

9 *The legacy of Futuna's Tsiaina in the languages of Polynesia*

ROBERT LANGDON

The island of Futuna, 240 km north-east of Vanualevu, Fiji, has always been virtual *terra incognita* to most Pacific scholars, especially English-speaking ones. Like its nearest neighbour, Wallis Island, otherwise Uvea, Futuna has been in the French sphere since French Marist missionaries established themselves there in 1837. Wallis and Futuna jointly have been both a protectorate and a colony of France. They have had the status of a French overseas territory since 1961. Most of the literature on them is naturally in French. Until fairly recently, the only way to reach them was by ship (Douglas and Douglas 1989:621–627).

In the circumstances, *not* to know about the Tsiaina of Futunan tradition and *not* to suspect their influence on the prehistory of Polynesia and its languages has been a normal condition.

Tsiaina is Futunan for 'China'. On Futuna the term describes a group of supposedly Chinese castaways who are said to have been wrecked in prehistoric times on the now-uninhabited island of Alofi that is separated from Futuna by a narrow strait. The Tsiaina thereafter played a prominent role in Futunan political and cultural affairs. They were eventually overthrown in a popular uprising. There are at least six recorded versions of the Tsiaina tradition. They give the impression that the reign of the Tsiaina was quite short. In reality, the evidence presented in this paper suggests that it lasted for a goodly period—several generations, at least. Certainly, the Tsiaina left a significant legacy in the language and culture of Futuna that was also carried to other islands. To appreciate this, one must first know what the various versions of the Tsiaina traditions claim.

A Frenchman, Emile Boisse, and an Englishman, Edward A. Liardet, wrote the first two versions in 1874 (Harms 1990). Boisse was a midshipman in the French naval vessel *L'Hermite*, which was wrecked on Wallis Island on 29 June 1874. He spent several days on Futuna after being sent there in a boat to seek help. In the following year, he published an article about Samoa, Tokelau, Wallis and Futuna in which he acknowledged that much of his

Jan Tent and Paul Geraghty, eds *Borrowing: a Pacific perspective*, 177–190
Canberra: Pacific Linguistics, 2004.

© Copyright in this edition is vested with Pacific Linguistics.

information had come from the French missionaries serving in those islands. In writing of Futuna, Boisse referred to reputed Tongan visits in prehistoric times, and added (author's translation):

A more certain, more extraordinary visit is that of the Chinese as it has left some traces. At a very remote period, some Chinese arrived at Futuna where they multiplied rapidly. They taught the Futunans the art of making bark cloth superior to that of all the other islands. (Harms 1990:19–20)

Liardet, who evidently visited Futuna at much the same time as Boisse, wrote about the reputed Chinese in a letter from Levuka, Fiji, on 2 December 1874. A 'curious circumstance' concerning the Futunans, he said, was that many of them were 'descended from Chinese'. About 200 years earlier, about 20 Chinese had reached Futuna, having 'escaped probably from shipwreck in a boat'. Although the islanders were then cannibals, they had treated the castaways well and they, in turn, had taught the islanders 'several useful arts'. Liardet went on:

[S]ome of their works in masonry still remain a memorial to them and the fine designs painted on their tappa [sic] testify to the improvements the natives attained from these immigrants to their shores. The tendency however of a superior people for the ascendancy proved in this case most disastrous to the Chinese, who, having conspired to assume the government of the islands became the victims consequent on their plot being discovered and were all massacred in one night, by order of the chiefs. It is now only about forty years since they wore pigtailed and this period is identical with the advent of the French Roman Catholic Missionaries [...]. (Harms 1990:18–19)

James Lyle Young, a well-respected trader, wrote a third account of Futuna's 'Chinese' during a visit to the island in the schooner *Daphne* in April 1875:

[...] there is a most interesting fact in connection with Futuna which illustrates the manner in which South Sea Islands have been peopled by natives of the groups from a great distance and in the teeth of the prevailing winds and currents.

I refer to the legend which they have here of a Chinese (Query: Japanese?) junk having arrived here many years ago with several persons aboard. They had been drifted off from their own land and after a length of time at sea finally made Futuna. It appears that contrary to custom, these persons' lives were spared and they resided for a length of time on the island and married among the people. The natives at last found that they multiplied very fast, and fearing that they might some day become more numerous than themselves, they, with true Pacific policy, killed them all off. This story might seem to be a myth were it not for the fact that the natives here manufacture native cloth marked with a very beautiful and peculiar pattern, which is unknown in any of the neighbouring groups, and which they assert was first introduced by the crew of the junk aforesaid. (Young 1875–77)

The only other account of Futuna's 'Chinese' known to have been written before the American anthropologist Edwin G. Burrows published his *Ethnology of Futuna* in 1936 was the work of Sir Joseph Carruthers, a one-time Premier of New South Wales. He had not been to Futuna and his account, published in 1933, was based on information obtained from several Europeans who had lived there. According to Carruthers, the 'Chinese' landed from a 'large

junk' that was blown off course in a typhoon 'in or near the China Sea'. This had occurred 150 to 200 years earlier. The 'Chinese' had been 'many'—'probably about 100'. They had remained on the island, had intermarried with Futunan women, and had left behind 'a half-breed progeny with slant eyes and a Chinese cast of features'. These features were 'quite marked and self-evident to anyone visiting Futuna'. On Wallis Island, such features were 'not at all pronounced', except in a few cases.

