Ethnography* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1982), introduction.
[36] An area of 166 000 000 km².

According to the accepted usage, Polynesia is the triangle formed by the islands of New Zealand, Hawaii and Easter Island. The other significant island groups within the triangle are the Society Islands, the Marquesas, Tonga, Samoa, and the Cook Islands.[37] Melanesia lies in the Southwest Pacific and encompasses New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, and New Caledonia. Micronesia is the remaining area North of Melanesia where there are two thousand islands, though many are uninhabited atolls. Micronesian groups include the Marshall, Gilbert and Caroline Islands. The islands of the New Hebrides and the Southern Solomon Islands are usually described as Polynesian outliers due to the cultural similarities they share with the islands within the triangle.[38]

Archaeological, linguistic, anthropological and nautical studies have established that the most likely origin of the peoples of Micronesia, Melanesia and Polynesia is South East Asia.[39] They thus migrated from West to East across the Ocean against the prevailing current but with the seasonal trade winds. Thor Hyerdahl's East to West theory has been largely discredited, though some scholars acknowledge the possibility that Polynesians may have reached South America and returned, thus explaining the presence of the potato.[40] The transfer of people across the Pacific would have been a risky enterprise. Bellwood suggests, however, that a sufficient population could have become established in as few as ten well provisioned voyaging parties.[41]

The migrations from South East Asia began in approximately 4000 BCE.[42] It is believed that Austronesians gradually settled in islands of Melanesia and Micronesia and reached Fiji by 1500 BCE and Tonga in 1200 BCE.[43] In Fiji a distinctive culture emerged, known as Lapita, which can be traced by its

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[37] See figure 1. Map of the Pacific Ocean.

[38] The Islands of Polynesia can also be divided into Eastern (Hawaii, Society, New Zealand, Marquesas, Easter Island Tuamotu, Austral and Rapa) and Western (Samoa, Tonga, Uvea, Futuna).

[39] Howe, *Where the Waves Fall,* 16-18.

[40] Robert C. Suggs, "The Kon-Tiki Myth," in *Cultures of the Pacific: Selected Readings* eds. Thomas G. Harding and Ben J. Wallace (London: Collier Macmillan, 1970), 29-38.

[41] Peter Bellwood, *The Polynesians: Prehistory of an Island People*, rev. ed. (London: Thames and Hudson, 1987), 161.

[42] The abbreviations B/CE before/common era have been used.

[43] Mary Elizabeth Shutier and Richard J. R. Shutier, "Origins of the Melanesians," in *Cultures of the Pacific: Selected Readings*, eds. Thomas G. Harding Harding and Ben J. Wallace (London: Collier Macmillan, 1970) 39-46. The authors suggest that any search for origins is futile and that it is the process of change and evolution which should receive attention.

characteristic pottery. Samoa was settled from Fiji around 1000 BCE but a period of almost a thousand years elapsed before any further migrations occurred. This has been described as the Samoan "bottle neck," a theory which explains the similarities between the cultures descended from later migrations but their dissimilarity to Melanesia and Micronesia.[44]

The Marquesas were reached from Samoa by 300 CE and it was from there that the remaining islands of Polynesia were settled. There are signs of habitation on Easter Island by 400 CE, at Hawaii by 600 CE and New Zealand, the furthest point of the Polynesian triangle, by 750 CE. The Society Islands were probably settled in the middle of this era of migration around 600 CE. The occupation of the islands of the Eastern Pacific is, therefore, recent when compared with other migrations such as the occupation of the Americas twenty thousand years ago or the Neolithic occupation of Europe between seven and nine thousand years ago.[45]

Methodological Issues

It is an aim of this thesis to place the activities of the South Sea Mission within as broad a context as possible. An account of life in Tahiti and the Society Islands at the time of the arrival of the first missionaries is, therefore, essential. However, a description of the islands at this very early period in their relations with Europeans presents special difficulties. Firstly, a problem facing all studies focusing on the area known as Polynesia is the extent to which generalisations about Polynesian culture are valid and the usefulness of comparative study. A second issue is whether any reliable evidence exists for historians and anthropologists to comment upon life in Tahiti in the pre-contact era. The evidence which does exist for the early period of relations between Tahitians and Europeans comes, almost exclusively, from the pens of the latter group. A third difficulty, therefore, lies in the attempt to present a Tahitian perspective. A resolution of these three issues is necessary before any account can be presented.

The pattern of migrations and the cultural similarities between islands have prompted a number of theories which suggest characteristics that are typically

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[44] Bellwood, *The Polynesians*, 52.
[45] John H. Bodley, *Cultural Anthropology: Tribes, States and the Global System*. (California: Mayfield Publishing Company, 1997), 22.

'Melanesian' or 'Polynesian'. At the beginning of the Twentieth Century it was common for authors to produce works which aimed to describe aspects of a 'Polynesian culture', for example, Handy's *Polynesian Religion;* Williams' *The Social and Political Systems of Central Polynesia* or Hogbin's *Law and Order in Polynesian*.[46] Social and political organisation were a particular focus for such distinctions.

This essentialising approach has been attacked for a number of reasons. Firstly, it has been recognised that the distinctions drawn between Melanesia and Polynesia have strong racial overtones and carried an implication, in much Nineteenth and Twentieth Century scholarship, of Melanesian inferiority.[47] Secondly, continuing study reveals the diversity within the regions and the contacts between them, for example, between Fiji, in Melanesia, and Samoa and Tonga, which are categorised as Polynesian. Thirdly, trends in anthropological method have led to a rejection of meta-narratives and to a concentration upon studies of limited scope focusing on particular peoples and their experience. The rejection of theories encompassing Polynesia as whole does not, however, preclude comparison between individual islands when appropriate.

The terms Melanesia, Polynesia and Micronesia have only limited value today in the study of the diverse cultures of the Pacific. This imposed terminology, nevertheless, remains important for the historians as the use of these categories by sailors, missionaries and other observers had a profound affect upon their understanding of the Pacific.[48] In this thesis every effort will be made to draw on research specifically relevant to Tahiti and the Society Islands group rather than that which assumes 'Polynesian' traits.

The LMS mission at Tahiti was founded thirty years after the first arrival of European visitors. The society which the missionaries encountered, therefore, had

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[46] E. S. Craighill Handy, *Polynesian Religion,* Bernice P. Bishop Museum Bulletin no. 34 (Honolulu: Bernice P. Bishop Museum, 1927); Robert W. Williamson, *The Social and Political Systems of Central Polynesia,* vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1924); Ian Hogbin, *Law and Order in Polynesia: A Study of Primitive Legal Institutions* (London, 1934); Irving Goldman, *Ancient Polynesian Society* (Chicago, 1970).
[47] Bronwen Douglas, *Across the Great Divide: Journeys in History and Anthropology* (Harwood Academic Publishers, Overseas Publishers Association, N.V., 1998), 5.
[48] See chapter 3.

been described by previous visitors. However, an attempt to construct a description of the islands at this very early period shares many of the problems associated with efforts to describe 'ancient' Tahiti.

Evidence for the period before contact is very limited indeed. European accounts, by their nature, belong to a period when the presence of outsiders was already affecting Maohi society. Indigenous versions of the pre-European past also pose difficulties as they too are interpretations made in the light of contact with Europeans. Marck, for example, has suggested that William Ellis, through his interest in creation stories involving eggs, may have introduced the idea later recorded by Teuira Henry as a traditional Tahitian one.[49] Later, Gifford found when researching Tongan folklore in the 1920s that he was told traditional Tongan tales such as Dick Whittington and Cinderella.[50]

It is not possible, therefore, to gain access to a "baseline" of pure pre-contact culture.[51] In addition, descriptions of the pre-contact era have a tendency to isolate a moment of history and in so doing give the impression of the society as static unless challenged externally. For these reasons some scholars, such as Swain and Trompf, reject any attempt at reconstructing complex matters such as religious beliefs in the pre-contact era.[52] Others continue to combine anthropological, historical and archaeological research.[53] Given that evidence for pre-contact Maohi society, and the early years of European visits, will remain limited; the use of comparative material and of recent anthropological research is useful where evidence is conflicting and incomplete. It cannot substitute, however, for direct evidence. Many conclusions about pre-contact indigenous societies will always be tentative.

There is a considerable amount of material dating from the period after the arrival of Europeans. Two lengthy accounts of Tahitian Society in the Eighteenth Century exist, both have missionary origins; William Ellis' *Polynesian Researches*

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[49]Jeff Marck, "Was there an Early Polynesian 'Sky Father'", *JPH* 31 (1996): 22.
[50] Edward Winslow Gifford , *Tongan Myths and Tales*, Bernice P. Bishop Museum Bulletin no. 8 (Honolulu: Bernice P. Bishop Museum, 1924).
[51] Dening, *Islands and Beaches.*
[52] Swain and Trompf, *Religions of Oceania,* 14.
[53] For example Kirch and Sahlins use of archaeology and anthropology in the study of pre-contact Hawaii. Patrick V. Kirch and Marshall D Sahlins, *Anahulu: The Anthropology of History in the Kingdom of Hawaii* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1992).

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(1829) and Teuira Henry's *Ancient Tahiti* (1928).[54] There are also numerous accounts produced by visitors to the islands from the time of Captain Wallis onwards.[55] Douglas Oliver attempted to evaluate and adjudicate between all these sources in his three volume work *Ancient Tahitian Society* which he described as an attempt to reconstruct the "late indigenous era" and the "early European era".[56] Driessen has examined religious change in the Leeward Islands of the group through a study of genealogies, myths and descriptions by early European visitors in his thesis *From Ta'aroa to 'Oro: An Exploration of themes in the Traditional Culture and History of the Leeward Islands.*[57]

The use of the narratives of Europeans, however, is problematic when studying the internal dimension of island life in the late Eighteenth and early Nineteenth Century. The visits upon which narratives were based were often short and communication was limited by poor language skills. Preconceptions about Polynesians are reflected in the choice of material and in the descriptions supplied. Furthermore, in attempts to describe the unfamiliar authors applied models drawn from their own experience which were not necessarily appropriate to the subjects.

Work conducted in the fields of anthropology and religious studies can provide a useful comparative framework in which to evaluate historical accounts of Polynesian societies. Methodological tensions arise, however, because even the most carefully executed comparison of accounts written by outsiders cannot reach the standards required by many scholars in the fields of anthropology or indigenous religions. Scholars studying indigenous religions, in particular, have sought to defer to the believer's perspective:

> .. the study of indigenous religions is committed to the self-determination and vitality of indigenous peoples. The authority to define what is true, correct or worthy of celebration resides not in the distant disengaged academics but among the people themselves.[58]

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[54] Henry took her data in part from material collected by J M Orsmond. Both Orsmond and Ellis served as members of the South Sea Mission. Ellis, *Polynesian Researches*; Teuira Henry, *Ancient Tahiti*, Bernice P. Bishop Museum no. 48 (Honolulu: Bernice P. Bishop Museum, 1928).
[55] See chapter two.
[56] Oliver, *Ancient Tahitian Society, 3 vols.* (Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii, 1974-1998).
[57] Hank A. H. Driessen, "From Ta'aroa to 'Oro: An Exploration of Themes in the Traditional Culture and History of the Leeward and Society Islands" (Ph.D. Diss., Australian National University 1991)
[58] Graham Harvey ed., *Indigenous Religions: A Companion*, (London and New York: Cassell, 2000), xii.

Historians cannot be participant observers or obtain confirmation of their interpretations from indigenous informants. The claims to knowledge of the historian, who is confined to the traces of past events which have survived, therefore, are very different. This need not preclude, however, the possibility of commenting on some aspects of indigenous experience.

The possibility of recovering Indigenous perspectives on events when these are lacking in European narratives has proved controversial in Post-colonial studies. Spivak, for example, questioned whether the subaltern can ever speak.[59] Pacific historians, such as Douglas and Dening, have argued that a careful reading of European texts can supply useful evidence of indigenous experience. Indeed, in *Across the Great Divide: Journeys in History and Anthropology,* Douglas states that:

> ..colonial texts are crucial resources to be exploited in writing histories about Islanders and their exotic encounters; to exploit such texts effectively and honestly one must know the authors and discourses which partly shaped them. Decentring and problematising colonial texts makes space for identifying the imprint of indigenous agency and presence in their content and tropes.[60]

Thus, while historians cannot claim to reproduce an insider's perspective they can examine the accounts of outsiders critically in a way that contributes to the understanding of the past experiences of indigenous peoples.

Furthermore, the work of historians can prove a useful corrective to the homogenising tendencies of anthropological descriptions of 'culture' which often emphasise the shared and the normal. Dening, for example, has described his history of the Marqueseans as an attempt to rescue them from, "the anonymity of the idealized model". The study of Islanders as historical actors releases them from the role of representatives of a culture and reveals them as individuals with a complex identity. The Tongan scholar I F Helu, for example, has emphasised the experience of individuals and of groups:

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[59] Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Can the subaltern speak?," in *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader, eds.* Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffths, and Helen Tiffin (London and New York: Routledge, 1995).
[60] Douglas, *Across the Great Divide*, 15.

In the case of Tonga the data-gathering historian or ethnographer is always confronted by an informant who is "unconsciously" very biased, being a product of intense cultural and tribal conditioning, as well as a promoter of his/her *ha'a* (tribe, lineage, district), *kāinga* (extended family, clan village) or *kauhala* (moiety, societal division). The reputation of the informant's *kāinga, ha'a* or *kauhala* must never be tarnished *vis-à-vis* other *kāinga, ha'a* or *kauhala*.[61]

A historical perspective can give attention to the actions and beliefs of individuals and groups, rather than to the functioning of a 'society' or the symbols of a 'culture'.

The "bias" which Helu describes shapes the ways in which Tongans construct their history. The peoples of the Pacific reinterpreted their past and reinvented cultural practices to take account of new circumstances. The ruling dynasty of Tonga, for example, constructed a version of its succession to power in the Nineteenth Century which legitimises the actions of Taufa'ahau, the first king, but which would be contested by member of other lineages in the islands.[62] In the case of Tahiti and the Leeward islands, Driessen suggests that reinvention occurred in mythology as a result of the rise in the status of the god 'Oro.[63] It should be noted, however, that work on the creation or "invention of tradition" has proved controversial in some parts of the Pacific where it has been seen as a tool of outsiders seeking to undermine claims to traditional lands and other campaigns for equality and justice for indigenous peoples.[64]

Conclusion

This theoretical discussion leads to a number of conclusions which are relevant to the presentation of the account of Maohi life which follows. Firstly, the inhabitants of Tahiti and Society Islands must be considered as a group who shared similarities with other Polynesian peoples but who were also distinct. It is not

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[61] I. F. Helu, "New brushstrokes on the Tupou I portrait," in Helu, I F. *Critical Essays: Cultural Perspectives from the South Seas* (Canberra: Journal of Pacific History, Australian National University 1999), 135-45.

[62] I. C. Campbell, *Classical Tongan Kingship* (Nuku'alofa: 'Atenisi University 1989).

[63] Driessen, *From Ta'aroa to 'Oro* 126.

[64] E. J. Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Canto, Cambridge University Press, 1997); Jocelyn Linnekin, "On the Theory and Politics of Construction in the

appropriate, therefore, to apply characteristics defined as typically Polynesian without adequate evidence from the archipelago itself. An account of the islands at the time of the LMS settlement at Tahiti must also reflect the changing nature of Maohi society. Finally, the dominance of source material produced by outsiders means that claims to represent indigenous perspectives must be made with caution. The author is limited both by the lack of available material and by the background and perspective of a Twenty First Century researcher. However, critical reading of European texts can reveal indigenous voices and actions. Research can also uncover the diversity of perspectives within a society.

Chapter one, therefore, is not arranged as a description of an idealised pre-missionary Maohi culture. Instead, aspects of Maohi culture are discussed in the context of change and continuity. This representation of life in Tahiti and the Society Islands, while intended to provide a background to the missionary encounter, can only be written from within the context of European descriptions of the islands. Critical assessment of the metaphors and models employed by Europeans in their narratives is, therefore, essential. The account which follows considers Maohi religion, politics and law using as far as possible research focused on Tahiti and the Society Islands but with the assistance of some comparative material.

Pacific," *Oceania* 62 (1991), 249-63; James West Turner, "Continuity and Constraint: Reconstructing the Concept of Tradition from a Pacific Perspective," *The Contemporary Pacific* 9 (1997): 345-81.

Figure 1. Map of the Pacific Ocean, showing Polynesia, Melanesia and Micronesia.

CHAPTER 1. MAOHI RELIGION AND SOCIETY

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an account of life in Tahiti and the Society Islands at the time of the arrival of the first mission. Contact with outsiders resulted in the introduction of new goods, technologies and ideas to the archipelago. Maohi society itself, however, was neither static nor dependent on external sources of innovation. An understanding of indigenous trends in religion, social organisation and leadership, prior to the arrival of the first Europeans, is essential for an examination of the relationship between the Maohi and outsiders. The Maohi made choices in appropriating, accepting and rejecting the aspects of European culture which they experienced. These decisions were governed by the extent to which European customs and ideas did, or did not, meet the needs of an already changing Maohi society.

The western distinction between sacred and secular spheres is not appropriate to the Maohi context. Thus, while subheadings have been used to divide the chapter for clarity, it will be suggested, that what might be termed 'the religious' and 'the political' spheres were interdependent. This state of affairs was exemplified by the *ari'i*, or chief, who was both leader and priest. He or she was the guarantor of material well-being for the community as a result of descent from the gods.

In the Eighteenth Century it appears that the roles and powers of the *ari'i* in Tahiti and Mo'orea were changing; a development which is paralleled by a change in religious practices in the two islands, through a rise in the importance of the god 'Oro. The introduction of new 'Oro images and regalia for the investiture of *ari'i* with high ranking kin-titles seem to have been associated with altered political relations and a tendency towards centralised power. It was in this complex and evolving religious and political situation that the first missionaries began their work.

Maohi 'religion' was, unsurprisingly, the principal focus of missionary attention. To the members of the LMS mission it was the principal cause of the differences they perceived between the society they had left behind in Europe and

what they found in the South Seas.[1] Recent scholars have noted the importance of religious beliefs in shaping the way the Maohi, and other Polynesians, interpreted their environment; their relations with one another; and their encounters with Europeans.[2] This chapter, therefore, begins with an examination of Maohi beliefs, followed by a discussion of social organisation and leadership.

Religion

The description of Maohi religion is difficult because beliefs are among the most elusive aspects of Maohi culture. This was the area in which linguistic skills of Europeans were most tested. Nevertheless, the religions of the Pacific were fascinating to the Europeans who observed them. In part, this interest stemmed from curiosity about exotic practices such as human sacrifice which became the gruesome subject for the artists who accompanied Cook. Cook's voyages also provided evidence for those who were seeking living examples of Rousseau's Noble Savages. The romance of the islands, including details of the Tahitians' "natural religion", was presented to the public in the work of George Forster and John Hawkesworth.[3]

European observers had a tendency to represent Polynesia in patterns familiar to their readership, for example by drawing comparisons with the gods of ancient Greece and Rome.[4] Authors focused upon the external and easily observable such as monuments, rituals, apparently sacred objects and examples of behaviours which most closely resembled their own understanding of religion. The collection of names of 'gods' and of stories and myths was an easier task than interpreting them.

The surviving European descriptions of religion in Tahiti and the Society Islands have been compared and contrasted by scholars in an attempt to deduce from them a systematic account of Maohi beliefs. This section will not repeat their efforts of reconstruction, which can never be entirely satisfactory. Instead it will consider some of their findings as a guide to the beliefs and practices which may have shaped

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[1] Ellis, *Polynesian Researches,* 1:301.
[2] Oliver, *Ancient Tahitian Society,* 1:47; Dening, *Islands and Beaches,* 87.
[3] See chapter 3. George Forster, *Voyage Round the World in his Britanic Majesty's Sloop, Resolution Commanded by Cpt James Cook, during the Years 1772,1773, 1774 & 1775,* 2 vols. (London, 1777); John Hawkesworth, *An Account of Voyages Undertaken by the order of his present Majesty for making discoveries in the Southern Hemisphere,* 2 vols. (London: Strachan and Cadell, 1773).
[4] Forster, *Voyage Around the World,* 2:105; Ellis, *Polynesian Researches,* 2:235.

the ways in which Tahitians perceived the LMS missionaries and their religion. The most important of these, for the purpose of this thesis, are Maohi beliefs about the power of the gods and spirits and the ways in which it was transferred to humans. These beliefs about the role of non-human agents have important implications not only for an understanding of Maohi attitudes towards the Christian religion but also in assessing their political and social relations.

Mana and *Tapu*

The discussion of the power of non-human beings in a pan-Polynesian context is usually carried out in relation to *mana* and *tapu*. Neither word has a English synonym. *Mana* has been defined as "spirit-power for success"[5] and "the creative power which brings life and prosperity".[6] *Mana* was considered a marker or characteristic of all those who were successful; it was a gift of power from the gods.[7] *Tapu* passed into the English language as taboo. Suggested meanings are sacred, holy or untouchable.[8] The interpretation of *mana* and *tapu* has important consequences for the study of Maohi beliefs about the working of the cosmos.

The definitions noted above, however, are general observations drawn from studies conducted elsewhere in Polynesia. The attempt to uncover a specifically Maohi understanding of the concepts is hindered by the scarcity of references to either word in early European accounts of the archipelago. The word *"Mana"*, often considered indicative of indigenous religion in Polynesia, is absent from the early record. This highlights the difficulties in relying upon European narratives.

The words can both be found in the Tahitian Dictionary of 1851. There *mana* was described as "power, might and influence" and *tapu* as "a restriction, sacred, an oath, or a sacrifice". It was noted that the latter was becoming obsolete except in the case of an oath.[9] The dictionary, however, gives an indication of what the words may have meant in the mid Nineteenth Century not a century earlier. The word *mana* does

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[5] G. W. Trompf, "The Pacific Islands," in *Religions of Oceannia,* eds. Tony Swain and G. W. Trompf (London : Routledge, 1995), 140.
[6] B. Colless and P. Donovan, "Pacific Religions," in *A Handbook of Living Religions,* ed. John R.. Hinnells (Penguin, 1991), 422.
[7] Raymond Firth, "The Analysis of Mana an Empirical Approach", *JPS* 49 (1940): 483-509.
[8] Peter J. Mataira, "Mana and tapu: Sacred Knowledge, sacred boundaries", in *Indigenous Religions: A companion,* ed. Graham Harvey (London: Cassell, 2000), 101-2.
[9] Davies, *Tahitian Dictionary,* 129.

appear in several of the songs and prayers collected by J M Orsmond and recorded by his granddaughter which she translates as "power" and in one case as "power or magnetism".[10] William Ellis noted the word "*tabu*"[sic.] in a description of the victim of a sacrifice whose families were "devoted" to the god for the same purpose.[11]

The informants used by Orsmond, Davies and Ellis, however, lived in a changing society. The advent of regular commerce with European shipping led not only to increasing exposure to European ideas but also to contact with the many Polynesians and Melanesians who crewed the ships. Thus, the Maohi themselves had the possibility to engage in comparative religion, which might have altered the way in which they described their own beliefs to outsiders. Finally, the dictionary was composed by a missionary and in the light of the rejection of the former Tahitian religion and its replacement in public life by Christianity.

Therefore, while the examples given demonstrate cognisance of the concepts of *mana* and *tapu*, as they were understood elsewhere in Polynesia, in the first half of the Nineteenth Century; they cannot provide conclusive evidence for the earlier period. In some cases authors have assumed that the ancient Tahitians' beliefs were sufficiently similar to those elsewhere to justify the use of these terms in the description of ancient Tahitian religion.[12] Others have attempted to locate alternative terms referring to the concepts *mana* and *tapu* in the early accounts.

It seems that at the time of Cook's third visit to Tahiti a difference in terminology was observable. Cook used the word "*tapu*" in his account of a human sacrifice witnessed at Tahiti during his third voyage in 1777, where it referred to the victim:

> This is the only instance where we have heard the word taboo used in this island, where it seems to have the same mysterious signification as at Tonga; though it is there applied to all cases where things are not to be touched. But at Otaheite the word Raa serves the same purpose, and is full as extensive in its meaning.[13]

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[10] Henry, *Ancient Tahitian Society,* 147, 351, 575, 129.

[11] Ellis, *Polynesian Researches,* 2:213.

[12] Robert I. Levy, *Tahitians: Mind and Experience in the Society Islands* (Chicago, 1973), 98.

[13] James Cook, *A Voyage to the Pacific Ocean undertaken by the command of His Majesty for making Discoveries in the Northern Hemisphere performed under the direction of captains Cook, Clerke and*

One reason for the lack of references to objects and persons being *tapu* may be that at Tahiti a temporary prohibition, though sanctioned by spirits, was called a *rahui*.[14] *Cook's* suggestion that *ra'a* could mean sacred is confirmed by Davies' Dictionary where it is defined as, "sacred, consecrated or devoted to a sacred purpose".[15] The opposite of *ra'a,* also listed in the dictionary, was *noa* or ordinary.[16]

The lack of comparable concepts in European culture has led to some problems in the interpretations of *mana* and *tapu* even where textual evidence is available. A point noted by Dening, is the propensity of European descriptions, because of the context in which they encountered the word *tapu,* to equate it with prohibition and negative power. They did not recognise the ways in which *tapu* could protect the sanctity of a chief or be a form of celebration.[17] While the imposition of *tapu* often created boundaries and prohibitions these varied according to the nature of the activity undertaken.

Mana and *tapu* became the subject of extensive comment, from the late Nineteenth Century, in connection with theories of the origin of religion in the work of E. B. Tylor, Marett, Durkheim and Freud.[18] Tylor's interest in animism as the source of religion was perpetuated through the work of E. S. C. Handy. Handy interpreted *mana* as the "psychic dynamism" behind nature and the "procreative power" through which creation and regeneration occurred.[19] Those objects and persons who had *mana* were, according to Handy, set apart as *tapu*. This interpretation remained influential until the researches of Raymond Firth disproved the assertion that all Polynesians saw all objects as conscious entities.[20]

The evidence for the use of particular words to describe the power of gods and the sacred qualities of things that had come into contact with their power is

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Gore in His Majesty's Ships the Resolution and Discovery in the years 1776, 1777, 1778, 1779 and 1780 (London: H Hughes, 1885), 2:40.

[14] Oliver, *Tahitian Society,* 1:68; Davies, *Tahitian Dictionary,* 219.

[15] Davies, *Tahitian Dictionary,* 218.

[16] Oliver, *Tahitian Society,* 1:68.

[17] Dening, *Islands and Beaches,* 51-6.

[18] E. B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture* (1871); R. R. Marett, *The Threshold of Religion* (1909); Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (1915); Freud, *Totemism and Taboo* (1913).

[19] Handy, *Polynesian Religion,* 25-28.

[20] Firth, "The Analysis of Mana."

inconclusive. However, there is no doubt that the acquisition and maintenance of power received from non-human sources was an important aspect of the religion of the inhabitants of Tahiti and the Society Islands. This can be seen in the prohibitions which protected sacred objects, places and people. Chiefs, in particular, were treated in a special manner to protect the power granted him or her by the patron god, upon whom the well-being of the community depended. The importance of influencing non-human agents to direct their power to the benefit of the worshippers can be seen in many rituals, including those associated with depleting the power of an enemy. The receipt of powers was always the result of a reciprocal arrangement in which the humans acted in ways pleasing to the gods.

The Maohi Cosmos and its Inhabitants

In Tahiti and the Society Islands there is no evidence for the belief that all of nature was sacred, rather it would seem that the Maohi recognised numerous non-human beings. The Maohi distinguished between three types of non-human 'spirit'. In the first category were the most powerful agents, the *atua* or gods; in the second the *atua-ta'ata* or demi-gods; the least powerful were the *oromātua* or ghosts. Human beings, *ta'ata*, were descended from the gods, according to Maohi belief, but were mortal and less powerful. The status of high ranking families was derived from genealogies traced to their patron *atua*.

The creator was *Ta'aroa* and below him in rank came his sons *Tu, Tane, 'Oro* and *Atea*, who aided him in fashioning the universe. The exact position of the *atua* within this genealogical hierarchy, however, was subject to change as will be seen below in the account of the rise to supremacy of 'Oro, once considered the son of *Ta'aroa*. The *atua-ta'ata* differed from the *atua* in having one human parent. They were said to have lived human lives, often performing great deeds such as separating the earth from the sky.[21] Figures with similar roles are found throughout Polynesia and are sometimes classified by scholars as cultural heroes. These beings often had important roles in stories of creation but did not necessarily interact with the human world in the present.[22]

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[21] Oliver, *Tahitian Society,* 1:62. The term *atua-ta'ata* does not appear in the 1851 Tahitian Dictionary.
[22] Trompf, "The Pacific Islands", 129-130.

Oromātua were the souls (*vārua*) of humans whose bodies had died. They were potentially immortal but could be extinguished by the superior power of an *atua.* These ancestors maintained a close relationship with the living community. *Oromātua* could also be classified; as good, rambling or malignant. A good ghost returned to its own skull and watched over its descendants whereas a rambling one only occasionally used its power on behalf of the living. Malignant or "long toothed ghosts" were feared as a cause of misfortune and illness.[23] The interests and motivations of the non-human inhabitants of the cosmos were very similar to the human ones of their worshipers. The most important distinction between them was extent of their power; the greatest of the *atua* were considered very powerful indeed. The *atua, atua-ta'ata* and *oromātua* communicated their power to *ta'ata* in return for human worship and offerings.

In the light of these statements, which focus upon the interconnections between humans and non-humans, it seems appropriate to clarify the relationship between them. The term "supernatural" was used in early accounts and also by both Oliver and Driessen to describe the non-human inhabitants of the cosmos. While the descriptions of these beings may suggest "the supernatural" to a western audience, the label introduces a distinction between what is natural and what is not, which may be inappropriate to the Maohi context. The extent to which the Maohi, at the time of their first contact with Europeans, made a distinction between sacred and secular, or natural and supernatural, is difficult to establish.

There were Maohi terms which distinguished a human realm *ao* from a spirit realm *po. Ao* and *po* also meant day and night. Scholars have employed different metaphors to explain the Maohi perception of the relationship between *po* and *ao.* Oliver, for example, describes *po* and *ao* as adjacent rooms, whose inhabitants shared the same appetites and motives; and between which there was constant contact. The inhabitants of *po,* however, had more power.[24] In contrast, Driessen's assessment of mythology and genealogy leads him to conclude that *ao* and *po* were in binary opposition:

> Po was cosmic night, the other world of the gods and spirits, the antithesis of Aoor Te-Ao-nei, literally, "this here Ao" or "This World" which was the

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[23] Oliver, *Tahitian Society,* 1:63.
[24] Ibid. 1:45.

human. The interaction between these two cosmic polarities was carefully controlled.[25]

Driessen stresses the division between the two realms using examples of ritual. He notes the ceremony associated with summoning "the gods of destruction" to the aid of parties at war and those which reversed the process at the conclusion of hostilities.[26]

Rituals of summoning were, it seems, one aspect of Maohi religion. However, there was also a sense of the constant presence of powerful forces. Oliver made a detailed study of the descriptions of non-humans found in accounts of Tahiti religion which allows a more subtle understanding of the boundaries between the inhabitants of *po* and *ao*.[27] He describes three forms in which *atua* might be said to manifest themselves. A god might be in its natural form, a shark for example, and remain permanently so. In this case the object or animal in which the god was incarnated was called an *ata*. However, another *atua* might be known to occasionally appear as a shark. Finally, an animal or object might be possessed by an *atua*. Places and objects in which gods stayed and then departed (*nohora'a*) were distinguished from human-made images (*to'o*).

Driessen also emphasises the distinction drawn between persons when they were considered to be *tapu* and when they were ordinary or *noa*. He uses the example of the precautions taken to remove the *tapu* after the investiture of chiefs at Opoa, on the island Raiatea. Part of the ceremony, Driessen argues, involved the removal of the chief's *tapu* through high ranking members of the party urinating and defecating upon him.[28] A chief's inauguration might require a special ceremony to remove the *tapu* or sacredness that resulted from such an important ceremony before he could resume normal life. However, there was also a sense in which *ari'i*

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[25]Driessen, *From Ta'aroa to 'Oro*, 42.

[26] Ibid.

[27] The problem of ascertaining, after the fact, the way in which particular non-human beings were viewed by indigenous people is illustrated by the recent dispute between Sahlins and Obeyesekere. Sahlins asserts that the Hawaiians saw Captain Cook as the returning god Lono. Obeyesekere argues that Cook was only perceived as a representation of Lono and that accounts of Cook the god are the result of European mythmaking. Oliver's detailed classification of the inhabitants of *po* is valuable for the detail it provides and the complexity of Maohi thought which it conveys.
Marshall D. Sahlins, *How "Natives" Think*; Ganath Obeyesekere, *The Apotheosis of Captain Cook: European Myth Making in the Pacific*, 2d ed. (Princeton University Press, 1992).

[28] Driessen admits that his source for this ritual is incomplete. *From Ta'aroa to 'Oro*, 50.

remained *tapu* constantly. Numerous European observers reported the signs of respect shown to chiefs such as the baring of the upper body when passing their dwelling place and their being carried in the shoulders of attendants, as in Smirke's painting *The Cession of Matavai*.[29] The houses of commoners which they entered became *tapu* and excluded from normal uses.[30]

It seems appropriate, therefore, to distinguish between occasions when extensive precautions were considered necessary for a particularly important ritual and the everyday observance of prohibitions associated with sacred persons and objects. In the former case, no work was done, no food cooked and women and the infirm retreated to the mountains.[31] Yet, the Maohi also observed many customs each day which were also rooted in their concern to preserve their own power and that of important members of the community such as chiefs. Tahitians avoided touching each other's heads and women always ate separately from men.

The exact nature of Maohi beliefs about women is not clear. European observers tended to conclude that their exclusion from ritual practices suggested that they were inferior and could not be *tapu*. The absence of social eating was particularly surprising to foreigners. Driessen suggests that women were permanently *noa*.[32] However, examples of women acting as chiefs are increasingly being documented in studies of Polynesia politics.[33] The power of a chief was crucial to the well-being of a community and would be an essential requirement for any person fulfilling the role. In these cases the high rank of the women, which was a result of their descent from an *atua,* seems to have over ridden any disadvantage that resulted from their sex.

Participants undertaking various tasks were placed under a *tapu* which set them apart in an attempt to ensure the success of an enterprise. Dening notes the

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[29] See figure 5.
[30] Cook, *A Voyage Around the World,* 2:169ff.
[31] Henry, *Ancient Tahiti,* 123.
[32] Driessen, *From Ta'aroa to 'Oro,* 56-8.
[33] Neil Gunson, "Sacred Women Chiefs and Female 'Headmen' in Polynesian History", *JPH* 22 (1987): 139-71; Phyllis Herda, "Gender, Rank and Power in 18th Century Tonga: the Case of Tupou Moheofo," *JPH* 22 (1987): 195-208.

frequency of these *tapu* in his research at the Marquesas.[34] The difficulty of the task would determine the type of being applied to for assistance; whether a specialist such as priest was required and the amount of ritual preparation which was necessary. It does not seem appropriate, therefore, to impose a western dichotomy of sacred and secular upon the Tahitian terms *tapu* and *noa* or upon the realms of *po* and *ao*. The evidence for the islands supports Hanson's assessment that:

> At the bottom of Polynesian religion is a story of gods who are immensely active in this world and of people who to attempt to control the activities of the gods by directing their influence into places where it is desired and expelling it from places where it is not.[35]

The Maohi cosmos was inhabited by beings, human and non-human, that were related to one another and who were dependent upon each other.

Worship and Ritual

The most important forum for worship and ritual in Tahiti and the Society Islands was the *marae*. These sacred spaces were paved precincts in which were kept houses for the *atua* and platforms for making offerings. *Marae* were usually dedicated to a single *atua* and to a specific use, as can be seen from Henry's classification:

> There were three classes of marae of public importance: the international, the national, and the local; also five classes of domestic marae: the family, or ancestral marae, the social, the doctors', the canoe-builders', and the fishermen's marae.[36]

Thus, almost all social groups whether families, followers of the same occupation or inhabitants of a territory also shared in worship of a particular *atua*.[37] A new *marae* was founded with a stone from another dedicated to the same *atua*.

In district and tribal *marae* religious specialists called *tahu'a* (authors) were maintained to conduct important rituals.[38] It was the responsibility of the *tahu'a* to

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[34] Dening, *Islands and Beaches*, 57.

[35] F. Allan Hanson, "Polynesian Religions: An Overview," in *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, 1987 ed., 424.

[36] Henry, *Ancient Tahiti*, 119.

[37] Oliver, *Ancient Tahitian Society*, vol. 2 *Social Relations* (Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii 1974), 881.

[38] For details of tribes and districts see below.

ensure that *marae* ceremonies were conducted correctly and that prayers were repeated without error. All people are likely to have communicated with non-human beings, especially *oromātua*, at some time and to have consulted mediums and healers.[39] The *ari'i,* however, had a crucial role in religious life. As descendants of the patron *atua* they had the greatest access to their power.

The *atua* was represented by a *to'o* of wood, stone or wicker. The presence of spiritual power was denoted by the red feathers attached to the *to'o.* Sacredness did not derive from the materials or any carving on the *to'o* but from a ritual of consecration. Each *to'o* was kept in a house, *fare atua,*[40] from which it was taken annually for a special ceremony at which its wrappings were renewed. These wrappings of bark cloth were considered so sacred that they were not discarded but placed in a special pit, the *tiri-a-pea,* in the grounds of the *marae.*

In a family *marae* the *tiri-a-pea* was used to bury personal items. Examples of objects in this category are given in a tradition recorded by Henry:

> Let not the cuttings of the human hair be burned with fire, lest the owner become bald. Let not the nail prunings of a person, or the worn out clothes, or shredded mats, or *tapa* from the bedding be burned with fire; these are the essence of the person, and there would follow moles on the skin and blindness in the owner...[41]

These items were believed to be so closely connected with an individual that harm to the object could cause them harm. In the possession of an enemy they could be used for sorcery. Similarly, the skulls of dead could be used by malicious persons as mediums for contacting *oromātua* and turning them against the family.[42] The bodies of relatives, therefore, were embalmed and then hidden whereas the remains of those killed in war were maltreated in rituals intended to weaken the enemy.

Regular prayer and offerings to the patron *atua* of a family, trade or the inhabitants of a district could ensure well-being. Conversely, illness and misfortune were attributed to the actions of malicious non-human forces, often at the instigation of human enemies. Remedies for affliction, therefore, focused upon identifying the

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[39] Oliver, *Tahitian Society,* 2:251.
[40] Several *to'o* might be kept together in *fare ia manaha* (house of sacred treasures).
[41] Henry, *Ancient Tahiti,* 143.
[42] Oliver, *Tahitian Society,* 1: 63-5.

human cause and also appeasing the angry *atua* or *oromātua*. This is not to suggest that the Maohi had no 'medical' specialists. There are accounts of bone setting, trepanation, the use of herbal remedies and other treatments. However, the power to overcome ailments and for the patient to achieve health remained in the gift of the *atua*.[43] A human sacrifice could be made for an important purpose such as restoring the health of a chief. In lesser cases food and animals, especially pigs, cloth or other goods were appropriate.

Health and other forms of material well-being were a sign that individuals had received aid from the *atua* and sickness or defeat a sign of loss of this support. The relationship between people and their *atua* could be restored through *taraehara.* This ritual neutralised the consequences of actions already committed which were offensive to the *atua*. *Taraehara* "untied" the *hara*, or error, which accumulated when individuals or groups offended an *atua*.[44] If *hara* was not removed it could sap the life, *ora*, of an individual or the power and success of the whole group.

The ultimate consequence of the loss of *ora* was death. However, the Maohi distinction between life and death did not correspond with western definitions of clinical death. Old age was a period of fading *ora,* hence the old and sick were often treated contemptuously.[45] Death was only certain once the flesh began to rot and no reversal was possible.[46] The soul then became an *oromātua* and a possible source of trouble to relatives. This was not a prospect which the Maohi relished as the majority of people had no expectation of reaching paradise.

The moral worth of individuals, it seems, had no influence upon their expectations of an afterlife. Only those who had a close genealogical relationship with the gods expected to reach paradise, *rohutu.* Even in their case, the journey to the other world could be frustrated by random ill-fortune.[47] The placing of the dead upon biers and the draining off of substances which were considered harmful was described by Cook and his companions. It was also the subject of sketches by

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[43] Trepanation, the cutting of the skull, is described by Ellis. *Polynesian Researches,.* 2:270-280.
[44] Oliver, *Tahitian Society,* 1:120.
[45] Driessen, *From Ta'aroa to 'Oro,* 44.
[46] Oliver, *Tahitian Society,* 1:65.
[47] Robert W. Williamson, *Religious and Cosmic Beliefs of Central Polynesia* (Cambridge University Press, 1933), 1:384.

Weber.[48] This has been interpreted as the removal of the *hara* of the dead. The ritual seems to have been carried out only for those of high status.

The ordinary people of Tahiti could not hope to reach *rohutu.* Precautions were taken, however, by their living relatives to prevent them returning as wandering or long toothed *oromātua.* Driessen suggest that people from the lower ranks may have expected to be eaten and then excreted by the *atua* in *po.*[49] Religious observances were not an attempt to influence the future state of people as this was predetermined by rank. For high and low ranking individuals the aim was the maintenance of their well-being in the present life.

Religious activity in Tahiti, then, was directed towards the earthly well-being of individuals and the community. Dening has described it as a "pragmatic transcendentalism".[50] Europeans, as Levy has highlighted, often expressed surprise and confusion at what they saw as the casual nature of Tahitian religious activity.[51] The foregoing provides two explanations for this observation.

First, the success of any ritual depended upon correct practice not upon the moral qualities of the participants. There was, therefore, no need for them to indulge in the soul searching anguish which Europeans might expect to see. Indeed, mechanisms existed for removing any negative consequences, *hara*, which might devolve a person who did transgress against a *tapu*.

Second, the different needs of the community required different degrees of assistance and resulted in appeals to different non-human agents. Tahitians were not relating to an all-powerful god of whom they stood in great awe. They acknowledged the existence of numerous *atua*, some of whom were more powerful than others, and also of a creator, *Ta'aroa.* Neither were Maohi *atua* and o*romātua* consistently beneficent; they could be capricious. The *atua* most likely to act for the benefit of the

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[48] Weber, "The body of Tee, a chief, as preserved after death in Otaheite," (1784), plate in *A Voyage to the Pacific Ocean undertaken by the command of His Majesty for making Discoveries in the Northern Hemisphere performed under the direction of captains Cook, Clerke and Gore in His Majesty's Ships the Resolution and Discovery in the years 1776, 1777, 1778, 1779 and 1780.*, by James Cook and James King, Supplement, Plates to the Voyages (London: H Hughes, 1885).
[49] Driessen, *From Ta'aroa to 'Oro,* 47.
[50] Dening, *Discourse on a Silent Land,* 57.
[51] Levy, *Tahitians: Mind and Experience,* 98.

community was its patron but this did not imply a denial of the power of the others. Each community also had a relationship with their own less powerful ancestors, the *oromātua*. The attitude of the people and the ritual precautions varied, therefore, according to the type of being that was addressed.

Finally, not all religious ceremonies were intended respectfully. Worshippers had methods for ritually discarding a patron *atua* whom they believed had not granted them sufficient power and for extinguishing troublesome "long toothed ghosts". The *to'o* of an *atua* which did not protect a family effectively would be removed from the *marae* and the relationship broken.[52] In this way the balance of reciprocity was maintained and both people and *atua* were forced to keep to terms.

The need of humans for constant access to power, however, left them with the fear that their offerings might not be sufficient. The rituals associated with war, for example, were intended to weaken the power of the enemy and even to cause their *atua* to abandon them. Ellis described the *Hiamoea* performed in the case of a besieged stronghold:

> Here they took different articles of property in their hands, and, holding them up, offered them to the gods, who, it was supposed, had hitherto favoured the besieged; the priests frequently exclaiming to the following effect – *Tane* in the interior or fortress, *Oro* in the interior or fortress, &c. come to the sea, here are your offerings, &c. The priests of the besieged, on the contrary, endeavoured to detain the gods, by exhibiting whatever property they possessed, if they considered the god likely to leave them.[53]

Offerings were also left for the gods of the opposing side on the battlefield and if found by the other side, caused anxiety and fear of abandonment.[54] The Maohi interpretation of the cosmos therefore allowed for changes of allegiance on the part of both *atua* and humans. This underlines the importance for humans to make the correct offerings to the most powerful *atua* to maintain their well-being.

The religious beliefs of the Maohi allowed for the co-existence of groups with allegiances to different *atua*. While such groups did not always live peacefully

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[52] Oliver, *Tahitian Society,* 1: 78.
[53] Ellis, *Polynesian Researches,* 2:513.
[54] Henry, *Ancient Tahiti,* 312.

with one another the Maohi had no metaphysical difficulty in acknowledging the reality and power of the *atua* of the other group. Their theology also allowed the Maohi to discard and replace a patron *atua* with another inhabitant of *po,* if they believed it would be of more assistance to them. This inherent flexibility of Maohi indigenous religion has important implications for the study of religious change in the Nineteenth Century.

Worship of 'Oro

The spread of the influence of Oro, god of war, across the Society Islands and Tahiti may have been the result of such a recognition of superior power. The transfer of allegiance from one god to another is very difficult to document as information about the previous hierarchy is difficult to establish. It is likely, however, that the principal *atua* at Raiatea and Borabora was once Ta'aroa and that Tane was dominant in Tahiti and Mo'orea.[55] At the time of the first visits by Europeans, worship of 'Oro seems to have been increasing at Tahiti and Mo'orea, and to have already displaced worship of Ta'aroa at Raiatea. The arrival of the LMS missionaries, therefore, coincided with a period in which some Maohi were already re-appraising the benefits they received from the worship of their patron *atua* and seeking alternative sources of power.

The centre of Oro worship was Opoa in Raiatea. The *marae* there was apparently originally dedicated to Ta'aroa and was, Driessen suggests, the centre of the universe and the destination of souls in their journey to *po.* According to the traditions recorded by Henry the transfer of the *marae* to 'Oro was the will of Ta'aroa:

> When 'Oro, god of war, was born of Ta'aroa and Hina-tu-a-uta, at Opoa, his father gave him Opoa with the marae, Feoro, as his home. So he soon waxed very great, and the people of all the land and beyond the shores of Havai'i[56] acknowledged him as the supreme god of the earth and air.[57]

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[55] See Oliver, *Tahitian Society,* 2: 882; following Williamson, *Social and Political Systems of Polynesia.*
[56] Raiatea.
[57] Henry, *Ancient Tahiti,* 120-1.

Driessen concluded that 'Oro was introduced to Raiatea by a chief from Mangaia called Te Futu. He identifies 'Oro in the Leeward Islands, the son of Tinirau and Hina, with the god Koro at Mangaia, also son of Tinirau and Hina. Only later, therefore, did the tradition alter to represent 'Oro as the favourite son of Ta'aroa.[58] The legendary figure Te Futu cannot be identified in the genealogies though Henry suggests that there was an alliance centred upon 'Oro and the *marae* at Opoa which can be dated from 1350.[59] Neither the mythological account nor that of Driessen can provide an explanation of why 'Oro was preferred to Ta'aroa. The arrival of 'Oro is too distant an event for conclusions to be more than speculation.

Henry provides two traditional versions of the spread of 'Oro worship to Tahiti. The first is an account of an unsuccessful attempt by Raiateans to found a *marae* at Tahiti. They were attacked by warriors and miraculously returned to Opoa after an appeal to 'Oro. The second story presents the establishment of the *marae* as a peaceful event, in which the correct manner of approach was the key to establishing the new *marae*:

> Finally 'Oro's zealots set out for Tahiti, and they went to Tai'arapu, the head of the fish, and the point called Ta'ata'tua (Man-of-the-sea) at the marae called Te-ahu-o-rua-tama (Wall-of-the source-of-fair-child), chief of the fire gods and there they presented their gifts and religious homage. They were well received with all due ceremonies, and allowed to set up a corner stone, called Tupu-i-mata-roa (Growth-of- long-face), for a home in the east for 'Oro. As all Tahiti and Mo'orea regarded this as the natural sequence in the history of Tahiti, the fish, they peacefully united in building a great national marae for 'Oro, which they named Taputapu-atea.[60]

'Oro may have been introduced in this way by offering the due respect to the gods already receiving worship and by choosing a location in accord with tradition. However, 'Oro is known to have been the rival of Tane and of Hiro.[61] A further passage from Henry reveals the possibility of more a contentious rise to dominance:

> Before 'Oro's forces in war, those of Tane and Hiro generally fell, so that Taputapu-atea at Tautira became a receptacle for decapitated heads like those at Opoa; and Taputapu-atea in Mo'orea was a receiving place for heads

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[58] Driessen, *From Ta'aroa to 'Oro,* 195.
[59] Henry, *Ancient Tahiti,* 123.
[60] Ibid. 130.
[61] Oliver, *Ancient Tahitian Society,* 2:906.

whence they were carried to Tautira. These marae trophies have been hidden away from foreign desecration.[62]

Worship of Tane, however, was strongly entrenched in Huahine and was carried on until the arrival of the LMS missionaries.[63] It is not clear whether 'Oro was introduced by force or if he was adopted due to a belief that his power was more likely to ensure the well-being of communities. These two reasons may have been compatible, if groups of Maohi perceived that their 'Oro worshipping neighbours were more powerful than themselves.

Driessen and Henry both identify Tamatoa I as the chief of Raiatea who introduced 'Oro to Tahiti. He is thought to have lived about four generations before Teu, the father of Pomare I. If this is the case, then the religious changes in Tahiti and Mo'orea can be dated 1650-1700.[64] Other scholars have dated the arrival slightly later, in the early decades of the Eighteenth Century.[65]

The height of 'Oro's influence, according to Maohi tradition, was during a period known as the Friendly Alliance. The members of the alliance were divided into two groups *Te-ao-uri* and *Te-ao-tea,* reflecting, according to Driessen, the natural geographical boundary of the mountain range on Raiatea.[66] Henry records the tradition that *Te-ao-uri*, or the dark land of the Friendly Alliance, extended from Huahine, Tahiti and Mai'ao to the Austral Islands and that *Te-ao-tea*, the light land of the Friendly Alliance, included Rotuma, Tahaa, Borabora, Rarotonga and Aotearoa/ New Zealand.[67] According to Henry the canoes of the members of the Alliance, with pennants flying in honour of 'Oro, were drawn up to the *marae* at Opoa using slain men as rollers.[68]

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[62] Henry, *Ancient Tahiti,* 131.
[63] Oliver, *Ancient Tahitian Society,* 2:884.
[64] Driessen, *From Ta'aroa to 'Oro,* 201.
[65] The first half of the Eighteenth Century is favoured by Newbury and 1720 by Filihia. Newbury, *Tahiti Nui,* 16; Filihia, Meredith Filihia, "'Oro-dedicated Maro 'Ura in Tahiti," *JPH* 31 (1996): 128.
[66] Driessen, *From Ta'aroa to 'Oro,* 193.
[67] Henry, *Ancient Tahiti,* 122-3.
[68] Ibid. 123ff.

The extent of the alliance described by Henry seems unlikely though Raiatea was an important religious centre for Tahiti and the Society Islands.[69] The *marae* at Opoa was the source of foundation stones for other *marae* all of which took the name *taputapuatea*. Opoa was the source of the genealogy that guaranteed the highest ranking kin titles associated with 'Oro. The highest titles were symbolised by the wearing of feather girdles, *Maro 'ura*. A high ranking *ari'i* could not take up such a title without obtaining a *Maro 'ura* and performing the correct rituals in a *taputapuatea*. The struggle to gain control of these girdles and the small number of 'Oro images, for the purpose of claiming kin-titles, dominated the political life of Tahiti in the Eighteenth and early Nineteenth Century.

There were at least five *Maro 'ura* in Tahiti in the late Eighteenth Century. The names of the girdles parallel the divisions of the Friendly Alliance and also two of the principal manifestations of 'Oro. The *maro tea* was decorated with yellow feathers and the *Maro 'ura* with red feathers.[70] Red feathers were used to cover the sennit images of 'Oro, were a symbol of sacredness and of 'Oro's manifestation in the parakeet.[71] His yellow girdle manifestation was the yellow thrush.[72] One had the flag used by Captain Wallis at Tahiti incorporated into it possibly with the aim of augmenting its power. [73]

Despite the importance of Opoa, 'Oro worship does not appear to have been a unified phenomenon across the archipelago. Oliver has compared the apparently stable and limited religious practices of Borabora and Raiatea with the other islands in the group where:

> ..'Oro was a very jealous god, and relations with him were anything but stable. In fact, his favor (or absence of disfavor) could only be maintained through frequent offerings tendered with elaborate ritual procedure.[74]

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[69] Driessen gives credence to a more limited alliance resurrected by Boraboran influence which ceased in 1823. Driessen, *From Ta'aroa to 'Oro,* 195; Oliver, *Ancient Tahitian Society,* 2: 909.
[70] *Maro ura* was also the collective name for all feather girdles.
[71] Sennit, a flat braid of rope yarn. The parakeet, *a'a-taevao,* was actually green and yellow. Red feathers were rare in Tahiti.
[72] Oliver, *Ancient Tahitian Society,* 2: 901.
[73] Filihia, "'Oro-dedicated Maro 'Ura," 27.
[74] Oliver, *Ancient Tahitian Society,* 2: 907.

Oliver notes the domination which 'Oro achieved in religious life of Tahiti and Mo'orea.[75] The majority of European accounts of religious worship, for example, are accounts of rituals associated with 'Oro. While there may be a distortion in this recording, there is evidence of increasing human sacrifice and competition between *ari'i* for custody of images of 'Oro.[76] It is possible, therefore, as Oliver argues, that: "'Oro was not just the 'war god,' or just 'the most powerful god,' but *the* God (Te *Atua*)."[77] If this is the case, there were indigenous tendencies toward religious hegemony prior to the arrival of Europeans in the islands.

The Maohi cosmos, therefore, was a complex reality in which beings with superior power but similar motivations to humans, had a constant influence. Humans required the power granted by the *atua* and *oromātua* for success in battle, curing illness and in all other undertakings. The non-human inhabitants of the cosmos were thus called upon by humans for specific purposes but were also constantly present in the environment. Interaction with these forces required careful preparation for the protection of the humans who could be harmed by contact with beings so much more sacred than themselves. The Maohi had a concept of *po* as a separate sphere but the constant interaction between *ao* and *po* in the acquisition of power and to achieve well-being were the dominant themes.

Religious worship was focused on patron *atua* whose m*arae* were centres of political, social and working life. These *marae* were the foundations of all communities and alliances. Humans received power from the gods in return for worship and offerings. This reciprocal relationship, however, was unstable. *Atua* and *oromātua* could be inconstant in their assistance, capricious or even desert their people. Humans, however, could reject their *atua* in favour of another or attempt to annihilate a malignant *oromātua*. The possibility in Maohi culture for such transfers of allegiance forms the background for the rise of 'Oro worship and of Christianity.

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[75] Ibid.

[76] I. C. Campbell, *A History of the Pacific Islands* (Christ Church: Canterbury University Press, 1989), 46; Filihia, *"'Oro Dedicated Maro 'ura,"* 134; Oliver, *Ancient Tahitian Society,* 2: 912-3.

[77] Oliver, *Ancient Tahitian Society,* 2: 912.

Maohi Social Organisation and Leadership

The themes outlined in the preceding section concerning religious belief are fundamental to an understanding of Maohi social organisation and leadership and, in particular, the Maohi concern with access to power and material success or well-being in the present. The *hau*, or rule, of chiefs was directly linked to the power which they received from the *atua*. If a chief appeared to lose the favour of the *atua* his or her *hau* would be in question and subject to challenge. The social status of individuals was defined according to the rank each derived from genealogies which originated with the patron *atua*. These genealogies were the source of rights to land and to the titles which could be claimed by high ranking individuals.

The precise identification of social divisions or boundaries among the Maohi is difficult, again, because of the nature of the evidence provided by European sources. Accounts tended to focus upon those at the top of society whose influence was most important to the welfare of the visitors. Individuals resident in districts visited by Europeans were also sufficiently aware of the possible advantages which might accrue to them through contact, to sometimes misrepresent themselves as chiefs. Some observers were aware of such self aggrandisement but there was ample scope for misunderstanding. In particular, there was confusion of rank or status with coercive power.

A number of Tahitian words, apparently denoting social groups, were recorded by Europeans. Some appear, however, to have been general terms of abuse for those of low status.[78] Three terms appear to reflect genuine social boundaries. At the top of the social hierarchy were the *ari'i-* chiefs, of whom the *ari'i rahi* were the most powerful, and the *ari'i rii,* or little *ari'i,* the sub-chiefs. In the second division were the "landed proprietors" or *ra'atira* and below them were the *manahune* or "common people".[79] The families of those captured in war were referred to as *titi*. This group may have been used to provide victims for human sacrifice.[80]

The terminology "landed proprietor" and "common people" does not necessarily reflect the Maohi reality of land ownership. It is an example of the way in

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[78] See Oliver's analysis, *Ancient Tahitian Society,* 2: 749-754.
[79] Ellis, *Polynesian* Researches, 2: 342.
[80] E. S. Craighill Handy, *History and Culture in the Society Islands*, Bernice P. Bishop Museum Bulletin no. 79 (Honolulu: Bernice P. Bishop Museum, 1930), 45.

which observers introduced parallels between Maohi society and feudal Europe.[81] The right to use land was associated with the family *marae* and its distribution controlled by the *ari'i*.

The distinctions between *ari'i, ra'atira* and *manahune* were particularly important in the choice of a partner with whom to raise children. While liaisons with a wide range of partners were permitted, an individual could not form a settled relationship for the purpose of procreation with a partner of lower rank. The families of the parties would not allow such a tie to be solemnised at the *marae* and would ensure that any child conceived was either aborted or killed at birth. Reproduction had important religious consequences:

> .. the all-important "spiritual" elements which linked each human with his or her divine or semidivine ancestors were transmitted through the genitor *and* mother, and that each parent owed it to his forebears and his descendants to ensure that the quality, or degree, of divinity contained in his (or her) self would not be passed on to an offspring in reproductive association with an element of a less divine quality.[82]

The correct matching of a couple was particularly important among *ari'i rahi* for whom there was limited choice of sufficiently high ranking partners.

European accounts of entertainment and dances refer to another distinct group unique to Tahiti, the *Arioi*.[83] Henry categorised the *Arioi* as a separate social class though it may be more appropriate to see them as a religious society.[84] *Arioi* were both male and female. They travelled giving dramatic performances and holding rituals, although the exact nature of their practices and role is not clear. The members were arranged in eight grades, each with its own tattoo markings. Progression from stage to stage was marked by ritual and festivities. Active *Arioi* did not allow their children to survive, irrespective of the rank of the parents. It seems likely that they were drawn from all classes but that the higher grades were usually occupied by *ari'i*.[85]

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[81] See chapter 3.

[82] Italics original, Oliver, *Ancient Tahitian Society,* 2: 1099.

[83] For example, *Captain Cook's Journal during his First Voyage Around the World made in H.M. Bark Endeavour*, ed. Cpt. W. J. L. Wharton, Hydrographer of the Admiralty (London: Elliot Stock, 1893), 95; Forster, *Voyage Around the World,* 2: 128ff.

[84] Henry, *Ancient Tahiti,* 230.

[85] Oliver, Ancient *Tahitian Society,* 2: 961.

There were no villages in Tahiti and the Society Islands in the pre-missionary era. Households lived in their own dwellings at some distance from their neighbours but often clustered around a principal family. There is not sufficient evidence to clarify patterns in the composition of Maohi 'families' or 'households'. These self-sufficient units seem likely to have included blood relatives, spouses, children, and adopted children.[86] Adoption was sometimes a formal arrangement between relatives but children and adolescents had the right to take up residence in any household which would accommodate them. Households co-operated with their neighbours in larger units, or tribes, who were led by single a *ari'i* and worshipped in the same *marae*.[87] These units could be as small as two households or represent alliances between districts and even islands.

The variety in the forms of organisation observed by Europeans led to confusion in their description of the districts of Tahiti; as many as forty-one were listed.[88] Tahiti, however, is usually divided into twenty-one districts, which are shown figure 2. In the Eighteenth Century these districts were united in six tribes: Te Porionu'u, Te Aharoa, Teva i Tai, Teva i uta, Te Oropa'a, and Te Fana. These larger units were headed by *ari'i rahi* who, it seems, had large households to assist them. Handy lists the officials who served each *ari'i:* a high priest (*tahu'a*), orator (*orero*), administrator (*taumihau*), chief warrior (*hiva*), messenger (*vea*), mariner (*fa'atere*), and chief comedian ('arioi).[89]

The extent of the respect shown to *ari'i rahi* was sometimes shocking to Europeans who were inclined to view their rule as despotic.[90] They were, for example, carried on the shoulders of attendants when travelling outside their compounds.[91] Ellis described the inauguration of an *ari'i rahi* and the names which reflected his or her high status:

> It was not only declared that Oro was the father of the king, as was implied by the address of the priest when arraying him in the sacred girdle, and the station occupied by the throne, when placed in the temple by the side of the deities, but it pervaded the terms used in reference to his whole

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[86] Ibid.
[87] Ibid. 2: 1108.
[88] Ibid. 2: 968.
[89] Handy, *History and Culture in the Society Islands,* 35.
[90] Forster, *Voyage Around the World,* 1: 367.
[91] As illustrated in the painting *The Cession of Matavai* see figure 5.

establishment. His houses were called the *aorai,* clouds of heaven; *anuaua,* the rainbow, was the name of the canoe in which he voyaged; his voice was called thunder; the glare of the torches in his dwelling was denominated lightning;..[92]

Furthermore, the investiture of a new *ari'i* could result in changes to everyday speech. The custom of *pi* dictated that all words which contained the name of the *ari'i,* or sounded similar, should be replaced with alternatives.[93]

The full extent of these privileges and prohibitions are likely to have applied only to the most powerful of *ari'i.* Nevertheless, the status of *ari'i* seems to have been particularly high and carefully protected among the Maohi. This point has two important implications for the purpose of this study. First, Europeans, as exemplified in the comments of Ellis quoted above, tended to identify high ranking *ari'i* as kings. This had important implications for the interpretation of Maohi culture and for European expectations of indigenous leaders which will be examined further in chapter three.

Second, the high degree of stratification in Tahiti, when compared to the social organisation of other Polynesian societies, and the emergence of *ari'i* who claimed new kinds of authority, suggests that Maohi society was undergoing a period of change, begun prior to contact with Europeans, which was leading to increasing centralisation of power. Leaders were emerging who claimed greater authority over their people and aimed to influence a wider geographical area.

The situation in Tahiti has been compared with Tonga and Hawaii. The three archipelagos appear to have a greater degree of social stratification than other Polynesian groups. Indeed, they are sometimes classified separately from the small scale tribal cultures of the Pacific and compared to "ancient civilisations" such as Mesopotamian, Inca, Chinese, Islamic or Indian civilisation.[94] The reasons for the differences noted in these three islands have been the subject of considerable interest. Handy, for example, proposed that the *ari'i* of Tahiti were a separate group who had conquered the island and subdued the original inhabitants.

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[92] Ellis, *Polynesian Researches,* 2: 359-60.
[93] Cook, *A Voyage Around the World..* (1776-80), 2: 169ff; Oliver, *Ancient Tahitan Society,* 2: 1090.
[94] Bodley, *Cultural Anthropology.*

Recent scholarship has focussed, however, upon the indigenous factors which may have led to the development of more complex forms of organisation and leadership. Goldman suggested that competition between individuals for status had led to the emergence of more powerful chiefs.[95] Oliver has highlighted the religious importance for the Maohi of "eugenical thinking", that is, of producing offspring from parents of equal rank. The position of a child in the genealogy determined his or her relationship with the patron *atua*, the first ancestor of the family line, and the power which could be granted to them.[96] Sahlins believes that a shortage of resources required increased co-operation and government. He also emphasises the hierarchical nature of Polynesian kinship patterns.[97]

Sahlins' theory is interesting because it not only raises questions about the origins of the high degree of stratification found in Tahiti, Tonga and Hawaii but also has implications for the way in which chiefs may have been maintained their authority. He suggests that the "ramage" descent patterns, which emphasised the precise ranking of each member of the line in relation to all other kin, were a precursor of the greater stratification and centralisation of power. Polynesian societies, he argues, have complex "ramage" descent patterns whereas in Melanesia kin relations are "truncated".[98] Thus, the "chiefs" of Polynesia who ruled by ancestral right could be contrasted with Melanesia "big-men" who maintained their authority by their personal charisma and ability to mobilise the community.[99]

The classification of kin relations in a particular society as exclusively matrilineal, ramage and truncated descent has been questioned.[100] The reality of social and power relationships was frequently more complex and flexible than kinship models allowed. The division of societies into those with "big-man" leadership and those with chiefs involved the stereotyping of cultures and is an example of the tendency among anthropologists to privilege "the Polynesian" over

[95] Goldman, *Ancient Polynesian Society*.
[96] Oliver, *Tahitian Society*, 2: 1130.
[97] Marshall D. Sahlins, *Social Stratification in Polynesia* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1958).
[98] Marshall D. Sahlins, "Differentiation by Adaptation in Polynesian Societies," in *Polynesia: Readings on a Cultural Area*, ed. Alan Howard, (1971), 46-58.
[99] Marshall D. Sahlins, "Poor Man, Rich Man, Big-Man, Chief: Political Types in Polynesia and Melanesia," in *Cultures of the Pacific: Selected Readings,* eds. Thomas G. Harding and Ben J. Wallace (London: Collier Macmillan, 1970): 203-15.
[100]Derek Freeman, "Some Observations on Kinship and Political Authority in Samoa," *American Anthropologist* 66 (1964): 553-68.

"the Melanesian".[101] Sahlins' terminology also focuses the debate upon male leaders and did not account for the presence of female chiefs in "ramage" societies such as Tonga and Tahiti.

The questioning of theories of kinship classification led to a re-examination of the importance of the hereditary principle itself and closer investigation of the way in which leaders achieved and maintained their power. In *"The Hau Concept of Leadership in Western Polynesia"* Gunson argues that sacred status was always qualified by the ability to maintain political power; challenge by peers could test whether a leader was worthy to remain.[102] Herda provides a reminder that the concept of *mana* contained within itself the possibility for assessing the strength of a leader and passing on political power:

> In addition, mana represented a gauge of public support of and confidence in a leader, as well as providing a legitimate political means of recognising outstanding ability and or achievement. An individual could be thought of as heir to the mana of a past title holder as distinct from a genealogically appropriate heir.[103]

Hau leadership, if this interpretation is correct, gave groups the flexibility to recruit effective leaders. However, such a system also had great potential for generating instability. Rulers were constantly under pressure from junior members of the lineage who threatened to usurp them. It would seem, therefore, that the authority of leaders in the islands of Tahiti, Tonga and Hawaii did not emerge purely from an extension of an existing descent orientated hierarchy. Nor was it as secure as Sahlins suggested. The account of events in Tahiti in the late Eighteenth and early Nineteenth Century given below, would appear to support the view that a combination of rank and proven success were necessary to sustain a position of leadership.

The bonds binding individual members of households to an *ari'i* were not particularly strong. Adults and children could take up residence in another district providing they were accepted there. The ability of *ari'i* to claim high status was also limited by the extent to which his or her kin and the inhabitants of the district were

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[101]"Prescriptive generalisations have been made on the basis of individual cases considered, a priori, to be typical either of 'Polynesia' or 'Melanesia.'" Bronwen Douglas, "Rank, Power and Authority: a Reassessment of Traditional Leadership in South Pacific Societies," *JPH* 14 (1979): 2.

[102] Neil Gunson, "The 'Hau' Concept of Leadership in Western Polynesia," *JPH* 14 (1979): 28-49.

[103] Herda , "Gender, Rank and Power in 18th Century Tonga*,"* 196.

content to provide resources as offerings to sustain the necessary rituals. The ability to impose a *rahui* for a particular purpose was a test of an *ari'i's* authority. In most cases obedience could not be expected beyond the district but alliances and support from relatives could provide a larger basis for exerting power.

Offerings made at the *marae* were consumed in part by priests and *marae* attendants and also by male worshippers.[104] *Ari'i* also had the customary right to demand tribute from their people. Goods collected in this manner, however, were redistributed. This was also the case with the gifts brought on formal occasions, such as weddings, to the families of *ra'atira* and *manahune* families. Europeans, and members of the mission in particular, tended to ignore the reciprocal nature of much of the hospitality and giving they witnessed. They portrayed the demands of *ari'i* as despotic and a hindrance to industry, which discouraged individual effort by preventing the *manahune* from accumulating wealth by their own effort.

