The Rise of the Anglican Orthodox Church in Solomon Islands

by

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BA (Hons)

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Deakin University

March 2014
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The Rise of the Anglican Orthodox Church in Solomon Islands

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Abstract

This study builds on and contributes to work in the anthropology of Christianity and in particular the social organisation of Anglicanism in Isabel, Solomon Islands. Studies in the anthropology of Christianity have focused on the impact of Christian thought and practice to non-western societies. More recently, the sub-discipline has looked to the role of Christianity in regional and national politics. This study follows this shift in focus by analyzing the social organisation of Christianity. To do this I document a schism in the Anglican Church of Melanesia which led to the rise of the Anglican Orthodox Church in Hograno, Isabel. I argue that these changes to Anglican social organisation in Isabel constitute a new social formation which I call the segmentary church society.
Chapter 1

Introduction

This thesis examines the social organisation of Christianity and the reasons why churches split and form over time. The church at issue is Anglican and the events discussed herein concern a split in the Church of Melanesia (CofM) on the island of Isabel in Solomon Islands. Christians are accustomed to schisms within their churches. The many denominations, sects and independent churches that comprise global Christianity is testament to the dynamism of Christian political organisation. In Isabel however, the schism within the CofM was something new, because, until the first decade of the twenty first century, Isabel was unified under the one Anglican Diocese. This continuity was broken in 2005 with the inauguration of the Anglican Orthodox Church (AOC). The reasons for the rise of the AOC is the focus of this study.

This investigation of the politics of Anglicanism is an anthropological
study and the rise of the AOC is interesting because the schism did not lead to a new denomination like Pentecostalism but rather another Anglican church organisation. The split was political not theological, or so it seemed. This fact makes the study an exploration of the politics of Anglicanism and focuses attention on the nature of power in Isabel today. The importance of the study lies in the relationship between the local politics of the region on the one hand with the impact of foreign power and influence on the other. Emanating from the local are the politics of chiefs and clergy vying for control of the Church. On the other is the impact of globalisation on Anglicanism itself with the splitting of the global Anglican Communion into the progressive Anglican churches that support gay marriage and women in the clergy, from the conservative churches that do not. This disunity within the Anglican Communion echoes through the many Anglican organisations of the world not least of all the CofM today. Further, in and amongst all these changes, Solomon Islanders over the last decade have experienced the turmoil of political unrest in their nation’s capital.

Solomon Islands was beset by civil war from 1998 to 2003. This period came to be known as the ‘ethnic tension’. During these years gun related violence centred around the nation’s capital Honiara, located on the island of Guadalcanal. The unrest paralysed all levels of government and in 2000 the Prime Minister was removed after militants took control of the police armoury. For Solomon Islands, the project of decolonisation was at an end. The international community lamented the failure of another post-colonial
government.

In 2003 the Australian Government responded in a surprising about face by leading a regional intervention to the country to restore law and order. After stabilising the police force the intervention force set about rebuilding the country’s bureaucracy. It was during these early years of the military intervention that I observed first hand the reconstruction of a post-colonial government by foreign powers.

I commenced my position with the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) a month before the arrival of the Australian led military and police forces. I was to spend another three and half years with the FFA over a period that saw the surrender of thousands of firearms and the overnight boom in the expatriate population coupled with the vigorous re-engagement of international development organisations and their associated funding. But the intervention had its low point when the first national election held in 2006 ended with destructive anti-Chinese riots across Honiara. During these years, the city was awash with expertise. Bureaucrats from Australia (mainly Canberra) were a presence at all levels of the Solomon Islands Government. The ranks of the Public Prosecutors and Public Defenders’ offices resembled more the Adelaide or Melbourne bar association as Australian lawyers picked up the heavy case load of arrests in what came to be known as the tension trials. All the prosecutions made for more prisoners which in turn led to more expatriate prison guards. Every Consulate and High Commission was overwhelmed with the demands of their aid programmes as foreign powers
poured donor funds into the country.

In this climate one could not escape the talk of development. Everyone in Honiara conversed in the cliches of the day: ‘capacity building’, ‘institutional strengthening’, ‘skills transfer’ were topics of discussion at the yacht club, gold club and over the hotel bar. It was a social field where Solomon Islands extended no further than the city limits of Honiara. Fledgling lawyers were prosecuting murder cases. Bureaucrats were defining the role of government and development advisers were managing tens of millions of dollars.

But among the din of development that was Honiara, the FFA remained unchanged and largely unaffected by the ethnic tension. It was here that I became a close friend with Thomas. From Isabel, Thomas introduced me to a world very different from that of the expatriate adviser. I attended his wedding back in his home District of Hograno, Isabel. And it was Thomas who told me about the rise of a new Anglican Church with American roots.

This Anglican strife in Isabel intrigued me because I saw the mainline Churches of Solomon Islands like the CofM as stable and neutral forces for peace that transcended the ethnic divisions dividing Honiara. The advisers and capacity builders of the intervention saw the Churches as critical to the process of reconciliation. Likewise, the consultants of the development community saw the Churches as that institution with a ready made network of contacts spanning the archipelago. Were there to be a political reconstruction of Solomon Islands then the Churches had to be involved. And they were right. Churches in Solomon Islands are pervasive. It is a Christian
nation where on Sundays every village wakes up to a Catholic, Seventh Day Adventist (SDA), South Seas Evangelical Church (SSEC), CofM or Uniting Church morning service.

What became apparent to me from Thomas’s stories was that the Anglican CofM was facing a radical reorganisation of its own. A new political movement was forming of a different kind. Here in Isabel, the flux that had come to typify the nation’s capital during the tension and reconstruction years was happening within the Church. The stability that had been the Anglican Church in Isabel was all of a sudden no more. Anglican missionaries once described Isabel as the ‘Anglican Zion’ of Melanesia (Hilliard 1978: 279). But in 2005 thousands of parishioners were now looking to a new leader, and a new Church administration. This seemed to go against the prevailing view of analysts as the mainline Churches of Solomon Islands were seen as safe refuge for all during the tension years. Political upheaval within the Church went unnoticed by the expert advisors of the time. Moreover, dissent between Anglicans only strengthened one’s opinion of the importance of Christianity in the provinces. For Thomas and his family around this time though, this was disturbing news. As I’d come to observe. Backsliding and revolt were typical of Honiara. For the village, rare.

There was talk of schism in the CofM. And rumours that a new diocese was to be formed on Isabel splitting the Island’s Anglicans in two. One for the disgruntled Anglicans of Hograno District and the other for the rest. The more I asked, the more I realised that the unrest on Isabel was only
growing and not going to subside. The agent of change at the centre of the strife was a CofM Bishop named Zephaniah Legumana. Legumana was the first Hograno man to be made Bishop of Isabel Diocese but his tenure was short lived. Accused of embezzling Church funds, Legumana was asked to resign, and after refusing was formally unfrocked. With their Bishop sacked, the chiefs of Hograno District came to his support. Meetings were being called and Lawyers were drafting new Church constitutions back in Honiara. Letters were being written to the Episcopal Church of the United States looking for support. Those against the breakaway Church refused to take communion from an unfrocked Bishop because the link between him and the Apostles was broken. At Church festival days across Hograno District harsh words were said between the opposing sides and news came back that a flag pole had been chopped down with an axe when an AOC flag was raised.

So while the process of post-colonialism was being rewritten in the nation’s capital, the conflict was going unnoticed in Isabel. The rise of an new Anglican Church brought with grave concerns for the leaders of the century old CofM. It was, and is, a Christian movement from the grassroots. Rural Solomon Islands is where over eighty percent of Solomon Islanders call home. It is also where the foreign intervention was having difficulty penetrating. Here was a movement that engaged successfully the support of a cashed-up and conservative AOC from North Carolina. This was a rural movement that challenged the relationship of mainline Churches with local leaders and the village. Here was a radical reorganisation of politics within
the Church but without any threat to Anglican theology. If there was the potential for the study of the origin of political power in a post-colonial, Christian country, then this was as a good place to start.

An exploration of the social and historical origins of political power in rural Solomon Islands through a study in conflict was the departure point for my year long ethnographic fieldwork in Hograno district, Isabel. The intellectual tradition I took with me was the school of anthropological enquiry which had asked similar questions and turned to similar forms of extended cases or social dramas in indigenous societies. This was the Manchester School which was at its height in the three decades after the Second World War and has seen renewed interest by anthropologists over the last decade (Evens and Handelman 2005, 2006; Kapferer 2005, 2010). Under the leadership of Max Gluckman, the Manchester School challenged the functionalism of the day by inverting the argument that social processes like ritual reinforced and underpinned the values and norms of a society. Rather, Gluckman searched for the structure and contradictions of norms and values in conflict. The students of the Manchester school were also strongly sociological in their approach. In no way did they see anthropology as the study and search for pristine societies untouched by missionaries, traders and colonial rule. Students of Gluckman like Turner (1996, 1969), Van Binsbergen (1981), Marwick (1967) and Epstein (1992, 1999) focused as much on the processes of colonialism as an agent of change as they did the social organisation of the village.

Their anthropological questions remain relevant to this day. For example,
in Papua New Guinea and to a lesser extent Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, upheaval caused by sorcery accusations continues to demand a response by the state. In this thesis sorcery accusations demand a response by the Church but are ignored by the State. The search for the contradictions in these social processes drove the researchers of the Manchester School to a sociological understanding of society. This sociology was popular for its attention to both the micro processes of social organisation at a village level and the macro processes of colonial rule regionally.

What the Manchester School refused to do was imagine pristine communities untouched by colonialism and missionisation. The now classic studies by Mitchell (1956) and Gluckman (1958) showed the potential of looking to the event as the unit of analysis over community. From this approach emerged the concept of tribalism which was a product of urban life around the copper mines of Zambia in the case of Mitchell (1956) (Kapferer 2010: 6). In this thesis I draw on the renewed interest in the analysis of events and the idea of situational analysis to foreground this study of Christian politics.

This thesis is about how Hograno district came to have civil unrest without it becoming a war. It concerns how the island of Isabel went about a radical reconfiguration of its structures of authority and articulated this within the global phenomena of international donor organisations like the AOC who brought their own form of chequebook missionisation to the island. These events also have their agent of change. Like Sandombu of Schism and Continuity (Turner 1996), Bishop Legumana finds himself in the middle of
fractious social processes, of which, he has limited control. The social ground underneath him is precarious. Rejected by the mainline Anglicans Legumana loses the bureaucratic, theological and sacramental authority of the CofM. Turning to the local power base of his home District Legumana finds support in a different order of authority, that of the lineage. He then leads and drives a fetishisation of the bureaucracy in and through the breakaway Church. It is in coming to an understanding of these two countervailing orders, of the social organisation of the village on the one hand, and that of the encompassing politico-religious bureaucracy of the CofM, that the processual and sociological analysis of the Manchester School remains critically important to contemporary anthropology.

And this return to a focus on social formations and the categories that comprise populations is timely. For what tends to take primacy in studies of Christianity by anthropologists are the changes to indigenous understanding of personhood. As such, the understanding of politics is limited to a politics between individuals not a politics that emerges from a population. Two anthropologists who I drawn on throughout this thesis are Geoffrey White and Joel Robbins. Both studied the ways Melanesians in the Christian encounter have changed and formed their relations among themselves, with their country, and altered their engagement with foreign power.

Geoffrey White (1978, 1992, 1997, 2006) conducted his research in Isabel during the 1970s. He was based in Meringe District where the language is closely related to that spoken in Hograno (White 1988). His work was
pioneering because his dissertation took Christianity seriously at the time when this feature of Melanesian societies was often overlooked by anthropologists. In his research he paired back the nature of role and office in Isabel and looked to the origin and place of mana (or personal power) in their categories of person. The big man, the church man, the warrior and government official were the fundamental roles which dominated the societies of the island. This fieldwork led to a monograph which took this psychological approach into a fuller historical analysis of indigenous Christianity. History, through the dominant stories of the island, helped White (1992) unpack the Meringe / Hograno view of their own conversion and mission encounter. In his studies of Isabel chieftainship White (1997, 2006) focused on the career of Anglican Bishop and first Paramount Chief of the island, Sir Dudley Tuti. Tuti embodied the complexities and friction inherent in local forms of political leadership and wider, more encompassing forms of power like the CofM and bureaucratic state. The chief was a spokesman for his descent group but a largely marginal figure in church and state bureaucracies. But in this body of research tantalising areas of further inquiry remained unexplored.

One of those is the nature and role of the descent group in relation to the role of chief, to the politics of the CofM and in the functioning of the state. Why then, after a century of partnership between chiefs, clergy and government officials was there a radical reorganisation of the CofM underway in Isabel? Were there sources of political power outside of the individual roles and encompassing political formations like church and state which drove so-
cial change? In White’s work, the descent group was largely taken for granted because 1970s anthropology was still recovering from the relativist critique of David Schneider (2004), who invalidated the study of descent and inheritance by showing that kinship studies were a function of western notions of ‘blood’ and genealogy (Godelier et al. 1998; Godelier 1998; Patterson 2005). As a result researchers turned away from kinship studies but I will reveal in this thesis that the exploration of kinship provides valuable anthropological insight into the study of political change in Solomon Islands.

The study of cultural change in Christian communities was debated with renewed interest in Oceania when Robbins (2004) published *Becoming Sinners*. For Robbins, whose fieldwork was among the Urapmin of Papua New Guinea, Christianity became the point of departure for a study of socio-cultural change. While *Becoming Sinners* could be glossed as a work in the understanding of social change, Robbins importantly draws a distinction between social change from cultural change. He sought to show that Christianity causes deep changes from within a culture rather then be a foreign agent of change acting upon it. For Robbins, an anthropology of Christianity must come to some conclusion about what it is within Christianity that makes it so attractive and a force behind and encouraging significant cultural change. On this Robbins (2004: 319) states ‘Christianity in most of its guises offers those who take it up both a set of ideas about moral change and the conceptual materials they need to establish a set of institutions (churches, rituals, roles of religious leadership and fellowship, etc.) that allow them to
put these moral ideas into practice’.

Here we see clearly the distinction between cultural content as Robbins’ calls it, and social change. Moral ideas, and how they change, underpin social change. A compelling model, and one that draws heavily on Louis Dumont (1972). Further, Robbins establishes a framework that is well suited to the task of understanding political upheaval in a Christian community. But of concern is not only the troubled distinction between what is cultural content from what is social content but also the understanding of change as a set of values taken up by individuals who then come together to form social institutions. There was little room in this model for a concept of society, which is surprising given the reliance on Dumont who was of the Durkheimian tradition. For Dumont, the political emerges from a set of events that necessitate the creation of a new social group. Without the micro and macro attention to social process, so important to the Manchester School, included in the analysis, the ethnographic material becomes difficult to unpack.

In *Becoming Sinners*, the Urapmin Christian community comprises a set of people whose actions are all guided by the same set of values. Take conversion as an example. The community at one point is non-Christian which comes with a set of values, and then after conversion the group takes up another set of values. This certainly holds true in the context of a dramatic event like a mass conversion but for Hograno district where the structure of authority is re-articulated by villagers, the model becomes difficult to apply.
There is change afoot for the Anglicans of Hograno but no radical conversion. The problem of the model is that the political is limited to actions between individuals and these actions are based on the same set of values.\textsuperscript{1} The group does not agitate against other groups with divergent values, or be recursive and contain groups encompassing other groups. To attend to the understanding of the group formations that take shape within a culture would be to establish a sociology. Spanning this complexity both into a society at a micro-scale of family, descent group and moiety but at the same time including the macro-level processes of national and international political units, is one of the attractions of the social anthropological tradition of the Manchester School.

The structure of this thesis follows a similar vein. Broken into two parts, Part I describes the way of life and daily practices of the people of west Hograno. Chapter 2 establishes the necessary background to west Hograno outlining the environment, economy, geography, system of government, demography, education and health of the population. Chapter 3 discusses the Anglican history of Isabel and draws upon the oral account of a chief who backed Legumana in the early days of the breakaway church movement. Following this, Chapter 4 outlines the family and lineage structure of village life in west Hograno and Chapter 5 builds on this description of social organisation to discuss the ritual practices of the region. In Chapter 6 I focus on

\textsuperscript{1}Tomlinson and McDougall (2012: 2) have sought to bring the analysis of Christianity in the Pacific back to as much a political investigation as a religious one.
the healing and sorcery events that I observed during my fieldwork. These practices were critical points of friction for church organisations and the last Chapter of Part I discusses the event of the inaugural National Convention of the breakaway Church. Part II analyses the rise of the AOC in terms of social organisation and territory (Chapter 8) and in terms of the hidden knowledge about government (Chapter 9).
Part I

West Hograno
Chapter 2

Land and Sea

In this chapter I introduce the economy of west Hograno and how the modes of production that structure the working lives of the region have come to shape their social organisation. Critical to these modes of production are the methods by which the west Hograno exploit their land and sea resources. These methods inform the ritual life of the region. But before we look more closely at the village economy of west Hograno some background to the archipelago is necessary.

Solomon Islands is a chain of Islands between Papua New Guinea to the west and Vanuatu to the east; all of which forms an arc of Islands in the southwest Pacific called Melanesia. The Islands themselves are the peaks of submerged mountains, some active volcanoes, that contribute to frequent violent earthquake activity. Starting in the west of Solomon Islands, the larger Islands are Choiseul, New Georgia, Santa Isabel, Guadalcanal, Malaita
and Makira (San Cristobal). To the east of Makira is the Santa Cruz group of Islands, to the north of Malaita is Ontong Java (Lord Howe), and to the south of Guadalcanal lies Rennell and Bellona (See Figure 2.1).

With its southern most latitude twelve degrees south of the equator, Solomon Islands is hot and wet during the summer months from November to March and, with the coming the south-east trade winds, hot and mildly dryer from March through to September. Steep mountain ranges, some with peaks to 2000 metres, dominate the interior of the large islands, attracting heavy rainfall throughout the year leaving steep ravines and razor like ridges across the landscape. Many of the islands are fringed by coral reefs and some island groups have extensive barrier reefs forming large sheltered lagoons like Langalanga lagoon in Malaita and Marovo lagoon in New Georgia. The inshore fisheries resources of the reefs are exploited by Solomon Islanders for fish, shell fish and bèche-de-mer and beyond the reef zones Solomon Islanders target pelagic (tuna, mackerel) and bottom-fish stocks (snappers, emperors, groupers).

Santa Isabel is the longest island in the Solomons but one of the least populated with six people for every square kilometre (Gagahe 2011: 1). The Isabel provincial government is based in the town of Buala on the eastern side of the Island. People in Isabel refer to each other as belonging to one of five districts: Hograno, Bugotu, Gao, Meringe, Kakota and Kia. While the people of Isabel describe themselves as belonging to an ethnic group by District, the District is not an electoral constituency as such in the provincial or national...
Parliaments. Rather, the province is made of electoral wards each with a member in the Provincial Assembly. The wards then are grouped together to make national electorates. Isabel has sixteen provincial wards which are grouped into three national constituencies (See Table 2.1).