The Chinese immigrants [Carruthers added] ... made themselves useful and agreeable to the natives of Futuna. Coming from a race of born agriculturists, they taught the natives better agriculture. Also as clever boat builders and carpenters and joinery workers they improved the native race in this class of work. They also could read and write — or at least some of them could — and they explained this to the natives and left examples of their character writings.

But all this contributed to the later undoing of the Chinese ... [Eventually] the common people ... rose up and massacred them to the last man, sparing off their offspring, however. (Harms 1990:20–21)

In his ethnology, Burrows (1936:54–55) published a version of the Tsiaina tradition that was a composite of accounts given to him by the Father Superior of Futuna's Marist mission, three long-term European traders, and two chiefly Futunans, Tu'i Asoa and Tu'i Agaifo. The latter was of the 'Tsiaina kindred'. One of Burrows' informants claimed that the 'Chinese' had reached the island about 350 years earlier. However, the Futunans could not link their arrival with the reign of any king. Their first landing place had been in the district of Sa'avaka on Alofi. Tu'i Asoa put their numbers at about 100, but two of the Europeans said 300 and 400. The 'Chinese' were said to have dug a well or cistern at Asau in Sa'avaka. According to Tu'i Agaifo, Asau was a 'Chinese' name. A similar well in the district of Alofitai was also attributed to the immigrants. Such wells had not been known on Futuna until this time.

Tu'i Agaifo said that, from Alofi, the 'Chinese' had gone to Ifoga, near Vele, which they renamed Fale Pule. The son of their chief fell into a well that they dug there and they filled it with rocks to make a grave for him. From Ifoga, the immigrants went to Tavai. Some informants said that, wherever they went, they struck a gong and judged by its resonance whether the place was suitable for settlement or not. However, Tu'i Agaifo claimed that this detail was not authentic. On the other hand, Tu'i Asoa said that several of the island's place names were 'Chinese'. Poi had replaced Pelenoa; Tamana had formerly been Langivusi; Tufuone was formerly Fatulaika; Pouma was formerly Pousi; and Fikavi had replaced a name that had been forgotten. Like most previous writers, Burrows said that the making and decoration of a superior kind of bark cloth was attributed to the Tsiaina. He added that whether they became dangerously strong or took too many Futunan women, the Futunans had eventually turned against them and massacred them.

The French archaeologist Daniel Frimigacci and three collaborators published yet another version of the Tsiaina tradition in 1987.¹ It reiterates many details of the earlier versions but adds others. It claims that after the 'Chinese' landed on Alofi, they dug wells at Sosoni and

¹ This version of the legend is also published in Frimigacci, Keletona, Moyses-Faurie and Vienne (1995).

fought with the people of Vaika. From Alofi, they went to Kolotai on Futuna, where more wells were dug. In going from Vele to Pelenoa, Tamana, Pouma and Tuatafa, they built irrigated taro fields 'since they knew the art of finding water'. Tuatafa was their name for a place previously known as Amatuku. Finally, the Chinese went to Fiua, formerly Maota. Wherever they went, they carried a small wooden drum, or *lali*, which they beat each time they reached a village. If it was resonant, they settled there. At a place called Lalotalie, 'Under the *talie* (*Terminalia catappa*) tree', they built a magnificent residence for their chief, Tu'i Agaifo. The 'Chinese' then had good relations with the island's king, who lived at Tapulakaia. However, one day—after an incident that Frimigacci et al. describe at length—a battle broke out at Lalotalie between the people of Tapulakaia and the Tu'i Agaifo's guards. It ended in the massacre of the entire 'Chinese' community except for one man and his wife who took refuge on the hill called Olokimoa, above present-day Nasaleti. No one was ever able to find them again and 'that was the end of the story of the Chinese and of Tapulakaia' (Harms 1990:24–25).

As will have been noted, certain details in two or more of the six versions of the Tsiaina tradition are constant:

- (1) the immigrants landed on Alofi;
- (2) they dug wells on their arrival;
- (3) they travelled about beating a wooden gong or drum, *lali*, to decide where to settle;
- (4) they altered place names;
- (5) they intermarried with the islanders and multiplied;
- (6) they introduced improved methods of making and marking bark cloth;
- (7) they introduced better agricultural methods; and
- (8) they were finally overthrown in a massacre.

None of the constant details is unbelievable. On the other hand, no faith can be placed in the widely varying claims about the number of castaways or the approximate date of their arrival at Futuna. Nor, of course, can it be accepted that they were Chinese or that they actually came from China. As Burrows (1936:55) commented, Tsiaina could have become part of the Futunans' tradition only if 'some Englishman [had] told them so'.

One does not have to seek far for a likely explanation for the Chinese element in the tradition. It almost certainly originated with a local man, Keletaona, who served in British and American whalers for about ten years in the 1820s and 1830s. Bishop Pompallier installed him as Futuna's king in 1842. In that capacity, Keletaona was on hand when Father Isidore Grézel, Futuna's first lexicographer, landed on the island from the French ship *Bucephale* in November 1843. One may readily imagine that he became one of Grézel's principal informants. The *Bucephale*'s commander described him as 'more learned' than any of his countrymen, while another French visitor of several years later recorded that he spoke English (O'Reilly 1964:13–16; Burrows 1936:41–43). Keletaona himself was of the 'Tsiaina kindred'. Hence, the notion that he himself and other Mongoloid countrymen were descended

from people who came from China may well have been sown in his mind during his seafaring days in British and American ships.