The behaviour of the Tahitian *ari'i* towards their people and the people to the *ari'i* is said to have been governed by the *ture,* a code of chivalry.[105] These sayings contained advice about good behaviour and wise policy but were not regulations. Neither, does there appear to have been a special process by which disputes were settled. A quarrel might be resolved by an *ari'i* if the result was in his interest or by the family of the aggrieved party if they had sufficient power.[106]

Handy refers to the "unwritten laws of the land" which he claims were upheld by councils of *ari'i* who met in special meeting houses. [107] He is the only author to cite such evidence and he does not provide examples of the unwritten laws. The description does resemble the workings of a Samoan council or *fono* but the evidence for the existence of such councils in Tahitiis not strong.[108]

Theft was a particular problem for European visitors to the islands. Prohibitions existed against both murder and theft. The status of both culprit and

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[104] Henry, *Ancient Tahiti,* 175.
[105] Oliver, *Ancient Tahitian Society,* 2: 795.
[106] Ibid. 2: 1062.
[107] Handy, *History and Culture in the Society Islands,* 48.
[108] Hobin, *Law and Order in Polynesia,* 249f.

victim, however, was an important consideration in deciding punishment. The consequences could be death. However, Oliver notes:

> By conventional western standards the Maohi attitude towards theft was somewhat ambivalent. One the one hand, a proven thief could usually be killed with impunity. Notwithstanding there appears to have existed a widely shared admiration for clever thievery, including some emulous veneration of Hiro, god of thievery.[109]

A thief who was caught could be killed instantly. It was the prerogative of the *ari'i* to dispense punishments either at the time or later by selecting an offender as a victim for human sacrifice. The *ari'i* had this power within his or her own district. It appears that the use of human sacrifice, whether as a method of removing enemies or simply as offerings to gain the favour of 'Oro, was increasing in Tahiti.

The Maohi believed that the *atua* had a crucial role in maintaining order and punishing offenders. The crimes of murder and theft for which retribution was dealt with human hands were the exceptions in the islands. The gods punished all offences with a variety of sanctions including illness and death. A person who experienced misfortune could enquire from a medium what the source of their guilt was and take ritual steps to remove it. The guilt could be untied in a *taraehara* ceremony. This could be performed by an individual, family or a community, for example after the desecration of *marae* by war. Restitution and punishment occurred while a person lived. There were no consequences in the afterlife.

Conclusion

Leadership and social organisation among the Maohi, then, were strongly influenced by Maohi religious beliefs and practical considerations had a profound affect on religious behaviour. Rank, according to genealogical closeness to the *atua*, determined the relations of each person to every other member of society. The survival of children was dependent on the appropriate ranking of parents. This was one of the principal markers of the three social divisions; *ari'i*, *ra'atira* and *manahune*.

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[109] Oliver, *Ancient Tahitian Society,* 2: 1054.

The foregoing has revealed ways in which the Maohi were linked by obligation and reciprocal giving to those below and above them in rank and yet also divided into groups with competing interests. For some groups such as the *ari'i* and the *arioi* there was considerable freedom and license. The fate of *ra'atira* and *manahune*, however, depended upon the extent to which their *ari'i* was prepared to defend their interests and the limits which he or she made on demands for tribute. The coercive power of an *ari'i* in Tahiti and Mo'orea, traditionally it seems, was limited to his or her own district. However, high rank, even for an *ari'i*, did not guarantee coercive authority. *Hau* also depended upon the success and perceived power of the *ari'i* which determined the support available from the people of the district or tribe.
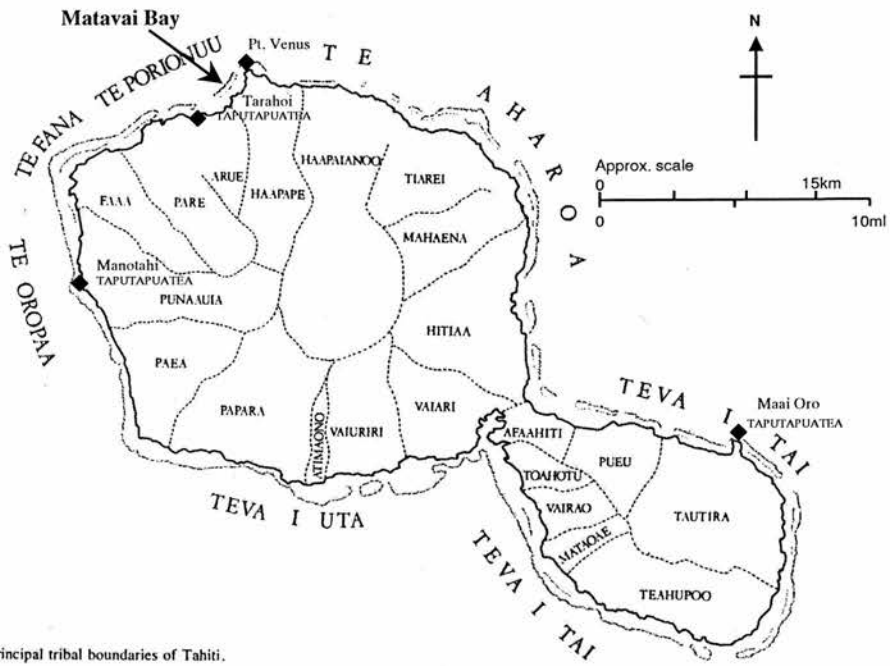
1. Principal tribal boundaries of Tahiti.

Figure 2. Map of Tahiti.
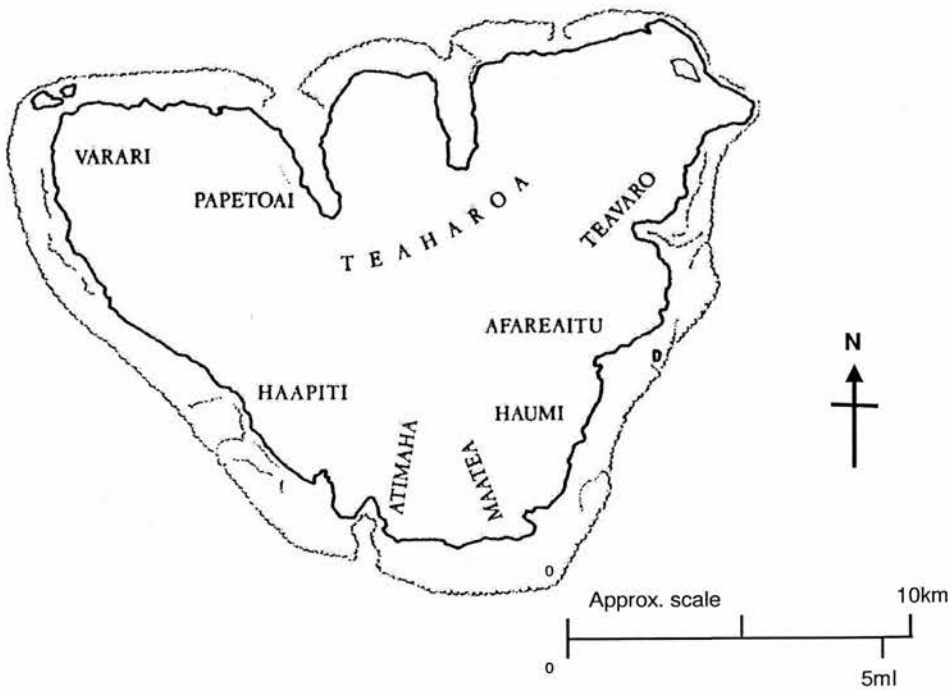
Figure 3. Map of Mo'orea.

CHAPTER 2. THE POMARE DYNASTY IN TAHITI

The period covered in this chapter is the seventy years between the arrival of
the British explorer Captain Wallis in Tahiti in 1767 and the end of the Tahitian War
in 1847; that is, from the arrival of the first European visitor to the suppression of
Tahitian resistance to French rule. These events were significant in Tahitian history.
However, it is important to note that this choice of starting points contains an implicit
orientation towards European participation in that history. The period has been
chosen because it provides a useful frame of reference for the study of the LMS
mission in Tahiti and is one for which a substantial amount of source material
survives.

The course of events in Tahiti, and other Pacific Islands, is often presented as
solely, or primarily, the consequence of actions by Europeans whether
beachcombers, missionaries, traders or naval captains. While an examination of all
these perspectives is necessary, a full understanding of the period requires
consideration of the situation and motivations of Tahitians themselves. This chapter
draws upon the foregoing discussion of Tahitian religion and society to consider the
political changes which occurred in the island. It is important, for the purpose of this
thesis, to give adequate weight to indigenous Tahitian motivations in addition to the
influence of ideas and pressures introduced through contact with Europeans. A full
evaluation of the Tahitian context is necessary to evaluate the role of the mission and
the Christian law codes.

The focus of this chapter therefore is on the actions of Tahitians, and in
particular, the fortunes of the Pomare family in whose territory the first mission was
founded. The foregoing chapter has revealed ways in which Tahitian society changed
in religious and political organisation prior to the arrival of Europeans. The Island
continued to change between 1767 and 1847 as a result of both Tahitian concerns
and the impact of missionaries, traders and other Europeans. There were, however,
important continuities. The structure of Tahitian society and its emphasis on rank
was unchanged. Despite the unification of the island and the apparent success of
Pomare II in achieving status similar to a western monarch, the rivalries between

tribes remained. The tradition of *ari'i* ruling their own districts also persisted. After 1767, another constant factor was the attempt by Tahitians to appropriate western goods and ideas to their own advantage.

Tahiti in the Late Eighteenth Century

The period between the arrival of the first Europeans and the conversion of the island to Christianity was one of internal instability. This cannot be described as civil war; there was no precedent of a united Tahitian state. Tension and fighting between the inhabitants of Tahiti, despite the relatively small size of the island, was not unusual.[1] The role of warrior was one of importance in Maohi culture. The attempt to extend coercive authority over neighbouring districts and to equate acknowledgement of high rank with sovereignty, however, was innovative.

The most important tribal groupings in Tahiti in the second half of the Eighteenth Century were Seaward *Teva*, Landward *Teva* and *Porionu'u*. While members of other groups were frequently involved in the fighting, it was members of these three tribes who could claim the highest rank and whose manoeuvrings shaped the political relations of the entire island.[2] At the time when Europeans first visited Tahiti the districts of the Taiarapu peninsula were united in the tribe *Teva-i-tai* or Seaward *Teva*. The *ari'i rahi* of Seaward *Teva* in 1768, according to Cook, was Vehiatua I.[3] He was succeed by two sons, who did not have a claim on any of the *Maro 'ura* related titles.

In Tahiti Nui, or greater Tahiti, the districts were less united.[4] The tribal groupings that had members of sufficiently high rank to claim *Maro 'ura* were the *Teva-i-uta*, or Landward Tevans, from the south of the island and the *Porionu'u* from the north. Accounts of Tahitian history at the close of the Eighteenth Century, written by LMS authors, tend to favour the Pomares, the protectors of the mission. However, an understanding of the claims of the different districts and tribes of Tahiti and the

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[1] Tahiti is 33 miles long.
[2] See chapter 1.
[3] Vehiatua I, as Oliver has noted, was not the first to hold the title. He was the first Vehiatua known to the Europeans. Oliver, *Ancient Tahitian Society,* vol. 3, *The Rise of the Pomares* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1998), 1174.
[4] Tahiti Nui, the larger of the two land areas of Tahiti. See figure 2.

tensions between them is essential for an assessment of events in the Nineteenth Century. These details provide the context for the acceptance of Christianity, the introduction of the laws in 1819 and also the French Annexation in 1843.

The *ari'i* of *Teva-i-uta,* or Landward *Teva,* was Amo who had claims upon two *maro.* [5] The first was the Paparan *maro tea,* the only yellow feather girdle in Tahiti and Mo'orea. This *maro* was not associated with 'Oro but was said to have been given to the founder of the lineage by a shark god.[6] His second claim was to a *Maro 'ura* called *Teraiputata* that had been introduced to Tahiti in 1760 by an *ari'i* from Raiatea named Maua. Maua's parents had links with the Papara district of Tahiti and the Tamatoa dynasty of Raiatea.[7] Maua was forced to return to Raiatea to defend it from an attack from Borabora but left the *Maro 'ura* and an image of 'Oro in Papara.[8] Amo's wife Purea was the sister of the *ari'i* of the district of Fa'a'a, and was therefore of high status herself. Their son Teri'irere, probably born in 1762, was therefore one of the highest ranking *ari'i* in Tahiti.

The leading titleholder of the *Porionu'u,* the tribe composed of the residents of Pare and Arue was Tu, later Pomare I.[9] His claim was through his father Teu. There were allegations that Teu was the son of low ranking Tuamotuan but this is likely to be propaganda aimed at discrediting the lineage. The Pomares held the right to a *Maro 'ura* which was kept at the Tarahoi *marae* in the Pare district. It had been introduced from Opoa in Raiatea c.1740 through the marriage of Teu to Tetupaia, the daughter of Tamatoa III. Pomare I was born in Pare between 1748 and 1752 and died in 1803. When Wallis visited Tahiti in 1767 Pomare I was not known to him as a great leader. Power in the districts of Pare and Arue appears, at that time, to have been exercised by his great uncle Tutaha.

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[5] Landward Teva consisted of four districts Papara, Aitmaono, Vaiuriri and Vaiari.
[6] Oliver, *Ancient Tahitian Society*, 3: 1215.
[7] His mother was Te'eva Pirioi of Papara and his father was Ari'imao a high ranking title holder from Opoa. Oliver, *Ancient Tahitian Society,* 3: 1199.
[8] Authors disagree about which of the maro was the one in which Wallis' pennant was incorporated. Filihia favours the red feather girdle introduced by Maua and Oliver suggests it was the yellow girdle. Filihia "'Oro Dedicated Maro 'ura," 131; Oliver, *Tahitian Society,* 3: 1216.
[9] Tu took the name Pomare. His son was also called Tu until he took the name Pomare II.

There were probably two further *Maro 'ura* in Tahiti at this period; one held in the district of Vaiari and one held in Puna'auia.[10] Filihia has suggested that it was the presence of Maua and his introduction of a new feather girdle that may have catalysed the intense competition for high status titles which arose in Tahiti at the end of the Eighteenth Century.[11] Both the *maro* held by Landward Tevans and that of the *Porionu'u* were associated with Opoa and with the Tamatoa dynasty which was reputed to have introduced 'Oro worship to Tahiti. It seems that 'Oro related titles and 'Oro images became increasingly important to Tahitians in this period.

The *Maro 'ura* and the Struggle to Become *Ari'i rahi*

In 1768, Amo and Purea attempted to establish their son Teri'irere's position as *ari'i rahi* of Tahiti. A new *marae* was built at Papara in preparation for the investiture and a *rahu*i imposed upon their district to facilitate the work. Members of Purea's own family opposed the plan, however, and attempted to use their prerogative as relatives to break the *rahui* and thus cause the project to cease. Purea refused to acknowledge two female relatives who made attempts to visit her thus humiliating them by denying their status. Enraged, the people of Seaward *Teva* led by Vehiatua I attacked Papara during the investiture itself and carried away the *Maro 'ura* and the Paparan image of Oro.[12]

The involvement of Pomare's uncle Tutaha in these events is not entirely clear from the sources.[13] It seems likely, however, that the *Porionu'u* were united with the Seaward Tevans in their attack on Landward *Teva* and that Tutaha took the Paparan *Maro 'ura* and deposited it at a *marae* in the district of Pa'ea. This is puzzling because this *marae* was not in his own territory.[14] The conflict resulted in a realignment of power in Tahiti. Vehiatua I was killed in the fighting. Amo and Purea seem to have retired from active politics while Teri'irere maintained the *maro tea* kin-title. Oliver considers this incident a turning point in the history of the competition for titles:

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[10] Oliver, *Ancient Tahitian Society,* 3: 1216.
[11] Filihia, ""Oro Dedicated Maro 'ura,*"* 130.
[12] The identification of this girdle as the one brought by Maua is made by Filihia in "'Oro Dedicated Maro ura,*"* 131.
[13] Oliver, *Ancient Tahitian Society,* 3: 1220-1225.
[14] *Marae* Utu'aimahurau, see Oliver, *Ancient Tahitian Society,* 3: 1233-4. Filihia suggests Utu'aimahurau in Puna'auia, "'Oro Dedicates Maro 'ura," 131.

.. intertribal relations on Tahiti entered a different phase. In the island's hierarchy of rankstatuses, pre-eminence began thereafter not to be ascribed to two individuals but to one. It took several years for this process to be completed and many more to accomplish a parallel development in the sphere of coercively sanctioned authority.[15]

The period which followed was one of increased instability with war between the Northern and Southern groups of Tahiti and between the West of Tahiti and Mo'orea. The districts of Puna'auia and Pa'ea, inhabited by the *Oropa'a,* emerged in the West of the island as enemies of the Pomares.

Pomare I had acquired the right to two kin-titles associated with Opoa on Raiatea. With the death of his uncle Tutaha in 1773 he became the highest ranked *ari'i* in Tahiti. In 1788, however, Captain William Bligh noted that Pomare was given little respect and despite his titles appeared to have little power to govern.[16] He had not, therefore, been able to exert influence beyond the traditional role of an *ari'i rahi*. He had also been challenged by rivals. In 1782 Pare was attacked by Te To'ofa *ari'i* of the *Oropa'a* with the help of an *ari'i* from Mo'orea, Mahine. Pomare was forced to flee though Mahine was killed.[17] In that year Pomare I, according to the usual Tahitian practice, began the transfer of titles to his son, Tu.

The Pomare's fortunes were restored, however, when he persuaded some of the *Bounty* mutineers who had remained on Tahiti in 1789 to join him in a venture to suppress the "rebellion" on Mo'orea. In April 1790, the mutineers commanded a force which ended the seventeen year war of Mo'orean succession.[18] In the same year the Pomares had further success when another force aided by the skills and weapons of the mutineers, together with their own *Porionu'u* warriors and the Paparans, defeated the *Oropa'a* and reclaimed from them the Wallis *maro* and the 'Oro image which had been lodged in the district of Pa'ea.[19]

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[15] Oliver, *Ancient Tahitian Society,* 3: 1225.
[16] Bligh accompanied Cook on the *Resolution* 1772-1775, he visited Tahiti again to collect breadfruit in 1788 prior to the loss of his ship the *Bounty* and made a second voyage to collect breadfruit in 1791.
[17] Oliver, *Ancient Tahitian Society,* 3:1253.
[18] Seaward Teva, Te To'ofa and Pohutea were involved in unresolved conflict with Mahine the most important chief of Mo'orea, Pomare gave partial support but seems to have been reluctant to become involved until 1790.
[19] The feather girdle with Wallis' flag incorporated in it.

The mutineers adapted their skills to Polynesian conditions such as the absence of military uniforms while the Pomare's allies began to adopt some of the mutineers' techniques, including such symbols of European military power as marching in ranks and flying ensigns in *tapa* cloth from their canoes. The appropriation of these symbols may have been as significant to the Tahitians as the firepower of the muskets. Pomare's enemies fled before a column of men marching behind the mutineers.

The possession of the *maro* allowed the Pomares to hold a fine formal inauguration for Pomare II at Pare in 1791. War with Seaward *Teva*, however, remained a possibility. Their hostility to the Pomare dynasty was manifest in the lack of representatives at the ceremony. The presence of the *Pandora* seems to have prevented conflict for the moment. Oliver comments that in early 1791 the Pomares were:

> ... *primi inter pares* of Mo'orea and of Tahiti's larger peninsular, the only serious challenge to their paramountcy having come from Seaward Teva.[20]

Pomare II was *ari'i rahi* of Tahiti in terms of status and title. His position, however, was in no sense comparable to kingship.

The extent to which Pomare II could exercise power over his neighbours fluctuated considerably. The trend between 1791 and 1809, however, was downward. Increasingly, the other *ari'i* were not inclined to recognise his authority and manoeuvred to prevent him extending it. Pomare II also suffered from a dispute with his father over his friendship with Teri'irere from Papara. The incident in which four of the LMS missionaries were stripped in 1798 was one result of this quarrel.[21] Pomare II used the missionaries, who were guests of his father, as an indirect object of abuse. Father and son were reconciled prior to the death of Pomare I in 1803.

The opposition of the people of *Oropa'a* was apparent again in 1802 when they began to dispute the propriety of the investitures through which Pomare II held his titles. They insisted that Pomare required further ceremonies. In 1802 and 1803 the image of 'Oro was captured by each side in turn as the *Oropa'ans* attempted to prevent Pomare II performing the additional rituals. In 1806, after a visit to Mo'orea

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[20] Oliver, *Ancient Tahitian Society,* 3: 1271.
[21] See chapter 5.

Pomare began another series of ceremonies to augment his position including a tour of Tahiti through which he was to be invested with many of the titles of the island. A large number of human sacrifices were made to 'Oro. One ceremony which occurred, the *pure ari'i,* may have been a ritual attempt to frustrate Pomare II by investing 'Oro himself as *ari'i rahi.*[22] Pomare, however, made increasing claims both for land and human sacrifice on behalf of 'Oro.

The alternative to ritual as a means of halting Pomare II was warfare. Pomare had some military success, for example, in 1804 when he sent the *Oropa'ans* against Matavai and again in 1807 when he attacked the *Oropa'ans* and Landward *Tevans* . In 1807 it seemed that Pomare II had put down all opposition but in the course of 1808 and 1809 it became clear that his behaviour had generated considerable hostility. An attack by Pomare II on his enemies in the district of Ha'apape failed and he was forced to withdraw to Mo'orea which remained a stronghold of the Pomare lineage. He was accompanied by four of the missionaries. The *ari'i rahi* there may have been Pomare I's half sister.[23] In 1809 all but two of the members of the mission left the island.

Pomare II was not able to reassert his authority during the absence of the missionaries. He made one attempt in October 1809 just prior to the missionaries' departure. The occasion was the seizure of the schooner *Venus* by the inhabitants of the Tahitian district of Faena. Captain Campbell of the *Hibernia* mounted an expedition to recapture the *Venus* and, in a strategy reminiscent of his father's use of men from the *Nautilus* and the *Venus* in 1802, Pomare II attempted to capitalise on the situation. Campbell was successful in his mission but Pomare's attack on Faena, supported by his allies from Huahine, was ambushed and succeeded only in destroying enemy canoes with the loss of twenty-four men. For a time he was able to maintain himself at Tahiti in his own district of Pare but was forced to withdraw to Mo'orea again in July 1810.

The period in Tahitian history from 1809 to 1815 has been labelled *Hau Manahune* "rule of the commoners". The term contrasts the situation with the previous rule by *ari'i,* however, as Oliver has observed, there is very little of

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[22] Filihia, "'Oro Dedicated *Maro'ura*," 139.
[23] Oliver, *Ancient Tahitian Society,* 3: 1315.

evidence of any kind of government exercised by commoners. Oliver's assessment of Tahiti at this period is that it remained disunited. There was no single figure of sufficient rank to take over the role to which Pomare I and his son had aspired.[24] The label may reflect the Pomare Dynasty's own negative definition of the period in contrast to their own exercise of power. In the Pomares' version of events an emphasis on the undesirability of the situation 1809-1815 highlighted the advantages of Pomare II's regime and argued for its legitimacy.

The first members of the Tahitian mission to return arrived in Mo'orea in 1811. The circumstances of Pomare II's conversion to Christianity in 1812 are discussed in detail in chapter six. From his base on Mo'orea he led a Christian army to Tahiti in 1815 where he was victorious at the battle of Fei Pi. His success, and possibly the mercy he showed to the vanquished, prompted widespread rejection by Tahitians of their gods and acceptance of Christianity.

The participation of members of the mission in drafting law codes suited the needs of the LMS mission and of Pomare in the novel situation in which both sides found themselves. Pomare was able to appropriate the symbols and ideology of Christian monarchy to support his unification of Tahiti and his exercise of jurisdiction over it. The events of subsequent decades, however, demonstrated a wish amongst the populace, and in particular the *ari'i,* to return to the system under which each district had its own chief.

The Success of the Pomare Dynasty

The success of the Pomare dynasty was based, in part, upon the accumulation of accepted symbols of status and an extension of traditional prerogatives. It was also the result of the skilful manipulation of the goods, skills and concepts brought to the islands by Europeans. A combination of factors, therefore, led to a reinvention of the role of *ari'i rahi* which allowed Pomare to claim sovereign authority in Tahiti and Mo'orea in 1815.

The first advantage of Pomare I in his attempt to increase his power was his high rank and connections with the Raiatean homeland of 'Oro. Pomare had

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[24] Ibid. 3: 1333.

sufficient connections to make the claim, however, possession of both the girdle and an 'Oro image were necessary for investiture. The capture of these items was one of the goals of his military campaigns. Traditionally, even if Pomare had received the title he would not have gained power to impose his will on the other districts of Tahiti but only recognition of his pre-eminence in rank. In seeking this coercive authority Pomare I, and indeed Amo and Purea of Landward Teva, were innovators.

The acquisition of the necessary ritual objects and the extension of his own political authority both required support in war. Pomare's family connections were also useful in this respect, they gave him powerful allies. It has been suggested that as a man he was neither particularly courageous nor a brilliant military tactician.[25] His allies are sometime credited with having done the 'work' in the campaigns which were successful. For example, in 1774 it was Teto'ofa who did the fighting against Mahine of Mo'orea though it was supposedly Pomare I who was the victim of a rebellion.[26] Pomare was also able to use the skills of Europeans on the islands. He enlisted the help of various beachcombers and also the mutineers from the *Bounty*. In addition, however, on several occasions the Pomares enlisted the help of more official representatives of European power.

In 1792 Pomare II attempted to use the opportunity of a force sent by Captain Bligh to recover goods from the people of Matavai to subdue the people.[27] This was less successful but in 1802 he persuaded Captain Bishop of the *Venus* and the captain of the *Nautilus*, first to provide a guard to accompany him to make an offering at Pa'ea and then to send a force to attack the districts of Puna'auia and Pa'ea. Nineteen men and a four pound canon were provided by the *Venus* and a boat and five men by the *Nautilus*.[28] Both Captains undoubtedly saw the quelling of trouble with the neighbouring region as contributing to their own safety as their crews were to remain on the island for some time salting pork. Nevertheless, this type of support bolstered Pomare II's attempts to obtain recognition as ruler rather than merely a highly ranked chief.

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[25] Ibid. 3: 1242.
[26] C. W. Newbury, "Introduction," in *The History of the Tahitian Mission 1799-1830. Written by John Davies Missionary to the South Seas Islands with supplementary papers from the correspondence of the missionaries*, ed. C. W. Newbury (Cambridge: Hakluyt Society, 1961), xxxviii.
[27] Oliver, *Ancient Tahitian Society*, 3: 1283.
[28] Ibid. 1310.

The position of Pomare I as King of Tahiti was accepted by Europeans long before it was a political reality in the island. From the time of Cook's Third voyage onward he began to be credited with the status of king of Tahiti:

> For, just as Wallis had made a "Queen" of Purea, and Cook a King of Tutaha, with the latter now dead the principal personage in the vicinity of Matavai , namely Pomare I, was duly given that label and was courted with official courtesies and innumerable valuable gifts.[29]

However, uncertain the voyagers may have been in this identification they did begin to see their own ally as having a legitimacy more akin to that of a European ruler. Pomare was able to enlist their help in suppressing 'rebellions' though these were in reality no more than disputes between independent tribes.

The geography of European contact had favoured Pomare I . The preference of ships for Matavai gave him access to European goods through gifts and trade which he could exchange with allies for support. His status was also increased through the prestige of his contact with the obviously powerful visitors. Credit should perhaps be given to Pomare I for realising the potential in this encounter. He was, therefore, able to benefit from his contact with the visiting ships both through military assistance and the way they enhanced his prestige and bargaining power.

Some of these advantages were lost to Pomare II. As European goods became less novel he was less successful in recruiting and maintaining allies. European fire power also became more widely available losing him his military advantage. He had less support from his own relations. The deaths of some without heirs allowed him to claim their titles but this generated further opposition and left him without allies.

'Oro may have become less important to Pomare II despite his efforts to please him with human offerings. By the time of his retreat in 1809 he may have been disillusioned with 'Oro. His adoption of Christianity can be viewed in a number of ways: as a tactical switch according to the established pattern; as a bid to attract more European backing; or as a response to the message of the missionaries, who by 1809 were beginning to have sufficient language skills to teach effectively. The issue of religious change in the Polynesian context will be considered in chapter six. At

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[29] Ibid. 1249, see also figure 4 *The Queen of Tahiti taking leave of Captain Wallis,* wood cut. Nan Kivell Collection, NLA.

present it is enough to note the political repercussions. Pomare's conversion was divisive both in Mo'orea and in Tahiti after he returned there in 1815. In Mo'orea there was opposition from chiefs who had not adopted Christianity. However, it did not prevent him amassing his force or taking the island.

The Christian Kingdom

Pomare II's code of laws was approved by an assembly of chiefs and promulgated in 1819. Two laws in particular supported Pomare's new position as ruler of the island.[30] The sixteenth law named the *iatoai* (judges) of each of the districts of Tahiti and Mo'orea. The *iatoai* were heads of households or extended families and it seems unlikely that the hundreds named in the code could have served as judges.[31] The writing of their names in the code, however, cemented the relationships in Pomare's Christian Kingdom and was symbolically very significant. The eighteenth law established the locations of the thirty court houses through which Pomare's new power could be exercised. Pomare also established a police force the *motoi*. The promulgation of the code throughout Tahiti was a visible sign of the dominance which Pomare had achieved in the Island.

This was the high-water mark in the power of the Pomare dynasty. Pomare II extended his influence to the other islands in the group by sending out Tahitian missionaries to the Leeward Islands.[32] Pomare also experimented with trade first in the *Haweis,* built by members of the mission, and later in partnership with Samuel Henry in the *Governor Macquarie.* In 1821 he imposed a prohibition of barter on all pork at Tahiti which included the members of the mission.[33] However, Pomare II's efforts to enforce similar rights in the Leeward Islands failed.

Following the death of Pomare II in December 1821 no single figure was able to dominate the group politically as he had done. Pomare III and IV were both young when they succeeded to the position created by their father. Their weakness allowed the *ari'i* of districts that were traditional rivals of the Pomares to reassert

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[30] The events which led to the drafting of the first Tahitian law codes will be examined in detail in chapter seven and their content in chapter eight.
[31] Newbury, *Tahiti Nui,* 51.
[32] Neil Gunson, "Pomare II of Tahiti and Polynesian Imperialism," *JPH* 4 (1969): 65-82.
[33] Nott to Hankey, 9th April 1821, SSL 3.

themselves. In doing so they used some of the tools which Pomare himself had found useful, including the Christian laws.

Pomare III

In 1824 Pomare III was crowned and anointed at the age of four by the LMS missionary Henry Nott. Ari'ipaea Vahine and Paiti, the *ari'i* of the Poriounu'u acted as regents. In 1825, a new code of laws was approved and introduced a new court, the *To'ohitu*. It was composed of seven *ari'i* from the leading tribes of Tahiti and Mo'orea. The most powerful members of the *To'ohitu* were Utami chief of the Oropoaans; Tati, from Landward Teva; Tavini from Seaward Teva; and Paofi and Hitoti from the Aharoa.[34] The Oropoaans had been enemies of Pomare II and it was Tati's brother who had led the army defeated by him at Fei Pi. The *To'ohitu*, therefore, was dominated by *ari'i* whose tribes had a history of opposing the Porionu'u and Pomare dynasty.

In 1826, Captain Catesby Jones of the *United States Sloop of War Peacock* concluded a consular and trading agreement with the Tahitians. It was signed in the name of Pomare III by Tati, Utami, Rora and Vairaatoa.[35] This agreement assured "peace and friendship" between Pomare III and his heirs and the United States in perpetuity in return for the receipt of a consul and fair treatment of American residents and shipping. This statement reflects the usual emphasis of westerners upon the Pomare dynasty, nevertheless, it also reveals the possibilities opened to high ranking *ari'i* during Pomare III's minority.

Pomare IV

Pomare III died only three years after his coronation. His sister became Queen Pomare IV, in January 1827 aged fourteen. Authors have noted Pomare's bad behaviour, in Christian terms, and suggested that she was difficult to manage.[36] However, this bad behaviour was not unprecedented. Pomare II had been renowned for his drinking and sexual appetites. The significance of Pomare's behaviour lay not in her relations with the members of the mission but with the high ranking *ari'i*.

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[34] Newbury, *Tahiti Nui,* 64.
[35] The agreement was witnessed by the missionaries Orsmond and Wilson, *Articles signed on board the United States Sloop of War Peacock Capt. A. P. Catesby Jones,* September 1826 [duplicate], SSL 5.
[36] Morrell, *Britain in the Pacific Islands,* 57; Campbell, *History of the Pacific Islands,* 77.

Pomare IV came into conflict with the chiefs who had participated in the revisions of the laws in 1824. On three occasions a prosecution attempted against Pomare or her retinue led to hostilities and in one case to open war. In 1828, the Porionu'u, the tribe to which the Pomares belonged, almost went to war with the judges after one of the queen's attendants was "judged" for prostitution.[37]

In 1831, the cause of the legal action was ceremonies of welcome for Pomare IV performed by the *ari'i* of Mo'orea and Taiarapu. Tati, Utami and Hitoti, three of the five powerful judges of the *To'ohitu* called for her to be "judged" for reviving the ceremonies. Pomare and her supporters resisted and in March 1831 the two sides resorted to an armed stand-off separated only by the bay at Fare Ute. This was broken by the arrival of the H.M.S. *Comet.* This incident has been interpreted as Pomare IV joining the *mamaia.* The *mamaia* was a religious movement that emerged in 1826 and 1827. The founders, Teao and Hue, were opposed to the mission and claimed that they had direct access to the revelation of the Christian god. It was strongest in Tahiti near the port town of Pape'ete and in the districts of Puna'auia and Taiarapu.

By associating herself with those who had rejected mission Christianity and the associated institutions Pomare undermined her own authority. As Morrell notes, the situation allowed *ari'i* from rival families to ally against her in defence of Christianity:

> The Tahitian chiefs rallied gallantly to the defence of their new Christian polity. Tati, chief of Papara and representative of the politically dominant family which Pomare I had displaced, took the lead.[38]

These chiefs were as astute as Pomare II in using the new faith in ways which supported their own power.

The choice of Pomare IV's second husband provided the cause of the third of the disputes between Pomare and the *ari'i* of the *To'ohitu.* The man chosen by her mother and aunt was Tenania, Pomare's cousin and the grandson of Tamatoa. The couple were married by Henry Nott in November 1832. The marriage preserved the

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[37] Newbury, *Tahiti Nui, 64.*
[38] Morrell, *Britain in the Pacific Islands, 58.*

important link between the Pomares and Tamatoas, however, *ari'i* from both Mo'orea and Seaward Teva opposed the union, ostensibly on the grounds that Pomare IV had never been divorced. Her supporters claimed that the union must be dissolved as her first husband, Tapoa, had left her treasonously to fight in Raiatea against her allies the Tamatoas. Seven or eight hundred rebels from these districts attacked areas loyal to Pomare but were successfully suppressed.[39] Their leader Tavarii was defeated and thirty one people killed.

One interpretation of the events of the 1820s and 1830s is that they represent a dispute between Pomare and the other high ranking *ari'i* about the place of the *ari'i* under the law and that Pomare IV was resisting the universal and equitable application of the Tahitian law.[40] This view is particularly suited to a "whiggish" interpretation of Tahitian legal history in which all concerned are taught the value of impartial justice. Pomare could be characterised as a wild young woman who resisted church discipline and preferred the old dances and sexual license. This, however, is an oversimplified view of the situation which neglects the political nature of the decision to prosecute. In all legal systems there is an element of discretion in the application of laws to individuals and this is particularly the case with those in the upper ranks of society. The attempts to prosecute Pomare were an expression of the power of the *ari'i*; a fact which is highlighted by the violent responses of her supporters.

It is also important to note that in the second and third case the challenge to Pomare was related to events which consolidated her status. The festivities which marked her return from Mo'orea may have contained elements frowned upon by the LMS but they were also an assertion of her status as *ari'i rahi*. Ritual and attempts to frustrate ceremonies were noted earlier in this chapter in the manoeuvrings of Pomare I and Pomare II. Similarly, Pomare's marriage to Tenania secured her links with his powerful family in Raiatea. High ranking *ari'i* who wanted to limit the power of Pomare IV and further their own claims, therefore, combined traditional and non-traditional means. The Tahitian law code was one tool which could be used to this end.

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[39] Ibid. 65.
[40] Newbury, *Tahiti Nui,* 65.

Protectorate and Annexation

The increasing contact between Tahiti and the rest of the world provided the rivals of the Pomare dynasty with new sources of wealth and generated tension between *ari'i* over land tenure. Newbury estimates that the *entrepôt* trade in Tahiti at the end of the 1830s was $60 000 and that there were between sixty and eighty visits by whaling vessels, from America alone, each year.[41] The increase in trade and of settlement by Europeans led to the appointment of consuls for the protection of the interests of their nationals by the United States (1835); Britain (1837) and France (1838).[42]

In the case of America and then France the first holder of this office was Jacques Moerenhout, who settled at Tahiti as a merchant after voyaging in the Pacific.[43] The personal rivalry between Moerenhout, a Belgian Catholic, and George Pritchard the British Consul, and former LMS missionary, contributed significantly to the events which led to the French Protectorate.[44] The actions and motivations of the French and the British as powers in the region will be discussed in the next chapter. The members of the mission too had distinct opinions about relations with foreign powers.

The events leading to annexation of Tahiti by France followed a pattern repeated elsewhere in the Pacific. A series of encounters between Tahitians and foreign powers occurred in which allegations of bad treatment were made by settlers, traders or priests and taken up by representatives of their respective nations. These consuls or naval captains then demanded reparation under threat of force.[45] In many islands the result was annexation. These aspects of European intervention and the justifications they gave will be discussed in more detail in chapter three. Here attention will be directed to the factors which led some high ranking Tahitians to co-operate with the French. The reasons for this behaviour included traditional rivalries between chiefs and land disputes.

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[41] Newbury, "Change and Survival," 73.

[42] Previously the British consul at Hawaii, appointed in 1824, had responsibility for Tahiti.

[43] Jacques Moerenhout, *Voyages aux îles du Grand Océan* (Paris: Adrienne Maisonneuve, 1835).

[44] See chapter 9.

[45] The foreign policy of France and Britain will be discussed in the next chapter.

The first Catholic priests to attempt to evangelise the island were Fathers Caret and Laval who arrived in 1836. The priests did not land at Pape'ete but took up their residence there with Moerenhout, the American consul. The reactions to the manner of their arrival varied. To the supporters of the LMS it was seen as an underhand attempt to settle in Tahiti in contravention of the harbour regulations, which required that permission be obtained before they were landed on the penalty of a fine.[46] Caret and Laval offered to pay a "landing fee" at an audience with Pomare. It has been suggested that in the absence of the influence of Pritchard this might have been accepted.[47] The resolution to remove the priests was made by an assembly of chiefs and judges. On 12th November 1836 they were removed from a building belonging to Moerenhout by the *mutoi* and deported.

In August 1838 the French Captain Du Petit-Thouras arrived in Tahiti with instructions from his government to demand an apology and reparation for the treatment of the priests. He received an indemnity of $2000 loaned to Pomare IV by Pritchard.[48] The arrival of Dumont D'Urville in September 1838 provided another reminder of French power. However, in November of that year a new law prohibited teaching contrary to the Protestantism of the LMS. The law was made in the presence of Captain Elliot of H.M.S. *Fly* and was proposed to an assembly of most of the high ranking *ari'i* and judges of Tahiti by Darling, a missionary, and Tati. It was accepted by Pomare and the chiefs, with the exception of Hitoti.

In March 1839, Captain Laplace reached Tahiti after his ship had been damaged by striking a reef. It was repaired at Papeete. By June Laplace had recovered sufficient persuasive force to conclude a treaty with Pomare which gave Catholics the same rights as Protestants. During his stay Laplace made gifts to leading *ari'i* and hosted dances.[49] He suggested that Catholic Tahitians would be permitted to sing and dance.[50] Laplace claimed that the chiefs would have offered, on that visit, to place Tahiti under French Protection had he been prepared to risk the controversy it would have caused in Australia and Britain.[51]

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[46] See chapter 9.
[47] Newbury, *Tahiti Nui,* 93.
[48] Peruvian dollars.
[49] Morell, *Britain in the Pacific Islands,* 73.
[50] For the extent of prohibition in Tahiti see chapter 8 and appendix.
[51] Morrell, *Britain in the Pacific Islands,* 73.

British visitors favoured the Pomares who had long been established in their narratives and policy as the kings and queens of Tahiti. The presence of Caret and Laval provided an alternative source of European assistance to aspiring chiefs. The co-operation between Tahitian *ari'i* and Catholic priests is paralleled by events in Tonga. There the unification of the islands was established by a Wesleyan Methodist, Taufa'ahau. His enemies, led by Finau Ulukalala, became Catholic. In both cases Polynesians chose to resort to alternative avenues of religious power; perhaps in the hope of aid in overcoming their enemies by spiritual power. They may also have recognised European rivalries and the possibility of material aid.

The treaty of 1839 did not affect the sovereignty of the island directly though the manner in which it was obtained had clearly infringed the right of the Tahitians to decide on their own laws. Pomare IV was opposed to any increase in foreign influence and favoured expanding her own powers. Following the annexation of the Marquesas in June 1842 the Tahitians became increasingly nervous about their own fate. In 1841 Pomare appealed for British protection and Consul Pritchard travelled to London to plead her case. Meanwhile Pomare was in Raiatea expecting the birth of a child.

In 1842 Du Petit-Thouras returned to Tahiti with further allegations made by Moerenhout about the treatment of French citizens. It was during this visit that he negotiated, in Pomare IV's absence, a petition for French protection signed by Paraita, Tati, Hitoti and Utami. The four men admitted later to having been offered $1000 each.[52] Their motivations, however, should be seen in a wider context.

Firstly, they were not the first Tahitians to have negotiated with foreign powers or to have attempted to make requests for "protection". Pomare herself, in addition to the request made through Pritchard in 1841, had requested permission to fly the British flag in 1825.[53] There were also precedents for the involvement of *ari'i,* including the men who signed the petition of 1842. Hitoti, for example, made a request for British protection in 1822 and in 1826 Tati and Utami were involved in the agreement made with the United States. In 1841, Tati, Hitoti and Paete had

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[52] Ibid. 78.
[53] Pomare IV to Canning 5th October 1825, SSJ 5.

sought the assistance from French naval officers to deal with sailors brawling in Pape'ete.[54]

The circumstances which led to these agreements and requests for protection were varied. They may have resulted from undue pressure, for example, in the case of the naval captains who intervened in favour of their nationals and threatened violence, such as Du Petit-Thouras himself. The role of missionaries as advisors and advocates of their own homeland can also be discerned. However, in assessing the actions of Tati, Utami, Hitoti and Paraita it is important to note, in the midst of these European pressures, the preference they showed for the French, rather than for Pomare's allies, the British. The possibility of fewer moral constraints under a Catholic regime may have influenced them. However, they are likely to have expected rewards under the new administration and the enhancement of their power.

Newbury has highlighted a number of land disputes in Tahiti in the early 1840s.[55] Land had increased in value with the arrival of settlers. This put a strain both upon existing law and practice in landholding arrangements. The result was complaints from settlers and their consuls about their treatment and a further cause of tension between *ari'i*. Paraita, another of the signatories to the petition in 1842, was involved in one of these cases and attempted to use his powerful position to influence the Tahitian judges.[56] A second case concerned a grant of land made by Teremoemoe, Pomare IV's mother, to Captain Jones.

A third case was taken up by the Catholic Mission over a grant of land which Moerenhout believed was illegal. Allegations made by the Fathers against Moerenhout were one of the matters addressed by Du Petit-Thouras. He met Tati, Utami, Hitoti and Paraita who signed the request for French protection which was then taken to Pomare in Mo'orea. She was given forty-eight hours to provide either a bond of $10 000 or submit to occupation. Pomare signed and a proclamation was issued in Tahiti under the signature of Paraita.

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[54] Newbury, *Tahiti Nui, 97.*
[55] Ibid.
[56] Ibid. 97.

After the birth of her son, Pomare rejected the document she had signed in September 1842 and continued to fly her household flag. She was encouraged by the arrival of the *Talbot* captained by Sir Thomas Thompson in January 1843 who refused to recognise the Protectorate. In a letter to Queen Victoria Pomare blamed the enemies of the Pomare dynasty:

> My Government is taken from me by my enemies, Paraita, Hitoti, Tati, and others connected with them. It was they who combined and entered into an agreement with the French. They have banished me, that I should not be sovereign of Tahiti- that they should be kings and also their children.[57]

Pritchard returned from his visit to Britain in the *Talbot*. He had missed the establishment of the Protectorate but was present when the newly appointed French Governor arrived in October 1843. Pritchard struck his consular flag arguing that he was not accredited to a French colony. Pomare took refuge with Pritchard and in December was conveyed to *HMS Basilik* in which she eventually sailed to the Leeward Islands.

Governor Burat, unable to take up his duties on cordial terms, tired of the situation and on 6th November 1843 annexed Tahiti and garrisoned it with his troops. In March 1844, in the face of a rumoured rebellion, which he suspected Pritchard of fermenting, Burat had him arrested. Pritchard was deported to Valparaiso. The Tahitians did rebel against the occupation. Newbury suggests that it was the occupation of royal land rather than support for the Pomare's position as Queen which prompted the western and eastern districts of the islands to begin active opposition to the French. The series of battles between March 1844 and December 1846 claimed five hundred casualties and one hundred and sixty dead.[58] The missionary Thomas McKean was killed in crossfire near Point Venus on 30th June 1844.[59] The incident shocked the members of the Tahitian mission and led to the withdrawal of four missionaries.[60]

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[57] F.O. 58/20 Pomare to Victoria (January 1843), encl. in Barrow to Canning July 5th 1843 quoted in C. W. Newbury, "Resistance and Collaboration in French Polynesia: The Tahitian War: 1844-47," *JPS* 82 (1973): 8.

[58] Ibid. 6.

[59] McKean and Howe were caught in crossfire, probably Tahitian, on the veranda of a house when the French made an attack on the district of Haapape. Barff Journal 22nd June-18th August 1844, SSJ 9.

[60] Howe, Joseph, Jesson and Moore.

Pomare returned to Tahiti in March 1847 . In August of the same year she signed a convention with the French which secured her place as monarch in conjunction with a Royal Commissioner to be appointed by the French. A Tahitian legislative Assembly was formed which could be called by the Queen and the Royal Commissioner. The Commissioner retained the right to handle all foreign relations but disputes between Tahitians were to be handled in the Tahitian courts. On Pomare's death in 1877, her son Ariiaue took the title Pomare V. He abdicated in 1880.

Conclusion

A comparison of events in Tahiti with those in Hawaii and Tonga underlines the importance of indigenous trends toward centralisation which were already emerging at the time of European contact. The apparent increase in social stratification in Tahiti in the era before the visits of the first Europeans has already been compared with the islands of Tonga and Hawaii. These islands also shared a similar course, at least for a time, in their fortunes after the arrival of the Europeans. As Sahlins notes:

> .. only the Hawaiians, Tahitians, Tongans and to a lesser extent the Fijians successfully defended themselves by evolving countervailing, native controlled states, complete with public governments and public law, monarchs and taxes, ministers and minions, these Nineteenth Century states are testimony to the native Polynesian political genius, to the level and the potential level of indigenous political accomplishment.[61]

In these island groups strong leaders emerged who extended existing rights and symbols and took advantage of the European goods and expertise. Kamehameha I of Hawaii, for example, benefited like Pomare from visits by Europeans to a bay in his territory. Political power, however, was more institutionalised than in Tahiti. In the 1770s the islands were already divided into a series of chiefdoms.[62] Kamehameha had only to organise an efficient bureaucracy to manage his territory.[63] Taufa'ahau unified the principal islands of Tonga and also the ancient titles which had once denoted rulers of the islands.[64] He took the existing but vacant title Tu'i Tonga and

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[61] Sahlins, "Poor man, rich man, big man, chief," 205.
[62] Howe, *Where the Waves Fall,* 152.
[63] Ibid. 158.
[64] The islands of Tongatapu, Ha'apai and Vava'u and the title of Tu'i Tonga and Tu'i Kanokupolu.

transformed the office by removing the power of the chiefs to choose his successor and making his *hau* hereditary.

Some historians of Polynesian relations with Europeans, and conversions to Christianity in particular, have emphasised the stress placed upon indigenous society and the role of Christianity as a replacement for ideology that had ceased to function.[65] The presence of Europeans did challenge the Maohi world view, but it has now been recognised that Pacific Islanders were often able to respond by adapting or "elaborating" their cultures.[66]

Leaders such as Pomare, Taufa'ahau and Kamehameha I built upon and transformed existing institutions.[67] Christianity provided new and attractive concepts such as divine right but the transfer of allegiance between gods was an indigenous cultural practice used to increase the power available to chief and people. Indeed, the Christian God often functioned in a way very similar to the previous war gods, as Cummins has demonstrated in his assessment of Wesleyan preaching in Tonga.[68]

Pomare I and II combined ambition for greater power with skill in manipulating indigenous and European sources of power to their advantage. Their rise to power appears to be part of a unifying and centralising trend observable in certain highly stratified Polynesian Islands in the late Eighteenth Century. These tendencies, marked in Tahiti by the rise of 'Oro, began prior to the visits of Europeans and involved the adaptation of existing institutions. The arrival of Europeans, however, provided goods, skills and ideas which had a profound impact on the forms of government and religion which emerged.

Pomare III and Pomare IV did not have sufficient power to sustain the synthesis of Tahitian and western government established by their father. The period of regency under Pomare III allowed the other *ari'i* to increase their power and to

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[65] Neil Gunson, "The Coming of the Foreigners," in *Friendly Islands: A History of Tonga*, ed. Noel Rutherford (Melborne: Oxford University Press, 1971), 11; Latukefu, *Church and State in Tonga,* 23.
[66] Malma Meleisea and Penelope Schoeffel, "Discovering Outsiders," in *The Cambridge History of the Pacific Islanders* , eds. Donald Denoon, Stewart Firth, Jocelyn Linnekin, Malma Meleisea, and Karen Nero (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 148.
[67] I. C. Campbell, "Imperialism, Dynasticism and Conversion: Tongan designs on Uvea (Wallis Island) 1835-1852," *JPS* 93 (1983): 155.
[68] H. G. Cummins, "Holy War: Peter Dillon and the 1837 Massacres in Tonga," *JPH* 12 (1977): 24-39.

establish themselves in the *To'ohitu*. The decline of the Pomare dynasty, as much as its rise, was the result of a combination of traditional elements and the adoption, by others, of possibilities provided by Europeans. The rivalries between *ari'i* of the different tribes of Tahiti reflected age old divisions. The challenges made to Pomare through the law code, moreover, were typically Tahitian attempts to frustrate the efforts of rivals to augment their power by marriage or ceremonies; achieved through the medium of the European style law code. The enemies of Pomare IV proved as capable of utilising this institution for their own benefit as Pomare II had been.

In the 1830s it suited Tati to take up a position as the defender of the Protestant faith from the reckless debauchery of the young Pomare. The overtures made by priests and French naval captains provided Pomare's enemies with another opportunity to challenge her. This is not to argue that the annexation of Tahiti was the result solely of the scheming of Pomare's rivals. The increased European presence in the Islands had created numerous problems and the imperial policies of the Great Powers were altering, as will be seen in the next chapter. However, it is important to recognise the indigenous factors which shaped Tahitian relationships with foreigners.

This chapter has suggested the value of the Christian law codes to Pomare II in furthering his centralising ambitions and also the uses to which it was put by opponents of the dynasty. The mission provided assistance in creating a simple legal system which was suited to the process of increased social stratification and unification which was already underway in Tahiti. This conclusion has important implications in assessing claims that LMS missionaries imposed the laws upon Pomare and for considering in what sense Tahiti may have been a 'Missionary Kingdom'. In the hands of astute high ranking Tahitians the laws were not the medium of missionary dominance described by Koskinen, Martin, Young or Wright and Fry but a tool which could be appropriated to serve Tahitian ends.[69]

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[69]Koskinen, *Missionary Influence,* 67; Martin, *Missionaries and Annexation;* Wright and Fry, *Puritans in the South Seas,* 323.

CHAPTER 3. EUROPEANS IN THE PACIFIC

This chapter provides an overview of European activity in Tahiti in the period 1767-1847. The LMS mission at Tahiti was part of a much larger phenomenon of contact between Europeans and Pacific Islanders. Europeans came from diverse backgrounds; assumed very different roles; and experienced a great variety of Island contexts. There was not a single Pacific to be experienced and nor was there a single European perspective of its inhabitants.

The first section of the chapter examines European contacts with Pacific Islanders and their interventions in island affairs. It would not be possible to attempt an assessment of missionary relations with indigenous leaders and involvement in promoting 'law and order' without examining other occasions on which Europeans expressed their views upon this subject and used their superior power to enforce them upon Pacific Islanders. A consideration of these issues will provide the foundation for an examination, in later chapters, of the continuities and discontinuities that can be identified in the approaches pursued by members of the LMS mission at Tahiti.

The second section is a consideration of the intellectual impact of the experiences of Europeans in the South Seas. The assumptions which were made by Europeans about the nature and permanence of the cultural, or racial, inferiority of indigenous people are of particular interest. The participation of individual missionaries in drafting law codes, and the responses of their contemporaries, were determined, in part, by the extent to which they believed that Polynesians were capable of successfully adopting western institutions or aspiring to 'civilisation'.[1]

The voyages of exploration and the narratives and images they produced are a recurrent theme in this chapter. For many Europeans the history of their nations' relations with Pacific Islanders was the story of the voyages of the great navigators. Ideas of 'exploration' and the role of the heroic captains who led these expeditions are very important in understanding perceptions and representations of the Pacific.

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[1] The use of the word Polynesian here is relevant because Europeans were increasingly drawing a distinction between the capabilities of Melanesians and Polynesians.

The narratives of the voyages provided the basis for all knowledge about the islands which had been known to Europe for less than thirty years. The voyages were an influential role model for those who came after them to the Pacific. As will be seen in chapter five, the first mission planned by the LMS shared many of the characteristics of these secular voyages.

European Encounters with Indigenous Leaders and Perceptions of 'Law and Order'

This section provides an analysis of interactions between Europeans and indigenous people in the Pacific. It cannot be a full treatment. However, it can provide an overview of the circumstances in the Pacific in which the mission operated and give some examples of the variety of interventions in island affairs; comments on law and order; and European relationships with indigenous leaders.

A further aim of the section is to reveal some of the Nineteenth Century attitudes and representations which have had an enduring impact on the way in which the LMS mission and the Tahitian law codes have been assessed. In British sources, relations in the Pacific were often interpreted, retrospectively, as a series of measures designed to increase order. Colonisation was presented as the only solution to problems of European lawlessness which indigenous authorities were incapable of resolving for themselves.[2] In this context the failure of the law codes which missionaries helped to create was seen as inevitable. It is important to remember, however, that before the 1840s indigenous sovereignty and the prospects for the success of a Tahitian law code appeared very different.

The approach followed here has been to avoid teleological assumptions about the progress of colonialism or totalising statements about the unity of purpose among Europeans. Instead, an attempt will be made to distinguish different perceptions and practices. The section begins with a brief outline of European presence in the Pacific prior to 1767. It then considers the behaviour of explorers, beachcombers, traders, Governors of New South Wales and public opinion there, and British and French foreign policy. These groups were not homogenous but sufficient similarities exist in their relations with Pacific Islanders for these categories to be useful starting point

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[2] Ward, *British Policy.*

for analysis. British policy in the Pacific and relations at Tahiti are the principal focus of this account but examples drawn form the wider Pacific have also been referred to.

European Nations and Exploration

The project of Pacific exploration and accounts of the exploits of individual navigators have been an enduring theme in narratives of European relations with Pacific Islanders. This picture of European navigators charting a vast and empty ocean is one which does not stand up to recent scholarly insistence upon indigenous perspectives or the recognition of European diversity. The persistence of this picture means that it is important when considering the categories and explanations which were available to contemporaries.

Geographers had speculated since the time of Ptolemy about the existence of a Southern continent, *terra australis incognita,* which would balance the land masses of the North. Spanish exploration in the Pacific, which began in 1519 with Ferdinand Magellan's circumnavigation of the globe, was an extension of their successful exploration and exploitation of the New World.[3] Spanish voyagers were influenced by the belief that the biblical King Solomon's mines could be found in the Pacific. Álvaro Medaña de Neyra, therefore, gave the name "Solomon Islands" to the group he discovered in 1567. Little was known outside Spain of the nature and exact position of the islands that had been 'discovered'.[4]

The exploration of the Seventeenth Century was dominated by the newly independent Netherlands but continued to be influenced by the belief in a Southern continent. The greatest of the Dutch navigators was Abel Tasman who 'discovered' New Zealand, Tonga and Fiji; rounded the northern coast of New Guinea; and sighted Van Diemen's Land in 1642.[5] However, it was the English explorer William Dampier who reached 'New Holland,' that is mainland Australia, in 1688. The extent of 'New Holland' was unknown and speculation about the existence of a *terra australis* continued. Nor were the British immune to the attractions of the imagined

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[3] Magellan was Portuguese but renounced his nationality to work for Spain. He died in 1521 before his ship returned. Mendaña was Spanish.

[4] Spanish navigators saw much of Melanesia; in Polynesia they noted the Tuamotus, Marquesas, Line Islands, northern Cooks, Ellice Islands; and in Melanesia they charted the Solomons, Santa Cruz, the Northern New Hebrides, and part of New Guinea.

[5] Tasman also visited the South Island of New Zealand, New Guinea, Tonga and Fiji.

fortunes to be made in the Pacific. The investment scandal the South Sea Bubble dates from this period of excitement and anticipated profit.[6]

In the Eighteenth Century the prospects for accurate and prolonged voyages of exploration improved with the invention of the chronometer in 1735, which allowed navigators to fix their longitude, and the introduction of measures which successfully prevented scurvy. These improvements coincided with a public appetite for published journals, engravings and plays on the subject of the new lands. The voyages of James Cook and also Louis Antoine de Bougainville began a new era in the collection of information and its presentation to the public.[7]

'Otaheite', which was 'discovered' by Samuel Wallis in 1767, was the most frequented of the Polynesian islands in the Eighteenth Century. The island was visited by the French navigator Bougainville, who named the island "*Nouvelle Cythere*" in 1769 and by the Spanish in 1772. Don Domingo Boenechea landed two Franciscan priests on the island in 1774, where they remained for twelve months.[8]

The three voyages made by Cook to the Pacific and the circumstances of his death at Hawaii made him the most famous of the British navigators.[9] He visited Tahiti four times between 1769 and 1777.[10] His repeated visits to the island allowed him, and his colleagues, to become familiar with the islands and to establish enduring relations with Tahitians.[11]

The navigators of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth centuries became prominent figures and national heroes. After the close of the Napoleonic wars the nations of Europe began to compete in their scientific voyages to the Pacific. The Russians, for

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[6] The South Sea Company was founded in 1711 to take on part of the national debt. For ten years there was a frenzy of investment followed by a crash in 1721. While the focus of attention may have been the possibilities of the South Sea there was no trade with New Holland. Glyn Williamson and John Ramsden, *Ruling Britannia: A Political History of Britain 1688-1988* (London and New York: Longman, 1990), 58.

[7] Bougainville commanded the first French circumnavigation 1766-1769. Cook: 1st voyage 1768-1771; 2nd Voyage 1772-1775; 3rd voyage 1776-1779.

[8] Germino Clota and Narcisco Gonzales. Greg Dening, *Mr Bligh's Bad Language: Passion, Power and Theatre on the Bounty* (Cambridge, 1992), 225.

[9] Cook was the first European to chart the East Coast of Australia, New Caledonia, Norfolk Island, and Hawaii.

[10] Cook visited Tahiti in 1769, 1773, 1774 and 1777.

[11] *Exploration and Exchange,* xxiii.

example, sent out Bellinghausen and later Otto von Kotzebue whose *A New Voyage Round the World in the years 1823, 24, 25 and 26,* will be considered in chapter nine.[12] Another figure of importance to the history of the LMS in Tahiti was the Belgian explorer Jacques Moerenhout, author of *Voyages aux îles du Grand Océan* (1835). He returned to Tahiti as an entrepreneur and consul for the Americans and later the French.[13]

An important element of the presentation of voyages of exploration to the French, British, Russian or American public was the proposition that the "useful knowledge" which was collected would be of national benefit.[14] The discovery of the breadfruit at Tahiti was one example. Banks suggested it could provide a cheap source of nutrition to slaves in the Caribbean. Captain William Bligh of the *Bounty* was sent to collect a cargo of plants in 1778 only to lose them when his crew mutinied.

European captains did not restrict themselves to scientific exploration but claimed the lands they charted in the names of their sovereigns. A distinction can be observed in British attitudes to sovereignty between the treatment of Australia and Polynesia. Australia was defined as *terra nullius,* that is, empty or wasteland land, to which the Aboriginal inhabitants had no rights. In Polynesia, however, the position was more ambiguous, Polynesians were punished when they infringed European norms yet high ranking chiefs were identified and treaties concluded with them.

There was little interest, from the British or other European governments, in colonising the small islands of the Pacific which offered few natural resources for exploitation. Their claims to territory, rather, established a sphere of influence in which their nationals could conduct trade. Britain had the additional aim of protecting the colony of New South Wales.

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[12] Fabian Gottlieb von Bellinghausen voyaged through the Antarctic and Pacific 1819-21, Kotzebue's work appeared in English in 1830.

[13] See chapters 2 & 9.

[14] James Cook and James King, *A Voyage to the Pacific Ocean undertaken by the command of His Majesty for making Discoveries in the Northern Hemisphere performed under the direction of captains Cook, Clerke and Gore in His Majesty's Ships the Resolution and Discovery in the years 1776, 1777, 1778, 1779 and 1780.,* 2d ed. (London: H Huges, 1885) 1: iii.

British Explorers and Islanders

It was the captains of the voyages of exploration who established the first relationships with Pacific Islanders and who set the patterns for those who followed. The fair and benevolent treatment of Pacific Islanders could be a matter of national pride, as is witnessed by the intense debate concerning the introduction of venereal disease at Tahiti. The British asserted that it was Bougainville's crew and not Wallis' who had introduced the disease to the island.[15]

Humane relations were a sign of a great captain; this was one of the qualities for which Cook was celebrated. Cook did attempt to establish good relations with the people of the islands he visited, though not always successfully. At Poverty Bay in New Zealand on his second voyage, for example, Cook ordered that seven young Maori be taken hostage in an attempt to improve relations by showing them kindness. He wrote of his regret that the incident ended in violence when the men resisted and four were killed.[16]

It should be remembered, however, that humane intentions of the voyagers were formed in the context of Eighteenth Century standards of behaviour. Naval officers expected obedience from their inferiors, whether European or indigenous, and inflicted severe punishments to maintain their authority. Dening's study of punishments inflicted on British seamen who sailed in the Pacific between 1767 and 1795 showed that 21.4% were flogged.[17] Captains also had a duty to protect their vessels and men from danger. The imbalance of power between a European crew armed with muskets and canon and Islanders with spears and clubs is obvious. Sailors, however, were often debilitated by their long voyages and outnumbered by the inhabitants of the islands. Captains attempted to ensure their safety by exhibiting their superior firepower.

At Tahiti, the first such demonstration was made by Wallis who fired over the heads of the first Tahitians to board the *Dolphin* when they attempted to take nails and other items from the deck. Thereafter, the Tahitians made two attacks upon the

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[15] Dening, *Mr Bligh's Bad Language,* 267.

[16] Stephen Turner, "A History Lesson: Captain Cook Finds Himself in a State of Nature," in *Voyages and Beaches: Pacific Encounters 1769-1840*, eds. Alex Calder, Jonathon Lamb, and Bridget Orrt (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2000), 89.

[17] Ibid. 114.

crew of the *Dolphin* when they came ashore. Wallis used his cannons to sink canoes and demonstrated the range and force of his weapons.[18] The Tahitian response was to offer women.

Howe argues that the Tahitian attack on Wallis was the result of different understandings of hospitality and exchange.[19] Polynesian voyagers who arrived in a foreign land, would have been welcomed but expected to give up their property to their hosts. The attacks made on Wallis by the Tahitians were, therefore, the result of his failure to respond to Tahitian speeches and symbolic plantain branches in a way that demonstrated friendship:

> From the Tahitian point of view, this was an outrage. Their welcome had been abused, and the newcomers were acting as enemies rather than submissive friends. New tactics were required to counter the now very real threat posed by the *Dolphin* and her 180 crew.[20]

The LMS mission had to come terms with similar claims over their property which from a European perspective were thefts or importunities.

Tahitians, as noted in chapter one, did not condone theft within a social group but it could be committed against outsiders. The penalty, if the thief had no powerful protector, could be death.[21] Indeed, Tahitians were sometimes surprised at the leniency of the treatment of theft by visitors. Bligh gave a man who stole a compass 100 lashes but his chief was prepared to see him shot.[22] Cook's sentences were similar; at Tonga in June 1778, he imposed between three and six dozen lashes on thieves.[23]

Punishments were not always physical; demands were sometimes made to chiefs for the return of property. Hostages were also used. Cook, for example, held a group of Tongan chiefs to ensure the return of a kid and two turkey-cocks in May 1778.[24] At Mo'orea on the same voyage he warned that if two goats were not

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[18] Howe, *Where the waves fall*, 87.
[19] Dening considers the stoning of the *Dolphin* to have been an act of welcome to the God 'Oro not hostility; because women would not have been present at a battle. One could ask why women were present at this religious ceremony? Greg Dening , "Possessing Tahiti," *Oceania* 21 (1986): 639
[20] Howe, *Where the waves fall*, 85.
[21] See chapter 1.
[22] Dening, *Mr Bligh's Bad Language* 85.
[23] Obeysekere, *Apotheosis of Captain Cook*, 30-31.
[24] Ibid. 32.

returned he would smash all the canoes on the islands. Having burnt six houses without success, carpenters were set to break up the canoes and the goats were returned when work was begun at the second bay.[25] Cook also had the heads of thieves shaved.

Thus, during the transitory visits of Europeans Tahitians were forced to abide by their conventions of property and trade. As Obeyesekere comments:

> Polynesians were in some manner being brought in line with judicial norms prevalent on British ships. They expressed an important political reality on the formal level of interpersonal relations: the Polynesians including their chiefs were subordinate to the commanders' authority be it Cook's or Cortése's.[26]

For the Europeans who administered them punishments could function as a means of rehearsing and communicating their values.[27] They were also, however, important to their survival as the loss of goods, even the smallest items, presented real dangers when the voyagers were so far from home. Wallis, for example, had to discipline his crew for trading nails with women when the fittings of the ship began to come loose.

The assessments which the early voyagers made of Tahitian society, and the relationships they established with high ranking *ari'i*, had an enduring affect upon European perceptions of the island and its inhabitants. The early visitors to Tahiti observed a highly stratified society. Recognising that the system of government on the islands was different to their own the visitors appropriated the model of feudal society as an interpretive key. The people of Tahiti were seen as belonging to orders; those at the top as being nobility and their leaders as kings. Therefore, Purea became 'Queen Oberea', Tutaha and later Pomare were seen as kings.

The explorers had little knowledge of Tahiti beyond Matavai Bay and were present only for short periods. It is not surprising, therefore, that they misunderstood the extent of the power exercised by high ranking *ari'i* and interpreted the elaborate rituals surrounding them as signs of their coercive power. The idea that a single dominant individual could be consulted in negotiations was in accord with ideas of orderly society. The identification of an island elite gave the officers of a vessel the

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[25] Ibid. 37.
[26] Ibid. 30.
[27] Dening, *Islands and Beaches,* 18.

opportunity to engage in appropriate social rituals. Gifts were exchanged and high ranking men and women were entertained on board ship. Similarly, high status members of a ship's company were identified by Tahitians and presented with gifts and entertained with music and dancing.

Once established, the idea that Matavai was the seat of political power in Tahiti was not challenged. Even Europeans who were outside the national projects of exploration, such as the *Bounty* mutineers, accepted the primacy of the Pomares. The identification of the Pomares as rulers also survived the tribal warfare and instability described in the previous chapter. The advantage to the Pomares of this misapprehension was that visiting captains could occasionally be persuaded to intervene in disputes to aid the "king" in suppressing a "rebellion".

The identification of monarchs in the Pacific Islands had three advantages for European visitors. Firstly, there was a practical benefit in locating a powerful individual and fostering him or her as an ally. Second, Polynesian monarchs could be employed as examples in philosophical enquiries into the origins of civil government and in critiques of European society.[28] Finally, indigenous monarchs were interesting characters who could fill the pages of journals. The presence of indigenous leaders in narratives and art enhanced the drama of a situation and status of the captain by providing a person of suitable rank to receive him.

The voyagers' journals often provided engrossing detail about island life. However, it was the formalised encounters, in which the captain was the protagonist, which often provided the subject matter for art. Smirke's *Cession of Matavai* in which the captain of the *Duff* is pictured meeting Pomare I and Ideah, has already been mentioned. Earlier Wallis was pictured taking his leave of 'Queen Oberea'.[29] Royal figures were also to be found in poetry about Tahiti and in O'Keffe's play *Omai: or a Voyage Around the World.* The Raiatean who had travelled to Britain with Captain Furneaux was presented as a prince. Tahitian monarchs were exotic figures who were quickly absorbed into the public imagination.

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[28] This aspect will be discussed in the second part of the present chapter.
[29] See figures 4 and 5.

Encounters between explorers and Pacific Islanders were often marked by violence intended to establish European superiority and by punishment of individuals who transgressed against European property rights. These incidents are the origin of the portrayals of the Pacific islands as lawless. Nevertheless, the explorers also contributed to ideas of indigenous sovereignty by their identification of 'kings' and 'queen' and their occasional interventions on their behalf.