The fieldwork for this thesis was conducted in Susubona Ward, Hograno District (See Figure 2.3). In particular the location of the study was the village of Hirolegu where my family and I were based for the duration of the fieldwork period. Hirolegu is a village permanently settled in the late seventies by three family groups who left the nearby village of Biluro after falling out with a prominent chief there. Situated in a large bay Hirolegu encompasses the hamlets of Shekloblahi, Kaimala, Togatabiru and Papari, with Papari being a former plantation on land alienated by the colonial administration (See Figure 2.2).

Hirolegu, like all villages of Isabel, is situated on territory belonging to a group who claim ownership of the terrain through matrilineal descent. This recognised territory around Hirolegu extends back into the bush as far as is traversable on foot (See Figure 4.1). The territory also includes the neighbouring reefs parallel to the coastline. While the group that claim the terrain around Hirolegu is undisputed the exact location and definition of the boundary that abuts the next matrilineage both up and down the coast certainly is disputed.
2.0.1 Bush

The interior of the island is traversed and exploited by farmers seeking flat alluvial areas beside fast flowing streams. These flat areas attract other villagers when discovered and over time the productive areas become a patchwork of paddocks occupied by different families. Further, men that come to develop a specialisation in pig hunting, and are keen to maintain dogs, also traverse the interior of the island extensively. Usually an experienced hunter with dogs will head into the bush for a period of two to five days,
depending on the rate of his success. These hunters are often accompanied by younger men keen to learn the terrain and methods of the hunter. But hunting sojourns are infrequent and usually coincide with feasting and fund-raising occasions centred around Church activities or the school calendar. As such all hunters are farmers but not all farmers have the skills of a hunter. The introduction of logging to West Hograno produced tracks into the bush which increased the hunters range but these tracks are quickly becoming overgrown and difficult to cross from the noxious creeping vine *Merremia peltata*.

Nonetheless the loggers’ tracks have assisted hunters and farmers in finding new areas to cultivate and eased a return to the interior.

### 2.0.2 Coast

The coastline of Isabel arcs from bay to bay with each bay supporting one or more fast flowing, spring fed streams. These streams are rarely navigable beyond a kilometre or so and are prone to frequent flash flooding from heavy rains inland. Villages are placed on areas conducive to the construction of dwellings where the ground is level, and building materials like sago palm and bamboo are close by. Of course, those sections of a bay or bight that shelter the village from the south east trade winds take preference over more exposed areas. But as you move further west along the coast of Hograno District the terrain becomes more rugged and consequently many of the villages begin to

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1. The vine flourishes when areas of rain-forest are cleared after cyclones and logging. For some pacific islands the vine was introduced by the Americans during the Second World War for camouflage purposes (Paynter et al. 2006: 8).
form further up embankments and even up river systems.

Figure 2.2: Map of Greater Hirolegu

![Map of Greater Hirolegu](image)

The coastline is also dotted with coconut plantations established under British Rule from 1897 to 1978. The plantations hug the coastline and only extend ten or so trees inland. Apart from village settlements within former plantations the only other structures which feature along these coastlines are copra\textsuperscript{2} drying sheds each owned by the family maintaining that stretch of coconuts.

\textsuperscript{2}The dried flesh of a coconut.
2.0.3 Reefs

Reefs are extensive enough along the coast of Hograno District to serve as a barrier from the open swells of the Pacific Ocean. Some reefs are shaped in a way to encourage the formation of sandbars and vegetation develops on these from time to time. The reefs demarcate the sea territory of a matrilineage but they support the human foraging of many beyond any one group. Coastal villages utilise the reef resources extensively: from turtle hunting to fishing, to bêche-de-mer, to shark-finning to harvesting clam meat, and netting. These barrier reefs are a critical source of protein for villagers which is occasionally supplemented by hunting of terrestrial fauna. The reefs are traversed by dug out canoes most frequently. Funds permitting, outboard motors powering both dugout canoes and fibreglass long boats are used to reach the barrier reefs. Reefs also fringe the immediate coastline but these areas are exploited so frequently that fishers are required to paddle or motor to the barrier reefs for more plentiful fishing grounds. Barrier reefs lie between three and six kilometres from the coastline and a canoeist can reach these areas at a leisurely paddle in around thirty minutes to an hour. Islands do dot the coast line but the barrier reefs are far more extensive, and productive fishing and foraging requires drifting along these reefs for many hours at a time. Some reefs are walked, especially for the harvesting of clam meat by women. Netting too is conducted in a similar fashion where men swim along the reef pulling a rope up to a kilometre long that musters the fish into a waiting net. This net is then heaved into a boat (See Chapter 5).
2.1 Language

Solomon Islands, like the rest of Melanesia, is culturally and linguistically diverse. Over eighty languages are spoken in the archipelago which has promoted the use of Solomons Pijin: a lingua franca made up of predominantly English words and local grammar (Bennett 1987: 6). Even with a lingua franca however, rural Solomon Islanders learn Pijin as a second language. For West Hograno, there are two languages spoken. The majority speak Blablanga but many also speak Cheke Holo the language of central and
eastern Hograno, and also of Meringe District on the other side of the island (White 1988). The villages of Biluro, Hirolegu, Galilee and Kilokaka all speak Blablanga with Kilokaka known for having the least loan words from Cheke Holo. It is common for some households to speak both if the mother has come from the eastern and central areas of Hograno and the father from the west and vice versa. But for children growing up in West Hograno Blablanga is their first language.

2.2 Demography

The population of Isabel has a average annual growth rate of 2.5 per cent (Solomon Islands National Statistics Office 2009, Gagahe 2011: 1). This has led to a young population with fifty seven percent of the population under the age of twenty five. The highest density of the population of Isabel has occurred in the south of the island and as one travels north along the island the population gets less dense with Kia, Samasodu and Kakota wards the smallest in population (See Table 2.1). The southern districts of Hograno and Buguto support large populations and Meringe ward, where the province capital is located is considerably bigger than Kokota to its north-east. There are historical factors to this dense population in the south and west of the island associated with the rise in raiding and warring with New Georgia to the west and Choiseul to the north of Isabel (Chapter 3). The growing population and dependence on agriculture in Isabel economy is another important
consideration in the population growth rate of the province as well as the quickly growing wards of Susubona as people migrate further and further north and west along the coast of Isabel.

2.3 Economy

The material wealth of Hirolegu is a product of its residents exploitation of the land and sea. The way they exploit this country determines the amount of money they can raise through cash-cropping, seafood export, and logging. In turn, the produce of their gardens sustains these continued activities and provides the raw materials for houses and canoes. But while these activities have remained the same for over a century with minor improvements in the technology involved, all residents continue to be competent in their execution. Importantly though, wage labour as an alternative form of wealth generation is becoming more and more highly valued over horticulture and fishing. For example, unmarried men in their late twenties would often complain that they had all the skills to attract the other sex; they could build a home, garden, fish, work hard, but this still was not enough. One single man concluded that if he had job in town (meaning Honiara) then he would have been married long ago. But this man’s lament neglects the fact that even wage labourers were rarely paid enough to sustain their families on purchased food alone.

Farming is a labour intensive activity. Hoes and machetes are the most commonly used technology and farming land is cleared through the use of
Table 2.1: Population by Electoral Ward in Isabel Province

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Constituency</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>Ward</th>
<th>Pop</th>
<th>Density (km²)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gao / Bugotu</td>
<td>Tatamba</td>
<td>1404</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sigana</td>
<td>2394</td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Japuana</td>
<td>2163</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Bugotu Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>5961</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gao</td>
<td>Kmaga</td>
<td>1862</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kaloka</td>
<td>962</td>
<td>44</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Gao Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>2824</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>8785</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hograno / Kia / Havulei</td>
<td>Kolomola</td>
<td>949</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kolotubi</td>
<td>1671</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Susubona</td>
<td>1907</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Hograno Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>4527</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kia</td>
<td>Kia</td>
<td>1929</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Samasodu</td>
<td>1868</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Kia Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>3797</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>8324</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kokota</td>
<td>Baolo</td>
<td>1148</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kokota</td>
<td>1177</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Kokota Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>2325</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meringe / Kakota</td>
<td>Hovikoilo</td>
<td>1988</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Buala</td>
<td>2813</td>
<td>113</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tirotongana</td>
<td>689</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Koviloko</td>
<td>1234</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Meringe Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>6724</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>9049</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isabel</td>
<td><strong>Isabel Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>26158</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*aSource: Data from Gagahe (2011: 5)*
axes and chainsaws and then burnt. Paddocks are tended Monday through Thursday. A cultivated area belongs to a family, but during extensive labour activities like tilling the soil, all the members of a matrilineage will get involved to complete the task within a day or two. Sweet potato is the dominant edible crop but spring onions, peanuts, casava, bananas, pumpkin and Chinese cabbage are also popular. These crops are rarely sold for cash but are important in feast exchanges. Cash cropping though takes place alongside subsistence produce in the cultivated area. Coffee, kava, teak and rice were all cash-crops sold at market. Kava and rice were very new to Hograno District during my period of fieldwork and kava was only being harvested for the first time during my stay. As an experimental cash-crop much discussion revolved around when to harvest and which buyers to sell to in Honiara.

2.3.1 Goods

Buying and selling of goods occurs at trade stores which range markedly in the goods and services they offer. Popular items are dried noodles, canned meat and fish, matches, kerosene, fishing gear, flour, sugar and other basic supplies. Some trade stores will be run from a family’s house and exist for as long as the goods imported from Honiara are in supply. Other stores are timber buildings in their own right and sell goods all year round. Stores of this size are often successful because the kinsfolk who work back in Honiara cover the costs of supplying goods to the store in low times or send them on when the proprietor back in the village cannot get back to town.
In an island where there is no bank, trade stores also operate as small time cash loan facilities. For example, after three months my family and I were low on cash and were able to borrow money from the shopkeeper at Hirolegu to return to town for more supplies. Other institutions like schools, churches and trade stores operate as unofficial cash loan agents so as to provide the cash for people between trips to town and commodity sales. Such practices make anyone potentially open to the charge of misappropriating funds should their opponents choose to ask when they last borrowed some cash from the local Church or School.

2.3.2 Cash cropping

All cash crops, either directly or indirectly, must make it to the capital Honiara for sale. There are buyers based in villages that will buy produce from farmers but even then many farmers will look to export the produce to Honiara themselves to earn, it is argued, higher profits. Dried coconut flesh or copra remains the dominant of all cash crops. Plantations in Hograno grew coconuts for export since the early twentieth century. By the late seventies many of the plantations were handed back to customary land owners through loan arrangements to the Development Bank of Solomon Islands. Large stretches of the coastline of West Hograno are coconut plantations which still harvest today by the population for cash. Coconuts remain the most consistent form of income generation for farmers but the labour required to turn the product into copra is extremely high so many look to supplement
this income with other crops. There is a long list of other crops and there is always talk of the next grand crop that will make a farmer rich. This excitement often stems from a visit from a representative of the Department of Agriculture telling all who will listen of the next big thing in primary resources. During my fieldwork, plans were afoot to turn tracts of land over to rice fields for local consumption and for export. Before that the cash crop being planted by many was kava and gossip frequently circulated about each others return on their kava crop which took three years to mature. Teak forests were another popular cash crop but farmers must wait some decades for their plants to mature. With the vicissitudes of commodity prices, every farmer returns to the evergreen coconuts and fiercely protects those trees that he has grown and inherited.

2.3.3 Coconut

All farmers maintain a stand of coconut trees described as ‘bases’. As the area in which my fieldwork was a former plantation, the extensive stands of coconuts were evenly distributed between each family group. Like the patchwork of families cultivating the alluvial terrain along streams, the former plantation, now under customary tenure came to resemble other food growing areas. The former coconut plantation was divided up by counting all the bases and then handing over control of a set of bases to a family. Each base then was owned by the family. This does not mean however that the land belongs to that family. A very important distinction needs to be made
between the produce of the land, and the land. Coconuts are the property of those that grow them. The land is the property of a matrilineage (see Chapter 4).

### 2.3.4 Copra Labour

There are many variations on the labour teams that work coconut fruits into copra and then into bags for shipment to Honiara. Families will carry out this work themselves and both men and women will collect the nuts and remove the flesh. The drying of the coconut flesh into copra requires gathering timber for fires and then compressing the flesh into hessian bags. This activity around the copra drying shed is conducted by men. Once the copra is rammed into the bags it is then either sold to local buyers along the coast or shipped by the farmer himself to Honiara. Farmers need to make decisions around the expense and hassle of shipping it themselves to Honiara versus selling it to the local buyer. Local buyers then have to manage the risk associated with stockpiling a commodity that may reduce in price between purchase from the primary producer and selling to the trader in Honiara. Other concerns are the frequency of available space on the ship to get the copra to market versus copra meat going moldy and spoiling before getting to market.

Apart from families harvesting copra, sometimes families will look to different groups keen for cash to get them to harvest coconuts on their behalf. This was the local soccer team’s preferred method of fund-raising. The family
pays the soccer team to clear around their bases, harvest the nuts and in
return are paid cash for the day’s work. The cash then goes to the purchase
of fuel to attend a weekend sporting fixture. I do not know of a case where
a coconut base was ever sold or exchanged for something else.

2.3.5 Logging

Logging came to Isabel in the late nineties. Since then logging activity has
moved along the coast with Hirolegu being one of the early villages to invite
loggers to the area. As one village came to be involved in logging so did
other villages start to follow suit and so the logging companies moved from
village to village along the coast. Depending on the extent of the territory
available to the logger, the company maybe camped in the area for six to
eighteen months. Vehicles and equipment arrive by barge and an area is
cleared for the provision of a wharf built from logs and filled with dirt taken
from the cleared area. Trees are felled and rough-sawn timber used to build
the accommodation for loggers. This area of Hirolegu where the wharf and
accommodation was built came to be called ‘camp’. The camp area over
the time of the logging operation attracts labour from the Hirolegu area but
the potential pool of labourers grows to surrounding villages as the need
increases.

The first logging operation was initiated and organised by a secondary
school teacher and principal from Hirolegu whose father is a member of the
land-holding matrilineage. To initiate the logging activity the former school
principal found a logging license holder in Honiara. This license holder was a *guale* man (ie. from Guadalcanal) who then went about finding a logging company to sign a Logging Agreement. This process introduced to Hirolegu the concept of primary and secondary right’s holders. Primary right’s holders were members of the land-holding matrilineage and secondary right’s holders were residents of the territory to be logged. But in terms of the royalties from the agreement, the *guale* licensee and the school principal were beneficiaries of the royalties outside of the primary and secondary right’s model.

Loggers came to Hirolegu three times over the life of the logging license. The agreement went for a number of years so one company would come and log the area and then after a year, the licensee and school principal would solicit another company and invite them to log. With the stock of suitable trees reducing each year the eagerness to expand the number of target species increases to those species protected from felling under the Forest Resources and Timber Utilisation Act. Former habitation areas and known sacred places were excluded from logging at the request of members of the land-owning group. These areas of the landscape were defensible positions on hill tops that could be retreated to during raids and attacks from marauding warriors from the New Georgia Group to the west (See Chapter 3). These former hilltop forts now stand out even further from the surrounding landscape as they are the highest points and now contain the tallest trees.

With the second visit of a logging company, the school principal organised
the Hirolegu housing project which was an agreement to supply timber for
the building of permanent houses for the people of Hirolegu. The company
would fell and mill the timber and the family would find carpenters to build
the house. The housing project built houses for primary rights holders first,
and the secondary rights holders were to follow. This project was still well
underway years after the logging company left. Very few houses built in this
style were complete. And by complete I mean the installation of doors, win-
dows and external wall cladding. Many houses consisted of stumps, floor,
stud-work, trusses and corrugated iron roofing. Walls were often incomplete
and instead, woven sago palm was used as the external wall cladding and oc-
casionally as roofing material when corrugated iron was not supplied. Other
villages learnt from the mistakes of Hirolegu and signed Agreements that in-
cluded the construction of more significant infrastructure like upgrades to the
potable water supply system and, in one case, the use of plant and equipment
to build an airstrip.

While the housing project was an obvious legacy of logging in Hirolegu
there was also the opportunity to pick up new skills. Many young men
became skilled in the use of chainsaws and would travel with the logging
enterprise to other villages, districts and islands. Other effects of logging
was the permanent residence of a Malaysian logger in the village with a
local wife and child, the sponsorship of a villager to attend a high school in
New Zealand, a number of outboard motors, and of course, extended periods
of recreation in Honiara for some primary right’s holders and the school
principal.

For female primary right’s holders and secondary right’s holders (both men and women), the process of getting a logging company to the island was, and is, poorly understood. The negotiations take place in Honiara, and on their behalf. So where royalty payments occur in Honiara, if the female right’s holders do not have a son or close relative in town on their behalf, it would be up to their brothers, and licensee to return their share for them.

Figure 2.4: Map of Hograno Coast
2.3.6 Fishing

Besides artisanal use for protein, the sea is exploited extensively for cash income. The frequency of shipping to the area means villagers can organise an icebox to be delivered on the ship. The icebox is then filled with whole reef fish caught over the next 24 hours and as the ship returns down the coast, the icebox, now full of whole fish is sent on the ship as it returns to Honiara. The success of refresh fish exports are contingent upon a number of factors. The fishers must have families permanently based in Honiara to organise the iceboxes to be filled with ice and taken to the wharf to be loaded on the ship. Further, those families based in town must have enough money at their disposal to pay for freight and the purchase of fish by the kilo in the village. Another factor which assists the marketing of the fresh fish is a strong network of wage labourers and expatriates to buy the fresh fish immediately. The more wealthy the buyer the less chance of buyers using credit, or kaon, to purchase fish.

Bêche-de-mer was for a period of time banned for export in Solomon Islands. This was a result of a collapse in the bêche-de-mer fishery in the Lord Howe Group of Islands which was a world renowned, managed, and highly profitable fishery (Christensen 2011). The Lord Howe Group of Islands were known for their continued wealth over many decades through the exploitation of Bêche-de-mer. Their system of harvesting and managing the resource were based upon customary forms of tenure but when the fishery suddenly collapsed the Solomon Islands Government reacted by banning the export
of the product across all provinces. The fishery was eventually re-opened and with this announcement many families returned to harvesting bèche-de-mer and drying it for export. The activity of bèche-de-mer harvesting often involved the whole family with husband and wife paddling out to outer reefs and diving for the valuable Asian delicacy.

Fishing for shark-fin however was a male occupation. This activity was rumoured to be highly profitable and involved setting large shark baits with strong wire trace which were anchored to the sea floor and buoys were deployed for the fishers to later identify and retrieve. The sharks were retrieved and pulled up on the sandbar of a reef or nearby island. The fin removed and the carcass remained. Many were ambivalent about the practice of shark-finning but no one had confronted any of the shark fishers about their concerns. Only a few fishers practiced it in the Hirolegu area. This practice was blamed for the loss of an island called Aborhi (See Figure 4.1). It was claimed that the former island was removed by a storm because the sea wanted the sharks back.