The Tsiaina were evidently well-entrenched in Futunan tradition when the first missionaries arrived in 1837. This is suggested by two virtually identical definitions of the word *mō* in the first Futunan and Uvean dictionaries. The Futunan dictionary, compiled by Grézel (1878) between 1843 and 1871, defines *mō* as 'espèce de cochon trapu que l'on dit de Chine' ('squat kind of pig said to be from China').² The Uvean dictionary, compiled by Bishop Bataillon (1932) between 1837 and 1877, has the same definition except that *gras* 'fat' replaces *trapu* 'squat'. The word *mō*, meaning a 'fat, squat or short-legged pig' is also known in the languages of Fiji, Rotuma, Tonga and Samoa.³ It first appeared in the Tongan-English dictionary of the Reverend Samuel Rabone (1845). By contrast, pigs described by the generic Polynesian term *puaka* are long-snouted, leggy and razor-backed (Burrows 1936:23; Langdon 1975:319). The *puaka* pig was present in both Western and Eastern Polynesia at the time of European contact; the *mō* is found only in the Western Pacific and is undoubtedly a more recent arrival.

The word *mō* is evidently a reflex of either Proto Oceanic **mboRo* or Proto Austronesian **beRek* 'pig' (Lynch 1991). This leaves little doubt that Futuna's Tsiaina were not Chinese. The first reconstruction is based on terms for pig in languages of Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu and the Solomons; the second on those in Southeast Asian languages. As there are no other Futunan linguistic clues relating to *mō*, the origin of the word itself cannot be resolved on linguistic grounds. On the other hand, no Melanesian community is known that could have supplied Futuna with prehistoric immigrants whose descendants could be looked on in later years as Chinese. So Southeast Asia, with its many people of Mongoloid stock, must have been the homeland both of the *mō* pigs and of the people who brought them to Futuna.

Mongoloid people have straight hair. So one would expect the Futunans to have a term for it. And they do: *sika* or *sikasika*. On Uvea, such hair is called 'ulu *hikahika*; in Tongan, it is 'ulu *hika*. In Samoa, straight hair is described by an unrelated term, *sē'ea*, which presumably means that such hair did not arrive there with immigrants from Futuna. On the other hand, all four languages have cognate terms for slightly wavy hair: Futunan, Uvean *kopa*, Tongan *hika-kopa*, and Samoan 'opa. On Nukuoro, a Polynesian outlier in the Caroline Archipelago, *gobagoba* means 'bushy (of hair)'. No other reflexes of **sika* or **kopa* describing hair occur in Polynesia. However, while **kopa* is thought to derive from Proto Malayo-Polynesian **kembaj* 'wavy', no apparent Southeast Asian relative of **sika* has yet been found.

² The *ō* in *mō* is long in Rotuman, Samoan, Tongan and Uvean, and is assumed to be long in Futunan although it is not so marked by Grézel (1878) or Moyses-Faurie (1993). However, Moyses-Faurie does have *mō* 'mumps', as in Tongan and Uvean. According to a Tongan informant, the faces of people afflicted with mumps look like those of *mō* pigs.

³ Unless otherwise indicated, the sources of lexical data used in this paper are: *Fijian*: Capell (1968), Hazlewood (1914); *Futunan*: Grézel (1878), Moyses-Faurie (1993); *New Zealand Maori*: Williams (1971); *Nukuoro*: Carroll and Soulik (1973); *Rapanui*: Englert (1978), Fuentes (1960); *Rennellese*: Elbert (1975), Elbert, Kuschel and Taupongi (1981); *Rotuman*: Churchward (1940); *Samoa*: Newell (1911); Milner (1966); *Sangirese*: Steller and Aebersold (1959), Sneddon (1984); *Tongan*: Churchward (1959).

Straight-haired Tsiaina were politically dominant on Futuna when the Dutch expedition of Schouten and Le Maire visited it in 1616. An account of the expedition by Le Maire, published in 1618, speaks of the king having one long plait on the left side of his head and of his nobles having two. The account also contains an engraving depicting the king and one of his nobles, as well as several other islanders with short, frizzy hair. The king was evidently sovereign of Sigave, one of Futuna's two main districts. The other district is Alo. The island of Alofi was then inhabited and the people of both were often at war (O'Reilly 1963:69–72; Kirch 1994:18–19).

A 118-word vocabulary that Le Maire compiled contains the words *herico* = *ariki* 'king' and *latou* or *latau* 'chief' (O'Reilly 1963:72–80). The first, now spelled *aliki*, is pan-Polynesian, and was undoubtedly in use when the Tsiaina arrived in Futuna. The second, which would now be written *latu*, is a reflex of Proto Austronesian **datu* 'chief, ruler, prince' (Wurm and Wilson 1975:34,115) and was evidently introduced by the Tsiaina. Reflexes are still found in Fijian *rātū* 'honorific particle and title of rank, before names of males who are chiefs' and Samoan *lātū* 'person in charge of an undertaking'. It also occurs in the Tongan surname *Lātūkefu*. On Futuna, *lātū* is now obsolete, having presumably fallen out of use after the Tsiaina were overthrown some time after 1616 and before the coming of the missionaries. This naturally raises two questions. How long before 1616 did the Tsiaina reach Futuna? And how did they get there? For the time being, the second question seems easier to answer than the first.