Beachcombers

Beachcombers, that is, Europeans who abandoned ship to settle in the islands, were not constrained in their relations with Pacific Islanders by the dictates of government policy or the pressure of national reputation. Their actions were only limited by the infrequent presence of the naval vessels, such as the British patrol based at New South Wales, which had few powers of intervention.[30] Until the close of the Napoleonic war the attention of European navies was focussed elsewhere.

The presence of European beachcombers in the South Seas, as distinct from the shipwrecked or indigenous beachcombers, was disturbing to other Europeans. There were two reasons for this. Firstly, beachcombers were deserters who had disobeyed their superiors and abandoned their posts. Fears about desertion and mutiny on board ship could parallel fears about the stability of society. This was particularly true of the *Bounty* mutiny, news of which reached Britain in late 1789.[31] In addition, some beachcombers were convicts from New South Wales who had been taken on as seamen by the masters of vessels on condition that they were returned to serve out their sentences. British naval captains had the responsibility of recapturing escaped convicts.

The second challenge made by European beachcombers was the way of life which they adopted in the islands. Men ordinarily deserted their ships singly or in small groups and could not survive without the patronage of a chief. A strong personality and skills useful to the chief were necessary for a successful transition.[32] Beachcombers, therefore, had to recognise indigenous authority and adopt a

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[30] See below.
[31] Rod Edmond, *Representing the South Pacific: Colonial Discourses from Cook to Gauguin* (Cambridge University Press, 1997), 72.
[32] Howe, *Where the waves fall,* 104.

Polynesian way of life. This rejection of their 'civilised' upbringing was alarming to contemporaries:

> A range of accounts, from early mutiny histories to the stories of Louis Becke, draw on developing discourses of degeneration to portray white males brutalized by long sea journeys and the circumstances of the beach, whose alienation from "civilized" values finds expression in their defection from the mini-civil society of the ship and incorporation into the indigenous realm.[33]

Culturally, 'white savages' could be perceived as a greater threat to Europeans than Pacific Islanders because of the element of wilful rejection.

Larger companies, such as the *Bounty* mutineers, also integrated to some extent into indigenous society and were protected by chiefs. On the whole they were supporters of Pomare, although one member of the group, Churchill, formed an alliance with the chief of Taiarapu and briefly led the district. The mutineers fought on behalf of Pomare in 1790 in Tahiti and Mo'orea.[34] They provided knowledge in handling muskets and also tactical knowledge to suit this new kind of warfare. When they experienced what they perceived as theft, they punished the culprits with flogging not by a resort to Tahitian methods.[35] The skills of beachcombers were welcomed by *ari'i* but were viewed with alarm by other Europeans who saw them as fermenting trouble.

When the LMS mission was founded in 1797 the Tahitians were already experienced in forming relationships with Europeans through the short visits of the powerful explorers and the longer stays of beachcombers. Both groups had shown respect for high *ari'i* and supported the Pomare dynasty in its attempts to achieve hegemony. The missionaries themselves, without the external protection of a ship and cannon, could not stand aloof from Tahitian society and were forced to depend on their protector Pomare I.

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[33] *Exploration and Exchange*, xviii.
[34] See chapter 2.
[35] Dening, *Mr Bligh's Bad Language*, 85, 217.

Traders

Traders were often well armed and could be more successful in enforcing their will on Pacific Islanders than more vulnerable beachcombers. Long term trade, however, required mutually beneficial arrangements and co-operation with local elites.

The East India Company had a monopoly on British trade in the Pacific until 1813. Thereafter, the number of traders increased and Port Jackson in New South Wales developed as a commercial centre. From small beginnings in 1787 the number of American and British whaling vessels increased until in the 1840s the Americans had a fleet of 675 vessels.[36] *Bêche de Mer*, mother of pearl and coconut oil were traded in the islands and there was a also a sealing industry in the Bass Strait, Foveaux Strait and New Zealand. Trade in Sandalwood for the Far East also flourished at various islands, in particular Fiji 1804-1813. In Tahiti, which was known for its friendly reception of visitors, a thriving port grew up at Papeete.

Trading in the Pacific could be a dangerous enterprise. At Tahiti in September 1809, for example, Pomare II's enemies captured the schooner *Venus* killing one of the crew.[37] At New Zealand, the crew of the *Boyd* were massacred and eaten. In reprisal, the chief Te Pahi, who was uninvolved, and sixty of his tribe were killed by whaler men.[38] The crews of trading vessels often included Polynesians. In 1846 there may have been as many as three thousand Hawaiians working on foreign ships.[39] Relations varied according to local political circumstances, the temperament of captains and crews, and the type of activity in which the vessels were engaged.

The collection and smoking of *bêche-de-mer,* for example, required good relations and substantial co-operation from chiefs. Traders relied upon an indigenous workforce who could prioritise local concerns such as religious festivals over their employment. Traders were, therefore, often forced to conform to local conditions

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[36] Ernest S. Dodge, *Islands and Empires: Western Impact on the Pacific and East Asia.* Europe and the World in the Age of Expansion, vol. 7 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1976), 69. The discovery of sperm whales off Japan boosted the trade in 1819.
[37] The *Venus* was recaptured by Capt. Campbell of the *Hibernia* who removed the majority of the missionaries to Port Jackson see chapter 5.
[38] Morrell, *Britain in the Pacific Islands*, 29.
[39] David A. Chappell, "Secret Sharers: Indigenous Beachcombers in the Pacific Islands," *Pacific Studies* 17 (1994), 4.

where the commodities which they wised to exchange were under the control of chiefs. As Thomas has argued:

> Although the ultimately exploitative character of the global economy cannot be overlooked, an analysis which makes dominance and extraction central to intersocial exchange from its beginnings will frequently misconstrue power relationships which did not in fact, entail the subordination of native people.[40]

In the Marquesas before 1813, for example, the chiefs refused to trade their pigs at any price and drove them inland to prevent theft by European sailors.[41] Furthermore, the goods which were exchanged by Islanders were often those for which they themselves had little use. In Fiji, the tortoise shell, sandal wood and *bêche-de-mer* traded for firearms were of little value or social importance.[42]

Traders, like beachcombers were accused by some Europeans, including missionaries, of causing disorder in the islands and hindering the spread of religion by their bad example. In *Imperial Benevolence*, Samson has outlined the "humanitarian" perspective which linked trade in spirits and firearms with the demoralisation of indigenous society and emphasised incidents of violent encounter between Pacific Islanders and Europeans.[43] These accounts, while they championed the rights of indigenous people, tended to portray them as innocent and passive victims of European aggression:

> Humanitarians were determined to put white agency at the centre of the story, confining islanders' motives to an easily understood "retaliation theory".[44]

The trade in sandal wood and the labour trade of the later Nineteenth Century were particular targets for humanitarian anger. It was commonly assumed that indigenous people were easily influenced and dominated by resident Europeans, a factor which has important implications for contemporary descriptions of the work of missionaries.[45]

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[40] Thomas, *Entangled Objects,* 84.
[41] Ibid. 97.
[42] Thomas, *Entangled Objects,* 119.
[43] Jane Samson, *Imperial Benevolence: Making British Authority in the Pacific Islands (*Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1998), 26.
[44] Ibid. 29.
[45] See chapter 9.

The relations which traders established with indigenous people varied considerably. Some acknowledged indigenous rulers and adopted islands ways but these were the individuals whose behaviour was the most alien to their compatriots.

Governors of New South Wales

After the foundation of New South Wales in 1788 the British government showed no inclination to go to the expense of maintaining any other colonies in the Pacific. British policy was to protect the colony itself and to preserve the surrounding area as a sphere of British influence.

The relationships established by governors of New South Wales with Pacific Islanders were conditioned from the outset by the confusion about the extent of the colony's own boundaries. The first governor was given jurisdiction over the territory of New South Wales and "all the islands adjacent in the Pacific Ocean".[46] It was only in 1817 that the islands of Polynesia were explicitly defined as outside the boundaries of the colony. Ward argues that the Pacific Islands were never legally within the colony.[47] However, it was the perception of Governors and of inhabitants which was more relevant in terms of shaping policy and attitudes to the islands; many inhabitants of New South Wales saw themselves as the natural heirs to the islands.

In its early years the settlement was in a constant state of crisis and food shortage. It was this situation that forced a closer relationship with Tahiti. In 1801, Governor King authorised the first expedition to Tahiti from which the *Porpoise* returned to Port Jackson with a cargo of 31 000 lbs. of salted pork. [48] The trade flourished between 1807 and 1826 but then declined depriving the Pomare dynasty of an important source of income and weapons.[49]

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[46] Specifically, "within the latitude …10 degrees 37 minutes south and 43 degrees and 39 minutes south." See Ward, *British Policy,* 33.
[47] Ibid. 34.
[48] E. H. Maude, *Of Islands and Men: Studies in Pacific History* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1968), 184.
[49]Ibid. 220.

This trade had two consequences for relations with Tahiti. First, it led Governor King and his successors to attempt to cultivate good relations with the Pomares and to reinforce the dynasty's position. Second, it led to measures to control British subjects, who might have impaired trade. The missionaries had an important place in this scheme as interpreters to Pomare and advisers to the captains sent to acquire pork.

In their efforts to establish good relations with Tahiti Governors of the colony accepted the testimony of navigators and missionaries about the Pomares' sovereignty. Governor King used the form "may it please your majesty" in his correspondence and also made gifts.[50] In 1801, for example, he sent clothing and red feathers by the *Porpoise*. The Rev. John Jefferson was consulted so that they could be distributed according to the respective ranks of Pomare I and Tu.[51] King was also willing to gratify Pomare's wish to visit New South Wales.[52]

In addition to these social and diplomatic pleasantries King laid down instructions for his captains which reinforced Pomare's position. He instructed that the *Porpoise* should not bring away any Tahitian without Pomare's permission. The *Porpoise* was also to trade mainly at Matavai. Later, in the contracts made with private Sydney traders who brought pork from Tahiti, he inserted a clause stipulating that they deal only at Matavai and that only the Pomares should receive guns.[53]

King was the first governor to attempt to control the behaviour of British subjects in the islands. These measures coincided with the first expedition to trade at Tahiti for pork in 1801. The text of the proclamation and accompanying letter suggest that protection of Tahitian livestock was a prime motivation:

> Understanding that the Crews of many Vessels, which have stopped at Otaheite, have behaved not only in a most disorderly manner, but also that they have carried their excesses so far as to take off by force, the breeding

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[50] Acting Governor King to King Pomaree of Otaheite 13th October 1800, HRA 1. 3: 142.

[51] Jefferson to Governor King 10th August 1801, HRA 1, 3: 335.

[52] He insisted in his instructions to William House that Pomare should not be refused but that the length of the journey and discomfort should be explained to him. Governor King to William House 5th November 1801 HRA 1, 3: 333.

[53] Howe, *Where the waves fall,* 134.

Stock that has been brought there at much trouble and expense by those who have formerly visited the Island,[54]

The content of this letter to Jefferson also reflects the concern with national reputation and King's efforts to support the mission. He ordered all merchant ships calling at the island to show respect to the missionaries; not only for the sake of their safety but to safeguard the future supply of the colony.[55]

In 1802 King appointed Rev John Jefferson a magistrate at Tahiti.[56] Jefferson died in 1807 and William Henry, another LMS missionary, was appointed to the same role in 1811.[57] In 1814, Governor Macquarie appointed Thomas Kendal, a CMS missionary, as magistrate in the Bay of Islands, New Zealand. Macquarie's letter to Earl Bathurst included a reference to Tahiti being within the geographical limits of "my Territory".[58] While Ward may be right that the appointments of Jefferson, Henry and Kendall outside Crown territory were illegal, again, it is perceptions of legality which are more important.[59]

In 1805, King introduced a good conduct bond for captains sailing in the islands. The amount was raised by Governor Macquarie in 1813 to £1000. Macquarie issued a proclamation in December 1814 which attempted to protect Pacific Islanders from raids on their gardens; the withholding of wages and to protect the religious rites and observances of the people.[60] Macquarie also stipulated that the permission of the chief be obtained before any Pacific Islander was removed from an island.

Public opinion in New South Wales was diverse with supporters both of schemes to protect Islanders and of projects for colonisation in the islands. The Rev.

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[54] Acting Governor King to Mr Jefferson 28th March 1801 HRA 1, 3: 139-40.
[55] *Acting-Governor King's Proclamation to English Merchant Captains calling at Tahiti* by Philip Gidley King Esqr. Captn. General and Governor in Chief in and over His Majesty's Territory of New South Wales and its dependencies including the Islands in the South Pacific Ocean, between the latitude 10 and 45 South. Given 28th March 1801, ibid.
[56] Jefferson to Gov. King 12th August 1802 HRA 1, 3: 727.
[57] See chapter 5.
[58] Gov Macquarie to Bathurst 17th January 1814. When Henry arrived in the colony in 1813 he was described as a magistrate in the *Sydney Gazette,* 8th May 1813.
[59] Ward, *British Policy,* 38.
[60] Proclamation, enclosure 1 in Macquarie to Bathurst 17th January 1814.

Samuel Marsden attempted to bring prosecutions in Australia over conduct in New Zealand. He was an official chaplain and magistrate in the colony. He acted as an agent for the LMS and also directed the work of the Church Missionary Society in New Zealand. Marsden founded a Society for the Protection of South Seas Islanders in 1813 and promoted the belief that the British Crown would protect the Maori by arranging for the translation of British legislation that affected the islands.[61]

The supporters of colonisation in New South Wales saw the Pacific Islands, and New Zealand in particular, as obvious spheres for expansion. Their activities are important because the campaigning of the 1830s contributed to a change in attitudes towards indigenous leaders and the necessity of British intervention. One prominent campaigner was Gibbon Wakefield, author of a *Letter from Sydney* (1829), which advocated "systematic colonisation" of the remainder of Australia and New Zealand as replicas of British society.[62]

New Zealand had valuable natural resources which could be exploited by Sydney merchants as demonstrated by the increase in trade between the two during the 1830s from less than £20 000 to £83 470 in 1839.[63] The plans for increased settlement by Europeans foresaw independent European colonies established in New Zealand. It was the proposal of private schemes for colonisation in New Zealand by the Frenchman Baron de Thierry (1835) and the New Zealand Association (1838) in Britain which led the British government to rethink its non-interventionist policy in New Zealand.[64]

Settlers already resident in New Zealand complained about the lack of official support in petitions in 1834, 1836 and 1838. They also highlighted the lack of effective justice, as they saw it, by forming their own vigilante groups.[65] The Colonial Office accepted the impression of lawlessness and feared that uncontrolled

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[61] Claudia Orange, *The Treaty of Waitangi* (Wellington: Allen and Unwin, 1987), 10.
[62] James Williamson, *A Notebook of Commonwealth History*, 3 ed., revised by D. G. Southgate (London and New York: Macmillan, 1967), 150.
[63] Orange, *The Treaty of Waitangi*, 9.
[64] See below.
[65] Orange, *The Treaty of Waitangi*, 15-16.

colonisation would lead to a repeat of the abuses elsewhere highlighted by the Committee on Aborigines.

British Government Policy

The British government was not inclined to acquire further colonies in the Pacific but did introduce measures to control British subjects. The first, in 1817, was 57 Geo. III c. 53 under which murder and manslaughter in the islands were to be treated as though they were committed on the high seas. This was the first statutory statement that the islands themselves were not claimed as British territory. Unfortunately, until the Act was amended in 1823, the nearest competent court was in Ceylon.[66] In 1828 the Australian Courts Act created Supreme Courts in New South Wales and Van Diemans land which could be used for serious cases arising in New Zealand, Tahiti or elsewhere. Few cases, however, came to trial.

The Cape of Good Hope Punishment Act of 1835 attempted a similar policy to that adopted in the Pacific in 1817. All British subjects south of the 25th degree of latitude were placed under the jurisdiction of the Cape Colony.[67] In both cases the measures take an approach reminiscent of the precedents in the Crown Colonies of New England where jurisdiction was claimed over the British inhabitants but not the native Americans.[68]

The first British consul in the Pacific was appointed to Hawaii in 1824, however, the question of negotiating legal jurisdiction for consuls was not considered until the 1860s. The application of the legal measures was left, therefore, to the Royal Navy. In 1829 the Admiralty ordered that vessels from the South American and East Indies stations should make regular visits to the Pacific.

Samson has highlighted two important points in relation to the "policing" of the Pacific in this era. Firstly, that bombardment and the imposition of fines did not necessarily convey the lesson intended by the captains who ordered them. Second, while naval captains were the agents of British government policy, they had

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[66] In 1828 the Australian Courts Act created supreme courts in New South Wales and Van Diemans land which could be used for serious cases arising in New Zealand, Tahiti or elsewhere.
[67] Eric Walker, *A History of Southern Africa*, 3d ed. with corrections (London: Longmans, 1962), 192.
[68] Paul McHugh, "Law History and the Treaty of Waitangi," *New Zealand Journal of History* 31 (1996): 29.

considerable discretion in carrying out their orders.[69] Samson argues that the many captains recruited post 1815 were influenced by evangelical Christianity and tended to be more concerned to prosecute British subjects for offences against Islanders than in protecting the interest of compatriots:

> ..naval reports circumvented the whole issue of islander offences by dismissing cases of murder or plunder of British subjects, justifying their tolerance by referring to islanders as impetuous, childlike savages who could not be expected to behave like civilized men and who needed protection while their Christianization and "improvement" was underway.[70]

In Fiji, there were instances of leniency in the 1830s. At Tahiti, however, where there was a recognisable form of government there were often attempts to assert the rights of British subjects. In 1832 two cases of plunder from vessels at islands considered under her dominion were brought to Pomare IV's attention.[71] Captain Fitzroy of the *Beagle* made a claim for compensation in 1835.

The policy followed by Britain in the Pacific Islands, prior to the annexation of New Zealand, appears to have been to avoid expensive interventions and to support indigenous sovereignty. The Tahitian appeal to use the British flag in 1825, for example, was rejected. A Tahitian flag was chosen however with the aid of Captain Lawes of the *Satellite* who also assisted with port regulations in 1829. At Samoa in 1838 Captain Bethune countersigned port regulations for Apia.

New Zealand also acquired a flag which was approved by an assembly of twenty-five chiefs from the North Island at Waitangi in March 1834. The flag was proposed by the British resident James Busby, appointed two years previously. In October 1835 Busby persuaded thirty-four chiefs to sign a Declaration of Independence, signing themselves the United Tribes of New Zealand.

American policy in the Pacific followed a similar course in concluding treaties with indigenous rulers and appointing consuls. Captain Catesby Jones concluded commercial treaties in 1826 at Hawaii, Tahiti and Raiatea. In 1839 Captain Wilkes of the United States Exploring Expedition revised the port

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[69] Samson, *Imperial Benevolence*, 130ff.
[70] Ibid. 107.
[71] Cole and Ebril see Ward, *British Policy*, 64.

regulations at Apia and persuaded Tanoa, the powerful chief of Mbau, to sign similar ones for Fiji. Tanoa's power, however, did not actually extend sufficiently far to implement the code.

The French were more interested in territorial acquisition than the Americans. One aspect of their strategy was the positioning of French missionaries to mark out spheres of influence. This was facilitated by Pope Gregory XVI who in 1835 gave the Picipus fathers charge of the Pacific. French Priests were taken to the Marquesas, Tahiti and Hawaii in French vessels. The Hawaiian response was similar to the Tahitian events; the Priests were expelled in 1837 and an Ordinance passed forbidding their re-entry.

The annexations of New Zealand and Tahiti were both carried out by treaty. The Treaty of Waitangi was signed in May 1840. It recognised the sovereignty of the New Zealand chiefs and, in the Maori text, assured them that they would retain their *Rangatiratanga*.[72] Orange, however, argues that the decision to intervene was prompted by the impression given by Busby, of his own lack of power:

> ..that New Zealand affairs were out of control, that there was a "state of anarchy" in the 1830s. If Busby meant a lack of strong, central government, this was true, but contemporaries in England construed it as a widespread breakdown of law and order.[73]

The possibility of further disorder as a result of an unofficial attempt to colonise could be used to justify the annexation. Indigenous leaders were presented as incapable of governing.[74] Tahiti had a sovereign in Queen Pomare but suffered nevertheless from European criticism of law and order in the grievances of European settlers and pressure from French naval Captains to alter the laws affecting French Priests.[75]

The Treaty of Waitangi was undermined by changes in legal theory. Whereas a nation might once have been recognised as such irrespective of its strength, Nineteenth Century legal positivists defined a nation state by the presence of

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[72] *Mana*, authority, sovereignty.
[73] Orange, *Treaty of Waitangi,* 18.
[74] Ibid. 31.
[75] See chapter 2.

institutions such as law courts and its ability to exercise sovereignty.[76] The Treaty of Waitangi was later attacked on the grounds that the Maori did not constitute a nation and in 1877 it was declared a legal nullity. The campaign to maintain the independence of the Leeward Islands succeeded, however, on grounds acceptable to the positivists; the existence of separate law codes for each island. LMS supporters were outraged at the treatment of the Tahitians and organised a petition campaign, which argued that Pomare IV had been ill used by the chiefs and the French Admiral and urged that she be given the same respect as a European monarch.[77]

There was no single European or British attitude to law and order in the islands or towards indigenous leaders. The members of the LMS who established the mission at Tahiti in 1797 were heirs to the interpretations, representations and practices of the Europeans who had gone before them, though they did not necessarily repeat them.[78] They also conducted the mission in the context of the relationships Tahitians formed with beachcombers; traders; Governors of NSW, and the British Foreign Office. There were, therefore, a wide range of possibilities before them when they made choices about their own course of action.

The identification and representation of Pomare I as monarch of Tahiti was made prior to the arrival of the mission. The relations established between the Pomares and Europeans varied, in part, according to the power of the visitors. Individuals and small groups conformed to island ways and depended upon chiefly patrons, whereas Wallis, Cook and other naval captains were able to enforce compliance, to some extent, with their own norms.

A mutually beneficial pattern of engagement might be established between high ranking Europeans and high ranking Tahitians. Military assistance or preferential trade were sometimes offered to Tahitian allies. These encounters augmented the position of the Pomares, assisting them in their pre-existing centralising ambitions and bringing them closer to the European definitions of monarchy which were originally applied to them.

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[76] Fredericka Hackshaw, "Nineteenth Cenury Notions of Aboriginal Title and their Influence on the Interpretation of the Treaty of Waitangi," in *Waitangi: Maori and Pakeha Perspectives of the Treaty of Waitangi* ed. I. H. Kawharu (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1989), 99-101.
[77] See chapter 9.
[78] See chapter 5.

The image of the islands of the South Sea as 'lawless' was already in existence when the mission was founded in Matavai Bay. The absence of written laws did not become a determinative element in this discussion until the 1840s. The differences in custom and the practices of human sacrifice and infanticide, however, were unsettling from the outset. Conflicting perspectives on the ownership of property were a recurrent problem. The fear of 'white savages', who had consciously rejected a civilised way of life, was as important as in shaping perceptions of the 'Pacific' as conflicts with Pacific Islanders. Furthermore, commentators assumed European dominance of events, irrespective of the actual power of the individuals concerned and of their island hosts.

Throughout the period under consideration in this thesis the problem of 'lawless' Europeans received attention from naval officers, and policy makers in New South Wales and London. Retrospectively these measures were interpreted as a sign of the 'disorder' of Pacific Islands and Islanders, which could only be solved by the intervention of Britain or another European power. The rule of law was thus presented as a gift of the coloniser. The influence of this justification should be borne in mind when comments about the viability or success of the Tahitian Law Code are considered.

Racial Theory and Pacific Islanders

The previous section reviewed the actions of various Europeans in the Pacific, their relationships with indigenous people and perceptions of law and order. This part of the chapter will consider the intellectual background to these relations; which both resulted from and influenced the experiences of Europeans in the Pacific. It will look a little more closely at racial attitudes in the late Eighteenth and early Nineteenth Century. It is appropriate to preface discussion of these subjects with further consideration of narratives of the voyages of exploration. These accounts set the scene for later interpretations and were also the source of European fascination with the Pacific.

British attitudes to the indigenous peoples of the Pacific and to their explorer-heroes were both shaped by the explosion of public interest in official voyages, exploration narratives, popular literature, art and theatre on the theme of the South

Seas. The English Admiralty had first advised explorers to keep diaries of their voyages in 1588. Cook's first voyage, however, can be seen as turning point both in the attempt to make accurate scientific observations and in the representation of the Pacific to the wider public through the publication of journals.

The first object of the voyage was to observe the transit of Venus at Tahiti and thereafter to seek evidence of a Southern continent. The voyage was planned with the collection of data in mind. Cook himself was chosen for his skills as hydrographer. He was accompanied by Joseph Banks, Fellow of the Royal Society; Daniel Carl Solander, a Swedish naturalist; Herman Spöring a scientific secretary and assistant naturalist; and two artists Sydney Parkinson and Alexander Buchan.[79] The intention, at least on Banks' part, to diffuse information was apparent in his choice of Buchan who was to provide picturesque views of his travels for consumption at home. Banks, then aged twenty five, was accomplishing two aims simultaneously: to collect information for the Royal Society but also to conduct his own grand tour.[80]

The first of Cook's voyages was seen by contemporaries as belonging more to Banks and Solander than to Cook. Cook's narrative of his first voyage was produced in rather simple style but the journals he kept on the second and third voyages show signs of conscious preparation for public consumption.[81] It was his leadership of the second voyage, in the absence of Banks, which began to establish Cook as a figure in his own right and his dramatic death at Hawaii in 1799 which established him as national hero. *A Voyage to the South Pole (1777)* sold out on the first day of publication. *A Voyage to the Pacific Ocean* (1784), the edited journals of Cook and King from the third voyage, sold out in three days.[82]

Sir Joseph Banks, J R Forster and George Forster were as important as Cook in shaping the public's perception of the expeditions and the written and visual representation of the Pacific. Banks was influential in the fields of art and science. He was a member of Royal Society and of the Society of Arts prior to the first

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[79]Banks' entourage also had four servants and two dogs. Moorehead, *Fatal Impact,* 12.
[80]Buchan died shortly after their arrival at Tahiti. Smith, *European Vision,* 27.
[81] Obeysekere, *Apotheosis of Captain Cook,* 24.
[82] Alan Frost, "The Pacific Ocean: The Eighteenth Century's 'New World'", in *Facing Each Other: The World's Perception of Europe and Europe's Perception of the World,* ed. Anthony Pagden (Ashgate Publishing, 2000), 596.

voyage, and it was he who selected the artists. He was president of the Royal Society from 1778 until his death in 1820. He did not publish his journal himself, it appeared in Hawkesworth, however he was the most celebrated figure of the first voyage.

A disagreement between Banks and the Admiralty resulted in his withdrawal from Cook's second voyage. Instead J R Forster and his son George travelled on board the *Resolution* and each produced a journal. George Forster's *A Voyage Around the World* (1777) was more influential than his father's *Observations made during a Voyage round the World on Physical Geography, Natural History, and Ethnic Philosophy* (1778). J R Forster also translated Bougainville's *La Nouvelle Cythere* (1769).

One of the most popular books of the century was Dr John Hawkesworth's "corrected" version of the journals of Byron, Wallis, Cartert, Banks, and Cook.[83] His account of Cook's first voyage was frequently criticised for its romanticism but had run through four editions by 1789:

> For the next ten years or more it was regarded as a classic of South Sea Island literature. So far as the world was concerned Hawkesworth *was* Cook and the engravings were illustrations of what Cook had seen.[84]

It was the book borrowed most frequently at the Bristol Lending Library between 1770-1784, a total of two hundred and one occasions. This can be compared with George Forster's *A Voyage Around the World* which was borrowed sixty eight times between publication and 1784 and J R Forster's translation of Bougainville with forty-eight borrowings.[85]

Hawkesworth's version of the voyages was a literary piece composed by someone who had never travelled to the South Seas. It was criticised by contemporaries, including George Forster, for its romanticism and sophistry.[86] Hawkesworth's idealised description of the inhabitants of Tahiti, with its lack of condemnation of immorality was a cause of disapproval:

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[83] Hawkesworth, *Account of Voyages Undertaken.*
[84] Moorehead, *Fatal Impact,* 48.
[85] Frost, *The Pacific Ocean,* 596.
[86] Forster, *Voyage Around the World,* 1: preface.

One page of *Hawkesworth*, in the cool retreat,
Fires the bright maid with more than mortal heat;
She sinks at once into the lover's arms,
Nor deems it vice to prostitute her charms;
"I'll do", cries she, "What Queens have done before";
And sinks, *from principle,* a common whore.[87]

The incident referred to here was Banks' sexual liaison with Purea, known to the voyagers as 'Queen Oberea', as a result of which he lost his trousers.

The voyages of Cook were acknowledged in LMS publications as an inspiration for the choice of a first missionary destination.[88] The planning and structure of the South Sea mission was influenced both by information recovered from these narratives and by the role model of the captain hero, as will be seen in chapter five.[89] The popularity of voyage literature and art also influence the representation of the first mission.

The LMS contributed to the genre itself with the publication of Captain James Wilson's *A Missionary Voyage to the Southern Pacific Ocean.* Later, the LMS deputation of Daniel Tyerman and George Bennet produced *Voyages and Travels Around the World* (1831), an account of their journey to the society's missions in the South Seas, Australia, Java, China, Penang, Malacca, Singapore, India, Madagascar and South Africa.[90]

European Attitudes Towards Pacific Islanders

At the close of the Eighteenth Century there was an almost universal confidence in the superiority of European religion, technology, government, indeed, all that they described as civilisation.[91] Europeans were divided as to the causes of the inferiority of indigenous people and its permanence; some believed that, with the appropriate tuition or through conversion to Christianity, Polynesians might aspire to

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[87] *An epistle from Mr Banks, Voyager, Monster-Hunter, and Amaroso, to Obera, Queen of Tahiti,* London (1774) quoted in Bernard Smith, *European Vision in the South Pacific* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1988), 46.
[88] London Missionary Society, "An Introductory Memorial Respecting the Formation of the Missionary Society published by the directors," in *Sermons Preached in London at the Formation of the Missionary Society* (London, 1795), i-xxix ; Thomas Haweis, "Sermon 1: The apostolic Commission," ibid., 12; George Burder, "Sermon II: Jonah's Mission to Ninevah," ibid., 35.
[89] See chapter 5.
[90] See chapter 8.
[91] With the exception of those such as Diderot who used the noble savage as a critique of European Society, see below.

European civilisation whereas others denied that such a transformation was possible. The beliefs which individuals held about the ability of Polynesians to 'improve' themselves informed their attitudes to projects such as the Tahitian laws.

European attitudes to indigenous people were diverse and changing in the period between 1767 and 1860. The publication of the Pacific voyages made two important contributions to European perceptions of indigenous people in the Pacific and beyond.

First, the popular literature of voyaging introduced the public to the idyllic climate of the South Sea islands. Polynesians were identified as noble savages whose simple unspoiled life could be developed as an intellectual tool either to critique civilised society or explain its origins. The application of these European models to Polynesian situations had long lasting implications as later authors sought to reinforce or rebut the image of the noble savage.

Second, the meticulous observation and cataloguing of the natural world practised on the Eighteenth Century voyages was increasingly extended to human beings. The amassing of data about the newly 'discovered' peoples and the impulse to collate and classify contributed to the hardening of the racial distinctions drawn between peoples across the World. The description of animals and plants and their division into separate species was extended to people. This hardening equated the physical characteristics of humans, which were thought to mark out races, with the state of civilisation which they might attain.[92] The link between biology and culture, which came to dominate debates in the second half of the Nineteenth Century, is referred to as scientific racism or social Darwinism. The Eighteenth Century impulse to classify was not identical with this later racism but its roots can be traced to the interest in systematic descriptions and distinctions. The point at which this scientific classification of races became the dominant mode of describing South Sea Islanders is a matter of debate among historians which will be discussed below.

Scientific observation and romantic idealisation are strands which are often combined in European attitudes towards Pacific Islanders and in the representations of them which Europeans produced. The relationship between the romantic and the

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[92] George W. Stocking, *Victorian Anthropology* (New York: Free Press, 1987) 45.

scientific was the subject of Bernard Smith's groundbreaking *European Vision in the South Pacific,* which is still a starting point for writing about cross-cultural representation in the Pacific.[93] Smith examined the development of a new style of landscape painting which, influenced by the work of topographical and botanical artists on board, rejected the romantic style of the neo-classicists. In the new "typical landscape" the construction of picturesque scenes intended to convey atmosphere was replaced by close observation.[94]

The treatment of human subjects too, Smith argued, altered as a result of the exploration of the Pacific. The early voyagers attempted to understand the peoples they met through classical analogies. Both Banks and Bougainville compared the Tahitians to the ancient Greeks. The crew of the *Endeavour* used the names Ajax, Hercules, Epicurus and Lycurgus for four chiefs before their real names were known.[95] Smith contrasted the portrayal of the Tahitians as "soft primitives" with the different kind of admiration accorded to the Maori. They could also be seen as noble savages but they were warriors; "hard primitives" akin to the Spartans in their "austerity and fortitude".[96]

Smith argued that the beginning of the missionary era saw an increase in criticism of Pacific societies and the rise of the image of the ignoble savage. Mission accounts and drawings focused on the depravity of the unconverted and sought to counteract the impression of an Elysium which remained popular. Smith's comparison of drawings and watercolours with engravings reveals the ways in which originals were altered prior to publication either to increase or decrease the romance of the composition or the savagery of the figures. The triumph of a scientific representation was demonstrated in the work of the artists employed by D'Urville and Wilkes. Thus, by 1850 the variety of humans found in the Pacific were being subject to the same scrutiny as specimens from the animal world.[97]

Smith's recognition of the extent to which the images and accounts generated by Europeans were constructed to conform to pre-determined categories has been

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[93] Nicholas Thomas, "Introduction," in *Double Vision: Art Histories and Colonial Histories in the Pacific,* eds. Nicholas Thomas and Diane Losche (Cambridge University Press, 1999), 3.
[94] Smith, *European Vision,* 4.
[95] Ibid. 41-2.
[96] Ibid. 5.
[97] Ibid. 339.

pursued by various scholars in the field of Pacific history. The concepts of noble and ignoble savage did indeed often function in this way. The Noble Savage or 'natural man' was already a philosophical device, a starting point from which the origins of civilisation could be traced. In the work of Hobbes and Hume the state of 'natural man' was one without the benefits of society. Rousseau, however, described an ideal age corrupted by laws and property:

> The times of which I am going to speak are very remote – how much you have changed from what you were! It is so to say, the life of your species that I am going to describe, in the light of the qualities which you once received and which your culture and habits have been able to corrupt but not able to destroy.[98]

Tahiti appeared to fit Rousseau's description of an unspoiled paradise and the image of the noble savage was taken up by Bougainville and Diderot. Their accounts emphasised the dissimilarities between the two groups and portrayed life in Tahiti as exotic and the home of pleasures denied in Europe.

Writers and artists, therefore, used pre-existing models of primitive society and the construct of noble, or indeed ignoble, savages as exotic illustrations of arguments about the state of European society. Some scholars have suggested that these concerns dominated European observations in and representations of the Pacific and that all portrayals of Islanders should be interpreted as deconstructions of "European selves".[99] Dening, for example, states that:

> Everything that was other was subordinated to the voyagers' self interests, and every cross-cultural relationship was defined by the voyagers' presumption of superiority....Aoe were voyagers through and through, in their souls, but never pilgrims, never expecting to find their better selves in other places.[100]

His implication is that all European visitors were unable or unwilling to attempt to understand Pacific Islanders.[101] Thomas, however, has questioned whether this

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[98] Jean Jacques Rousseau, *A Discourse on Inequality*, ed. Maurice Cranston (Penguin, 1984), 79.
[99] J. G. A. Pocock, "Tangata Whenua and Enlightenment Anthropology," *New Zealand Journal of History* 26 (1992): 41.
[100] Dening, *Islands and Beaches, 25.*
[101] Ibid. 271.

emphasis on the incomprehension of Europeans is appropriate given the many aspects of life which Europeans did find comprehensible.[102]

Thomas' point is supported by a number of recent studies.[103] In *The Exotic as Erotic: Captain Cook at Tahiti,* for example, Roy Porter suggests that studies which highlight stereotyping by Europeans and the labelling of 'the other' underestimate the extent to which they employed strategies which drew comparisons with the familiar.[104] Porter describes how J R Forster and Cook were keen, in the face of Bougainville and Diderot's comments on the sexual freedoms of Tahiti, to emphasise the normality of Tahitians' behaviour. They were, according to Cook, no more lascivious than the worst sort at home.[105]

George Forster made a similar defence of the Tahitians from accusations of theft which suggested that they were no more inclined to dishonesty than any other people subject to undue temptation.[106] Forster's representations of Tahiti are complex and contain some passages which reflect the noble savage approach; he does describe Tahiti as an Elysium and occasionally uses Tahitian customs to criticise British ones, for example, when praising the elegance of Tahitian clothing.[107] However, this does not preclude occasions where there is an attempt to use familiar concepts to promote understanding in his readership.

In his account of Huahine, for example, George Forster describes an incident in which he shot a blue-white bellied kingfisher and a grey heron. The birds were described by the crowd as "eatoos".[108] Forster notes, however, that this did not mean that the birds were considered divinities, which were invisible, rather the degree of

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[102] Thomas, *Colonialism's Culture,* 52.

[103] Jane Samson, "Ethnology and Theology: Nineteenth-Century Mission Dilemas in the South Pacific," in *Christian Missions and the Enlightenment,* ed. Brian Stanley (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon, 2001), 99-122 ; Brian Stanley, *Enlightenment and Mission: A Re-evaluation* (Cambridge: North Atlantic Missiology Project, 1996).

[104] Roy Porter, "The Exotic as Erotic: Captain Cook at Tahiti," in *Facing Each Other: The World's Perception of Europe and Europe's Perception of the World,* ed. Anthony Pagden (Ashgate Publishing, 2000), 584.

[105] Ibid. 575.

[106] Forster, *Voyage Round the World,* 1: chap 9.

[107] Ibid. 1: 280.

[108] *Atua* see chapter 1. Forster, *Voyage Round the World,* 1: 379.

veneration should be compared with the injunctions which protect swallows in England from small boys. His comparisons between the Tahitians and the Greeks were based upon his belief, "that men in a similar state of civilisation resemble each other more than we are aware of."[109]

The representation of South Sea Islanders was often romanticised. The Pacific, however, could be described in both exotic and more familiar terms. The accuracy of the analogies drawn by European observers may have been doubtful, as in the case of the identification of the Tahitian monarchy. However, the comparisons which were drawn were not necessarily the result of projection which depended upon a radical distinction between the observer and the 'other'. They could be attempts, predicated upon a common humanity, to convey information in terms familiar to readers.

From a broader perspective David Cannadine, too, has questioned the assumption that colonialism was always supported by the strategy of drawing sharp distinctions between Europeans and indigenous peoples:

> ..the British Empire was not exclusively (or even predominately) concerned with the creation of "otherness" on the presumption that the imperial periphery was different from, and inferior to, the metropolis: it was at least as much (or perhaps more) concerned with what has recently been called the "construction of affinities" on the presumption that society on the periphery was the same as, or even on occasion superior to, society in the metropolis.[110]

Cannadine's study of "Ornamentalism" is interesting, though concerned with the period 1850-1950, because of its focus upon the attempts within the British Empire to identify and foster the position of indigenous elites. He contends that historians should give greater attention to the assumptions made by the British elite about the nature of society overseas and to the affinities which they perceived between themselves and elites on the periphery.[111] His comments provide a wider context in

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[109] Ibid. 2: 108.
[110] David Cannadine, *Ornamentalism: How the British saw their Empire* (Allen Lane, Penguin Press, 2001), xx.
[111] Ibid. 8.

which the observations on European treatment of indigenous leaders in the preceding section of this chapter can be placed.

An assessment of late Eighteenth Century descriptions of the islands and their inhabitants must therefore take account of the familiarising tendencies as well as of description and classification. Arriving in the South Seas in 1797 the LMS missionaries inherited both sides of this romantic tradition; to exoticise and to familiarise, including the identification of the Pomares as the ruling dynasty in Tahiti. To these ideas were added their own beliefs about the shared humanity and the capabilities of their converts.

The data gathered by the voyages of exploration has already been noted as a factor which promoted hierarchical classifications of peoples and scientific theories of race. The outline of Smith's argument above, reveals that he traced the triumph of science to the years 1820-1850. Edmond and Kociumbas, however, focus on the influence of the voyage narratives and art from the outset and have seen racial attitudes in the Pacific hardening from around the turn of the century.[112] This would seem to be a little early for the identification of scientific racism as distinct from hierarchical comparisons and negative descriptions. While there was an increasing interest in ethnology in the early Nineteenth Century, the categories of comparison were not necessarily racial. The inhabitants of the Pacific were graded according to a variety of factors: their treatment of women, willingness to trade or religious beliefs.

The approach taken by Douglas resolves some of these difficulties by suggesting that there was a slow shift, beginning in 1800, from perspectives which equated the word "race" with the variety of humankind to a "grim modernist dogma of permanent, hereditary, possibly originary, physical differences between groups". Douglas suggests, however, that in the Pacific the work of D'Urville, with his distinction between Melanesian and Polynesian, first drawn in 1832, should be seen

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[112] Jan Kociumbas, *The Oxford History of Australia: Possessions 1770-1860* (Oxford University Press, 1995), 83; Edmond, *Representing the South Pacific, 7.*

as a landmark.[113] This is particularly appropriate as the characteristics ascribed by D'Urville's to his two races exemplify the link between physical characteristics and culture.[114]

The classification of people alone, as Thomas argues, was not the central point of scientific racism.[115] It was the permanent link which was established between the physical characteristics, said to define the races, and the abilities of the members of those groups which was significant. Thomas draws a distinction between Renaissance colonisation and a modern paradigm. The Renaissance view was:

> .. an "incoporporative" ideology and a religious framework characterized Renaissance colonialism: others were represented as pagans rather than savages or members of inferior races, and their conversion served to legitimize expansion... [116]

This perspective, while it assumed that non-Christians were inferior, did allow for their improvement. The secular model which replaced it accounted for the differences between people by reference to fixed categories. The cause of inferiority was race not climate or religion.

In *The Image of Africa* Curtin drew similar distinctions between racial attitudes, based upon beliefs concerning whether an indigenous person could "improve". Curtin contrasted "conversionism" with "trusteeship". Conversionism was the attitude, not necessarily held by all but extending beyond religious circles, that, "The absolute superiority of Western culture implied a moral obligation to change African culture".[117] In contrast, trusteeship indicated a belief that inferiority was permanent:

> In the great age of imperialism racism became dominant in European thought. Few believed that any "lower race" could actually reach the heights of Western achievement. Their salvation would have to be achieved in some

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[113] Bronwen Douglas, "Art as ethno-historical text: science, representation and indigenous presence in eighteenth and nineteenth century oceanic voyage literature," in *Double Vision: Art Histories and Colonial Histories in the Pacific, eds.* Nicholas Thomas and Diane Losche (Cambridge University Press, 1999), 65.

[114] See introduction.

[115] Thomas, *Colonialism's Culture*, 80.

[116] Ibid. 125.

[117] Philip D. Curtin, *The Image of Africa: British Ideas and Action 1780-1850* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1964), 116.

other way; but meanwhile they were entitled, in their inferiority, to the paternal protection of a Western power. The idea of trusteeship gradually replaced that of conversion.[118]

Curtin suggests that this change occurred in West Africa between 1850 and 1870.

Thomas however, is reluctant to outline the development of ideas about race for fear that such a chronology would tend to homogenise European perspectives and obscure the range and the competing interpretations, both monogenesist and polygenesist, which co-existed at any one time.[119] His stress on the variety of attitudes and representations of Pacific peoples is valid.[120] Thomas cites the racial views of evangelical Christians as one example of the diversity of European perspectives and as a continuation of the incorporationist attitude of the Renaissance.

For the purpose of this study, to propose an "evangelical perspective" is a useful starting point but it does not provide sufficient scope for describing the changes in the attitudes of missionaries and other evangelicals. As Anstey has demonstrated, many evangelical themes were suited to identification with fellow humans and were indeed metaphors of slavery and freedom.[121] The missionary movement was founded on the basis that all people were equally in need of conversion and could aspire to the blessings of Christianity. Thomas is right, therefore, to emphasise the distinctive evangelical position, however, it should not be assumed that this position was unassailable.

Firstly, while the biblical account of the creation supported the unity of humankind, or monogenesis, it was also possible to derive a near polygenesist perspective by reference to the three sons of Noah and the curse of Ham. Second, the members of missionary societies were not immune to changing attitudes in the rest of society, such as the decline in sympathy for Africans which followed emancipation. Medical and statistical evidence appeared to confirm the existence of distinct races. Third, missions had to contend with disappointments in the field of their own expectations of converts. [122] It will be the task of later chapters in this thesis to

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[118] Curtin, *Image of Africa,* 415.

[119] Nicholas Thomas, *In Oceania: visions, artifacts, histories* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997), 71.

[120] See Smith, *European Vision,* 49.

[121] Roger Anstey, *The Atlantic Slave Trade and British Abolition, 1760-1810* (London: Macmillan, 1975), chapter 5.

[122] Samson, "Ethnography and Theology."

examine the extent to which the views expressed by members of the Tahitian mission changed.

Conclusion

The first section of this chapter considered the variety of attitudes, from confrontational to collaborative, which Europeans adopted in their relations with Tahitians and with indigenous leaders in particular. The assessment of racial attitudes and of the representation of Tahitians has suggested that the identification of monarchs, first made by explorers, was based both upon projections of the romantic and exotic, but also on an attempt to recognise and explain Tahitian society in familiar terms.

The identification of Tahitian monarchs was more than a romantic literary diversion. For the Bounty mutineers, Governor King or the members of the Tahitian mission, it was a working definition of Tahitian society which they applied when determining their own policy. The interventions made by Europeans, for example to suppress "rebellions" against the "monarchs" they had identified, had the effect of bringing Tahitian reality closer to the original identifications made by the explorers.

The transition in European thought from explanations of culture difference in terms of climate or religion to one based on racial characteristics provides an explanation for the negative assessments of the mission laws found in Nineteenth Century and early Twentieth Century discussion of them. It was assumed that Pacific Islanders did not have the capacity to manage the complex institutions of European civilisation, such as law. The acceptance of scientific racism made the contrast between the image of an inherently disorderly Pacific and the rule of law imposed in European colonies all the more convincing.

This negative assessment of the Polynesians' ability to acquire the benefits of civilisation can be contrasted with the attitudes expressed by some early LMS Directors and by members of the first mission. For them the cause of cultural differences was heathenism. A convert to Christianity would have access to all the advantages of European civilisation. However, beliefs about the capabilities of

indigenous people were not static, even within mission circles. The development of these perspectives will be examined in later chapters.

Figure 4. The Queen of Otaheite taking leave of Captain Wallis.

Engraving, National Library of Australia

CHAPTER 4. THE ORIGINS OF THE LONDON MISSIONARY SOCIETY AND THE MISSION TO THE SOUTH SEAS

The South Sea mission was the first project conducted by the LMS. It was proposed during the first week of the Society's meetings in 1795 and had been put into execution within one year. For this reason the foundation of the LMS itself is an essential topic in the history of the mission at Tahiti. The increasing interest in missionary activity that culminated in the foundation of several voluntary missionary societies in the 1790s, including the LMS, provides the context for these events.

The first section if this chapter examines the origins of the LMS and the concepts shared by the evangelicals who joined the society. Previous studies of the mission have questioned whether the participation of the missionaries in drafting laws in Tahiti was consistent with the principles of their denominations or the LMS. [1] The second section, therefore, examines the British political context, the backgrounds of the early Directors and their beliefs about relations between 'church and state' and 'politics'.

The ecumenical roots of the LMS, which differentiate it from its counterparts, have important consequences for a study of the Society in its early years. The broad evangelical constituency of the LMS included clergy from the established churches, such as John Eyre and Thomas Haweis, as well as prominent Dissenters such as David Bogue and Matthew Wilks. The interplay of these very different backgrounds is crucial in considering the policy that emerged. It is not possible to attribute a single homogeneous view to the LMS. In studying the perspectives of the Directors it is important to illuminate the tensions between them.

The Origins of the London Missionary Society

The foundation, in 1790s, of societies organised by individuals banded together specifically for the purpose of mission was a new venture which required theological justification. The arguments, which were rooted in the theology of the evangelical revival, provided a basis not only for missionary activity but also for co-

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[1] Gunson, *Messengers of Grace,* 281; Koskinen, *Missionary Influence,* 67; Garrett, *To Live Among the Stars,* 20.

operation between denominations.[2] These beliefs shaped the instructions which the first Directors gave to the Tahitian Mission and also influenced their expectations for the progress of the mission. The first section of this chapter, therefore, considers the models to which the LMS referred and the arguments they employed in establishing their new venture. It also examines the diversity of the membership of the early LMS.

The Baptists were the first group of British Christians to form a society for missions in 1792. The Missionary Society followed in 1795. Its very name is indicative of the novelty of the enterprise; only in 1818 was it necessary to adopt the designation London to distinguish themselves from the numerous bodies which had emerged in Europe and America. In 1799 the Church Missionary Society was founded by Anglican Evangelicals.

The missionary activities of the Wesleyan Methodists began slightly earlier. Thomas Coke wrote his *Plan of the Society for the Establishment of Missions among the Heathen* in 1784 and in the same year two men were sent to Antigua. The overseas missions of the Wesleyans, however, were pursued through Conference as an extension of their mission work at home. It was not until 1813 when Thomas Coke, the pioneer of Methodist foreign missions and General Superintendent of work in America, died that a missionary society was formed. Methodist missions remained under the control of the Conference unlike the boards of subscribers who ran the BMS, LMS and CMS.

The new missionary societies borrowed the organisational style of commerce; members invested their money in a venture and therefore received a say in the way in which the missions were directed. This marks a considerable departure from missionaries appointed by Crown and Church who reported to them alone. Evangelicals, both Anglicans and Dissenters, who supported the missionary cause were often people who had commercial experiences. Their reluctance to become involved with the state led the societies to make a principle of their financial independence. For example, Donaldson has shown that this policy had a significant

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[2] Following convention the term "evangelical" will refer to the movement as a whole and "Evangelical" will be restricted to the party with these beliefs within the Church of England.

impact on the LMS in South Africa where the acceptance of government grants in the 1850s provoked controversy among some LMS supporters.[3]

The formation of missionary societies was a sign of the growing economic confidence of the nation and of individuals and a belief that they could improve their world. It was the theology generated by the evangelical revival, together with the enthusiasm generated by the revival experience, which provided the impetus necessary for the Protestant missionary movement which emerged.

The conversion experience was a defining feature of the revival. The Evangelical Conversion evolved from a Puritan concern for a genuine "effectual calling" rather than mere outward conformity. To be a Christian was to have undergone a spiritual process which could often be dated to a particular moment at which peace and assurance were received. The recounting of conversion experiences through testimonies, obituaries and other narratives further standardised the common pattern of the conversion.[4] The first stage of conversion was 'conviction', that is, the sinner became utterly convinced of his or her own sinfulness and unworthiness before God. This was followed by repentance and the placing of faith and trust fully in the atoning power of the death of Christ. The individual would then, through the grace of God, be redeemed and experience the joy of salvation.

The conversion experience was also a galvanising force; the converted demonstrated the transforming effect of the experience through a reformed life. This led to enthusiastic commitment to voluntary societies which had a Christian purpose. The pattern was set in the First Great Awakening in North America where the large number of voluntary groups, many with the same leading evangelicals on their boards, came to be known as the 'benevolent empire'. Benevolence came to be a dominating ethic as the humanitarian strains of Enlightenment philosophy permeated British and American society.

In *Sermons Preached in London at the Formation of the Missionary Society...* which was published in 1795 it is William Carey, a Baptist, and Melville Horne, an

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[3] Margaret Donaldson, "The Voluntary Principle in the Colonial Situation: Theory and Practice," *Studies in Church History* 23 (1986): 391-410.
[4] Henry D. Rack, *John Wesley and Early Methodist Conversion* (Cambridge: North Atlantic Missiology Project, 1997), 3-9.

Anglican, who are acknowledged as the intellectual antecedents of the cause. Coke's plan is not mentioned but authors of early LMS material refer frequently to Wesley and the example of Methodist missions at home and abroad. The other missions to which the authors looked were the Moravian missions to Greenland and the West Indies and also David Brainerd.[5] His work in North America was known through the publication of his diary by Jonathan Edwards which became a classic of evangelical spiritual literature and provided one of the few missionary models with whom evangelicals were familiar and of which they approved. Brainerd is given frequent mentions in literature of the period when the missionary societies were founded.[6]

The works of Horne and Carey and the sermons delivered at the first meeting of the LMS provide an insight into the objections to mission with which the first generation struggled. Horne and Carey, for example, both found it necessary to insist upon the need for human agency in evangelism and on the literal sense of the Apostolic Commission.[7] Readers needed to be convinced that the conversion of the nations mentioned in prophecy was not to be the work of God at the end of time but of Christians before the millennium.

As van den Berg has noted, for some authors the causal link between success of missions and the arrival of the eschaton was of fundamental importance.[8] Rev. Rowland Hill and Rev. John Hey both focused on this theme, preaching at the foundation of the LMS.[9] Horne, however, refused to make predictions about the end

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[5] Danish, Dutch, and Swiss Missions are mentioned by Morison as well as the work of British Baptists, Methodists and the SPCK. John Morison, *Fathers and Founders of the London Missionary Society with a brief sketch of Methodism and historical notices of the several Protestant missions 1556-1839* (London, 1844).

[6] William Carey, *An Enquiry into the Obligation of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens*, Facsimile of the 1792 edition (London, 1961), 87; David Bogue, "Sermon VI. Objections Against A Mission to the Heathen Stated and Considered: preached at Tottenham Chapel 24th Sept. 1795," in *Sermons Preached in London at the Formation of the Missionary Society: To which are prefixed memorials respecting the establishment and first attempts of that society* (London, 1795). John Morrison, *Fathers and Founders*, 1: 111-128.

[7] Carey, *An Enquiry into the Obligation,* 9; Melville Horne, *Letters on Missions: Addressed to the Protestant Ministers of the British Churches* (1794), 33.

[8] Johannes Van den Berg, *Constrained by Jesus' Love: An Enquiry into the Motives of Missionary Awakening in Great Britain in the Period Between 1698 and 1815* (Kampen: Kok, 1956)

[9] Rowland Hill, "Glorious Displays of Gospel Grace" in *Sermons Preached at the Formation of the Missionary Society,* 60; John Hey, "The Fullness of Times," ibid. 82.

times.[10] Rev. Thomas Haweis saw the leading of Providence but did not indulge in eschatological speculation.[11]

The missionary writings and sermons of the 1790s also addressed the danger to the souls of the heathen should they never hear the Gospel. In deist circles this question would have been related to natural religion but, to the intended audience of the pamphlets and sermons, universal atonement and predestination were the points at issue. Horne seems to imply that the heathen are likely to be condemned without denying the possibility of the intervention of the grace of God, or predestination:

> God will certainly judge equitably, and will not seek to reap where he has not sown. We grant also that a heathen may be saved without an explicit revelation of the gospel, though not without sanctification of the spirit and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus. [12]

George Burder in his sermon preached in September 1795 was more conclusive on the fate of the heathen and all sinners:

> These unhappy persons have no written law but they *shew the work of law written in their hearts:* they are sinners against the law, and we are assured by St Paul that *as many as have sinned without the law, shall also perish without the law,* (Rom. 2. 12&15) without hope.[13]

It is interesting to note that the image of the perishing heathen, so ubiquitous in the later literature, was once the subject of uncertainty.

Evangelical theology was also influenced by the tendency, noted in chapter three, to stress the similarity between Europeans and other peoples. Preachers and authors, therefore, told their audiences that the heathen abroad were rational beings capable of appreciating the Gospel and were entitled to receive its benefits. Thus, Carey describes people:

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[10] Bogue rejected predictions in "Objections Against a Mission to the Heathen," 126.

[11] Thomas Haweis, *A Word in Season designed to encourage my Brethren of the Missionary Society in the work; and to engage those who hitherto have only looked on, to help their endeavours..* (London: T. Chapman, 1796), 11.

[12] Horne, *Letters on Missions,* 152.

[13] Original italics. Burder, "Jonah's Mission to Ninevah," 38.
Burder did see the possibility of natural revelation in the biblical sense. He argued that pagans could only ascribe altars to the unknown God and have only "broken and mangled fragments of Gospel hope may be discerned among the rubbish of ancient mythology and in the religious rites of the most barbarous nations," ibid. 31.

...who are as capable as ourselves, of adorning the gospel, and contributing by their preaching, writings, or practices to the Glory of the Redeemer's name, and the glory of his church.[14]

A similar point is made by Horne, Burder and Samuel Greatheed.[15] The word "heathen" was applied to those at home as well as abroad. Indeed, Hill argued that the former were far worse than the later for falsely bearing the name Christian.[16] Comments of this nature often function more as a rebuke to those in Britain than as a serious assessment of those living abroad.

The descriptions of the heathen at home and abroad could be very similar indeed. In 1792, for example, Bogue spoke of the Society in Scotland for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge (SSPCK):

It found tens of thousands in the grossest ignorance and it has conveyed to them knowledge of the truth. ..It found them crouching before their haughty chieftain, and the blind devotees of gloomy superstition; and it has taught them their own dignity as men, as citizens and to bow as Christians with the lowliest reverence, before their Saviour and God.[17]

The examples of previous success with the heathen at home were a reassurance not only that they could be converted but also that they could be civilised. According to Burder, civilisation and salvation were separate results of the same course of action; the preaching of the Gospel.[18]

Evangelical Co-operation and the Foundation of the LMS

The founders of the LMS and its supporters shared a common evangelical theology and a belief in the importance of the conversion experience. For those within the circle of the Revival the test of preaching was its effectiveness in reaching sinners. The denomination of the preacher was less important.[19] Indeed, to the rank

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[14] Carey, *An Enquiry into the Obligation,* 69-70.

[15] Greatheed was pastor at Woburn. Horne, *Letters on Missions,* 20; Burder, "Jonah's Mission to Ninevah," 32; Samuel Greatheed, "Sermon III. A Mission to the Heathen Founded upon the Moral Law" preached at Habadashers Hall, forenoon 23rd Sept. 1795, in *Sermons Preached in London at the Formation of the Missionary Society: To which are prefixed memorials respecting the establishment and first attempts of that society* (London, 1795), 52.

[16] Hill, "Glorious Displays of Gospel Grace," 94.

[17] David Bogue, *A Sermon preached at Salters Hall, March 30th, 1792 before the Correspondent Board in London of the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge in the Highlands and Islands..* (London: A. Strathan, 1793), 34.

[18] Burder, "Jonah's Mission to Ninevah," 32-35.

[19] W. R. Ward, *Religion and Society in England 1790-1850* (London: B. T. Batsford, 1972), 19.

and file there may have been little to distinguish between them.[20] Following the French Revolution and the arrival of refugees from the Terror, the divisions were weakened further:

> It was now that the great flowering of undenominational theology took place; the divisions of the past were not merely impossible in the light of modern thought, they were intolerable in view of the opportunities created by the tottering anti-Christ.[21]

The foundation of *Evangelical Magazine* in July 1793 was one concrete result of this new trend towards co-operation. The interdenominational nature of the revival experience was based upon the acceptance of common ideas and it was these which formed a basis for the mission movement and allowed the unprecedented interdenominational basis of the LMS.

Evangelical Magazine, edited by John Eyre, an Anglican, was an ideal forum for communication. The first item to appear was *"An Address to Evangelical Dissenters who Practice Infant Baptism"* by Rev. David Bogue of Gosport which appeared in the magazine in September 1794. In November of the same year it published a review of Melville Horne's *"Letters on Missions: addressed to the Protestant Ministers of the British churches"* written by Rev. Thomas Haweis, chaplain to the Countess of Huntingdon. At the close of his review Haweis gave notice of £600 which had been collected for a mission to the South Seas. Bogue and Haweis were central figures in the early years of the LMS.

Bogue (1750-1825) was educated at Edinburgh University but became an Independent minister in England, accepting a call to Gosport in 1777. There he began tutoring preachers at what later became the LMS seminary. Haweis (1734-1820) was educated at Oxford and became Rector of Aldwincle in 1764. In 1774 Haweis accepted a position as personal chaplain to Selina Countess of Huntingdon, a patron of George Whitefield. The Countess of Huntingdon was one of several aristocratic women who furthered the Evangelical cause by opening chapels and providing preachers.[22] Haweis devoted half the year to his preaching in the Countess of

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[20] Michael R. Watts, *The Dissenters: From the Reformation to the French Revolution* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), 1: 434.
[21] Ward, *Religion and Society,* 45.
[22] see Samuel J. Rogal, "Ladies Huntingdon, Glenorchy and Maxwell: Militant Methodist Women," *Methodist History* 32 (1994): 126-32.

Huntingdon Connexion.[23] On her death in 1791 he was appointed a trustee and executor.

Bogue and Haweis both had claims, through their articles in *Evangelical Magazine,* to be seen as founding fathers of the LMS. Both men had shown a longstanding interest in the subject of foreign missions. Bogue advocated missions in an address to London Board of the Society in Scotland for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge in 1792.[24] His article in the *Evangelical Magazine* was prompted by reading correspondence from William Carey at Serampore.

Haweis persuaded the Countess to fund a mission to Tahiti shortly before her death. Two missionaries were to travel with Captain Bligh on his return there to complete the duties which had been interrupted by the mutiny of the crew of the *Bounty*. Haweis met Bligh in London and persuaded him to carry two young men from the Connexion's college at Treveca, Michael Waugh and Richard Price.[25] The missionaries were given a course of preparation but in 1791 refused to sail without receiving Episcopal ordination. This was denied by Bishop Porteous of London and the project collapsed.[26] Haweis later proposed the same destination in another article for the *Evangelical Magazine* published in 1795.[27]

November 1794 was the month in which the first formal meeting of the supporters of missions was held at the Castle and Falcon coffee house, Aldersgate Street, London. Two further articles followed "*An address to the serious and zealous Professors of the Gospel, of every denomination respecting an attempt to evangelise the Heathen*" and "*An address to Christian Ministers, and all other friends of Christianity, on the subject of missions to the heathen.*" (Jan 1795).

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[23] Kenneth Hylson-Smith, *Evangelicals in the Church of England 1734-1984* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1989); Rogal , "Ladies Huntingdon, Glenorchy and Maxwell," 48.

[24] Bogue, "A Sermon preached at Salters Hall."

[25] See Arthur Skevington Wood, "The Failure of a mission: 1791," *Congregational Quarterly* 32 (1954): 347.

[26] Horne describes two plans: one in 1789 concerning Waugh and Price and a second in 1791 involving a man named Lewis. Skevington Wood, however, describes one project with the selection and training of Waugh and Price occurring in 1789 and 1790. C. Silvester Horne, *The Story of the LMS 1795-1895*, 2d. ed. (London: John Snow & Co., 1895), 3; Skevington Wood ," The Failure of a mission: 1791," 345.

[27] Thomas Haweis, "The Very Probable Success of a proper mission to the South Sea Islands," *Evangelical Magazine* 3 (1795), 261-70.

A corresponding committee was formed to circulate a letter written by John Eyre and Matthew Wilks to the ministers of London and regular meetings were now held in the Castle and Falcon. The foundation of the Society occurred at a preparatory meeting there on Monday 21st September 1795. This was followed by three days of preaching and organisation which were attended by two hundred clergy; Anglicans, Independents, Methodists and Presbyterians, both English and Scottish.[28] The members of the LMS appointed twenty five Directors; two Secretaries Rev. John Love and William Shrubsole; a Treasurer, Joseph Hardcastle and a board for correspondence. John Eyre became Home and later also Foreign Secretary.[29]

Haweis presented the idea of a mission to the South Seas in *A Memoir on the Most Eligible Part to begin a Mission* which made many similar points to his article in *Evangelical Magazine*.[30] He saw the South Seas as presenting the least difficulties with the greatest chance of success. The advantages he suggested included the climate, the settled life of the people, the simplicity of the language when compared with India or China and the absence of absolute government which might persecute the missionaries:

> It seems monarchical, but of the mildest nature, with little authority, controlled as it were by powerful vassals, each in his own district supreme, but with no written law, nor the use of letters, and presents the sort of patriarchal state: where the disorders seem so few, that the arm of authority is but seldom extended.[31]

The people of the South Seas, Haweis, believed would have fewer prejudices than those of China and India where "civilization hath long obtained."[32] Those in an uncivilised state would be more struck by the mechanic arts and more easily convinced of European superiority in all things, including religion. Indeed, the mission had more to fear from being exalted than from being insulted and oppressed.

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[28] " An Introductory Memorial Respecting the Formation of the Missionary Society, " xxix.
[29] Secretaries: John Love 1795-1800; William Shrubsole 1795-98; John Eyre –Home Secretary 1798-1800 and also Foreign Secretary 1800-1803. Foreign Secretaries: George Burder 1803-1827; William Orme 1828-1830; William Ellis 1833-41. Salaried Home Secretaries: Samuel Tracey 1811-16; John Arundel 1819-46.
[30] Thomas Haweis, "A Memoir on the Most Eligible Part to begin a Mission &c.," in *Sermons Preached in London at the Formation of the Missionary Society* (London: 1795), 161-84.
[31] Ibid. 170.
[32] Ibid. 165.

The LMS aimed to maintain the inter-denominational co-operation that was manifest in its foundation. The presence of such a diverse group of supporters at the first General Meeting led Rev David Bogue to declare it the "funeral of bigotry".[33] The founding members of the LMS were drawn from the Establishment and Dissent. Thomas Haweis, Rowland Hill and John Eyre and were all ordained in the Church of England and John Love, James Steven in the Church of Scotland. Whereas, David Bogue, Matthew Wilks, Joseph Hardcastle, William Shrubsole and George Burder were nonconformists.[34]

In May 1796 Rev Dr Alexander Waugh, an LMS director and minister of the Associate Presbytery, penned a statement which came to be known as the society's Fundamental Principle:

> ...it is a principle of the Missionary Society, that its design is not to send Presbyterianism, Independency, Episcopacy or any form of Church order and government (about which there may be difference of opinion among serious persons), but the glorious Gospel of the blessed God, to the heathen; and that it shall be left (as it ever ought to be left) to the minds of persons whom God may call into the fellowship of His Son from among them to assume for themselves such form of Church government as to them shall appear most agreeable to the word of God.[35]

Martin has argued that the roots of this cooperative spirit can be traced to Horne's advice in *Letters on Missions* that missionaries should not focus on what separated Christians but on the points that united them.[36] This is a theme which can also be found in Haweis' writings. In 1796 he published a pamphlet entitled *A Plea for Peace and Union among the Living Members of the Real Church of Christ Addressed to the Missionary Society* in which he argued that the churches involved in the Society differed in administration not "fundamental doctrine".[37]

The hearty rhetoric of the LMS publications can be read purely as an exercise in publicity. However, it does highlight the very deliberate attempt at made at co-

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[33] Bogue, *Objections Against a Mission to the Heathen.*
[34] Irene Fletcher, "The Fundamental Principle of the London Missionary Society." *Transactions Congregational Historical Society* vol. 19 (1962-1963) 192-198.
[35] Horne, *The Story of the LMS*, 16.
[36] Roger H. Martin, *Evangelicals United: Ecumenical stirrings in Pre-Victorian Britain, 1795-1830.* (N.J. and London: The Scarecrow Press, 1983), 41.
[37] Thomas Haweis, *A Plea for Peace and Union among the Living Members of the Real Church of Christ* (London: T Chapman, 1796), 6.

operation in the early years of the soceity.[38] The ecumenism of the LMS was gradually undermined by the foundation of societies representing the denominations of its supporters. In the 1820s and 1830s the Society became increasingly Congregationalist in membership. However, to apply this picture retrospectively to the early years is unhelpful as it obscures the diversity of the Society's original supporters.

The LMS and Politics

This section of the chapter considers the political views of LMS founders and what was meant when they declared that their missionaries would not be involved in 'politics'. The pronouncements of the Society and the advice given to the missionaries themselves were conditioned both by the circumstances in which the mission was founded and the personal views of LMS Directors. Two aspects are treated in turn. First, the political context in Britain in the late Eighteenth Century and the difficulties which the newly founded LMS faced in presenting itself to the public, and, second the political views of prominent members of the LMS.

The LMS in its early years cannot be described simply as a Dissenting or Congregational society. A description of political attitudes, therefore, must take account of this diversity and cannot rely upon assumptions about the politics of any one denomination. The tensions between David Bogue and Thomas Haweis are a useful illustration of the variety to be found within the LMS. The personal influence of Haweis over members of the Tahitian mission and his role in planning the first voyage make his views on the relationship between church and state particularly relevant.[39]

Fears of Sedition

The writers of the early letters and sermons advocating the foundation of the LMS felt it necessary to justify the need for missionary activity theologically. In addition to this it was important to provide reassurance to government and commerce about the nature of their project. The foundation of a voluntary society for the

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[38] Irene Fletcher, "The Fundamental Principle of the London Missionary Society." *Transactions Congregational Historical Society* vol. 19 (1962-1963), 145; Martin, *Evangelicals United, 55.*
[39] See chapter 5.

support of missions was an innovation in itself which involved matters previously controlled by government and chartered companies.