2.4 Transportation

Hograno has only two roads. One road heads inland from Susubona and is a service track for a training centre run by the CofM. The other road heads inland from the port of Kaevanga and services eastern Hograno and the Hograno highlands. These roads are in relatively flat terrain. The areas
around Kaipitu, and the villages which it supports (Kaevanga, Kolotubi, Muana, Kolomola), harvest large quantities of betel nut for Honiara markets as well as dry rice farming and other larger agricultural enterprises. In turn eastern Hograno supports a larger population and the road is utilised by a tractor and trailer as well as a vehicle belonging to the Muana School, which is the Government run high school for the Hograno District.

2.4.1 Shipping and Shipping Infrastructure

Because of the larger population and quantity of freight being loaded and unloaded, Kaevanga village which is near to the mouth of the Kaipitu river, has the District’s only well maintained and consistently used wharf. Villages in east Hograno are at an economic advantage over other areas of Hograno and Isabel. The wharf, road and tractor facilitate the shipping of large quantities of betel nut to market in Honiara. At all other villages of the Hograno coast, tenders are used by the ship to load and unload the vessel. Copra buyers based locally are faced with some challenges because of this. At eighty kilograms a bag, copra must be loaded into tenders and ferried back and forth from the vessel. As the vessels are former passenger ferries, the holds can be difficult to access. This may mean also that should the local copra trader have many bags to freight, the vessel may be at ease for over two hours while the ship is loaded. Further, should this have occurred at other villages back along the coastline then the ship clerk may have to turn back some traders when the vessel is full. The upshot is a very slow
and protracted voyage along the coast as tenders dart back and forth from
the village to the ship.

Nonetheless, the shipping that services Isabel is the envy of other provin-
cial populations. The now long running Isabel Development Company (IDC)
has maintained a regular shipping service to and from the Island since the
sixties. The IDC vessels, the *MV Isabella*, *MV Estrella* and *MV Ortega*
service west Hograno every fortnight and east Hograno, via Kaevanga port,
every week. Over a two week period the company schedules two ‘long runs’,
one travelling along the western coastline and back and the other week trav-
elling along the eastern coastline and back. These long runs are broken up
by a ‘short run’ direct to Kaevanga port and the provincial capital of Buala
on alternating weekends. The Ortega is designed for cargo only and freights
predominately copra to Honiara and fuel on the return trip.

### 2.4.2 Airstrips

The first airstrip in Hograno came with the introduction of logging. The
current airport is located in the sparsely populated and very steep terrain
of far western Hograno. An entrepreneur from Biluro with claims to this
region has managed to utilise his control of logging royalties to build an
airstrip. Due to the air strip’s distance from the larger population centres
of Hograno, the fortnightly service of the Solomon Airlines domestic service
carries the occasional expatriate to Hograno, but more often tourists to a
surfing eco-lodge on the eastern coastline of Isabel (Kakota Ward).
2.4.3 Migration and Mobility

Occupation was a key determinant of mobility for people living in Hirolegu. A fifth of the men surveyed and a quarter of the women had never lived outside Hograno (See Table 2.2). Two thirds of the men had never lived outside of Isabel and there were two men who had studied overseas. Occupations like teaching, commercial fishing and retail created opportunities for Hograno men and women to work and live in other districts and provinces (See Table 2.3). Importantly though the survey concerned places people had lived not just visited. For example, everyone had been to Honiara at sometime.

Table 2.2: Hirolegu Men and Women who have never lived outside the District, Province and Country

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never lived outside Hograno</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>22.7%</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>26.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never lived outside Isabel</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>36.4%</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>57.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never lived outside Solomon Islands</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>95.5%</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.5 Government

Beyond the physical manifestation of government in the form of Hirolegu’s primary school and the health clinic in Susubona, people interact and take up positions with the provincial government in a number of ways. Chiefs represent the village at the district house of chiefs meetings. Some run in local elections at provincial and national elections. For Hirolegu, a local secondary teacher was the sitting member for Susabona ward during my fieldwork. In a
more informal way, a village headman continues to be appointed even though there is no colonial administration for them to report to.

The recognition of chiefs as local political figures came about during the twentieth century and was realised through the introduction of a House of Chiefs. The system and was very much driven by Sir Dudley Tuti, Isabel’s first Paramount Chief and first Diocesan Bishop. Under Tuti’s leadership the House of Chiefs system flourished but to keep it going Tuti spent much of his time traveling from district to district attending meetings. With his retirement and death the solidarity of the chiefly system as a single institution began to wane and district level affiliations came to overshadow pan-Isabel goals.

Irrespective of their lack of acknowledgment in provincial and national legislature, chiefs are the decision-makers in the village. Chiefs represent family groups and they are expected to organise work groups for fund raising events, resolve disputes between people, welcome visitors, represent the village at government and church meetings, and look for development opportunities for the village as a whole. Chiefs tend to downplay their role and see themselves as appointed by others rather than desiring the position themselves. Chiefs frequently address the congregation on Sundays with community announcements and news from their attendance at meetings in other villages. The village headman assists chiefs in ensuring that tasks involving all of the community are arranged and completed. Typical activities include arranging work parties to gather sago palm and lashing vine to repair
the rest house as well as the weekly task of weeding paths and cutting grass along pathways and around homes and the meeting hall.

2.5.1 Education

Both a kindergarten and primary school are located in Hirolegu. Kindergarten is attended by children of ages between four and six and organised and run by mothers resident in Hirolegu. Primary school consists of six levels with students completing primary school at the age of twelve to fourteen. All four teachers at the primary school are permanently based in Hirolegu.

The larger villages of Susubona and Kilokaka maintain schools which can cater for childhood education through to form 1 (or around fifteen years old). Growing areas like Hirolegu have more recently added a small primary school which caters for children through to grade six with continuing students being billeted with families in Susubona or Kilokaka or sent to boarding school at Muana in east Hograno or Aladyce in Samasodu Ward.

Using level of schooling figures from across a number of provinces (Solomon Islands National Statistics Office 2009: 34), thirty percent of the population complete primary school, twenty four percent start secondary education and less than one percent complete secondary school. Importantly though, not completing secondary school does not preclude tertiary education evident in the number of school teachers based in Hirolegu alone (See Table 2.3). These teachers are trained in Honiara.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Private Sector</td>
<td>Plantation Manager</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Plantation Worker</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lucas Mill Operator</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Seaman / Deckhand</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Carpenter</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chainsaw Operator</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grazer</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shopkeeper</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Bulldozer Crew</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Factory Worker</td>
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<td>Government</td>
<td>District Clerk</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School Teacher</td>
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<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provincial Politician</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>Kindy Teacher</td>
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### 2.5.2 Health

Across Solomon Islands the life expectancy for men and women is approximately seventy years of age (World Health Organisation 2012: 58). Pharmaceuticals and health care are provided by the government which operates a clinic at Susubona. The clinic is manned by a nurse with the assistance of nurse’s aides and for emergencies the Government provides a HF radio system which allows the nurses to communicate with specialists in Honiara. In Hirolegu a former nurse’s aide worked with the clinic for a fee to assist with injections and dressings for those wanting to remain in Hirolegu rather
than stay in Susubona for extended periods. Women travel to Susubona to
give birth and prior to the 1960s the government clinic was operated from
the village of Mablosi.

Non-government health services are provided by traditional healers who
apply spiritual methods as well as herbal remedies to heal patients. Healers
do form into associations and the churches support health ministries for these
specialists (See Chapter 6).

2.6 Summary

Daily life in west Hograno is centred around horticultural activities and fish-
ing. Their work is tied to their land and sea resources and the success at
which they can exploit these natural resources is associated both with the
ways they organise themselves to work together and the ease with which they
can transform and ship these resources to urban centres like Honiara. Kin-
ship networks at the same time broaden and limit the areas in which families
can exploit. Likewise, the transportation networks, especially shipping lanes
and wharves set the direction and flow of commodities and cash to and from
west Hograno. Flowing through these networks have been opportunities to
pick up new skills, mainly for men, through logging, seamanship, farming
and fishing. In turn, these new skills have been useful when logging com-
panies move on and travelers return home. Logging has trained young men
in the felling of timber and the operation of portable sawmills to make an
income through the shipping of timber to Honiara. Skills learnt at sea have brought new fishing techniques to the region which has enabled local fishers to target new markets like shark-finning and reef fish exports. Importantly though, these activities demand differing levels of engagement from their kinship networks which is discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.

Different forms of economic activity lends itself to different forms of social organisation in west Hograno. The immediate family of husband, wife and offspring suits cash activities like bêche-de-mer harvesting, shark-finning and subsistence horticulture. The dried sea slug and shark-fin can be transported with ease and sold in Honiara to Chinese buyers. Interestingly, when logging is carried out using manual labour, at least three to four men are required to carry the felled and milled timber from the forest down to the beach for shipment. Cash is required to pay for fuel, portable mill operators and transport to Honiara which necessitates loans from lineage members beyond the nuclear family. The wider kinship network then becomes involved in making the whole enterprise possible. Logging then is an income generating activity that has re-vitalised larger social formations. Lineages in early twenty first century Solomon Islands remain central to the country’s economy and at the whim of fluctuations in global commodity prices. Fresh fish exports from Hograno to Honiara provide an interesting case both of the way in which kinship networks are utilised for income generation but also shows how kinship formations that have territory extend and exploit areas beyond their territory. In fresh fish exports the lineage depends on members being based
in urban centres as well as members exploiting their fishing grounds. Large iceboxes are sent out by a lineage member to west Hograno and the icebox returns full of fish for sale in Honiara. While home is centred strongly back in west Hograno, a lineage that expands its territoriality to the town (Honiara), is at an economic advantage.

Chiefs too benefit from good access to transportation networks, and their ability to galvanise support through their own kinship networks places them in a strong position politically. These factors have an important bearing on the next chapter where the power of the chief in the politics of Hograno plays a central role in the schism. A key figure in the schism was the chief Stanley Vuhamana who is based in east Hograno. Villages in the east are at an advantage over other areas of Hograno. East Hograno, with its road running alongside the Kaipitu River and serviced by a tractor and with a wharf near its mouth at Kaevanga means chief’s like Vuhamana can get betel nut and copra to market on a weekly basis. Chiefs and the lineages they represent have responded not only to changes since decolonisation but also to missionisation and colonisation in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries.
Chapter 3

History

It is the events which led to the break-up of the once all powerful CofM in Hograno district that I explore in this chapter. The central figures in the rise of the AOC were two men: Bishop Zephaniah Legumana who was sacked by the CofM and chief Stanley Vuhamana of Kava village who Legumana went to for help when he had no one left to turn to for support. These events are described in the second half of this chapter and draw on the oral testimony of Vuhamana himself.

But Hograno, and Isabel more broadly, are thoroughly Anglican and another reason for the success and speed at which the AOC rose in Hograno was because the breakaway church was staunchly Anglican and saw itself as more traditional than the CofM. For this reason, I start this chapter first with an introduction to Anglicanism in Hograno and those institutions within it that make it differ from Anglicanism elsewhere. Anglicanism differs from other
places in two very interesting ways; the popularity of its Healing Ministry, and in the CofM order of brothers called the Melanesian Brotherhood. Both institutions feature throughout this ethnography and are introduced here.

Further clues to the character of Anglicanism in Hograno and the political relationship between the Church, and the lineages that are led by chiefs, comes across through a reading of the mission encounter in Isabel and Solomon Islands. I see two broad historical time-frames to this encounter. The first period concerns the coming of Christianity to Isabel over the last two centuries and the second period discusses the events of the last decade where two new Anglican churches came to prominence in Isabel. For this outline of the history of Christianity in Isabel I have inferred four broad phases. The first is what I call, the *taem bifo* and is the period before conversion but where the impacts of the *ship men*, or traders as they are known, were having profound impacts on the lives of Solomon Islanders. The second phase is the conversion to Christianity which occurs at the end of the nineteenth century. The third phase I label the consolidation of mission and state through Christianity and colonialism typified by the expansion of copra plantations and the development of mission stations across the archipelago. The fourth phase is the post-independence era since 1978, and for Isabel this meant the retraction of foreign planters from copra plantations, the localisation of the Church administration across the archipelago, and the expansion of the logging and fishing industries in the wake of the British decolonisation. For my discussion of the rise of the AOC over the last decade, I commence with
events surrounding the sacking of the Bishop of Isabel Diocese, Zephaniah Legumana from the CofM in May 2003 (Kame Ruavaolo 2007: 54). This event would lead to not one breakaway church but two, and inspire the enthusiastic re-engagement of chiefs, clergy and laity in Anglican institutions across Hograno District.

Schism though is not isolated to Isabel or Anglicanism in Solomon Islands and the rise of other churches and religious from established mission churches and the colonial administration reveal interesting lines of intersection with the rise of the AOC (Allen 2009, Belshaw 1947, Burt 1982, Burt 1983, Hilliard 1978, Keesing 1982a, Laracy 1971, Worsley 1970). I take particular interest in the rise of the Christian Fellowship Church (CFC) in New Georgia, Western Province (Tippett 1967, Tuza 1977, Trompf 2004). The CFC was led by Silas Eto and his success was based on his standing as a church leader, lineage spokesman and prophet.

3.1 Contemporary Anglicanism

Almost everyone in Hograno District is Anglican and the form their Anglicanism takes is of the ‘High Church’ variety. Daily ritual practices follow that set out in the Book of Common Prayer and those leading the services adhere to the strictures of wearing vestments and using all applicable ritual paraphernalia. The Book of Common Prayer sets out a strict order of events for each day and month of the year. Catechists who conduct the morning
and evening prayers in the absence of the Priest freely draw from either both *cheke holo*, English and Pijin translations. Bible readings also are interchangeable read in *cheke holo*, Pijin and English. In Hirolegu there are a number of catechists who all go through formal training at the Diocese headquarters in Buala. The catechists establish a roster between themselves to ensure regular and timely services. They also are expected to attend the Saint’s Day festivals of neighbouring villages throughout the year. Once a year the catechists must lead the community in the execution of their own Saint’s Day and this is time where the chiefs and all of the village come together to help. The role necessitates a proficiency in reading and writing as well as the confidence to express these skills to the congregation. Each church is also supported by churchkeepers. These men assist the catechists in morning and evening prayer.

Distinguished catechists may move onto a career in the clergy. Doing so means gaining the support of the Parish Priest. Upon successful enrolment priests attend the CofM’s Bishop Patterson Theological College at Kohimarama to qualify for a degree in Theology. Bright students may then progress to postgraduate studies at the Pacific Theological College in Suva, Fiji. Alongside the college at Kohimarama are the two religious orders of the CofM, the Melanesian Brotherhood and the Community of the Sisters of Melanesia.
3.2 Melanesian Brotherhood

Established in 1925 by Ini Korporia of Guadalcanal, the Melanesian Brotherhood began as an order to continue the work of converting heathens across Solomon Islands. Membership in the Brotherhood is held in high esteem and acolytes must be male, single and of strong moral character. For those eager to join, the parish priest would need to endorse their application to become a Brother. The Brothers swear a vow of poverty and chastity for the period of their membership and they are expected to remain within the order for at least seven years. Brothers can leave at any time. During my fieldwork there was much talk of the Brotherhood’s activities in Hograno but they never visited Hirolegu and I was unable to witness their evangelism firsthand. The evangelism of the Brotherhood continues today but the focus has become more combating the heathen practices of the converted.

Close to the end of my fieldwork period a group of Brothers were requested to assist with a number of sorcery accusations after the sudden death of an Anglican priest in Susubona. The local clinic said the priest died of a stroke or heart attack, but he was only in his forties and harmful sorcery was suspected. Relatives of the deceased raised funds to sponsor the Brothers to identify the sorcerer. The group of touring Brothers was led by a Makiran who was known to be gifted with an ability to see a sorcerer’s hidden spell components. When the Brothers arrived they detected the presence of harmful spell components in the form of a skull with a hole in it at an elderly man’s residence. The
accused sorcerer denied having possession of any skull. When I asked those bringing news of this incident the accused sorcerer had been identified by Brothers on previous visits. These practices of cleansing a village of sorcery is called a ‘clearance’.

In all the cases of clearances I was told about, it was elderly men who were accused of performing harmful sorcery on others. After identifying the sorcerer in Susubona the Brothers responded to a request further up the coast at Kilokaka. In Kilokaka elderly men were again identified as sorcerers. The two accused men were absent from Kilokaka at the time attending a healing ministry conference in Meringe District. A couple of men from Hirolegu travelled to Kilokaka after hearing the news of their presence in west Hograno and requested that they come to Hirolegu. However, the Brothers were unable to respond to this request because they received a notice from the Diocesan Bishop to return to the provincial capital immediately. I was disappointed at this news because a three year old girl had died the year before and sorcery accusations were rife in Hirolegu about the resident primary school teacher having caused the death (See Chapter 6). The Brothers, it was hoped, would be able to resolve the matter, but they never came.

3.3 Healing Ministries

Spiritual Outreach Ministries Abroad (SOMA) is an organisation within the CofM that caters for local healers and operates as a healing ministry. Parish-
ioners who practice laying of hands, dousing with holy water, herbalism or the use or prayers would consider themselves local healers claim membership in healing ministries. During my first few months in Hograno such a meeting was held but I became aware of this after the conference had finished. The meeting was held in Meringe District on the other side of the island. The AOC does not have a counterpart healing ministry but healers who have joined the breakaway church are actively lobbying for one to be created. The ministry has its detractors though. Some priests claim that the ministry descend too often into ‘clearance’ work and focuses too much on sorcery rather than healing. Others claim that only the devil’s work can be found in these sorts of ministry and it has no place in Anglicanism.

When I asked what SOMA stood for I was told the acronym meant Spiritual Outreach Ministries Abroad. There is another organisation with the same acronym within the Global Anglican Communion which probably inspired the ministry now active in Hograno. This is the evangelical group called the Sharing of Ministries Abroad which is a mission organisation within the Anglican Communion which runs short trips to developing countries at the request of local bishops, priests and diocean administrators. This global organisation is part of the charismatic movement in mainline churches where Anglicans came to acknowledge the gifts of the Holy Spirit. The charter of this global SOMA organisation declares this element of Pentecostalism to be to ‘share the blessings of renewal in the Holy Spirit so that the Body of Christ might be empowered to preach the Kingdom of God and minister
in the power of the Holy Spirit’ (Sharing Our Ministries Abroad Australia 2013).