The Tsiaina, it seems, could only have reached Futuna directly from Southeast Asia during an exceptional El Niño year when meteorological conditions favoured an involuntary, west-to-east voyage. The fact that, according to tradition, they dug a well at Sa'avaka, Alofi, immediately on landing, supports this proposition.

Studies undertaken since the exceptionally severe El Niño of 1982–83 have shown that the phenomenon causes long periods of anomalous westerly winds. At such times, floods and hurricanes are experienced in some parts of the Pacific and severe droughts in others. An important atmospheric condition associated with El Niño is the southern oscillation. This is a large-scale exchange of air between the eastern South Pacific and the equatorial Indian Ocean around Indonesia. When the oscillation occurs, the trade winds weaken and the warm seawater carried towards Southeast Asia in normal trade-wind conditions begins to surge back along the equator towards South America. It travels as a wave-like motion, taking about 60 days to reach the Peruvian coast (Gross 1983; Langdon 1984).

A voyage in apparent El Niño conditions that seems to have closely paralleled that of Futuna's Tsiaina took place in 1780–81. It carried the Spanish ship *Princesa*, under the command of Antonio Mourelle, from the Philippines to Tonga. Mourelle was in the Philippines in December 1780 when he was ordered to take urgent dispatches to the Viceroy of Mexico. It was the wrong season of the year for him to follow the normal galleon route north of the Hawaiian Islands. So he headed south. He lost sight of the Philippines on 8 December and later passed close to the Admiralty Islands, the St Matthias Group and Ontong Java Atoll. The people of St Matthias, he noted, were suffering the effects of a severe drought. He also recorded that there was no wind by day, but fresh breezes from the north-north-west to the north-east by night which made it impossible to steer 'any course but east'. On 26 February 1781, Mourelle reached the Tongan island of Fonualei, which he called

Armatura 'Bitterness' because no water was to be found there. Nine days later, after a voyage of 78 days and without having set foot on land, he anchored in Vava'u desperately short of water. Like the Tsiaina, one of his first tasks was to dig wells and within days he had all the water he could carry (Landín Carrasco 1971:273–295).

The tradition that the Tsiaina dug a well at Sa'avaka is confirmed by the existence of the well itself. Burrows (1936:126), who visited it, described it as being six metres deep and 2.4 metres in diameter, surrounded by a circle of stones. Several others attributed to the Tsiaina are also extant (Manaud 1983:97). One, at a place called Sosoni, bears the Futunan name for well. Futunan *sosoni* is possibly related to *senep* 'spring, well' in the Palawan language of the Philippines (Tryon 1995:2:54). But no cognates in the sense of 'well' exist in other Polynesian languages. On the other hand, *hohoni* means 'a coconut shell water container' in both Tongan and Uvean.

The tradition that the Tsiaina went about Futuna beating a drum or gong called *lali* to determine where they would settle suggests that the Tsiaina introduced both the instrument and its name to that island. At the time of European contact, the *lali* was known on both Futuna and Uvea as well as Fiji. Missionaries later took it to Tonga, Samoa, Tokelau⁴ and other islands because its resonant tones, audible over long distances, made it ideal for calling the islanders to church.

The word *lali* 'drum' was first recorded in Fiji in 1809–10 (Davies 1925:155). The earliest accounts of it on Futuna and Uvea date back to the early 1830s (Angleviel 1989:117). In 1848, a French missionary, François Palazy (1895) described being awoken by a *lali* on Futuna that was suspended from the gallery of the church. To him, it had 'the sound of a Chinese bell' and proved to be 'an enormous wooden bell or drum, hollowed out in the form of a trough' and beaten by a big wooden club.

In the light of other evidence presented in this paper, the *lali* and its name seem likely to have reached Fiji with Futunan castaways. The Lau Islands, lying south-south-west of Futuna, have long been recognised as a halfway house between Polynesia and Melanesian Fiji. The missionary Thomas Williams (1884 [1858]:13), who served in Fiji from 1840 to 1853, noted that although differences of colour, physical conformation and language combined to separate the Polynesians and Melanesians, the line of demarcation tended to be blurred in Fiji. There, many 'distinguishing peculiarities' seemed to meet and blend, betokening a 'confluence of the two races'. In Lau, Asiatic peculiarities were marked, but they died away as one went westward, giving place to such as were 'decidedly African, but not Negro'. The anthropologist A.M. Hocart (1929:5) said much the same. To him, the Lauans were a cross between the Negroid Fijians and Polynesians. Their hair ranged from fuzzy to wavy, or even straight, and the eyes of many had 'a slight Mongolian appearance'.

In Fiji, the preferred timber for the making of *lali* is *vesi* (*Intsia bijuga*). It is exceptionally hard. The botanist Berthold Seemann described it as virtually indestructible (Parham 1972:99–101). *Intsia bijuga* is also called *vesi* on Futuna. In Tongan, it is known by the

⁴ In 1841, Horatio Hale of the United States Exploring Expedition reported seeing 'a trough-like drum' on pre-missionary Fakaofu, one of the three Tokelau atolls. It was like some seen earlier in Tonga (Langdon 1998:25). However, as all *lali* were and are of similar appearance, it cannot be assumed that it came from Tonga.

cognate term *fehi*, but the Samoans call it *ifilele*. It apparently does not grow on Uvea. In many Southeast Asian languages, *besi* or a cognate means 'iron' (Tryon 1995:3:363). This suggests that the Tsiaina called it *vesi* on Futuna because its timber was as near to iron in hardness as anything they could find there.