In the aftermath of the French Revolution, the government was wary of private organisations of all kinds. The warning of Lord Justice Boyle to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in 1796 provides an insight into the interpretation which others could place upon the Society's ambitions:

> Observe, Sir, they are affiliated, they have a common object, they correspond with each other, they look for assistance from foreign countries, in the very language of many of the seditious societies. Above all, it is to be marked, they have a common fund.[40]

From the perspective of those suspicious of revolutionaries, therefore, the LMS shared some of the characteristics of the new political societies. For this reason it was important to the LMS that it prove its own lack of radicalism.

1795 was a turbulent year in which to found a missionary society . The London Corresponding Society which was formed in 1792 to campaign for annual elections and "an Equal Representation of the Whole Body of the People," was at the height of its membership.[41] Harvest failures led to food riots in July and members of the Corresponding Society held a mass meeting in London in October. When Parliament opened in the same month anti-war protestors attacked the King's coach. These events prompted the introduction of the Seditious Meetings Bill and the Treasonable Practices Bill. The former prevented mass meetings without the permission of a magistrate and the latter extended the definition of treason to encompass any criticism of the King. Dissenters, in particular were already suspected of disloyalty.

In the early days of the French Revolution the fall of a Catholic monarchy, widely regarded as despotic, had been greeted with acclaim by many, including some prominent Dissenters. Lingering distrust of those who did not conform to the established church, however, combined with unease about the Dissenters' campaign

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[40] [R. Heron] *Account of the Proceedings and debate in the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland,* 27th May 1796, Edinburgh, 1796 quoted in *Constrained by Jesus' Love,* Van den Berg, 111.
[41] Founded by a shoemaker, Thomas Hardy its activity was co-ordinated by local groups reporting to the centre, probably 90 in 1795. Frank O'Gorman, *The Long Eighteenth Century: British Political and Social History 1688-1832* (London: Arnold, 1997), 243.

for the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts led to Dissenters being seen as a special threat.[42]

The most notorious of the comments was Richard Price's address to a meeting of the Revolutionary Society, which commemorated the 1688 revolution, *"A Discourse on the Love of Our Country" (1789)* which prompted Edmund Burke's defence of the status quo *"Reflections on the Revolution in France"* (1790). The Church and King riots in 1791 saw attacks on Dissenters including the destruction of Joseph Priestley's meeting house and home in Birmingham. Priestley, the leading advocate of Socinianism, was the epitome of the fears for church and state through his radical theology and politics. Loyalist societies to defend church and king were formed all over the country.

In 1792, David Bogue expressed pro-revolutionary sentiments in a sermon preached before the SSPCK:

> Were its subject more extensively pursued, it would appear that the connexion between civil liberty and the advancement of true religion, is more close that we commonly imagine. It must be, then, to the joy of every friend of human nature, that tyranny has received a mortal wound.[43]

Bogue is also thought to have been the author of the pamphlet *"Reasons for seeking a repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts…"* of 1790.[44] In this, France was described as having formerly been a land of slaves which called to God for help:

> ..he diffused among them a spirit of Liberty. To the joy of every lover of Liberty, they have lately asserted their just rights: And it is with a pleasure that cannot be described that we see our good neighbours pulling down the enchanted castle of despotism[45]

The French were thus to be both envied and congratulated. Bogue had, therefore, acquired a reputation as a radical. In 1794 he was called to London for the trial for treason of the leaders of the British National Reform Convention which had been

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[42] A group of Dissenters centred on London, the Dissenting Deputies, had sought relief from the two acts which stipulated that those taking offices of the crown or of corporations must be communicants in the Church of England.

[43] Quoted in James Bennett, *Memoirs of the Life of the Rev. David Bogue…* (London, 1827), 139.

[44] *Dictionary of Scottish Church History and Theology*, 1993. s.v. "David Bogue".

[45] [David Bogue], *Reasons for Seeking a Repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts, submitted for the consideration of the Candid and Impartial by a DISSENTER* (London: J. Burkhard and C. Dilly, 1790), 21.

held at Edinburgh in October 1793.[46] Bogue was not himself accused and the ten radical leaders including Thomas Hardy, Horne Tooke and John Thelwell were found not guilty. However, the prominence of Bogue in the foundation of the Society posed a problem in presenting the Society's aims as non-political in 1795.

Opposition to the LMS did not only arise on the grounds of a fear of radical sympathisers. The combination of Dissenters and evangelical Anglicans alone was a potential source of distrust. Men such as Haweis and Rowland Hill who were clergy of the Church of England were, nevertheless, regarded as outsiders by many within the Establishment. Both men suffered from prejudice against Evangelicals; Haweis' ordination as a priest was delayed and Hill was never allowed to proceeded beyond deacon's orders.[47] Haweis and Hill both chose to remain within the Establishment and were able to rely upon the influence of others who supported the Evangelical cause, but their presence as members of the LMS did not improve its claims in the eyes of the Establishment. These denominational origins, however, were important for the LMS itself because Haweis and others did not give up their attachment to their own church.

The claims to legitimacy that the LMS made through sermons and literature by allusions to historical precedents in mission, such as Moravians and Methodists, were also a problem. These antecedents may have been ideally suited to inspire an evangelical audience but to those who opposed itinerancy and the enthusiasm of revivalists they were only further evidence of the danger of missions.[48] Hostility to Methodists at the local level of mob violence had subsided by the 1790s but suspicions of the purposes of Methodist meetings remained on the part of the government.[49]

Commercial considerations compounded the reasons for outsiders to distrust the newly founded LMS. The East India Company wanted to preserve the stability of

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[46] Bennett, *Memoirs of Bogue*, 143.
[47] William Jones, *Memoirs of the Life, Ministry and Writings of the Rev. Rowland Hill MA. late minister of Surrey Chapel* (London: John Bennett, 1834), 20.
[48] The attitude towards the Moravians was briefly positive in the 1740s, when they first arrived in England. In 1749 the Bishops in theHouse of Lords voted in favour of their recognition as an "ancient Protestant Episcopal Church." See C. J. Podmore, "The Bishops and the Brethren: Anglican Attitudes to Moravians in the Mid-Eighteenth Century," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 41 (1990): 622-47.
[49]John Walsh, "Methodism and the Mob in the Eighteenth Century," *Studies in Church History* 8 (1972): 227.

its colonies and was jealous of its monopoly on trade to the East. In July 1796, for example, David Scott the chairman of the East India Company wrote enquiring about the real purpose of the outfit of the missionary ship *Duff.*[50] A correspondent of Haweis stated that many commercial men could not understand the expenditure of such large sums for the purpose of religion.[51] The mission also faced government measures to protect home industry. It was necessary to have missionaries exempted from laws forbidding the emigration of skilled artisans in war time to protect the crew from the press gang.[52]

The political and commercial context outlined above is important in understanding the statements made by the LMS about politics and the formation of its practice. The early public pronouncements of the LMS insisted that there was no political motive behind the Society. In his sermon on 24th September 1795, for example, David Bogue declared:

> It is a fundamental law of our society: "that the missionaries shall not in the smallest degree interfere with the political concerns of the countries in which they labour, nor have anything to say or do with the affairs of civil government: And whoever shall transgress this rule shall immediately be dismissed with shame." The sole business of a Missionary is to promote the religion of Jesus.[53]

It is not surprising, considering his own background, that Bogue felt it necessary to explicitly state the view that missionaries should not engage in political activity. When standardised printed questions for candidates were introduced in 1820 the sixteenth section asked for an assurance of obedience to the civil authorities and non-interference in political concerns.[54] The LMS could not hope to gain access to India or the slave plantations of the West Indies unless it could portray itself as an institution which would not challenge the *status quo.*

Radical or Conservative?

The LMS attempted publicly and privately to assure the authorities that it was not a seditious organisation. However, the presence among its members of Bogue

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[50] Scott to Hankey 16th July 1796 Nan Kivell Collection, [NK 2618].
[51] Ambrose Serle (Transport Office) to Haweis 23rd December 1796. Haweis Papers vol. 5 ML.
[52] Haweis to Dundas 22nd July 1796 Haweis Papers vol. 4, ML; James Neale (Admiralty Office) to LMS 8th August 1796, Home Letters 1.
[53] Bogue, *Objections Against a Mission to the Heathen,* 132.
[54] LMS Candidates Papers 1796-1899.

leads to questions about what the political views of the Society were. The political backgrounds of missionaries and Directors has been given little attention in the literature of Polynesian missions. The question was examined by Gunson in *Messengers of Grace* where he drew a distinction between the politics of the LMS and the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society. In his view the LMS was more inclined to support liberty whereas the WMMS had inherited the Tory Politics of John Wesley and was, therefore, more conservative and inherently "soporific" to political activity.[55] Despite noting that LMS members were not opponents of monarchy Gunson's treatment of the subject contrasts "dissenters with a radical bias" with "conservative Methodists".[56]

It will be argued below that this contrasting of the two groups is unhelpful in understanding the planning of the mission to Tahiti and the years prior to Pomare II's conversion. First, Gunson's assessment of the Wesleyan Methodists does not accord with recent scholarship. Second, his description of the LMS minimised the diversity of the Society by outlining the politics of the LMS as though it were coextensive with that of the rational Dissenters. Gunson implies a more united and more radical outlook than actually existed among the members of the LMS.[57] His brief mention of Anglican Evangelicals does not relate their views to the work of the LMS.[58]

Gunson's distinctions are inappropriate, not least because Wesleyan Methodists, especially at the local level, were themselves often members of the LMS. The numbers of Methodists participating in other societies was one argument used in 1813 when the specifically Methodist WMMS was formed.[59] John Wesley was a Tory and instituted a "no politics" rule for the Methodists. Methodists, however, provided a high proportion of leaders in early trade unionism among agricultural workers and miners.[60] Wesley's successor as head of the Methodist Conference,

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[55] Gunson, *Messengers of Grace,* 280.
[56] Ibid. 286.
[57] That is, Presbyterians and Unitarians such as Price and Priestley.
[58] Gunson, *Messengers of Grace,* 280.
[59] David Hempton, *The Religion of the People: Methodism and Popular Religion c. 1750-1900* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), 103.
[60] David Hempton, *Religion and Political Culture in Britain and Ireland* (Cambridge: University Press, 1996), 36; Gerald Parsons, "From Dissenters to Freechurchmen: The Traditions of Victorian Nonconformity," in *Religion in Victorian Britain: 1 Traditions,* ed. Gerald Parsons (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press in association with the Open University, 1997), 95.

Jabez Bunting, attempted to ensure the respectability of the Wesleyan Methodists, a process which resulted in the expulsion of those involved in political associations.

Bernard Semmel suggested that the foundation of the WMMS itself was an attempt to divert energy away from radical activity. Stuart Piggin, however, has stressed the campaigning activities of Methodists, for example, over Sidmouth's Bill to restrict itinerant preaching.[61] More importantly, missionary work was pre-existing among Methodists and considered as revitalising work at home not detracting from it. It would seem, therefore, that Wesleyan Methodism cannot be characterised as uniformly Tory which calls into question Gunson's contrast between Wesleyans and the LMS.

In the case of LMS Directors, despite the sympathies of Bogue noted above, there are grounds for caution in describing the politics of others, even those from a Nonconformist background. There is indeed a strong case to be argued that the search for the removal of their own disabilities led Dissenters to advocate the cause of liberty. Bradley, for example, has described nonconformity as the "midwife to radical artisans" and his study of the petitions against the War of American Independence suggested that this period was an important "stepping stone" to the radicals responses to the French Revolution.[62] Bradley portrayed Dissenters' loyalty to the House of Hanover as decreasing in the 1760s and 1770s with the result that a the time of the American Revolution:

> .. the latent radicalism of Nonconformity, ever present in the congregational polity, became explicit, and when it aroused the interest of the lower orders it became potentially highly disruptive. The attitudes towards law, corporations, and the Church that were vividly displayed for the first time in 1775 betray underlying and persistent animosities.[63]

Prominent Dissenters did provide the ideological underpinnings of radicalism and ordinary church members do seem to have been disposed towards participation in campaigns in the cause of liberty. However, it cannot be assumed that these views

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[61] Stuart Piggin, "Halévy Revisited: The Origins of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society: An examination of Semmel's Thesis," *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 9 (1980): 17-37.
[62] James E. Bradley, *Religion, Revolution and English Radicalism: Non-conformity in Eighteenth Century Politics and Society* (Cambridge University Press, 1990), 423, 430.
[63] Bradley, *Religion, Revolution and English Radicalism,* 422.

can be attributed to all Dissenters. Recent studies have stressed the strength of status quo and the weakness of support for radical ideas in the late Eighteenth Century.[64]

Indeed, in the period immediately following the French Revolution, the sermons of Dissenters were as constant in defending the role of religion in the stability of the state as those of the Anglican clergy.[65] Lovegrove has noted the tendency of many evangelical associations to declare their non-political character at this period, for example, the Essex Congregational Union rules made at its foundation in 1798.[66] Before the end of hostilities with France in 1815 dissenting evangelicals restricted comments on matters in public to those directly affecting the denomination concerned, such as the defence of itinerancy and protection of ministers and students from military service.[67] While some of these comments may have been made for the sake of appearances there was also a genuine fear of the effects of a repetition of the events in France. Political activity amongst Dissenters increased in the 1830s but the label "political dissenter" remained a term of rebuke within the community as late as the 1840s.[68]

It would seem that the period in which in the LMS was founded and its early policy crafted was one in which generalisation about the links between Dissenters and political activity are difficult to substantiate. Gunson's arguments are better suited to the later years when the LMS had a more Congregationalist membership than to the period in which the South Sea Mission was established. He notes, for example, that some missionaries wrote for the radical newspaper *The Patriot*. However, this did not appear until 1832.[69] The links between the LMS and Congregationalists increased as the latter moved in the 1820s towards forming a national association and is the number of mission societies sponsored by other churches increased.[70]

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[64] J. C. D. Clark, *English Society 1660-1832*, 2d ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 255-286; H. T. Dickinson, *The Politics of the People in Eighteenth Century Britain* (Basingstoke: Macmillan New York, St Martin's Press, 1994).
[65] Robert Hole, *Pulpits, Politics and Public Order* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).
[66] The report of the Congregational Ministers of Staffordshire of 1800 highlighted the same point. Deryck Lovegrove, "English Evangelical Dissent and the European Conflict 1789-1815," *Studies in Church History* 20 (1989), 265.
[67] Lovegrove, "English Evangelical Dissent and the European Conflict," 266.
[68] Timothy Larsen, *Friends of Religious Equality: Nonconformist Politics in Mid-Victorian England* (Suffolk: Boydell Press, 1999), 24.
[69] Larsen, *Friends of Religious Equality,* 32.
[70] The Congregational Union of England and Wales was formed in 1831.

There are additional factors in the case of the South Sea Mission which add force to these arguments. Thomas Haweis cannot stand as a representative for the entire Board of the LMS. Nevertheless, his ideas in the area of politics and church-state relations are worthy of more lengthy examination because of his role as architect of the South Sea Mission and his personal contact with members of the early missions. His quarrel with Bogue shaped the early years of the mission. Haweis opposed Bogue on two grounds; his theory of mission and his politics.

Haweis accused Bogue of opposition to the choice of Tahiti. He also alleged that Bogue had aimed to found his own seminary from the beginning and that through the institution at Gosport he and his family gained financial advantages from the LMS.[71] It was the case indeed, that the funding for LMS students replaced money from the banker George Welch, on whose plan the seminary was first begun.[72] Haweis was critical of the influence which Bogue held over the students at the Seminary. Haweis insisted that Bogue diverted missionaries away from the Tahitian mission and quenched their missionary spirit.[73] Bogue also preferred mission to regions such as China and India; he himself planned to go to India with Robert Haldane.[74] The politics of both Haldane and Bogue are likely to have been the cause of their rejection by the East India Company.[75]

Haweis believed that Bogue's politics were damaging to the LMS. He cited the example of the presentation of a copy of *A Missionary Voyage Around the World* to the King in 1800. Haweis, who had edited the journals, was horrified to find Bogue in the carriage with the delegation. They waited for some time but were not taken into the presence of the King. Haweis believed Bogue was the cause of their exclusion:

> ..for reasons <u>political,</u> in which, tho' in the society politics is never suffered to mingle in our Debates, we were known to differ toto caelo. He had chosen to

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[71] Autobiography Haweis Papers vol. 1, ML.

[72] Robert Haldane later sponsored ten students at the rate of £10 each. Bennett , *Memoirs of the Life of the Rev. David Bogue,* 134.

[73] Haweis to LMS 18th November 1819 Haweis Papers vol. 4, ML.

[74] Penny Carson, "The British Raj and the Missionary Awakwening of the Evangelical Conscience: The Ambiguities of Religious Toleration, 1689-1833," in *Christian Missions and the Enlightenment,* ed. Brian Stanley (Richmond Surrey: Curzon Press, 2001), 45-70.

[75] Haldane too welcomed the French Revolution though later moderated his position in his *"Address to the Public Concerning Political Opinions" (*1800). He sold his Stirlingshire estate to raise money for the proposed mission to Bengal.

make known his sentiments so notorious and democratical as mine as a minister and member of the Church of England were always assuredly monarchical and constitutional. [76]

In 1801, Haweis expressed concern about a proposed delegation to France to assess the prospect there, again because of Bogue's presence. He implied that Joseph Hardcastle had similar reservations and that the two had entered into an agreement on their course of action. Haweis, however, fell from a chaise and broke his elbow three days prior to the planned departure and did not travel.[77] Haweis took a personal interest in the resettlement of refugee priests and nobles from France in 1793.

Haweis was closely involved with the work of the Countess of Huntingdon whose life's work was to bring the evangelical message into the upper reaches of society. She established chapels in fashionable watering places such as Bath and Bristol and invited Whitefield and other preachers to address invited audiences in her drawing room.[78] Initially her chaplains were drawn from the Established Church and followed its liturgy. Haweis expended considerable energy on two occasions to prevent the Countess from breaking away from the Church of England.

The first difficulty for the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion arose over Spa Fields Chapel, a converted theatre which she had purchased. When the Countess' methods were put to the test in court, by the Priest of the parish William Sellon, she found that her appointment of personal chaplains had no basis in law.[79] In 1781 Haweis urged her not to register her chapels as dissenting meeting houses but failed.[80] The relations between the two cooled for a time. Haweis was always careful to declare that he had not allowed a minister of another denomination to preach at one of his chapels nor had he participated in the Countess of Huntingdon's college at Trevecca.[81] Most importantly, he assured the Bishop of Peterborough, he had never been present at an ordination for the Countess of Huntingdon Connexion.[82]

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[76] Haweis Papers vol. 2, ML.
[77] Ibid.
[78] J.H.O. *Hastings, "Selina, Countess of Huntingdon,"* in *National Dictionary of Biography,* 1891 ed.; Harry S. Stout, *The Divine Dramatist: George Whitefield and the Rise of Modern Evangelicalism* (Michigan, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1991).
[79] Edwin Welch, *Spiritual Pilgrim: A Reassessment of the Life of the Countess of Huntingdon* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1995), 156.
[80] Autobiography Haweis Papers vol. 1, ML.
[81] Haweis Papers vol. 3, ML.
[82] Haweis to Bishop of Peterborough 31st December 1809, Haweis Papers vol. 4, ML.

Haweis opposed the Countess again when she proposed a plan for the running of her connexion after her death. The Countess had not only provided buildings and evangelical chaplains she also personally administered a complex plan for the stationing and itineration of preachers. The *"Plan of an Association"*, which was distributed to the sixty four chapels, in 1790, provided that chapels should be organised into districts and governed by a committee of ministers and laymen. Haweis opposed the lay majority which would have existed and the subservience to committees.[83]

While his opposition may have resulted from Haweis' own wish for independence[84] it seems more likely that his prime concern was to prevent the Countess of Huntingdon Connexion from becoming a dissenting denomination.[85] Haweis' letters and journals show him to have been a strong-headed and tenacious man. However, his attachment to the church, even whilst admitting its faults, is also clear.[86]

Haweis saw no reason why evangelicals should find it necessary to leave the Church of England yet was always ready to co-operate with those of similar theological sentiments. In his *An Impartial History of the Rise, Declension and Revival of the Church of Christ* Haweis described the three kinds of Methodists; Wesleyan, Huntingdonian and Whitefield's connexion:

> For a long while they were very reluctant to appear to separate from the Church established, and to this day, I apprehend the great body is episcopalian; and prefer that mode of government in its ancient simplicity, to the presbyterian or independent model.[87]

He lamented the loss of Methodist congregations to dissent but noted that many of these had pastors who had not been educated as independents and had no "radical objection" to the church. Ministers of the established church could preach without

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[83] Boyd Stanley Schlenther, *Queen of the Methodists: The Countess of Huntingdon and theEighteenth-Century Crisis of Faith and Society* (Durham: Academic Press, 1997), 170. Tyson cites sixty seven chapels. John R. Tyson , "Lady Huntingdon's Reformation," *Church History* 64 (1995): 592.
[84] Schlenther, *Queen of the Methodists,* 170.
[85] Arthur Skevington Wood, *Thomas Haweis 1734-1820* (London: SPCK, 1957), 173.
[86] Thomas Haweis, *An Impartial and Succinct History of the Rise, Declension, and Revival of the Church of Christ; from the Birth of Our Saviour to the Present Time* (London: Chapman, 1800), 1: x.
[87] Haweis, *An Impartial and Succinct History,* 3: 237.

hindrance in the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion where the liturgy of the Church of England was often in use.[88]

In his manuscript autobiography Haweis stressed the role of clergy from the Church of England within the LMS.[89] As late as 1819 Haweis was pursuing contact between the LMS and the Anglicans by arranging for missionary publications to be put in the hands of "our superior people and clergy". [90]

The firm attachment which Haweis had to the Anglican Church did not prevent him advocating greater toleration for other churches and limiting the power of the Church of England. He approved the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts though doubted that this would occur in his lifetime.[91] Haweis devoted almost thirty pages of his *Impartial History* to arguments against compulsion in religion:

> I will grant that the magistrates, with the majority of every nation, have a right to form religious institutions for *themselves*. Of this I should hope few will doubt the lawfulness; and where the Christian religion is generally professed, dispute the utility. Nor does it militate against any divine precept, why *they* may not annex advantages, if the majority so decree, to such institutions: but whether every man in that nation be subject to penalties, for not conforming to such regulation, is a very different thing.[92]

In the pamphlet *A Plea for Peace and Union among the Living Members of the Real Church of Christ,* addressed to the LMS in 1796, Haweis was critical of the worldliness of Bishops and doubted whether the role of "human politics and earthly pursuits" could be combined with their duties as described in the New Testament.[93] Haweis was, therefore, very loyal to the Church of England but as a church not as an Establishment.

This consideration of Haweis' theology and politics reveals an important consequence of the evangelical co-operation upon which the LMS was founded, that is, the presence of a leading figure who was an advocate for good relations with the Church of England and the British monarchy. However disturbing Haweis may have

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[88] Ibid. 263.
[89] Haweis Papers vol. 3, ML.
[90] Haweis to LMS 25th February 1819. Haweis Papers vol. 4, ML.
[91] Haweis Papers vol. 2 ML.
[92] Haweis, *An Impartial History,* 1: 353.
[93] Thomas Haweis, *A Plea for Peace and Union among the Living Members of the Real Church of Christ* (London: T Chapman, 1796), 23.

been to other Anglicans, in his own terms he was a staunch defender of the church and an opponent of the radical politics for which he castigated Bogue. Haweis is an example of the influences on the early LMS which led Garrett's to describe it as "pre-democratic".[94] This would seem to a more appropriate framework for interpreting the policy of the Board, in the case of the South Sea Mission, than Gunson's contrast between Wesleyan Toryism and LMS liberalism. It was not Bogue the radical, but Haweis the conservative who shaped the South Sea Mission. The historical conditions in which the Society was founded together with the views of the more influential planners, such as Haweis, resulted in instructions to missionaries which sought to reinforce established forms of authority in Britain.

Conclusion

Words change their sense and usage over time. It is worth considering the interpretations which contemporaries are likely to have placed on the stipulation that the LMS not be involved in politics. The word "politics" has a broad range of meanings ranging from matters pertaining to civil or civic life and administration; to affairs of state; policy; or organisation in parties. It cannot therefore be assumed that present day conceptions of the issues of 'church' and 'politics' can be applied to the late Eighteenth Century.

Campaigning for the reform of public policy, for example, which today can cause controversy for churches and charities was an accepted part of the activity of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century.[95] Anstey in his assessment of the participation of evangelicals in the campaign for the abolition of the slave trade concluded that such activism was founded in the response, of those who had felt convicted of their own sin, to the mercy of God[96]. It was this debt of gratitude for their own salvation which led to passionate involvement in evangelistic and benevolent societies. The Directors of the LMS were frequently involved in other causes which sought to influence public policy such as the campaign against the slave trade.

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[94] Garrett, *To Live Among the Stars,* 11.
[95] John Wolffe, "Introduction," in *Evangelicals and Public Zeal: Evangelicals and Society in Britain 1780-1980,* ed. John Wolffe (London: SPCK, 1995), 1.
[96] Anstey, *The Atlantic Slave Trade,* 199.

Missionary societies were themselves a form of active participation in public life. It is, therefore, unlikely that avoidance of politics was intended in this sense.[97] John Philip, for example, when he wrote his preface to *Researches in South Africa* stated that he had "nothing to say to politics", because the treatment of the Hottentots was "a mere question of civil rights".[98] The moral duty to criticise an inhumane policy was not, to him, political at all.

The use of the word "politics" to refer to personal conviction or allegiance to a party was already established in the period under consideration.[99] This may be the underlying meaning of Philip's comment quoted above. He refused to become involved the campaign in Britain against the Governor of the Cape Colony, despite his personal disagreements.[100]

The diversity of political leanings within the LMS would have made association with any one group problematic. Furthermore, the notion of party was closely associated with faction and had negative connotations. The good of the people and the nation, it was believed, could be harmed by the disputes between factions and attempts to further party interests. Haweis exemplified these sentiments in a thanksgiving sermon. Preaching following the conclusion of a peace treaty with France he rejoiced at the "silencing of faction":

> Our rulers like unskilled pilots in a storm, began to be at their wits end when most the political Bark called for assistance and yet more anxious about their own Places, than the safety of those who were on Board, refused the helm to such as offered their assistance, with probability of success & observations on their mistakes. Distracted with clamour, torn with faction, our councils divided, our credits sunk, ... [101]

Party politics, therefore, was not necessarily a respectable activity. On the evidence of these comments it is probable that involvement in politics of that kind would have aroused the concern of the Directors. The LMS appealed to friends and sympathisers within government but did not side with any party.

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[97] An exception was the restriction on missionaries in the West Indies from campaigning against the slave trade.

[98] John Philip, *Researches in South Africa* (London, 1828), 1: xxv.

[99] The first use can in this sense can be traced to 1769. *A New English Dictionary on Historical Principles*, 1909 ed., s.v. "politics".

[100] Andrew C. Ross, *John Philip (1775-1851): Missions, Race and Politics in South Africa* (Aberdeen: University Press, 1986), 102-3.

[101] Sermon on Samuel 22:1 [incomplete], Haweis Papers vol. 3, ML.

The role of advisor may itself be considered a political position. The chapter heading under which Gunson discussed the drafting of the Tahitian law code was "Advisers in Affairs of State".[102] In this connection, it is interesting to note that the first use of the term "political" to describe an advisory role is thought to be of civilian advisors to native rulers of Indian states in 1849.[103] Thus while this particular meaning of "political" was emerging it seems unlikely that the Directors in 1795, would have consciously excluded an advisory role. Wider definitions of politics in terms of active participation in civic life seem less to have been of concern to the Directors of the LMS than their fear of being associated with radicalism. The participation of the missionaries at Tahiti in law making, therefore, does not seem to have been inconsistent with the instructions of the Directors.

From the foregoing it seems clear that the main sources of the LMS "no politics" rule was the fear of being tainted by accusations of radicalism and the "pre-democratic" views held by many of the Directors themselves. Avoidance of association with party may have been another aspect of their thinking. However, in the context of the early years of the LMS an equation of politics with radical politics probably comes closest to the meaning intended by the Directors. Therefore, when regulations were drafted they included strong exhortations to obey the ruling authorities.[104] These statements, intended to express the loyal sentiments of the directors and reassure observers at home, had the consequence of enjoining obedience to chiefs, including Pomare. In this way, notions, such as Divine Right, were transferred by a policy aimed at supporting the British constitution.

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[102] Gunson, *Messengers of Grace,* chap 15.
[103] *A New English Dictionary on Historical Principles*, 1909 ed., s.v. "politics".
[104] See chapter 5.

CHAPTER 5. PLANNING AND EARLY YEARS 1795-1809

This chapter covers the period from the decision to send a mission to Tahiti to the withdrawal of all but two members in 1809. It looks at the instructions to the missionaries and the degree of integration in to Tahitian society which the various authors of the documents envisaged. The role of Captain Wilson in the planning of the first voyage and the implications of this for the internal organisation of the mission and for relations with Tahitians while the *Duff* remained at Tahiti are also examined.

Finally, the chapter considers the relations between the mission at Tahiti and the inhabitants of the islands after the departure of the *Duff* as they attempted to challenge Tahitian life with their Christian message and yet live within Tahitian society. The missionaries' own fears, aspirations and suggestions for the future of the mission are noted together with the way in which their ideas changed after as they learned more about Tahitian life. It will be argued that the attitudes towards the Pomares, which evolved during this period, had important implications for the way the longest serving members of the group behaved in later years.

Planning the Mission and the First Voyage of the *Duff*

The decision of the General Meeting of LMS in September 1795 to send a mission to Tahiti left the Board of thirty four Directors the task of organising a mission to a destination thousands of miles away and infrequently visited by shipping. Nevertheless a plan was drawn up and the missionaries embarked on 24th September 1796. The principal difficulties facing the Board concerned the make up of the mission and the method of conveying the group to its destination.

On 28th September 1795 a committee was appointed by the Board consisting of Haweis, Josiah Wilson, Joseph Hardcastle and James Steven to enquire into the best means of conveyance for an unspecified number of missionaries. The possibilities before them, which had already been outlined by Haweis, were to obtain passages for missionaries in a South Sea Whaler; to charter a ship or to buy one.[1]

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[1] Haweis, "Memoir on the very probable success of a Mission" and. Haweis, *Memoir on the Most Eligible Part to begin a Mission.* See chapter 4.

However, the very same meeting unanimously accepted the offer of service from Captain Wilson which Haweis put before the Society amidst the excitement of the first annual meeting. In December Wilson set a proposal for the purchase of a small ship before the Board.[2]

Advice was taken about the cost of carriage in a South Sea Whaler but it was concluded that the moral influence of the notorious whaling crews would counteract any beneficial effect of a mission. Burder had misgivings about the cost of a ship, which was difficult to justify when Tahiti was the only location which required one.[3] It was eventually decided that the society would buy a ship of 264 tons, the *Duff*, and seek permission from the East India Company to return with a cargo of tea that might offset the cost. This last measure, which had also been suggested by Haweis in print, provoked controversy by introducing a commercial element into the affairs of the society. The objections were not sufficient to hinder the plan.[4]

The missionaries themselves were recruited gradually. Recommended by pastors and friends of the mission, they were interviewed by Directors and wrote an account of their religious experience.[5] The number eventually selected was thirty men, six of whom were married. The occupations of the men in the party were various, but predominantly skilled manual work such as carpentry, weaving or blacksmithing.

The ministers too had humble origins and three had received ordination as a result of their participation in the mission. James Cover, a school teacher and John Eyre, a blockmaker were ordained together at Holywell Chapel, London in July 1796. John Jefferson was a former actor and school teacher ordained at Haberdasher's Hall in August 1796. Thomas Lewis, however, had been ordained at Odiham in November 1795 in the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion. The size of the party reflected the form of mission being planned but also economic considerations once the decision had been made to purchase a ship.

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[2] 14th December 1795, Board Minutes 1.
[3] Burder to Haweis 23rd December 1795, Haweis Papers vol. 5, ML.
[4] Eyre to Haweis 2nd April 1796, Haweis Papers vol. 5, ML.
[5] It was not until 1820 that a standardised set of questions were devised. Burder to Haweis 28th January 1796, Haweis Papers vol. 5, ML.

Hardcastle had initial doubts about sending a large party fearing either that the British government might take offence at the planting of a colony without their leave or that the government of Tahiti would be offended. In his circular to the country Directors in 1796 however he confidently supported the ambitious scheme:

> What are six missionaries to so immense a population & by what means are their number to be recruited in the event of death?[6]

It was expected that the missionaries would settle not only at Tahiti but also, if circumstances proved favourable, at Tonga and the Marquesas. The prospect of Christianity speedily reaching the Society Islands was also considered. The length of a voyage to the South Seas was a problem with no certain communication between there and New South Wales or Britain. For these reasons the large party made up principally of artisans was considered preferable because the group could be self sufficient in the trades required to support a community.

The Moravian missions provided examples upon which the LMS Directors could draw. Their mission in Labrador, though commenced in 1752, had been reinforced in 1771 by a party of fourteen including two preachers, a doctor and seven artisans.[7] Rowland Hill corresponded with Peter Braun a Moravian missionary at Antigua[8] and in November 1795 the Board heard a report from Haweis and Brooksbank of a conversation they had had with Christian Ignatius La Trobe the Secretary of the Moravian Foreign Missions Department.[9] Further advice from La Trobe was later published in *Missionary Instructions Recommended to the Serious Attention of all who are Engaged in the Great and Important Work of Promoting the Gospel of Christ Among the Heathen.* [10] La Trobe calmed fears about the sending of wives into the mission field and also advised that education was not an essential for a missionary. [11]

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[6] Hardcastle, Plan of disposing the first mission, addressed to the Country Directors, Home Office Extra 1.

[7] J. E. A. Hutton, *A History of Moravian Missions* (London: Moravian Publication Office, 1922), 136.

[8] Ibid. 200.

[9] 9th November 1795, Board Minutes 1.

[10] The body of the pamphlet was written by Haweis with an Appendix relating La Trobe's Advice. Thomas Haweis, *Missionary Instructions Recommended to the Serious Attention of all who are engaged in the Great and Important work of promoting the Gospel of Christ among the Heathen* (London: T. Chapman, 1796).

[11] Haweis in 1790 had planned to send two men who had been given a theological education by his friends Dr Walker and Mr Spencer and had cherished hopes of ordination, the collapse of this venture may explain, in part, Haweis' support of the plan to send artisans and his belief that a classical education served only to make missionaries conceited. Haweis Papers vol. 3, ML.

The background of the missionaries chosen by the LMS was similar to those who had been used successfully by the Moravians. Yet, Greatheed feared that British would not be as submissive as the Germans.[12] The Moravians were sent out under strict discipline. They were given only sufficient money to travel to the nearest seaport from where they were expected to work their passages to the appointed destination. They were also expected to be self supporting and show total devotion to the mission:

> 4. What do you intend to do there?
> A. I will do my best to earn my living and bring sinners to Christ.
> 5. How do you intend to get there?
> A. I shall simply trust Christ to shew me the way.
> 6. How long do you intend to stay there?
> A. I shall stay there either till I die or till the elders call me to another field.
> 6. How do you propose to treat your wife?
> A. I will love her with all my heart; but I shall not allow my love for her to interfere with my work.[13]

It seems from the reactions of the Directors to later events that they expected a similar degree of obedience form their own agents. Nott was expected to work his passage home after twenty years service in Tahiti[14] and Bourne received a severe rebuke for retreating to New South Wales due to his wife's illness.[15]

Moravian missionaries had, though suffering severe hardship, been able to maintain themselves in the West Indies, Greenland and North America. In the South Seas, however, it was difficult for the mechanic missionaries to ply their trades in the absence of European employers or indeed many of the raw materials necessary. Attempts at self sufficiency in agriculture were hampered by climate and by 'theft'. The infrequency of the supplies from London was to be a persistent problem and source of estrangement between the Directors and their missionaries.

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[12] Greatheed to Haweis 7th July 1797, Haweis Papers vol. 5, ML.
[13] Questions put to Dr Regnier, a medical missionary to Surinam quoted in Hutton *History of Moravian Missions,* 171.
[14] Tyerman & Bennet to LMS 14th November 1822, Home Odds 1.
[15] Hankey and Orme to Marsden 14th November 1827. They note that a man of far higher social rank would not expect to have his passage paid when his wife was ill yet he was unhindered in carrying on the work. Marsden Papers vol. 4, ML.

The size and composition of the mission at Tahiti has led some authors to describe it as an attempt to civilise prior to conversion.[16] This was not the case. In addition to the practical reasons already noted, the artisans were present to give an example of a Christian life and to attract converts by demonstrating their superior skills. The policy is best summarised by Hardcastle's description of the mission as a "complete exhibition of a Christian and Civilized community".[17] Indeed, in 1800 Hardcastle urged that more prominence be given in the instructions to this "inferior tho' necessary branch in our Missionary work."[18]

The recognition by the LMS of the utility of using artisans as part of their mission strategy does not mean that they believed that adoption of Western civilisation or instruction in 'rational' thought was a prerequisite for conversion. Haweis, for example, believed that the preaching of the Gospel could take Tahitian society as it was as a starting point. The practice of human sacrifice and the beliefs which underpinned it, he suggested, revealed a pre-existing sense of the need for atonement upon which the missionaries could develop preaching about the Atonement.[19] Haweis did not favour the sending of educated men to dispute with potential converts but missionaries of firm faith who would preach the simple message of 'Christ crucified.'

The official instructions to the missionaries were printed by the LMS in a pamphlet which contained details of the valedictory service. A manuscript version of these *Counsels and Instructions to the Mission by the Directors* also survives in the archives.[20] Haweis published his own version entitled *Missionary Instructions Recommended to the Serious Attention of all those who are engaged in the Great and Important Work of promoting the Gospel of Christ among the Heathen* which in parts agreed word for word with the official document.[21] Haweis' opinions are important,

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[16] Alan Tippett, *People Movements in Southern Polynesia: Studies in the Dynamics of Church Planting and Growth in Tahiti, New Zealand, Tonga and Samoa* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1971), 10.
[17] Hardcastle, *Plan for disposing of the first mission,* 21st April 1796 [printed circular], Home Office Extra 1.
[18] Hardcastle, *Observations on the Instructions to the Missionaries,* 29th March 1800, Home Office Extra 1.
[19] Haweis, *Missionary Instructions,* 9.
[20] Henry Hunter and Edward Williams, *A Sermon and Charge Delivered at Sion Chapel, London July 28, 1796. On the Occassion of the Designation of the First Missionaries to the Islands of the South Sea* (London: T. Chapman, 1796); *Counsels and Instructions to the Mission by the Directors,* SSL 1.
[21] Haweis, *Missionary Instructions.*

not only because of their circulation in print but also as a result of Haweis' personal presence among the missionaries in Portsmouth as the *Duff* waited for the convoy.

All the versions began with an admonition to live in love and unity.[22] The missionaries were also instructed to avoid temptation; no man was to sleep away from the group without permission and women converts were to be instructed by one of the sisters. On the subject of marriage they were told:

> If a brother thinks he ought to marry, let such a one take care that he is not guided by passion and fancy: *Only in the Lord* is clear apostolic order: If therefore his desire be that he may keep himself more pure in honourable estate of wedlock, let him communicate his wishes to his brethren, nor presume to form any secret engagements, but always to act openly and with the approbation of the Mission.[23]

The possibility of marriage to Tahitians was considered. A Tahitian wife was to come under the same regulations as the British women.

There are indications that Haweis and Hardcastle foresaw the missionaries marrying unconverted women. Hardcastle raised the issue in a circular to the Directors but did not come to a conclusion.[24] Haweis noted that the crew of the *Dædalus* had found nine men who had lived in Tahiti for eighteen months and had married.[25] He also wrote in *Evangelical Magazine* that it would further the cause of the mission if the men could intermarry with superior families in Tahiti.[26] This would protect the mission and, in the absence of mass conversions, Christian families would be a beneficial example.

Haweis went beyond the official instructions in advising that the missionaries cultivate friendship with "the King and superior people".[27] He also evaluated the advantages in bringing a few principal people away from the island to guarantee the safety of the mission, though he expected that the king and chiefs would pledge themselves for the security of the mission, a measure which Cook had attempted.[28]

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[22] *A Sermon and Charge*, 52.
[23] Ibid. 54.
[24] Hardcastle Plan for Disposing the First Mission.
[25] Haweis, *Missionary Instructions*, 26.
[26] Haweis, *Very Probable Success of a Mission*, 267.
[27] Haweis, *Missionary Instructions*, 20.
[28] Ibid. 22.

Both the official instructions and Haweis' version outlined principles according to which the mission should be governed. The former recommended a committee elected monthly on board ship and thereafter every six months, or longer if that was better suited to the chiefs' ideas of government. The manuscript instructions go on to state:

> The missionaries must make the natives sensible that in settling among them, they have no unreasonable demands to make, no claim of ambition, arrogance, or avarice- that they are disposed to acknowledge with the fullest integrity, & respect the dominion of the natives over their island, & all its products, & the subordination previously established....[and] show willingness to place confidence in their justice and generosity.[29]

The mission was, therefore, to settle peaceably and to respect the rights of indigenous people and rulers. This echoed the comments made at the first General Meeting intended to reassure governments, British and foreign, that missionaries would not prove disruptive to social order.

Haweis' suggestions show a greater emphasis on fixed hierarchy within the mission. He urged that the most aged preside in each location where a mission settled and also recommended a council of four or five elders to include the surgeon and Captain Wilson. The official instructions and Haweis' coincided exactly in urging the missionaries to oppose the most serious sins but:

> Avoid attacking their established customs of a more indifferent nature, such as their dress, amusements, &c. however indecent the one may appear, or in its consequences apparently dangerous the other. If the conscience becomes truly awakened, it will then grow tender, and they will be ready to hear, as in matters of less notoriety, and abstain from the appearances evil.[30]

Haweis, however, went further suggesting conformity in food, hours of sleep and refreshment and daily bathing. He also envisaged the missionaries clothed in the same material as Tahitians though covered to a greater extent.[31] His view of the integration of the missionaries into Tahitian society was, therefore, more extensive involving intermarriage and the adoption of many aspects of the Tahitian way of life.

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[29] *Counsels and Instructions,* SSL 1.
[30] *A Sermon and Charge,* 59-60.
[31] Haweis, *Missionary Instructions,* 17.

Haweis had great confidence in the abilities of Tahitians and their readiness to receive the Christian message:

> They are men, whose natural understanding is as good as our own, and however, suspicious, and with reason, when once convinced of the reality of the fact, they cannot but highly respect us for our labour of love.[32]

Haweis' assessment of Tahitian society was based on the assumption that Tahitians were fundamentally similar to Europeans; whether in their beliefs about sacrifice and atonement, or in the organisation of their ruling class. The similarities between peoples made suggestions that the artisan missionaries integrate into Tahitian culture and to obey the hereditary monarchy, which was believed to exist there, appear all the more logical.

The LMS was influenced by the example and advice of the Moravians with the result that there was an emphasis upon obedience. The instructions, however, express only the thoughts and plans of the Directors not the perceptions of the thirty-nine people who sailed on the *Duff.* The testing of the instructions by experience revealed that the presence of so many artisans created confusion about the precise nature of the role of the non-ordained. There were also different expectations about the extent to which the exemplary Christian community would stand independent of the Tahitians. As the missionaries attempted to resolve these dilemmas, the problems of geographical distance were compounded by the social distance between the missionaries and members of the Board.

Captain Wilson and the Settlement of the First Mission

The artisan or mechanic roots of the missionaries have frequently been commented upon and contrasted with later patterns in mission composition. However, the role of Captain Wilson has received little attention.[33] This is surprising as one of the most striking aspects of the material produced before and after the return of the *Duff* from its first voyage is that the missionaries themselves are not the focus of interest. It is Captain Wilson who appears most frequently in material produced by the LMS from the first general meeting of the LMS onwards.

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[32] Ibid. 25.

[33] See Gunson, *Messengers of Grace*; Max Warren, *Social History and Christian Mission* (London: SCM Press, 1967).

Wilson's dramatic conversion and life story which was a gripping tale of danger, escapes from death and redemption may be one reason for his popularity. The narrative occupied forty pages of Haweis' history of the Christian Church, published in 1801.[34] A serialised account of Wilson's life was published in 1802 by *Methodist Magazine.*[35]

Furthermore, the figure of 'The Captain' held particular resonance in this period. The public were used to following the exploits of captains and to gathering their information about unexplored regions from them. Captain Wilson was, therefore, a natural figure around whom publicity about the voyage could revolve. The instructions given to Wilson were published in the *Evangelical Magazine* as were his letters from Rio de Janeiro and Canton.[36] The production of his *Missionary Voyage to the Southern Pacific Ocean* fits neatly into the pattern established by these explorers and national heroes.

It should also be noted that the classic missionary painting *The Cession of Matavai,*[37] though undoubtedly produced for the honour of the missionary society and its first venture, was created as a gift to show appreciation to Captain Wilson.[38] It is Wilson and his nephew who are the central figures and not all the missionaries were included. Thus both the central image and narrative account of this first enterprise of LMS centred on the Captain.

The instructions given to the missionaries and to Captain Wilson both emphasised that he was responsible for the mission not only for discipline on board ship in temporal matters, but also:

> ...with full and complete authority for the management of its concerns in relation to the voyage; but also to commit to your care and superintendence, during the same period, the more important charge of the mission itself, and especially of those faithful brethren who accompany you therein.[39]

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[34] Appendix 3 in Haweis, *An Impartial and Succinct History*, 3: 361-401.

[35] James Wilson, "Memoirs of Captain Wilson," *Methodist Magazine*1 (1802): 71.

[36] James Wilson, *Letter from Cpt. James Wilson of the Ship Duff to Joseph Hardcastle Esq. Treasurer of the London Missionary Society* (Edinburgh: nd.).

[37] Figure 5.

[38] 23rd July 1798, Board Minutes 1.

[39] "Instructions to Captain Wilson," in *A Missionary Voyage*, Wilson, xc.

The result of this emphasis upon the person of Wilson and the apparent distrust of the missionaries was that there was never a clearly defined authority over the mission from within the group. This lack of leadership was later recognised by the Board as a flaw in the first mission, though one which was difficult to rectify.

A secretary and other officers were elected from among the missionaries on board the *Duff* but Wilson was in the chair when decisions were made about important issues such as who should be designated a preacher; excommunication; or the division of the group between the islands.[40] The lack of planning is illustrated by the decision about preachers. The issue of who was to be considered a preacher did not emerge until after they had left Rio de Janeiro when on 31st December 1796 Capt. Wilson asked each of the brethren to preach in turn before him so that he could decide how to divide the missionaries. [41]

At the same meeting, in December 1796, Wilson convened a committee of eight to draw up a code of church government and articles of faith for the use of the missionaries at their destination, again chaired by himself.[42] The decision of the LMS not to favour any one form of church government had precluded any such instructions being given in London. The final version comprising twenty-one articles was signed by all on 21st February. New office bearers were elected from among those who were destined for Tahiti.

The Arrival of *The Duff* at Tahiti

The Duff arrived at Tahiti on 5th March 1797. Twenty missionaries, five wives and two children had decided to remain there.[43] Ten men, all single, opted for Tonga and two for the Marquesas. There is a suggestion that one element in the decision making was friction between some of the married and unmarried brethren and a feeling that those with wives and families might make unfair demands on the resources of the mission as a whole. The decision may have been entirely practical;

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[40] In January 1797 Jefferson and Cock were excommunicated following an accusation by William Henry that they were Arminian in their views. They were later reinstated. Mss Journal [Smith] from the *Duff*, W. W. Bolton Papers vol. 20, ML.

[41] Journal of William Henry, SSJ 1.

[42] The committee had three ordained members: Cover, Jefferson, and Lewis and five others Bowell, Buchanan, Henry, Main and Shelley.

[43] Revs. Cover, Eyre, Jefferson and Lewis. Messers Bicknell, Broomhall, Cock, Clode, Hodges, Henry Harris, Hassall, Main, Nott, Oakes, William and John Puckey and Smith. Gilham and Nobbs were designated for Tahiti but left on 4th August 1797.

the women preferring to stay together to help one another in the absence of a doctor.[44]

The day following their arrival, being a Sunday, no business was done but a service was led by Rev. Cover at which the Tahitians who had boarded the ship were present. [45] *A Missionary Voyage* records this service as perhaps the first occasion on which the Saviour's name was mentioned to the poor heathen. However, the focus of the chapter describing the arrival is on meetings between significant island figures and Captain Wilson.[46] This emphasis, again, demonstrates the social biases in the construction of the mission and its presentation to the subscribers at home; in this instance, it also reflects an important characteristic of European-Tahitian relations.

A pattern of intercourse had already been established in which the captain of a vessel would take the chiefly role in meetings with high ranking Tahitians. Thus, when Mane Mane, a 'high priest' from Mo'orea came aboard the vessel it was Captain Wilson whom he sought as a *tayo,* or friend, not Jefferson the president of the missionaries nor any of the ordained men. It was, therefore to be expected that the negotiations surrounding the arrival and settlement of the mission would be carried on between the Captain and the 'King'.

The appeal sent out by the LMS for donations of goods for the outfit of the *Duff* mentioned the need for gifts suitable for the Tahitians.[47] Knowledge of the South Seas also extended sufficiently for subscribers to be aware of the monarchy which was reported to exist in Tahiti. Individual members of the society seem to have become caught up in the romance. R Coleman, for example, sent a gift of "a new pewter pot for the King of Otaheite as you will see by the inscription on it," and "2 rows of beads for the queen".[48]

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[44] William Henry suggested they were advised to do so by a director, SSJ 1.
[45] There was an error in their reckoning which led to a discrepancy in the celebration of the Sabbath which lasted at Tahiti until after the arrival of the French.
[46] Wilson, *A Missionary Voyage,* 56.
[47] Home Letters 1.
[48] R. Coleman to LMS 27th June 1796, Home Letters 1.

The public show of politeness did not necessarily signify personal respect. Wilson was negative about Tu's character and abilities.[49] However, in all the events surrounding the arrival of *The Duff* in Tahiti there was a recognition of legitimate authority and of custom. Though the missionaries may have misunderstood the power which individuals had and the nature of the offers which were extended to them, the first phase of their interaction was one in which every effort was made to obey the civil authorities, as instructed by the Directors of the Missionary Society. These initial relations, though not perhaps significant in themselves, give an indication of one strand of thinking out of which the later relationship between the missionaries and the Pomare dynasty emerged.

On 7th March Wilson made a speech giving an explanation of the purpose of the mission using the beachcomber Peter Haggerstein as interpreter. Following this Tu led the missionaries to the "British House" which he offered them for their use.[50] Preparations were made for landing by partitioning the building to provide living accommodation, a store and chapel. Additional bamboo was added to enclose the sides and the entrances were designed to open onto the chapel with the remaining accommodation secured behind locked doors.

It was several days after the first landing that Wilson presented the official gift of the society to Tu and his wife Tetua; each was given a "shewy dress" but Wilson reported the Tu was better pleased with the axe, musket, knife and scissors that were given him.[51] The arrival of Pomare and Iddeah led to a further exchange of gifts and discussion about the situation of the mission. Pomare was entertained to dinner on board and Wilson asked his permission for the missionaries to settle.[52]

The ceremony which marked the 'cession' of Matavai occurred on 16th March. Again Wilson acted with the utmost courtesy. Mane Mane made a long oration naming the gods, districts and chiefs of Tahiti and Mo'orea and also naming all the captains who had visited. He concluded with a "formal surrender of the district of Matavai: observing that we might take what houses, trees, fruit, hogs, &c.

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[49] Wilson also reports that Jefferson had a very bad opinion of Tu, who later took the title Pomare II. Wilson, *A Missionary Voyage*, 78.
[50] A building 80 by 48 ft which had been erected for Captain Bligh in the belief he would return.
[51] 10th June, Wilson, *A Missionary Voyage*, 69.
[52] Wilson, *A Missionary Voyage*, 73.

we thought proper." At this time the missionaries believed that they had been given the territory.[53]

It is not entirely clear how Pomare interpreted the arrangement he had made with the Captain. One clue is Mane Mane's inquiry about whether Wilson would aid him in war against Raiatea.[54] Previous Tahitian experience was of beachcombers who had been absorbed into Tahitian society as specialists in various useful trades and of the parties who had landed for short periods from ships for recuperation, preparation of provisions or scientific measurement. In the former instance individuals had deferred to Tahitian authority and in the latter superior arms and ample supplies of trade goods had allowed the groups to maintain their separateness.

The missionaries fitted neither pattern. The mission at Tahiti had a brief taste, whilst the *Duff* remained with them, of the generosity and respect which their position fostered. However, the period of their life in Tahiti following the departure of the *Duff* was one in which they were forced to adjust from this view of their relationship with the islanders to one in which they realised their own powerlessness and dependence upon Pomare.

The missionaries were nervous about being left on the island and attempted to persuade the whole party to settle with them for protection. Captain Wilson and the missionaries on board thought their fears ill-founded and suspected the Swedish beachcombers of frightening them with false reports.[55] The *Duff* departed first only for a few days to see whether the mission party would be well treated. The ship then sailed for Tonga and the Marquesas where the remaining missionaries settled. *The Duff* returned to Tahiti, as planned, in July and a final leave was taken on 4th August. Whilst the missionaries expected soon to receive supplies and further recruits it was to be four years before they had direct contact with the society.

Sailing away in *the Duff* Wilson could only report on the cordial and apparently deferential relationships he had witnessed. *The Duff* and the missionaries had been amply supplied with pork and breadfruit during their stay. Work had been

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[53]Haweis to LMS August 1798, Home Office Extra 1.
[54] Wilson, *A Missionary Voyage*, 77.
[55] Ibid. 76.

carried out on behalf of the mission such as the cutting of bamboo to make the partitions in the house. Furthermore, it appeared that the missionaries had received not only the house as a gift but also the produce and labour of an entire district. This interpretation of events was widely disseminated by both *A Missionary Voyage* and *The Cession of Matavai*.

The Years 1797-1801

The missionaries were aware of the Tahitian reputation for theft, though they had experienced little while the *Duff* remained.[56] Captain Bligh had predicted that this would be a problem when he spoke to Haweis prior to the mission attempt in 1791:

> Among other pieces of advice, he told me the greatest Danger would probably arise from a Cause I little apprehended that the men should be too rich, as the provisions that would be made for them in Clothes & iron tools tho' insignificant in our view, would be in the view of the natives as the jewels of Golconda, and equally tempt them to plunder yea more than if they had been so many diamonds,..[57]

After the departure of the *Duff* the difficulties became apparent as they lost tools, household objects and produce from their garden. The reason the missionaries found it difficult to protect themselves because they could not call upon indigenous sanctions which they believed were harsh and tyrannical. This forced them towards a leniency which was construed by the community as cowardice. Reports of thefts occur frequently in their journals. In November 1799, the death of Thomas Lewis in suspicious circumstances highlighted their difficulties. Pomare threatened to take revenge on the entire district if it was found that Lewis had been murdered.[58]

The Mission faced constant requests for goods from others including chiefs. Their store was depleted still further by the necessity of paying for food and labour. This was resented not only because of the contrast to the generosity of early days but also because of the missionaries' understanding of their own personal sacrifices. Why should the Islanders not repay them when they had come to bring both spiritual and practical benefits?[59]

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[56] William Henry, *Early Days on Tahiti,* SSJ 1.
[57] Haweis Papers vol. 1, ML.
[58] Mission Journal [Jefferson and others] January - December 1799, SSJ 1. See below.
[59] For example, paying for lodging when on preaching tours. Mission Journal [Jefferson] August 1803, SSJ 1.

The first serious breach with the Tahitians came in 1798 when four of the missionaries were attacked and stripped naked. A number of explanations have been given for the incident. Harris attributed it to the attempt of the missionaries to prevent the Tahitians from getting hold of guns by supplying the *Nautilus* themselves during a previous visit to Matavai at the beginning of March.[60] Hassall suggests that deserters from the *Nautilus* had spread rumours against the mission. The direct cause appears to have been an attempt to prevent trade in weapons but the incident occurred in the context of the dispute between Pomare and Tu noted in chapter two. The four missionaries set out to visit Tu and request the return of some runaway sailors rather than allow Captain Bishop to negotiate their release by paying in guns. They left Tu, who was intoxicated, and headed for Pomare's residence but were set upon, beaten and stripped.[61]

The safety of the mission was discussed at a meeting and eleven of the missionaries concluded that the danger to themselves and their wives was too great. They sought passage in the *Nautilus* and departed for New South Wales on 31st March 1798. Their own letter of explanation claimed that this incident was the culmination of a series of threats from the islanders to seize their wives and property.[62] Only Jefferson, Eyre, Bicknell, Nott, Lewis, Broomhall and Harris remained.[63] They decided that the best means to prevent further disputes was to put their stores in the hands of Pomare I.[64]

It may be that the split in the mission which took place in 1798 resulted not only from different assessments of the safety of the group but also different expectations of the mission itself. Those who had expected to found a strong and independent Christian settlement would have been least prepared for the indignities of the experience in 1798. William Henry writing from New South Wales in 1799, suggested that a further thirty men and their wives be added. He argued that the small number of missionaries allowed their instructions to be slighted. Henry also recommended that courts of justice would be a useful demonstration "without which

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[60] Harris to LMS, 29th March 1798, SSL 1.
[61] Journal of Rowland Hassall 1797-99, SSJ 1.
[62] The Missionaries at Port Jackson to LMS 1st September 1798, SSL 1. Signed Cover, Henry, Oakes, Hassall, Clode, Smith, Hodges, Peter and William Puckey.
[63] Eyre was the only married man to remain. Others explained this as due to either to the age of his wife or to her unwillingness to take another voyage.
[64] Harris to LMS 29th March 1798, SSL 1.

they cannot have any just conception of Judgement nor the attribute of power in the Deity."[65]

Mr and Mrs Hodges and Puckey, who were examined by a committee of the Board when they returned to England, agreed with Henry. They believed the party had been too small and lacked a proper head.[66] Rev. Cover also believed that large numbers were necessary as a method of overcoming the influence of the *Arioi*.[67] Cover was careful to explain that this would be achieved by example not by force. A group of fifty, with sufficient property, would give them influence and strong defence. He firmly believed that the "natives" should be civilised first then evangelised.[68] Strength of numbers was also highlighted by Kelso, Buchanan and Wilkinson in their evidence about the mission in Tonga.[69]

The missionaries were a diverse group acting from many motives. There was never unanimity on the attitude to be adopted towards the mission. James Elder arriving in Tahiti in 1801 wrote:

> You may send one hundred thousand people to New Zealand, they may they may [sic.] all get possessions, without infringing on the property or the liberty of the natives. Here there are few people, very little land fit for cultivation, and if you send a great number the natives will be brought (most likely) in slavery, and I wish the missionaries may never contribute towards the bringing of the heathen under a foreign yoke.[70]

Hassall and Burder seem to have been opposed to proposals for more missionaries.[71] This was the also view of the Board of the LMS. A letter to the missionaries, dated 28th February 1806, stated that despite the advantages in comfort and social contact they had decided against sending further missionaries.[72]

In addition to fears of attack another factor which seems to have fed calls for more Europeans was the loneliness of the group and the wish of many to marry. Hayward's comments about European settlers, for example, are contained in a letter

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[65] Henry to LMS. 29th August 1799, SSL 1.
[66] Examination of Hodges and Puckey September 1800, SSL 1.
[67] Examination of Cover 12th September 1800, SSL 1.
[68] Second examination of Cover 15th September 1800, SSL 1.
[69] Examination of Kelso, Buchanan, Wilkinson: 22nd September 1800, SSL 1.
[70] Elder to Waugh 26th July 1801, SSL 1.
[71] Burder to Hassall 14th September 1804, Hassall Papers vol. 1, ML
[72] SSL 1.

in which he outlines the temptations of the islands and fear that he will "make a shipwreck of my faith".[73] Following the refusal of the church meeting to allow Lewis to marry a Tahitian in 1799 and the decision of the Board to oppose marriage to "heathens" the single men, if they were to remain true to their principles, had to choose between their loyalty to the mission and departure to search for a wife.

The retreat of the eleven missionaries to Port Jackson was not the only blow to strike the mission. News had already reached London, though not the mission at Tahiti, of the loss of the *Duff*, on a second voyage to Tahiti, to a privateer. Letters also began to reach London concerning the questionable moral conduct of the missionaries. William Henry, who was in New South Wales in 1799, reported that Main was living in adultery; Oakes had fallen in with harlots and confessed to doing the same at Tahiti; and that Cock was known to drink liquor and visit prostitutes.[74] In addition, Samuel Clode had been murdered in Port Jackson in July 1799 by a soldier who owed him money.[75] In the same year Rev. Lewis was excluded from church membership after the group refused to solemnise his marriage. He was found dead at the house he shared wih a Tahitian woman. Witnesses claimed that Lewis had been taken ill but members of the mission suspected foul play.[76]

The home correspondence reveals a good deal of disappointment at the fate of the mission but also a conviction that the loss of the *Duff* should be attributed to providence. One letter, from September 1799, contains a suggestion that the mission at Tahiti should have been better protected.[77] Haweis fought hard for further large missions and defended the first group. Hardcastle, however, had begun to argue for smaller missions of better quality in May 1799 before the loss of the *Duff* was known.[78]

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[73] Hayward to LMS 9th July 1802, SSL 1.
[74] Henry to LMS. 29th August 1799, SSL 1.
[75] Henry to LMS, 29th August 1799, SSL 1 see also *Evangelical Magazine* 1800, 298-302
[76] Mr Thomas Lewis to Haweis 4th August 1798, SSL 1; Jefferson to LMS 29th December 1799, SSL 1.
[77] William Spurr asked why the mission could not have sought protection from their own government. He is however, a lone voice in advocating a formal colony at this time. William Spurr to directors 22nd September 1799, Home Letters 1.
[78] Report of the Committee on memoir read to the Board by Rev. Hardcastle 6th May 1799, Home Office Extra 1.

It was decided in 1800 to take passages for twelve missionaries in the *Royal Admiral*, which was also to take convicts to New South Wales. The instructions for the missionaries sailing on the *Royal Admiral* contained some changes from those given to the first group. They were to beware of their own corrupt inclinations and to avoid selfishness and insubordination. In particular, they were reminded that the injunction concerning civil magistrates (Rom 13:1) was particularly applicable on board a ship.[79] Captain Charles Wilson, nephew of James Wilson, was given the power to choose who might officiate at public worship, the normal prerogative of a sea captain, otherwise they might choose for themselves.

The *Royal Admiral* arrived at Tahiti 10th July 1801 carrying John Davies, James Elder, William Scott, Samuel Tessier, William Waters, Charles Waters, Charles Wilson and John Youl.[80] A ceremony of introduction was conducted by Captain Charles Wilson with Nott as interpreter. Again, the men were asked if they would fight for Pomare who thought it strange that King George, having so many fighting men, would send none to aid him.[81] Pomare agreed to protect the missionaries. Captain Wilson wanted to demand back the mission stores which had been given to Pomare. The missionaries, however, dissuaded him; a sign that some of the group were beginning to accept island customs even if they could not understand them.

As the missionaries became more familiar with Tahiti it became apparent that political relationships were not as clear as some of the earlier observers had supposed. The tensions between Pomare and Tu had been obvious in 1798. By May 1800 it was also apparent that Pomare's position was not what it had appeared and neither was it secure. Other forms of government had once existed in Tahiti:

> Rumours of war continue. It is reported that the commonality are much
> moved against the principal chiefs, and are wanting to rool [sic.] them up
> altogether, and to restore the ancient form of government to the island: that is,

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[79] Romans 13: 1 "Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God." Instructions to the Missionaries sailing in the *Royal Admiral,* draft 1800, Home Office 1.
[80] The doctor Stephen Morris died of fever and James Mitchener sailed with the group but remained in Port Jackson. William Read travelled on the *Royal Admiral* but became an LMS missionary in South Africa.
[81] Capt. Charles Wilson to Hardcastle 15th March 1802, SSL 1.

is every district to be subject to its own chief, without the acknowledgement of a superior over him. Our present situation appears very dangerous..[82]

Despite having allowed Pomare the iron from their store, which he used to purchase guns, the missionaries felt their own position to be precarious and worsening with the arrival of each vessel. Though they themselves traded on behalf of the chiefs for gunpowder there were still accusations of interference in trade.[83]

The Missionary Relationship with Tahitian Authority and Law

In the years after 1801 the group of fourteen missionaries had to find their own solution which took account of their particular circumstances and the expectations of their Directors. The missionaries wrestled with their own views about the conduct of the mission, seeking a way in which to fulfil their role as preachers committed to challenge and change the society they encountered and yet find a way of living with the Tahitians.

A realistic assessment of the mission's relations with Tahitians, and the Pomares in particular, must take into account both the continuing comments expressing frustration about thefts and revulsion at some Tahitian practices with their attempts to gain Pomare's assistance and their submission to his authority. This section considers the mission's contacts with issues of law and order, as a part of the wider European presence, in challenging Tahitian norms; and in relating to *ari'i*.

The missionaries' relationships with Tahitians, while specific to them and their missionary purpose, were forged in the context of Tahitians' previous encounters with Europeans and also the expectations of co-operation on the part of visiting Europeans and the inhabitants of New South Wales. Members of the mission assisted fellow Europeans as interpreters and in procuring supplies. In one case two Tahitians suspected of having been employed in a plot by a mutinous crew to kill their captain were interviewed by missionaries.[84] In the absence of regular communication from the LMS they were dependent on good relations with visitors to keep them in essential supplies.

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[82] Mission Journal [Jefferson and others] 1800, SSJ 1.
[83] Purchase of powder for three principal chiefs and 18 pound cannon and 2 swivels for Pomare. Mission Journal [Jefferson and others] 1800 SSJ 1. Accusations that the mission interfered in trade, Mission Journal Tahiti Dec 1802-March 1804.
[84] Journal Jefferson and others 1799 SSJ 1.

While there is evidence that the mission co-operated with ships' captains, for mutual benefit, there is no evidence to suggest members of the mission themselves inflicted punishments on Tahitians as a matter of policy. There is one example in the mission journals in which an accusation was made that Elder had struck a native four years previously. Elder's reply to the brethren stated that two others had admitted beating natives. [85] No contemporary record survives of any of these incidents. The inclusion of beating among charges in this context suggests that it was rare and not approved by the body as a whole. In this they were different from the European captains and the *Bounty* mutineers.

The mission received occasional assistance from visiting captains, for example, in 1801 Charles Wilson removed three unruly seamen.[86] In 1805, a man seen stealing from the mission garden, was taken on board a ship with the intention that he receive a flogging but he escaped before it was given.[87] Visiting captains, however, were often as frustrated by their inability to trace thieves as the members of mission. It was not until the 1820s that European navies began their more frequent and increasingly competitive interventions in the islands.

The mission also played a role in the plans formulated in New South Wales as intermediaries in the pork trade and through the appointment of Jefferson and later Henry as magistrates. Neither man interpreted his position as giving them any power over Islanders. The circumstances noted in the journals in which they acted as magistrates were matters involving other Britons and fit the pattern of European concern about 'White Savages' outlined in chapter three.

In 1804, Jefferson arbitrated when sailors from the *Harrington* burnt three "native houses" after a fight. He believed them to have been drunk on their double ration of grog for Christmas. His judgement was that unless they made reparation, of three pieces of "chints" to the owner of the houses, they would be reported to Governor King.[88] Jefferson adjudicated a dispute between William Caw and "Aiken

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[85] Mission at Tahiti [Youl] to Elder 11th Nov 1806 SSJ 2.
[86] Mission Journal [Jefferson] 12th July 1801 SSL 1.
[87] Mission Journal [Jefferson] 29th July 1805-8th March 1806 SSJ.
[88] Mission Journal [Jefferson] 12th Dec 1804-11th March 1805 SSJ 2.

the black man" over a pig and some tomahawks.[89] Jefferson also received sworn testimony and examined sailors left behind by their ship.[90] His authority and success seem to have fluctuated as in 1807 his request for the removal of a beachcomber named Hoare was ignored.[91]

William Henry was made a magistrate by Macquarie and married Hayward to Sarah Christie in 1812.[92] This was the only occasion on which the role was used to resolve a mission matter. The majority of the disputes between members of the mission were dealt with in the forum of the church meeting. The ultimate sanction was expulsion from church membership. Individuals who were considered to have left the mission according to the ruling of the meeting, lost their access to the mission stores. It seems, however, that in many cases items continued to be lent and a sense of responsibility remained towards their countrymen.

The appointments of Jefferson and Henry were the first in a series of attempts by officials to exert control over British subjects in the South Sea. Dissenters in Britain often protested about clerical magistrates. However, neither the missionaries at Tahiti nor Directors appear to have had objected to these roles. This is a further sign of the diverse membership of the early LMS which cannot be assumed to have been typically dissenting in its views on relations between church and state. Rev. Samuel Marsden, the society's agent in New South Wales, was a colonial chaplain and magistrate at Paramatta. This attitude had altered by the time George Pritchard was appointed British Consul in 1837. He was recommended for the post by the LMS but both the Society and the Government insisted that he resign as a missionary.[93] There were protests from within the Tahitian mission when he continued to preach and, more controversially, to attend mission meetings.[94]

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[89] Caw served as a missionary in Tahiti from 1804 to 1808, when he was ejected from the mission. He lived on Tahiti until his death in 1820. Mission Journal [Jefferson] 29th July 1805-8th March 1806, SSJ 2

[90] *Transactions of the Missionary Society,* 3: 182. Protest of the crew of the *Norfolk* 26th March 1802. HRA 1. 3: 732.

[91] Affidavit of James Elder, County of Cumberland, sworn before Jno. Palmer JP 20th July 1808. HRA 1. 6: 543.