### 3.4 Before Christianity

The West Hograno retell the time before missionisation and colonialism by referring to the widespread retreat of villagers to fortified compounds in the interior of the island. They also distinguish this time as being much more territorial, where members of one matrilineage would not enter the territory of another without being invited or involved in ritual activity. Other practices emphasised at this time were the widespread use of sorcery for healing and harm, more care in the concealing of human remains from one’s neighbours, and the lack of disputes with one’s neighbours. People talk of this time as a frightening, but powerful era, because of the veneration of one’s ancestors and spirits and the support of those beings in the defence of territory and family. Spirits are split into two broad categories, those of the sea (*naitu tahae*), and those of the bush (*naitu mata*).

**Fortification and War**

The nineteenth century saw the coming of the ship men.\(^1\) Traders both itinerant and permanent, engaged with Solomon Islanders where sandalwood and other commodities were exchanged for foreign consumables like tobacco

\(^1\)In Isabel the term for white man is *mae vaka*, literally ‘man ship’.
and soap, and iron implements like knives, axes and guns. This trade led to the movement of people throughout parts of Isabel and especially affected those along the western coast of the island. The reason for this was the proximity of this coastline to the New Georgia group of islands to the west and Choiseul Island to the north. Populations were now well armed, and participating in a ritual complex involving human sacrifice which included raiding neighbouring islands. The west Hograno were frequently victims of these raids.

Stories of the raids, and the retreat to defensible fortified compounds in the interior, have been retold in recent times as a result of logging. The old fortified hilltops remain taboo and logging companies are told to avoid these areas. As a result, the taboo hilltops protrude out in the landscape, as the large trees remain on the top of the hill in contrast to the surrounding areas. The sizeable trees remain in these areas. Behind Hirolegu there were two such hilltop compounds. Stories told of the raids would often come up on fishing expeditions, rather than sojourns into the bush. Elderly men would mention, as we sailed past an island, that it was places like this that the raiding party would lie in wait for nightfall and watch out for the firelight of villages along the coast. In another case, one woman claimed that although she was born in New Georgia she had Isabel ancestry as a result of the taking of slaves because one of her grandparents was a captured Isabel woman.
Dangerous Territory

When West Hograno talk about the time before, the territories of their matrilineage are depicted as powerful and dangerous. Because of this, they add, they would not venture into another's territory without fear of reprisals from both humans and the spirits that belong to the neighbouring matrilineage. Evidence of this power continues to this day. In the territory in which I was based, the matrilineal group were totemically bound with snakes. Encountering these snakes was, and still is, a dangerous affair because the snakes protect and respond to the requests of their matrilineage. Interestingly, the snakes are at the command of leaders of the matrilineage but for residents and those without this knowledge, there are ways to pass by snakes without evoking their wrath. For visitors to the territory, and residents from elsewhere, talking and singing in the snake’s company will often be sufficient to pass by them unharmed. But it is important to remember the distinction. Matrifiliates make demands of the snakes, but others must engage with their voice through talk. But there are subtle differences in how matrifiliates engage with the ancestral beings of the matrilineage. For example, a Senior Matrifiliate is often approached by his sister’s children asking for access to his specialist knowledge about commanding these beings. It will be at the discretion of the Senior Matrifiliate who receives this knowledge. When I queried about how an heir was chosen Senior Matrifiliates responded that they would make the decision based upon the character and moral fortitude of the heir. While no senior matrifiliate would disclose who was chosen and
who was not, rumours always circulate about those that have been knocked back and those that are in the know.

**A Different Kind of Peace**

Contemporary issues cast their own hue over the past and this is certainly evident in the rise of land disputes over territorial boundaries with the introduction of logging to West Hograno at the beginning of the twenty first century compared with the complete lack of land disputes in the *taem bifo*. West Hograno would often tell me that I was lucky now because I could move around. They would then say, we are lucky because we move freely from village to village in safety. This was not the case before they argue. As I have already described, the power of one’s territory was respected because of the ancestral beings in the command of the living. This meant also that each group and their territory was left well alone unless there were specific ritual events which brought the groups together. West Hograno say that this respect, while frightening, meant there were not disputes between lineages. Today, people reiterated, there is no respect for territory and because people are not fearful they make things up and want to change boundaries to benefit themselves. Money is making them lie many argued.

**Foraging and Hunting**

During the *taem bifo* foraging and hunting meant covering much more ground across one’s territory. The West Hograno would traverse the interior of their
respective territories more frequently and spend much longer times away from the village gathering yams and swamp taro. While movement through a neighbour’s territory was extremely limited before, movement within one’s territory was extensive and many elderly West Hograno stated that knowledge of places throughout one’s territory was diminishing. This was a result they claimed of an increasing like for imported foodstuffs like rice, noodles, canned meat and fish, flour and sugar, which meant less time in the bush gardening and foraging. Another facet of foraging and hunted through country was the size of the group. In the past a large group spanning a number of families and generations would travel and camp through their territory. This would often be compared with today where only a husband and wife and maybe their children would travel to areas where food can be foraged like wetland areas rich in swamp taro.

3.5 Ship Men

Missionaries may have preceded the British colonial administration by fifty years but opportunistic traders and whalers beat them both by another fifty years. During the first half of the nineteenth century whalers utilised harbours throughout Solomon Islands to resupply their vessels with food and water provided by coastal communities in exchange for surplus hoop iron (Bennett 1987: 33). The introduction of iron increased the production of shell money and brought about a rise in warfare both within and between
islands which in turn forced communities with limited access to western technology to build large fortified towns (White 1992: 88-90, Bennett 1987: 36). For Solomon Islanders, western goods increased their productive capacity and efficiency and provided a competitive advantage over their neighbours and enemies. Increased warfare and headhunting, labour recruiting to plantations in Queensland, and the introduction of diseases saw a population decrease in Solomon Islands by the late nineteenth century (Hogbin 1939: 136).

3.6 Missionaries

Over ninety percent of Solomon Islanders are Christian (McDougall 2008: 4). The largest denomination is the CofM followed by the Roman Catholic Church and SSEC. The legacy of missionaries is evident in the Christian names still chosen by Solomon Islanders today. I have been introduced on numerous times to ‘Selwyns’ from across the archipelago, to ‘Charles Foxes’ from Makira and and ‘David Welchmans’ from Isabel. George Augustus Selwyn was the first Bishop of New Zealand – an episcopacy that included parts of Melanesia. Founder of the Melanesian Mission, George Selwyn established St. John’s College in Auckland as a summer school for promising Melanesian youths to learn English, arithmetic and the ‘saving truths of the Christian faith’ (Hilliard 1978: 9). The youths were then returned to their home villages as catechists. By the 1860s, Bishop Patterson joined Selwyn as the first
Bishop of the new See of Melanesia. Patterson, with a keen interest in indigenous languages, saw the folly in English as the lingua franca so instead chose Mota, a language of the Bank Islands, as the common tongue of the Mission (Hilliard 1978: 34). The drawbacks of educating Solomon Islanders in distant Auckland became more pronounced and in 1865 the Mission moved its headquarters to Norfolk Island. The new headmaster at Norfolk was Robert Henry Codrington whose interest in the customs of Melanesians made him a pioneer in Pacific anthropology (Hilliard 1978: 37).

In 1845 Marists led Roman Catholic efforts to Melanesia under the leadership of Bishop Jean-Bapiste Epalle. Ill-prepared and naive about the environment to which they were going, Epalle was murdered in Santa Isabel after only 14 days ashore and the remaining Marists returned to Makira only to lose more of their clergy to malaria (Laracy 1976: 18-22). The Marists were not to return until 1898 when European contact was well established across the Solomons and increased trade ensured regular shipping services to the region (Laracy 1976: 35). This second wave of Catholicism was centred on Guadalcanal where Catholic missions were located on the weather coast of Guadalcanal and in 1932 a headquarters was built at Visale, northwestern Guadalcanal. Stations were also established at Buma (Langalanga) and Rohinari ('Are'Are) on Malaita at the turn of the century.
3.6.1 Mission in Isabel

The period of conversion on Isabel in the later nineteenth century was dominated by three figures of the historical record. They are the missionary Dr Henry Welchman and the Isabel chiefs Soga and Figrima. The retelling of these encounters, between missionaries and chiefs today, draws from the interplay of oral and written history. White (1992) has placed considerable focus on this history and the way these stories carry through to the present as ‘identity talk’. Here I will only outline this history to the extent that it can provide a background to the concepts which the West Hograno and key figures in the breakaway movement have drawn on this history for the politics of the present. In this way the use and retelling of the conversion event by contemporary chiefs confirms the argument made by White (1997: 234), that being, the role of chiefs at conversion is structurally equivalent to the role of chiefs in the present, especially in mediating local politics with missionisation and colonialism. But before I turn to the use of conversion narratives by contemporary chiefs, I will outline the historical terrain already mapped out by White.

By the late nineteenth century, missionaries began to arrive in the region and in Isabel was the Melanesian Mission that rose to prominence over the missionary groups. Bishop Coleridge Patterson was the first to step ashore from the Melanesian Mission and following him were Alfred Penny and then Henry Welchman. It is Welchman who is remembered most among these early missionaries but he was preceded by a New Caledonian missionary
called Wadrokal. During Wadrokal’s time a powerful chief defied attempts at conversion by the Anglicans. His name was Bera and the lucrative trade in shell and bech-de-mer helped him amass an array of firearms to prey on populations along the island to the north. Bera was regarded by the missionary Penny as detrimental to the mission effort and Penny was somewhat relieved when Bera died (White 1978: 153). One of Bera’s sons, Soga, followed his father’s disdain for Anglicans until he was successfully treated for influenza by Bishop Selwyn. This event led to his conversion. This was a significant event the missionaries reported and hundreds of conversions followed, as did the trade in heads between Soga and the west Solomons and raiding parties north up the coastline cease.

Where Selwyn reported on the successful conversion of Soga, Welchman was to have a similar event unfold in his encounter with Chief Figrima. Figrima is of particular interest here because he continues to figure in chiefs’ understanding of their own place and role in contemporary Hograno politics. In his diary, Welchman was prosaic in his description of the first encounter with the pagan chief. He said merely that Figrima wanted to be friends, that Figrima should visit him and Chief Soga, and that Figrima would like some boys to be taught by him (White 1992: 170).

White (1992: 157-180) goes into considerable detail about this encounter between Welchman and Figrima bringing together a number of oral retellings of the event. From this perspective, the version of events is somewhat more bracing and vigorous. Welchman follows the Kaipitu River (See Figure 2.4)
up toward Figrima’s fortified compound with his catechists by his side. As they make their way they are confronted by Figrima’s scouts and Welchman, it is recounted, prays twice, once when the scouts ‘say they should kill him, and the second just before [Welchman] obtains entrance to the fort’ (White 1992: 166).

On this last point the comments in the missionary’s diary suggests considerable acumen in Welchman’s approach to Figrima. That he simply had a conversation and invited the chief to an upcoming event shows the missionary intentionally opened up an opportunity for Figrima to make his own decision about the Christians, without making any demands. In fact, Figrima was later to meet with Welchman and lead his people in a mass conversion.

White makes the following points about Welchman’s approach to the fort. The first is that Welchman succeeds through his ‘Christian mana or spiritual power’ (White 1992: 166). He shakes hands with the scouts and they acknowledge his power by using their non-preferred hand. In one account Welchman approaches the fort with a walking stick, another symbol of power still evident today in the use of staffs by the Melanesian Brotherhood. Figrima resists Welchman’s request to enter the fort but Figrima finally and abruptly lets Welchman into the fort. In the conversation between Welchman and Figrima talk of peace and an exchange of gifts occur. In Welchman’s account of the same event interestingly, he does not mention any violence directed towards him, or any talk of peace with Figrima.
3.7 Plantation Labour

From the 1870s onward Solomon Islanders provided labour for cane fields in Queensland and Fiji (Keesing and Corris 1980: 10). The majority of Solomon Islanders recruited came from Malaita and had little to no contact with any missions and no formal mission work was conducted on the plantations (Hilliard 1969: 41). The presence of heathen labourers did not go unnoticed by Christians in cane growing areas like Bundaberg, Queensland. One such Christian was Florence Young who took it upon herself to ‘teach them the way of salvation’ and started Sunday school for labourers on her brother’s estate in Bundaberg (Hilliard 1969: 42). The school was a success and became a non-denominational Evangelical mission called the Queensland Kanaka Mission. The popularity of the Sunday schools saw many labourers baptised and the mission provided documentation accrediting their conversion to be presented to missions back on in Solomon Islands. However, at the completion of their contracts many labourers returned to islands like Malaita and Guadalcanal where missionaries had little to no influence and abandoned their new religion upon return. By 1906 labour recruiting had ceased, driving up the value of seasonal labourers in Queensland, but in turn curtailing the supply of heathens for the Queensland Kanaka Mission (Bennett 1987: 161, Hilliard 1969: 46). The end of the Pacific labour trade saw the mission’s centre move to the Solomons and was renamed the South Seas Evangelical Mission.
3.7.1 Pacification

With Solomon Islands contributing labour to Britain’s colonies, and France and Germany vying for territory and labour in the Pacific, Britain reluctantly assumed sovereignty over Solomon Islands in 1893 (Fox 1967: 39). Pacification of the new British Solomon Islands Protectorate was not solely the product of colonial intervention. Rather pacification was aided by depopulation from disease and raiding and headhunting, the enforcement of laws against ownership of firearms, and the involvement of missions in pastoral care (Bennett 1987: 103). Pacification was essential for a Protectorate that had to be self-sufficient and raise its own revenue. To attract commercial enterprise to Solomon Islands the first Commissioner of the Protectorate, Woodford with the aid of traders, alienated land for would be investors (Bennett 1987: 149). Larger companies like Lever Brothers and Burns Philp established coconut plantations in the Protectorate which was followed by a growing number of smaller plantation companies spurred on by advertisements in the Sydney Morning Herald of ‘Wealth in the Solomons’ (Bennett 1987: 138).

Solomon Islanders were exploited for labour and land by the colonial government and commercial enterprises. With wages came taxes yet Solomon Islanders did not receive any government services in return. Education and medical services remained the province of the missions until the Second World War.
3.7.2 The Planters

With the British administration came the planters who focused on copra production, but cocoa was a crop often planted alongside coconuts yielding two cash crops from the same hectare. The other feature of the early twentieth century was the consolidation of the missions and the establishment of mission stations across the Solomons islands and Isabel. In Isabel, mission stations fanned out from Bugotu over the early twentieth century. A station was established in the now provincial centre of Buala, and on the western coastline, a station was established in Susubona, which is now the government service centre for West Hograno.

For West Hograno, the other centre to develop was Kilokaka over this period and where the population of Isabel had moved to the southern end of the island and the interior, it was over the first half of the century that the population moved to mission stations. This was a time of boarding schools and movement of people toward large coastal villages. When West Hograno talk about this period they will invariably add that they still returned to their matrilineal homelands for periods of weeks at a time to garden and protect their territory. As services grew, by the end of the Second World War the population began to expand especially with the introduction of anti-malarial drugs and discontent grew over the problems of sharing alluvial river plains near to the villages.
3.8 WWII

In 1942 Guadalcanal was the location for the beginning of America’s counter-offensive against the Japanese Imperial forces who had taken the Solomon Islands capital of Tulagi and cleared a runway on Guadalcanal. For Solomon Islanders, their colonial masters seemed pitiful in comparison to the American and Japanese war machine. The white residents of Tulagi fled, as did missionaries, traders and planters in the face of the Japanese advance and the generosity of American troops to the Solomon Islanders they employed in camps forever altered Solomon Islanders’ perception of Europeans. This shift in power and perception would lead to unrest most notably on the island of Malaita where the political movement took shape called Maasina Rule (See Section 3.10.2).

3.9 Post War

In 1978 Solomon Islands gained independence from Britain, but as Bennett (1987: 321) notes, it was more a case of Britain gaining independence from the Pacific. But the process of decolonisation had been building for sometime because during the postwar years there was a reduction in European traders and planters. The protectorate moved to develop the economy. Laws were revised to encourage the exploitation of primary resources like forestry and mining. Commonwealth grant schemes were introduced to encourage surveys for natural resources, and the development of communications, medical and
health services. However, much of this spending was concentrated in the new capital of Honiara on Guadalcanal. By 1970 efforts were made to increase Solomon Islander participation in the public service. These moves created a political class in Honiara aiding the careers of Peter Kenilorea and David Kausimae, both Prime Ministers to be.

Hirolegu experienced the changing of the guard in the coconut plantation that runs along its shoreline. During and immediately after the war Papari plantation was run by an Australian called Laycock whose grave site remains on a rise among the coconut trees. After this the plantation came into the possession of the Chinese and then into the hands of the government. Through the seventies and eighties the plantation was run by a former teacher from Kia District and employed labourers from the area as well as Malaita and Guadalcanal. After independence the Government was keen to pull out of the operation and by the mid to late eighties had encouraged the landowners of the Hirolegu to buy back the alienated land, returning it to customary tenure. The landowners did this with a loan from the Solomon Islands Development Bank and had made the final payment on the loan using logging royalties in the first decade of the 2000s. Land administration had come full circle. Chiefs in Hirolegu, and Hograno more broadly, had taken every opportunity to return their territories to a local system of tenure.
3.10 Churches and Movements

The conversion to Christianity and the Second World War were tumultuous events which changed permanently the politics of Solomon Islands. New forms of association and political innovation were to take shape in the wake of these events highlighting the fervour and willingness to adopt new knowledge but also outline the practices and institutions that endure. The twentieth century saw a number of political movements take root across the archipelago. The first of these movements which involved both Isabel and the nearby islands of the Central Province (Nggela and Savo) was the Chair and Rule movement associated with the missionary Richard Fallowes of the 1930s. The second movement was the Maasina Rule or Marching Rule which took root in Malaita but came to encompass all of the Solomon Islands. The third movement was that of the CFC which was centred around the rise to prominence of Silas Eto, a Solomon Islander from New Georgia who led and created a new Pentecostal church in western Province. This church continues to this day.

3.10.1 Chair and Rule

Chair and Rule, otherwise known as the Fallowes Movement, arose under the guidance of the missionary Richard Fallowes who arrived in Isabel in 1929 (White 1978: 219). Fallowes believed local chiefs were ignored by the Government and instituted the new role of church chief. The Church chief
was to be an influential person of the village that would take responsibility for the Church and ensure the work programmes around maintenance of the grounds were carried out by parishioners. They also had to report sins, adulterers, and those who were drifting away from the mission to Fallowes himself (White 1978: 223). Fallowes would then give the accused a choice between whipping or excommunication. But while the role as church chief seemed to be only associated with the mission, a rivalry ensued on Isabel between the District headman system of government and the Church chief system of Fallowes. This was captured succinctly by a Police constable at the time ‘who is number one boss...King George or Arch Bishop’ (Hilliard 1978: 282, White 1978: 229). But for a time the growing friction between Fallowes and his church chiefs and the government district officers was to subside in 1935 when Fallowes had a mental breakdown and left the island.