The limestone islands of Lau are favoured habitats for *Intsia bijuga*. One of these is Namuka, where, according to Rod Ewins (1986:144), a specialist in Fiji's material culture, it 'grows naturally in the dense, vine-shrouded forests'. Namuka, Ewins adds, is 'important as the Lauan centre for the male craft of carving *lali*' and is also famous for the 'unsurpassed *masi* bark-cloth of its women'.

No certain cognates of *lali* have been found in any Southeast Asian languages. But in Sangirese, the language of the Sangir Islands between northernmost Sulawesi and southern Mindanao, a small drum is called a *lala* (sic). This is especially noteworthy because the Sangirese term for 'open sea, ocean' is *tagaloan*, which recalls Tangaloo, 'the name of a pagan god', as Grézel put it in his Futunan dictionary, and 'one of the great deities of Polynesia, the Lord of the Ocean', according to Edward Tregear (1891:468). The anthropologist E.S.C. Handy (1927:324), in his study of Polynesian religion, expressed the view that Tangaloo was associated with 'a group of seafaring Polynesian immigrants' who reached Polynesia long after it was first settled. Yet if Tangaloo was a late comer, Handy wondered why his name was more widely known in Polynesia than that of any other of the greater gods of the area. 'A satisfactory answer', he thought, was that Tangaloo was 'the patron and ancestor of a group of skilled mariners' who, as traditional history showed, had 'voyaged from Samoa and the Society Islands to every part of the Pacific'.

Like Tangaloo, the *lali* was apparently known in New Zealand in pre-European times, but not in other islands of Eastern Polynesian speech. The earliest clue suggesting this is in the third (1871) edition of Williams' New Zealand Māori dictionary, where *rari*, a verb (note the long *i*), is defined as 'to make an uproar'. An illustrative sentence follows: *Ka rari tera te tamariki*.

The fifth edition of the dictionary (Williams 1917) contains many new words and meanings, including two new definitions under *rari* 'to make an uproar':

1. 'Disturbance, uproar. Whakarongo rawa atu ki te nge, ki te rari [note short *i*], ki te *nganga*'.
2. 'Some instrument used as an alarum or gong'.

The late appearance of the second definition leaves little doubt that that particular usage was confined to an isolated speech group such as the Tuhoë, who lived in the rugged country inland from the Bay of Plenty. Their language and culture were little known until the ethnologist Elsdon Best worked among them at the turn of the century. In the preface to the dictionary (Williams 1917:viii), Best is described as the most important contributor of new words both in volume and character. However, it is not known whether the definition 'some instrument used as an alarum or gong' was one of his contributions.

The only published description of a New Zealand drum reminiscent of a Fijian or Futunan *lali* is that of a Māori war gong dating back to the mid-19th century. Its author, the historian Arthur S. Thomson (1859:1:132), said the gong was about 12 ft long, 'not unlike a canoe in

shape' and 'suspended by cords from an elevated stage'. When struck by a wooden mallet, it 'emitted a sound heard in still weather up to twenty miles off'.

The tradition that the Tsiaina introduced new methods of making and marking bark cloth to Futuna is substantiated both ethnographically and linguistically. Burrows (1936:233–234) pointed out that the people of Eastern Polynesia had only one method of making bark cloth at the time of European contact; the Futunans and Uveans had two. In the Hawaiian, Society, Marquesas, Cook and Austral Islands, felting the bast into a single sheet by beating was the only method practised. In Tonga and Samoa, the only method was to paste one sheet over another. In Futuna and Uvea both methods were used. These facts, plus a Futunan claim that pasting was the more recent method, left Burrows in no doubt that felting was the original Polynesian method; that it had been entirely superseded in Tonga and Samoa; and that in Futuna and Uvea, the two methods had been retained side by side.

Burrows noted that the west–east cleavage in methods of making bark cloth coincided with a cleavage in the marking of it. Freehand decoration was obviously the original method as this was used in both Western and Eastern Polynesia. However, painting designs on the cloth by means of a matrix made of leaves was confined to Western Polynesia. This, therefore, was possibly a Tsiaina innovation.

In Futunan, Uvean, Tongan and Lauan (Troxler 1972:87), the matrix is called *kupeti*; in Samoan, *'upeti*; and in standard Fijian, *kuvesi*. On Futuna, the *kupeti* was made of two layers of leaves of the *fala sola*, a variety of pandanus with fairly large leaves (Burrows 1936:189). In Tongan, this pandanus is called *falahola*, clear evidence of borrowing because all other varieties or species of pandanus are known in Tongan (and in Uvean) as *fā*. The medial *l* has been lost. Cognates of **kupeti* are unknown in Eastern Polynesian languages.

Another apparent Tsiaina lexical innovation in Futunan relating to bark cloth is *kaumafute* 'paper mulberry tree when stripped of its bark'; compare Uvean *kaumafute*, Samoan *'aumafute* and Tongan *mokofute*, with the same gloss. The aberrantly metathesised Tongan form is also evidence of borrowing. As with **kupeti*, cognates of **kaumafute* are unknown in the languages of Eastern Polynesia—with one notable exception. In Rapanui, the language of Easter Island, *mahute* means both 'paper mulberry tree' and 'bark cloth', according to recent dictionaries. However, when the German naval ship *Hyäne* visited the island in 1883, its commander, Wilhelm Geiseler (1995:68), recorded that both the tree and 'the first step in preparation, the peeling-off of the rind', were referred to as *mahute*.