[92] Bicknell, Davies, Hayward, Wilson, Henry and Scott to LMS 22nd June 1812, SSL 2.

[93] Ellis [on behalf of the Directors] to Backhouse 11th January 1837, PRO FO 58/15 Consul Pritchard & Various; W Fox Strangeways to Ellis 14th February 1837, PRO FO 58/15 Consul Pritchard & Various.

[94] Darling to Ellis 4th December 1837, SSL 11. Davies, Barff, Wilson and Rodgerson supported Pritchard in his continued preaching. Simpson to LMS 16th December 1837, SSL 11. See chapter 9.

The starting point for members of the mission in understanding the Tahitian attitudes to law and order which they sought to change was similar to that of other Europeans. Jefferson wrote in 1799:

> The Otahietians hold thieving among themselves to be a bad thing, and if they find the thief they do not scruple to kill him, but they do not suppose their imagined deities are angry with them for stealing, on the contrary they pray to them to give them success. Laws for the maintenance of right and the punishment of wrong are not yet in being among them.[95]

Similar comments were made about the inhabitants of New Zealand, when the *Royal Admiral* called there. Not all, however, were so imperceptive as to equate the absence of written laws with an absence of legal process or a concept of crime. The *Royal Admiral* journal gives an account of a dispute at Port Jackson settled by traditional methods.[96] As members of the mission became more familiar with punishments and saw the use of the death penalty for offences such as theft and sorcery, criticism of these measures replaced comment about the non-existence of law.[97]

The first recorded attempt to influence Tahitian behaviour, in accordance with the *Instructions to the Missionaries*, was made on 10th March 1797 when Pomare was urged to give up the evil practices of his people.[98] Hassall records that in November a more studied effort was made:

> We had a meeting of the Body in order to see what Rules we could adopt to suppress the abominable Sins these pepal [sic] are guilty of Viz. The murdering of infants both [in the] womb, and after they are Born, the sin of Sodom and the offering of human sacrifices, on this subject we was of various opinions. Some thought it would be best to tell them that if they did not put away their sinful customs, that we would do nothing for them, ..But contrary we thought it was our duty to do every sort of kindness for them and win them by love, …[99]

This was the first of many disagreements about the extent to which they should intervene in island affairs. On this occasion it was decided that four of them be sent

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[95] Mission Journal [Jefferson and others] 1799, SSJ 1.
[96] 100 spears were thrown at the accused who defended himself with a shield. He was then allowed the same against the relatives of his alleged victim. Royal Admiral Journal March- July 1801, SSJ 1.
[97] A man and woman were killed for sorcery in 1804 and another case was noted in which a man and his son were killed. Journal Elder and Wilson June-July 1804 SSJ 2. Mission Journal [Jefferson] July 1805-March 1806, SSJ 2.
[98] Bolton Papers vol. 20, ML.
[99] Journal of Rowland Hassall 1797-99, SSJ 1.

to the "king, and other Chiefs" to state that if they would "oblige" the mission in putting away evil customs they would serve them in anything. [100] The statement appears to have been received without offence but no change in behaviour resulted.

In the instructions produced in 1800 a revision was made in the Directors' advice, perhaps, out of a belief that confrontation had caused the breakdown in relations in 1798.[101] The missionaries were advised to avoid heathen customs and idolatry but not deliberately to violate what the Tahitians held sacred as this would lead merely to them being despised for their perceived ignorance. Indeed they should put themselves in the place of the heathen and act in a way that would recommend the mission to them:

> Do not assume authority to insist on the renunciation of practices which they hold sacred, nor demand any concession but by the force of reason, and of what they are convinced is truth.[102]

The focus, therefore, in early years was on attempts to intervene in individual cases to prevent infanticide. However, it proved difficult to convince Tahitians that this should be considered a crime when it was the custom of the land and there was no immediate sign of the Christian God's anger. [103]

Members of the mission also attempted to disseminate information about British law and penalties. William Henry, for example, told a group of Tahitians that a *mahu* would be hanged in England and that the same penalty was exacted for bestiality.[104] In December 1802 a man was killed for theft and Elder and Eyre were deputed to tell Pomare "of God's law, and what civilized nations would do in such a case".[105] They attempted to persuade Pomare I that he should not countenance revenge between individuals because the right to dispense justice belonged to him alone "as Governor of the Island".[106]

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[100] Ibid.
[101] One letter in the home correspondence does express concern about the behaviour of the missionaries reported in *Evangelical Magazine* Anon 21st November 1799, Home Letters 1.
[102] Instructions to the Missionaries sailing in the *Royal Admiral* [draft] 1800, Home Office Extra 1.
[103] William Henry, "Early Days on Tahiti," SSJ 1.
[104] Jefferson Journal 1800, SSJ 1. A *Mahu* was a man who dressed as a woman, preformed the domestic role of a woman and was subject to the same restrictions. It was probably a permanent state. Oliver, *Ancient Tahitian Society,* 2: 607.
[105] Mission Journal December 1802- April 1803, SSJ 1.
[106] Ibid.

In February 1803, the members of the mission group disagreed about a plan to refer the case of the man killed for theft the previous December to "Edeea", or Itia:

> But some thought that we could not act in the path of duty as christians & missionaries, unless we did inform Edeea of the heinousness of the man's crime & required his removal from the district. Others again thought it had nothing to do with our christian and missionary character to interfere in the business in so public a manner. It belonged to the civil government, which we were not to intermeddle with: & tho' it was murder in our eyes, it was not so in the eyes of the government. A majority was agt. Edeea being spoken to on the subject.[107]

These comments have been interpreted as an indication that the missionaries felt that advice on punishment fell outside their role.[108] This seems likely in the case of some of the group. However, two additional comments can be made when the particular circumstances are considered. First, the proposal was to refer the matter for a second time to a different *ari'i*, thus implying an attempt by the mission to set Itia against Pomare. Second, the killer of the thief was a man of high rank who had special privileges. The case, therefore, was a complex one in which larger considerations of Tahitian custom and politics were involved.

In spite of the comments made in 1803 members of the mission continued to refer disputes to Pomare such as problems with fences and the theft of hogs.[109] They also provided information about the penalties for crimes such as infanticide in Britain.[110] Indeed, in 1805 the Mission had some small successes on two occasions when local *ari'i* offered compensation in hogs for lost items.[111] By 1805, their understanding of Tahitian customs had advanced sufficiently for them to gauge when it was possible to make applications and when it was futile because they believed that Pomare would ignore their request. Thus the same mission journal reports a decision not to apply to Pomare in the case of thefts from the garden but later to seek the return of some stolen property because the people suspected that the 'king' disapproved.[112]

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[107] Ibid.

[108] Gunson, *Messengers of Grace*, 284.

[109] *Journals of the Missionaries at Tahiti 11th April 1803-11th December 1804* TMS, 2: 282,298.

[110] Mission Journal [Davies] August 1807-Nov 1808, SSJ 3.

[111] "Journal of the missionaries proceedings in Otaheite 12th December 1804-28th July 1805," *TMS* 3: 45-47.

[112] Mission Journal [Jefferson] July 1805-March 1806, SSJ 2.

The willingness of the missionaries to resort to *ari'i* for assistance and the protection and compensation they received were an indication that the missionaries had been adopted into the local hierarchy under the protection of Pomare II. A letter written by Youl on behalf of the mission in 1806 marks a rejection of the former policy of strong defence and independence from local disputes. Youl argues that since the availability of guns has increased in the islands it is impossible to contemplate a separatist position.[113] In such a situation, only a close alliance with a powerful protector such as Pomare would be sufficient. However, once Pomare was in retreat the resolve for such a policy faltered.

This is not to argue, however, that the entire party had come to an understanding of, much less, an accommodation with Tahitian culture. Two entries in the same month from the mission journal for 1806 illustrate the revulsion they felt for many aspect of Tahitian life and also the continuing friction over Western and Tahitian concepts of property. First, on 19th June a woman was driven away from the house for behaving indecently prompting the comment:

> The abominations practised among the people are not fit to be mentioned, and we find it painful and difficult frequently to have intercourse with the natives, or to enquire after their customs owing to the disagreeable conversation they introduce on almost every occasion- but for the language.[114]

In the second incident Pomare II returned from Mo'orea, asked for the key of the store room and sent a servant to see what was there. He accused the missionaries of having taken all the iron and refused to return the key. This provoked the author to comment that Pomare II evidently considered the property to be his.[115] Thus, despite having given the stores to Pomare I and having observed the rights of other chiefs over the possessions of the common people, some of the missionaries could not adjust to their dependence on the Pomares nor to their lack of property rights in a European sense.

Two further examples of the mission's gradual integration in Tahitian structures can be observed. First, their work in building a European style house and

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[113] Youl for the mission to LMS December 1806, SSL 1.
[114] Mission Journal [Davies, Youl and others] March-Aug 1806, SSJ 2.
[115] Ibid. 27th June.

also a boat, the *Haweis,* for Pomare II. Second, the offer in 1807 of land in Atehuru by Pomare II following his victory over the district. The mission accepted, though it asked for an ownership agreement in writing. It also asked Pomare which of the refugees should be readmitted and whether the mission should choose one of the people to be a "ratera" or head over the others.[116] Their journal continues to note requests that criminals be brought to justice and even an occasion on which the "rateras of Teauru" were summoned successfully to the mission, to account for some stolen keys. [117] In January 1808 a canoe brought gifts to the missionaries as owners of the district which were also accepted.[118]

Gunson suggests that the information conveyed to Tahitians by members of the mission reveals their tendency to favour liberty and undermined the "despotism" of the chiefs:

> Although the missionaries realized that they owed the preservation of their persons and the property to this power, they did not believe in any form of tyrannical oppression; and if they did not preach active rebellion, they did not think it inconsistent with their profession to proclaim the virtues of the British system, which limited the authority of the monarch.[119]

The LMS missionaries and Directors did indeed provide information about the British monarchy. Gunson's account of the origins of this advice, however, emphasises the radical connections of Carey, Bogue, and Haldane rather than Haweis' attachment to the Establishment. An attachment to law and order need not have resulted from familiarity with revolutionary ideas and indeed it is equally likely to have originated in the celebration of the British Constitution which arose as a response to the French Revolution.

There were some indications of radical sympathies amongst early missionaries but these are not conclusive. In 1801 Jefferson wrote to Governor King setting out, perhaps in the face of rumours to contrary, their attitude to the Tahitian government:

> As for their Political Government we have never presumed to inter-meddle with it – We are Friends to Subordination and Peace – We are Friends to

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[116] Mission Journal [Davies] August 1807- November 1808 Tahiti and Huahine, SSJ 3.
[117] In the same period Wilson had a stolen musket returned. Mission Journal [Davies] August 1807-Nov 1808, SSJ 3.
[118] Davies Journal Aug 1807-Nov 1808, SSJ 3.
[119] Gunson, *Messengers of Grace,* 282.

Monarchy, which form of Government we believe perfectly Consonant with the word of God. And therefore should any Person through Prejudice or Malice, or Ignorance endeavour to bias Your Excellency against us, as being inimical to Monarchy, Your Excellency is requested to disbelieve the Report.[120]

It seems that these assurances were accepted. Jefferson and Henry were trusted with appointments by Governors of New South Wales. Missionaries travelled to the Pacific on convict ships and visited the condemned as the colonial chaplains did.[121] Elder was trusted to preach to a group of convicts following a rebellion.[122] In the context of the rough penal colony at New South Wales former members of the mission were welcomed as skilled and educated men.

Gunson's approach underestimates the conservatism of many of the members of the mission and their stress upon unified authority, which they believed only the Pomares could achieve.[123] They were aware that Pomare's rule did not extend across the entire island as they had first suspected. In May 1808 the mission journal contains a reference to "*Heau Manahune*" or the rule of the people that Jefferson had first described in 1800.[124] Despite this awareness of the traditional powers of chiefs they continued to consider Pomare's opponents as rebels and to write as though he should rule the entire island. On the eve of the 1808 crisis Pomare warned them that war was likely and they replied:

We are strangers & have no voice in such matters. You are king of your own island war or peace rest solely with yourself, as for us when war takes places we are very sorry especially for the helpless women and children......we are also concerned to know how to act in case any of the people of Matavae shd fly to our dwellings for refuge, shd any of the women and children run to our houses for shelter, wd. You be displeased if we let them in?[125]

There was no question that they might actually fight for Pomare in this sense the mission remained independent, however, their position as his dependants made them clear targets for his adversaries in the war to come.

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[120] Jefferson to Governor King 10th August 1801, HRA 1. 3: 337.
[121] Journal of Elder, Youl and others August 1800- April 1801, SSJ 1.
[122] Ibid.
[123] Jefferson for the society to LMS 5th December 1804, SSL 1.
[124] Mission Journal [Davies] August 1807- November 1808 Tahiti and Huahine, SSJ 3.
[125] Missionaries at Tahiti to Pomare 3rd Oct 1808 Davies Journal Jan 1808-Feb 1810, SSJ 3.

The approach of the LMS Directors in addressing Pomare and Tu using the conventions of European monarchy was similar to that adopted by Governors at New South Wales.[126] They also consciously provided images which they thought might impress Islanders and provide role models. As they explained in 1804:

> To confirm you in the respect of Otoo & to impress his mind in some degree with the advantages which would accrue to himself & to his country men by encouraging you in your attempts to communicate in instructions in the design of the Peter to Otoo ..we have also sent a hand painted picture print of his Majesty – the Prince of Wales & the Duke of York receiving the Troops, as a present from our Society to Otoo.[127]

Pomare II was an admirer of George III and even suggested that a celebration be held for his birthday, as was done by visiting ships.[128] He was also keen to adopt any European practices which might assist him in maintaining or expanding his power and by 1806 had a guard of six men with muskets dressed in red coats.[129]

In the period immediately before the missionaries fled to Huahine, there was much less anxiety about the closeness of their relationship with Pomare, perhaps because their fortunes were now so closely linked. They received nothing from London from the arrival of the *Royal Admiral* in 1801 until twenty two letters arrived in 1806. However, the criticism contained within them of their proficiency in speaking Tahitian and preaching left them insulted. They believed that the "minds of the Directors were prejudiced" against them and even that they had ceased to mention them in their prayers.[130]

Near Abandonment of the Mission 1809

On 26th October 1809 Davies, Eyre, Wilson, Scott, Tessier, Elder and Henry left Huahine aboard the *Hibernia*. Only Nott remained at Tahiti and Hayward, who had stayed with him after the others departed, brought the news that he had taken a

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[126] See chapter 3

[127] Directors to Tahiti 1st October 1804, SSL1.

[128] Mission Journal [Davies] August 1807-Nov 1808 SSJ 3. The research of H. G. Cummins on early vernacular literature in Tonga has revealed the extent to which Wesleyan missionaries there provided material about British institutions to their new converts. There is, unfortunately, no similar study for Tahiti and the Society Islands. H. G. Cummins, "School and Society in Tonga 1826-1854," (MA. Diss., Australian National University, 1977).

[129] Ibid.

[130] Ibid.

Tahitian woman as a wife.[131] Nott lived at Mo'orea with Pomare until the return of the first of his colleagues in 1811.

The reasons for the retreat from Huahine to Port Jackson in 1809 were complicated. The war on Tahiti alone was not sufficient justification, in the view of the missionaries themselves, for them to leave their posts.[132] Their explanation dwells upon two points; the neglect of the missionary society: the turbulent situation in Tahiti and their own lack of success. They implied that had they believed that the Directors supported them they might have carried on. This, however, is counter balanced by another comment:

> That without the protection of a Colony, the state of society in these islands is such as to make the Mission, whatever its success might be always, liable to such danger and disasters as have lately befallen us at Tahiti.[133]

Davies made a similar point in a private letter to Marsden in which he emphasised the danger to which the mission had been subject to despite the protection of the ruling party.[134] Marsden, however, did not accept this assessment of the failure of the mission. He perceived their lack of contact with the outside world to have been the main obstacle to a successful mission and began plans for a vessel which could keep up links between the mission and New South Wales.[135]

Conclusion

Historians have often, rightly, contrasted the approach of missionaries and beachcombers as settlers in Pacific Islands:

> In attempting to cut the ties with their home culture beachcombers were obliged to treat their island hosts with courtesy, and to respect local practices. Missionaries on the other hand, were emissaries rather than refugees from the civilized world, answerable to Europe for the success or failure of their task of conversion. Indigenous values and beliefs were to be replaced with their own.[136]

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[131] Davies Journal Jan 1808- Feb 1810, SSJ 3.

[132] Mission Journal [Davies] Jan 1808- Feb 1810, SSJ 3.

[133] Ibid.

[134] Davies to Marsden 18th October 1810, Marsden Papers vol. 5, ML.

[135] "I see no possibility of making any permanent Establishment of a mission under the circumstances in which these Islands are placed without a ship." Marsden to Hardcastle 25th October 1810, Marsden Papers vol. 2 ML.

[136] Edmond, *Representing the South Pacific,* 17; see also Lamb, Smith & Thomas, *Exploration and Exchange,* 119;

A proper distinction between the intentions of missionaries and beachcombers should not be allowed to obscure the similarities of the two experiences. Beachcombers were themselves agents of change but, more importantly, this review of the early Tahitian mission has shown the extent to which the mission was dependent upon the Pomares.

The role of Captain Wilson in negotiating the settlement of the mission party and arranging for supplies and labour to improve the British House followed the patterns established by previous Captains. After his departure, however, the missionaries were forced to come to an accommodation with the most powerful *ari'i* as other European settlers had done before them. This dependence upon powerful indigenous figures meant that their position within Tahitian culture was more akin to beachcombers than those of other Europeans in the islands at this period.

The appointment of Jefferson and later Henry as magistrates was a reflection of a role in relations with other Europeans and as intermediaries but entailed no power over Tahitians. Indeed, the mission suffered from constant losses of property, which they interpreted as theft.[137] Their powerlessness was difficult to accept for those who expected to found an independent Christian settlement. The missionaries unlike the *Bounty* mutineers were opposed to administering European punishments to Tahitians. They did, however, adopt the practice of the majority of Europeans in identifying Pomare I as king of the island. They had been enjoined to respect the Tahitian monarch and been given gifts to present in the name of the LMS to gain his favour.

The period between 1797 and 1809 was one in which the members of the mission had to adjust their preconceptions both to the Directors' instructions and the situation which they found in Tahiti. Their attitude to the Pomares, therefore, developed as a result of both their precarious situation and also their own beliefs about good order and obedience to the ruling powers. While this circumstance may not have pleased all the members of the mission, it did establish the relationship upon

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[137] Surrender of property was a normal consequence for Polynesian strangers, see chapter 3.

which Pomare II's conversion and the drafting of the laws was based. This was the kind of integration which Haweis had recommended from the outset.
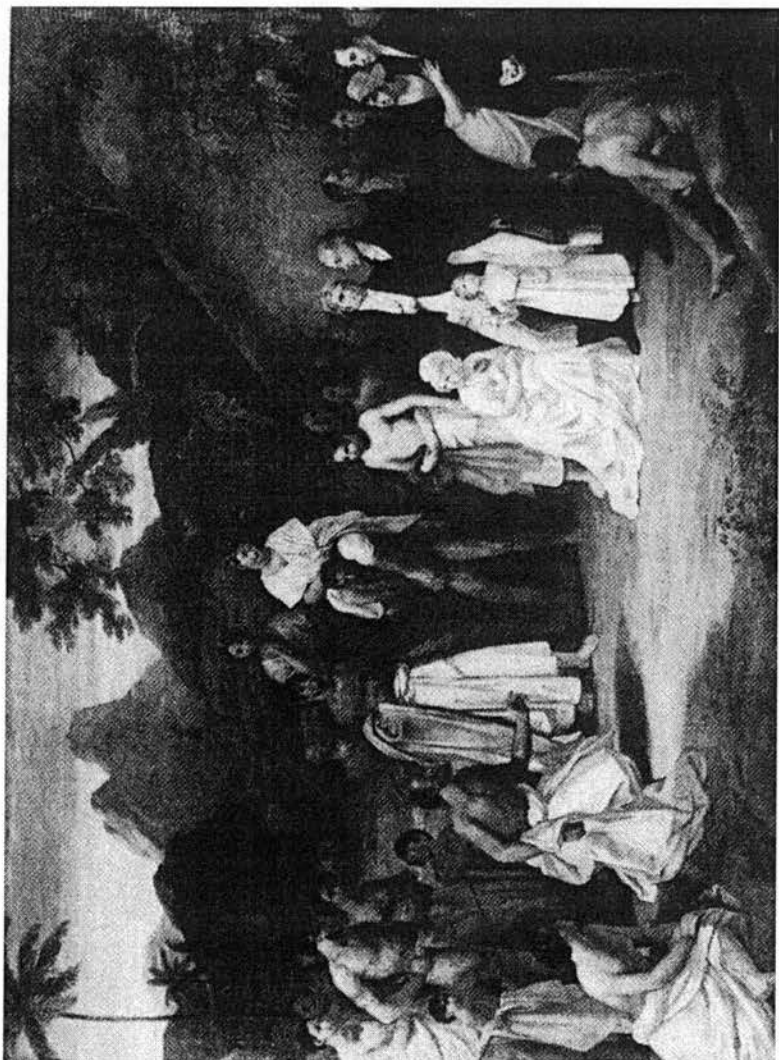
Figure 5. The Cession of Matavai, Robert Smirke.

Canvas and oils, Council for World Mission Archive

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CHAPTER 6. NEW BEGINNINGS AND SUCCESS 1810-1815

The departure of all but two of the missionaries from Huahine in October 1809 brought the hopes vested in the original mission of the *Duff* almost to nothing.[1] The future appeared uncertain and there were few advocates of the mission or its personnel in London. However, the return of the missionaries to Tahiti was followed closely by the high points of the conversion of Pomare II and the victory of his armies at Fei Pi in 1815. Pomare's victory not only established his own supremacy in Tahiti but also led to a mass movement of Tahitians into Christianity. The 'mass conversion' was to become a stereotype of mission in the Pacific and a source of contention among missionaries and historians.

This chapter will examine the circumstances of the resumption of the mission in 1811, including the relations of the missionaries with the LMS in London. It will then survey the period prior to Pomare II's profession of Christianity and the growth of the faith among his allies. The period under consideration concludes with the victory of November 1815 and the subsequent abandonment of the rituals and objects dedicated to 'Oro. There then follows an examination of the missionaries' varied responses to the 'conversion' of Tahiti. The final section considers the reasons for religious change in Tahiti in the context of later scholarly comment.

The Mission at Tahiti: Re-evaluation and New Beginnings

A difficult voyage, in which their ship the *Hibernia,* was almost lost, prevented the arrival of the fleeing missionaries in New South Wales until February 1810.[2] There Davies, Eyre Wilson, Tessier, Scott, Henry and Elder received sympathy from Governor Macquarie who granted them the right to remain as settlers and found some of them posts "educating the youth of the colony".[3] The letters of explanation written to the Directors first from Huahine and later at Port Jackson

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[1] The mission to the Marquesas had failed after a year and the missionaries withdrew from Tonga in 1799.

[2] The missionaries were put ashore in Fiji following the near wreck of the ship see William Lockerby, *The Journal of William Lockerby Sandalwood Trader in the Fijian Islands 1808-1809*, Hakluyt Society Series II Vol. 52, ed. Everard Thurn and Lenard C. Wharton (London: Hakluyt Society, 1925). The doctor, Warner, had fallen out with the group over the removal of the medical equipment and books. He left them at Fiji taking a passage for India. Davies Journal Jan 1808-Feb 1810, SSJ 3. *Report of the Directors of the London Missionary Society* (London, 1811), 366.

[3] Eyre at Paramatta and Davies at Sydney, TMS 3: 386.

focused not only on the war in Tahiti but also on their own isolation and feeling of abandonment.[4]

In July 1811 the group was joined by Henry Bicknell who had departed from Tahiti in 1808. He reached London in 1809 and there he met the Directors and stayed with his patron Rev. Thomas Haweis. Bicknell's reason for travelling first to New South Wales and then to England was to seek a wife. In the same year Youl, Elder and Bicknell all left the island to "change their state" and Davies records in his journal that, despite the controversy over Elder's wish to marry a Tahitian two years previously, Wilson was then contemplating such a marriage.[5] Of the total of twenty-five unmarried men sent to the mission before 1808 only ten remained committed to the cause.[6] In 1806 Youl had protested to Haweis claiming that:

> It is all over with this mission unless there should be, and I trust there will, some families and young women be sent out to prevent our return.[7]

From this evidence it can be surmised that the difficulties of the single men had played a significant role in the loss of morale in the mission. One obstacle to the resolution of the problems had been the insistence from London that those who wanted to visit Port Jackson to seek marriage partners should work their passages to New South Wales.

The failures in sexual continence on the part of several missionaries had already promoted public criticism of the mission. Comment on the propriety of sending single men had appeared in the *Evangelical Magazine* in 1802 when letters were printed from Eyre, Jefferson and an inhabitant of Port Jackson.[8] Perhaps surprisingly, the perceived lapses of missionaries were presented to the public in the publications of the LMS itself. For example, in an extract made from the journals

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[4] See Chapter 5.

[5] Davies Journal Jan 1808-Feb 1810, SSJ 3.

[6] 14 of the 19 from the *Duff* were single and 8 from *Red Admiral*. Caw 1804 and Warner 1805 arrived independently. In 1808, Bicknell, Nott, Hayward, Wilson, Youl, Davies, Elder, Tessier, Scott and Warner remained. William Henry was married when he sailed on the *Duff*; his first wife died in 1812 and he remarried in 1813 in NSW. All those who continued in the mission after the flight of 1809 took the earliest opportunity to marry.

[7] Youl to Haweis 28th Dec 1806, SSL 1.

[8] Extracts from Eyre 1st Jan 1801; Jefferson 24th July 1801; anon Port Jackson 4th November 1801. *Evangelical Magazine* 1802: 155, 322-6, 228-9.

prior to their departure in the *Hibernia* it was noted that the Brethren were sorry to hear that "Mr Nott had taken a native woman to be his wife."[9]

The mission at Tahiti was acquiring a reputation not only for a lack of evangelistic success in the twelve years of its existence but also for moral failing among its missionaries. In June 1809 the LMS Board resolved in future to send only married men to the South Seas.[10] It appears that the Directors sought candidates for missionary wives among their own congregations and others of suitable social background. Wilks considered his housekeeper for the role and also suggested the Browning family. He described Sophia as a "nice girl" whose parents would not object.[11] Bicknell himself married Mary Ann Bradley of Dorset, and the couple returned accompanied by four young women; Sophia Browning, Sarah Chrystie, Ann Spurr and Ann Turner.

The female missionaries,[12] were instructed to spend their voyage in family and social worship and to guard themselves against the influence of other passengers. They also began some work among the female convicts and in teaching the children on board the *Canada*.[13] In a letter to Marsden the Directors assured him that:

> ...they perfectly understand that they are entirely consecrated to the Tahitian mission & that no offers of marriage from any person not immediately devoted to that work ought to be accepted however flattering they may appear.[14]

Scott had married in New South Wales prior to the arrival of the party. John Davies, however, married Sophia Browning and Sarah Chrystie travelled on to Mo'orea

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[9] *TMS* 3: 336. There were also twenty-five pages published covering the scandal Broomhall's loss of faith and his dispute with the mission in 1800. *TMS* 1: 177-203. Garrett suggests that this was a customary marriage. It is not clear how much validity this union held for the missionaries themselves.
[10] The problem had been perceived for some time but no solution was forthcoming. While New South Wales remained a penal colony there was a shortage of women of good character to whom the missionaries could apply. As early as 1803 Hardcastle enquired if Rowland Hassall knew of suitable young women in New South Wales but without success. Hardcastle to Hassall 21st March 1803, Hassall Papers vol. 1, ML.
[11] Wilks to Burder 5th July 1809, Home Letters 2.
[12] Though given the title "female missionaries" they were not listed separately in John Owen Whitehouse, *A Register of Missionaries and Deputations from 1796 to 1877* (London: Yates and Alexander, 1877). The register does list 15 female missionaries 1827-1876. All were single at the time of their appointment, notes of their work and achievements cease following marriage.
[13] Draft Instructions to Mr & Mrs Bicknell 12th Feb 1810, SSL 1. *Report of the Directors to the members of the London Missionary Society* (London, 1810), 333.
[14] Hardcastle and Burder to Marsden 19th March 1810, Marsden Papers vol. 4, ML.

where she married Hayward. Marsden reported that Wilson was considering marriage to one of the women but nothing came of this. Nott married Ann Turner during his visit to the colony in 1812.

The degree of intervention of the Directors in this case was unusual in the history of the LMS. However, the Directors did claim a great measure of authority over missionaries in matters of marriage. The printed questions for candidates asked them not only their current position but whether thy would submit to the will of the Directors should they decide to send the candidate out in a single state.[15] Those under training at Gosport or elsewhere were not permitted to enter into an engagement without the permission of the Directors. The case of the marriage partners, highlights, again, the social distance between missionaries and Directors and the control which the latter expected to exert over their agents in the Tahitian mission. Duty, obedience and frugality outweighed considerations of comfort. Bicknell later complained that he and his wife had been without financial support in New South Wales because the letter of instruction to Marsden had mentioned only the young women. [16]

The recognition of the need for married missionaries was a distinct change in policy formulated in London. The letter from the Directors to Marsden went on to advise that the missionaries should trade for their own subsistence in commodities such as sugar. It was argued that this would promote communication between Tahiti and Port Jackson and tend to the civilisation of the "natives". Such commercial activities, however, were not to be carried out in the name of the society as this would be incompatible with LMS aims. The missionaries themselves had already been engaged in small scale trading exchanging pork for items they required with visiting ships and raising their own cattle. However, this had been sufficient only for their most basic needs in imported goods. Haweis attempted on numerous occasions to promote trading ventures to support the mission with the enthusiastic support of Marsden though with no success.[17]

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[15] Printed question forms for 1820 (question 18) and 1836 (question 16), Candidates Papers.
[16] Bicknell to Joseph Hardcastle October 1812, SSL 2.
[17] Haweis Papers ML.

At the LMS General Meeting of 1811 emphasis was placed upon the seed which had been sown in the minds of the islanders and of the hopeful cases of people who might have died trusting the Saviour. The letters reaching the missionaries from London, by contrast, reveal the Directors' doubts about the necessity of abandoning the mission. In a public letter to the missionaries dated April 1812 they were criticised for incurring a cost of £800 to the Society in leaving when Nott and Hayward had been able to remain "undisturbed".[18] In a letter to Marsden, Burder revealed his disquiet at the amount invested on an island of five to six thousand inhabitants and the few opportunities taken to evangelise beyond Tahiti itself. He urged that no more than £300 a year for a family should be sufficient and that two men and their families be placed on each island.[19] Policy in terms of the finance and supply of the mission, therefore, was not substantially altered.[20]

The shift in mission methods away from large parties of artisans was finally established together with recognition of the importance of the ability to communicate in the language of the people rather than simply practice and share European skills. The Directors stipulated that those who had failed to learn the language during their previous residence should not be allowed to return to Tahiti.[21] They stated their disappointment in 1812 at the "..small degree of Improvement made amongst the natives in respect of Industry and Civilisation."[22] Davies commented in response that the missionaries were not disappointed in the progress made and, indeed, expected that little more could be achieved without a change in religion. For Davies, civilisation was a benefit to be grasped following acceptance of the gospel not a prerequisite for its preaching or reception.

Rev Samuel Marsden, the LMS agent in New South Wales, does not seem to have had similar doubts about the prospects of the mission. He was away when the missionaries first arrived, seeking support in Britain for his plans for a mission to New Zealand. He wrote to the missionaries 4th October 1810 in strong terms urging them to declare their intentions:

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[18] The original is missing, quoted in Davies, *History of the Tahitian Mission,* 150.

[19] Burder to Marsden 21st August 1812, Marsden Papers vol. 4, ML.

[20] This was an increase on the £100 he mentions in Burder to Haweis 5th Oct 1811, Haweis Papers vol. 5, ML.

[21] Directors to Missionaries at Port Jackson [draft] Aug 1811, SSL 2.

[22] Davies, *History of the Tahitian Mission,* 151.

The Mission to the South Sea Islands does not now rest with the Directors, but with you.....if you now relinquish the missionary work from any other motive than necessity, your own conscience will condemn you, the religious public will condemn you, and the Searcher of all hearts hath told us, "he who putteth his hand to the plough, and looketh back, is not fit for the kingdom of heaven.[23]

The result was confirmation from Henry, Scott, Wilson, Bicknell and Davies dated 13th October that they were willing to return.[24] Despite the apparently harsh tone Davies looked back with kindness on Marsden's role in the resumption of the mission. He wrote later that it was Marsden not the Directors who should be given the credit for the return to Tahiti. They had also received letters from Tahiti since their departure which had reported that Nott and was safe and Pomare had urged their return. [25]

The Return to Tahiti

Transport from Port Jackson to the islands by schooner was slow to arrange. The first to arrive at Mo'orea were Mr and Mrs Bicknell, Mr and Mrs Scott, Sarah Chrystie and Mr George Bicknell in July 1811.[26] Henry and his wife arrived that September but Mr and Mrs Davies and Wilson were delayed until May 1812. The year 1812 proved a tuning point in the history of the mission. Frustratingly, however, the manuscript journals of the mission are missing for the period 1809-1813; though it is covered by Davies in his *History of the Tahitian Mission*.[27] There is no journal from Nott or Hayward of their stay at Mo'orea. Nott, however, did comment on the Davies manuscript circa 1830. The principal contemporary accounts of the conversion period consist of Davies and various letters, some of which only survive in the edited form in which they appeared in *Transactions of the London Missionary Society*. A detailed narrative of the events is given by Ellis in *Polynesian Researches*. He, however, did not arrive in the islands until 1817.

On 9th June 1812 the missionaries held a day of thanksgiving for their safe arrival and sought direction for their future work. The methods they employed

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[23] Published in *TMS* 3: 387-388.
[24] *TMS* 3: 389.
[25] Davies, *History of the Tahitian Mission,* 149. Pomare to Henry 8th Nov 1811, quoted by Davies ibid. 138.
[26] George Bicknell - nephew of Henry Bicknell.
[27] South Sea Odds 6 published as Davies, *History of the Tahitian Mission.* In his version Newbury omits the Introduction and chapters 1-5.

following their return did not differ greatly from their previous strategy. Bicknell had brought from London some Tahitian spelling books and Davies planned to recommence his school. It is not clear what scheme he used at this point but later he adopted the Lancastrian system.[28] The message preached of "Christ crucified" is likely to have been unaltered. Nott and Davies were the most competent preachers and translators. At this period they were working on Old and New Testament "Scripture histories" containing excerpts from important passages. Their slowness and failure to concentrate on individual biblical books drew further criticism from the Directors.[29] Nott began a translation of Luke in 1813. It is not known if any preaching tours occurred prior to the public profession of Pomare.

One new element in mission policy was the decision that a station should be founded at Raiatea. However, this resolution was never implemented due to the deaths of Mrs Henry, Mrs Davies and Mrs Hayward within a few months of their arrival. In this planned division of their personnel, the missionaries themselves finally abandoned the idea of large numbers of Europeans living in model communities. The demonstration of European skills and dissemination of tools and goods continued, though no longer on the grand scale envisaged in 1796. The mission employed servants who were paid in kind and learned to complete the tasks necessary for the running of the mission. These people, together with those in the immediate vicinity of the mission would have been able to observe much Christian activity and hear preaching in Tahitian.

Settlements in Tahiti and Mo'orea were generally small. A chief such as Pomare, however, was surrounded by a large number of attendants, one strong practical reason for Nott and others staying with him. By 1812, Tahitians had been exposed to Christian teaching for fifteen years. They were aware of at least some of the important practices and prohibitions.

Pomare II, as noted in chapter five, had a close relationship with the LMS mission. He was their protector and this was unchanged on the return of the mission. Nott had remained with Pomare and Bicknell now also lived with him at Mo'orea. There was no question, apparently, of attempting to form a new alliance with another

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[28] Teaching through monitors chosen from among the most able in the class.
[29] Burder 19th December 1815; quoted by Davies, *History of the Tahitian Mission,* 162.

leading figure as the Wesleyans did at Tonga. There, Nathaniel Turner took the decision to move the missionaries from their residence under Ata, a chief from Tongatapu, to live with Taufa'ahau on Ha'apai. It was this astute new alliance which proved to be crucial for the spread of Christianity through all the islands of Tonga. As Taufa'ahau gradually imposed his authority from Ha'apai over Vava'u and Tongatapu he brought with him the new religion.

Pomare II, from the perspective of the returning missionaries, was not only their patron, but also the rightful ruler of rebellious Tahiti. The term "*Hau Manahune*" can be found in the mission journals in the period prior to their departure attributed to Pomare when describing the situation which would arise if he were deposed .[30] The term expresses a sense of impeding chaos rather than popular government. Later Davies translated *Hau Manahune* as "republican government" equating it with a lack of any government at all.[31]

Despite the duration of his exile, the mission's confidence in the notion of Pomare as King of Tahiti persisted, though they were often pessimistic about his chance of reclaiming that position.[32] Further, Pomare had a close personal relationship with Nott and had received more education than other Tahitians. Nott had taught him to read and write and Pomare was Nott's main source of help in his translation work.

Pomare II Accepts Christianity

Pomare's loss of confidence in 'Oro and the religion of his fathers was signalled, according to Ellis' narration of events, by an order that a turtle be slaughtered and cooked for him without the traditional blessings at the *marae*. The turtle was eaten by Pomare before relatives and servants who witnessed that his defiance had no visible effect. This, Ellis wrote, confirmed his belief that the old gods were false and held no power and that he should direct his attention to Jehovah.[33] Pomare's own interpretation may have been subtly different; that Jehovah was proved to have more power than 'Oro.

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[30] Davies et al. 1807-1808 SSJ 3. See chapter 1 for a discussion of traditional government and leadership in Tahiti.
[31] Davies, *History of the Tahitian Mission,* 136.
[32] Missionaries to Marsden 17th May 1814, *TMS.* 4 : 137.
[33] Ellis, *Polynesian Researches,* 1: 191.

According to the annotations of Davies *History of the Tahitian Mission*, made by Henry Nott, the first "proposition" made by Pomare was to Nott in November 1811 at the time that Bicknell and Scott arrived. Nott, however, doubted his sincerity and advised Pomare to await the arrival of the other missionaries before taking such a public step.[34] The official date given for Pomare's profession of Christianity and request for Baptism is 18th July 1812, following the arrival of Davies and Wilson. The first letter home to mention the news was dated 21st October 1812:

> .. our hearts encouraged by an event which you will, no doubt, with us deem of great importance in itself, and portending a happy result of our missionary labours, we take the earliest opportunity of making this known to you...... The event to which we refer is the conversion of King Pomare to Christianity.[35]

Their letter concludes with the comment that they have hopes of the conversion of another man but would not baptise any without good evidence of "real conversion." They enclosed a letter from Pomare himself which the missionaries felt would show the Directors his state of mind. In it he expressed his wish to be saved by Jesus Christ, his guilt for "accumulated crimes" and his wish for a new heart.[36] Thus, whilst recognising the importance of the moment, there is a degree of caution in these comments even as they appear in published form. The missionaries speak of their prospects as "in some measure brightened" and preferring to say "too little than too much."[37]

Letters from Pomare had already appeared in LMS publications and *Evangelical Magazine*.[38] The publication of two further letters from Pomare followed in the same issue of *Transactions of the London Missionary Society*.[39] These letters cemented the special place of the Pomare dynasty in the minds of the evangelical public. The familiar imagery of the Pomares as South Sea monarchs; built up by voyagers and perpetuated by the mission, was now finessed with the addition of the Christian monarch. His claim to authority over all Tahiti, already accepted by the mission, could only be strengthened in the view of outsiders by his conversion.

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[34] Davies, *History of the Tahitian Mission,* 153.
[35] Missionaries to Directors 21st Oct 1812, SSL 2; published in *TMS* 4: 2-7.
[36] Pomare to Missionaries at Eimeo 25th September 1812, SSL 2; published *TMS* 4: 8.
[37] Missionaries to Directors 21st Oct 1812, SSL 2: published *TMS* 4: 2-7.
[38] See chapter 9.
[39] 2nd letter no date; Pomare to Missionaries 8th October 1812 SSL 2; published *TMS* 4: 8-10.

The descriptions of rebellion in Tahiti and of Pomare attempting to regain his sovereignty acquired a further layer of romance. Pomare's change in religion brought him even closer to the European model which had been both misapplied by Europeans and appropriated by the Pomares themselves. The terminology of European Kingship was applied to the Tahitian situation perhaps without any conscious consideration of whether it was appropriate. Nevertheless, the use of words, such as "king" and "sovereignty" contributed to the building of the image of Pomare abroad.[40]

The Spread of Christian Influence

Pomare remained at Mo'orea for less than a month following his request for baptism.[41] He returned to Tahiti where he reportedly came under pressure to renounce his statement but held firm.[42] News began to reach the mission of others who were prepared to profess themselves Christians. The next individuals to be named as Christian converts were Oito and Tuahine. They were discovered when Scott overheard the sound of Christian prayer in the bush during a preaching tour of Tahiti accompanied by Hayward in June 1813. Oito had, according to Ellis, had his feelings aroused by some words said by Pomare and turned to Tuahine, a former mission servant, for guidance in how to approach the new God.[43] The name given to these early converts was *Bure Atua,* praying people.

This news from Tahiti gave encouragement to the brethren on Mo'orea who soon after the return of Scott and Hayward announced that they would hold a meeting at which the names of those who professed Christianity would be taken. Oito and Tuahine had in many ways been secret Christians among a majority "heathen" population of Tahiti. However, among the community of Pomare's supporters at Mo'orea a number of people began to attend worship and seek

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[40] "… his regaining of his sovereignty of that island appears to us a matter very doubtful." Missionaries to Directors 21st Oct 1812, SSL 2.

[41] Pomare was not at this period permanently resident in Mo'orea. His marriage to Terito, the daughter of Tamatoa IV of Raiatea, re-established the family links which he had with the Leeward Islands. By January 1811 he had amassed a considerable number of followers and was able to return to Tahiti with a superiority in numbers of seven hundred. His arrival with such a large force was greeted peacefully but as his supporters dispersed his position weakened and he withdrew from Pare again in 1813.

[42] Ellis, *Polynesian Researches*, 1: 198.

[43] Ibid. 200.

instruction. At the first meeting, on 26th July 1813, thirty one names were written. Each person was asked to make their profession individually:

> ...to this meeting were invited all that were truly desirous of being instructed in the word of the true God; all that sincerely renounced their false gods, and desired to cast away their evil customs, all that were willing and desirous to receive Jehovah for their God and Jesus for their Saviour;...[44]

It is important to note that even in this version of the letter, as printed in *Transactions of the London Missionary Society,* the claim is not that the people have experienced the type of heart felt conversion experience described in chapter four. The event was not what an evangelical would have described as a conversion but a turning away from the old way and towards the new. The commitment was to learn and to cast off evil customs with a willingness and desire to receive salvation. This definition of the missionaries should be borne in mind when assessing their descriptions of the conversion of Pomare and others.

By September the number of names had risen to forty two and John Davies had between forty and fifty scholars. His journal for 1813 gives the impression of a growing and material consolidation of the circumstances of the missionaries. A new vessel was commenced and the mission houses were improved. Davies enlarged his school to teach all, not just boys and young men. Hymns were composed in Tahitian and singing was introduced into public worship. Davies and Nott also began to hold a regular meeting for Tahitians on the Sabbath and to catechise.[45]

The spread of Christianity on Mo'orea continued in particular among those who were visitors and allies of Pomare. The number of the professed grew slowly with some losses due to deaths and the transience of visits.[46] Davies commented:

> Our people whose names are written down, are in general constant in their attendance on the means of instruction, exact in their observance of the Sabbath, often retire for secret prayers, and where numbers dwell together, have family prayer in their homes... they are greatly altered in their moral conduct from what they were some months ago.[47]

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[44] *TMS* 4: 131 and SSL 2.
[45] Davies, *History of the Tahitian Mission,* 159-168.
[46] 50 in April 1814; 26 names added in June 1814; 92 names Sept. 1814; 204 names Jan 1815; 362 names and 600 in school in Sept. 1815, *TMS* 4: 138, 143, 144, 149; *QC* 1: 7.
[47] Davies, *History of the Tahitian Mission,* 174.

As yet none of those who professed Christianity had received baptism. The difficulties surrounding this issue will be addressed below.

In January 1815 there were two hundred and four names on the mission list at Mo'orea. In February, Patii, the priest of Papetoai, who had already made his own profession to Nott, assembled the people of Papetoai and systematically dismantled the *marae* and burnt the images of which he was custodian. Ellis commented that, though the people may have anticipated that a terrible revenge would be wrought upon Patii no one intervened to stop him. Davies, however, believed that it was fear of Pomare that prevented action.[48]

Ellis, saw this demonstration of the power of Jehovah as pivotal for the spread of Christianity in Mo'orea:

> The conduct of Patii, when it became more extensively known, produced the most decisive effects upon the people. Numbers in Tahiti and Eimeo were emboldened by his example – not only burning their idols, but demolishing their *marae* or temples...[49]

The actions of Patii may have given others courage to do the same or they may have been part of a more sophisticated process of community decision making. Alan Tippett has suggested that confrontation between the power of the old gods and the new was an essential part of the process of rejecting former gods.[50] From the accounts available, it is not clear, whether the destruction of the *marae* at Papetoai was the action of an individual priest or if the people as a whole participated in the testing and symbolic renunciation of their gods.

The following month a chief from the Leeward Islands, Taaroarii of Huahine, resident at Mo'orea, engineered another breaking of traditional practice and though

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[48] Ellis places this incident with material from 1813. Davies believed that fear of the Pomare prevented them from taking action. Davies, *History of the Tahitian Mission,* 184.
[49] Ellis, *Polynesian Researches* 2: 214. The missionaries still used the name "Eimeo" for the island of Mo'orea at this period.
[50] Alan Tippett, *People Movements in Southern Polynesia: Studies in the Dynamics of Church Planting and Growth in Tahiti, New Zealand, Tonga and Samoa* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1971). See the discussion of 'mass conversion' below.

not as destructive as Patii the element of confrontation is also present.[51] Taaroarii refused to allow the normal dedication of a feast held in honour of some visiting Arioi and subsequently invited Nott to preach to his retinue. It is noteworthy that the selection of individuals for inclusion in the conversion narratives produced by the mission, whilst it includes persons of humble origin such as Otio and Tuahine, are biased towards high ranking individuals, such as Patii, Taaoraii and Pomare himself. In this and many other examples, the early LMS missionaries in Tahiti appear to have combined their own notions of status with an appreciation of the importance of rank in Tahitian culture and thus acted in a way which was in keeping with the traditional ordering of society.

The role of Pomare in the spread of Christianity was for the early missionaries an honour and a great asset. Ellis, as with Oito and Tuahine, gives the credit for prompting the 'conversion' of Taaroarii to Pomare and not the missionaries.[52] The narrative in *Polynesian Researches* is somewhat simplified and is glossed with Ellis' own interpretation. Nevertheless, in the light of the negative comments of some missionaries about Pomare II it is important to note the key role that Ellis gives him in spreading Christianity.[53] Pomare seems to have taken the role of evangelist seriously. In writing to the missionaries from Tahiti in July 1815 he reported that all the chiefs had turned, though not all the common people, to the word of God and that the idols were all burnt.[54] He requested permission to write down the names of the people if they asked him.

The visit of Pomare Vahine to Mo'orea and Tahiti was a further occasion of defiance of the traditional ways and symbols. She too replaced traditional blessings with Christian ones and at Tahiti one of her followers snatched sacred red feathers from the hands of a priest of 'Oro and cast them into a fire.[55] This last action

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[51] Davies records this incident in March 1815 whereas Ellis places it in 1813; *Polynesian Researches,* 1: 209.
[52] Ellis though chronologically not one of the early missionaries was closer in his views to Nott and Davies than to the critics of Pomare who arrived post 1815, such as, Williams, Orsmond and Threlkeld.
[53] Ellis, *Polynesian Researches,* 1: 208.
[54] Pomare II to Missionaries at Eimeo 3rd July 1815 [translation], SSL 2.
[55] Farefau, a Boraboran. Ellis, *Polynesian Researches,* 1: 238.

provoked violence against the Christians. Led by an inspired prophet, Taramea, the district of Matavai and the Northwest of Tahiti entered into an alliance with their traditional enemies the Paparans and Atehurans to drive out the Christians. Pomare Vahine and the Christian inhabitants of the districts of Pare and Matavai fled to Mo'orea on the night of 7th July escaping a massacre planned for the following morning. The result was a new concentration of Christians in Mo'orea who formed a basis of support for Pomare in his ambition to reclaim Tahiti.

The Battle of Fei Pi

The alliance which had forced Pomare Vahine to flee in July 1815 quickly disintegrated with the Atehurans and Paparans plundering their neighbours.[56] The missionaries engaged in a fast for the purpose of discerning their duty in the predicted war. They were joined by many Tahitian Christians though no request had been made to them.[57] In August news was received that Taiarapu had been defeated by Atehuru and Papara and driven into the mountains. The victors gave Pomare an assurance that he could restore the fugitives to their lands in Tahiti in peace.

On his return in September 1815 Pomare was faced by a large, hostile crowd. He prevented his men from firing and was able to land safely. His position was not secure, however, and tension and predictions of war increased. The climax came on 12th November, a Sunday. An attack was mounted on Pomare's party whilst they were at prayer but they, having taken arms with them in preparation for such an eventuality were able to conclude their service and commence battle. The chief of Papara was killed and Pomare's force was eventually victorious.

Not all his allies were Christians. However, Pomare restrained his men from the expected destruction of the persons and property of the defeated. Instead he called for their conversion to Christianity and the destruction of the images and temples of the old gods and wrote to Mo'orea requesting missionaries. Human sacrifice and infanticide were abolished. The cessation of these former practices

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[56] Pomare communicated with Atehuru and received assurances that they had no quarrel with him, however, reports also reached him that the people of Taiarapu planned an attack on Mo'orea.
[57] Davies, *History of the Tahitian Mission,* 188.

seems to have been seen as a logical extension of accepting Christianity for both Tahitians and missionaries. It was against these practices, in particular, that the mission had focussed its attack from the beginning.

The battle of Fei Pi has assumed great importance in later narratives of the conversion of Tahiti and the surrounding islands. Ellis wrote that:

> The Lord of hosts had been with them, the God of Jacob was their helper, and to him they rendered the glory and praise for the protection he had bestowed, and the victory they had obtained. In this sacred act they were joined by numbers, who heretofore had worshiped only the idols of their country, but now desired to acknowledge Jehovah alone.[58]

It was the treatment of the defeated army as much as the victory at Fei Pi itself which was given significance. It was represented both as a sign of the change wrought upon Pomare by his own conversion and as the reason for universal profession of faith. Oliver confirms that the absence of the usual destruction following a battle would have been surprising to contemporaries.[59] This may provide one explanation for the 'mass conversion'. Pomare travelled around the island himself seeing to the destruction of *marae* and "idols". This circumstance may suggest a lack of spontaneity or the "universal consent" which Davies claims in the reinstatement of government and profession of faith.[60] However, the role of gods in war was so significant in Tahiti that abuse and ritual sanctions against those who had not aided their worshipers had clear precedents.[61]

A direct parallel can be drawn here with the experience of the Wesleyan mission in Tonga. There too, the victory of a centralising leader, already himself converted, brought the faith to those under his dominion. The reaction of the mission to the victories, which they interpreted as Providential, has provoked criticism from some scholars. Cummins has suggested that the missionary John Thomas actually provoked violence by preaching sermons on Old Testament themes such as the siege of Jericho on the day of the battle.[62] Thomas has also been blamed for failing to

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[58] Ellis, *Polynesian Researches,* 1: 254.
[59] Oliver, *Ancient Tahitian Society,* 3: 1349.
[60] Davies to Cowper 30th March 1816, *TMS* 4: 360.
[61] See Chapter 1.
[62] Josh 5:13-15. H. G. Cummins, "Holy War: Peter Dillon and the 1837 Massacres in Tonga," *JPH* 12 (1977): 24-39.

prevent the massacres which occurred after Taufa'ahau's victories at Ngele'ia and Hule.[63] Taufa'ahau did not show the restraint of Pomare. However, his destruction of enemies at this time did give him an ascendancy far more stable than the one the Pomare family achieved.

The comments of the missions in both Tahiti and Tonga on the victory of their patrons may seem distasteful to readers, however, sermons and prayers for victory would have been entirely acceptable to contemporaries in Britain as an acknowledgement of loyalty to one's country. The Providence of God was the explanatory principle constantly invoked by the missionaries in their everyday lives and in the fortunes of the mission The days of fasting and thanksgiving held by the Tahitian mission were entirely consonant with the world view which they shared with their supporters of various denominations at home. If God could act to further the cause of the mission might He not act also on behalf its patron?

The Response to the 'Conversions'

Religious change in Tahiti, though it began in a gradual way, developed on a scale which did not fit the expectations of Evangelicals concerning the conversion of sinners. The profession of Christian faith by large numbers of people posed problems for the missionaries in evaluating who could be considered a genuine convert. There was disagreement between the members of the mission over their understanding of genuine conversion. For some the only genuine claim to Christianity lay in the conversion experience with the accompanying forgiveness of sins, reassurance of salvation and change of heart, described in chapter four. From this perspective it was not possible to see the events that had taken place in Tahiti and Mo'orea, however dramatic, as a conversion to Christianity. Whilst the mass movement was exciting for those who demanded personal signs of regeneration it was not sufficient.

Not all the missionaries rejected the mass movements so strongly. Some, such as Davies, Nott, Ellis and perhaps Threlkeld could accept the intentions of the Tahitians as serious rather than dismissing their religious observances as lukewarm

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[63] Luckcock has highlighted the political motivation behind Peter Dillon's charges against the mission, however, she does not address the question of Thomas' choice of preaching material. Louisa Luckcock , *Thomas of Tonga, 1797-1881: The Unlikely Pioneer* (Peterborough: Methodist Publishing House, 1990), 160-167.

or even hypocritical. For them the events of 1812-1815 could be seen as a genuine turning towards Christianity and as a beginning in Christian living. Divisions in the mission over the issue were widened, in the period prior to the drafting of the laws, by the question of the baptism of Pomare.[64]

The mission letters home reveal the language employed by the mission in describing the changes in Tahiti. The Tahitians are said to "profess" Christianity and to "cast off" idols. In description of the taking of names at Mo'orea in July 1813 the candidates are said to be "willing and desirous to receive Jehovah"; there is no claim that they are "saved" nor that individuals have had a heart felt experience.[65] It is notable that the missionaries who had the longest experience of Tahiti were those who were most likely to see the Christian profession of the Tahitians as genuine and to label conversions as real. This group may have been less critical of the flaws in their Tahitian congregations because they had personal experience of the extent to which change had already occurred.

The missionaries were not united in their interpretation of events or in their application of the term "conversion". Private letters were published in *Transactions of the London Missionary Society* in which Henry, Bicknell and Wilson expressed the opinion that Pomare was genuinely converted.[66] However, an official mission letter in 1815 assessed him to be "far from a proper subject for baptism."[67] Hayward did not believe that the people were converted but they had adopted "our religious customs" and he was pleased to see the prejudice against the gospel removed.[68] This assessment, written in 1814, perhaps gave a more realistic impression of what had occurred.

Those who arrived after 1815, with some exceptions, were more likely to experience disappointment at the disjunction between the expectations fostered due

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[64] See chapter 7.
[65] *TMS* 4: 131 and SSL 2.
[66] Henry at NSW to LMS 17th June 1812, Bicknell to Haweis 5th October 1812 and Rowland Hassall 26th June 1813 (quotes Wilson) in *TMS* 4: 15. Bicknell wrote that none doubted Pomare's conversion.
[67] Missionaries at Eimeo to LMS 14th Jan 1815 signed Bicknell, Davies, Hayward, Nott, Scott, Wilson and Tessier, *TMS* 4: 149.
[68] Hayward to Burder 29th March 1814, SSL 2.

to the large numbers professing Christianity and the flawed reality they met in the islands. The contrast in assessments can be seen in the different reactions to the death of Pomare II in 1821. The veteran missionary Henry Nott wrote that Pomare was:

> .... Prince who never had an equal on these islands, the friend of all foreigners, the friend and protector of the missionaries, in knowledge of every kind unrivalled, whether civil, political or Religious; in his mental powers, had he been favoured with the same means he would have attain to a degree of eminence as some of the greatest men have ever reached.[69]

John Williams and Lancelot Threlkeld wrote that not one native of good character regretted the death of Pomare as his aim had been to grasp the other islands under the pretence of Christianising them.[70]

There was similar disagreement about the piety of the people. John Orsmond, who arrived in April 1817, dismissed the change as political not spiritual.[71] Crook found the people lacking in individual piety and enthusiasm and also complained that they did not hold services unless the missionaries were present.[72] On the other hand Davies believed that the people were in fear that even if they prayed they would be shut out of heaven.[73] The differences in approach are also revealed in the comments made by Davies about the chief of Papara. Davies suspected him of political motives in becoming a Christian, elsewhere, he also commented that it is the same in many other countries.[74] Threlkeld too, though belonging to the later arrivals, was prepared to show some forbearance. He compared the situation in Tahiti with the enormities of Corinth; like Davies acknowledging that new Christian communities have often struggled to live a Christian life.[75]

Interestingly, Threlkeld described Pomare as an Antinomian, an epithet which is also found among the comments of other missionaries.[76] Pomare's drinking and sexual proclivities merited censure according to the standards of the mission.

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[69] Nott to Directors 26th December 1821, SSL 3.
[70] The changes of mission personnel in 1816 and 1817 are noted in chapter 7. Williams and Threlkeld to Directors 8th July 1822, SSL 3.
[71] Orsmond to LMS 1st December 1817, SSL 2.
[72] Crook to LMS 2nd November 1818, SSL 2. Crook was a missionary from the first voyage of the *Duff* he carried out a solo mission to the Marquesas for one year but did not arrive in Tahiti until January 1816.
[73] Davies Journal December 1817- Nov 1818, SSJ 4.
[74] Davies Journal of a preaching tour with Hayward, October-December 1816
[75] Threlkeld to LMS 29th September 1818, SSL 2.
[76] Ibid. also Crook Journal 28th June- 18th August 1817, SSJ 4.

Alternative titles such as pagan, heathen or even apostate would have been available for use in this case yet Pomare was described as a Christian heretic. Whether Pomare actually held Antinomian views is debatable; the crucial point is that despite his numerous failings he was considered, even when being heavily criticised, as a wayward Christian not a heathen.[77]

The variation in these comments on the commitment of the people to Christianity reflects, no doubt, both differences in personal standards of the missionaries and between congregations in different parts of the Society Islands. The temptation to describe the changes in glowing terms must have been great after so many years without success. Henry claimed, however, that the flow of positive information in the early days was purposely limited in their public letters.[78]

The publication of the reserved descriptions and explicitly critical comments belies the accusation that the LMS was over rosy in its presentation of the mission and its prospects.[79] The fault of over optimism lay in over enthusiastic interpretation not in the reporting of the missionaries themselves. William Ellis was unusual among the post 1815 missionaries. In *Polynesian Researches* he combined a sympathetic approach to the mass movements with a concern to give later lives of the named converts such as Oito as proof that they continued as valued members of the Christian community .[80]

Polynesian Christians in commenting on their own church history have been critical of the focus on 'mass conversion'. The Tongan historian Paula Onuafe Latu, for example, has emphasised the importance of the early individual converts within

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[77] On this point it is interesting to note that some of the letters sent by Pomare may indicate a tendency towards antinomianism: "If God were pleased to create all men anew then they would be good. This is my earnest desire, that God would enable me to love from my heart that which is good, and to abhor that which is evil; and that I may be saved by Jesus Christ." Pomare to Missionaries at Eimeo 8th Oct 1812, *TMS* 4: 10.
However, it is impossible to know the relationship between his newly acquired theological rhetoric and his own beliefs at this period or even how far these letters are his own work.
[78] He contrasts this with the competition between the stations in the 1820s. William Henry to LMS 9th February 1826, SSL 5.
[79] Threlkeld thought that the public's hopes had been raised too high and the missionaries would be accused of being deceivers. Threlkeld to Hassall Raiatea n.d., Hassall Papers vol. 2, ML.
[80] Ellis, *Polynesian Researches,* 1: 200.

the mass movements such as Lolohea the first convert in Tongatapu, and their identities as individuals with reasons for conversion and personal Christian experience and life.[81]

Tippett and others have been critical of the churches which emerged in Polynesia in the generations after conversion, echoing the voices of the mission era in the search for 'real' conversions.[82] John Garrett has distinguished between a mass formal conversion and the more vital experience of the revivals which occurred in Tahiti, Tonga, Samoa and Fiji in the 1830s. It was this experience which, he argues, formed the basis of the indigenised Christianity which survives in Polynesia to today.[83] This valuing of the continuing, and now independent churches, of the Pacific is absent from the works of earlier historians. The emphasis on the growth and spiritual development of the island churches adds a welcome dimension to discussions of conversion which have too often been centred on a few dramatic events.

Davies, however, knew the faults of the Tahitians yet retained his belief that they were genuine in their faith:

> ...they would act some times, and shew a disposition so inconsistent with the good things that had been observed in them that some would be ready to condemn them as hypocrites, or such as had no claim to the real Christian character, and the reason of this, was the measuring of them by the opinions and conduct, of those in a different state of society, not making the requisite allowance for the manner they had been brought up...[84]

This passage was written by Davies at the end of his career not in the first excitement of the mass movement into Christianity. By the 1830s the views which prevailed in

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[81] Paula Onuafe Latu, "Decisive Converts are in a Sense the Pillars of Christian Church Development: 1826-1855," (BD. diss., Pacific Theological College, Suva, 1997).

[82] Tippett considered that the work was not consolidated, Koskinen, *Missionary Influence* ; Wright and Fry, *Puritans in the South Seas.*

[83] Garrett wrote of the Wesleyan church in Tonga: "A church that had already found chiefly sponsors received its soul back again – part Wesleyan part Tongan; no strange mixture, but a seemingly predestinate love affair between modes of life united in underlying harmony." Garrett, *To Live Among the Stars,* 75. Criticism of Nineteenth Century mission methods (many of which were destructive of tradition) from within the Pacific community is often placed within the context of the contribution of the churches to identity and the preservation of culture. See Ron Crocombe and Marjorie Crocombe, "The London Missionary Society and Culture: Impacts from Rarotonga," *South Pacific Journal of Mission Studies* 17 (1996): 4-11.

[84] Davies, *History of the Tahiti Mission* Mss., South Sea Odds 6.

the mission were those of the post 1815 generation who had not shared the formative experience of a precarious life under the protection of the Pomares in pre-Christian Tahitian society.

Why Did the Tahitians Turn to Christianity?

For a historian concerned with the history of the mission the question of why first Pomare himself and later large numbers of Tahitians turned to Christianity is necessarily one of importance. The authenticity of the conversions was of singular importance to the missionaries themselves and has been a subject for comment ever since. Historians and anthropologists have continued to see the conversion as a matter of political or practical expedience. Others have been reluctant to assess the conversion of Pomare, preferring to analyse the results than speculate as to motive.[85]

The section which follows is an attempt to evaluate some of the explanations which have been given for the conversions and also to take seriously a methodology which assesses the events from the perspective of the participants and to allow them a full range of motivations. The influence of social and other pressures for change must be acknowledged but the possibility of religious motives should also be preserved. To find practical reasons for the conversion of Pomare or others is not to establish that these 'conversions' were not 'genuine'.

Newbury, has pointed out the ratio of missionaries to inhabitants must have made Mo'orea the most highly evangelised place in the World.[86] However, effort and presence in numbers are hardly sufficient explanation for the turn away from 'Oro worship and toward Christianity. That would rob Tahitians of any decision making powers; make no allowance for internal dynamics; and ignore the crucial relationship with Nott outlined in the first section of this chapter.

There are strong reasons for concluding that the relationship between Nott and Pomare was one factor in Pomare's own decision.[87] This is a more likely source

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[85] Howe, *Where the Waves Fall,* 140.
[86] Newbury, *Tahiti Nui,* 37.
[87] Garrett, *To Live Among the Stars,* 20; Howe, *Where the Waves Fall,* 140.

of success than the preaching to which audiences, after the initial novelty proved unresponsive. There was little change in the methods employed by the mission following the return of those who fled to Port Jackson. The policy followed by Nott during their absence is less clear though no innovations are described in the few letters which survive or in later mission accounts of the period. The first profession made by Pomare occurred before all the mission had returned. Indeed, the growing acceptance of traditional structures noted in the previous chapter is exemplified by Nott's decision to remain loyal to the protector of the mission.

In staying with Pomare Nott approached the degree of integration achieved by the beachcombers who made themselves valuable additions to the retinues of chiefs all over Polynesia. Unlike George Vason, the LMS missionary turned beachcomber in Tonga, Nott was able to take up a position within traditional society without abandoning his links with the mission or his evangelistic concerns.[88] His relationship with a Tahitian woman may be one reason why Nott's role in preparing the way for an acceptance of the Gospel received little attention from his own contemporaries. The part taken by Nott in later events such as the foundation of the Tahitian Auxiliary Missionary Society and the drafting of the laws suggested that he had indeed established a close and lasting relationship with Pomare II. He also played a personal role in several of the earlier conversions described above, such as, Oito, Taaroarii and Patii for which Ellis does give him credit.

The acceptance of Christianity, however, cannot be attributed entirely to Nott. There were numerous other factors which may have affected Pomare's mind over a long period. The presence of the mission for fifteen years and European contact since 1767 had given him ample opportunities to evaluate the Christian religion. There were signs of disillusionment with 'Oro before his conversion. European visitors had, for example, encouraged high ranking Tahitians to break tapus such as the prohibition on men and women eating together. Davies noted that there were signs,

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[88] Vason separated from the LMS mission in Tonga and lived as a farmer with a native woman, under the protection of local chiefs. He witnessed the war in which three former colleagues were martyred. He later underwent a second conversion and wrote a salutary account of his adventures. [George Vason], *Narrative of the Late George Vason, of Nottingham*, ed. David G. May, amplified version of the 1840 edition (Nukualofa, Friendly Islands Bookshop and the Taulua Press, 1998).

prior to the departure of the missionaries in 1809, of a weakening of religion among the elite. The marriage of Pomare to Terito the daughter of Tamatoa IV of Raiatea was neither according to traditional ranking rules nor ceremonies.[89]

The presence of outsiders may have had a weakening effect on religion in Polynesia. The introduction of a new god would not in itself have been a challenge. Tahitian religious practice took account religious of diversity between islands and warring groups. Latukefu argues that Christianity in Tonga replaced a cosmology which had been undermined yet interestingly he sees two causes: contact with Europeans but also with Fiji. He also notes that priests were questioned when they failed to reach objectives.[90] Doubt, when it occurred, was the result of both internal and external pressure on religious ideas.

Loss of faith in the power of 'Oro and the efficacy of the rituals may have played a part in Pomare's decision. It has been suggested that the number of human sacrifices required by the cult of 'Oro may have caused disillusionment. The spread of disease or Pomare's defeats in battle would also have been powerful and logical reasons for seeking a new patron.[91] The rejection of a god who did not provide for the material welfare of the people had sanction within the existing worldviews of Tahiti.

Explanations of religious change have often focused on the practical benefits of conversion, such as wealth, medical care and political advantages. The Tahitian mission itself placed some faith in the lure of trade goods and of western medicine. However, the influence to be acquired by a chief through the distribution of European goods probably decreased as articles became more widely available.[92] Furthermore, goods were available to the unconverted from a variety of sources whilst the mission at Tahiti and Mo'orea, though materially richer than the inhabitants, was never so comfortable as to be a source of largess. There can have

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[89] Terito was the second daughter of Tamatoa IV. Pomare II should have married the elder sister Teri'itaria but Pomare decided against this when he met Terito who was younger and more beautiful. As compensation the elder sister was given the title Pomare Vahine see Oliver, *Ancient Tahitian Society* 3: 1336.
[90] Latukefu, *Church and State in Tonga,* 23.
[91] Oliver, *Ancient Tahtiian Society,* 3: 328-30.
[92] Newbury, *Tahiti Nui,* 31-33.

been very little property left to Nott and Hayward during the crucial period when they remained with Pomare.

In "'He Can but Die' Missionary Medicine in pre-Christian Tonga" Shineberg has highlighted the realities of the 'superior' medicine brought by the earliest missions. A cure through the use of bleeding, purging and sedation was no more likely than from traditional Tongan methods.[93] An attempt to prove superiority through medical skill was, therefore, far from certain of success and failure exposed missionaries to additional risk. The devastating effect of diseases transmitted by Westerners was a further disadvantage.

Powerful political motives could also operate in Polynesia. Koskinen argues that for chiefs there was an advantage in changing religion as the arrival of Europeans had undercut the former basis of their power. He asserts that weak and ailing chiefs were more likely to convert than the strong though this is not an appropriate description of either Pomare II or Taufa'ahau.[94] Even among the set backs of the period 1809-1815 Pomare had been able to maintain links with his Leeward Island allies and forge new alliances. His decision to turn to Christianity could have jeopardised these relations. On the other hand, Pomare had attempted to manipulate Europeans such as Captain Campbell to support his political manoeuvres and had also received encouragement from Captains and Governors at NSW to attend to the mission. He may have calculated that conversion would improve his chances of gaining assistance.