He returned in 1938, but this time independent of the Mission and as an activist he was ‘convinced that the protectorate government was unjustly neglecting the welfare of its Melanesian subjects in favour of the white commercial community’ (Hilliard 1978: 283). Fallowes ‘maintained that it was his duty as a priest to engage in political activities in the cause of a just society, The Kingdom of God on earth’ (Hilliard 1978: 283). This new Christian order was received well and Fallowes' meetings came to be known as ‘Parliaments’ (White 1978: 231). Beyond Isabel, ‘Parliaments’ were held in Savo and Nggela. The movement grew quickly in response to Fallowes' message of lack of development, the need for schooling, low wages, high taxes and
most importantly no formal indigenous political system within the colonial government. At one ‘Parliament’ an ornate chair was introduced in which the speaker would sit, and it was this convention which gave rise to the name ‘Chair and Rule’. Those attending these meetings were government headmen, priests and catechists. Fallowes had generated a large political following in a very short period of time and by the second ‘Parliament’ in Savo the movement was attracting followers from as far away as Malaita. At this second meeting White (1978: 235) records the list of demands that were sent to the High Commissioner of the colonial government:

requests for a technical school, medical dispensaries, a native ‘hostel’ at the Administration center, rescinding of the ban on the sale of gun cartridges, a regulation to require married men working on plantations to return to their families after two years, and not turning over the Protectorate to Australia.

By the second meeting the government began to monitor the movement and after the third meeting the High Commissioner received a letter from a headman of the Nggela group of islands demanding equal wages and copra prices with Europeans (White 1978: 237). As one local leader in Nggela argued

we have only been taught the Gospel, but nothing yet about trade and commerce. We have been christianized for 78 years now. The Church people are anxious for collections and the [Government] for taxes, but where is the money? Here in the Islands wages and
prices are very small, not enough for taxes and church collections (Hilliard 1978: 284).

With letters coming from local leaders the high commissioner called Fallowes to a meeting and told him to cease meddling in local politics and leave the country on the next available ship. But with Fallowes deported the movement dissipated as the capacity to organise large gatherings between island groups ceased with its leader’s departure (White 1978: 238). Without Fallowes the movement subsided. As Hilliard (1978: 283) describes, the Chair and Rule movement was a reaction to the ‘lack of economic and educational opportunities and the failure of both British government and Church of England mission, despite taxes and church collections over many years, to give them the means of achieving that economic, political and social equality with Europeans’. These criticisms were to be raised a fresh with the breakup of Anglicanism in Isabel.

3.10.2 Maasina Rule

Acquiring its strength and support for its political and anti-colonial stance, Maasina Rule started in Malaita and spread through Makira, Guadalcanal and Nggela and Isabel only to be quashed by the colonial government in the early fifties. There is a broad consensus to the origins of Maasina Rule (Belshaw 1947; Laracy 1971; Keesing 1982a). These origins include exposure and encouragement by American troops stationed in Solomon Islands
against the colonial regime, the establishment of native councils and community development in Solomon Islands before the war, and the Chair and Rule movement encouraged by Fallowes in the 1930s. A District Officer cum anthropologist writing about Maasina rule at the height of its influence and power, blamed the American troops for inspiring independent thought in Solomon Islanders:

During the war years, such influences as American-dollar inflation in the Pacific, critical talk (much of it uninformed and irresponsible) on the part of American forces, and sudden contact with such products as ships, trucks, aeroplanes and preserved foods, greatly stimulated the natives to independent thought (Belshaw 1947: 187)

Further, Belshaw (1947: 191) picked up a theme still popular among expatriates in Melanesia today whereby the natives, with nothing to do, occupy their spare time by devising unruly notions like political autonomy. These early concerns of the idle native with dissent on his mind are particularly salient when coming from a District Officer working in a plantation economy buttressed by local labour. Malaitans especially, were no newcomers to labouring and the business of plantations given their experience on the cane fields of Queensland fifty years earlier. Considered in these terms, as a labour movement, the Maasina Rule directly threatened the colonial economy of the British Solomon Islands Protectorate. Former plantation labourers wanted to bring about a change to their economic situation which was spurred on by
the disparity between labourers working for the Volunteer Labour Corps for £1 / month to those working for £14 / month as free labourers, and in turn, those who worked directly for the Americans who received much by way of side earnings (Worsley 1970: 183).

Surprising the colonial administration, Maasina Rule brought together the culturally diverse island of Malaita under one organisation (Tippett 1967: 204); something the colonial administration had failed to achieve. Maasina Rule spread rapidly not from one centre, but from multiple villages, and its focus was on ‘community re-organization, communal work, political organization in hierarchies of chiefs, and their collective bargaining with the colonial government over the terms of administration, plantation labour, and law’ (Keesing 1982a: 359). Some interesting points of difference are made about how the Maasina Rule was understood and the ways in which it became popular among different cultural and language groups of Malaita. Keesing (1982a) points out that for the ‘Are’Are of South Malaita the movement was based around codifying customary law, as the Law, and writing down of traditional rules and taboos, called custom. For the Kwara’ae in central to north Malaita, the Maasina Rule helped synthesise Christianity with the ancestors, as the Kwara’ae myth of Bilitigao encodes. Here, Bilitigao a Kwara’ae ancestor is depicted as a Biblical Israelite bringing together Malaitan custom and the Old Testament (Keesing 1982a: 361-2). In trying to reconcile these highly divergent understandings of custom on Malaita, Keesing developed the term kastom as an analytic tool in much the same vein as that which
was developing around ideas of the invention of tradition (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983).

### 3.10.3 Christian Fellowship Church

The rise of the CFC provides a case study for an assessment and understanding of the rise and formation of an independent church. As both a political and religious innovation, the CFC is a creation of the inter-relation of the indigenous encounter with the Methodist mission, in the conflict and alienation of New Georgians to the market economy, and in the political conflict between social groups (*butubutu*) in New Georgia itself.

By the 1960s the Methodist Mission in the western Solomons was facing unrest of its own making when Silas Eto, an indigenous clergyman from the area, formed the CFC and lead it until his death in 1984 (Hviding 1996: 122). Silas Eto was known as the ‘Holy Mama’ and even after his death, the CFC today remains active in New Georgia under the guidance of his sons, one of whom is known as the ‘Spiritual Authority’.

Christianity came to many New Georgians in the early twentieth century in the form of the Methodist Mission. With the assistance of established European traders in the western Solomons, the Methodists built a mission station in Roviana Lagoon, New Georgia in 1902 and one of those Methodist missionaries was the Reverend John Goldie; a figure who would dominate the political scene of the western Solomons for the next 50 years. Goldie set about implementing—what was then a fad in missionary circles—the idea of

From their new station on New Georgia, the Methodists set about establishing plantations, work sheds and schools in order to teach New Georgians the value of hard work and the discipline of a total Christian way of life. Harwood (1971: 24) summarised Goldie’s approach as an ‘emphasis on a “social ethic” which stressed “works” over “beliefs” and emphasised the here and now rather than future salvation’ (Harwood 1971: 24). Initially Polynesian catechists were sent to villages across the western Solomons (New Georgia Group and Choiseul) and loyal converts being schooled at the mission station were selected to carry the Gospel to other villages. Roviana, a New Georgian language, was used as the lingua franca of the mission and translations were made of selected hymns and prayers (Harwood 1971: 30).

The secular approach of the mission, its emphasis on a Christian life of the here and now meant the Christian message became swamped by the day to day management of its plantation projects, schools and hospitals. The New Georgian response, writes Harwood (1971: 31), was to equate the Christian life with a European way of life. Ironically, New Georgians responded to the European missionaries through the idiom of their own religious thought which was to attend mission schools and convert to Christianity in order to obtain, through the acquisition of esoteric knowledge, the same material benefits accorded the European missionaries. However, access to European religious
knowledge through schooling and conversion did not lead to economic parity with Europeans.

Goldie, through his activities, set in train further lines of antagonism in New Georgian societies which would later lead to schism in the Methodist Mission. Irrespective of Goldie’s pontifications urging New Georgians ‘to stand on their own feet and to look after their own affairs’ (Harwood 1971: 32), he resisted empowering local clergy as wages for mission labour were either low or non-existent. Nonetheless Goldie embodied a form of leadership which endeared him to New Georgians. He provided for his followers, was successful in running the mission’s business ventures and he mediated on behalf of New Georgians in all dealings with the colonial government and other Europeans. New Georgians saw Goldie as a successful leader both in a European and Melanesian sense and New Georgians were eager to access the ‘special knowledge and mysterious powers’ (Harwood 1971: 35) which blessed Goldie’s activities. Goldie was known as bangara (chief) and tie nomana (bigman) by islanders and Harwood (1971: 35) reports stories developed around Goldie of ritual paraphernalia in Goldie’s possession. The search for the source of Goldie’s supernatural power is tellingly revealed in the words of one informant to Harwood (1971: 35): ‘Goldie was a lawyer and he never taught the people about theology. No one really knew anything about the Bible until Reverend Leadley came to teach at the school’.

Lineages in New Georgia are reckoned by tracing an individual’s line of descent bilaterally to a common ancestor. Those belonging to the same de-
cent category or segment belong to an individual’s kin-group and comprise his or her *butubutu* (Harwood 1971: 9, Hviding 1996: 132). Tracing a line of descent, which comprises a list of names, toward an apical ancestor is known as *tututi*. Few New Georgians remember their tututi in its entirety therefore leaving the transmission of genealogies to specialists during a ceremony known as *minila* (Harwood 1971: 11). In each village the leader of the dominant butubutu is known as the palabatu and Harwood (1971: 12) associates the palabatu with the bigman type. Leaders who establish themselves beyond one butubutu are known as bangara as they draw support from multiple butubutu. Bangara maintain regional alliances through marriage arrangements to the extent that bangara come from the same butubutu and may be perceived as hereditary positions but Harwood (1971: 12) points out any bangara successor must mobilize regional support in their own right.

With prominent *tututi* of the region close to him, Goldie was informed of local affairs, and in turn ensured that the next generation of bangara were loyal and supportive (Bennett 1987: 215). Those close to Goldie in the 1920s would rise to be prominent leaders in New Georgia as teachers, bangara, government employees and in Silas Eto’s case, Holy Mama (Harwood 1971: 61).

The idea of Holy Mama is connected with the idea of the Holy Spirit. And with this is the notion of concealment and revelation which Silas Eto came to understand and explain to New Georgian Christians in the events after World War II, when the experience of tataru overcame New Georgians
during worship. In 1947 Reverend Allen Hall joined the Methodist missionaries to run the theological college at the head station and took exception to the complacent approach of other Methodist missionaries to Christianity (Harwood 1971: 72). Hall, in deliberate contrast to Goldie, emphasised personal religious experience in contrast to Goldie’s penchant for temporal affairs. During the fifties, Silas Eto and others became exposed to Hall’s evangelism and Eto found an avenue to reveal his visions along Christian lines. At this time, notes Harwood (1971: 74), Pentecostal revival meetings could be heard on short wave radios and print material from Pentecostal churches were circulating. In the early 1950s, and against mission protocol, Silas Eto was sent to his natal village as a catechist. Eto’s reforms to Methodist worship practices which included an early morning children’s service, praying on all possible occasions, parading outside church and marching in prior to worship, saluting the crucifix, and clapping during the service, became more popular. Increasing also during this period were ‘possessions’ and ecstatic experiences of worshippers. Missionaries and powerful New Georgian leaders marginalised Eto for his religious innovations and Eto responded by constructing an impressive church he called ‘Paradise’ which, in scale, left no doubts as to his standing as a bangara of the Kusage region of New Georgia.

At the opening ceremony of ‘Paradise’ Eto took the opportunity to invite his political and religious counterparts both for and against him to attend. The Kusage region was considered somewhat of a backwater in comparison to other parts of New Georgia and many in attendance had not seen the
activities Eto and his followers had been up to in recent years (Harwood 1971: 84). The Paradise Church was built in a traditional leaf house style and was the biggest of its type in the western Solomons. At the opening ceremony some children became possessed. The event had the effect of either recruiting New Georgians to Eto’s movement or galvanising other islanders against it. The concerns of those islanders opposed to Eto’s movement were warranted as the movement quickly spread to other villages along kinship and marriage lines (Harwood 1971: 86). Eto’s powers were plain to see whether you liked him or not. He combined the best of Goldie’s business acumen and the most appealing aspects of Hall’s theological thought.

From 1960 to 1961 the movement spread rapidly from village to village with worshippers being overcome by the Holy Spirit. Those villages that resisted the movement experienced the Holy Spirit more acutely. Eto’s ‘new way’ was spreading without his involvement and a mass possession took place at a Roviana school adjacent to the Methodist mission station (Harwood 1971: 87). Villagers turned to Eto for an explanation of the phenomenon with one informant recalling Eto’s words: ‘the completion of our Christianity is to receive the Holy Spirit, therefore we must be born again, and encourage other people to enter the real life of the spirit’ (Harwood 1971: 89). Village leaders called on Eto to visit them as the movement spread. At one village Eto gave a service where widespread personal experiences of the Holy Spirit took place. He visited a Methodist boarding school at this time and one teacher informed the school before Eto’s arrival that ‘four persons were coming—God,
the Son, the Holy Spirit, and Silas Eto’ (Harwood 1971: 93). New Georgians against Eto and his movement demanded the missionaries stop Eto from moving between villages and at the Mission’s quarterly meeting Eto made the following point in his defence:

It is a shameful thing for those who have had no experience with the Holy Spirit to try and teach about it while someone who knows all about it is among you. Such a man will stand and say that you speak falsely. (Harwood 1971: 96)

In Roviana the experience of the Holy Spirit, its coming into one’s heart, is called tataru which means ‘to pity’ or ‘to love’ and ‘refers to the feeling of affection as well as to the demonstration of that affection’ (Harwood 1971: 132). It seems Eto’s sincerity about the experience of tataru were not heard by its scribe as Harwood (1971) consistently refers to the experience as a ‘trance like state’. Nonetheless some description is made of the Holy Spirit posession which was associated with glossalia, running into the bush, dancing, and the possession of children. New Georgians closely associated with Europeans and European ways experienced tataru more violently. An explanation of tataru by New Georgians draws on a popular passage among Pentecostals from John 14:16-31 where God sends a comforter, the Holy Spirit, that both enters and emanates from the heart (Harwood 1971: 132). Another explanation was that tataru was akin to receiving an electric shock in that it can not be controlled and comes of its own accord. It is explanation
like this that led Harwood (1971: 133) to interpret tataru as experiential and not cognitive, and as an experience that revitalises communal values.

Certainly, tataru formed a distinctive line of demarcation between those following Eto, from that of the Methodists. Tataru then set in train the schism in the Methodist mission in Solomon Islands. However, I see Harwood’s interpretation of tataru as experiential not cognitive as contrary to the many New Georgian elaborations and interpretations of tataru documented in Harwood’s ethnography. This view stems from the mission perspective that saw Reverend Hall’s revival as setting in motion a religious fervour that the mission could not control or manage (Harwood 1971: 75). Certainly, a view was put forward that tataru overcame worshippers at any time and caught them by surprise but overemphasising this point muddies an understanding of tataru in terms of innovations in New Georgian religious thought, and as a political movement. In fact, specialising in interpreting and innovating with new ideas is an aspect of Silas Eto’s character that informed his power and efficacy as a leader and prophet.

Harwood sees tataru as revitalising a form of ‘communitas’ that awakens communal values (kastom) lost in the face of a rising individualism brought on by the encroachment of a market economy (cf. Tomlinson 2009). Examples of which were the attempt to establish copra plantations on individually owned lands or take up government and wage employment and relocate immediate family members to town (Gizo, Honiara) or mission centres. But there is more to the success of the CFC than a reaction against western individualism.
Eto anchored the CFC in New Georgia through his political ties as a chief exemplified in the construction of the Paradise church which can only succeed by bringing together many lineages. He coupled these collective activities with a personal experience of the Holy Spirit which explained his own visions and revealed the the missionaries’ power that they had been concealing from New Georgians. At play here are two interrelated sources of power. One finds its origin from within the landed social group while the other is hidden, foreign, and distant. Silas Eto was a leader that could articulate and draw upon these two sources of power to create a church.

3.11 Rise of the Anglican Orthodox Church

Like the CFC and the CofM, the rise of the AOC centres on a talented clergyman trained by the mission. Bishop Zephaniah Legumana is the clergyman behind not one, but two of the three Anglican churches in Hograno District. Those three Anglican churches are the original CofM, the Episcopal Church of Solomon Islands (ECOSI), and the AOC.

Legumana is an Hograno man, born and raised in the village of Biluro. He is the son of Rueben Bele and closely related to the families of Hirolegu where I was based. He has five children and lives in a modest leaf house in his home village of Biluro. Legumana’s career and rise through the ranks of the CofM are important to an understanding of the split. After graduating from the Pacific Theological College in 1990, Legumana returned to
Solomon Islands and took up a lecturing post at the CofM’s own Theological College at Kohimarama in Guadalcanal. He taught there for some years, but was eventually dismissed after a number of incidents including a petition by theological students to have him removed from the school. His removal from Kohimarama though did not hamper his progress with the CofM. In 1999 he was elected as the Bishop of the Diocese of Ysabel and moved to the provincial capital to fulfill the role. Legumana was the first Hograno man to head the Diocese and it has been suggested to me, that the move to honor Legumana with the title was more about appeasing the push by Hograno for their own Diocese than an appointment based on merit.

Like his time at Kohimarama though, it was not long until Legumana’s staff at the diocesan office in Buala began to revolt. The incidents began stacking up as Anthony Kame Ruavaolo (2007) has already documented in some detail. Upon his arrival in Buala, a secretary at the diocesan office was dismissed by Legumana for misappropriating funds and a Hograno secretary installed in his place. Eventually though, the Bishop himself was accused of the misappropriation of church funds after a number of letters were sent to the Archbishop in Honiara. These accusations led to his demise. The process of arbitrating the conflict between Legumana and his staff involved the Church Court and in both the initial decision, and appeal, Legumana lost. The Church strongly advised that Legumana submit his resignation but he refused. The Archbishop saw no alternative but to sack him. It was in these finals days, when all seemed lost that Legumana went to the chiefs
of Hograno.

It is at this juncture that Legumana turned to the chiefs of Hograno. Many of those I interviewed about the Anglican schism in Hograno spoke of another key player in the breakaway movement. That man was the chief of Kava village in East Hograno, Stanley Vuhamana. Interviewees saw Vuhamana as the man that faced the music, that came to each village throughout Hograno and discussed the move to separate from the CofM: calling village meetings, gathering chiefs together for pan-Hograno ‘conventions’ and meeting with clergy of the CofM to stage the Hograno concerns with the CofM administration.

In the first two months of my fieldwork, Vuhamana came to Hirolegu for a meeting and it was at this meeting that my host, suggested that Vuhamana was an important person for me to meet. I introduced myself to Vuhamana and he said his business in Hirolegu did not concern me, but he would be more than happy to discuss the origin of the AOC back in his home village of Kava. He said for me to come to Kava village on Saturday in two weeks time. This was to be more than fruitful, and for what follows, as a history of the rise of the AOC, I have relied heavily on Vuhamana’s narrative.