The last cultural innovation of the Tsiaina specifically referred to in the tradition about them is that they brought improved agricultural practices to Futuna. Frimigacci and his associates recorded that these related to wetland taro cultivation (Harms 1990:25). This is a feature of life in the Sigave district of Futuna that was evidently carried from there to Fiji and to other Western Polynesian islands. Although the practice is also known in some of the Hawaiian Islands and on Mangaia (Kirch 1994:251–287), there is no trace of the Futunan vocabulary relating to it in the languages of those islands and it seems to have had a different origin.

On Futuna, an irrigated taro field is called *vūsiga*. In defining that term, Grézel said that such fields were best because they lasted longer than those created on dry land. He also said that a ditch alongside a swamp where taro was planted was called *kau ano*. As Kirch (1994:133) has pointed out, Futunan *vūsiga* seems to be a combination of two lexemes, *vūsi*

and the place designator *ga*. This is suggested both by the place name Langivusi mentioned in Burrows' version of the Tsiaina tradition and the cognates in other languages. On Uvea, *fui* signifies the garden islands, usually rectangular, that are built on its swampy, low-lying coastal flats for taro cultivation. They are separated from each other by ditches called *kau ano*, in which water circulates from neighbouring seeps and springs (Kirch 1978:171). In Fijian, *vuci* is the parallel term. Hazlewood's 19th century definition is: 'a taro bed: more properly, low wet ground capable of growing taro'. In Samoan, *fusi*, *taufusi* and *taufusiga* mean 'patch of ground irrigated for the purpose of growing taro'. The latter two words also signify 'swamp, marsh'. On Rennell Island, *husi* means 'swamp, especially wet-land taro patch'. On Nukuoro, *husi* signifies a swamp or taro bog. There is no cognate in Tongan presumably because conditions in many Tongan islands are not suitable for wetland taro cultivation.

Cognates of Futunan *vūsiga*, or at least of *vūsi*, occur in both New Zealand Māori and Rapanui. In Māori, *hūhi* merely means 'swamp', which possibly indicates that the people who carried the word to New Zealand also did not take taro. Like *rārī* 'gong-like instrument', *hūhi* first appeared in the 1917 edition of Williams' dictionary. In Rapanui, the cognate form *vuhi* means 'pond, small lake' and also 'to dirty oneself', an easy thing to do during taro cultivation. In this respect, it is significant that one of Easter Island's crater lakes is called Rano Kau, a name cognate with Futunan and Uvean *kau ano* 'taro ditch', which also occurs in Uvean as *ano kau*. Rano Kau's lake is overgrown with reeds. In 1785, a member of the La Perouse expedition climbed into the crater and reported that 'the marshy area' was 'edged with the finest banana and [paper] mulberry plantations' (Dunmore 1994:72). The islanders were still growing crops there in much more recent times (Metraux 1940:7, 12, 155, 158, 160).

In a comparative study of Rapanui, the present writer and the linguist Darrell Tryon argue that it is an amalgam of three languages: Futunic, Tahitic and American Indian. The Futunic element was evidently carried by drift voyagers from Futuna to Ra'ivavae in the Austral group. Later, Tahitic-speakers from Ra'iatea, Society Islands, reached Ra'ivavae, where a hybrid Futunic/Tahitic language was created through intermarriage with their predecessors. This language was eventually carried on to Easter Island, where further intermarriage with members of an aboriginal American Indian community led to the development of a tri-hybrid language—the Rapanui of today (Langdon and Tryon 1983:49–64).

A direct migration to New Zealand from the Lau group some time after Futunan castaways of Tsiaina origin had settled there could explain the presence of such words as *rārī* 'gong-like instrument' and *hūhi* 'swamp' in New Zealand Māori. Many other Māori words with cognates only in Western Polynesian languages and sometimes Fijian have been identified (Langdon 1988:252–254, 286–287). They seemingly belonged to the language of the *tangata whenua* 'people of the land' who occupied New Zealand when migrants from Eastern Polynesia arrived there in the early 16th century, according to the present writer's *San Lesmes* theory.

The fact that a few words and practices that can be specifically linked with Futuna's Tsiaina were carried as far afield as New Zealand, Easter Island, Rennell Island and Nukuoro as well as to the nearer islands of Uvea, Tonga, Samoa, Rotuma and Fiji leaves no doubt that the arrival of the Tsiaina on Futuna was a long time ago. The question is: how long?

After intensive research into Futunan agricultural practices, the archaeologist Patrick Vinton Kirch (1994:242–243) claimed that pondfield irrigation began ‘about the middle of the first millennium AD’. However, prehistoric developments noted in the Central Pacific by other archaeologists suggest that this date may be too early. They say that towards the end of the first millennium, mounds begin to appear in the Futuna–Uvea–Tonga–Samoa region as foundations for houses and other buildings. In Tonga, especially, elaborate grave sites also become part of the local culture. Two other types of mound have been identified: one used for snaring wild pigeons, the other as a resting place at pleasant spots along routes regularly used by travellers. A unique monument on Tongatapu is the Ha’amonga ’a Maui. This is a huge trilithon comprising two upright coral pillars four metres apart connected by a third six metres long, resting horizontally in deep mortises cut into the tops of the pillars (Poulsen 1977).