A change of religion, or choice of denomination, functioned in many parts of Polynesia as an expression of dissent or political ambition. In Tonga, for example, the traditional enemies of the Tupou family became Catholics allying themselves with foreign powers they knew to be inimical to the British Protestants. The later behaviour of Pomare does tend to support the view that political motivations were

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[93] Dorothy Shineberg , "'He can but die' missionary medicine in pre-Christian Tonga," in *The Changing Pacific*, ed. Neil Gunson, (Melbourne: Oxford University Press 1978), 285-96.
[94] Koskinen, *Missionary Influence*, 41.

involved. From the perspective of expansion of his own dominance the spread of Christianity could function as a method of gaining influence elsewhere.[95]

The expansion of the power of Taufa'ahau was also very closely linked to religion. His intentions in Samoa, for example, have been disputed.[96] There the denominational concord between the LMS and WMMS was undercut by the traditional links between Tonga and Samoa. Missionaries sent from Tonga established a Wesleyan mission, though it had been agreed that Samoa would be LMS territory. There was considerable resistance in Samoa to withdrawal of their teachers of the Tongan *lotu*. It is clear that Christianity played a key role in the expansion of Taufa'ahau dominions within Tonga, however, the place of traditional and family links is also well attested. Conversion of the first chiefs in Fiji was linked to pressure from Taufa'ahau.[97]

One conclusion that can be drawn from these interactions between islands is that even in the earliest stages of transmission of Christianity evangelisation carried out by Polynesians themselves was very effective. Conversion to Christianity often occurred not through the preaching of Western missionaries but through traditional relationships. These might be based upon peaceful advocacy, lineage links, political dominance or even defeat. Thus, decisions to turn to Christianity were made within a context of traditional relationships, in particular, the influence of powerful high ranking individuals.

In the case of Hawaii, where the *tapu* system was abolished prior to the arrival of any Christian missionaries, Webb has argued that religious change can be explained as expediency in the face of the need for political unification. Thus, the *tapus* were broken because their continued existence prevented the building of sufficient surpluses to build a state, revenue was diverted from ritual and feasting to

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[95] see Neil Gunson , "Pomare II of Tahiti and Polynesian Imperialism," *JPH* 4 (1969): 65-82.
[96] Gunson has presented Taufa'ahau as the "Polynesia Napoleon" whereas Campbell has denied that there is evidence of imperial motives in Samoa or Fiji. Neil Gunson, "The Tonga-Samoa Connection 1777-1845," *JPH* 25 (1990), 176-87 ; I. C. Campbell , "The alleged Imperialism of George Tupou I," *JPH* 25 (1990): 159-75.
[97] A. C. Reid, "The View from Vatuwaqa: The role of Lakemba's Leading Lineage in the introduction and establishment of Christianity," *JPH* 14 (1979): 155-67.

sustain the a centralised state. The abandonment of traditional *tapus* was, therefore, a part of "the inevitable process of political consolidation within a newly formed secondary state". [98] Webb applies his teleological and functionalist view to Tonga and Hawaii as successful examples of transition and to Tahiti and New Zealand where consolidation was never achieved.

An explanation which defines religion solely as the legitimater of chiefly power and bureaucratic centralisation is too simplistic. Webb takes no account of other dimensions of religious belief and activity; religion is subsumed into a process of social change and political unification. Equally reductive is the restriction of Christianity to the role of conceptual bridge between the new and old worlds without any attention to perceived meaning or experience for the people involved.[99] Whilst the conversion of elites and commoners to Christianity did have the result of aiding political centralisation and providing new concepts with which to engage European culture these explanations, if applied in isolation, neglect the religious experience of Tahitians and other Polynesians under their traditional religion.

The nature of Tahitian religion was discussed in chapter one, where it was noted that material success and failure were themselves religious categories in the Polynesian and Tahitian context. The aim of religious activity was to ensure the well-being of the community by harnessing power for its benefit. Ritual was designed for the appropriation of such powers and the efficacy of a ritual or a deity was the measure of its value. From this perspective motivation which might be viewed as entirely secular is in fact completely in keeping with the religious world view of Tahiti. The key to acceptance of the new religion, therefore, was the power of Jehovah.[100]

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[98] Malcolm C. Webb, "The Abolition of the Taboo System in Hawaii," in *Polynesia: Readings on a Cutural Area*, ed. Howard, Alan. (Scrunton, London & Toronto: Chandler Publishing Co., 1971), 274.
[99] Nason, for example, has written of the Mortlock Islands that: "Christianity contributed a religious doctrine that did not inherently change social organisation but instead provided as ameliorative symbolic context within which changes could be undertaken without massive interpersonal disruptions within the community." James D. Nason, "Civilizing the Heathen: Missionaries and Social Change in the Mortlock Islands", in *Mission, Church and Sect in Oceania,* eds. Boutiller,Tiffany and Hughes (Michigan: Univerity of Michigan Press, 1978), 136.
[100] Trompf, "Pacific Islands," 209.

This is an explanation which can be applied both to Pomare's decision and that of those who became Christians later. In *People Movements in Polynesia* Alan Tippett argues that the essential feature of the conversion process was a moment at which a confrontation took place between old gods and new.[101] Gunson dismisses such events as "crude metaphysical experiment". However, it seems that incidents such as Pomare eating of the turtle and Patii burning of the feathers, which were perceived as demonstration of superior power, were very important in the decision making process.[102] Tippett suggests that symbolic gestures are typical of the conversion process that occurs among people in Polynesian societies. He believes that these are part of a decision making process through which the leaders act on behalf of the traditional group and act out a decision which can only be taken communally.[103]

The individualist understanding of conversion, though it was dominant in the theology of the LMS missionaries, has not always been the standard of the church. Tippett uses Elijah and prophets of Baal as an analogy but he could equally have chosen Boniface taking his axe to the Oak tree. In his concluding chapters Tippett makes the case for "people movements" as a biblical concept and attempts to remove the stigma which has often been applied to 'mass conversions'.[104] His emphasis on the religious nature of the conversion process has been an important contribution to the assessment of conversion in Polynesia.

The wealth of Europeans was interpreted by Tahitians as being the result of a superior power. From the perspective of their own religion, access to this power would give access to the goods and other benefits. The enthusiasm of Tongans and Tahitians for literacy has been interpreted as one example of their wish to appropriate the power of Europeans. It is suggested that, spurred by the emphasis placed by the missionaries themselves on the Bible as the source of their faith and on the importance of reading the Word of God, literacy may have been conceived by

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[101] Alan Tippett, *People Movements in Southern Polynesia.*

[102] Gunson, *Messengers of Grace,* 199.

[103] In these cases to act alone would be treason. Tippett, *People Movements,* 199. Unfortunately, this point does not come across very clearly in Hindmarsh's references to Tippett and conversion in the Pacific, which ignores the element of testing. D. Bruce Hindmarsh, "Patterns of Conversion in Early Evangelical History and Overseas Mission Experience," in *Christian Missions and the Enlightenment,* ed. Brian Stanley (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon, 2001), 71-98.

[104] Tippett, *People movements,* 207-220.

Islanders as the means through which they could gain access to the technology and material wealth of the Europeans.[105]

This is a form of religious logic which is not so very far from that of the missionaries themselves. They were prepared to see their own temporal success, even in battle, as the result of a guiding Providence. A parallel can also be found in the belief held by missionaries and Directors alike that the gospel was the root of their own civilisation. In the early stages of the mission this link was evident in the plans which envisaged civilising measures preparing the way for the gospel. For men like John Davies the result was a belief that through accepting Christianity and given sufficient time and instruction, converts whether European or Polynesians could grasp for themselves the benefits of that civilisation:

> ..and all things considered the natives of <u>Tahiti</u> and <u>neighbouring islands</u> will bear an advantageous comparison with any <u>European</u> nation whatever at the <u>commencement</u> of Christianity and civilization among them.[106]

From the perspective of the historian one factor which cannot be ignored is the self definition of the Tahitians themselves as Christian after 1815. Whatever motives had been at work and however imperfect the understanding of the subtleties of doctrine and ethics, they had, through the renunciation of other gods and the adoption of the elements of the Christian practice, turned conclusively towards Christianity.

Conclusion

The Tahitians quickly adopted those practices which through a combination of their own worldview and their impressions of the missionary message seemed most important. They did not kill the defeated army at Fei Pi, and abandoned infant murder and human sacrifice. Observance of the Sabbath coincided not only with mission practice but also with the previous suspension of work during important ritual.[107] The missionary message has been consistent and clear enough for these sins and practices to be immediately associated with conversion process. In these matters there was no need no need for a law to prompt change.

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[105] G. S. Parsonson, "The Literate Revolution in Polynesia," JPH 2 (1967).

[106] John Davies, *History of the Tahitian Mission Mss.* South Sea Odds 6.

[107] Bicknell, Crook, Davies, Hayward, Henry, Nott, Tessier and Wilson to LMS 13th August 1816, SSL 2.

Regardless of mission disagreements about who might be considered a genuine convert the Tahitians themselves under Pomare had declared themselves to be Christian and instigated a dramatic religious change. This mass movement into Christianity gave Pomare II a firm basis from which to appropriate further elements of the European concept of monarchy. He was faced by both the political opportunities and problems of organising a newly centralised society. He required a framework which would accommodate the norms of the new religion. It was from this context of redefinition that the Christian law codes emerged.

CHAPTER 7. DRAFTING THE LAWS 1816-1819

The drafting of a law code for use in Tahiti occurred between October 1816 and May 1818 and the code received the assent of the chiefs in May 1819. This chapter will examine these events and the accounts given by the missionaries themselves. It will assess the explanations they gave and attempt to determine whether the Tahitian Mission was divided over the principle of involvement in the drafting of the code. The main negotiations appear to have occurred between Pomare II and Nott and Davies. Three phases in the involvement can be identified each of which will be discussed separately.

The first began in October 1816 with the first requests that the mission offer examples of suitable laws for Tahiti. The arrival of Ellis with the printing press and the split of the mission into two uneasy camps, situated at different stations, prevented any further progress. However, a letter written to the Directors in London gives the most lengthy explanation of the missionaries' reasons for participation and reveals no division on the issue of advice on civil matters.

The subject of the law code was raised again by Davies in September 1817. In this second phase an attempt was made to settle the organisation of the Tahitians into churches and to come to agreement on church discipline. The coincidence of these two objectives raises questions about the type of church which Nott and Davies favoured. None of the issues were resolved and discussion began for a third time in January 1818. Then, following the arrival of Threlkeld, Williams, Platt, Bourne, Darling and Barff, opposition to involvement in civil affairs was raised. However, the dispute occurred within the context of wider tensions in the mission. Consideration of all those factors is essential in determining the extent of the opposition existed within the mission.

The mission at Tahiti received reinforcement in the years 1816 and 1817 on four separate occasions. Eight missionaries, accompanied by their wives, joined the nine men and their families already resident at Mo'orea. The tensions that might be expected between old-hands and new recruits were intensified by the selection and training of the arrivals, which gave them a different status from the old missionaries.

The divisions between the two groups were the context for the discussions in the mission both about the baptism of Tahitians and involvement in writing the new laws. An assessment of the reasons for these greater divisions is necessary before the missionaries' attitudes to the specific issue of advice over the law can be addressed.

In January 1816 William Crook arrived at Mo'orea with his wife. The members of the mission had urged his return to mission work but tension developed between him and those who had served the long years at Tahiti and Mo'orea.[1] William Ellis and wife arrived in February 1817. He had been given training in printing and attended Homerton and the seminary at Gosport.[2] John Muggeridge Orsmond arrived in April 1817 and in November of the same year a party of six men arrived; Lancelot E. Threlkeld, David Darling, George Platt, John Williams, Charles Barff and Robert Bourne. All were married in accordance with the new policy of the LMS.

The arrivals of 1816 and 1817 were committed to the policy of small stations run by a few missionaries and seem to have been eager to strike out into new territory. From the length of service they eventually achieved it can be estimated that, unlike some of those who sailed in earlier parties, they were committed to the missionary cause.[3] They saw themselves as entering into a specifically missionary venture rather than a pious settlement. However, this does not mean that they were in agreement with the Board on all aspects of the mission.

Phase 1. Initial Discussions and Explanations

In his journal entry for 21st October 1816 Davies wrote that the mission had been corresponding with the King for several weeks on the subject of laws and Pomare had requested that they give him an example of the good laws observed in Christian countries.[4] Unfortunately, there is no indication of how the matter first arose or on which side. It may have been the result of the meeting held earlier that

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[1] Bicknell, Davies, Henry, Nott, Hayward, Wilson and Tessier to LMS 15th September 1815, SSL 1.
[2] See chapter 3.
[3] Threlkeld 12 years; Crook 14 years of active service in Polynesia; Williams 23 years when killed at Erromanga; Orsmond 28; Barff 48; Platt 49; Ellis 56 years with home service and Deputations included. Threlkeld was involved in a very public dispute with Marsden over the mission undertaken in Australia to Aborigines at Lake Macquarie. His connection with the LMS was dissolved in 1828. Orsmond suffered the same fate due to his co-operation with the French at Tahiti in the years after 1842.
[4] Davies, *History of the Tahitian Mission,* 203.

month among the missionaries for the discussion of church order. The consultations of 1816 were not resumed for nearly a year. However, they appear to have been sufficiently conclusive for the missionaries at Papetoai to give an explanation of the decision in an official letter dated 2nd July 1817.[5] This letter, which gave the first and most detailed explanation for the role taken by the mission, will be discussed below.

Any further progress was frustrated by the arrival of William Ellis with the long awaited printing press. The disputes which emerged as the mission attempted to decided upon the location of the press are important because they reveal the divisions in the mission at this period and illustrate the variety of attitudes within the mission, towards Pomare II's wishes.

In the days immediately following Ellis' arrival in February 1817 it was assumed that the press would be taken to Tahiti, the site favoured by Pomare. However, the captain of the vessel revealed that he had no orders to land at Tahiti and refused to make any diversion there. The press was, therefore, landed at Mo'orea. Pomare continued to favour printing at Tahiti and in a letter expressed the opinion that the press should be conveyed there.[6] Crook, Ellis and Davies planned a trip to Tahiti to search for a suitable site. However, the other missionaries seem to have opposed this measure and suggested that the matter be settled by lot.

A meeting was held on 24th February to decide on both the location of the press and which of the missionaries should accompany it. This led to the decision, achieved by ballot, that Nott, Davies, Hayward and Ellis should be with the press. Davies had opposed the use of either the lot or a decision by the majority from the beginning. He preferred what he termed a rational approach and claimed that the people were against the plan on the grounds that the best preachers and linguists, Nott and Davies, would be removed.

The most serious drawback to the new plans, from Davies' perspective, was that they would antagonise Pomare and, therefore, be detrimental to baptising the people and forming churches:

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[5] Bicknell, James Hayward, William Henry, Nott, Wilson, Tessier to LMS 2nd July 1817, SSL 2.
[6] 14th February. Davies, *History of the Tahitian Mission,* 204.

Further the present time is a peculiar crisis in the state of the mission; for all had hitherto considered the chiefs but particularly the King as the chief obstacle in our way to proceed further with our people in respect of Christian discipline and Baptism. That the Directors in their last letter say they do not think we are justified in withholding the ordinance such as are proper subjects, but they think it <u>absolutely necessary</u> that we should form a Christian Church: and, that notwithstanding our being under the disagreeable necessity of rejecting Pomare, they entreat us to deal faithfully with him, yet <u>respectfully</u> and in a way to give as little offence as possible: but our present plan will in all probability thwart this altogether and vex and irritate his mind to a high degree.[7]

Thus, Davies noted the difficulty of baptising others before Pomare and the necessity, if this was to be achieved at all, of placating Pomare in other matters.

The problems over siting the new press revealed clearly to the mission a dilemma which resulted from the Tahitian notion of the relationship between chief and religion. Pomare and the chiefs saw their place as at the head of their people and expected to take the lead as they had done prior to accepting Christianity. As noted in the previous chapter, they had played an important role in leading their people into the church and received recognition from the missionaries. Pomare's conversion had been crucial to the acceptance of Christianity by others. However, according to the standards of church discipline Pomare was not a fit candidate for baptism. The importance of Pomare to their future was clear to the missionaries who had lived through the difficult days of the early mission.

The meetings held on 28th September and 1st October 1816 had reached no decision on church discipline. Under the system of writing down the names of those professing Christianity it had been possible to exclude or remove those who were seen to fall below the standards expected. Notice of persons excluded even appeared in the public versions of their letters.[8]

The first plan for the location of the press and missionaries was overturned at a meeting of the members of the mission on 11th March. It was decided that Davies, Ellis and Crook should form a new station at Afareaitu on the other side of Mo'orea with the press, the others were to remain at Papetoai. The printing office at Afareaitu was only to be temporary, an appeasement to Pomare. The lot had already destined

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[7] Journal Davies, Crook and Ellis March- April 1817, SSJ 4.
[8] Bicknell, Davies, Hayward, Henry, Nott & Tessier to LMS 6th Sept 1815, SSL 2 reproduced in QC 1: 7.

the press for the Leeward Islands.[9] When the first pages were printed at the press. Pomare was given all due attention and drew off the first sheets himself.

The disagreement about the press and division of the mission between stations also had its origins in personal matters. William Henry believed that it was Crook who had caused the dispute by insisting on his own choice of station and companions. Henry also suspected Crook of using Davies, over whom he allegedly had an "unhappy ascendancy", to aggrandise his own reputation in the New South Wales.[10] According to his own account, Crook and his wife felt it their duty to oppose a plan which separated them from all their "attachments" and stationed them with persons with whom they "could not unite". Crook thought that Nott had encouraged him in order to support his own plans and then dropped him in favour of Hayward.[11] Hayward, meanwhile, believed that Crook was injuring the characters of the missionaries in his letters to London.[12] As a result of these disagreements it seems that the missionaries at Afareaitu and Papetoai continued to be wary of each other. Ellis, Crook and Davies complained of a lack of help in constructing the printing house.

The first indication in the correspondence of the missionaries of a decision to draw up laws dates from after the dispute over the press; 2nd July 1817.[13] The signatories were Bicknell, Hayward, Henry, Nott, Wilson and Tessier the members of the station at Papetoai. This was the first opportunity for conveying letters since 13th August 1816.[14] The other letters written for the same post and in the intervening period make no mention of discussions over laws. The letter gives a report of all aspects of the mission. Bicknell, Hayward, Henry, Nott, Wilson and Tessier were forced to defend themselves before the Directors, on this occasion from the accusation that they had been "too inactive both in spiritual and temporal concerns" and that they have made insufficient progress in the language.[15]

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[9] Bicknell, Hayward, Henry, Nott, Wilson and Tessier to LMS 2nd July 1817, SSL 2.
[10] Henry to Marsden 1st July 1817, SSL 2.
[11] Journal Crook and others Oct 1816-June 1817, SSJ 3.
[12] Hayward to Burder 5th July 1817, SSL 2.
[13] Bicknell, Hayward, Henry, Nott, Wilson and Tessier to LMS 2nd July 1817, SSL 2.
[14] Ibid.
[15] Ibid.

The letter prefaced the discussion of the laws with an admission that the mission had never stood in such need of advice. The missionaries from Papetoai stressed that they had always avoided participating in civil affairs or politics, "except in a few instances where we endeavoured to promote peace between contending parties" but that on this occasion it was not possible to follow that policy.[16] The authors then explained why the new laws were drafted and the circumstances of their own participation. Intervention, they argued, was unavoidable because of the relationship between religion and civil affairs in the lives of Tahitians:

> Such a complete revolution having taken place, now thro' the Islands, the King, the chiefs, and people from all quarters, apply to us, for advice and direction, not only in respect of moral and religious but likewise civil and political affairs of every description. The religious and political systems of the islanders, being blended together in every affair of life, the change affects every custom and usage.[17]

They went on to argue that the changes made by the people, in abandoning the old ways, were so great that the previous methods of maintaining order were no longer viable; either because the power of the old gods was necessary for their support or because they were incompatible with Christianity. They also stressed that it was Pomare and the chiefs who asked for advice, rather than they who had insisted on a reform.

This letter was the most lengthy contemporary explanation for the missionaries' behaviour. The letters written in 1818 and 1819, after the matter had been settled, included only short treatments of the topic and added nothing new. It is, therefore, worthwhile to pause and consider the plausibility of these justifications. Had the missionaries been asked to play the role of advisors and were their claims about the need for reform of the existing customs well founded?

There were obvious advantages in preserving the image of the mission as detached from 'politics' in the explanation that the they were acting in response to requests. These claims in a public letter from Papetoai must, therefore, be viewed critically. Some credibility is lent to the idea, however, by the occasions on which advice was sought from the missionaries and also the missionaries' own comments on the influence of the old beliefs and practices on everyday life.

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[16] Ibid.
[17] Ibid.

This was not the first occasion on which Pomare had consulted the missionaries about appropriate behaviour. As early as February 1813 he had written to the mission from Tahiti asking "shall I sin in killing thieves?"[18] He had also taken their advice over the treatment of captives after the battle Fei Pi. It was important to Tahitians to behave correctly under the old religion and this concern continued during the transition to Christianity. Changes in practice had great significance for the Tahitians, for example, the symbolic action of destroying images and *marae*. Pomare's letters reveal that he considered the abandonment of practices opposed by the mission as a sign of professing Christianity. In a letter to John Eyre in 1817, for example, he claimed, perhaps in a fit of hyperbole, that the islanders had cast off stealing, fornication, infant slaughter and drunkenness.[19]

From a Tahitian perspective it would arguably have been far more important to adopt correct behaviour than doctrine. The reciprocal logic of the old religion required that certain actions be performed in order to obtain benefits and others be avoided to prevent harmful consequence. Ritual and restrictions were familiar emphases with the result that attendance at worship and observance of the Sabbath were punctilious. In these areas Tahitians seemed keen to learn the appropriate behaviour.

Tahitians requested advice on a wide range of subjects at weekly meetings, including some which were civil rather than religious. The primary purpose of the meetings, often held on Mondays, was to discuss the topic of the sermon on the previous Sunday. The questions also addressed practical matters, such as, Sabbath working, suicide and the suitability of women conducting family worship.[20] Many of the examples which survive from the period 1816-1819 were recorded by the missionaries at Afareaitu on Mo'orea. Two are recorded in which Davies was asked about matters he considered to be civil rather than religious; boundary markers and inheritance.[21] In these cases he referred the people to the chiefs.

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[18] Pomare to missionaries 17th February 1813, Hassall Papers vol. 2, ML.
[19] Pomare to Eyre 2nd July 1817, SSL 2.
[20] QC. 1: 258, 1: 302, 1: 484.
[21] 24th Nov 1818 trespass on a fishing ground, reported in QC. 1: 305. Inheritance Davies Crook and Ellis Journal 23rd September to 15th November 1817, SSJ 4.

Davies' answers illustrate a point made by the authors of the Papetoai letter, that is, the extent to which the old ways had come into conflict with the new. The question about boundaries was raised in November 1817 after an alleged incident of trespass on a fishing ground. Boundaries on land and sea had previously been *atua*, who would punish those who took produce to which they were not entitled. With the removal of the divine sanction the former restrictions were no longer effective. Davies would not be drawn into a plan to place new boundary markers which he declared was the business of the chiefs. Thus, he supported the rights of the *ra'atira* over the *muahane* and refused to upset the balance of power.

Unscrupulous individuals could take advantage of the confusion for their own benefit, for example, by claiming property to which they did not have a right under the traditional system:

> Brother Davies spoke in strong terms against such pretensions, showing that the reception of the word of God had abolished nothing good, just and equitable; that it abolishes what is evil, and that alone, and that if private property were respected formerly, it ought to be more so now.[22]

Without guidance concerning what was good or equitable no new common standard could be agreed. When faced by a dispute over the possessions of a dead man Davies concluded that, "certain laws and regulations, for the general good of the people, and the better ordering of their civil affairs were necessary". His journal, however, does not state how these would be arrived at. Davies' experiences reveal that a combination of practical confusion and loss of traditional sanctions to limit behaviour were a both problem for the mission and the Tahitians.

The situation of Pomare II makes credible the suggestion that a new structure was both necessary and useful to Tahitians. His new status and claims to power were without precedent in traditional practice. The law code gave Pomare an opportunity to augment his power. The usefulness to Pomare of the contents of the code will be discussed in the next chapter.

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[22] 24th Nov trespass on a fishing ground QC. 1: 305.

The Tahitians knew of the differences between their own customs and those of their visitors. A conscious effort was made by British officials in New South Wales, naval officers and the missionaries to impress Pomare and other chiefs with the power of Britain and its monarch. As a newly established Christian monarch it is not surprising that Pomare enlisted the help of outsiders, including missionaries, to provide him with the institutions which he was told were the foundation of a 'civilised' nation.

The case put by the missionaries in their letter does have a basis in the conditions on the island at this period and the pre-existing beliefs of Tahitians. The practice of helping the islanders to adopt Western style laws were compatible with the theories that assumed a direct link between Christianity and the benefits of 'civilisation'. Nevertheless, the signatories of the letter were aware that they were moving into a difficult sphere. Despite the strong practical case which they were able to argue they foresaw difficulties arising from the link between civil and religious affairs in Tahiti:

> We think the history of the Christian church, from the time of Constantine to the present day, loudly calls upon us, to do what we can to avoid those evils. We want to convince the people that the kingdom of our Lord is not of this World, and that civil and ecclesiastical affairs ought to be managed as altogether different and distinct. We have told the King and chiefs that being strangers, and come to their country as teachers of the Word of the true God....we will have nothing further to do with their civil concerns, than to give them good advice, and in that way several letters have passed....[23]

They were prepared, therefore, to play the role of advisors. The basis for the laws was to be the word of God, and the laws of their own country and other civilised nations. They added that they would inform the king who would place the laws before the chiefs, though he was having entirely his own way in such proceedings.

Phase 2. Church Discipline

When the subject of the laws was discussed for a second time the issues of church formation and baptism were also before the mission. This phase opened in September 1817, two months after the composition of the public letter. Davies'

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[23] Bicknell, Hayward, Henry, Nott, Wilson and Tessier to LMS 2nd July 1817, SSL 2.

History of the Tahitian Mission assigns the role of convenors on this occasion to some of the missionaries at Afareaitu. The catalyst in raising issues of church organisation may have been a visit by Orsmond, who was an advocate of the early formation of the people into churches. The missionaries at Papetoai had also maintained an interest, as demonstrated by their letter of July 1817.

A meeting took place on 16th September 1817 for the discussion of six propositions put by Davies on the subjects of discipline and baptism. His first priorities were:

> 1st. Whether it is not an immediate Duty to bring to a close the correspondence formerly entered into with the king about adopting some laws and regulations, for the well being, peace and tranquillity of the community at large, as a nation now professing Christianity.
> 2d. If it be determined in the affirmative, then what are those laws and regulations which ought to be proposed? Are they to be the substance of the various moral Duties required in the second Table of the Law, as they are inculcated in the N. Testament, and digested into the relative Duties of Magistrates, and Subjects, masters and servants, husbands and wives, parents and children &c. or only for the present some outlines of these, so far as circumstances will allow?
> 3d. The nation as such (it was to be hoped) was not to be formed into a church with the king as its head &c. consequently was it not expedient to agree on some way of separating from the multitude such as in the judgement of Charity should be thought proper subjects of baptism?[24]

The practice of writing the names of the people had ceased following the mass profession of Christianity. Without this "badge of distinction," Davies argued, it was not possible to hold the people to church discipline.[25] He, therefore, wanted a decision both on baptism and the correspondence over the laws.

The order in which the propositions were listed by Davies raises questions about the type of church Davies intended. Davies begins by mentioning the laws and then considers the forming of a church and baptism. Several interpretations can be made of this prioritisation. The laws may be the first subject for pragmatic reasons, that is, because this subject was already in hand. Davies may, as Garrett has suggested, have envisioned a form of national church.[26]

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[24] Davies, *History of the Tahitian Mission*, 210-211.
[25] Ibid. 211.
[26] Garrett, *To Live Among the Stars,* 20.

On the other hand, the plans to draft laws may appear at the head of the list for the same reason that Davies had wanted to site the press at Tahiti; to please Pomare. On that occasion he argued that progress could not be made towards forming churches, particularly, if difficult decisions had to be made about baptism without support from Pomare. He may have believed that possession of the law code would appease Pomare if Baptism was refused. In this case Davies need not have intended an Established Church in the sense implied by Wright and Fry; but rather an attempt to integrate their relations with Pomare as far as possible into the gathered church model familiar from home.

The mass movements in Tahiti forced the mission to accommodate a large number of professed Christians. Elements of national church organisation were, therefore, unavoidable. The churches formed in Tahiti inevitably had aspects of a national church in that they provided for the entire community and were the forums for important events. However, they held firmly to the principle of church membership with strict disciplinary criteria for baptism and admission to communion. Each church, therefore, had both a widely drawn congregation and an exclusive membership. The 1819 law code was not used as a standard for church members neither was the church Established in the sense of having a monarch at its head as Supreme Governor. The roles of indigenous leaders were very different from those they had exercised under the previous religion.[27]

The situation of the Tahitian Christians were very different to those of Nonconformists at home who had consciously rejected an alternative national church. The principle of the gathered church, composed of members whose commitment and piety had been tested, seems to have been central to Davies' thinking. This was the typical Nonconformist model of church organisation and the careful examination of those who professed conversion would have been familiar to all the members of the mission.[28] Insistence upon evidence of religious experience was common to evangelicals, of all denominations. The mission as a whole, beginning with the excommunication of Jefferson on board the *Duff*, showed a

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[27] Forman, *Island Churches*, 73.
[28] Strict standards were imposed on converts before they could become "members" of a church, as distinct from mere attenders. Only church members were admitted to communion and a church meeting disciplined those who fell away.

tendency to be very particular in its acceptance of individuals as members of the church. The disputes with Lewis, Caw, Broomhall and Elder were all taken very seriously. In 1814 a special meeting was held on Mo'orea to:

> ..consider what general rules we should adopt as to the reception of new members, whether Europeans or natives. There are various things calling upon us to be strict and guarded in all our religious proceedings as now the eyes of many are upon us, ...It appeared to us that we ought to have satisfactory evidence of a person's piety, whether an European or a native, and that we should receive none merely on the recommendations of others, or because they have been members of some Christian church before.[29]

The occasion appears to have been the preparation of Mrs Hayward to join them at communion. From the early days of the mission excommunication had played a role in its internal discipline. It had been the only form of sanction available to the community, other than persuading a captain to remove one of their number.[30]

The fundamental principle of the LMS laid down that its missionaries were not employed to establish any particular form of church government.[31] The mission had no service book or ceremony for burial and disputes also arose about matters such as the celebration of Christmas.[32] The need to form the Tahitians into churches, however, focused attention on these issues. No agreement was reached in 1817. Indeed, a statement on the subject later sent to Marsden leaves many of the possible points of contention open. It was agreed that baptism would be administered on "...deliberate and credible profession of believing in the Lord Jesus Christ as the Saviour of sinners..."[33] The resolutions do not define "credible" profession which would, no doubt, have been a source of disagreement between individuals. This straightforward test was accompanied by an assertion that those of superior rank should not hold privileges within the church:

> ...that in the relation of Church Membership, no authority or discipline over persons be exercised but by the church itself. Note. By "the Church itself", is here intended the persons in the Church who are acknowledged to have the spiritual authority in such matters according to the particular form of ecclesiastical discipline which the members shall adopt...[34]

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[29] Davies Journal 25th July 1823-20th April 1814, SSJ 3.
[30] This was the case with Walters whom the missionaries believed had gone mad.
[31] See chapter 4.
[32] Afareaitu Journal [Crook] 4th Oct- 30th June 1817, SSJ 3.
[33] Resolutions [1819] Marsden Papers vol. 5, ML.
[34] Ibid.

Here again is an indication that the differences among the missionaries over church structure were irreconcilable.

The situation in Tahiti confronted the mission with a population in which the majority were attending church and were enthusiastic, initially at least, to receive books and instruction. Whilst they hoped to see the nation formed into a church with the King at the head, a separate judgement was necessary for discerning those suitable for Baptism. The importance of replacing the system of writing names with church membership was that it would allow missionaries to distinguish once more between those who had turned away from the old religion and those they believed to be genuinely converted. The standard applied to church members was higher than that contained in the law. Journals written by members of the mission show distinctly different reactions when members of the church, rather than ordinary Tahitians, were thought to have broken law.

Davies attempted to maintain clear boundaries between the province of the church and of the chiefs, as exemplified in his refusal to intervene over boundary markers. The journal kept by Crook, Ellis and Davies at Afareaitu records that in May 1817 they were faced with direct questions about the relationship between the two. Davies was asked at a Monday meeting whether the chiefs should be given priority in leading prayer, as was the practice in Tahiti. Davies spoke to the people present at length on the subject and:

> ..showed that in all civil things relating to common life the customs of the country & every proper respect ought to be paid to the chiefs, but in religious things all distinction in religious things would be governed by the apparent reality of true religion, by consistency of conduct and by the knowledge and abilities that such pious persons may possess.[35]

This public journal was later published.[36] In the answers given to questions, as they recorded in the mission journals, there is often an impression that the author has the home audience in mind. There is no guarantee that the model answers recorded for transmission to Britain reflect the meaning conveyed in Tahitian at the time. The presentation of the material in the journals often allows a single and succinct answer to stand for the response made by the missionary perhaps obscuring the debate which resulted.

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[35] Journal Davies, Crook and Ellis April-July 1817, SSJ 4.
[36] QC. 1: 235.

The missionaries at Papetoai also complained of the King's disposition to take the head in religious affairs.[37] A second comment by Davies found in his journal for March 1818, expresses exactly the dilemma faced by all the missionaries:

> Evening meeting as before, various questions brought forward, but chiefly questions about the difference between civil and religious affairs. This is a subject of much perplexity at the present time to most of the thinking intelligent part of the people, and it requires much prudence and caution as to what is said to them about it, as there is danger from either discouraging the chiefs from promoting good things, or else giving them more consequence in religious affairs than belongs to them.[38]

The desire to maintain their own influence from over the church and to evaluate converts by evangelical criteria had to co-exist with the realisation that safety continued to depend upon their relationship with the Pomares. The importance of the co-operation of the chiefs in promoting "good things" would have been particularly evident to the older residents of the mission. The mission had prospered due to the patronage of Pomare and was still reliant upon him. Tahitian culture predisposed both people and chiefs to expect the lead to be taken by those of high status. Despite missionary complaints about the intervention of *ari'i* in church affairs, as Forman notes, indigenous leaders were not sanctified as they had been when 'Oro was their patron.[39]

There was, however, one religious institution in which the king and *ari'i* did take the lead and which consciously harnessed traditional communities, the Auxiliary Missionary Society. This society was founded in May 1818. The missionaries had always kept the first Monday of each month for prayer for missions, as LMS members did in Britain. The foundation of an auxiliary society allowed them to take their emulation a step further. In practical terms, the mission in Tahiti was still short of funds and in need of support. The goods collected were not devoted to the mission in Tahiti, however, but sent to London.

The society had many factors in common with those founded in Britain: the auxiliary had its own printed rules; speeches and prayers were offered; office bearers

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[37] Reported by Davies, Mission Journal Afareaitu 23rd Sept- 15th Nov 1817, SSJ 4.
[38] Journal Davies 5th Dec 1817-16th Nov 1818, SSJ 4.
[39] Forman, *Island Churches,* 73.

were chosen from among prominent residents; and the contribution of each individual was carefully noted. The last two factors, in the Tahitian context, led to some difficulties. Giving between individuals and communities became competitive and the voluntary aspect was obscured. There was a similar problem with church building, where the labour of the community was the result complex reciprocal obligations. The breadth of membership of these societies and the choice of the office bears approximated more closely to the model of national establishment than do the churches, which were strictly governed by their respective church meetings.

Phase 3 The Drafting of the Laws

The arrival of the new party of six missionaries and their wives in November 1817 reopened the debate over the stations which had already proved divisive. It was now clear that new stations should be opened in the Leeward Islands and that a separation of the mission was necessary. Davies who had received a number of letters from Nott on the subject, agreed that they meet again to discuss the correspondence with the King.[40] On 15th January 1818 all the missionaries met to settle their stations and to discuss the drafting of laws in response to Pomare's request. It was on this occasion that the only recorded dispute about the involvement of the missionaries occurred.

The opposition to the previous policy of the mission came from among the new missionaries. According to Davies:

> ..the business was explained by br Nott and myself as well as we could, and they were told plainly that no interference was intended on our part in respect of the civil and political affairs of the islanders, farther than to give our best advice in compliance with the requests of the king and principal chiefs, but br Threlkeld and some of the others caviled [sic] so as nothing could be settled and the subject was dropped.[41]

It seems from this passage that some of the objections raised may have been directly related to the involvement in politics. However, it is also clear from the account that the meeting failed to reach agreement on any of the issues set before it. The origins

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[40] Entry for 13th January. Davies Journal 5th December 1817-16th November 1818, SSJ 4.
[41] Journal Davies, December 1817-November 1818, SSJ 4.

of the stalemate may have been related as much to personality as to matters of principle.

The original instructions to Platt, Bourne, Darling and Williams had insisted upon decision making by "considerate conference", prayer and "unanimous decision".[42] Bourne, Darling and Threlkeld, however, refused to be bound by a majority and would accept no authority but the Bible.[43] Davies noted that when James Read had expressed similar scruples he was not accepted in to the mission and returned with the ship.

The reasons for the dispute were articulated in religious terms. However, there were a number of factors which divided the missionaries who arrived in 1816 and 1817 from those already working in Tahiti and Mo'orea and the cause of the disagreement may have been more complex than involvement of the latter in drafting laws. First, the new missionaries differed from the old hands in education. Ellis, Threlkeld and Orsmond had been educated at Gosport. Barff and Ellis had studied at Homerton and Platt at Manchester.[44] In a letter from Paramatta, for example, Barff wrote proudly that he could now read Virgil in Latin and also New Testament Greek and Hebrew.[45] Their training set them apart from the artisans and mechanics sent out in the *Duff* and the other early parties.

Second, all the new missionaries had been ordained prior to their departure, whereas, despite their length of experience, none of the nine remaining at Tahiti had this status. The occupations of the old and new missionaries prior to selection by the LMS did not differ greatly. Orsmond and Darling had been carpenters and Barff a farmer, bricklayer and carpenter. Bourne was a printer and Threlkeld a druggist's apprentice and actor. John Williams was apprenticed to an ironmonger and Platt was a cotton manufacturer. The new missionaries had been dignified with a status to

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[42] Burder to Platt, Bourne, Darling and Williams, 14th October 1816, SSL 2.
[43] Davies Journal 5th December 1817-16th November 1818, SSJ 4.
[44] Homerton was founded at Mile End in 1754 and moved to Homerton in 1768. John Pye Smith was tutor 1806-1850. Michael R. Watts, *The Dissenters Volume II: The Expansion of Evangelical Nonconformity 1791-1859* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 269.
[45] Barff to LMS 4th March 1817, SSL 2.

which the others might have aspired, had their training and circumstances been different.

Third, the arrivals of 1816 and 1817 may have had a greater sense of their own independence and individualism. They had, for example, travelled out to the South Seas in much smaller parties and did not have a captain placed over the group as supervisor. Travelling independently allowed the missionaries to exercise their own judgement. Threlkeld, for example, attempted to remain at Rio de Janeiro and found a mission there.[46]

When they reached New South Wales, the younger men were consulted by Marsden. He had formed a new committee composed of members resident in New South Wales to share with him the management of the mission. New plans were adopted for supplying the mission and paying salaries. These were later rejected by the Board in London and the missionaries accused of extravagance.[47] The older missionaries seem to have felt that claims of over expenditure were justified and there were disagreements over the division of supplies. The behaviour of the new wives was criticised by the Directors and Davies accused them of making the loudest claims to the property and yet doing nothing for the work of the mission.[48]

Fourth, there were tensions between young and old in their assessment of the state of the mission. The missionaries who were working in Tahiti and Mo'orea in 1817 had considerable experience. Nott, Henry, and Bicknell were the sole survivors of the first party with twenty years of experience ; the others had served since 1800.[49]

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[46] Ellis and Threlkeld families had travelled together from London departing in January 1816. Threlkeld took the decision to disembark at Rio following the illness of his wife and new-born child. Once settled he began to establish a Protestant community among the foreign residents and thought of staying as its pastor. Threlkeld had not wished to be posted to the South Seas but to the Afghans. Threlkeld to Rev J Lewes 27th September 1815. Candidates Papers Box 16.

[47] Rejection of the new plan and accusation against Ellis and Orsmond see Burder to Marsden 5th June 1817 Marsden Papers vol. 4, ML.
Extravagance of Williams, Barff, Bourne, Darling, Platt and Threlkeld see Hodson to Marsden 17th November 1818 ibid.

[48] Davies Journal Dec 1817- Nov 1818, SSJ 4.

[49] Hayward and Wilson had been missionaries of the LMS for longer still, having sailed on the unsuccessful second voyage of the *Duff* in 1798. Crook had returned to London and then worked in New South Wales, running a school and serving briefly as a colonial chaplain. Gunson, *Messengers of Grace*, 40.

They had suffered all the difficulties and dangers of the precarious early years and had continued the mission in the face of discouragement; arising both from conditions in Tahiti and attitudes at home. These were circumstances which the new missionaries found difficult to appreciate.

The new arrivals had the expectation of seeing a converted island. The published versions of the journals and letters from Tahiti had often been cautious. However, read from a distance they were open to misinterpretation. Ellis was fairly positive in his assessment of the mission both in his published work, where it might be expected, and in letters written shortly after his arrival. Ellis told Marsden that the religious and moral character of the people exceeded anything he had conceived of, and the work of God was going on speedily.[50] Few criticisms of his new colleagues can be found.[51]

Threlkeld, by contrast, was horrified to see the mission children running on the beach without hats, stockings or shoes and sometimes naked up to the age of six or seven; learning all the practices which "stop a parent's breast".[52] In the case of the mission families he was perhaps right to be concerned. The previous year William Henry had sent his "unhappy daughter" to Marsden in the hope of reforming her character.[53] Both Williams and Threlkeld were critical on arrival of the "abominable" customs of the Tahitians and lack of system in the methods of the older brethren.[54]

Denomination is a fifth area in which the two generations of missionaries may have differed.[55] If this is the case, their backgrounds may have had implications for their attitudes towards relations between church and state. Garrett contrasts the conservatism of the first group with the Congregational majority in the second.[56]

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[50] Ellis to Marsden, 30th June 1817, SSL 2.

[51] No mission journal was kept at Mo'orea. Ellis to Burder 3rd July 1817, SSL 2.

[52] Threlkeld to directors 29th September 1818, SSL 2.

[53] Henry to Marsden 1st July 1817, SSL 2 see also Neil Gunson, "The Deviations of a Missionary Family: The Henrys at Tahiti," in *Pacific Island Portraits,* ed. Deryck Scarr (Canberra: Australian National University, 1973).

[54] Threlkeld and Williams to LMS 30th October 1818, SSL 2.

[55] Appendix IV Particulars of Evangelical Missionaries 1797-1860. Gunson, *Messengers of Grace,* 344-364.

[56] Garrett, *To Live Among the Stars,* 24.

There were missionaries among the early group with clear established church connections. Gunson classifies Scott and Wilson as Scottish Presbyterians and Henry and Bicknell as members of the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion. Haweis had considerable personal influence over Bicknell, Henry and Nott. The group also included Crook, Hayward and Davies who were Calvinistic Methodists, and Nott a Congregationalist.[57]

It might be argued that the second group came from non-conformist backgrounds and were therefore, likely to oppose links between church and state. According to Gunson, Bourne, Threlkeld, Williams and Barff were Calvinistic Methodists; whereas, Ellis, Orsmond, Platt and Darling were Congregationalists. [58]

Questions of denominational background and attitudes to involvement in politics, as demonstrated in chapter four, were not necessarily clear cut. In addition, the boundaries between denominations originating in the evangelical revival were fluid. The ministries of Whitefield and Wesley had begun inside the Church of England. Wesley, in particular, was reluctant to break his relationship, though both ultimately did withdraw. The Countess of Huntingdon, a friend to both men who ultimately sided with Whitefield, made the same transition eventually being forced to register her chapels under the Toleration Act.

Neither Whitefield nor the Countess attempted to build a church organisation in the way that Wesley did, with the result that after their deaths the chapels under their patronage chose their own destiny. The majority of Whitefield's churches later became Congregational as did some of the Connexion chapels. The remainder of the Countess of Huntingdon Connexion survived united under a trust. [59] In the early Nineteenth Century the term "Congregational" was only gradually replacing that of "Independent". There was no Congregationalist denominational body in existence

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[57] Tessier's denominational background is not known.
[58] Orsmond and Ellis were ordained at Kensington. Joh Owen Whitehouse , *A Register of Missionaries and Deputations from 1796 to 1877* (London: Yates and Alexander, 1877).
[59] In 1891 46 chapels and preaching stations were members of the connexion. J. B. Figgis, *The Countess of Huntingdon and her Connexion* (London: S. W. Partridge & Co., 1891), 205-207.

until 1832 although local associations were being formed. The designation of chapels and individuals as belonging to a particular category is therefore difficult.

The second group does not contain any members of the Connexion according to Gunson's calculation yet Williams, Platt, Darling and Bourne all shared the same ordination service at Surrey Chapel in September 1816. The minister was Rev. Rowland Hill (1744-1833); deacon of the Church of England and Chaplain to the Countess of Huntingdon. Annual sermons were preached at Surrey Chapel for the benefit of the society and Hill read the Church of England liturgy at the annual meeting of the society. [60]

A single label cannot, therefore, be relied upon to encapsulate the influences on their thought. The education of the missionaries at the Academy in Gosport, for example, was in the hands of Bogue. Ellis a Congregationalist and former Unitarian was one of the greatest advocates of the laws. The ordinations of some missionaries also crossed apparent denominational boundaries, Threlkeld was ordained at Kensington, a Congregational chapel. The church membership of the wives of the missionaries reveal the central importance of a few key churches under the care of prominent Directors. The wives of Barff, Williams and Darling were all from The Tabernacle, Tottenham Court Road, under the ministry of Matthew Wilks.[61]

For these reasons, it is only possible to conclude tentatively on any effect of denominational background upon the attitude of missionaries in Tahiti to involvement in law making, which as already noted is often difficult to determine. The first group appear to have had more links with established churches, however, the origins and influences on the second group may have been more complex than Gunson's designation suggests. Any automatic link between dissenters and a reluctance to be involved in civil affairs is unjustified. There were branches of Nonconformity in which respect for the traditional order remained high and who were not opposed in principle to an established church. Nott and Davies, the strongest advocates of the laws plan, were Congregationalist and Welsh Calvinistic

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[60] Morrison, *Fathers and Founders,* 1: 120-1.
[61] Williams, a Tabernacle member himself married Mary Chauner; Barff - Sarah Swain; Darling - Rebecca Woolston. See Whitehouse, *Register of Missionaries and Deputations.* Whitefield's Tabernacle founded in 1756 later became Congregational.

Methodist respectively.[62] They had been sent out to Tahiti when public fear about radicalism following the French Revolution was at its height and when the LMS Directors were concerned to present mission as a respectable activity which would not undermine the *status quo*. The influence of Haweis' attempts to promote good relations between the LMS and those with power, both in Britain and Tahiti should also be noted.[63]These factors shaped the missionaries' own attitudes to authority and seem to have been more important than assumptions about denominational attitudes to church and state.

The new missionaries arrived in 1816 and 1817 with commitment and enthusiasm but also as critics of the achievements of the mission. They were set apart by their education and ordination and also had strong sense of independence. These factors dividing the mission must be borne in mind when the causes of the disputes between them are examined.

The opposition was short lived. On 14th May 1818 another meeting of the mission was held at which the previous subjects of contention was passed, apparently without difficulty. The reasons for this are not given. One possibility is that the principle of drawing up laws was not the major cause of the original disagreement. Disputes over the settlement of new stations could have led to the rejection of the other business. Later events suggest that either the objections to law making were not the primary cause of the quarrel or that the objectors were soon convinced by the more experienced missionaries.

The new members of the mission were later in involved in law making in other islands; Ellis at Huahine and Threlkeld and Williams at Raiatea. The first letter to report the news stated:

> A little code of laws has been drawn up, approved by the King and translated into Tahitians by Br. Nott, but it remains with the King to give their effect. WE do not expect that this will take place till the next annual meeting of the missionary society which is to be held in an immense house now building for the King in the Pare district.[64]

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[62] See chapter 4.
[63] See chapters 4 & 5.
[64] Tessier, Crook, Bourne, Darling, Wilson to LMS 6th July 1818, SSL 2.

Bourne and Darling were both signatories to the letter and registered no objections.
The practical circumstances of the mission and its converts appear to have
in the long run
overridden any concerns they had about intervention in the civil sphere.

It seems unlikely, that Threlkeld had personal objections to co-operation
with the civil authorities. When Threlkeld left the Tahitian mission he accepted
government funding for his mission at Lake Macquarie, New South Wales. Crook
had worked as colonial chaplain prior to rejoining the South Sea Mission.

Orsmond however kept himself remote from all civil affairs and later noted
that he was absent when the laws for Raiatea were approved.[65] Antipathy to Pomare
may explain how some of the new missionaries could oppose the Tahitian laws and
yet participate in creating codes elsewhere. Pomare was viewed by the newer
missionaries as a hypocrite and once they were in their new stations he was also
attacked for imperial ambitions. Co-operation with the local leadership of the
Leeward Islands, with whom they had forged their own special relationships, was a
different matter.

Williams, like Ellis, wrote a strong defence in print of the missionary's role
in making laws for newly Christian nations in Polynesia:

> …it would be criminal were he, while seeking to elevate the moral character
> of the community, and to promote the habits and usages of civilised life, to
> withhold advice or assistance which might advance these designs. It has been
> shown that their civil and judicial polity, and all their ancient usages were
> interwoven with their superstitions…The missionary goes among them and
> by the blessing of God upon his labours, they are delivered from the
> dominion of the idolatrous system.[66]

His attempts to introduce laws elsewhere will be discussed below. Apologia
delivered for the home audience are not necessarily evidence of a missionary's
attitude at the time. However, the balance of evidence suggests that the majority of
the members of the mission, excluding Orsmond, had no strong reservations about
co-operating with chiefs.

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[65] Orsmond Journal 13th November 1820-16th February 1821, SSJ 4.
[66] Williams, *Missionary Enterprises,* 140.

Nott had already drafted a version of the laws which was read over at the meeting. Nott and Davies were appointed to discuss them with Pomare and Nott was to translate them into Tahitian.[67] Pomare was able to approve them the next day. The explanations in the letters of the missionaries themselves are vague. Darling writing in Sept 1818 used very similar words to Bourne, Crook and Wilson though he mentions that the laws are drawn from the Old Testament. Platt wrote in more detail, contending that the former customs had been entirely founded on the old religion and that the country was, therefore, lawless. He adds:

> The present form of government is a considerable draw back or exertion. With their politics, we as missionaries, have nothing to do, tho' by desire, there have been a few laws drawn up & approved; which the king has now in possession; but they are not yet in force.[68]

Pomare's own comments on the laws in correspondence also stressed that the laws were yet to be approved. Writing in October 1818 he told Haweis that the laws would be corrected and then approved by the chiefs.[69]

It has been suggested that the impetus for drawing up the Tahitian law code came from London rather than from the coincidence of missionary aims with those of Pomare II.[70] In November 1815, Matthew Wilks wrote to George Burder:

> Would it not be well for you or some of your brethren to draw up a code of national laws something like our own – only simpler- (see Campbell's) a deputation of Miß[ies] to go and call a meeting of all the chief natives present them for their consideration but not to interfere at all, or not act except called by all parties – or they might send to a few of the leading chiefs to meet & consult on what was read to them & then call all the chiefs together to deliberate – that might bring in all the Society Islands under the same regulations. I think you ought to draw up something of the kind- send it to the brethren, & leave it to their direction how to act, that is, whether to present it or not.[71]

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[67] Davies Journal December 1817-November 1818, SSJ 4.
[68] Platt to LMS 12th November 1818, SSL 2.
[69] Pomare [trans. Crook] to Haweis 3rd October 1818, SSL 2.
[70] Gunson, *Messengers of Grace,* 284. Koenig and Pukoki Winston , "Des Bords de la Tamise aux Rivages de Aure, le Code de Tahiti," Bulletin de la Société des Etudes Océaniennes 23 (2000), 50.
[71] Wilks to Burder November 1815, Home Letters 3.

This paragraph appears within a letter discussing general instructions for and criticism of the missionaries at Tahiti. Gunson and Koenig, therefore, argue that the law codes were a matter of home policy.[72]

The process proposed by Wilks is similar to what happened at Tahiti, however, no trace survives of any order from London to the missionaries on this subject. The letters written by the missionaries themselves reporting the process have an explanatory tone and do not refer any letter or instructions received about law making. Furthermore the mission journal records the dispute about involvement in drafting laws but again no mention is made of the Directors to justify their decision. There was no motion of the LMS Board in reference to Wilks' letter. No causal link can be established between suggestions in Wilks' letter and the activities of the mission in the field.

The Griqua Town Law Code of 1813, mentioned by Wilks, may have influenced the missionaries at Tahiti. Rev John Campbell wrote the code whilst travelling through South Africa as a member of a two person deputation from the LMS.[73] The Griqua people were the result of frontier mixing between Boers and indigenous people. Increasingly unwelcome in Boer society they withdrew and formed separate communities outside Boer territory and jurisdiction.[74] Campbell composed a code of fifteen articles. While there is no direct reference to the Griqua laws there are mentions of other aspects of the South African mission. When the Tahitian Auxiliary Missionary Society was founded in May 1818 Henry Nott spoke at an open meeting using the example of the societies founded among the "Hottentots."[75]

Conclusion

The reasons for missionary participation in law making were complex and varied between individuals. Nott and Davies emerge as the central figures in drafting

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[72] Gunson, *Messengers of Grace*, 284.
[73] Campbell was minister of Kingsland Chapel where William Ellis was a member.
[74] Andrew C. Ross, *John Philip (1775-1851): Missions, Race and Politics in South Africa* (Aberdeen: University Press, 1986), 27.
[75]That is, the Khoi people. William Henry for the missionaries to Burder 30th May 1818.

laws and negotiating with Pomare. The drafting of the laws in 1818 was a logical result of the encounters which the mission had with Tahitian culture and the relations they had established. The formative period of the mission had led the older missionaries to a close relationship with Pomare, based on the belief that he should be the sovereign ruler of Tahiti and deserved their obedience.

It has been noted that the missionaries of the first, and to some extent the second generation came from backgrounds in Britain which were more often traditional than radical. Obedience and respect for monarchical government were more prevalent than democratical or republican sympathies and had been conistantly enjoined by the LMS Directors. William Ellis applied this principle in his description of the law making at Tahiti. In unpublished notes for a History of the LMS he wrote that the missionaries:

> .. had been uniformly taught that civil government was the ordinance of Divine appointment, one of the chief instruments by which the Divine Rule governs the world; and that a Christian's duty was summoned up in the scriptural injunction to "Fear God, and honour the King." Deeming it for the good of the community, that the authority of the chiefs should not be diminished, but be fixed on a Christian, instead of a heathen foundation,..[76]

The decision to support Pomare could also be justified on pragmatic grounds as it preserved stability in Tahiti.

The explanations for their actions offered by the missionaries indicate a realisation that law making was a civil matter and that they were aware of the difficulties that could arise. They were cautious in taking the step yet did not feel that it was contrary to the instructions of the LMS not to meddle with politics. The majority of the mission seem to have been convinced that the practical advantages and special circumstances in Tahiti made their actions acceptable and even a duty. To reform Tahitian society by providing equitable laws was an undoubted good.

Their worries about the boundary between civil and religious affairs were more likely to focus on the intervention of chiefs in the church than on their own influence over the chiefs. This is not to say however, that their emphasis on the need

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[76] William Ellis History of the LMS Mss., Home Odds 2. These notes were written after the publication of Ellis, *The History of the London Missionary Society* (London: John Snow, 1844).

for the conversion of individual was abandoned. Standards applied to church members remained central to the organisation of the Tahitian churches.

The elimination of the heathen practices was not only important as a negation of heathenism it was also a positive appropriation of Christianity and its benefits. The contemporary belief in Christianity as the forerunner of civilisation identified absence of Christianity as the cause of the apparent disadvantages of the Tahitians. Acceptance of Christianity would allow Tahitians to claim the benefits of civilisation including regulation and ordering of their civil affairs for the general good. This thought, when combined with strong emphasis upon the power of a conversion experience to change an individual, tended give missionaries a positive view of the capacities of their converts. Once converted a Polynesian could claim all the benefits of Christian civilisation. Racial distinctions were, therefore, of comparatively little importance.

CHAPTER 8. LAW MAKING AND MISSION POLICY 1819-1830

This first part of this chapter examines the terms of the Tahitian Code of 1819 and considers the extent to which they favoured the interests of Pomare and the missionaries. This provides a further opportunity to test the claims that they were imposed by the mission and that they were intended as an instrument to Christianise the Tahitians. An exhaustive analysis of the impact of the codes, from a Tahitian perspective, upon society and culture as a whole is beyond the scope of this study. The Tahitian perception of the laws is, however, one important facet of the context in which the members of the South Sea Mission viewed the laws. The aim will not be to judge whether missionaries were justified in attacking the pre-existing Tahitian culture but to assess their actions in the context of Nineteenth Century perspectives.

The second part of the chapter will trace the development of the codes at Tahiti, Huahine and Raiatea and the attitudes of members of the mission at these stations towards the laws and their effectiveness. It will examine the views of individual missionaries on the operation of the 1819 laws and the attempts made to expand codes and introduce them elsewhere.

The period of Tahitian history covered in this chapter begins with the promulgation of the first Tahitian law code, under Pomare II in 1819 and ends in 1830. This was a period which, though without outright civil strife, was crucial to the fate of the Pomare dynasty. The death of Pomare II in December 1821 can, in retrospect, be seen to mark the end of an era. The political alignments which developed in the reigns of Pomare III and Pomare IV were ultimately of greater political significance than Pomare II's success in uniting a kingdom following the battle of Fei Pi in 1815. The legacy of his religious conversion, however, was permanent despite the apparent difficulties of the period. The 1820s and 1830s saw heresy and wild anti-Christian behaviour on the part of some. Nevertheless, the LMS-founded church persisted even in the face of the French annexation and competition from Catholic evangelists.

Another important aspect of the 1819-1830 period was the arrival in September 1821 of Daniel Tyerman and George Bennet, a Deputation sent by the LMS, to evaluate the progress of its agents in the South Seas and also in Australia, Java, China, Penang, Malacca, Singapore, India, Madagascar and South Africa. The response of these two men who were outsiders to the mission group itself, yet appointed by the LMS Directors with the power to decide upon the future of the mission, was crucial in the policy of law making.

The years 1819-1830 were significant as the first versions of the missionary law codes received their trial in the daily life of Tahiti and the other islands. However, perhaps more importantly, it was the era in which the practice of missionary participation in law making was given approval by the LMS deputation and therefore spread as the circle of mission activity widened. Through the efforts of Ellis and the Deputation of Tyerman and Bennet news of the Polynesian law codes was spread to other mission fields and to the religious public in Britain. In these narratives, the 'success' or 'failure' of the laws, as they developed in the Pacific, was not necessarily relevant to their portrayal before the public. The very existence of the codes became an important tool in the arguments made by the LMS not only as proof of the society's achievements but also in debates about the capacity and rights of indigenous peoples, as will be seen in chapter nine.

The Content of the 1819 Laws

The first Tahitian law code of 1819, though drafted by Nott, was the result of a request from Pomare rather than a policy communicated from the LMS in London.[1] The code was, therefore, a local policy formed in response to local considerations. The influence of Pomare upon the content of the code is difficult to establish in precise terms, though some specifically Tahitian elements, such as the detailed treatment of the topic of domestic and wild pigs, are present.[2] One reason for examining the content, therefore, is to assess the balance the codes achieve between the ambitions of chiefs and of missionaries. This will provide a further standpoint from which to consider whether the law codes were imposed or if Tahiti was a mission-dominated kingdom. The content of the law codes was also later disputed and misrepresented, as will be seen in chapter nine.

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[1] See chapter 7.
[2] Howe, *Where the Waves Fall,* 142.

In 1815 Pomare had abolished the gods and with them the former means of social control.[3] The need for a new basis of order was not solely a matter of missionary concern, but also one which genuinely affected Pomare's prospects. A law code in the European style could provide him with a legitimising principle to replace the system of rank and accumulation of titles upon which claims to power had formerly been made in Tahiti.[4] An examination of the laws themselves reveals that while many show signs of a missionary interest, there are points at which Pomare's interests appear paramount, particularly, in the case of rebellion.

The laws were drawn up, according to William Ellis, on two principles of Scripture upon which all affairs of civil nature might be grounded and that had always been sustained at the various mission stations:

> ...they were to do unto others as they would that others should do unto them – that with regard to government, Christianity taught its disciples to fear God, and honour the king- that the power which existed was appointed of God- and that magistrates were for the terror of evil-doors [sic.], and a praise to them that do well.[5]

It was the very orthodoxy of these two propositions, to a European audience, which allowed Ellis and others to help Pomare make the final steps towards becoming a Christian Monarch. The theology of divine right, brought by the LMS missionaries, provided Pomare with the legitimising principle which he required.

The earliest instructions to the South Sea Mission had exhorted them to obey the established authorities in the lands they came to. While members of the mission, such as Threlkeld and Williams, could attack Pomare's personal morality, to undermine the theory of monarchy itself was an entirely different matter.[6] Pomare might have unpleasant sexual proclivities and heretical theological opinions but his critics could hardly withdraw from him the status of monarch with which he, and his father before him, had been credited since the arrival of the *Duff* in 1797. They could insist on the "independence" from Pomare's control of the islands on which their

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[3] Campbell, *Hisory of the Pacific Islands,* 76.
[4] See chapter 1.
[5] Ellis, *Polynesian Researches,* 2: 380.
[6] "Not one native here of good character regrets the death of Pomare – his whole aim was to grasp at the other islands under the pretence of Christianising them." Threlkeld and Williams to LMS 8th July 1822, SSL 3.

mission stations were located. However, they could do little to undermine his position in Tahiti without attacking the idea of monarchy itself.

The preamble to the Pomare Code of 1819 fulfilled both the needs of Pomare and the mission. It first established Pomare as holding the title, conferred by God, of King of Tahiti and Mo'orea. A short paragraph then described the gift of the Word of God as the means by which the people could save their lives. The original document entitled *E ture No Tahiti,* was composed at the mission press on a single sheet suitable for public display.[7] The word "law" was translated as *ture,* which was introduced into Tahitian from the Hebrew *Torah.* In his dictionary Davies defined the noun *ture* in neutral terms – a law, rule of conduct; code of laws and the verb- to be exalted or honoured.[8] The word *ture* clearly had Christian theological implications the printed version of the code, however, the introductory paragraph made clear that this was Pomare's law and not God's.

The nineteen laws fall into a number of broad categories which will be treated briefly below. The first item in the code was the clause concerning murder. The emphasis, however, was in equating the death of unborn and newly born children, whether at the hand of parents or any other person, with the killing of a man. The *Duff* missionaries had begun to campaign against infanticide soon after their arrival and it ranked with human sacrifice and sodomy among the "abominable Sins" which they were most anxious to suppress.[9] This was a crime which, as noted in the previous chapter, appears to have strongly associated in the mind of Pomare with the adoption of Christianity. His letter to John Eyre in 1817 asserted that infant murder, stealing and fornication were cast off as ancient and bad customs.[10] These practices, it may be argued, represent a core which, though they were clearly inspired by a missionary agenda, were also strongly linked in the minds of Pomare, and other Tahitians, to the acceptance of the new faith. Whereas other Christian moral precepts

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[7] Two published versions of this code exist, both in French. L. J. Bouge, "Le Code Pomaré de 1819: Historique et Traduction," *Journal de la Societé des Océanistes* 7-8 (1951): 5-26. Koenig and Pukoki Winston, "Des Bords de la Tamise aux Rivages de Aure, le Code de Tahiti," *Bulletin de la Société des Etudes Océaniennes,* 23 (2000): 50-71. The former included a facsimile of the printed code. Efforts to trace an original version have been unsuccessful. For an English translation see Appendix.
[8] Davies, *Tahitian Dictionary,* 291.
[9] Hassall to LMS 1st September 1799, SSL 1.
[10] Pomare to Eyre 2nd July 1817, SSL 2.

might have been unfamiliar these were well known standards and public acceptance of them was comparable to the destruction of old shrines and images.[11]

This small group of abominable sins, it seems, are a special case when it comes to determining the weighting of Mission elements in the code and Tahitian ones. They were introductions from the Christian traditions brought by the missionaries yet Tahitians saw them as significant as part of their transition to Christianity. Observance of the Sabbath belonged to the same category. The strict prohibition on work had been obvious from the first arrival of the *Duff* when the group refused to trade on the day of their arrival.[12] This was covered by the seventh law which forbade unnecessary work and travel on the Sabbath.

The second law concerned theft, another of the sins mentioned by Pomare in 1817. It can be grouped with laws three, four and five which deal with property. Restitution for theft was to be by a fourfold repayment of the stolen goods. A two part share was to go to the victim of the crime and two parts to the king. In the case of non-payment the criminal was to work the land. Under the third law, compensation for damage by stray dogs and pigs depended upon the state of the fence which had been broken. The fourth law defined receipt of stolen property as theft and the fifth concerned the finding of property lost by another person.

A change in behaviour which protected the mission from depredations might be suggested as one reason for their support of a law code but this seems unlikely. It might be that, the discouragement of theft might have made their own property more secure. However, if a comparison is made between the journals of 1797-1809 and those post 1815, it is clear that the missionaries were suffering far fewer depredations of their property in the latter period. It seems likely, that their acceptance into the community, as much as the introduction of Christian ethics, protected them from the frequent thefts of earlier years, though not completely. By 1819, a law to protect property purely for the sake of the mission was not a necessity.

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[11] For a discussion of how far these and other moral standards became a reality see below.
[12] Wilson wrote that "..the native perfectly understood that the prohibition.." was for one day only. Wilson, *Missionary Voyage,* 71.

It might be argued that missionaries had a vested interest in establishing a European system of ownership which would favour them and their countrymen in attempted colonisation. As Gunson has noted, there was a tendency among LMS missionaries towards trade and to aspirations of social improvement for themselves and their families.[13] This was especially true of the missionaries who arrived after 1817. However, the missionaries primarily responsible for the laws, including Nott and Davies, had the closest ties to the Pomare Dynasty. The law code was a vehicle that secured Pomare in his position rather than one which undermined him in preparation for annexation. Newbury's conclusion that colonisation was not a significant factor in the drafting of the mission laws coincides with the comments made above in chapter five.[14]

The eighth law, according to William Ellis was written by Pomare himself. The offence was sedition; exciting war and contention according to Davies' definition.[15] The style of this section differed from the others in the code. It contained seventy-one definitions of seditious behaviour, for example, spying, plotting and carrying out ceremonies in preparation for war. There were also numerous other actions, such as, making signs with the eyes and grinding the teeth which appear to reflect traditional means of signifying discontent. Tattooing was included, together with the practice of enchantments and the style of hair, as symbolic rejections of the new faith and hence of Pomare's legitimacy.

It seems likely that this part of the code had its origin in Pomare's own view of the threats to his rule. This theory is supported by the way in which separate offences are listed. These were not ordered in a European fashion, those of an apparently similar nature were not grouped together nor were they subdivided or glossed, as in other parts of the code. Form and content, therefore, suggest that this section reflects Pomare II's own aims; the vigorous suppression of opposition and all gestures of defiance. There is evidence too, in the complaints of the missionaries,

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[13] Gunson, *Messengers of Grace*, 32-139.
[14] C. W. Newbury, "Introduction" in Davies, *History of the Tahitian Mission*, 367.
[15] Davies, *Tahitian Dictionary*, 18.

that this is how Pomare used the law in practice.[16] The death penalty was reserved for sedition and murder under the 1819 code.

The death penalty was exacted at Tahiti in two cases. On the first occasion two men from the district of Atehuru were executed in October 1819 for attempting to overturn the government. In 1821 an attack on Pomare II resulted in the same penalty being applied to another two men. No method of execution was stipulated and sources disagree about the method used in the latter case. In *Polynesian Researches* Ellis contrasted the solemn hanging of the condemned men in 1821 with the former use of spears and club, whereas Crook's Journal described a firing squad.[17]

The code continued with a number of regulations concerning marriage. The ninth law prohibited bigamy but allowed a man who had two wives from the time of paganism to remain with both. The tenth law prevented either a man or woman returning to a spouse they had abandoned under paganism, if they had taken a new husband or wife in their place. No penalties were stipulated for either of these situations. The eleventh law carried the penalty of labour, which was to be imposed on stubborn married couples who refused to live together. The twelfth allowed for a dissolution of marriage but not for remarriage of the guilty party. In the case of a husband who refused to feed his wife the judges under law thirteen could require hard labour, this was also the penalty under law seven for failure to observe the Sabbath. Law fourteen contained a description of the state of marriage, the giving of bans and the marriage ceremony. The attempt here at detailed coverage of possible cases suggests, that in this case the drafters were well aware of the difficulties involved in convincing Tahitians to live in lifelong monogamous relationships.