3.11.1 The Sacking

Vuhamana began his telling of Legumana’s dismissal from the Church of Melanesia with Legumana’s return to Hograno District:
[Bishop Zephaniah] came to Kaevanga and asked if he could find me. They led him to me at Kaevanga and he told me ‘please can you help me?’

‘What has happened [to] you Bishop?’ I told him.

‘I was sacked as the Bishop of the Diocese of Isabel on the grounds that I am a person who steal[s] money from the Church’ he said.

‘Then I refused to resign’.

Vuhamana’s response was definitive: ‘I am the secretary of the Hograno House of Chiefs. I cannot do it myself. I have to call all the chiefs in Hograno to gather at Kaevanga on the Saint John the Baptist Church Day’. He would assemble the Hograno House of Chiefs for a meeting to discuss Legumana’s situation.

But for the Saint John the Baptist Church Day, Vuhamana organised a gathering of chiefs and Hograno-based clergy. Sending letters to all chiefs and priests, Vuhamana raised the issue of Legumana’s sacking and that he was no longer a priest, but ‘now become[s] an ordinary person like us’. Vuhamana stated that the reason this issue was so important and why all the chiefs and priests attended was because Legumana was the first Bishop of the Diocese of Isabel. Before Legumana, Vuhamana clarified, bishops came from Kia. By this Vuhamana refers to the current Archbishop Ellison Pogo who is from Kia and the nephew of the renowned Sir Dudley Tuti who was the first priest from Isabel to lead the CofM as Archbishop. Vuhamana further added that support for Legumana rose in Hograno for his unfrocking was announced over
the radio, a national broadcast.

For those in attendance at the meeting, the consensus was to write a letter to the Archbishop, Ellison Pogo. The letter contained four resolutions which Vuhamana recalled:

We made four resolutions to the Archbishop...One, is that Archbishop and the paramount chief of Isabel and Bishop Zephaniah must reconcile and that Zephaniah must go back to his work. Two, Zephaniah must, I mean Archbishop must retain his episcopal duties. Three, while Zephaniah [cannot] perform any Episcopal duties here in Hograno District, you, [the Archbishop], are not allowed to come and consecrate, especially the Kholomola church... Four...that Zephaniah has to return and refund the money that he [has] taken.

The letter, Vuhamana recalled, ‘gave [the Archbishop] the deadline of August. You have to reply to the letter by August [and it was June] 2003. If you don’t give the answers we will breakaway’. Under these conditions, the Archbishop replied. The reply from the Archbishop, Vuhamana summarised: ‘chiefs, you should not interfere with a church problem. You should concentrate with our customs, and settling all the land disputes and other issues.’ In telling me this, Vuhamana emphasized again the meaning of the Archbishop’s letter: ‘That is what he said, “you [chiefs] do not come and interfere”’. This only made the situation worse for the Archbishop and the CofM.
The letter called for another meeting of the Hograno House of Chiefs. Once again held in the areas close to Vuhamana’s home village of Kava, the meeting was convened at the government run boarding school of Muana. At the meeting Vuhamana read the letter to the chiefs and the letter did not answer their resolutions. Rather, the Archbishop said chiefs ‘have to keep away from the Church activities or church affairs’. On this point Vuhamana said the Archbishop is ‘now separating the chiefs from the Church.’ And he expanded on the tone and implications of the Archbishop’s letter. He said, ‘the Church enters here through chiefs’ and he then referred to the first Anglican missionaries to Isabel. Vuhamana’s narrative is told to me as if it were how he addressed the chiefs at the Muana meeting.

I mean Dr. Henry Welchman comes to Bugotu, to Chief Soga, to get permission. So the chief was converted, and all his congregation was converted. Also from here he went up to Figrima up in the hill there. He converted chief [Figrima] and then all the congregation. So the chiefs was entered through the chiefs. And then, I told them, ‘it is the chiefs that hold the Church’...If the Bishop says he is coming here [it is] all the chiefs [who] prepare everything...[The Archbishop], he is separating us [and] then we are not part of the Church now. That this is his church now, [then] we have to breakaway and follow what we think is better.

Here the view of permission and ownership in the sphere of influence of chiefs in Isabel is fascinating. Like Henry Welchman, addressing a congregation
means addressing the chief first. Further, approaching one chief does not rule out having to approach another oneself. Hence the segmentary nature of Vuhamana’s statement that the chiefs enter through the chiefs. A chief’s leadership extends only so far and the Archbishop, like the missionary, must follow this protocol.

For the Archbishop to take this view of leadership in Isabel surprised Vuhamana to the extent that the Archbishop must be shown why chiefs hold the Church. Vuhamana decided to teach the Archbishop a lesson.

So I demonstrated. The time he came [to] ordain one of his clergyman in that same year. I told all the chiefs here, ‘keep away so [that] he was waiting for chiefs and people to meet him at the [wharf] to take him up and welcome him. So that he knows that’s how [it is if] there is no chiefs; Church would be nothing so he just came up, do not see for him, do not do any welcome at all. So [the Archbishop] was not welcomed. He wasn’t given food in his house, nothing, so that he can learn that we chiefs are part of the Church...If you start to separate us that’s how it is going [to] be. The Church was welcomed by the chiefs and we accept it, and we always welcome, because the Church is accepted by us. So because he don’t know that if we want to show you. If chiefs are absent from anything you’ll just feel hungry.

Interesting here is the connection between food, chiefs and the Church. Even for an Archbishop to not receive food from the land of the Church menas not
being a part of the Church. To make other chiefs follow Vuhamana’s advice, especially in something as disagreeable and foreign as not providing food to a guest shows, the considerable persuasiveness of Vuhamana, even if he is embellishing the story for effect. But he did not stop there. Knowing of an upcoming consecration of the Kholomola church in the Hograno highlands, Vuhamana intervened again, this time making the opposite point.

So the other time he came to Kholomola, I told the chiefs there ‘ok now you attend at him so that he know that is how a chief is’. So I told him, ‘let the chiefs sit up the front’. I went up to Kholomola quickly [to] arrange everything there. ‘Let him ask permission to the chief before he enter the village that he knows that it is clear, that it is the chiefs that welcomes the Church to the village to Hograno.’...So when he went to Kholomola they did that...That is how the Church comes in.

The Church here is pictured as outside the village for it ‘comes in’, ‘enters’, and seeks ‘permission’. Within a year, Kholomola was to take centre stage again with the ordination of a new Bishop for the Diocese of Ysabel. The priest from Kholomola, Basil Naramana was ordained and Vuhamana, among others, saw this as an obvious reaction to the rumblings in Hograno after the sacking of Zephaniah. But the move by the CofM was too late even though Naramana was from Hograno. As Vuhamana put it, ‘Zephaniah is a man from Hograno and we know he is our blood, we respect that. We have been mistreated sometimes in the Church [of Melanesia]’. The Hograno chiefs,
clergy and laity who came out to support Zephaniah now had formed into a movement which had roots beyond both Zephaniah and Legumana. From the Hograno highlands to the villages along the coast of western Hograno, they came together to form a new church but were anxious and unsure about breaking away from the Church denomination in which they were baptised.

Vuhamana describes this period of change as the start of the Church and a three year period of contemplation, reflection and prayer. The clergy and the chiefs waited for an answer to their prayers. For a dream to be revealed to turn them back to the CofM, but nothing was revealed. Certainly, if what they have done is wrong, would not there be an answer from God but ‘nothing was revealed, or nothing received in a dream, we dreamed nothing.’ From 2003 to 2005, much organisation occurred in preparing for a new church. Constitutions were being written in Honiara, Legumana himself was back in Honiara teaching at a government high school, and chiefs and clergy in Hograno were working together to form their own places of worship within each village. It was a time for arguing and debate as well. Within families, brothers were debating between themselves about which way to go. Many argued that the CofM had always sided with Kia and Meringe districts over Hograno. The time had come to show Isabel that Hograno made leaders as much as anywhere else. Others argued that no breakaway movement could have the institutional clout to train catechists, ordain priests, run schools and technical colleges as well maintain a link back to the apostles through the Archbishop of Canterbury.
Then, in June 2005, Zephaniah was asked by the chiefs to be the bishop of the new ECOSI. An inauguration ceremony was held and by December a constitution was drafted, adapted and registered. Then moves were afoot to align the ECOSI with its namesake in the United States. This move, Vuhamana said, was blocked by the Archbishop of the Church of Melanesia. This failure to connect with Episcopal Church of the United States had to be addressed. Because the CofM had stripped Zephaniah of his episcopal duties he could not ordain, consecrate or give communion and it was this last sacrament that held the most concern for parishioners. As Vuhamana put it, ‘We were persecuted. We were called “floating church”’. The ECOSI was no longer genealogically tied back to the line of bishops, through the Archbishop, to the Apostles. Further, those CofM priests in Hograno that were aligned and practising under the new ECOSI were de-registered from the CofM. The task then was for Legumana to find a ‘link’. As Vuhamana stressed, ‘he suddenly linked. [Legumana] made this link to the AOC, to the presiding Bishop Jerry Ogles. That was January 2006, just six months after inauguration. [In] January we link, [the] 18th, 2006.’ In fact Jerry Ogles, of North Carolina came from America to Solomon Islands ‘to enthrone [Zephaniah] and give him the episcopal duties under the Orthodox Church.’ Legumana’s ordination under the AOC occurred this time in the east Hograno village of Kholotubi. At this time also a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between Ogles and Legumana which detailed the basic tenements of the AOC which included the 39 articles, and the 1928 Book of Common Prayer. This
was a time for the new church to be ‘firm’ and now, with Legumana ordained, new churches could be consecrated, children confirmed and priests ordained.

The visit and ordination by Ogles in 2006 also made a break within the Hograno people that had split form the CofM. The period from 2003 to 2006 was seen as a time of persecution, where the ECOSI, then AOC communities were without copies of the Bible, without prayer books, without vestments: ‘So we handicapped [and] lucky that we connected with the Orthodox Church as [they] supply everything: Bibles, common prayer, [and] the formal service that we are now adapting is orthodox.’ But with Ogles came a new problem, a quarterly grant of funds from America.

The memorandum of understanding between Jerry Ogles and Legumana was at odds with the constitution of the new Anglican Church, so some were arguing in the east Hograno villages of Kholotubi and Kaevanga. The constitution placed control over finances with the AOC trust and not with the Bishop. This instrument caused no concern for the management of tithes raised from the parishes but with a quarterly grant being received from America the stakes rose. Legumana argued that the position of Bishop could not be subordinated by the trust and that the Grant should be under his control. Those voicing their concerns, some based permanently in Honiara, could not accept this situation and before long, Legumana received a letter from the trust board of the ECOSI terminating him as bishop of the Episcopal Church. Further, the chancellor of the Episcopal Church said also that the constitution stated that the Bishop had a term of fours years and that that
time had expired. It was now time for a new Bishop. The chancellor also
wrote a letter to every chief across Hograno about Legumana and that he
should resign from his position. The chiefs met once again in Kaevanga in
2007 and decided to distance themselves from the ECOSI and its constitu-
tion by forming the AOC. Another meeting was held in Galatha, this time,
many chiefs began asking questions and wanted both Vuhamana and Legu-
mana to explain themselves. In this meeting Vuhamana argued that it was
the American AOC that saved them from persecution, that returned the
common prayer, uniforms and King James Bible. Further, unlike the other
churches the Orthodox church acknowledged the role of chiefs, that it was
the chiefs who saved the Church. No other church did this.

3.12 Summary

In closing this discussion of the rise of the ECOSI and then AOC it is im-
portant to document the other reasons for the breakaway church movement.
The reasons thus far have only included prejudice against Hograno clergy,
shame felt in the sacking of their Bishop and ignorance of the role of the
chief in the Church. These reasons do not cover all the concerns. And it was
to this that Vuhamana closed his interview with me.

The first concern was the decline of the CofM post independence. Prior
to independence the CofM was a powerful Church based overseas which
Vuhamana located as being New Zealand. In Vuhamana’s words, ‘It was
very good at that time because it was run from New Zealand. We have schools, when it was under the Church of New Zealand. We had schools like Maravovo, or Pamoia, hospital, Vuavu, shipwrights, you know ship slipways, Taroniara, and they had fleets, everything...So by the time we get independence in 1978...we think we can handle all this.’ But it was not to be. The Church since independence ‘lost schools, nothing survived, now hospitals all go. Taroniara, also nothing, not working very well now.’ With the advent of Solomon Islander administration of CofM came the rise of taxes from the villages. The idea of a target or budget, which was set by village and family was introduced:

They ask for collections and they ask for targets. If they say fifty dollars, you have to throw fifty dollars. There is no exception. It is a set target. There are also targets of two thousand to three thousand dollars each village, every year. Hograno District pay everything. Church of Melanesia were very happy with Hograno.

In Hirolegu, the majority of interviewees said that the setting of a tax target on a per family basis was the main they left the CofM. Some added that these taxes did not then come back to their parishes in the form of wages for the catechists and churchkeepers who do the day to day running of the Church. The target is and was interpreted by the people of Hograno as a family tax and akin to the system of taxes levied by Government.

Social unrest over the twentieth century saw the rise of a number of politico-religious movements which inform this study of Anglican schism in
Hograno. From the encounter between Figrima and Henry Welchman to the rise of the CFC under Silas Eto Solomon Islanders approach foreigners with trepidation and an expectation that foreigners are in possession of hidden strengths. Welchman’s diary was prosaic in comparison to the ways the encounter have been retold over the last one hundred years. Welchman’s use of a stick and repeated use of prayer when faced with Figrima’s threatening scouts introduce to the story evidence of the missionaries Christian mana. Likewise in New Georgia Reverend Goldie held back the powers of the Holy Spirit but these powers were revealed through Silaas Eto’s visions and interpretation of Reverend Hall’s pentecostalism.

But local polities remained powerful through the upheaval of missionisation, colonisation, World War Two and decolonisation. The leaders of these polities, the chiefs, managed throughout all this change to continue to remain relevant to the landed social groups upon which they draw their power. Expressing this power through the Church is critical and the oral testimony of Vuhamana shows how the Church and the clergy are fed by the congregation and even an Archbishop is dependent upon the people of the land on which a church finds its foundation.
Chapter 4

Social Organisation

Chiefs are spokesmen for landed kin groups. They must draw on their place in a network of kin relations to be build their standing in the community and beyond their home village. All work toward feasts, fund-raising and supporting the Church start by looking to the three kin groupings of family, lineage and moiety. In this chapter I describe the social organisation of Hirolegu starting with the smallest category, the family then moving on to describe the lineage and moiety. In these descriptions I focus on the practices and responsibilities every individual has to their kin group and the sorts of negotiations individuals must enter into to maintain their connections and access to land and sea resources. These negotiations are important for our understanding of church affairs in Hograno because it is through the set of families that comprise a lineage that the CofM and the AOC finds both its strongest support and also its most challenging dissent.
While an important backdrop to the chapters that follow, understanding kinship in Hograno as simply membership in one of three social categories conceals somewhat the complexity of the social process. For this reason the second half of the chapter draws on the testimony of a practicing ritual specialist, Phillip and how Phillip came to have command over crocodiles. His story reveals the ways individuals come into possession of powerful totemic forces associated within a lineage and its territory. But at the same time Phillip’s story shows how this inherent totemic power is transferable through knowledge of its use which is then potentially exploited by anyone to effect their social world (Keesing 1982b: 88, Stephen 1995: 94). Even more interesting, and of critical importance to Anglicanism in Isabel, is the ambivalent relationship between the totemic forces of the lineage and Christian practice (cf. Herdt 1989: 39). As Phillip’s story goes on to relate, the Melanesian Brotherhood’s role in adjudicating over the powers that stem from lineage territory suggests a developing synthesis in Hograno between lineage power and Anglican beliefs and institutions.

4.1 Family

The smallest social formation in Hirolegu is the elementary family of a married couple and their offspring called the tharakna. It is the core domestic unit as its members occupy the same household and all members contribute to the production of food and wealth for their own survival. In the organi-
sation and distribution of food at feasts, fund raising events for school and church, and any other group activity, the family is used to divide the proceeds and perform tasks. Typified by generalised exchange, members of a family work for each other, and the sharing of produce and surplus is implicit and rarely immediately reciprocated, if at all (Sahlins 1968: 83). All activities over the week involve the coordination and consideration of duties to the family. Gardening and subsistence farming is the responsibility of the family. Cash cropping through copra, kava, rice and timber production, can interrupt gardening activities for subsistence but the working family unit is responsible for maintaining subsistence gardens to a sufficient extent to support itself. The family works for cash with husband and wife in many cases fishing together to earn cash for reef fish exports to Honiara markets. Gardening land also is demarcated by family and fertile alluvial soil along river banks forms a spatial patchwork of family belonging to the village. In the management of former coconut plantations the family as a unit of production has been used to divide up the plantation into blocks, assigning each block to a family.

Members of a family reside in a household and it is upon marriage that the children are expected to build their own household. The dwelling which houses the family is either the more traditional thatched sago palm house or the currently popular, but more expensive milled timber and iron-roofed dwellings. Accompanying each dwelling is the *suga kuki* (kitchen house) which is used by the family but more accessible to others than the main house.
itself. The main dwelling in which the family sleeps is a private space and
visitors always announce their presence by coughing or other indirect audible
gesture. Directly calling the name of an occupant is a form of invading the
privacy of the household. Children however are an exception.

A task of the family is the rearing of children. A family typically has
between two and five children and all of these children will attend kinder-
garten and primary school. It is after primary school (six years in total) that
the school participation becomes more difficult and the costs increase in the
form of travel and boarding fees. It is the responsibility of the family to meet
these expenses, which may mean for families with more than three children,
that some children will remain with the family to assist in cash cropping and
fresh fish exports. After school, children will interact and play with others
but have a tendency to interact with other children from households nearby
to their own. Friendships develop through school. It is children who are the
messengers between families especially for requests for food, or fire, informa-
tion about a hastily arranged meeting, or delays in shipping, for example.
Children are free to transgress boundaries between family and larger social
groupings and enter private spaces with much more ease than adults.

The households and attached buildings inhabited by a family are not sub-
divided by gender. The conjugal pair sleep in the same room of the domestic
dwelling and items belonging solely to one spouse may be located alongside
those of the other (cf. Jolly 1989). Tasks performed at home however vary
markedly between husband and wife. Cleaning, washing, cooking and food
preparation are all carried out by women with the men responsible for house maintenance. The caring of children is prescribed to the mother but with children accompanying parents in all of their productive duties, fathers are considerably involved in the rearing of children. However, in the absence of his wife, a father rarely cares for his children alone. A wife is judged in terms for her willingness to work in the domestic sphere (cleaning, cooking, craft) and her prowess and knowledge in gardening. Women tend to marry earlier than men and parents show a greater concern that their daughters are unmarried than their sons. A woman’s capacity to earn as a teacher or nurse may not necessarily increase her marriageability but an unequivocal connection and residence in ancestral land would. For women based in the village and occupying a profession, the husband may take up the tasks of his wife especially where the family have been required to relocate to a nearby school or clinic.