The mounds and more elaborate structures of Tonga and elsewhere are thought to reflect a complex, stratified society with a centralised and authoritarian government. Only in such a society could the production of the necessary surplus have been organised to allow large-scale undertakings. In Tonga, the new era coincides with the rise of the Tu’i Tonga, the sacred kings of that archipelago. Another apparent development of that time was the creation of an honorific vocabulary used in addressing chiefs.

In a study of the honorific language of the Central Pacific, the Uruguayan linguist Olaf Blixen (1966, 1967, 1969) found obvious links between the terms used by speakers of Uvean, Tongan and Samoan. But only ‘a residue’ of them existed in Futunan. As Blixen (1967:5–6) had apparently not heard of the Tsiaina, he concluded that the 19th-century missionaries had tried to democratise Futunan society by eliminating the ‘reverent distinctions’ that had once been used in addressing chiefs. However, this study has surely shown that this is unlikely: the Futunans almost certainly eliminated the distinctions themselves when the Tsiaina were overthrown.

In summary, Futuna’s Tsiaina tradition merits much more serious scholarly attention than it has had so far. For linguists, the tradition offers an interesting challenge in that it suggests that many words that have been reconstructed to Proto Polynesian are actually borrowings of much more recent date. Hence, a task for the future is to see whether Tsiaina borrowings can be readily separated from the original Polynesian vocabulary. Another is to try to determine where the borrowings came from.

One thing seems certain: the Tsiaina came from a place where society was stratified, where honorific language was used, and where both wetland taro cultivation and the making of bark cloth from the paper mulberry tree were practised. Some of the evidence presented here indicates that the Tsiaina homeland was in Southeast Asia, and two items point specifically to the Sangir Islands. Other evidence also favours those islands: their geographical location, the seafaring prowess of their people, the existence of a stratified society and an honorific language (Hickson 1889:193, 198–203; Grimes and Maryott 1989). Yet it is puzzling that no cognates for a number of Futunan terms mentioned in the paper have been found in Sangirese; or perhaps they have not been recognised.

References

- Angleviel, Frédéric, 1989, *Wallis et Futuna (1801–1888)*, vol. 1. Lille: Université de Lille.
- Bataillon, P., 1932, *Langue d'Uvea (Wallis)*. Paris: Librairie Orientaliste Paul Geuthner.
- Blixen, Olaf, 1966, El lenguaje honorífico en Uvea (Wallis) y sus conexiones en Polinésia Occidental. *Moana*, 1(1).
- 1967, Acerca del lexico honorífico de Futuna (Home). *Moana*, 1(2).
- 1969, La dispersión del lenguaje honorífico en Oceanía. *Moana*, 1(3).
- Burrows, Edwin G., 1936, *Ethnology of Futuna*. Honolulu: Bishop Museum.
- Capell, Arthur, 1968, *A New Fijian dictionary*. Suva: Govt Printer.
- Carroll, Vern and Tobias Soulik, 1973, *Nukuoro lexicon*. Honolulu: The University Press of Hawaii.
- Churchward, C. Maxwell, 1940, *Rotuman grammar and dictionary*. Sydney: Australasian Medical Publishing Company.
- 1959, *Tongan dictionary*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Davies, John, 1925, Journal of the missionaries... In Sir Everard Im Thurn and Leonard C. Wharton, eds *The journal of William Lockerby, Sandalwood trader in the Fijian Islands during the years 1808–1809*. London: Hakluyt Society.
- Douglas, Norman and Ngaire Douglas, eds, 1989, *Pacific Islands Year Book*, 16th edn. Sydney: Angus and Robertson.
- Dunmore, John, ed., 1994, *The journal of Jean-François de Galaup de la Pérouse, 1785–1788*, vol. 1. London: Hakluyt Society.
- Elbert, Samuel, 1975, *Dictionary of the language of Rennell and Bellona*, part 1: *Rennellese and Bellonese to English*. Copenhagen: National Museum of Denmark.
- Elbert, Samuel, Rolf Kuschel and Toomasi Taupongi, 1981, *Dictionary of the language of Rennell and Bellona*, part 2: *English to Rennellese and Bellonese*. Copenhagen: National Museum of Denmark.
- Englert, Sebastian, 1978, *Idioma Rapanui: gramática y diccionario del antiguo idioma de la Isla de Pascua*. Santiago de Chile: Ediciones de la Universidad de Chile.
- Ewins, Rod, 1986, Lali — the drums of Fiji. *Domodomo* 4:142–169.
- Frimigacci, Daniel, J.P. Siorat, Bernard Vienne and Muni Keletaona, 1987, *Recueil de littérature orale de Futuna et d'Alofi, Royaume de Sigave*. Noumea: Mission CNRS-ORSTOM.
- Frimigacci, Daniel, Muni Keletaona, Claire Moyses-Faurie and Bernard Vienne, 1995, *Ko le fonu tu'a limulimu/ La tortue au dos moussu/ Textes de tradition orale de Futuna*, SELAF No.356, 397–399. Paris: Peeters.
- Fuentes, Jordi, 1960, *Diccionario y gramática de la lengua de la Isla de Pascua*. Santiago de Chile: Ediciones Andrés Bello.