Finally, laws fifteen to nineteen set out the planned legal system and principles for its operation. The first subject was truthfulness in giving evidence, again with the penalty of hard labour. The sixteenth law named the *iatoai* (judges) of each of the districts of Tahiti and Mo'orea. The *iatoai* were heads of households or extended families and it seems unlikely that the hundreds named in the code could

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[16] See Crook's views below.
[17] Ellis, *Polynesian Researches,* 2: 383-7. Crook Journal June-December 1821, SSJ 4.

have served as judge.[18] The writing of their names in the code, however, cemented the relationships in Pomare's Christian Kingdom and was symbolically very significant. The examination and treatment of the accused was stipulated in the seventeenth law. The eighteenth established the locations of court houses and the nineteenth required that a copy of the laws be displayed at each of them.

The 1819 Tahitian code was a thoroughly Christian document. It contained strictures on the observation of the Sabbath and a detailed exposition of Christian marriage. It also, from the preamble onwards, established Pomare II as a Christian monarch who held his sovereignty under God. The code was not entirely satisfactory to the mission. Ellis noted the failure to limit the powers of chiefs but felt that, having expressed their views, the missionaries could have done nothing further at that time.[19] Pomare's interests, therefore, limited the extent to which Nott and his colleagues could introduce European norms to Tahiti. Tahitian content is present in the code in more than the measures for restraining marauding pigs. The eight law, composed by Pomare, was a genuinely Tahitian contribution though it asserted a position which was not part of the traditional structure of society. Laws fifteen to nineteen attempt to cement Pomare's sovereignty by assigning roles to individuals in the new legal system and thus incorporating them into the new hierarchy.[20]

The Tyerman and Bennet Deputation

The South Sea Mission had been isolated from the Directors in London for the majority of its twenty five year history. Communication had either been by slow letters to London or by letters and occasional personal contact with Marsden in New South Wales.[21] Those who had been able to return to London and meet with the Directors had occasionally been able to carry a point. However, for the majority of the missionaries in Tahiti and the Society Islands, the arrival of the Deputation was an opportunity to influence matters of policy which had previously been outside their control. It was also a trial of their progress and abilities, the Deputation was to:

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[18] Newbury, *Tahiti Nui,* 51.
[19] Ellis, *Polynesian Researches,* 2: 383.
[20] See chapter 2.
[21] Robert Haldane suggested that a director be sent out as a minister as early as 1799. Haldane to Hardcastle 29th August 1799. Home Letters 1. The South African Mission did have a resident director 1819-1851, John Philip.

..ascertain the nature of extent of the change, and adopt such practicable measures as might tend to impart stability, improvement and permanence to the new order of things which has been so happily introduced.[22]

Schemes which found acceptance with Tyerman and Bennet were to remain for a generation. The Deputation provided detailed information about the methods of LMS missionaries to the Directors and the general public. They expressed their opinions in private reports to the Board and an account of their experiences was published in 1831.[23]

The Board of the LMS, it seems, still had doubts about the capacity of the missionaries and their ability to direct the South Sea Mission unaided. Their concerns are revealed by the Annual Report in 1819 which noted "peculiar difficulties" in administering baptism and forming churches.[24] The division of the missionaries among the new stations and the need for the new brethren to learn the language were also mentioned. Another issue was the importance which the report's authors attached to introducing useful arts to the islands. A system of regular industry would be essential to the preservation of the peoples religious and moral habits.[25]

The mission had been successful in overthrowing the former religion of the Tahitians, however, the people could not be classed as converts in the sense understood in standard evangelical literature. This dilemma is illustrated by the section of the report which listed ten changes in the islands following the acceptance of Christianity. The claims made in the annual report were restrained, for example, idolatry had been "subverted" and there was no mention of conversion, only:

> The *professed* reception of the Christian religion by the inhabitants of the islands generally, and the apparently *cordial* reception thereof by considerable numbers among them.[26]

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[22] QC. 2: 224.

[23] Daniel Tyerman and George Bennet, *Voyages and Travels Round the World*, ed. James Montgomery, 2nd ed. (London: John Snow, 1840). Hiney has recently written a review of their adventures for a popular audience see Tom Hiney, *On the Missionary Trail: The Classic Georgian Adventure of Two Englishmen Sent on a Journey Around the World, 1821-29* (London: Chatto & Windus, 2000).

[24] Ibid. 10.

[25] Ibid. 12.

[26] Italics as in original. Annual Report 1819, 16.

However, there had been a "universal reformation in their moral sentiments".[27] Some of the items on the list matched Pomare II's own description of The transformation of society, such as, the end of human sacrifice and infanticide. However, the changes which the Board most expected from a truly converted people had not yet appeared. They looked forward to the formation of churches and the administration of Christian ordinances, in particular, baptism. The introduction of Christian marriage and the employment of Tahitians as teachers of gospel were hoped for. The arts and comforts of civilised life were also looked to and the establishment of " a regular system of productive industry".[28] It is important to note here the relationship between spiritual, moral and material improvements.

The solution suggested by the report was that a representative be sent out by the LMS to reside in Tahiti and be a superintendent of the mission.[29] This proposal was later altered resulting in the dispatch of the Tyerman and Bennet Deputation. Daniel Tyerman and George Bennet arrived in the islands in September 1821.

Laws Beyond Tahiti and the Revision of the Tahitian Code

The first islands to which the practice of Christian law making spread were those in the remainder of the Society group. The reasons for the adoption of the laws in the Leeward Islands were, in part, different from those in the Windward group; missionaries and *ari'i* had their own perspectives. The laws at Huahine and the revised Tahitian laws were made during the stay of the Tyerman and Bennet Deputation and received their scrutiny and approval.

The Leeward Islands had their own high ranking *ari'i* or chiefs. None had aspired to the same degree of centralised power as Pomare. The need for law codes as a legitimising tool was less urgent to their indigenous leaders. Nevertheless, the Tahitian example was attractive not only to leaders who might aspire to royal status but also to the other inhabitants of the Leeward Islands. Spiritual and material considerations, as noted above, were closely linked in the Polynesian world view. The presence of missionaries and conversion of Tahiti appeared to have material advantages. Papeete, for example, was the principal port used by European vessels.

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[27] Ibid.
[28] Ibid.
[29] It was also proposed in this report that a second member of the LMS visit Tahiti but then take up the role of the Society's agent in New South Wales. ibid. 14.

Tahitians had set an example of how an island should go about rejecting the old religion and embracing the new.

The Leeward Islands became the centre of activity for the new group of missionaries who arrived in 1817. Orsmond, Williams, Barff, Bourne, Ellis and Threlkeld all took up stations there, anxious to prove themselves in new mission fields. The formation of Auxiliary Missionary Societies and the composition of law codes became an established pattern where entire islands professed Christianity as their new faith. The European style law codes produced in the Leeward Islands drew heavily in content upon the Tahitian one but were altered to reflect changing circumstances on each island and the views of the missionaries involved.

In 1820, a code was prepared for Raiatea, Tahaa, Borabora and Maupiti. Raiatea where Williams and Threlkeld were stationed became the centre of activity for the group. As in Tahiti, the foundation of an Auxiliary Mission Society preceded a law code. The appointment of Directors or governors for these bodies served a similar function, in defining alliances and hierarchy, as the writing of the names of judges in a law code. The mission society also provided an experience in Western style meetings. The annual gatherings, held to coincide with the LMS Annual General Meeting in May, became highlights in the church year. The May meetings appear to have functioned as more than just a religious society, in the sense understood in Britain. The majority of the law codes, for example, were put into effect at the time of May meetings. The large numbers attending the events provided a forum for discussion and for challenging the power of chiefs.[30] There was no restriction on membership of the Missionary Auxiliary, unlike the stages involved in church membership.

From the missionary perspective, this formal organisation and contribution of gifts seems to have had an important place in their thinking about the maturing churches. Giving as a sign of gratitude was important. From a Polynesian, perspective, however, the contributions probably had associations with the obligations of their previous system. The collection of these voluntary offerings was thus more complex than it first appeared and the contributions were soon a cause of

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[30] See below.

contention. They became confused with Pomare's collection of produce for trade with New South Wales.

The code was promulgated in the names of the chiefs of the various islands and was headed *"Tamatoa, with the chiefs of Raiatea, Borabora and Maupiti. By the gift of God adopted 12th May 1820. We are rulers of those islands and to our people who acknowledge our authority we wish the blessing of God."* [31] None of these chiefs was making a claim to supremacy as audacious as Pomare's, yet all were stepping beyond the traditional power relationships of the Society Islands. The laws were drafted at Raiatea and later approved at each of the other locations. It seems, for example, that the laws had already been agreed at Borabora but were formally adopted at a meeting of chiefs and people on 1st January 1821. On this occasion Orsmond disassociated himself from the code noting that it had been drafted by Threlkeld and Williams during his absence in New South Wales. [32] The code had twenty-five articles and shared the first fifteen with the Tahitian laws. Trial by jury was introduced and a more explicit statement of the penalties to be applied by judges.

The independence of the Leeward Island stations resulted both from a desire of the new brethren to prove themselves in new fields and also from their distrust of Pomare II. It seems likely that Pomare hoped to extend his sphere of influence as Christianity spread. [33] In 1821 he attempted to impose prohibitions on the sale of goods at Raiatea so that produce could be transported in his ship to New South Wales. Missionaries in Tahiti and Mo'orea, where Pomare was able to impose a ban, were incensed at the interruption in their supplies but were forced to suffer the shortages. At Raiatea, however, the request was rejected by the chiefs. Williams purchased a ship on behalf of the Leeward Islanders at Sydney so that they could trade on their own account. This competition between the people and missionaries of the stations shocked Hayward:

> ..the cause of which taking place they [the Leeward Island chiefs] charge on the missionaries below. The alienation of the minds of some of the missionaries here, as well as below, from Pomary [sic], has been very

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[31] *Laws of Raiatea, Tahaa, Borabora and Maurua* (Huahine: Mission Press, 1821) Enclosure with translation of preamble in Barff to Admiral Sir George Seymour 18th November 1845. PRO ADM 1/5561.
[32] Orsmond Journal. November 1820-February 1821, SSJ 4.
[33] Neil Gunson , "Pomare II of Tahiti and Polynesian Imperialism," JPH 4 (1969): 65-82.

apparent and indeed from one of the older missionaries here, for adhering to him as friend and protector of the mission.[34]

These comments by Hayward on the relationship of the mission to Pomare underline the difference between the older brethren and those in the new stations. Tyerman and Bennet, however, approved of Williams' procurement of the schooner, despite noting that his opposition to Pomare II was a political act.[35]

Huahine did not acquire a code of laws until 1823. The missionaries stationed there were Charles Barff and William Ellis. A full translation of the code appeared in *Polynesian Researches* together with extensive notes on the reasons, as Ellis perceived them, for their adoption. The code was entitled, *The Laws of Huahine Promulgated in the reign of Teriituria the Queen, when Hautia and Mahine were her regents*. A biblical quotation appeared on the title page, "Think not that I came to destroy the law and the prophets. I came not to destroy but fulfil".[36] Again, the laws were promulgated in the name of the highest ranking chief, Teriituria. She, however, was absent from Huahine and it was the chiefs Hautia and Mahine who seem to have been responsible for the decision to follow the example of the other islands.

Huahine, like Raiatea, had been called upon to support of Pomare's trading ventures. His request for a restriction on barter so that all goods could be kept for the ship was sent out early in 1821. The Raiateans refused outright to accede to the demand whereas Huahine was more cautious because Teriitaria was the sister of the Tahitian queen and was resident at Tahiti. Shortly, thereafter, Ellis and several chiefs travelled to Tahiti to visit Teriitaria, who expressed an interest in returning to Huahine. The group also visited Nott, then stationed at Matavai, where a week was spent revising the laws intended for Huahine. Though Pomare consented to the departure of Teriitaria no progress was made on the laws. In March 1823, Barff and another group of chiefs consulted Teriitaria at Tahiti.[37] The laws were approved at the May Meeting of Huahine Auxiliary that year, in the presence of the Deputation.

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[34] At this period Hayward no longer considered himself "in immediate connection with the mission." Hayward to Hodson 16th August 1822, SSL 3.
[35] Tyerman and Bennet Report 11th February 1824, Home Odds 10.
[36] ADM 1/15561 PRO.
[37] Barff to Burder 20th March 1823, SSL 4.

Ellis reported that Teriitaria had been nervous of the limitations which the code placed on her powers but was eventually convinced by the advantages of the measures for raising taxation. Article twenty-six of the Huahine code stipulated that every individual contribute towards the revenue of the King and also governors[38]. The law included a brief explication of the obligation of the people to support their government and to "render unto Caesar". There was also a statement of the levy to be made upon individuals of different status and the amounts to be given by districts as a whole.

This new law severely limited the powers of the highest ranking chiefs. Ellis wrote:

> The government having been hitherto an arbitrary monarchy, the king and chiefs had been accustomed, not only to receive a regular supply of all the articles produced in the islands, but to send their servants to take whatever they required, however abundant the supply furnished might have been. This practice destroyed all security of individual property, and so long as it continued was one of the great barriers to the improvement and civilisation of the people.[39]

Newbury has characterised the law as an attempt to "codify and rationalise the ceremonial exchange of surplus."[40] One of the obstacles to promoting enterprise and industry, as Ellis observed, were the social obligations which determined that wealth obtained by individuals did not remain personal property. All wealth was subject to the complex obligations of tribute and reciprocal giving. The work ethic, which many of the missionaries would have liked to instil in their converts, relied on the worker receiving the rewards of their own labour. The law concerning revenue was important, therefore, both for its restrictions upon the power of chiefs and for the change in social relations and property rights which it envisaged.

The penalties under the Huahine code were similar to those at Tahiti with one important exception; the death penalty was not included. The most severe punishment available was exile to an uninhabited island for life. Ellis had strong views on the subject and believed that execution was not a suitable punishment to be exercised by a people only recently emerged from "barbarism". He also favoured the

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[38] Governors – chiefs ruling over a district of the island.
[39] Ellis, *Polynesian Researches*, 2: 450.
[40] Newbury, in *History of the Tahitian Mission*, 369.

use of a punishment which allowed the criminal an opportunity for repentance.[41] Many of the punishments inflicted by the code allowed ample scope for penitence. Men were set to hard labour on roads and quays and women to make cloth or mats; except where restitution was to be made for damage or theft.

The Huahine code of 1823 introduced specific prohibitions of "the unnatural crime", seduction, rape, fornication, drunken disorder and voyaging in unruly companies. Tattooing was listed separately, not as a part of the law of sedition. In 1826, the terms of the eighth law were modified to consolidate the long list of offences in Pomare II's code to a simple statement about rebellion. Ellis, in his notes on the Huahine code, was apologetic at the severity of the penalty for Sabbath breaking. He suggested that it reflected a national tendency to take such measures seriously and noted that labour upon the road was not too arduous.[42]

The Huahine code introduced three conceptual changes not attempted by the Tahitian one. Banishment had replaced the more familiar practice of taking of a life for a life and a European definition of rebellion had been introduced. Finally, the measure concerning royal revenue implied an alteration in the concept of ownership and in the social relationships which governed the redistribution of wealth.

The Revision of the Tahitian Laws

The laws of Tahiti were revised and enlarged in 1824 and appeared as *The Laws of Tahiti, Mo'orea ...given out by Pomare II in 1819 and revised and again given out by Pomare III in 1824.*[43] The new code contained forty-six laws. The death of Pomare II in December was one circumstance which may have prompted the creation of this new code. After his death it was important that both the missionaries and high ranking chiefs could come to an agreement about the balance of power and affirm their positions.

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[41] Ellis, *Polynesian Researches*, 2: 444.
[42] Ibid. 445.
[43] *E Ture Na Tahiti, E Mo'orea...* (Tahiti: Windward Mission Press, Burder's Point, 1825) see Kroepelien and Harding George L. *The Tahitian Imprints of the London Missionary Society 1810-1834* (Oslo: La Coquille qui chante, 1950), 62.

The law codes of the Leeward Islands provided examples which could be drawn upon in revising the Tahitian one. The new laws of Huahine contained several advantages from a missionary perspective in terms of the offences covered. The restriction of traditional rights of chiefs would have been appreciated by missionaries and perhaps by ordinary Tahitians, though they might have feared material loss through an end to the system that redistributed goods acquired by chiefs. Following the death of Pomare the greatest opponent of the curtailment of royal power was removed. The high ranking *ari'i* of Tahiti, such as Tati and Utami, benefited from the reduction in centralised power combined with guaranteed income for governors.

Crook's journals reveal his interest in the subject of public order. He himself favoured a reform of the laws and participated in several events which proceeded the redrafting of the code. Crook accused the King of prejudging cases before they were heard by the judges. He also accused the judges of making rash decisions and banishing people out of vengeance. Crook believed that Tahitians were afraid to complain in case they were judged:

> Thus both the hands & tongue of the natives are tied, and the people love to have it so, and we must quietly wait for the end thereof. In such a degenerated state, not a step can be taken towards civilization.[44]

Two months after writing these words, however, at the May meeting of 1821 the chiefs did challenge Pomare by proposing the investiture of his son.[45] This was also the period in which Huahine began to edge away from Pomare's control.

In January 1823, Tyerman, a member of the Deputation sent from London, raised what he described as, "civil and religious concerns" with Crook. Crook took these before a meeting of communicants at Papeete. The concerns of the Deputation were diverse but reflected their preoccupation with the material state of the mission stations. The subjects raised were the consumption of spirits, houses for the missionaries, servants, the building of a town, regular subscription to support the mission, support of the school, building a place of worship. Crook addressed the

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[44] Crook Journal June 1820-June 1821, SSJ 4.
[45] This was an attempt to revert to the Tahitian custom by which a son inherited the rank of his father at birth, see chapter 1.

issue of public order again at the end January when he held a meeting with chiefs about the behaviour of the royal family and the soldiers.

In February Barff arrived at Papeete with "the principal people of Huahine" to put the final version of the new Huahine code before Territaria. Crook copied this version of the Huahine code for his own people in the hope that it could end the "arbitrary abuses".[46] This copy was taken to a meeting held by the Deputation at Matavai in March 1823. In October, the Deputation reported to the LMS directors that the laws were undergoing a revision prior to the coronation of the new king.

No immediate result followed these efforts and Crook struggled with an outbreak of wild behaviour among the young people of his district who were tattooing themselves and organising dances in secret locations. Between January 1822 and June 1824 Crook recorded in his journal four instances of people being judged under the code.[47] The first generation to be denied the traditional rites and licence of youth had, not surprisingly, rebelled against the laws. Pomare, a strong if not tyrannical leader, had died and future political relationships were uncertain. Tyerman and Bennet suggested that the Tahitian laws had become a "dead letter".[48]

However, there had also been frequent complaints about the morals of the royal court during Pomare's life time. Disregard of the laws was not new. Behaviour was unruly in Tahiti at this period but it was not a breakdown in the order of the community. The death of Pomare may have led some to argue that the laws were no longer in force. The young people concerned, however, did not cut themselves off from the Christian community and its institutions entirely. Tyerman and Bennet told Marsden that there were a few profligate young men in each island but that even they attended the ordinances. The courts sat and judged them. Thus, while a section of the community had reacted against the Christian way of life and with it the restrictions of the code, the laws themselves still functioned. The complaints of Crook at Papeete are very similar to Orsmond's at Borabora and the Deputation's own conclusion

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[46] Crook Journal September 1822-May 1823, SSJ 4.
[47] SSJ 4.
[48] 12th November 1822, Home Odds 10.

about Raiatea and Huahine.[49] Tahiti and Mo'orea were consistently treated less favourably in the report of the Deputation. The claim that the laws in Tahiti were a dead letter, therefore, should be treated with caution.

The roots of the Deputation's attitude can be traced to their attitude to the older brethren and towards Pomare. The divisions between the generations in the mission was noted in their reports. Tyerman and Bennet admitted that progress had been achieved by the older generation but their assessment of the issue favoured the younger brethren with their "firm, noble, independent spirit".[50] The Windward mission stations were judged to have made less progress in material civilisation than those to the Leeward. The cause they identified was the:

> ...influence of the Tahitian government, which has never yet viewed our ideas of civilization in that important and interesting light with which the governments of the other islands have done. Neither are the chiefs of that government disposed to treat their missionaries with that respect and deference so observable in the Leeward Mission.[51]

One advantage which the Deputation saw in the Leeward island law codes was the way in which they protected the inhabitants from Pomare's influence.

The correspondence of the Deputation does not reveal any qualms on the part of the two men about the involvement of the mission in drafting law codes. They were present at the revision of the laws in Huahine, Tahiti and Borabora. [52]On the subject of the laws in the Leeward Islands they reassured the directors in London:

> ..they guarantee the people all their rights as in England while they give to their kings a dignity, and their power a stability, and their domestic establishments an affluence, which they never before enjoyed. In our last communication we informed you of the first Tahitian Parliament in which we assisted in revising their former laws- So soon as the new code is printed it will be forwarded to you; - we also mentioned that we had assisted in the coronation of <u>Pomare</u> the III.....[53]

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[49] See SSJ 5; Tyerman and Bennet to LMS (Huahine) 26th October 1822; (Raiatea) 12th November 1822, Home Odds 10.

[50] "...it is a principal which has given Popery its death warrant in Europe, which prevents England from returning to her allegiance to the man of sin, and which has supplied it with its bud in the South Sea Islands." Tyerman and Bennet to LMS 3rd October 1823, Home Odds 10.

[51] Tyerman and Bennet to LMS 11th February 1824, Home Odds 10.

[52] Tyerman and Bennet, *Voyages and Travels,* 153.

[53] Tyerman and Bennet to LMS 11th February 1824, Home Odds 10.

The same letter continued with an explanation that indigenous teachers placed at other islands would take these laws with them so that when Christianity was accepted, "all the Religious and Political Institutions they enjoyed in their own country, succeed as a matter of course." For the Deputation, then, the laws were a benefit of the Christian religion which would naturally follow in its wake. Indigenous teachers would be eager to share the blessings of the new religion as experienced at home.

In the narratives produced by the Deputation, however, the involvement of members of the mission in lawmaking appeared uncontentious and limited. *Voyages and Travels* described the Parliament of the Windward Islands at which the new laws were approved:

> Mr Nott, the senior missionary, was chosen president; his brethren and the Deputation were also present, but none of these foreigners took any part in the proceedings, beyond giving such information or opinion, on different points, as was from time to time required of them. The draught of the code had been previously prepared, in fit terms, by Mr Nott, at the express desire of the chiefs and people, the general enactments and having been frequently canvassed in previous meetings, and deliberately recognised by all parties.[54]

The narrative summarised the subjects included under the new code and also purported to record the contributions made during the debate on the replacement of the death penalty.[55] The speeches said to have been made by Hitoti, Utami, Tati, Pati and others are recorded in a condescending manner and may not reflect the actual words of the speakers.[56] However, they were intended to convince the British audience of the intelligence of the *ari'i* and their ability to managed their own affairs. They also published accounts of their visits to orderly "courts of justice" in Tahiti and Huahine and also noted their approval of a jetty and roads built by those compelled to hard labour.[57]

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[54] Tyerman and Bennet, *Voyages and Travels,* 168.
[55] Ibid. 168-170.
[56] On the role of the high ranking *ari'i* in this period see chapter 3.
[57] Tyerman and Bennet, *Voyages and Travels,* 48, 137.

The Deputation's concerns focused on the role of chiefs in the churches and not the role of missionaries in the state. Their attitude to missionary interventions were pragmatic. Signs of improvement were more important than worries over mission involvement in civil affairs. In their reports Tyerman and Bennet concluded that despite the diversity of background among members of the mission, the churches formed had been on the independent model and that any fears they had harboured about the churches of Tahiti were unfounded.[58] They praised Nott's usefulness as an adviser and assisted at the coronation of Pomare III.[59]

The Coronation of Pomare III

Pomare III was crowned on 21st April 1824 at the age of four. His father had undergone several ceremonial investitures but had never received a Christian coronation. The coronation was not held inside the Royal Chapel but about half a mile away where a series of special platforms were constructed. A procession was formed, led by two small girls strewing flowers and by the wives and children of the Missionaries. They were followed by Nott, Henry, Tyerman and Bennet and then the remaining missionaries. The next group was composed of the three highest ranking judges: Mahine carried a large Bible, Utami the code of laws and Tati carried the crown. Pomare III was borne in a chair carried by four youths. The judges, the district governors and magistrates concluded the procession.[60]

The ceremony opened with hymns, a prayer and an address made by Nott in which he described coronation as a public recognition by the people of their lawful sovereign as "the object of their choice."[61] Nott also outlined the obligations accepted by the King:

> The code of laws having been read and replaced on the table, Mr Bennet took the laws and put them into the hands of the king, and Mr Wilson addressed his majesty at the same time in the following language: "Do you promise to govern your people in justice and in mercy agreeably to the word of God, and these laws, and what other laws the national assembly may agree upon, being sanctioned by yourself. To which the king answered, "I do, God being my helper".[62]

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[58] Ibid.
[59] Tyerman and Bennet to LMS 12th November 1824, Home Odds 10 also published in QC 3: 145.
[60] *The order to be followed at the ceremony of the coronation of Pomare, King of Tahiti & Eimeo,* Home Odds 10.
[61] Tyerman and Bennet, *Voyages and Travels,* 172.
[62] Ibid.

Pomare was then anointed with oil by Henry and crowned by Nott who pronounced a benediction. Tyerman then presented the young King with a Bible emphasising his role as Christian monarch. The gathering then retired to the Royal Chapel for worship.

The procession was a visual reminder of the new order which Pomare II had imposed on Tahiti when he fused traditional rank with offices adopted from the accounts of his European guests. The symbolism of the ceremony was also a clear illustration of the new theory of divine right which legitimised his rule. The new European crown replaced the *maro'ura* of 'ancient' Tahiti. Nott thanked Mrs Haweis for:

> .. your son"s valuable and well chosen present, which, with the crown nothing could have been more adapted to please him.[63]

Though he died in 1820, the coronation of Pomare III can be seen as Haweis' last contribution to the mission, the crown used in the ceremony had been sent out by his son.[64] The participation of members of the mission in this event was entirely in line with policy of fostering good relations wih high ranking Tahitians which he had recommended. It is not surprising that it was Henry Nott who preformed the coronation. Nott had been a protégé of Haweis and had travelled to Tahiti under the original instructions of 1796. He had also experienced the changing fortunes of the mission as it found a place within Tahitian society.

As Gunson has noted, there is some correspondence in the LMS archive which indicates unease at the role of the missionaries in the Christian kingdom which Tyerman and Bennet presented to the public.[65] In one Nott is described as the "Archbishop of Tahiti" and the other suggests that the events in Tahiti were being used against dissenters.[66] The concerns of the first author were put to the LMS on 17th September 1827:

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[63] Nott to Mrs Haweis 7th November 1826, Nan Kivell Collection NK 2639, NLA.

[64] Similar ceremonies were carried out to install the king of Niué in 1876, see South Sea Odds 4.

[65] Gunson, *Messengers of Grace,* 286.

[66] J. Reed to Arundel 12th September 1827, Home Office Extra 2; G. T. Ryan to Ellis 12th June 1834, Home Office Extra 2.

> Resolved that the Home Secretary reply to the letter of Mr Reed & that he refer him to the Fundamental Principle of the Society which precludes the Directors from interfering in the business to which he adverts.[67]

The correspondence was prompted by concerns among its supporters about the reputation of the LMS as a dissenting missionary society. The letters are a sign of the changing nature of the LMS whose membership was increasingly dominated by Congregationalists. The Directors, however, chose to quote the original principle of the society which stipulated that it was for the new churches to choose their own form of government.

Advocates for Law Making

Tyerman and Bennet provided a validation of missionary participation in law making at an important moment in the history of the South Sea Mission. John Williams was just beginning his voyages to place indigenous teachers on other Polynesian Islands. In 1823 he made a voyage to the Hervey Islands and journeys followed to Rarotonga, Rurutu, Rimatara, Samoa, Niue, Keppel"s Island, Upolu and the New Hebrides. It was in the latter group that he was killed at Erromanga in 1839. Williams returned to Britain in 1834 and undertook a successful lecturing tour.

Williams was involved in the drafting of codes in Raiatea but he also advocated the policy to others. While in Britain in 1835 he wrote of a matter he had forgotten to mention when speaking to the brethren destined for Samoa:

> ..the introduction of laws this they will find a difficult subject there being no chief as a head of the whole what I wish you to say to them is not to be in haste about the introduction of laws let the chiefs and people be brought into perplexities they will then apply to the Missionaries for advice, let the missionaries keep in the background, & let the onus of law making be on the Chiefs.[68]

In 1837, Williams published *Narrative of Missionary Enterprises in the South Sea Islands* in which he justified his methods, including advocacy of written law codes. His example became all the more compelling to the public and future missionaries after his death.[69]

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[67] Board Minutes 20.
[68] Williams to Arundel 17th October 1835, Home Letters 6.
[69] Williams, *A Narrative of Missionary Enterprises*.

The return home of William Ellis, after a period of service in Hawaii assisting the ABCFM missionaries there, is also a significant landmark.[70] From the year 1826 the South Sea Mission had a representative in London who could claim to be an expert on the situation in Polynesia and had the respect of the Board of Directors. Ellis made tours through the country on behalf of the society from 1826 until 1831, when he took up the post of LMS Foreign Secretary. His influence was already felt in 1829 with the publication of *Polynesian Researches* and its elucidation of the methods applied at Tahiti and the Society Islands.[71] The contribution of Ellis and Williams to the representation of law making and the Tahitian monarchy will be discussed further in the next chapter.

Law codes were later introduced by LMS missionaries at Rarotonga in 1827 and at Tutila in Samoa in 1851. Missionaries from the ABCFM assisted in drafting laws for Hawaii in 1827 and the WMMS did the same in Tonga in 1839 and Fiji in 1862. There has not been space here to permit a detailed evaluation of the application of the Tahitian laws in the years 1820-1845. The aim has been to consider how the policy of assisting with law making emerged and became established in Tahiti and the Society Islands. In later years missionaries did influence some amendments to the laws notably Nott's attempt to ensure attendance at religious instruction and the measures against Catholics passed in 1838.[72] The next chapter will consider assessments of mission involvement which appeared in print.

Conclusion

There is no doubt that the Christian laws were resented by some Tahitians who rebelled against the codes. It should be remembered, however, that litigation and law breaking were actions which took place in the context of wider Tahitian society. As noted in chapter two, the land cases, disputes over Pomare IV's marriage and the behaviour of her entourage in the 1830s can be interpreted as the resurfacing of pre-existing enmities under the cover of the new laws. The attempts made by

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[70] Ellis visited Hawaii with Tyerman and Bennet in 1822 and worked there 1823-4.
[71] Ellis, *Polynesian Researches.* Ellis had previously published *Tour in Hawaii,* (London: Fisher & Co.,1826).
[72] Nott wrote that he believed the enthusiasm for attendance would be short lived. Nott to Marsden 13th November 1834, Marsden Papers vol. 5, ML.

missionaries, with varying success, to intervene in cases suggest that the process of law had been taken up enthusiastically by Tahitians themselves.[73]

The codes which appeared after 1819 attempted to reduce the power available to chiefs and brought them closer to the model of constitutional monarchy imported from Europe. This is visible in the changes to the law on sedition but most clearly in the attempts to generate royal revenue. The methodology of the members of the mission who branched away from the stations of Tahiti and Mo'orea was not fundamentally different. They too relied upon relationships with indigenous leaders. The introduction of law codes was always carried out in the name of high ranking *ari'i* who took upon himself or herself the role of monarch. Thus, despite the changes in content, law codes remained attractive to both missionaries and chiefs.

The policy of the missionaries at Tahiti was accepted by the Deputation and by the Directors, who upheld the right of the new churches to choose their own form of church government. Their involvement in law making had emerged as a result of the missionaries' relationship with Pomare II and also the emphasis placed on respect for established authority by the LMS Directors themselves. The LMS deliberately fostered good relations with the British Government and the Crown. Haweis, for example, had arranged for the dedication of Wilson's *Missionary Voyage* to the King and had also been severely disappointed when the LMS delegation was not received at court. It is not surprising that it was he who provided the Tahitian crown.

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[73] Williams at Raiatea was proud of his ability to stem the torrents in public affairs but Crook's position in Tahiti was less secure. Williams to Daniel Tyerman c. May 1827, South Sea Personal 2; Journal Crook 9th Jan-14th December 1826, SSJ 5.

CHAPTER 9. REPRESENTATIONS OF THE LAWS AND THE TAHITIAN KINGDOM

This chapter will trace the ways in which the law codes produced with the aid of the South Sea Mission were interpreted in published material. It also considers other aspects of the representation of the Tahitian Kingdom and, in particular, the campaign which followed the annexation of Tahiti by the French. This subject is an appropriate one with which to conclude the thesis. The topic allows the focus to shift from the perspectives of the missionaries in the South Seas to the reception of their work at home. This review of the accounts of the Tahitian Mission cannot be exhaustive but it does reveal the changes in outlook which separate the earliest accounts of the mission from those which were made at the time of the first centenary of the LMS in 1895.

The subject-matter has been divided into four sections. First, the early accounts of the law making process found in LMS periodicals and reports which were produced soon after the news of law codes and baptism of Pomare II reached Britain are considered. Second, the personal narratives written by members of the mission who had returned to Britain are analysed, in particular the work Ellis and Williams. Third, some criticisms of the mission, especially those of Otto von Kotzebue, are noted together with the LMS response. Finally, the material connected with annexation of Tahiti by France has been examined.

LMS Periodicals and Reports

The problems of the mission between the years 1800 and 1814 provided few opportunities for positive publicity. News of events in the various fields occupied by the LMS and short extracts from letters of missionaries appeared as they became available, in the Missionary Chronicle section of *Evangelical Magazine*. Longer excerpts from letters and mission journals were reproduced in *Transactions of the Missionary Society* and later in the *Quarterly Chronicle*.[1] Both publications were composed primarily of accounts written by the missionaries themselves which were edited in London and occasionally annotated. The descriptions of hardship and

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[1] *Transactions of the Missionary Society* was published until 1817. The full title of the *Quarterly Chronicle* was *Quarterly Chronicle of the Transactions of the London Missionary Society* first published in 1815.

caution in reporting success made them much less romantic than Haweis' picture of the mission prospects.

Good relations with the ruling powers had practical benefits for the mission and could increase the standing of the mission in the eyes of the British public. The LMS at home was keen to attract royal patronage where it could, for example, through the dedication of books such as Wilson's *Missionary Voyage*. Henry Nott presented a copy of the Tahitian Bible to Queen Victoria. A similar mindset can be noted in the representations of the relations between the mission and the Pomare dynasty.

The LMS and Governors of the colony at New South Wales had both taken pains to establish cordial and respectful relationships with the Pomares. Published accounts of the Tahitian mission contained references to members of the Pomare dynasty including notice of gifts, appeals for redress on behalf of the mission, and appeals for intervention to prevent infanticide.[2] Published excerpts of the mission journals were sometimes critical of the Pomares but also affirmed the benefits of the their rule. After the death of Pomare I in 1803 the missionaries commented:

> As a governor, if we may judge by the complaints everywhere made, he was oppressive: but it is probable, that, with the Otaheiteans' present sentiments of right and wrong, those who have complained loudest of him, in his situation, would not have been less oppressive. He was a peaceable man; and it is generally agreed, that the island has enjoyed a far greater degree of tranquillity, during his reign than it had even while every district was an independent state.[3]

The progress of Pomare II in learning to write in Tahitian was also reported.[4] Eventually it was possible for him to correspond with the directors.

In July, 1807 Pomare II replied to a letter from the LMS directors. The content of the letter offered some encouragement about the work of the mission at a time when there was little good news to report from Tahiti. However, the request for well armed settlers made Pomare's positive remarks about Christianity appear

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[2] TMS 1: 126; TMS 2: 131; TMS 3: 279.
[3] "Journals of the Missionaries at Otaheite, 11th April 1803-11th December 1804." TMS 2: 295-296.
[4] TMS vol.3 169 The first letter to be printed by the LMS was one from Pomare I to Governor King at New South Wales dated January 1801,TMS 1: 213-4.

dubious.[5] The editor's introduction emphasised the good relations which the mission had established with Tahitian royalty:

> Pomare, the King of Otaheite, who has long been in the habit of visiting, and familiarly conversing with, the British Missionaries at Matavai, in that island, ... The following answer, in the Taheitean [sic] language, was composed entirely by himself; it was then translated by the missionaries into English, which translation was copied by the King. The Fac Simile annexed is an exact copy of his English letter, and may be considered as a literary curiosity.[6]

The letter was indeed a curiosity for LMS supporters, allowing readers the opportunity to view the handwriting of the King of Tahiti. After the near abandonment of the mission 1809 an appeal from Pomare II for the return of the missionaries written to Henry was also published.[7] The appetite for letters from Pomare increased during the period after his request for baptism was announced. Between 1812 and 1817 eight letters from Pomare were published by the LMS.

The news allowed the mission at Tahiti to regain its standing with the Board in London and with the public. The South Sea Mission, as the first mission attempted by the LMS had, until 1810, always appeared first in the Annual Report. The departure of the group in 1809, however, caused a loss of confidence in the missionaries as individuals and in the prospects of any further expenditure on the Pacific. In 1814, however, Tahiti was restored to the place of honour at the front of the volume;

> The Directors commence their report with a pleasure they never before enjoyed – the pleasure of stating that after the patient labours of fifteen years, enlivened by only some faint rays of hope.... Your faithful missionaries at Otaheite feel themselves rewarded for their toil by the conversion of King Pomare to the faith of the gospel.[8]

The news of success prompted a reinterpretation of the setbacks that had plagued the mission since its foundation. The mission became an example of fortitude and perseverance in the face of adversity.

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[5] TMS 3: 175 (plate).
[6] TMS 3: 175.
[7] Translation of a letter from Poamre, king of Otaheite to Mr Henry Entreating his return, Eimeo 8th November, 1811. TMS 3: 447-448.
[8] *Annual Report* 1814, 494.

The information that the mission was considering advising on laws was not hidden from the public. Indeed, an extract of the letter from Mo'orea in July 1817, discussed in chapter seven, was published in the *Quarterly Chronicle*.[9] It revealed that the missionaries at Tahiti were aware that a boundary had to be maintained between church and state and that they had appealed to the LMS for advice on the subject. The letter was published without comment. The inclusion of these details is not necessarily evidence of LMS approval. While letters and journals were often edited for publication, the editors of missionary periodicals did not exclude material which was damaging to the mission. The moral lapses of Lewis and Broomhall, for example, were both recorded in print.[10]

In the Annual Report for 1819 the missionaries' request for advice was recorded and the missionaries' own rationale for assisting with the laws was reported.[11] It repeated their assessment of the degree to which civil law as well as custom and habit were influenced by the previous religion and noted that it was the chiefs and "the King himself" who sought their advice on how to replace the old laws. The mission was described as having declined "direct interposition" in civil affairs but agreeing to give advice.[12] The mention of "the King", is significant, as it conveys the idea that the missionaries were not disturbing the *status quo* in Tahiti. Moreover the advice which the missionaries were to give would be based on their knowledge of the Scriptures and the laws of civilised nations.[13]

In 1820, an account of the introduction of the Tahitian laws appeared in the *Quarterly Chronicle* under the title "Copy of Circular printed at the Mission Press in Eimeo, containing an Account of the opening of the Royal Mission Chapel in Otaheite; the first Anniversary Meeting of the Taheitean Missionary Society; the Promulgation and Acceptance of the Laws; Baptism of Pomare, &c."[14] The acceptance of the laws, therefore, was only one of the significant events which had occurred in May 1819. The Tahitian May Meeting, as recorded in the circular,

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[9] QC 1: 225-228.
[10] An account of Lewis" excommunication for living with a Tahitian woman after the mission at Tahiti refused to marry them appeared in *Evangelical Magazine* 1802, 333. The account of Broomhall's loss of faith occupied the published version of the mission journal for almost sixty pages in *Transactions of the Missionary Society* 1: 177-235.
[11] LMS Annual Report 1819, 3-16.
[12] Ibid. 9.
[13] Ibid. 10.
[14] QC 1: 491-496.

revolved around the figure of Pomare II, King of Tahiti. It was Pomare who had erected the chapel and he who processed in with the missionaries for the opening service. He also chaired the meeting of the missionary society and was the first to receive baptism.

The presentation of events reflects the LMS habit, already noted, of representing Pomare as monarch in the European sense. Pomare and his Queen were presented as dignified in dress and behaviour. The chapel was described in majestic terms and the hanging fringes of the roofing mats compared to the banners of St Paul's Cathedral.[15] John Gyles, the agriculturist sent by the LMS to introduce sugar production to the islands, did not agree.[16] His annotations on a copy of the printed circular deliberately counteracted the more impressive elements in the descriptions. He substituted "post" for "pillars"; "dry" for "clean" grass on the floors; and hinted at immoderate feasting after the baptism of Pomare.[17] The version of the circular published in the *Quarterly Chronicle*, however, retained the original descriptions. There were editorial alterations such as a reduction in the estimated numbers at each event. The comment in the original circular that the Queen and her attendants looked better in "native clothing" than they would have done dressed in European fashion was omitted.[18] The editor of the piece also attempted to increase the dignity of the occasion, for example, the "members" of the Tahitian Missionary Society became "Governors".

The members of the mission who wrote the circular viewed the adoption of the law code with pride. The account of Pomare reading the articles of the code to the congregation for their approval concluded with the comment:

> To see a king giving laws to his people, with an express regard to the authority of the word of God, and a people receiving the same with such universal satisfaction, was a subject very affecting to us all.[19]

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[15] Ibid. 491.

[16] Gyles who had experience of sugar production in the West Indies arrived with his family in August 1818. He failed to establish a sugar plantation at Mo'orea and left in September 1819. Gyles Journal Aug 1818- Sept 1819, SSJ 4.

[17] South Sea Odds 6 & QC 1: 491-496.

[18] Ibid.

[19] QC 1: 494.

The circular made no comment on the composition of the code, its content, or the role of Nott, Davies and the other members of the mission. A footnote was added to the text which stated that the king undertook to write out a fair copy of the laws for the press, a detail which emphasised Pomare's role as lawgiver. The original version of the circular, though not the one published in Britain, noted that those who did not receive a copy of the code were disappointed.[20]

The account of the events presented to the public in Britain, at this point, consisted of edited versions of the Tahitian Mission's account. The published version expressed approbation at the introduction of the code. The missionary contribution was neither hidden nor emphasised. The role of Pomare as originator of the laws was emphasised. The public had already been given a thorough introduction to the idea of Pomare as monarch of Tahiti through the comments of the missionaries and the publication of his own letters. At this stage in the presentation of the laws to the public the involvement of the mission in the preparation of the laws was accepted but there was no attempt to use the codes as an example of the positive work of the mission. This argument developed later in the personal narratives of missionaries who had returned from the South Seas and in the evidence given to the Committee on Aborigines.

William Ellis, John Williams and the Committee on Aborigines

The personal narratives written by members of the mission were very different from the material discussed in the previous section. The publication of the experiences of the Tyerman and Bennet Deputation began a new era in the representation of the South Sea Mission to the public. The rationale of the Deputation had been to produce accurate information about the real state of each station they visited upon which the LMS could make decisions about the future. Ellis and Williams, the first members of the South Sea Mission to publish their own experiences were able to ground their accounts in the faith the public and directors had in the assessments of the Deputation, which had already appeared in their reports.[21]

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[20] South Sea Odds 6 & QC 1: 491-496.
[21] With the exception of William Gregory who published *Journal of Captured Missionary* (London, 1800) following his experience on the second voyage of the *Duff*. He did not reach Tahiti.

Daniel Tyerman died at Madagascar in June 1828 but Bennet returned to England in June 1829. James Montgomery compiled *Journal of Voyages and Travels by the Rev. Daniel Tyerman and George Bennet, Esq.* with the aid of the journal kept by the two men and additional material provided by Bennet which was published in 1831.[22] The first work to be published by William Ellis after his return to Britain in August 1825 was *Tour in Hawaii.* This was followed by *Polynesian Researches* in 1829.[23] John Williams' *A Narrative of Missionary Enterprises in the South Sea Islands* appeared in 1837. [24]

Williams and Ellis had benefited from more training than was received by the missionaries who had arrived prior to 1817. The presence of both men in London gave them advantages over their colleagues writing from the mission stations. It allowed them to tailor their writing to the situation in Britain and to avail themselves of assistance in producing works of the required calibre. Ellis, in particular, developed a talent for collecting and presenting material to the public that had an appeal beyond the supporters of mission. In Ellis and Williams, the South Sea Mission had two very useful advocates. Both became prominent figures within the LMS.

Ellis acquired a reputation as lecturer touring for the society. He was Foreign Secretary of the LMS from 1832 to 1841. He came to have considerable influence over the policy of the LMS and of the view of its missions presented to the public. He wrote a defence of the South Sea Mission and also co-edited an abridgement of the evidence presented to the House of Commons Committee on Aborigines.[25] He also completed the first volume of a history of the LMS which was published in

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[22] Tyerman and Bennet, *Voyages and Travels.*
[23] Ellis, Polynesian Researches 2 vols
[24] Williams, *Narrative of Missionary Enterprises*
[25] William Ellis, *A Vindication of the South Seas Mission from the Misrepresentations of Otto von Kotzebue, captain in the Russian Navy* (London: Frederick Westley and A. H. Davis, 1831); D. Coates and William Ellis, *Christianity the Means of Civilization: shown in the evidence given before a Committee of the House of Commons on Aborigines..* (London: R. B Seeley and W. Burnside, L and G Seeley and T Mason, 1837).

1844.[26] Ellis retired from his position at the LMS due to ill health but eventually resumed work as a pastor and then began travelling again on behalf of the LMS.[27] He made three visits to Madagascar at the request of the directors; 1853-1855,1856-57 and 1861-1865 about which he wrote accounts.[28] He was, therefore, a key advocate and defender of the work of the LMS.

Williams had great success with his lecture tour during a visit to Britain 1834-1838. He left Britain with a new missionary ship the *Messenger of Peace* with which he intended to transport indigenous teachers to unevangelised islands. The imagination of LMS supporters was captured by Williams' drive to reach new islands encapsulated in his famous statement that he would not confine himself to a single reef. He loved the sea and through his accounts of voyaging and 'discovery' could lay claim to a modest place beside the great British explorers of the Pacific. Indeed, as Smith has noted, the images of his death at Erromanga in 1839 referred back to those of Cook at Hawaii in 1779.[29] Williams' death led to the publication of biographies which drew from his works and extended his influence over the public's view of the mission. Williams published less than Ellis but was influential as a role model.

Ellis and Williams used similar arguments to explain the missionary involvement in law making. Both men recognised that the law codes raised questions about the relationship of missionaries to civil authorities.[30] They justified missionary assistance with the codes through their interpretations of Tahitian society as it had been under the old religion and in its changed state. In this, they had an advantage over previous mission members; their book length narratives allowed them to attempt a more thorough presentation of Tahitian culture than could be done in letters to the Board. They described the previous customs of the people as intertwined with superstition and practices which were condemned by Christianity.[31]

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[26] William Ellis, *The History of the London Missionary Society* (London: John Snow, 1844).

[27] Ellis was pastor of Hoddesdon 1847-1852.

[28] William Ellis, *History of Madagascar.* 2 vols. (London: Fisher and Co., 1835); William Ellis, *Three visits of Madagascar* (London: Murray, 1858); William Ellis, *Madagascar revisited* (London: Murray, 1867); William Ellis, *The Martyr Church of Madagascar* (Snow and Co, 1870).

[29] Smith, *European Vision in the South Pacific,* 318.

[30] Ellis, *Polynesian Researches* 2: 380; Williams, *Narrative of Missionary Enterprises,* 129.

[31] Williams, *Narrative of Missionary Enterprises* 128; Ellis, *Polynesian Researches* 2: 377.

The gruesome details which could be presented by missionaries with first hand experience of life in the islands bolstered their argument for assisting in drafting new laws. Ellis noted that criminals were often selected to be victims for human sacrifice while Williams described organised vengeance, including a tale of a boy thrown into the harbour with a stone tied to his legs.[32] Ellis argued that the old laws had fallen into disuse because the *raatiras* were not inclined to impose them.[33]

It is interesting to note that while Ellis and Williams repeated the common charge from Europeans, that Tahitians were thieves, they did not describe Tahitians as lawless. They were arguing for a replacement or even reform of the Tahitians' law. They did not, for example, interfere with the principles of inheritance or with the powers of chiefs. Indeed, the requests for the mission's assistance, both authors emphasised, had come from the chiefs.[34] Furthermore, advice on living according to the new religion was considered a duty. As Williams explained:

> ..under existing circumstances it was as much a duty to direct them in the formation of a code of laws as it was to instruct them in the principles of Christianity itself; for in thus acting, we were simply advising them to apply those principles to social life, and to substitute them for the ferocity and revenge by which all classes were previously influenced.[35]

Teaching on the subject of Christian laws was only an extension of their ordinary work as missionaries.

Ellis and Williams developed their justification of the involvement of the mission with the law codes into a positive argument which depicted the laws as a benefit of conversion and proof of the way in which civilisation had followed Christianity in the Pacific. The wishes of the chiefs and people for written laws was another example of the improvements achieved since the acceptance of the Gospel. The request for new laws was, therefore, a measure of the success of the mission. Ellis and Williams provided frequent examples of the adoption of western "civilised" arts. Williams even produced a table of the plants, animals and "useful arts"

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[32] Williams, *Narrative of Missionary Enterprises,* 129.
[33] Ellis, *Polynesian Researches,* 2: 380.
[34] Ibid.; Williams, *Narrative of Missionary Enterprises,* 128.
[35] Williams, *Narrative of Missionary Enterprises,* 129.

introduced to the islands as proof of the ways in which Christian faith promoted civilisation and commerce.[36]

The extent to which the missionaries had succeeded in altering the behaviour of the Tahitians was a hotly contested topic. Accounts of voyages to the Pacific remained extremely popular and gave their authors and other commentators ample material over which to dispute. *Hints on Missions* by James Douglas (1822) described the achievements of the LMS in the South Seas as a "brilliant conquest for humanity" yet argued that the only method by which the islanders could attain civilisation was through colonisation by artisans who would be less indolent than the missionaries.[37] The early history of the Tahitian mission left it open to criticism that its members were poorly educated and lazy. Douglas accused them of having sunk to the level of their charges.[38]

The evidence of the same authors could even be taken up selectively by opposite sides. One example was Captain Beechey's *Narrative of a Voyage to the Pacific and Behring's Strait..* which was quoted by Ellis in support of his evidence to the Committee on Aborigines.[39] Yet, it was also the subject of a review which used Beechey's comments as the basis for an attack on the law codes themselves. The *Edinburgh Review* portrayed the laws as a diversion from the useful work which could be done by a missionary and ridiculed the possibility that they could be of any benefit to the Tahitians:

> The missi-nares, as the natives denominate them, seem much more disposed to enact the part of legislators, than instructors of the Otaheitians. They have been at infinite pains to get up a mock Parliament, and to perpetrate other analogous follies; but as yet they appear to have found no leisure for the more obscure and humble labours, which alone can prepare a people for receiving political institutions. We should have thought better of them had they striven

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[36] He included smithing, house building, shipbuilding, lime burning, turning, furniture making, tobacco manufacture, sugar production and printing. Ibid. 579.

[37] Douglas had not visited the mission. James Douglas, *Hints on Missions* (Edinburgh: William Blackwood 1822), 90.

[38] Ibid. 111.

[39] F. W. Beechey, *Narrative of a Voyage to the Pacific and Behring's Strait, to co-operate with the Polar Expeditions: performed by his Majesty's Ship Blossom, under the command of Captain F W Beechey,... in the years 1825, 26, 27, 28.* 2 vols. (London, 1831). Coates and Ellis, *Christianity the Means of Civilization,* 181-183.

to confer upon them some of the substantial benefits of civilisation, instead of wasting their time on fanatical experiments.[40]

Thus, any parliament established by Tahitians could only be a travesty. This attitude, which denied that the Tahitians could be ready for civilised political institutions contrasts with that of Ellis and Williams.

The House of Commons Committee on Aborigines 1835-7, chaired by Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton, took evidence from members of various missionary societies on the treatment of indigenous peoples in British colonies. The investigation of the committee was an opportunity to influence future government policy and also to put the success of the missions before the public.

Ellis told the committee that the principal protection of aboriginal people was justice. In his evidence he emphasised the need for permission to be sought before any land was settled and asserted the "inalienable right" of all "uncivilized tribes" to the land they inhabited.[41] He described the Tahitian code as "simple" and "explicit" and as having preserved peace and "cultivating the virtues of social life".[42] He recommended that properly concluded treaties always be used and added:

> I would further recommend, that the native authorities should be treated with respect, and that regard should be shown to their laws and usages, so far as can be done without compromise of character or virtue. It is customary to treat them with contempt, and to consider it beneath us to observe their usages and laws by which their society is regulated; needless offence is thus often given.[43]

Ellis recommended that naval commanders use efforts to introduce "wholesome regulations" and show respect for the work of missions.

Excerpts from John Williams' evidence were also included in *Christianity the Means of Civilization*. He argued, like Ellis, that Christianity must precede civilisation. Williams, however, focused not upon the responsibility of Europeans to

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[40] Anon, *A review of "Narrative of a Voyage to the Pacific and Behring's Strait, to co-operate with the Polar Expeditions: performed by his Majesty's Ship Blossom, under the command of Captain F W Beechey,... in the years 1825, 26, 27, 28."*, Edinburgh Review CV, March - June, (1831), 318.
[41] Coates and Ellis, *Christianity the Means of Civilization*, 76.
[42] Ibid. 183.
[43] Ibid. 76.

support and obey indigenous authority, but on the role of Europeans in maintaining order and protecting islanders from the depredations of unscrupulous Europeans. He gave evidence about a plan by Sir Thomas Brisbane to invest Williams with the powers of a magistrate.[44] When questioned about the independence of chiefs he noted that Britain had no sovereignty over them but explained that the presence of a magistrate would be welcomed by chiefs as it would prevent the inconvenience caused by run away sailors and other Europeans.[45] Williams' comments favoured intervention to protect indigenous people and to preserve order in the islands. He did not advocate colonisation but he did advocate the presence of British officials with the power to restrain British subjects.

There is some evidence in the work of Ellis and Williams to suggest that Williams had less confidence in indigenous rulers than Ellis. Ellis had a favourable attitude to Pomare II, though he was critical of Pomare's personal failings, and gave him full credit for his role in evangelising the islands.[46] Ellis also fostered the image of the Christian monarchy of the Pomares through the regal and graceful portrait of Pomare II which appeared as a frontispiece in *Polynesian Researches*. In terms of his training and date of arrival Ellis belonged to the group of the 'new missionaries' outlined in chapter seven. However, his attitude was more akin to the deference of the 'old missionaries'.

In contrast, Williams was more critical of Pomare II and more inclined to emphasise his own role in island politics. Williams did, however, make appreciative comments about some of the chiefs he knew such as Tamatoa of Raiatea.[47] Williams, missionary method brought him into contact with figures who were very different from Pomare. He was never placed in the same position of dependence on an indigenous leader as the early mission at Tahiti had been. Williams conducted his negotiations in unevangelised islands from the safety of his ship and acquired for himself the *mana* often attributed to captains by Polynesians.[48] One explanation for the success of his voyages, it has been suggested, was his personal charisma which allowed him to interact with chiefs as one 'big-man' to another.[49]

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[44] See chapter seven.
[45] Coates and Ellis, *Christianity the Means of civilization*, 282.
[46] See chapter 6.
[47] Williams, *Narrative of Missionary Enterprises*, 377.
[48] See chapter 1.
[49] Garrett, *To Live Among the Stars*, 30.

Williams' description in *Missionary Enterprises* of the introduction of the
laws at Rarotonga gives a suggestion that the indigenous authorities, if left to
themselves, were not capable of resolving their own problems:

> ..frequently, a word from the Missionary, rightly-timed, will do more towards
> settling a dispute, healing a breach, burying an animosity, or carrying a useful
> plan into execution, than a whole year's cavilling among the natives
> themselves would have effected.[50]

It appears, from his account, that the incident which prompted consideration of laws
at Rarotonga was an attempt on Williams' life which the chiefs sought to remedy
with a summary execution. Williams remonstrated, and at their request supplied the
chiefs with details of practice in Britain.[51] Some examples of the way in which
Williams intervened in the application of laws and punishments were noted in
chapter eight.

By 1843, when Ebenezer Prout wrote his *Memoirs of the Rev. John Williams,
Missionary to Polynesia* the introduction of western style laws by missionaries in
Polynesian islands had become common practice.[52] Ellis and Williams had already
explained their benefits to the public. Prout saw no need to defend the intervention of
the missionaries in civil affairs. Indeed, he saw no objection to missionaries taking a
greater role:

> ...nothing was done by the chiefs merely from deference to their desires, but
> even had it been otherwise, had the teacher employed their utmost personal
> influence to obtain regulations which they deemed essential to their main
> object, who would have condemned them?[53]

Prout stated that assistance in making laws was unavoidable as a result of "mental
and moral superiority".[54] Neither Williams nor Ellis would have agreed with this
assessment of the Polynesians. Both saw Polynesians as inferior to Europeans only as
long as they lacked the light of the Christian religion. Once they accepted

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[50] Wilson, *Narrative of Missionary Enterprises,* 141.
[51] Ibid. 129-131.
[52] Prout had not visited the mission.
[53] Ebenezer Prout, *Memoirs of the Life of the Rev John Williams, missionary to Polynesia* (London:
John Snow, 1843), 88.
[54] Prout, *Memoirs of John Williams,* 87.

Christianity, Polynesians had access to the same advantages as a European and could be intellectual equals.[55]

Negative views of the intellectual capacity of Polynesians resulted, in part, from changing European attitudes to people of other "races".[56] In addition, biographies often focused upon the actions of a hero whose actions were magnified at the expense of the other figures in the narrative. The heroes were often, though not exclusively, Europeans. There was, however, one biography of Williams which did not describe Polynesians as intellectually inferior to Europeans. John Campbell's *The Martyr of Erromanga; or, the Philosophy of Missions illustrated from the labours, death and character of the late Rev. John Williams* was a series of essays on the philosophy of mission taking John Williams as its exemplar.[57]

Campbell argued that the source of the backwardness that Europeans observed in Polynesia was ignorance of Christianity not inherent inferiority. Conversion would allow Polynesians access to all aspects of Western civilisation:

> The source of evil in our world is ignorance of God, ...the only means, therefore, of curing the maladies of the human nature, and of rectifying the disorders of society, is, to substitute knowledge for ignorance, and love for enmity. This will effect a recovery, and restore tranquillity, complete universal and permanent. The result of this substitution will be true and perfect civilization, comprehending everything necessary to elevate, adorn, and bless mankind-the resurrection of the buried intellect-the enthronement of enlightened reason..[58]

For Campbell, the only solution to the problems of individuals and societies was theological. The influence of Christianity on the lives of people would naturally lead to changes in all aspects of life. Thus, a change in the "character of the subject" would lead to a change in the "character of the laws, and the form of government."[59] Campbell had personal experience of these changes through his involvement in

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[55]Williams, *Narrative of Missionary Enterprises,* 516.
[56] See chapter 3.
[57] Campbell, *Martyr of Erromanga.*
[58] Ibid. v-vi.
[59] Ibid. 77.

creating the code of laws adopted by the Griqua in South Africa.[60] Campbell portrayed the laws enthusiastically:

> The value of such a code may, to unthinking men, be deemed very small; but they ought to remember, that the first step towards rational freedom, is a movement of unutterable importance. The rudest elements in a system of true liberty, form one of the noblest and most glorious objects that this can present to an enlightened understanding.[61]

Authors, such as, Campbell, Prout, Ellis and Williams presented views of the law codes that were not an embarrassment to the LMS but as a successful policy to be celebrated. However, the divergences in the attitudes of Ellis and Williams reveal the beginning of a new emphasis upon Polynesians as in need of protection through direct intervention by the British government; the attitude which Samson described as "imperial benevolence".[62] In later years, Williams was taken up by pro-colonial writers as the first advocate of a new imperialism.[63]

Criticism and Response

The arguments presented by the LMS to prove the transforming effects of the Gospel could, however, be counterproductive. Some authors were critical of the mission and accused it of having imposed the changes in the islands by force. In the mid-Nineteenth Century, these issues were complicated by national and denominational rivalry.

The most prominent of these critics was the Russian, Captain Otto von Kotzebue. *A New Voyage Around the World in the years 1823, 24, 25 and 1826* was an account of Kotzebue's second voyage to the Pacific. [64] The expedition itself and the narrative produced by Kotzebue clearly followed the pattern expected by the public in voyages of exploration. He was accompanied by two naturalists, an

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[60] See chapter 7.
[61] Campbell, *Martyr of Erromanga,* 79-80.
[62] Samson, *Imperial Benevolence.*
[63] Young, Christianity and the Civilization of the South Pacific, 20.
[64] Otto von Kotzebue, *A New Voyage Round the World in the years 1823, 24, 25 and 26*, vol. 1 (London, 1830).

astronomer and a mineralogist.[65] The impact of his observations can be seen in the number of occasions on which LMS authors sought to refute his allegations.[66]

Kotzebue believed that the Tahitians were naturally "superior" to other "savages".[67] He was familiar with the works of Wallis, Cook and Bougainville. In his comparisons he preferred the Tahiti of their narratives to the mission influenced society which he encountered during his own visit. He was critical of the abandonment of the flute, the cutting short of hair and replacement of *ava* by imported spirits. Tahitian psalm singing was described as unharmonic and the adoption of European dress as comical.[68] For Kotzebue, the mission had spoiled all the charming aspects of Tahiti.

Kotzebue had no sympathy for the form of Christianity introduced by the mission. He also attacked the qualifications of the missionaries:

> In Russia, a careful education and diligent study at schools and universities is necessary to qualify one to be a teacher of religion. The London Missionary Society is more easily satisfied; a half savage, confused by the dogmas of an uneducated sailor, is, according to them, perfectly fitted for the sacred office.[69]

British critics and members of the LMS themselves had also criticised the selection and training of the missionaries.[70] This criticism was tackled by Williams, who admitted that the mission had once been despised.[71] The merits of mission work, he argued, lay not only in the honour of carrying the gospel to foreign lands but also in the civilisation and commerce which followed and the benefit to Britain.[72] He hoped,

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[65] Kotzebue's orders were to carry a cargo from Kronstadt to Kamschatka and then proceed to the west coast of America. However, he had a free choice in his course through he Pacific.

[66] Ellis, *A Vindication of the South Seas Mission from the Misrepresentations of Otto von Kotzebue, captain in the Russian Navy*. London, Frederick Westley and A. H. Davis 1831; preface to *Polynesian Researches;* William Orme, *A Defence of the Missions in the South Seas, and Sandwich Islands, against the misrepresentations contained in a late number of the Quarterly Review in a letter to the editor of that Journal* (London, 1827).

[67] Kotzebue, *New Voyage Around the World,* 1: 133.

[68] Ibid. 172-3, 142.

[69] Ibid. 153.

[70] Lovett, *History of the London Missionary Society;* William Brown, *The History of the Propagation of Christianity among the Heathen since the Reformation*, 3[d] ed. 2 vols. (Edinburgh and London: William Blackwood and Sons, 1854).

[71] Williams, *Narrative of Missionary Enterprises,* ix.

[72] Ibid. 582-584.

however, that the missionary calling would be regarded by the sons of noblemen as honourably as service in the army.[73]

Theft and the chastity of Tahitian women were a perennial topic in the narratives of seamen. Kotzebue managed to combine the arguments of compulsion and depravity by stating that the women obliged his sailors but with great fear in case they should be discovered by the missionaries.[74] Charles Darwin, who visited Tahiti for eleven days in November 1835, believed that such criticisms were provoked by disappointment that the "field of licentiousness" was not so open as formerly:

> Such reasoners never compare the present state with that of the island only twenty years ago; nor even with that of Europe at this day; but they compare it with the high standard of Gospel perfection. They expect the missionaries to effect that, which the Apostles themselves failed to do. In as much as the condition of the people falls short of this high order, blames is attached to the missionary, instead of credit for that which he has effected.[75]

Kotzebue's most damaging accusation was that Christianity had been established by force in a bloody war in which "whole races were exterminated".[76] He asserted that more men had been killed in the Tahitian wars of religion than in the old practice of human sacrifice. This was a reversal of the standard missionary explanation which saw the leniency of Pomare to the vanquished as the reason for the mass rejection of the old religion. Furthermore, Kotzebue suggested that the missionaries controlled the chiefs, who regarded them with blind reverence and that no judge could hold power without their approval. He interpreted the laws, therefore, as a means of holding the people in submission.[77]

Kotzebue's version of events was challenged by Ellis and Williams. Ellis noted that Kotzebue's stay at Tahiti had been for only ten days and that none of the

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[73] Ibid. 589-90. A theme taken up by Campbell, in Letter 12 "The military and missionary character, compared and illustrated, from Napoleon, with other commanders, and from John Williams with other missionaries." Campbell, *Martyr of Erromanga*.
[74] Kotzebue, *New Voyage Around the World,* 196.
[75] Charles Darwin, *Voyage of the Beagle: Charles Darwin's Journal of Researches*, ed. Janet Browne and Michael Neve, abridgement of the 1839 edition (Penguin, 1989), 302.
[76] Kotzebue, *New Voyage Around the World,* 1: 159.
[77] Ibid. 175.

crew had known Tahitian.[78] Kotzebue's geographical knowledge of Tahiti and nautical skills were attacked and he was accused of having invented characters.[79] Ellis abridged for publication an account of the voyage of Captain C. S. Stewart which refuted Kotzebue's accusations of depopulation.[80] Ellis also addressed the charge of compulsion in his *History of the London Missionary Society* by arguing that those who first converted did so in opposition to the authorities.[81] In reply to allegations on the subject of the use of force Ellis described the battle at Fei Pi as a measure of last resort. [82]

Williams admitted the influence of chiefs in evangelism but not that any coercion had been used, only "moral influence."[83] Ellis' history of the LMS, written in 1844, insisted that the methods used by the mission in 1815 were the same as they had used previously and that the conversion of Tahiti could only be the work of God.[84] In his description of the creation of the Tahitian code of 1819 Ellis restated his emphasis on the importance of Pomare to the process.

> Pomare had been so long accustomed to consult only his own will in all matters of government, that he declined calling a meeting but solicited the assistance of Mr Nott and some of the other missionaries in preparing a code of laws, few in number, explicit and simple in their character, and adapted to the circumstances of the natives.[85]

These comments are consistent with those in *Polynesian Researches* where he also emphasised Pomare's influence.[86]

Kotzebue portrayed the observance of the Sabbath as oppressive with a constable appointed to ensure attendance. This accusation was repeated by Daniel Wheeler in *Memoirs of the Life and Gospel Labours of the late Daniel Wheeler, a minister of the Society of Friends*.[87] On the other hand, they could be considered an

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[78] Ellis, *A Vindication of the South Sea Mission*, 11.
[79] Ibid. 1-10; *Narrative of Missionary Enterprises*, 482.
[80] *A Visit to the South Seas by C. S. Stewart in the ship Vincennes during the years 1829 and 1830*, ed. William Ellis (London: Fisher, Son and Jackson, 1832).
[81] Ellis, *History of the LMS*, 255.
[82] Ibid.
[83] Williams, *Narrative of Missionary Enterprises*, 192.
[84] Ellis, *History of the LMS*, 225.
[85] Ibid. 238.
[86] See chapter 8.
[87] *Memoirs of the Life and Gospel Labours of the late Daniel Wheeler, a minister of the Society of Friends*, ed. Daniel Wheeler (London: Harvey & Darton and Charles Gilpin, 1842).

expression of the Tahitians' own wish to change. Darwin believed that the Tahitians he took with him on his journeys to the interior of the island were genuinely converted. He rejected the assertion that Tahitians prayed only when a missionary was there to observe them.[88]

In 1828, what was claimed to be a literal French translation of the laws of Tahiti was circulated in France. Ellis translated the document which purported to be a Tahitian code dated May 1820.[89] Women, it was alleged, were forbidden by law from wearing either flowers or perfume to church. The translated code protected dogmatic purity by punishing idolatry by death. The control exercised by the mission, according to the translation, included receipt of half of all fines; control of all trade with vessels; and the ownership of all unmarked hogs. Their power was maintained by another law which stipulated that all "natives" were to report ill-speech of the missionaries. Ellis provided a detailed point by point commentary on the laws in a letter to Mark Wilks in Paris.

The extent of the power of the missionaries was a difficult question.[90] The roles which the missionaries had in Tahitian society did give them influence, especially in dealings with foreigners. This could be combined with an assumption, by those at a distance, that their very presence and assumed superiority would place them in charge of matters:

> The missionaries, it is well known, acquire over the islanders whom they teach, an influence so great, that their very word is law. In some of the smaller islands where the people form, as it were, a single congregation, under a single European or American missionary, that missionary is, for all practical purposes, the sovereign of the country. We find from their own works, that it is these gentlemen who make the laws, and lay down the rules for political and social organization.[91]

These remarks, made by Charles St Julian in 1851, were not intended as an attack on the missions of Polynesia. His aim was to encourage trade and settlement. However,

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[88] Darwin, *Voyage of the Beagle,* 299.
[89] *Literal Translation of a French Copy of the Tahitian Laws,* William Ellis, SSL 3.
[90] As will be seen below in the case of Pritchard's actions and the expulsion of the priests in 1836.
[91] Charles St Julian, *Notes on the Latent Resources of Polynesia* (Sydney: Kemp and Fairfax, 1851), 198-9.

the behaviour of the missionaries was a useful tool in French justification of the Protectorate and Annexation. After the news that Captain Du Petit-Thouars had established a Protectorate at Tahiti reached Paris *Le Consitutionnel* stated that the missionaries "had acquired a quasi omnipotence" but had then been expelled by the Queen who preferred the arrangement with the French. The report incorrectly described the arrival of "Methodist Missionaries" in Tahiti in 1819 and therefore implied the immediate imposition of the law code.[92]

The involvement of the mission with the Tahitian laws, therefore, did bring some problems to the LMS. In the period before 1842 and throughout the Tahitian crisis the LMS repulsed accusations on the subject of the laws and the mission's relationship with Pomare.