While landownership and residing on that land might be attractive for a potential wife, conversely a man’s capacity to earn a wage and succeed at business are alluring attributes to single women. The more traditional skills for a husband of building, hunting and fishing remain important but today fall a second to wage earning potential. Husbands are generally older than their wives and have in the past two decades sought employment in other provinces. During the seventies and eighties a number of Hograno men worked the tuna fishing vessels of the Solomon-Taiyo fishing operation for one to two years at a time. In the last decade labouring as chainsaw crew with
logging companies along the coast has employed a number of young men with
some going on to work for the same logging companies in other provinces. Logging camps are sometimes large enough for young men to take their wife and children with them. For families where both husband and wife do not have any wage earning capacity it is largely the husband’s responsibility to direct and manage cash cropping, logging and fishing export activities, while subsistence gardening activities as well as domestic duties are assigned to the wife. There is a preference for uxorilocality but a number of variables play
into the decision to move to the husband’s land rather than the wife’s. These include the number of siblings who have remained with the lineage, access and distance to gardening lands, quality and proximity of potable water, and potential for cash income through logging, fishing and cropping.

4.2 Lineage

A number of families compromise a lineage. Few days go by without activities involving kin beyond the family. The collective that incorporates multiple family is the *thi’a*. Literally meaning belly or womb, *thi’a* corresponds to the Pijin *line* meaning line of descent from the mother. When Isabel is glossed as a matrilineal society by themselves and others it is the ascription of land ownership through the mother’s line to which they refer. The spatial layout of family households is grouped by the lineage with mother’s and mother’s sibling’s households located nearest each other. All activities carried out by, and the responsibility of the family, may also include members of the wider lineage grouping. Gardening activities that are labour intensive like tillage for sweet potato may at times draw on a number of members belonging to the same lineage. Fishing parties for export and not consumption often comprise a cohort of marrying-in husbands and mother’s brothers. The construction of dwellings especially the ridge cap for sago thatched dwellings and the milling of lumber for permanent dwellings require the assistance of the lineage (See figure 4.2). Child rearing also, in cases where both husband and wife
are expected to be away for sometime, will fall to members of the lineage. In smaller villages, all dwellings may be occupied by members of the same lineage and in larger villages dwellings will be co-located by lineage. For family that have remained on the father’s land, it is common for the husband to be organised by his wife’s lineage. It will only be in situations of land disputes or requests for access to his ancestral resources that a husband would actively participate in his own lineage’s business. A husband may be lead by his wife’s lineage in terms of working the land but a brother will lead his sisters’ families in the business of his own land. Long term co-location of multiple lineages especially where one lineage is substantially smaller than another, may give rise to combined labour activities where both lineages operate as a single unit of production. With time this cooperation may in many cases lead to inter-marrying (exogamous marriage rules permitting). In times of tension and conflict within the lineage, a feuding family may move back to their spouse’s village for a time and draw on assistance and labour from their spouse’s lineage to avoid interacting with their own.

The lineage is located within a specific territory of both land and sea. Elders of a lineage keep the knowledge of a lineage’s territory and stories are often used to verify and justify the extent of a lineage’s territory. Names of places, locations of former camp sites, ancestral signs, locations of food gathering sites and knowledge of hidden markers which can be uncovered in a dispute establish a lineage’s claim to a particular area. Significant feast exchanges and the purposes of those exchanges are also essential to knit rival
lineages together in a way to validate one’s territory by including and gaining the consensus of one’s rivals.

In any discussion of territory today a chief will lament the increase in land disputes because of logging and logging royalties and idealise the past when disputes were rare (cf. Tomlinson 2009: 82). The notion of the past also conjures a more hunter-gatherer existence. It was a time when a lineage moved from one location to another location within a known area. Going beyond this area meant entering dangerous ancestral territory, not because the territory *in toto* was prohibited but because the spirits, shrines and totemic
creatures possessed by a lineage would by harmful to outsiders (See Section 4.4). The presence of members of an adjacent lineage when moving through rival territory would guarantee safety and therefore meant movement across territories was limited to feast exchanges and organised events for the preparation of feasts.

A territory occupied by a lineage has a sacred quality. Certain locations of shrines are considered dangerous and taboo. Trespassing through these locations can be harmful and cause illness or even death. With the rapid increase in logging along the coastline, sacred sites have become highly visible especially as they are the only locations with large trees remaining and also the location of those sites are often former settlement sites located in defensible positions atop hills and ridges. Knowledge of these locations is now difficult to hide from a neighbouring lineage.

4.3 Moiety

Through marriage a lineage forms a larger social unit called a *kokholo*. A kokholo is a marriage class and membership is reckoned through the mother. People of Hograno, and all of Isabel, are expected to marry out of their class and the class resembles a moiety as it is a bipartite system, or at least can be reduced to a bipartite system when establishing the class and marriageability of others. In the field area, I know of only one case where the exogamous marrying rule was not followed and the couple have remained
estranged from nearby villages ever since they began rearing children. Some younger Hograno men have protested the antiquated and obsolete nature of the practice. Elders argue that if young people are against the beneficial and prescriptive cross-cousin marriage practices because it is incest then removing this rule will only further confuse the issue. Although attempts are still made by parents to encourage their offspring to marry a cross-cousin most young adults claim the practice is akin to marrying a brother or sister and therefore inappropriate. If this defense is not enough then the betrothed might argue they have grown up alongside, been at school with, or had to care for their potential spouse in a way not distant enough to be a marriage partner. When I have asked about prescriptive marriages in almost all cases parents could list at least one marriage proposal their children rejected.

The two moieties in Hograno are called posamogo and khome. It is a dispersed group category and although in other districts of Isabel the names differ they do refer to the same class. White (1978: 92) has defined a moiety as a form of clan similar to the Lévi-Strauss (1969: 73) definition for dual organisation societies where clans are exogamous but the marriage exchange is not always reciprocated. A marriage class or moiety alternatively is typified by a positive marriage exchange between two or more groups. I agree with White and Levi-Strauss that marriage practices are asymmetric in Isabel as there is no limit to the number, preference or permanence of exchanges between lineages. However, beyond its utility to marriage the members of a moiety share no territory but they are obliged to produce food for the gano
The thago feast discussed in Section 5.3 (cf. Leach 1958: 158). The economic and political and exogamous corporation is the lineage and a quality of that lineage is its moiety. No one was in doubt of those interviewed as to their moiety and if there was a pause for thought someone else was always ready to answer for them. A lineage however is not always named and when pressed for a name the name of any female ancestor is given. A lineage therefore is implicit as it is deduced by place of residence and ancestry. A moiety is always explicit. Of all the interviews conducted, all respondents could name their moiety.

### 4.4 Totemic Affiliations

The affiliation between the natural world, of plants and animals, and the social categories of lineages and moieties is known as a totemic relationship (Morris 1987: 270). In Hograno a lineage is associated with natural species and lineage members have varying degrees of specialist knowledge about these totemic affiliations and the techniques used to control them. Hirolegu is on Domielo territory and the lineage is associated with snakes and it is said, more often by those outside the lineage, that the Domielo territory is protected by these snakes. The relationship between totemic beings and social groups continues to be understood as a dangerous and powerful way for lineage members to reshape social relations. The social case that follows provides a personal testimony of contemporary social practice as both a
structural form and creative potential for individual agency. Totemic beings come from a lineage as will become apparent below but, critically, the power of these beings can be manipulated by individuals outside of the group. The narrative, which I have broken up into three sections, discusses the crocodile as a totemic being with the first section describing how the crocodile came to live in water and its ancestral connection to a matrilineage. The second section is about the approach taken by the Melanesian Brotherhood to powerful totemic beings being used by individuals to effect the world around them. The last section tells of how the narrator came to possess knowledge of crocodiles and is revealing of processes of knowledge transmission and power in the region.

4.4.1 Crocodile

Totemic affiliations connect a lineage with its territory and are a source of power in contemporary human affairs as I was to observe when a domesticated pig was attacked by a crocodile in the village in which I was staying. Domestic pigs in coastal villages dwell in small sties no bigger than a couple of metres square. These sties are placed close to the shoreline so as to be easy to clean and wash out with sea water. The pigs are fed with food scraps and will be tended until someone requests to purchase the pig or a family member asks to butcher the pig for a feast. In the village in which we lived there were two pigs being raised in such a fashion. One was well secured above ground in a raised sty on stilts and the other not so well housed in a
sty on the ground. This sty consisted of only a small fence. One early morn-
ing the village awoke to the sound of dogs barking and much commotion. The cause of the noise was the presence of a crocodile which had grabbed the pig, yanked it from its tether, and dragged the animal into the sea.

The female owner of the pig was very upset about her loss and blamed her adopted father for not helping her build a more secure sty. For my wife and I, with two toddlers playing in the sea everyday, the presence of a crocodile only twenty metres away from where we slept was cause for considerable concern. When we raised our concerns over the presence of the crocodile, which was seen drifting offshore more and more often, no one seemed that interested. I think more out of an inability to address the matter than disinterest. What really could anyone do about it? Placing baits with large stainless hooks out for a crocodile involves having to deal with it when caught. First, the catch could potentially cost the hunter much in the way of tackle, which could be much better utilised catching sharks. Second, there was no market for crocodiles in Honiara that I was aware of. And thirdly, the surrendering of all firearms in the post-tension Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI) years also meant there was no easy way to dispose of a captured crocodile.

The weeks went by. The crocodile was seen more and more frequently only a hundred metres from shore. The reason, I assumed, for this was the other pig sty next to the copra shed. Stanley, the owner of this pig, advised me again and again that the sty was well and truly secure from the
crocodile, and one morning crocodiles tracks were seen about the sty. Clear
evidence, Stanley reiterated, that the lashed timber sty was well up to the
task. A month passed. My wife and I had become accustomed to the watchful
company of a saltwater crocodile. However, upon a trip to Susubona to take
family to the clinic and pick up supplies, the presence of the crocodile came
up again.

After visiting the clinic, I waited at the boat for Stanley to return. As al-
ways there were others from our home village who needed to be in Susubona
and I asked them where Stanley had gone. They said he was late because
he was visiting someone and their evasive response made me even more in-
terested in his whereabouts. I asked again, and they said he was visiting a
friend. After an hour or so, Stanley returned and we left for the home trip
to Hirolegu. I asked Stanley where he had been and he said he went to see
Phillip about a crocodile. I inquired as to the crocodile hunter’s techniques.
Did he use nets? Was he tethering a bait and hook to a tree by the shore-
line? Stanley said no, he had received a stone from Phillip in Susubona.
A stone that wards off crocodiles. Stanley explained that the stone would
stop crocodiles approaching the area where it was cast into the sea. I was
surprised. Stanley had spent nine months convincing me of the folly of his
kinsmen’s traditional beliefs, in local healing techniques, and the use of sor-
cery to harm one’s enemies. When we returned to the village the stone was
placed near to the pig pen and we did not sight another crocodile again.

It took some time for me to discover who it was that blessed the stone in
Susubona and eventually I tracked down Phillip and organised an interview. Phillip was forthcoming with information about how he came to have this power over crocodiles. We talked about crocodiles and people’s power over them for two hours and the discussion ranged from how one acquires these techniques to why some crocodiles are in the service of people. The recordings were made in the evening and we conversed in Solomons Pijin.

The origin of a father’s command over crocodiles

When this man’s wife was pregnant, he thought she was pregnant with a human being. When his wife gave birth, she gave birth to a crocodile. And when the father saw that it really was a crocodile, it was not human, he knew something extraordinary had happened. He said, ‘See! You’ve given birth to a crocodile. I do not like this crocodile. Kill it.’

But the mother replied, ‘No. He came from my belly and I gave birth to him.’ She gave birth to it. ‘He really is my child’.

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So her husband said, ‘Well, then you go take it away. Do not keep it here because it is not human, it is a crocodile’. So the mother of the crocodile kept him inside. She kept him inside the house. She fed him and with time he grew big. She fed him sweet potato and he ate and ate. The crocodile grew even bigger.

Then the parents dug a pool outside the house and fed the crocodile. He got even bigger. So the mother told her husband, ‘make a room for the crocodile inside the house.’

So he dug a hole and filled it with water for the crocodile. Over time, he
kept the pool full with water and the crocodile started to live well and grew even bigger. Then, one day the parents of crocodile went to the garden for taro and other food for the family. Meanwhile, the two brothers of crocodile remained at the house and they were told ‘Do not go to your brother crocodile, do not stir him up or poke him.’ The two brothers looked after their crocodile brother, but with mum and dad away—you know what small boys are like—they saw crocodile was not a human being and one said ‘Mum said he’s our brother but he does not have legs. He does not look like us.’ The other brother picked up a stick and poked crocodile. Then, when he poked crocodile, the bugger, he spun around and bit one of the small boys.
He was only bitten, [not killed]. He cried and then his father said ‘Man! Did not Mummy say to you two to not go and poke crocodile otherwise he might get angry.’ The two brothers were very upset and cried. The smaller of two brothers remained upset.

One of the parents asked ‘why did you go to crocodile?’

No, he poked crocodile when you said not to poke it and then crocodile got angry and bit him

‘Where did crocodile bite you?’

‘It bit me on the leg’. Mother looked at her son’s leg and it really was bleeding. Blood was coming out but that was it. Mother then got angry with crocodile.

Mother then said to crocodile, ‘OK. Because you did not look after your
ui no stap lo hea noa. Bae mi muvem ui go daon lo wata. Ui stap farawaee from tufala nao olsem’ noa bifo hem takem dis-fala krokodael ia, kam doan an hem livim nao lo disfala wata so hem rimean dea stap noa

Hem nao stori. From dat taem nao hemi garem kastom blo hem fo, fo satem disfala, ui si hem, hemi garem fo satem an den hem garem fo fo kolem olketa kam tu

two brothers, you cannot stay here anymore. I am going to move you down to the water. You must stay faraway from your two brothers now, you hear.’ So now, as before, this crocodile came down to the water and that is where he now resides. He remains there.

That is the story. That is how men came to have this knowledge to ward off crocodiles. But also, you see, if you can ward off crocodiles, it follows that you can call them to come as well.

Phillip’s narrative of the birth of the crocodile alludes to the cosmogonic origin of the matrilineage in Hograno and situates this as a powerful totemic association that remains within the land and sea of the mother’s lineage. Affirming of the matrilineal system, the mother’s offspring are both human and crocodile. The storyteller’s use of the word ‘belly’ is telling of how the Hograno understand their origin as through the mother the word belly is also the word for a matrilineage (White 1978: 61). The role of the father however in the story is very interesting. He threatens his own children and
is prepared to kill the dangerous child crocodile. The father denies his own child’s humanity, suggestive of his alterity to the mother’s lineage. The mother raises the crocodile on the fruits of her land and so the crocodile grows. She protects her offspring in her matrilineal territory. The father then commits his labour to the task of child rearing by building a pool for the crocodile. The construction of the pool is the task of the father which is in keeping with the father’s limited position as a creator and owner of property on his wife’s land not the land itself (see Section 5.3).

The second half of the narrative concerns the brothers of the crocodile. As the siblings grow older they come to take responsibility for themselves in the absence of the parents. Left to their own devices, they disobey their parents and tease the crocodile. Their disobedience culminates in the realisation of their crocodile brother’s temper. Now too powerful to be among his own human siblings, crocodile must leave the house of the family. The brothers belong to crocodile and their mother but this is a dangerous and wild relationship to maintain. For the safety of her own family mother sends crocodile away. Crocodile is sent below, to the water, but he remains there. There is a sense still of closeness of crocodile but he is down in the water. Crocodile then, for this lineage, remains an ever present and powerful association below the surface.
Why command over crocodiles has the blessing of the Brotherhood

After discussing how a lineage came to have this knowledge and power, Phillip positioned the techniques within the Church by discussing how Christian institutions like the Melanesian Brotherhood have not eradicated these practices. The Brothers are renowned for their powers to eradicate sorcery and sorcerers from villages and here Phillip details how the Brothers legitimate his command of crocodiles.

Regarding the Melanesian Brothers and SOMA, actually, sorry, SOMA do not know about these techniques. With the Tasui, the Melanesian Brotherhood that is, they came and inquired into this business and said ‘regarding telling this to anyone, resist. Because this knowledge is part of nature and everyone wants it for themselves. This knowledge does not harm people. You can practice this technique and whoever is frightened of entering the seas and rivers, or does not want to swim,
olketa. Olsem no moa. ‘Bat fo trom nomoa, bikos hemi pat lo naeta. Hemi bon lo human be-
ing so ui lukim afta hemolketa so hem oraet’, olketa olsem so then you must use this technique to ward off crocodiles.’ That is what the brothers said. They continued ‘but use it for warding off crocodiles only, be-
cause this is natural. The crocodile came from human beings so you must look after the crocodiles so that they are protected’. That is what they said.

The brothers personify Christian power and the use of that power to effect and protect the world. They eradicate sorcery in rural areas and lift curses cast by sorcerers on their enemies. They are feared and revered for these powers and parishioners make requests to the CofM for them to come to their village and address concerns about sorcery in their midst. In this section of Phillip’s account he uses the brothers as a validation of his techniques and that the power to control crocodiles is unlike that of other sorcerers. His skills are actually helpful to those that use the rivers and sea. It is helpful magic not harmful magic.

More interesting is the tight coupling of an Anglican order with sorcery and magic. The brothers are seen as an authority on its use and the eradica-
tors of sorcery but can delineate fields in which magic among Anglicans has its place. Christian power does not deny all forms of magic rather, sorcery
is a potentiality that all men and women may have at their disposal in and through their place in Hograno as lineage members. It is at the discretion and desires of the specialist that helpful versus harmful sorcery is manifested. It is the role of the Brotherhood to adjudicate in these uses of local power.

**Learning how to have command over crocodiles**

Phillip concludes his discussion by detailing the way in which he came to have this knowledge. The method is one of deception which is used to initiate the exchange of knowledge between generations which then led to more fuller tutelage of the technique.

Hem i pasem doan lo dadi lo mi den wae noa mi, mitu-fala brata takem ia, dadi blo mi hemi sei ‘no moa fo mitu-fala takem ia. Bikos mi tufala long deferen laen’. Laen blo dadi blo mi, hem nao waef blo mi.

So taeem hem transferem lo, lo laen blo hem noa, disfala man lo Furona noa, nata smol Ths knowledge was passed down from my father and why my brother and I came to know this, well, that’s interesting. My father said ‘you cannot know this information because you both belong to a different lineage.’ You see, my father’s line is my wife’s line.