- Geiseler, Wilhelm, 1995, *Geiseler's Easter Island Report: an 1880s anthropological account*. Translated by William S. Ayres and Gabriella S. Ayres. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i at Manoa.
- Grézel, Isidore, 1878, *Dictionnaire Futunien-Français*. Paris: Maisonneuve.
- Grimes, Charles E. and Kenneth R. Maryott, 1989, Marked speech registers in Austronesian languages: Buru, Sangir, and implications for comparative studies. Paper presented at Comparative Austronesian Project Symposium on Contact-induced Language Change, Australian National University, Canberra.
- Gross, M. Grant, 1983, Oceanography. In *1984 Year Book covering the Year 1983: annual supplement to Collier's encyclopedia*, 381. New York: Macmillan Educational Company.
- Handy, E.S. Craighill, 1927, *Polynesian religion*. Honolulu: Bishop Museum.
- Harms, Volker, 1990, Le débarquement des Chinois à Futuna: une histoire inventée? *Journal de la Société des Océanistes* 90:29–34.
- Hazlewood, David, 1914, *A Fijian and English and an English and Fijian dictionary*, 2nd edn, James Calvert, ed. London: Waterlow.
- Hickson, Sydney J., 1889, *Naturalist in North Celebes: a narrative of travels in Minahasa, the Sangir and Talaut Islands*. London: John Murray.
- Hocart, A.M., 1929, *Lau Islands, Fiji*. Honolulu: Bishop Museum.
- Kirch, Patrick Vinton, 1978, Indigenous agriculture on Uvea (Western Polynesia). *Economic Botany* 32:157–181.
- 1994, *The wet and the dry*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Landín Carrasco, Amancio, 1971, *Mourelle de la Rúa: explorador del Pacífico*. Madrid: Ediciones Cultura Hispánica.
- Langdon, Robert, 1975, *The lost Caravel*. Sydney: Pacific Publications.
- 1984, Pacific Islands. *The World Book Encyclopedia Year Book*, 430–431. Chicago: World Book Inc.
- 1988, *The lost Caravel re-explored*. Canberra: Brolga Press.
- 1998, Fakaofu's Hawaiian castaways of 1830 and the origin of its lidded boxes called 'Tuluma'. *Journal of the Polynesian Society* 107:287–300.
- Langdon, Robert and Darrell Tryon, 1983, *The language of Easter Island: its development and Eastern Polynesian relationships*. Laie: Institute of Polynesian Studies.
- Lynch, John, 1991, Pigs and dogs in island Melanesia. In Andrew Pawley, ed. *Man and a half: essays in Pacific anthropology and ethnobiology in honour of Ralph Bulmer*, 432–444. Auckland: The Polynesian Society.
- Manuau, S., 1983, *Futuna: ethnologie et actualité*. Noumea: Société d'Études Historiques de la Nouvelle Calédonie.
- Metraux, Alfred, 1940, *Ethnology of Easter Island*. Honolulu: Bishop Museum.
- Milner, George B., 1966, *Samoan dictionary*. London: Oxford University Press.

- Moyse-Faurie, Claire, 1993, *Dictionnaire Futunien–Français*. Paris: Peeters.
- Newell, J.E., ed., 1911, *Pratt's grammar and dictionary of the Samoan language*. 4th edn. Apia: Malua Printing Press (repr.1977).
- O'Reilly, Patrick, 1963, Le Maire et Schouten à Futuna en 1616. *Journal de la Société des Océanistes* 19:57–80.
- 1964, *Bibliographie des îles Wallis et Futuna*. Paris: Musée de l'Homme.
- Palazy, François, 1895, Letter to Father Poupinel from Futuna, November 1848, in *Annales des Missions d'Océanie*, 388–395.
- Parham, J.W., 1972, *Plants of the Fiji Islands*. Rev. edn. Suva: Government Printer.
- Poulsen, Jens, 1977, Archaeology and prehistory. In Noel Rutherford, ed. *Friendly islands: a history of Tonga*, 4–26. Melbourne: Oxford University Press.
- Rabone, Samuel, 1845, *A vocabulary of the Tonga language*. Neiafu, Vavau: Wesleyan Mission Press.
- Sneddon, J.N., 1984, *Proto-Sangiric and the Sangiric languages*. Canberra: Pacific Linguistics.
- Steller, K.G.F. and W.E. Aegersold, 1959, *Sangirees-Nederlands Woordenboek met Nederlands-Sangirees Register*. 'S-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff.
- Thomson, Arthur S., 1859, *The story of New Zealand*. 2 vols. London: John Murray.
- Tregear, Edward, 1891, *The Maori–Polynesian comparative dictionary*. Wellington: Lyon and Blair.
- Troxler, Gale Scott, 1972, *Fijian Masi: a traditional art form*. 2nd edn. Greensboro, North Carolina: Piedmont Press.
- Tryon, Darrell T. ed., 1995, *Comparative Austronesian dictionary*. 4 vols. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Williams, Herbert W., 1917, *A dictionary of the Maori language*. 5th edn. Wellington: Govt Printer.
- 1971, *A dictionary of the Maori language*. 7th edn. Wellington: Govt Printer.
- Williams, Thomas, 1884 [1858], *Fiji and the Fijians*. 4th edn. London: T. Woolmer. (1st edn 1858).
- Williams, W.L., 1871, *A dictionary of the Maori language*. 3rd edn. London: Williams and Norgate.
- Wurm, S.A. and B. Wilson, 1975, *English finderlist of reconstructions in Austronesian languages (post-Brandstetter)*. Canberra: Pacific Linguistics.
- Young, James Lyle, 1875–77, Private journal. Microfilm PMB 21, The Library, Australian National University, Canberra. Original in Mitchell Library, Sydney.