Memorials Regarding the Annexation of Tahiti

From the perspective of the members of the South Sea Mission, the arrival of the French was a disaster. The LMS had always considered Tahiti as within the British sphere of influence. Formal applications for British protection had been made in the past but not accepted.[93] Nevertheless, it was assumed that Britain had a duty to protect the islands and members of the mission retained a hope of this throughout the crisis. Had Tahiti been placed under a British Protectorate it seems highly unlikely that comparable rhetoric or public interest would have been generated. The opportunity to attack the old enemies of Catholicism and France, however, brought out the most eloquent expositions of the mission's benefits and allowed mission supporters to make arguments that they might not have done against their own government. The contents of the material must, therefore, be viewed with some caution. An examination of the protests is included here because they mark the high watermark of the presentation of the Pomare dynasty and the Tahitian Mission. The memorials and pamphlets gave a wider currency to the ideas propounded by Ellis, Williams and others described above.

The published works of members of the LMS, not surprisingly, focused upon the perceived aggression of the French not upon the failings of the existing system.

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[92] Additional Papers Society Islands FO 881/252, PRO.
[93] A request for protection was made by chief Hitoti in 1822 and for the use of the British flag in 1825. See chapter 2.

The first report in *Evangelical Magazine* in April 1843 began with an account of the previous "aggressions of the French at Tahiti."[94] This was also true of Mark Wilks' *Tahiti: Containing a review of the origin, character, and progress of the French Roman Catholic Efforts for the Destruction of English Protestant Missions in the South Seas.*[95] He gave an account of an Irish carpenter who had lived at Tahiti for two years while sending secret communications to the Bishop at the Gambier Islands. The most sensational incident, prior to the Protectorate, however, was the arrival of two priests in 1836.

On the subject of the intolerance displayed in deporting the priests, Wilks argued that the Tahitian case was not a simple matter of conscience; it was a special case because Tahiti was a nation recently converted from "barbarism:"

> The forcible introduction, by foreigners, under these circumstances, of another religion; of a religion announcing as its object the overthrow of the religion embraced by the whole nation; .....must inevitably lead to the disturbing of the social and political as well as the religious of the nation; it must raise the hopes and rally the energies of all the discontented: if successful, produce revolution, and even if unsuccessful, involve in anarchy, civil war, and perhaps ultimate ruin a peaceful country.[96]

Wilks concluded by asking if the sovereign of an Island in the Pacific Ocean had not the same the rights as those of the sovereign of a vast empire in Europe?[97] This comparison between the monarchs of the Pacific and Europe was the logical result of the presentation of the Pomares by LMS authors.

Milder comments described the incursion into Protestant territory when so many islands were unoccupied as ungentlemanly. There was also, however, an abhorrence of Catholicism among many of the missionaries which was not unique to missionaries serving in the South Seas. In 1829, proposals for a Bill for Catholic Emancipation had elicited 957 petitions within a month of its announcement in the King's Speech.[98] Anti-Catholic feeling prompted a large petitioning campaign again,

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[94] *Evangelical Magazine and Missionary Chronicle* (1843), 195ff.
[95] Mark Wilks, *Tahiti: Containing a review of the origin, character, and progress of the French Roman Catholic Efforts for the Destruction of English Protestant Missions in the South Seas...* (London: John Snow, 1844).
[96] Ibid.
[97] Ibid. 22.
[98] 357 were received in favour of the Bill, mostly from Ireland J. C. D. Clark, *English Society 1660-1832*, 2d ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 533.

and seven thousand public meetings in 1850 in response to Vatican plans to appoint bishops for England to replace the former Vicars-Apostolic.[99] Thus, while the members of the mission were intolerant they were not substantially different from many other British Protestants. British identity itself, especially at the popular level, was often tied to anti-Catholic and anti-French feeling.[100]

The LMS directors and the British government took a more tolerant attitude to the Catholic missions. The LMS directors were appalled at the expulsion of the priests and the law made in 1838 forbidding the teaching of Catholicism and wrote to the missionaries at the Leeward and Windward stations warning them against any similar measures in the future, and in doing so highlighted their own presumptions about the influence of the mission over the *ari'i*.[101] The Foreign Office advised Pritchard that while Pomare had the right to exclude the priests the action was "contrary to the rules of international hospitality" if no law had been broken.[102]

The existence of the law passed in 1838 appeared to justify the claims of missionary domination. The law was a stumbling block in the presentation of the case which required careful justification:

> In 1836, a portion of an arrogant priesthood, "privily crept in, to spy out their liberty & bring them into bondage"….. They felt they needed them not;- & Pomare claimed (whether wisely or nor) the same right to exclude them as Foreigners, as Louis Philippe claims in demanding a Passport for every English man who sets foot on French soil.[103]

The LMS directors, though they publicly supported Pomare's right to exclude whom she pleased, portrayed her as unwise. The society had little option but to uphold the "principles of propagating religion," from which they benefited themselves.[104]

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[99] Walter Ralls, "The Papal Agression of 1850: A Study in Victorian Anti-Catholicism," in *Religion in Victorian Britain: Interpretations,* ed. Gerald Parsons (Manchester: Open University in association with Manchester University Press, 1995), 117.

[100] Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837* (London: Vintage, 1996), 342-354. David Hempton, *Religion and Political Culture in Britain and Ireland* (Cambridge: University Press, 1996), 145.

[101] Wilks to Windward Mission 27th February 1837, Western Outgoing Letters 1.

[102] Palmerston to Pritchard 19th July 1837. Consul Pritchard & Various., FO 58/15, PRO.

[103] *An Appeal to Friends of the Society and the Christian Public,* London Missionary Society 1844, [printed circular] Home Letters 8.

[104] LMS Directors 13th December 1844 Memorial Addressed to the King of the French, Home Letters 8.

The role of George Pritchard was another problem for the LMS. Pritchard's appointment at Tahiti had replaced a vice-consul of whom the missionaries had disapproved and placed in authority the very kind of person that Williams had recommended to the Committee on Aborigines. Pritchard had been recommended by Ellis.[105] The controlling influence of missionaries over chiefs and monarchs was asserted by some contemporaries, such as St Julian, and also by some historians.[106] Koskinen suggested that even "a previously relatively independent-minded ruler could be moulded into a humble instrument in the missionary's hand."[107]

Pritchard himself composed a memorial on the subject of the priests in which he defended himself. He stated that there was no government in existence which did not have advisors and that:

> The native mind is not constituted of such servile materials as is supposed. It is only necessary to be acquainted with the tedious and scrutinizing [sic] investigation and sometimes jealousy with which any proposition is viewed from the Missionaries, and also the unhesitating rejection of proposals sometimes deemed beneficial for adoption- to be convinced of this.[108]

The interpretations given in LMS publications in the 1840s certainly stressed this version of events. It was Queen Pomare's wishes which were emphasised, not those of the missionaries or Pritchard. Mark Wilks, for example, contrasted the French priests with the LMS missionaries who had always acted with the consent and permission of the authorities in Tahiti and had not committed "a single act of resistance."[109]

There is not space here to attempt a detailed analysis of Pritchard's actions or his relationship with Pomare IV. Descriptions of her character vary from the pliable protégé of Pritchard to the wild and wilful young woman who joined the *mamaia*. After Pritchard left she remained obstinate in her exile on the *Basilik* and later at Huahine until August 1847.

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[105] Ellis on behalf of the Directors to Backhouse 11th January 1837, Consul Pritchard & Various, FO 58/15, PRO.
[106] Martin, *Missionaries and Annexation,* 21; Wright and Fry, *Puritans in the South Seas,* 323; Charlotte Haldane, *Tempest over Tahiti* (London: Constable, 1963), 75.
[107] Koskinen, *Missionary Influence,* 67.
[108] Pritchard, and British Residents J P Henry, G Bicknell, W Henry, J H Smith, G Brown, J Vaugham to Ellis 1837, SSL 11.
[109] Wilks, *Tahiti,* 18-19.

The description of the events of 1842 in LMS sources focused upon the clandestine meeting held between Du Petit-Thouars and the chiefs Paraita, Utami, Hitoti and Tati at which they signed the appeal for French Protection. The accounts also noted that an indemnity had been demanded in compensation for losses suffered by French citizens and that Dupetit-Thouars threatened a bombardment from the *La Reine Blanche* [110] Pomare was at Mo'orea awaiting the birth of a child. It was, therefore, suggested that she had been forced to sign at a time when at "a moment when the courage of any woman might have failed her."[111] Her weakness as mere woman was played upon, in particular, in a painting by George Baxter which showed her cowering with her son on her lap as French troops invaded the island.[112]

The secretaries of the LMS and WMMS acted jointly in their representations to the government fearing French aggression in other islands of the Pacific but disclaimed any attempt to restrain Catholic missionaries.[113] A public meeting was held on 12th April at Exeter Hall.[114] A small number of memorials were sent to the Foreign office in 1843 requesting that Queen Pomare be restored to her liberties.[115] The LMS Board urged the mission not to encourage Pomare in her hopes that the British Government would intervene, though they did hold out the prospect that representations to the French might lead them to claim only the harbour.[116] In a letter to the chief Paofai in October 1843 Tidman and Freeman, the secretaries of the LMS, urged him to consider the occupation by the French as a judgement upon the sins of the Tahitian nation.[117]

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[110] The demand for compensation had a precedent in the actions of Captain Fitzroy of the *Beagle* in 1835.

[111] Appeal to Friends of the Society and the Christian Public London Missionary Society 1844 [printed circular], Home Incoming Letters 8.

[112] George Baxter, *Pomare Queen of Tahiti* NK 541 National Library of Australia, see figure 6.

[113] Tidman and Beecham to Earl of Aberdeen 31st March 1843, FO 881/252, PRO.

[114] *Evangelical Magazine* May 1843, 249-260.

[115] Newbury 22nd April; Lancaster 28th April; Woodbridge 5th May; Essex 8th May; Huddersfield n.d.; Plymouth n.d. Confidential Print - *Additional Papers Society Islands. Correspondence with the London and Wesleyan Missionary Societies,* FO 881/252, PRO.

[116]Tidman and Freeman to Georgian Island Mission 4th October 1843, Western Outgoing Letters South Seas 3.

[117] Tidman and Freeman to Paofai 26th October 1843 ibid.

It was in response to the outbreak of war and not the original establishment of the French Protectorate that the main campaign on behalf of the Tahitians was launched by the LMS. The national press took up the "Pritchard Affair" and resolutions of protests were sent to the Foreign Office. Questions were also asked in the House of Commons.[118] Pritchard's actions, however, were passed over briefly by the LMS.[119] No reference was made in the model resolutions for Memorialists to his ill-treatment or his claim for compensation. Pritchard wrote two works in defence of his actions *The Aggressions of the French at Tahiti* in 1844 and later *Queen Pomare and Her Country, 1879.* His son William, also a British consul, later defended his father in *Polynesian Reminiscences.*[120]

The members of the Tahitian mission were urged by the LMS to remain "entirely aloof from interference with local politics".[121] Orsmond, who co-operated with the French and acted as an interpreter for Burat was dismissed by the LMS in 1845, though he continued to serve as a pastor in Tahiti in the pay of the French.[122] The expulsion of the French priests was still a problem for the LMS as were the trading activities of some of the members of the mission. The Board commented that the reports on the French and British Press:

> … embarrass and mortify us from a certain measure of consciousness that while there is, we trust, at the present day but one sentiment among our Brethren of disapproval of such proceedings, yet that there has been a time when such charges were to some extent applicable. Would that for the honour of the Tahitian Mission we had it in our power to give a bold and distinct refutation of all such statements.[123]

Nevertheless, the mission had a very tense relationship with the French authorities.

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[118] see Haldane, *Tempest over Tahiti,* 154ff.

[119] The Board did note their disgust at his removal Tidman and Freeman to Pritchard 1st June 1844, Western Outgoing Letters South Seas 3.

[120] Pritchard , *Polynesian Reminiscences,* 1866.

[121] Tidman and Freeman to Georgian Mission 7th March 1844, Western Outgoing Letters South Seas 3.

[122] Tidman to Orsmond 16th Jan 1845, Western Outgoing Letters 3.

[123] Tidman and Freeman to Georgian Mission 1st June 1844 ibid.

The LMS Board resolved to instigate a campaign of memorials to the government "without delay" at a meeting on Monday 2nd November 1846. [124] The South Sea Committee drew up two resolutions for the approval of public meetings:

> First. To the adoption of such measures by negotiation or otherwise, as may secure to the inhabitants of the Society Islands the peaceable and permanent possession of their Country.
> Secondly. To employ its friendly mediation with the Government of France to allow those natives who may be so disposed peaceably to withdraw from Tahiti. [125]

The committee proposed that a deputation be sent to the major cities to promote this aim and that committees be formed in the city of London and the suburban boroughs for the purpose of drawing up memorials.

These efforts produced considerable results; two hundred and fifty memorials are preserved at the Public Record Office received in the period between 10th November 1846 and 28th February 1847. [126] These memorials were signed by 77 964 people. [127] Sympathy for the Tahitians does not seem to have been limited to LMS supporters or to Independents and Congregationalists. In their preambles the memorialists predominantly identified themselves as inhabitants of a particular locality and often stressed that they were members of various denominations. Only in sixty-nine of the petitions was a particular church or missionary society mentioned. [128]

In terms of number of participants the Memorials Regarding the Aggressions of the French at Tahiti, do not compare with campaigns on issues such as Catholic Emancipation or the 4000 petitions between 1830 and 1833 by Abolitionists. [129] Nevertheless, the controversy generated sufficient notice for the "earnest

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[124] In confirmation of a resolution of the South Seas Committee on 30th October. Board Minutes 30; Committee Minutes South Seas 1.

[125] Underlining original, 10th November 1846, Committee Minutes South Seas 1.

[126] Memorial Respecting the Occupation of Tahiti by the French. FO 58/50-58/53, PRO.

[127] In twenty-seven cases memorials were signed by individuals on behalf of town councils, congregations or societies such as the Aborigines Protection Society.

[128] Memorialists identified by geography 72.4 %; by religious affiliation 27.6%.

[129] O'Gorman , *The Long Eighteenth Century: British Political and Social History 1688-1832*. (London: Arnold, 1997), 301.

representation" from all parts of the kingdom to be mentioned in letters between Palmerston and the French Ambassador.[130] In addition to their inter-denominational character the memorials in many cases stressed the respectability of the participants. Mayors or members of town councils were signatories to fourteen memorials and magistrates and justices of the peace are found on eleven. Some Members of Parliament forwarded the petitions without identifying themselves with the cause.[131]

The memorials show the influence of the positive views of the Tahitians' abilities propounded by Ellis. The Tahitians were dignified with descriptions such as "noble and patriotic" and as a "brave religious people".[132] These were the virtues of civilised people not savages. In its report of the public meeting held in Liverpool the *Liverpool Courier* stated that the success of Tahitian Mission proved "that the natives of the South Seas are capable of being raised to a state of civilization."[133]

The Tahitians were also described less flatteringly as "weak and defenceless," though the inhabitants of Huahine had actually defeated a French assault in January 1846 and the Tahitians held out in the mountains until they were betrayed by a deserter in 1847.[134] Nevertheless, it was feared that the ruthless French soldiery would overwhelm the rebels and "that either Slavery or extermination will result"[135] These passive portrayals of the Tahitians have their roots in a wish to evoke sympathy for the islanders and ensure their protection. They also differentiate the memorialists from a body of opinion, current at the time, which would not have objected to Europeans annihilating the inhabitants of the islands. The Edinburgh physician Robert Knox, for example, described the inhabitants of New Holland as:

> ..non-progressive races which mysteriously had run their course, reaching the time appointed for their destruction.[136]

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[130]Viscount Palmerston to Count Ste. Aulaire January 20th 1847. FO 58/54, PRO.

[131] W Evans MP to Palmerston 12th December 1846. FO 58/51, PRO.

[132] Memorial of the inhabitants of the Town and Borough of Norwich and County of Suffolk, Memorial from Melton Mowbray n.d. FO 58/50, PRO.

[133] *Liverpool Courier* 2nd December 1846.

[134] Memorial of the Baptists of Bingley, Yorkshire 30th November 1846 FO 58/50, PRO.

[135] FO 58/53, PRO.

[136] Robert Knox, *The Races of Men: A Philosophical Enquiry into the Influence of Race over the Destines of Nations* 2d. ed. (London, 1862), 1: 87.

To counteract this attitude, humanitarian opinion increasingly advocated the protection of Polynesians and Melanesians on the grounds of their weakness and inability to defend themselves.[137]

The memorials also recognised Pomare's sovereignty, though they did not ask for her restoration. They did, however, assume that the Tahitian people would prefer dignified withdrawal to submission to the French. These claims were not based in traditional Polynesian terms of reference but on the image of the Christian Tahitian Monarch which had been developed by the LMS. The arguments made in favour of the sovereignty of the Windward Islands was based upon the demonstrable existence of familiar western institutions, the laws.

In June 1845 the French and British governments agreed to halt any further acquisition of land in the area until investigations could be made. Admiral George Seymour visited the islands and collected samples of five law codes from the Windward Islands which were provided, with translation of their title pages, by Charles Barff: the code made in 1820 for Raiatea, Taha, Borabora and Maupiti and the revised version of 1836.; the laws of Huahine from 1823, revised in 1835 and 1845. Barff also sent Seymour the Port Regulations for Raiatea drawn up with the aid of Captain Lawes of the *Satellite* in 1829; the Port Regulations of Huahine 1837; and the Port Regulations Borabora 1837.[138]

Seymour also collected testimony from Utami, who had signed the request for the Protectorate and a declaration by the "Sovereign chiefs" of Huahine, Raiatea and Borabora.[139] Statements were made by LMS missionaries Rodgerson and Platt, and William Moth, British resident. Seymour also included excerpts from *Polynesian*

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[137] See chapter 3.

[138] Seymour also acquired a copy of the Harbour of Regulations of Raiatea 1831 from another source. Barff to Seymour 9th November 1845 encl. in Admiral Sir George Seymour to Admiralty 17th December 1845. ADM 1/5561, PRO.

[139] Made to Seymour in August 1845 and confirmed by personal declarations 21st-22nd December 1845. He also enclosed a copy of memorial addressed by Pomare to the King of the French stressing the independence of the Windward Islands dated 25th September 1844. Admiral Sir George Seymour to Admiralty 17th December 1845. ADM 1/5561, PRO.

Researches in his dispatches. He concluded that the Leeward Islands were independent which he reported in a dispatch dated 17th December 1845.

In July 1847 that the Foreign Office produced a lithographed reply which was sent to two hundred and thirty eight of the memorialists.[140] It was accompanied by printed copies of a the correspondence between Viscount Palmerston and Count Ste. Aulaire regarding the right of the rebels to withdraw from Tahiti and the independence of the Society Islands.[141] The right of Tahitian rebels to retire to the Society Islands had been previously admitted by the French.[142] On the subject of the Society Islands the two powers agreed:

1. Formally to acknowledge the independence of the Islands of Huahine, Raiatea, and Borabora (to the leeward of Tahiti), and of the small islands adjacent to and dependent upon those islands.
2. Never to take possession of the said islands, nor any one or more of them, either absolutely, or under the title of a protectorate, of in any other form whatever.
3. Never to acknowledge that a Chief or Prince reigning in Tahiti can at the same time reign in any one or more of the other islands above mentioned; nor on the other hand, that a Chief or Prince reigning in any one or more of those other islands can reign at the same time in Tahiti and its dependencies, being established as a principle.[143]

The memorialists were, therefore, rewarded in their efforts. The Windward Islands remained independent until 1888 when a French Protectorate was established. The missions there were handed over to the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society in 1890.

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[140] Declaration of the Plenipotentiaries of Great Britain and France, acknowledging the Independence of the Islands of Huahine, Raiatea, and Borabora, and of the small Islands adjacent thereto. Answers to Memorials respecting the Occupation of Tahiti by the French FO 58/54, PRO.

[141] Printed Circular - Papers Relative to the Tahiti and the Society Islands presented to Parliament by the Queen's Command FO 58/54, PRO.

[142] Aulaire noted that the decision had ben taken in the previous December. Count Ste. Aulaire to Viscount Palmerston 1st February, 1847 Answers to Memorials respecting the Occupation of Tahiti by the French FO 58/54, PRO.

[143] Declaration of the Plenipotentiaries of Great Britain and France, acknowledging the Independence of the Islands of Huahine, Raiatea, and Borabora, and of the small Islands adjacent thereto. FO 58/54, PRO.

Conclusion

The annexation of Tahiti and the war which followed produced a flurry of material which emphasised the extent to which Tahiti, and the Windward Islands, had progressed as civilised Christian nations as a result of accepting the Gospel. The nature of the dispute over Tahiti led to a concentration upon the laws and the sovereignty of the chiefs in the Windward Islands and of Queen Pomare. However, the loss of Tahiti marked the turning point of this way of presenting the mission. Thereafter, the need to protect Pacific Islanders from malign influences superseded efforts to portray them as sovereign Christian nations.

The LMS pride in the Tahitian Laws decreased, though missionaries continued to draft Christian codes and to support Christian monarchs. There was no mention of the Tahitian law codes at all when *The Missionary World*, a volume endorsed by the LMS, BMS and WMMS was published in 1872.[144] Some authors described the 1819 laws but not the involvement of the missionaries in drafting the codes[145] whereas others noted the advice given by members of the mission but emphasised the request from Pomare II.[146]

There were some authors with a different interpretation of events. John Eimeo Ellis, for example, gave an account of the laws and of the relationship between the Gospel and civilisation which was entirely in accord with his father's thoughts on the matter. C. Sylvester Horne, writing in 1894, mentioned law codes in Polynesia and the missionary reluctance to become involved. He described the Tahitian laws as "simple" and trial by jury as an "invaluable limitation of despotic power".[147] The official centenary history, however, took a different approach. Lovett mentioned the promulgation of the first Tahitian laws only in passing when

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[144] *The Missionary World, being an encyclopædia of information, facts, incidents, and anecdotes, relating to Christian Missions, in all ages and countries, and of all denominations* (London: Elliot Stock, 1872).

[145] J Logan Aikman, *Cyclopædia of Christian Missions their rise, progress and present position* (London and Glasgow: Richard Griffin and Company, 1860), 60.

[146] Harvey Newcomb, *A Cyclopedia of Missions; containing a comprehensive view of missionary operations throughout the world* (New York: Charles Scribner, 1854), 659-60.

[147] C Sylvester Horne, *The Story of the LMS 1795-1895*, 2d. ed. (London: John Snow & Co., 1895), 43-4.

recounting the events of May 1819. His account relied heavily on the circular printed at Tahiti referred to earlier in this chapter, and contained no reference to the missionary involvement in drafting the code.[148] Lovett made no comment on the reasons why new laws were adopted either at Tahiti or when he noted the code made at Raiatea.[149]

Lovett's attitude to the relationship between the missionaries and the British government was more clear. He was entirely opposed to Pritchard's acceptance of the office of British consul, while continuing to preach . Lovett demonstrated the damage, which he believed, had been done to the mission by quoting a letter from Darling which described an incident when the church at Papaoa refused to receive the Lord's Supper from Pritchard.[150] Pritchard, in Lovett's opinion, had also been responsible for the expulsion of Caret and Laval and his actions had fermented many of the troubles which later came to Tahiti:

> Here once again the law is illustrated that in religious matters there should always be absolute toleration, the fullest and most unfettered freedom. There was much reason on Pritchard's side, yet after events prove that had the Romanists been allowed to settle down and work quietly on Tahiti …. It would not have been so easy for France to discover any reasonable pretext for interference.[151]

Embarrassment at Pritchard's role and the use to which the laws were put in 1838 may have been one cause of Lovett's lack of enthusiasm for the missionary involvement in law making.

Lovett's account of the Tahitian Mission made no mention of the attempts of the LMS to influence the government or of the memorials. By the time Lovett wrote his history in 1895 attempts to preserve the independent islands had been abandoned as futile.[152] In 1900, Tonga the last of the independent kingdoms in Polynesia, accepted a British Protectorate. At the end of the century mission supporters had concluded that Polynesians were not capable of resisting the depredations of

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[148] Quoted by Lovett, *History of the London Missionary Society,* 1: 219-223.
[149] Ibid. 248.
[150] Ibid. 311.
[151] Ibid. 307-8.
[152] Campbell, *History of the Pacific Islands,* 148.

foreigners without the "protection" of a colonial power. Opinion about the abilities of Polynesians had also altered. For example, in concluding on sixty-five years of work in Samoa, Lovett wrote of the "infantile weakness of the Samoan character" which demanded careful supervision and strict church discipline.[153] From Lovett's perspective, the confidence of Ellis and those who had celebrated the laws as examples of the power of the Gospel appeared manifestly misplaced.

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[153] Lovett, *History of the London Missionary Society,* 1: 401.

Figure 6. Pomare, Queen of Tahiti, George Baxter.

Nan Kivell Collection, National Library of Australia

CONCLUSION

This thesis has argued that far from being an example of irregular practice by field agents, there were strong contemporary reasons for the missionaries to provide assistance to the Pomare dynasty in creating law codes and a Tahitian monarchy. They were not only obeying their instructions to respect the ruling powers in the land to which they were sent but also demonstrating the transforming power of the Gospel and the dependence of all civilised institutions upon Christianity.

It was noted in chapters one and two that Tahitian society was not static at the time of its first contacts with Europeans and that Tahitian needs and aspirations affected the way in which European goods and ideas were received. It has been argued that during the late indigenous period in Tahiti a small number of high ranking *ari'i* attempted to expand their power. Among them, the Pomare family was the most successful in transforming their high rank status into authority outside their own district. This innovation was attempted by traditional means; the collection of regalia for investiture with high ranking titles. The Pomare dynasty, however, was also astute in taking advantage of the presence of European assistance.

A study of patterns of European relations at Tahiti, in chapter three, revealed that the first Europeans to visit Tahiti used the European terminology of kingship to describe the high ranking *ari'i* whom they encountered. It was suggested that while this was in part a result of the romantic and exotic terms in which the islands were described it was also based on the assumption that all peoples and societies were similar and that Tahitian society could be understood in familiar terms. Power structures were described as though Tahiti were a feudal state. The analogies employed by early voyagers such as Wallis, Cook and Bligh endured as ways of interpreting Tahitian society and in turn influenced the development of Tahitian institutions. The relationships which the members of the Tahitian Mission established at Tahiti were negotiated in the context of these previous European contacts.

The narratives and journals of voyages of Pacific exploration, which were so popular at the end of the Eighteenth Century, seem to have inspired the LMS directors not only in the choice of destination, but also in the decision to buy a ship and the prominence given the Missionary Captain. It was Captain Wilson, and not

the missionaries, who was the focus of the publicity surrounding the first mission. It was Wilson who decided who should preach and he who stated that the LMS was essentially "Calvinistical" in its theology. Wilson conducted the negotiations at the islands visited by the *Duff* and his journal became the standard written version of events. The early missionaries at Tahiti, in consequence, received comparatively little attention at home.

It was noted in chapter four, that the LMS was founded on genuinely ecumenical principles. While 1795 may not have marked the "funeral of bigotry" it did mark a collaboration between evangelicals of numerous denominations for the purpose of supporting foreign missions.[1] The statements which forbade involvement in "politics" have one origin in this diversity but were also the result of a need to reassure outsiders, given the presence of some members, such as David Bogue, who were known for radical sympathies. In the 1790s it was important that a new society appeared loyal to the Establishment, particularly if it hoped to influence the East India Company or to send agents to the West Indies.

The LMS was by no means predominantly dissenting in its early years. The policies of its directors and missionaries cannot, therefore, be judged by reference to dissenters' political activities or to non-conformist separation between church and state. The South Sea Mission was influenced by advocates of the Established Church. While this strand of LMS history was not the one which later dominated its work, the work of the Society in the Pacific in the late Eighteenth and early Nineteenth Century cannot be understood without reference to these views and especially the influence of Rev. Thomas Haweis.

Haweis, was a defender of the Church of England and an advocate of promoting links between the LMS and the British Establishment. It is not surprising, therefore, that the mission which was his strongest preoccupation should have established close relations between church and state. Haweis suggested that members of the mission should promote good relations with the chiefs and raised the possibility of the men marrying into high ranking Tahitian families. These instructions and the expectations of obedience to the Directors and to Captain Wilson are an illustration of the hierarchical principles upon which it was organised.

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[1] Bogue, *Objections Against A Mission to the Heathen Stated and Considered.*

The evangelicals who founded the LMS shared a theology which led them to see all those without Christianity as equally depraved but also as having equal potential. Haweis, for example, wrote, "They are men whose natural understanding is as good as our own."[2] Despite the presence of so many artisans and mechanics the mission was not intended to civilise the Tahitians prior to evangelisation. Haweis had proposed a mission to the South Seas because he believed that the peoples who were most "barbarous," had the most to gain and would be those most likely to recognise the superiority of the Christian religion.

The differences between states of civilisation were regarded as a result of their religion, a factor which could be changed. Thus, once the hearts of the Tahitians had been awakened they would see the necessity and have the ability to transform their society.[3] Evangelical theology ran in parallel with pre-Darwinian racial theory which Curtin described as "conversionism".[4] These attitudes help to explain both the instructions to the missionaries on the subject of integration into Tahitian Society and also the willingness of missionaries and Directors to accept the concept of a Tahitian Christian Kingdom.

In chapter five it was noted that the first decade of the mission in Tahiti was a period of gradual adjustment as the members of the mission sought to adjust their expectations of founding a Christian settlement to the reality of their position of dependence. The apparently cordial relations established while the *Duff* was at Tahiti were typical of the kind of encounters and power relationships which occurred between obviously powerful visiting Europeans and Tahitians. The position could not be maintained after the departure of the *Duff*. The missionaries suffered continual loss of their property yet could not bring themselves to appeal to a system of justice which they found abhorrent. The position of the missionaries at Tahiti was analogous to the traders and beachcombers who had traded their skills for protection from a powerful *ari'i*.

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[2] Haweis, *Missionary Instructions,* 25.
[3] Ibid; "Counsels and Instructions for the Regulation of the mission by the directors" in Hunter, *A Sermon and Charge,* 59-60.
[4] Curtin, *Image of Africa,* 116.

The instructions to found a Christian settlement, and their fears for their safety, left some members of the group convinced of the need to stand independently of the Tahitians. Haweis, however, had advocated as full an integration into Tahitian society as possible to include clothing and food. In 1798, the Tahitian mission put itself and its stores under the protection of Pomare II and by 1806, the remaining missionaries, had begun to find a place within Tahitian society.

The missionaries sent out to Tahiti seem to have shared the Directors' views about the importance of hierarchy and loyalty to the British monarchy. The mission's view of Pomare's power was inherited from previous visitors to Tahiti. The LMS sent letters and gifts sent to Pomare addressed him as King and provided him with examples of the trappings of monarchy. The presence of the missionaries gave Pomare a further source of information about European customs; including the powers of kings and examples of English law and punishment.

In chapter six it was argued that the Tahitians' rejection of 'Oro worship should be viewed in terms of their existing religious beliefs, which had mechanisms for rejecting patron *atua* who were perceived to be failing the people. The descriptions which survive of the actions of Pomare II and other high ranking individuals show them testing Christianity by breaking a prohibition of Tahitian religion. As Tippett has suggested, the decision to abandon the old ways was linked to proof that the new god had superior power.[5] News of events in Tahiti promoted renewed interest in the South Sea Mission. Early accounts were cautious and focused on events such as the Baptism of Pomare II and the dedication of his Royal Chapel. Letters from Pomare were published. The impression of Pomare II as monarch was thereby reinforced.

A number of questions related to the drafting of the first Tahitian law code were addressed in chapter seven. First, it was noted that there is no direct evidence that the suggestions about lawmaking made in London being translated into an LMS policy transmitted to the missionaries. The missionaries' own explanations give a strong impression that the decision to assist with drafting laws was their own.

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[5] Tippett, *People Movements in Polynesian,* 207-220.

Second, an evaluation of the reasons given by members of the mission noted that two were highlighted in the correspondence; that the abandonment of 'Oro worship had removed the rationale for former sanctions, and that the mission had received requests for advice. Both these circumstances appear to be confirmed in other documents produced by the mission in this period.

Third, it was noted that the evidence concerning the division of mission in 1818 is inconclusive. A dispute did halt the discussion of law codes for a brief period, however, this may have resulted from more general tensions in the mission, both between the two stations on Mo'orea over the site of the printing press and the differences between the old missionaries and those who arrived in 1817. The differences between the backgrounds of the new missionaries and the old are not sufficiently great to support the conclusion that their views on church and state would have differed significantly. Their evangelical backgrounds were similar but the two groups did diverge in their attitudes concerning the state of the mission and the importance of visible signs of civilisation. Only Orsmond appears to have consistently distanced himself from civil matters.

Fourth, on the question of the creation of a national church it is clear that the mission did co-operate to a considerable extent with Pomare II. However, they were able to reconcile their actions with a model of church government which emphasised church membership. Their journals show careful attention to church meetings and a concern with the progress of church members whose behaviour was judged by different criteria than that of other Tahitians. The laws were not intended to perform a spiritual function.

Ari'i expected to take the lead in religious affairs. Missionaries, however, attempted to prevent their intervention and occasionally opposed the will of a chief. The press was not sited according to Pomare's wishes and even Queen Pomare was denied admission to communion. However, in the case of the Tahitian Auxiliary Missionary Society there were clear overlaps between religious and civil affairs. The chiefs were the governors of the society. There was confusion with Pomare's national trading ventures. There were also attempts by *ari'i* to influence the location of mission stations.

Chapter eight assessed the content of the laws and noted that the clause on sedition showed strong Tahitian influences. The adoption of this Western institution gave Tahiti the appearance of a unified kingdom. The appointment of judges also supported Pomare's power. However, the laws were also a tool which could be used by other high ranking *ari'i* as a means of countering the power of the Pomare family.

The spread of law making to other islands was facilitated by the Tyerman and Bennet deputation in two ways. Firstly, they gave their approval to the policy, and thus the authority of the directors and also participated in the redrafting of codes and the coronation of Pomare III. Second, their accounts of the progress of the Tahitian and Society Islands Missions rehabilitated the mission in the eyes of the public and prepared the way for the acceptance of the influential narratives of Ellis and Williams.

The coronation of Pomare III was shocking to some supporters of the LMS. The measure was carried out in the presence of the Tyerman and Bennet deputation and with regalia supplied by Haweis' son. It can be interpreted, therefore, as a highpoint in the strategy of fostering a Tahitian Christian monarchy, a policy which Haweis had supported. In 1827, the LMS board noted that a founding principle of the LMS had always been that the new churches should adopt the form of church government which they thought best.

Mission involvement in law making received the approval of the Tyerman and Bennet Deputation and from that time became an established pattern in LMS missions elsewhere in the Pacific. With the success of John Williams and the adoption of law codes by other missions confidence in the strategy grew. Tyerman and Bennet welcomed the laws that they found at Tahiti, Huahine and Raiatea in their reports as a sign of the transforming effect of Christianity. This theme was taken up by Ellis and Williams who proudly exhibited them as evidence of the civilising power of the Gospel. Indeed, a whole generation of writers described the mission in terms adopted from Ellis and Williams. However, by the time the centenary histories of the LMS were written, the laws made in Tahiti and the other Islands were a subject that was passed over with minimal comment.

This apparent embarrassment about the lawmaking activities of missionaries at the close of the century, however, was not present in the 1830s and 1840s. Briefly in those years a number of authors presented a view to the public which represented the Tahitians as a Christian nation under a Christian monarch. At this time, while critics of the mission occasionally raised the issue, the LMS provided a strong defence of the law codes and the Tahitian Mission. There was no question of their having acted inappropriately or broken a "no politics" rule. In the evidence given to the Committee of the House of Commons on Aborigines Ellis quoted with pride the opinion of a British naval officer who had visited Tahiti:

> …we cannot but congratulate the people on the introduction of the present penal code, and acknowledge that it is one of the greatest temporal blessings they have received from the introduction of Christianity.[6]

However unrealistic this portrayal may have been, it was an assertion of the Tahitians' right to self government and bore the implication that with the benefit of the Christian faith Polynesians were capable of achieving "civilisation".

Following the annexation of Tahiti by the French comments about the Tahitian Nation reached their height in the petition campaign of 1846. In these documents the British public sympathised not with a defeated chief but with the sovereign of a Christian nation. The picture presented by the LMS of the Pomare dynasty and of the "civilised" institutions established in the islands was taken up in the memorials to the government. The description of events at Tahiti in LMS publications further supported the idea that an outrage had been committed against the Tahitian Kingdom. The existence of laws codes at each of the Windward Islands became a crucial part of the evidence for establishing their independence. The presentation of the islands was often idealistic and, indeed, patronising. However, it was positive in its assessment of the capability of the inhabitants of the islands and their right to govern themselves.

Participation of members of the Tahitian mission in law making and building a Tahitian Kingdom was not, therefore, a contravention of LMS principles. The respect shown to indigenous leaders was a transfer of the deference to authority

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[6] Ellis was quoting Capt. F W Beechey of HMS *Blossom* in *Christianity the Means of Civilisation*, 183.

which was expected of the missionaries in Britain to a context in which the ruling power was a Tahitian *ari'i*.

The LMS missionaries at Tahiti, and those who served in the years before 1817 in particular, were at home with hierarchy and monarchy as a result of their backgrounds and through the influence of Haweis. The avoidance of politics, for them, was an avoidance of radicalism, faction and participation in disputes between leaders. The assistance they gave in framing Christian laws was a logical outcome of their instructions which had led them to expect that a transformation of society would follow the acceptance of Christianity. As Rev Thomas Raffles told the Annual General Meeting in 1814:

> .. we are neither warranted nor disposed to legislate for those to whom we preach the gospel. If indeed the introduction of the gospel shall give to the untutored savage a milder code of laws, a purer principle of government- if it shall teach him more correctly the relations of human life, and the responsibilities which they involve, so that in the administration of rewards and punishments, caprice shall yield to justice, and physical strength to the dictates of right, - who but must pronounce its influence benign, and hail the harbinger of such inestimable benefits to mankind? But this is not the influence of Missionaries, but the influence of the gospel that they preach; and the whole constitution and genius of that gospel must be changed ere it can cease to have an influence like this.[7]

The appropriation of the institutions of a Christian kingdom, in the Tahitian context of the early Nineteenth Century, was as attractive to ambitious indigenous leaders as it was to their missionary advisors.

The loss of faith in mission law making, and its absence from LMS histories written at the end of the Nineteenth Century, was the result of changes in beliefs about the capacity of indigenous leaders to maintain order and govern themselves. Pessimistic assessments of the ability of indigenous people to transform their societies and become "civilised" were accompanied by increased calls for their

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[7] Thomas Raffles, "Missions to the Heathen Vindicated from the Charge of Enthusiasm," in *Four Sermons Preached at the Twentieth General Meeting of the London Missionary Society 1814* ed. Belfrage (London: J Dennett, 1814), 65.

protection and advocacy of schemes in which European intervention was the source of law and order.

APPENDIX. THE POMARE CODE OF 1819[1]

POMARE,

Because God has conferred on you the title of King of Tahiti, of Mo'orea and the neighbouring islands etc., etc., and all the people who love Him, may you be saved by the true God.

As a result of God's great love for us, He has sent us His Word. We will keep this Word in order that our life might be saved. With the intention that our conduct be similar to that of the men of God, we make known to you now:

A CODE FOR TAHITI.

I. Concerning murder
Fathers and mothers or the relations, the neighbours or all other people killing newborn infants or those not yet born, just as those who kill a person shall die.

II. Concerning Theft
If a man steals a pig, he will give back fourfold as recompense: two for the owner of the pig and two for the king; if he has no pigs, it will be two canoes, one for the owner and one for the king. In the place of a canoe, it will be at least two rolls of cloth: one for the owner of the pig and a similar one for the king. In place of a roll of cloth, he will present other goods. It will be the same as reparation for all goods stolen; the thief must render up fourfold in multiples of four in the same way, two for the owner and two for the king. In default of goods, he will cultivate the soil of him from whom he has stolen the article. If he has nothing at all, his land will become the property of the king; he will no longer stay but wander the roads for an unlimited time. If the king rehabilitates him, the land will be returned. If the king does not rehabilitate him, he will have nothing more. The judges will make known the sentence for the thief in order to make good his nasty business.

III. Concerning pigs
If a pig breaks into an enclosure and destroys the crops, one will take note of the state of the enclosure. The judges will make a formal report. If the enclosure was in good condition, the judges will tell the owner of the pigs the amount of the compensation to be sent for the crops destroyed. He will also make good the damage to the enclosure. If the enclosure was badly maintained where the pigs entered and destroyed crops, one will not reclaim compensation. If someone takes a pig and throws it breaking its leg, or if he strikes and wounds it, he will keep it. He will search for one of the same size to return to the owner of the pig. If he has not a pig, he will give something else in reparation; if he has nothing, he will work for the person who owned the pig. The judges will tell him the work needed to make

[1] This translation is based upon the text in Robert Koenig and Winston Pukoki, "Des bords de la Tamise aux Rivages de Arue, le code de Tahiti." *Bulletin de la Société des Etudes Océaniennes* 13 (2000) 50-71. See also L. J. Bouge, "Le Code Pomaré de 1819: Historique et Traduction." *Journal de la Societé des Océanistes* 7-8 (1951) 5-26. With thanks to Dr Andrew Ross and Dr Mike Purcell.

amends. If he does not bring what he is due and if he then does not put himself to work, he will be exiled.

IV. Concerning stolen goods

If someone steals something and, having obtained it changes if for something belonging to someone else and if that person knows they have received a piece of stolen property and does not reveal this but hides it, he is also a thief. He will have the same punishment as the thief. Everyone who hides property stolen by someone else, knowing that the thing is stolen, is also a thief. He will receive the same sentence as that of a thief.

V. Concerning lost property

If something comes into the hands of someone who knows the owner, he must give it back to the owner. If the property is in good order, one will give a small reward to he who found it; if the property was in a bad state, one will not give a reward, one will simply receive it back. If the aforementioned property of which one knows the owner is hidden, this act of hiding is also theft. The punishment must be identical with that of a thief.

VI. Concerning exchanges

If people exchange goods and if the transaction is done properly and in order, each taking away what is theirs, if after some time, one of them brings back the object exchanged, the other does not need to give it up if he does not want to. If the person who owns the object wishes to take back what someone has brought back to him, that is up to him. If the goods are not faulty at the moment of exchange, yet once at home one notices it, it is right to return it. If the bad quality was known to the buyer when he took it to his house, and it is taken back to the seller of the goods then the he will not receive it.[2] If someone is sick, let an intermediary take his goods to be exchanged, [and] if the exchange is agreeable, he [the intermediary] will carry the goods to be exchanged to the sick person; equally, it is [this person] who will return it, or if it is necessary to return it; it is right to return it without the person who has exchanged it having seen it. Those who are not exchanging goods must not deprecate the goods of others. That is bad. Those not exchanging goods must not act in this way while others are making exchanges. The two who are exchanging may criticise, that is better.

VII Concerning the non-observance of the Sabbath

It is a great sin before God for a man to work on the Sabbath day. The tasks that cannot be put off are authorised: but not the preparation of a dugout canoe, the building of a house, working the land or other similar tasks. No one should make a long journey on the Sabbath. Whoever wants to take himself to the pastor's to the hear the Word of God and truly with that intention, should go there without going aside from the road or the goal [of the journey]. If the intention of going to hear the Word of God is a lie, that must not be done, it is bad. If one wishes to go to the pastor's place on the day of the cooking of the foodstuffs [Saturday], that is good. Whoever persists in undertaking unauthorised work, which he might not do and if he

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[2] This sentence is unclear in Pukoki's text. Bouge's version is followed here.

does not obey, he will work for the king, the judges telling him the kind of work he has to do.

VIII. Concerning quarrels

However, every man who provokes a quarrel, who arouses sedition, who plots against the sub-division of a district, who encourages subversion, who strikes his thigh to defy his enemy, who persists in shaking his head as a sign of opposition, who exults in his pleasure, who disgusts by his conversation, who whispers [to arouse] dissatisfaction, who passes on wicked gossip, who forgets half of the issues, who incites to action, who is consumed by anger and by spite in body and spirit, who makes signs with his eye, who is scathing, who continually makes signs with his head, who spies from the inside, who has an evasive look, who removes bags, who has a deceitful manner, who has a bad character, who performs evil, who practices ceremonies on a flotilla of war canoes, who rants, who travels at night, who exhorts the people, who is dismissed from his office, who encourages, who dresses his hair in braids as a sign of grief, who has a light head, who remains passive when the enemy approaches, who undermines peace, who destroys canoes, who mingles with the soldiers, who lies, who quarrels on the subject of a favourite child for power, who turns the discussion in his favour, who cuts ropes, who undoes that which has been done, who breaks his given word, who strips the bark from trees, who prays in a pagan way, who is attached to the earth, who has not chosen his camp, who does his hair in a particular way when meeting with the chiefs in order to incite them to go to war, who is furious, who rolls his eyes like a fool, who speaks shaking his head as a sign of opposition, who spurns others, who lights a fire to practice sorcery, who attacks from the side, who hides, who slips his hand into the bag, who gives himself up to endless fighting, who takes the place of another person, who brings evil into being by his unruliness, who speaks like an *oputu* bird, who strikes up a friendship with a stranger, who has the title both of a lower chief and of a higher chief, who does nothing but sleep, who muddles things up, who intimidates people, who uses spells, who tattoos his lower belly, who keeps to himself precious information, who provokes a chiefs council, who deceives the people by wicked tricks, who accuses an innocent person, who clashes with people, who is bold, audacious, who has an evil tongue, who rejects this present law developed by the *hui arii* and the *hui raatira* of this island; acting thus they may be exiled, may no longer be helped.

If the king restores him then the matter rests there, if the king does not restore him, there is nothing more to be done. (This present article leads to death, he who acts this way will die-that he might not act in this way).

IX Concerning bigamy

It is not permitted for two women to stay with the same man, similarly for two men to stay with the same women. This does not conform to the existing code. However, a man who already had two wives in the time of paganism, one has nothing to say to him, he can remain so, the law will not condemn him. Nonetheless, if one of his wives dies and the other lives, he will not have the right to take another.

X. Concerning a woman abandoned in the old days
A man who abandoned his wife in the pagan times to unite with another does not have to return to his abandoned wife in the same way that a woman need not go back to a husband abandoned in the pagan era.

XI. Concerning the married man and the married woman
If a married man takes another woman, and the legitimate wife becomes angry and leaves her husband, she may leave him. If she wishes to unite with another man, she may take him. But it is not necessarily a fault if that man unites with another woman if he stays with her alone. If this woman whom he maltreated dies, he can then unite with another woman. With regard to a woman who has taken another [man], if the legitimate husband is angry and abandons his wife, he may leave her. If he wishes to unite with another woman, he may unite with her. But the woman has not necessarily committed a fault in uniting with another man if she stays with him alone. If the husband whom she maltreated dies, she then can unite with another man. At that time the judges will make known the penalty for those who have taken a woman. Here it is: he will bring a large number of valuable objects to the judges who will give them directly to the man from whom the woman was taken. If he does not pay with things of value and does not give compensation he will be held until everything has been taken due as compensation for the woman he seized.

XII. Concerning the abandoning of a spouse
If a man abandons his wife without any reason, the judges will advise him to take up again the union with his wife. If he pays no attention to their advice, he will be exiled. He will not take another wife. If the wife he abandoned dies, he can then take another wife. As for the woman he abandoned, she can take another husband. It is the same for a woman who leaves her husband for no reason, she will be judged in the same way.

XIII. Concerning the refusal to support a wife
If a man refuses to give food to his wife and if he is allowing her to die of hunger, the judges will counsel the man not to behave in this way. If he does not listen to the advice and the woman leaves because of this bad treatment, the man should be exiled. He cannot take another wife. This does not conform to the present code. As for the woman who might have been so ill treated, if she wants another husband, that is up to her.

XIV. Concerning marriage
To marry with a woman is a moral contract between two people, a single man and a single woman to come together in marriage. They cannot be brother and sister, but it is possible to marry within the extended family or with non-related persons. It is a missionary or else a judge who will marry them. Those who wish to marry should make this known to a missionary or a judge. It is up to this missionary to decide if everything is all right. If it is not, then the couple cannot marry; if there is nothing wrong, it is good thing that they marry. Here are the impediments; the woman may have her husband on another island and come to another and pretend to marry there. This does not conform to the present code. It is the same for a man. It is for this reason that the missionary will ask the people at large if they know of bad behaviour

that he or she may have done on another island. They must tell the missionary so that he is aware of the impediment, in which case there will be no wedding. If there is no impediment it is a good thing that they marry.

On the day of public worship, the missionary will announce this news to everyone: "so-and-so and so-and-so wish to be married." Then everyone will search for any impediment that might prevent their marriage. When the day for the celebration of the marriage arrives, let people come as witnesses. The missionary shall then tell the man to take the right hand of the woman, and say to him, "Do you take this woman to be your true wife and to regard her until death?" Then the man will shall answer, "Yes." And in the same way, the missionary will tell the woman to take the right hand of the man and ask her, "Do you take this man to be your true husband, will you obey him and regard him alone until death." Then the woman answers, "Yes." After this is finished the missionary declares to all, "These two have become truly man and wife, in the presence of God and men." The missionary will write the two names in the register of marriages. It is good to do this. They shall not unite in secret. That is bad. He shall pray before sleeping with a woman, that is a good thing.

XV Concerning lying
If a man makes it to be believed solely by unfounded statements or blasphemy, theft, murder, adultery or other imagined things, without having paid attention to their veracity, the one who does this commits a very grave fault. It will be necessary to clear a four mile portion of the road, two arms breadth; for a lesser lie, this will be two miles long with the same breadth; for yet a lesser lie, this will be a mile long with the same breadth. For a very small lie, which does not cause pain, one will only give a judgement; and when the judgement has been pronounced, one will let him leave. When the road has been cleared entirely by the man at fault, he will have been acquitted of his pain, and that is an end of the matter.

However, when the grass grows again on the cleared way, the owner of the cleared road will remove the grass, so that it is not abandoned. Let the owners of these cleared places sweep the road so that it is well kept. They will raise the central part so that the sides are lower, and the water will flow away immediately when it rains. Let the central part be a dry walkway for the people. In this way, it will be a good road.

If his close relatives are saddened and want to help share the work of the condemned person, that is their business. The chief will give food to the person who clears; he must do no harm to him to the point of letting him die of hunger; he must not give him too much to clear away before nightfall; let him continue to clear; when he is tired, let him rest. on another day, he will continue to clear. And when the condemned person has finished clearing the designated part, he will have paid the price of his pain. The judges will make known the punishment to those who are in the habit of lying. When the sentence has completed, the judges will have arranged the punishment so that the evil in his word is transformed into good.

XVI. Concerning the judges

These are the *iatoai* and all those who are encouraging the good word of God who will judge all the cases that they are presented with. Pateamai, Matihamu, Motuaau, Horoi, Hape, Papaura, Fainau, Tiahoaia, Temauri, Tahitara, Faataere and Tiitorea who will judge at Faaa whenever there will be a case.

For the people of **Temanotahi** they are Rua, Fai, Taataereere, Pupee, Tarauea, Maoni, Raihau, Fare, Maii, Pahuhu, Faatupua, Vairaavaho, Hunahia, Ahupape, Taataobu, Taihia, Teiho, Tomaro, Taifao, Maatebuaa, Teutari, Tua, Tiavairau, Marea, Teaumanava, Tautahaa, Piria, Faaitoa, Aihere, Faaruea, Tahua, Roometua and Pohuetea who will judge whenever there will be a case.

For the people of **Teramano**, they are Ariihopea, Hamau, Taaroatahi, Tavi, Puhia, Hufaira, Tuahu, Tiahiti, Marurai, Areroa, Faapuea, Parahi, Tetaputaata, Opahi, Mautete, Mairi, Faura, Tetuanuihaamarurai, Raatiraore, Paita, Huaarii, Otaha, Papahuira, Tuamaea and Tetoofa who will judge whenever there will be a case.

For the people of **Papara**, they are Huarepo, Moovi, Nanuu, Nonoha, Upafara, Potahi, Areva, Moorea, Reti, Toi, Rupe, Mararu, Teaere, Tetuahou, Faamere, Anoano, Hurupa, Tevaruamai, Tirua, Mataa, Tevaruaiterai, Matavera, Miti, Tefaaoraupoo, Ura, Tiaiterai, Aro, Temanava, Paahu, Reti, Teraitua, Mataa, Nanuu, Tevaro, Raoa, Tati, Amoa, Avaeoru, Tetiaau, Tehaapapa, Mairau, Tere, Pairi, Ruanuu, Ape, Temao, Rua, Putauri, Tiaoura, Area, Teavao, Rimapii, Teapee, Nohoraaroa, Ariimaau, Temahuru, Raveita, Tevaruahiotua, Araaihere, Oreromoo, Teriitaumaiterai, Pautu, Matarepo, Tio, Tefa, Tite and Ariifaataia who will judge whenever there will be a case.

For the people of **Atimaono**, they are Terai, Piirai, Ruhiruhia, Teamo, Aunuunu and Teriifaatau who will judge whenever there will be a case.

For the people of **Mataiea**, they are Purumaaha, Taruia, Faapoua, Teehutu, Tematahiapo, Teamo, Ruahine, Terai, Rauoro, Rere, Fano, Pupa, Teuimaiatia, Itia, Tamutamu, Teihotu and Onee who will judge whenever there will be a case.

For the people of **Haumatavana**, they are Tiapou, Naenae, Manono, Panee, Terupe, Tehutu, Matatini, Opiri, Faatahe, Orihura, Pitomai, Teu and Ruroa who will judge whenever there will be a case.

For the people of **Taiarapu**, the people who are at Papeautea and equally for the people who are at Paiuma, they are Tetiamanua, the other Tetiamanua, Paea, Reia, Aruirui, Teriimana, Marutia, Fareatae, Tiraha, Taumataohiro, Teuvira, Hotate, Tapuhia, Taihia, Faarahia, the other Faarahia, Temataua, Ahiahi, Pehe, Hitore, Teavau, Taahia, Hutiti, Tetaahi, Teuie, Maui, Metuaaro, Rura, Huatutui, Huare, Mati, Paumotu, Papaura, Taharai, Puhoro, Pahiutai, Tevahineivi, Maufenua, Mahana, Puahea, Taporo, Umia, Tiopa, Tairaa, Taatatuhaia, Tematahiapo, Ariipau, Tapuni, Ahiahi, Ruu, Taano, Tematua, Vairaavaa, Taneuapoto, Tetuanui, Tefaarava, Teehuvivi, Vahapata, Porotia, Touturei, Upaa, Teapaa, Tafai, Tetuanuihaamarurai

and Teriinahoroa who will judge the people of Taiarapu, of Hui[…], Tefarearii, of Hiroroa, of Taere, of Atituaana, of Hapai, of Taaroa who are found in the valley, the people who are at Papeautea and Paiuma [..] who will judge whenever there will be a case.

For the people of **Mataoae**, they are Ahifa, Teuhi, Paari, Paetaha, Tepaotaata, Upaupaino, Varo, Nanamu, Tuanai, Teao, Ruauia, Ova, Vehe, Tau, Feitara, Opea, Opiro, Omaomao, Pateaino, Tireo, Haapae as well Moe will judge whenever there will be a case.

For the people of **Vairao**, they are Teraitahi, Ruu, Manua, Teirobu, Atii, Tavahia, Mauehaore, Tuaroa, Upa, Rora and Teahahurifenua who will judge whenever there will be a case.

For the people of **Faahiti**, they are Tetoaitematai, Tetuanuifaahiti, Tiapai, Teraituri, Tauraatia, Taufa, Temaamaa, Marereiatiu, Fauobu, Teriifaautia, Matai, Moearu, and Taviarii who will judge whenever there will be a case.

For the people of **Nuhi**, they are Tipao, Manavaroa, Tauamanahune, Temaamaa, Tehaabu, Tematahiapo, Faaruea, Teahietea, Meho, Pahiiriro, Burea and Maraetaata who will judge whenever there will be a case.

For the people of **Teahuare** and of **Tetaero**, they are Aroa, Tetuaahoro, Pahua, Pahi, Tepatia, Taaiva, Vaiho, Area, Temaau, Taruri, Tevaruamaue, Tetuanui, Uetia, Mafera, Faataere, Paperoa, Maamaa, Noho, Mariua, Tapii, Teai, Farau, Vahinetuanui, Area, Tiihauou, Temauu, Paepahu, Toea, Taataobu, Teriitua and Roura who will judge whenever there will be a case.

For the people of **Teue** and of **Mehiti**, they are Tiamatahi, Haava, Havaii, Tepua, Faau, Amo, Tiae, Aro, Taea, Teamo, Tue, Tehereio, Paui, Amea, Moeino, Teaau, Pahipaea, Tiafa, Hipoo, Torea, Parau, Faatiu, Nuu, Hopuetai, Papauri, Taaiva, Paparoa, Maeta, Heuheu, Paefaaio, Ahuriro, Upa, Tevivirau, Haia, Rare, Paumotu, Haere e, Maaraa, Poihahi, Taute and Hitoti who will judge whenever there will be a case.

Concerning more judges

For the people of **Mahina** and of **Haururu**, they are Tepau, Tahiti, Titi, Faeta, Faahee, Hi, Tiaarue, Tuu, Titimi, Moarii, Teraiharoa, Rauhuri, Ruruore, Obu, Tiraroa, Matorea, Teamo, Tiareura, Tematahiapo, Vane, Ariiore, Roi, Tiiri, Momoa, Aati, Pouura, Paua, Teparavahine, Maharia, Teroo, Faatea, Teova, Faarahia, Aito, Upea, Faaroo, Puaraau, Tetupua, Tauarii, Teraiharoa, Pafaarua, Vaiatua, Tepura, Mihi, Tahuhu, Poroa, Tefaahira, Tarapati, Manua, Pata, Taaroamaiturai, Pori, Maneu, Aneu, Taatauuru, Tiaiho, Huitia, Mairoo, Tiaoo, Tiapaitia, Tefaahira, Utatia, Tepau, Taituo, Temauritahito, Pori, Tuihaa, Mani, Tiaarii, Farara, Tiatoa, Tefaea, Teheva, Teova, Tauvahine, Omaomao, Tefanautua, Amatahiapo, Purata, Huri, Titi, Tiapai, Maheirava, Titaa, Teau, Itae, Parautaamu, Taihoru, Vavaro, Tehui, Pafaarua, Faatiraha, Pori, Teihotua, Atitioroi, Tate, Paitia, Tetupuaioterai and Tiipa who will judge whenever there will be a case.

For the people of **Pare** and **Arue**, they are Temaehuatea, Tanoa, Taihia, Nena, Teparautaata, Tenahe, Vairoa, Tuahine, Reea, Iraa, Mauaihiti, Tetiatafaamaue, Teraiareva, Paa, Tiai, the other Tiai, Fanau, Teihotia, Orairai, Maruae, Tiaraai, Tiare, Ruahate, Farehupe, Manamanaiaha, Mahea, Hotupuu, Mairuru, Virio, Temaua, Paipai, Mahea, Tetumu, Haro, Tiaava, Maeta, Meia, Tevahitia, Hueromoa, Tetoamauroa, Tetumu, Naehu, Mairau, Tahaa, Vaihuti, Farua, Tenahe, Otoorefaatefatefa, Tahiti, Rai, Teimua, Pata, Maufane, Moehau, Tiavaraitaata, Parea, Muunene, Pahere, Heivae, Paraharaha, Meha, Tahaa, Apaapa, Ahuriro, Teraatira, Mape, Pia, Poniu, Tauvere, Titia, Harua, Fareniau, Tearaipani, Pitara, Tiaipoi, Ravaai, Aratai, Rairiri, Poufere, Faamatau, Opio, Tereohumu, Itaita, Ouo, Hau, Faataha, Aratai, Hiti, Uva, Hivaa, Matairahi, Mutoi, Tifara, Unene, Ihi, Vaia, Nouvahine, Tavahia, Tihata, Pori, Huriaau, Paa, Tuaahu, Tetohu, Tepua, Huitia, Raufau, Otoore, Buaautu, Tautumahu, Hue, Tehora, Tavana, Moorea, Teao, Vaapau, Huamao, Roropau, Puaiaha, Paemai, as well as Arripaea who will judge whenever there will be a case.

For the people of **Mo'orea**
For the people of **Teioiraro**, they are Raupua, Puta, Uvira, Pehe, Avaeoru, Mare, Paee, Tetumu, Tetiatau, Rutua, Tetaraa, Tauhiro, Vaha, Hanu, Teamo, Maamaaiti, Vipuu, Teupooihi, Maheu, Horoi, Tefatiaarai, Maro, Papetiri, Teaau, Taitonu, Tetiaeaa, Vanaa, Mape, Tehei, Iria, Hehe, Utohou, Tau, Teaau,Ofaiao, Faateni, Manea, Tiihiva, Pi, Hihae, Maraa, Ohumua, Tapuni, Patii, Ovaovao, Oea, Maihaere, Teraatira, Tarahoi, Tairaa, Ofai, Pi, Hotutaihi, Terahuaura, Puariri, Motuuta, Teruru, Itaita, Hurarama, Tuahine, Papehara,Hutumanu, Mairoi, Fareraro, Iritau, Taia, Tuaroa, Marama, Hiti, Teraiharoa, Maapara, Teaua, Amaru, Tauirua, Teamo, Tau, Tafai, Ahuriro, Mahine and Taaroaarii who will judge whenever there will be a case.

For the people of **Teioinia**, they are Papauru, Tetiaeaha, Horoinuu, Tepapuatea, Ofaimarama, Teriimana, Hurupa, Paperoa, Taputere, Umauma, Ruanuu, Matoe, Tea, Pee, Tahara, Taero, Mairau, Hopuu, Mare, Tama, Tepa, Maitara, Hamuna, Tevaearai, Varaia, Pao, Motuaau, Titohi, Nuu, Otoi, Tiahani, Otaha, Teatea, the other Teatea, Omaomao, Tetuaiterai, Tepau as well as Taaroaarii who will judge whenever there will be a case.

XVII. Concerning the procedure of justice
When an offence is committed those who are angry must not ever avenge themselves on those who have maltreated them. The offence must be brought before the judges, it is they who will judge it. If the case has been started one should ask of the accused what is his district of origin. If he comes from somewhere else he will be taken back to his place of origin to be judged there. The witnesses will also present themselves there. It will be the proper judges of that district who will say what is the punishment. That is, when the offence is well established so that the verdict may be pronounced. There should be two witnesses or again three to decide what it merits. A sole witness is not sufficient to decide on the merits of the case. If there is no witness and if one is accused by word only then he receives nothing and he is allowed to go away.

XVIII. Concerning the court room

Court rooms must be built all around Tahiti and Mo'orea, three for the people of Teoropaa and of Tefana, four for the people of Landward Teva, four the people of Seaward Teva, eight for Teporionu, and also eight for Mo'orea. All cases must be judged inside these houses. These houses are to be used for judgement and for nothing else.

XIX. Concerning the present code

This code developed by the great chiefs of Tahiti should be posted up on posts in all the law courts in Tahiti and Mo'orea so that everybody will have knowledge of them, without the smallest exception.

GLOSSARY OF TAHITIAN WORDS

'arioi. A Tahitian society known for drama, dance and rituals. The members of the 'arioi were probably of high rank. They did not allow their infants to live.

Ao. Day or light, also the world of people when contrasted with *po,* the world of the atua. See chapter one.

Ari'i. A chief.

Ari'i rahi. A high ranking chief.

Ari'i ri'i. A lesser chief.

Ata. An object or animal possessed by an *atua.*

Atua. A powerful non-human being, often translated as god. Groups of Tahitians took a particular *atua* as their patron see chapter one.

Atua-ta'ata. A less powerful *atua* with one human parent, sometimes translated as demi-god.

Bure-atua. Literally praying people, the name given to early Tahitian Christians.

Fa'atui. A mariner in the retine of an *ari'i.*

Fare atua. A house in which the *atua* were kept.

Hara. An error or incorrect action including mistakes in the conduct of ritual. The concept does not include a moral element, sin is therefore not an appropriate definition. See chapter one.

Hau. Rule, the mandate to govern the people through the approval the *atua.* See chapter one.

Hiamoea. A ceremony described by William Ellis preformed in the case of a besieged stronghold.

Hiro. An *atua,* sometimes described as the god of thieves.

Hiva. A warrior in the retine of an *ari'i.*

Iatoai. Judges under the 1819 Pomare Code.

Mahu. A man who dressed and lived as a woman and was subject to the same restrictions.

Mamaia. A new religious movement centred on Pape'ete and Puna'auia which opposed the mission. Its leaders, Teao and Hue, claimed direct access to the Christian god.

Mana. This is not a Tahitian word. One definition is power but the use of the concept and its translation have been widely debated. See chapter one.

Manahune. The Common people.

Maohi. The inhabitants of Tahiti and the Society Islands.

Marae. A paved precinct and sacred space. A place of worship and storage of objects associated with the *atua*.

Maro'ura. A feather girdle denoting the wearer's claim to a high ranking kin title. See chapter one.

Motoi. The Tahitian police established by Pomare II.

Noa. Ordinary, *noa* may also mean profane, that is a state which can be contrasted with *tapu,* but this is debated. See chapter one.

Nohoroa'a. A place or object in which an *atua* is transiently resident.

Ora. Life, the quality possessed by humans who are living.

Orero. An orator in the retinue of an *ari'i.*

'Oro. An *atua,* god of war. The centre of 'Oro worship was Raiatea. At the time of first contact with Europeans 'Oro was replacing Ta'aroa as the principle *atua* in Tahiti and Mo'orea. See chapter one.

Oromatua. The souls or spirits of dead relatives with the power to intervene in the affairs of the living.

Pi. A practice through which words found in a new chief's name were replaced in common usage.

Po. Night, darkness or the realm of the *atua.* See chapter one.

Pure ari'i. A ceremony in which the *atua* 'Oro was invested as *ari'i rahi* of Tahiti.

Ra'a. Sacred, consecrated.

Ra'atira. Those who owned land, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century authors often translated the term as "landed proprietors".

Rahui. A prohibition.

Rohutu. Paradise.

Ta'ata. Human beings.

Tahu'a. Literally "authors," religious specialists who conducted rituals.

Ta'aroa. An *atua,* the creator.

Tane. An *atua*, the son of Ta'aroa.

Tapa. Tahitian cloth made form bark.

Tapu. This word may not be Tahitian. See chapter one. Sacred, a person or object
   surrounded by prohibitions which protect worshiper and *atua.*

Taputapuatea. A marae dedicated to 'Oro with a foundation stone taken from the
   marae at Opoa in Raiatea.

Taraehara. A ceremony for the removal of *hara.*

Taumihau. An administrator in the retinue of an *ari'i.*

Tayo. A friend. This was a reciprocal relationship established between two people
   who exchanged named as a sign of their mutual obligations. Tahitians were often
   keen to make *tayos* of apparently high ranking European visitors

Te-ao-tea. Literally, the light land of the Friendly Alliance. An alliance of
   worshippers of 'Oro centred on Opoa in Raiatea. The dark and light lands of the
   alliance were divided by the mountain range of Raiatea but the geographical
extent
   of the alliance is debatable. See chapter one.

Te-ao-uri. Literally, the dark land of the Friendly Alliance. See chapter one.

Te Aharoa. The people inhabiting the districts of Haapaianoo, Tiarei, Mahaena,
   and Hitiaa in Tahiti. See figure 2.

Te Fana. The inhabitants of the district of Faaa in Tahiti. See figure 2.

Te Oropaa. The people inhabiting the districts of Paea and Punaauia in Tahiti.
   See figure 2.

Te Porionuu. The people inhabiting the districts of Pare, Arue and Haapape in
   Tahiti. See figure 2.

Teva-i-tai. Seaward Teva, the people inhabiting the districts of Afaahiti, Pueu,
   Tautira, Teahupoo, Mataoae, Vairao and Toahotu in Tahiti. See figure 2.

Teva-i-uta. Landward Teva, the people inhabiting the districts of Vaiari, Vaiuriri, Atimaono and Papara in Tahiti. See figure 2.

Tiri-a-pea. A disposal pit for sacred items at a *marae*.

Titi. Persons captured in war, possibly used for human sacrifice.

To'o. Human-made image which might be possessed by an *atua*.

To'ohitu. A new court consisting of seven *ari'i* from the leading tribes of Tahiti established by the Tahitian Code of 1825.

Ture. A collection of sayings and advice about good behaviour and wise policy described by Douglas Oliver. The word, drived from the Hebrew "Torah", was introduced by LMS missionaries to refer to law.

Varua. The soul.

Vea. The messenger of an *ari'i*.

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