So when it came to passing down this knowledge in my father’s lineage, and telling this story to another man,

Hem deilaet bifo brata blo mi talem hem 'Eh! mi drim las naet ia. Sipos, fo, bae mi traem kalem olketa ia kam ia.'

'watkaen?'

'olketa man stap lo wata'

'man ui slipi nao mi tink ui slipi nao, dat wae mitufala

my brother was staying in another room. When the man came to the house to hear the story it was night time. The two men talked together, and the story was passed down to the other man. It happened near here. But my brother was asleep inside the other room. Father thought my brother was asleep, you know. My brother, with paper, was recording it all. Surprising hey. That is how my brother and I came to know this. Without sneaking around, we would not know this.

The next day my brother said to our father ‘Hey. Last night I had a dream that I could call them to come.’

‘Call what?’ Father said.

My brother replied, ‘Call the people from the water’.

Surprised, Father said ‘I thought your were asleep, really asleep, that is
transferem. ui takem finis nao ia?’

‘no moa dadi, mi drim no moa.’ Hem sei

‘nomoa. ui mas raetem nao ia ui takem finis nao.’ Oslsem nao hem waonem mitufela nao.

‘sunting hem kastom nao ia lo traeb blo mi and mi no ting fo givim lo uitufala son blo mi, bikos dis wan hem nao mifala laef lo hem den traebol woa olsem disfela live lo hem so hem deiguros, sipos ui kalemolketa, sipos i ui tufela lo deferen klan an mi no wanem transferem dis wan lo klan blo uitufala

ia nao bifo ui jus kam takem hem, hem i wanem mitufala fo no kalemolketa: ‘mi talem tumus mi sei’. Hem no somem mitufala stiki blo why I transferred knowledge last night. Did you take down this information?’

‘No dad, I only had a dream’ my brother replied.

Dad said, ‘Not good. You must write down the whole story in its entirety now’. Father decided to pass this information onto both of us. He told us, ‘this is the custom of my tribe and I did not plan to give this information to my two sons because it is the life of my tribe otherwise there would be tribal war, it is dangerous, because suppose you called the crocodiles, and you’re from a different lineage...I did not want to transfer this to your clan.’

You know, yesterday you just came and took this information. Father warned us not to call the crocodiles. He said ‘I said it, I said too much’. Father did not show us anything about
Hemi spesol stik blo his staff. He has a special staff, when you place it down, it then calls the crocodiles to come. However, what my brother and I know, regarding us being able to call them, my father was against it because he would have to flee. You cannot call the crocodiles because they will come from all over the Solomons. They all come, all the crocodiles and when they come they do not come to reside here, they come to kill people. That is what my father said. Very dangerous.

It was a warning and my father only told that custom story and not any others because he was frightened for us, that we might use it against people. That was his warning. But my brother and I, we kept this custom for its use for others. My father said it was alright for use to take it but no to [call them]. But to ward off crocodiles, it
In this last narrative about the totemic affiliations of a lineage, the narrator challenges the boundaries between lineage members and the knowledge they keep. For the narrator comes to know a power that belongs to his father’s group which is not his property to own. Therefore, the knowledge and techniques to control crocodiles is transferable but prohibited. The source of the power remains with the lineage’s creatures but its use is potentially open to all. Secrecy then becomes even more important because there is always the potential that another might steal it. What Phillip reveals in this last segment of the narrative is an approach to power for personal use that can be taken from others. Looking further into the story, Phillip talks of his father having a special staff. A strong connection is being made here with the Melanesian Brotherhood’s use of staffs when on tour in the provinces and these staffs are seen as being blessed and having special powers. Customary use of staves is equivalent to the Christian power imbued in staffs. The affect
of hidden power, one within the totemic territory of the matrilineage and the other in the holiness of a Brother’s staff have different sources but equivalent strengths.

4.5 Summary

Keesing (1982b: 54-55) has contrasted powers derived from ancestors as solely the province of lineage members to magical knowledge which can be bought and sold between outsiders. If we equate ancestral power with what I have described here as a totemic force, then ancestral power as imagined in Hograno is exchangeable with outsiders. In Phillip’s testimony, his brother steals the knowledge of his father’s lineage. This transfer both subverts inherent ancestral powers of a lineage by coming to know it as an outsider and invigorate the potential of ancestral power for lineage members (cf. Kapferer 1997: 39). Sorcery here accentuates the marriage alliances that form families and through marriage outsiders have the opportunity to learn the secrets of the lineage. To borrow a geometric analogy, sorcery here differentiates the ancestral connections along the x-axis in the same way that lineage territories are situated spatially. However, where Keesing talks of outsiders in relation to lineage members, Phillip’s testimony delineates Anglicanism with lineage power vertically, along a y-axis. The Melanesian Brotherhood in Phillip’s view provide a legitimacy to his use of sorcery and in so doing places the Christian power associated with the Melanesian Brotherhood above that of
ancestral forces. Power here, has two countervailing sources.
Chapter 5

Ritual

Food forms the interface between land and people with feast exchanges being the fundamental way to express this relationship. Anglican practice in west Hograno is shaped by this relationship through the competitive feast exchanges which take place on church festival days, on holy days, and at other public events. However, with the rise of the AOC a new way to articulate this relationship has been adopted in the form of giving one-tenth of one’s harvest back to the church. Often raised as the most glaring difference between the churches, the AOC’s introduction of a tithing system undermines the legitimacy of the CofM’s tax collection but at the same time sets in train a growing threat to the chiefs aligned to the AOC. Looking back to Vuhamana’s testimony from Chapter 3, he showed the power of chiefs to the Archbishop of the CofM by controlling the distribution of food at church events. Now, with the AOC tithing system connecting the exchange
of food directly with the church and not via the chief, the power of chiefs as mediators of these exchanges is potentially diminished.

In this chapter I explore the feast exchange system and take a lead from LiPuma's (1988: 63-4) analysis of the complex set of exchanges that take place between people and land. In his study of the Maring, LiPuma (1988: 7) traces the flow of what he calls ‘clan substance’ as a ‘natural cycle’ from land to garden to produce to people to death, with burial returning clan substance to the earth and renewing the clan’s land once again. In west Hograno a similar cycle exists where horticulturalists and fishers transform the produce of the land and sea for the welcoming of newborns into the community, and in returning the deceased to their land.

Feast exchanges are also used to clarify and legitimate people’s relationship to land where the relationship and flow of ‘clan substance’ is ambiguous. The first of this type of feast exchange is the feast of the father or gano thaego which celebrates the work of the father for his wife and children and ensures the fruits of his labours go to his children and not his brother’s and sister’s children. The second feast exchange is held to ensure continued access to productive land for families that do not have a direct line of inheritance to that land. This feast is called fapegra. The politics of these exchanges has an important bearing on Anglicanism in west Hograno and shapes the competitive feast exchanges that take place on church festival days.
5.1 Birth

In the week following childbirth the mother and child return from the clinic and remain secluded from general village life for one to two weeks. This period away from home at the district clinic is part of this seclusion. The mother and newborn return from the clinic and a baptism will ensue depending upon availability of a priest. Other mothers of Hirolegu organise a feast called a *boebone*. The newborn ceremony requires all the women and children, and occasionally elderly men, to approach the mother’s dwelling. The mothers layout a woven mat and place a chair for the mother to sit upon. They then parade in front of the mother in single file and place their gift, usually food, in front of the mother and newborn. In this way a public ceremony is performed so that all can witness the gift made to the mother. Depending on who is present, a priest or catechist will grace the ceremony with a prayer. Usually two or three hymns will be sung and the rest of the event will move into an informal occasion for discussion and chat nearby to the mother’s dwelling. The newborn ceremony serves a simple practicality. The allocation of food from gardens for the newborn and mother who are unable to attend gardens themselves. But the newborn ceremony is also used to welcome new residents to community.

The use of the ceremony for newcomers was apparent with the arrival of a new priest and his family to Hirolegu. Preparations for the new AOC priest involved preparing sweet potato gardens in readiness for the family and
clearing an area for further gardening in addition to the ceremony itself. The men of the AOC also conducted renovations to an existing leaf house for the family. The work spanned a month of Fridays, the allotted day for communal work. When the priest arrived with his family he was stocked with food, but unlike a guest, his household was provided with uncooked food and firewood to cook for themselves. The new family had four months to wait before their own gardens were ready to harvest and the Mothers’ Union of CofM and Mothers’ Fellowship of AOC organised between themselves to ensure the family had a supply of sweet potato over the intervening period. The family also would join in activities in each family’s garden so as to get to know everyone and the best crops and methods for cultivation. But much to the surprise of the AOC congregation, a boebone was organised by the rival CofM congregation. This involved a boebone, but instead occurred at the dancing area outside the CofM church building in the village. Once again, an area was marked out by a woven mat was placed in front of the family and gifts were presented to the new Priest and his family. Dancing followed and the new Priest and his family said thank you by singing a hymn with hand actions. The event prompted much discussion among the AOC congregation. Was the CofM congregation trying to out do the AOC congregation by providing for the rival Priest’s family? One AOC parishioner answered that it was a sincere gesture of respect for an Anglican priest even though he was ordained by a rogue Bishop.
5.2 Death

Mortuary rituals in west Hograno are split into three phases. The first phase is the burial itself which is conducted in a day or two after death. Closely following the burial is *gatho fa pulo* which means ‘thinking back’ and is a time to tell stories and sing songs about the deceased. The songs are lamentations about how the family will survive now that this relative has passed away especially given how much the deceased provided for the family over his lifetime. The third phase is called *simele*, after the English word cement, which is the ritual casting of the headstone and grave. A considerable amount of food would be provided for the bereaved family during the first burial phase to sustain them through their mourning. Some elderly men have suggested that this practice is less and less performed in association with burials because primary resources and garden produce are being held onto for the mortuary preparations associated with the *simele*. Further, there is a strong emphasis placed on close family being present at the burial which for kin based in Honiara can be difficult to arrange given the infrequency of shipping. Thousands of dollars are spent getting people home via power boat charters. Of the three phases though, the *simele* requires the most preparation and stress for the matrilineage of the deceased.

Typically a *simele* takes one year to eighteen months to complete. Fund raising begins to in order to pay for the cement and imported food stuffs like rice and fuel for fishing, electricity generation and chainsaw use. Generally
the otherwise dispersed matrilineage must be coordinated as labour parties to prepare all the materials for the casting ritual. This requires the collection of sand and gravel from river mouths and the building of shelters for the milled timber used as form-work around the graves. Chiefs aligned with the matrilineage have opportunities at these junctures to show the extent of their community support by organising the biggest labour parties. The brothers and sisters’ sons of the deceased are all seen as key labour resources. The women of the matrilineage as well will cook and provide food for the labourers. For a large and well established matrilineage there may well be kin from four or five villages in these work parties and considerable resources are required to transport kin to the work site located as near as possible to a cemetery.

Closer to the day of the simede more complicated coordination of food preparation especially the harvesting of sweet potato, fishing and slaughtering of pigs is required. Chiefs will negotiate with representatives of each matrilineage and outline dates at which fish will be caught and pigs slaughtered. Large quantities of firewood are prepared also for stone ovens and teams of men may be coordinated for a large fish netting operation and possibly hunting. The setting out of dates can cause debate and chiefs will vie to have their arrangements accepted over other chiefs. Disputes in scheduling often go unresolved.
5.2.1 Khuarao

Khuarao is a fishing netting practice which uses a plaited rope which dragged over large expanses of reef. For my host lineage, who were the most involved in the simede preparations, making sure everything went according to plan was important. In Hirolegu, the chiefs of the other lineages decided to plait the rope on boxing day and not before Christmas. This was not inline with the decisions as discussed in Susubona a week ago and the decision frustated my host lineage considerably but they could do nothing about it.

On Boxing Day in an area of rainforest was chosen to make the rope just beyond Papari village where a particular ginger plant was plentiful. Here all the men sat around and began plaiting a rope from the ginger plant. A three way plait was used and new strands of the plant were added continuously. It was important that the strands of the rope had leaves which dangled out from the core of the rope. The aim was to plait two hundred fathoms of rope. We all sat in the rainforest and plaited. Everyone was very excited about the activity and much joking and good humour was expressed among the men. A couple of men used a large stick which they drove into the ground to curl the rope around as it was plaited. They joined new lengths of plaited rope to the main coil and wrapped this rope around the main coil with the stick at its centre. When two hundred fathoms was reached the coil was then hoisted onto the shoulders of four men and carried to a waiting boat ready for the next day’s fishing.

I woke up before dawn to prepare for the boat trip out to Rarahina reef.
Rarahina reef was chosen because of its long wide flat expanse which was important to the type of fishing we were about to undertake. Rarahina however, was outside of the territorial extents of Susubona and Hirolegu based lineages. This meant negotiations had to be made with the owners based in Kilokaka and Gallilee prior to carrying out such a fishing technique using nets. Normally one would not need to ask for permission if it was for subsistence purposes. However, should the event be for a lineage wide activity then of course a lineage should draw on its own resources and only turn to other lineages’ resources should those organising have the connections to do so. Fishing at Rarahina was testament to the renown of one of the chiefs in Susubona.¹

The technique being used for this fishing event was called *Khoarau*. It used the length of rope we had made to frighten all the fish into a small area where a set of nets were placed to catch the fish. This is why it was important to leave fronds of the ginger plant dangling from the core of the rope. As the rope was pulled through the water these leaves splash and turn about making a commotion that frightens fish.

When all the boats had met at the reef an area was chosen in which we would walk the reef towards the net. To do this two boats went up toward our destination and another two boats remained at the beginning. The water was too deep to walk so the cumbersome rope had to be pushed through the

¹ Sometimes too, a lineage might mark a section of reef as taboo for the purposes of building up a particular stock of a species like bêche-de-mer for a harvest to raise funds for a feast exchange or even for a building project like roofing a church.
water by swimmers. The depth of the water was around seven to eight feet with the tide running out. The fishing started with the men on the boat letting out the rope and having a man jump into the water with the rope at fifty metre intervals. When in place there were ten or so men in the water with the rope tethered to a boat at either end. The rope spanned close to the width of the reef.

Over the next two hours we swam the rope slowly through the water along the length of the reef. After two to three hours we began to get closer to the boats at the other end. At this point, the ends of the rope reached the two boats at our destination. These two boats had placed a lead weighted nylon net between them. As the rope came closer and closer together so too did more and more of the lead weighted net get let out. Eventually the lead weighted net made a complete circle around the inside of the plaited rope of vine. At this point all the fish had been marshaled into a small area. Everyone jumped into the water with spears made of thin iron bar and rubber hose and shot as many fish as possible. Finally, the net was pulled into an even tighter circle and lifted into the boats so that all the fish fell into the hull. With the netting complete the fish were returned to the village to be cleaned and cooked in stone ovens. There was now enough fish for the feast exchange.
5.2.2 Grave Casting

In the day before the event all the produce is amassed in the village nearest to the cemetery. Kin of the deceased will begin gathering in this village also and the produce will help to support the needs of visitors from other villages. On the day, the chiefs will also cater for dignitaries which includes clergy and possibly provincial and national politicians. Others will travel straight to the cemetery and begin constructing the form work required for casting the graves. This can take hours and construction culminates in the insertion of the plaque in the headstone. Plaques are best sourced from Honiara but writing in the wet concrete was common in decades past and for poorer matrilineages with no connection to the capital city. At completion of casting the clergy are notified and bless the casting. After hours of building and casting the grave, the blessing of the grave is over in a matter of minutes and all amassed at the cemetery begin walking back to the village. Upon return to the village no dancing or singing follows the simede and all that is left to do is distribute the food and gifts to all in attendance. Parcels of food are laid out in rows with either names of hamlets or villages upon them or names of a head family member.

5.3 Gano Thaego

The majority of people I asked about gano thaego said it was the most important of all the feast exchanges. Structured along moiety lines, it is an
event where as many matrilineages as possible are invited to attend. The
more chiefs and clergy involved the better the record of the event and the
prestige accorded the father’s children, and more broadly the mother’s broth-
ers of those children who organise and contribute significant resources to the
exchange. The feast is similar to a *doklu* feast in that personal and family
histories are heard at a public event. The completion of this feast legitimates
the passing of a father’s inheritance to his children but this excludes any right
to adjudicate over his land.

A feature of the feast is the singing of a song called a *rororo* which de-
scribes the personal history of the father. Plans were underway for a feast
of this nature while I was in the field and during this planning I asked as to
the contents of the song to be sung for the father. The song is written by
multiple authors.

The song begins with a history of the homeland of the father’s mother,
where the father’s mother used to reside and other genealogical connections
are mentioned. The song also mentions recently deceased lineage members
and details the history of the father’s wife and her family. As the names
are sung many in the audience will cry. Those who raised one’s father and
mother will be acknowledged. The song then describes how the father and his
wife met, and if their marriage was arranged, the chief involved in this would
be acknowledged. If the marriage was not arranged then the father would
be described as a heroic knight in shining armour who came and took his
wife away. The history of the mother and father will be sung in considerable
detail; where they first went to live, and who looked after them during this
time. Those people who housed them would be acknowledged once again and
this history would bring tears to the eyes of many as more deceased relatives
names are sung. Then the history of the couple turns to their offspring. Even
the first names of the offspring will be mentioned. After all the names of the
children are sung, so too will the names of all the grandchildren. As the
song of the father comes to focus on the children, the lyrics then describe
his love and care for his children as he raised them. This section expresses
the father’s unending love for them. The lyrics describe how he carried
his children as babies, how he brought them food when they cried, how he
clothed them when they were naked, how he sent them to school so that
they were educated. Every detail, except conception, needs to be sung. The
lyrics include how the father wiped his children’s arses, how he even slept
next to his children when they wet the bed. It was explained to me that no
one really thinks that a father would do this but to say he did shows how
much of an exceptional father he is.

The song is made up of hundreds of short lines and the children and
mother’s matrilineage would organise themselves so that an old man would
start each line and then the rest come in behind him to finish the singing
of each line. There are some theatrics as well. When the lyrics move to
what the father’s children are offering, each line will describe that they are
offering only a few particles of rice, but before the father will be bag after
bag of rice. The next lyric will say that they give only a few pieces of biscuit
yet cartons of biscuits will be present. Turning to the pigs, only a parcel of pork is here, and someone will kick all the pigs to make them squeal. The song would then describe how paltry these gifts are when compared to the love and generosity of their father. The focus will turn to the father and it is at this point that most fathers will cry. The song would conclude by stressing that all the things we give are made possible because of the father.

Apart from the writing of the song much excitement and organisation is associated with the feast preparations. Ideally, the children, with the help of their matrilineage, will be planning at least eighteen months in advance and this planning is meant to be secret. The reason for this is to ensure that the father’s matrilineage do not hear about the plans until it is too late and therefore cannot raise more gifts than the father’s children.

5.4 Faegra

Faegra is a feast held to gain permanent access to the productive capacity of another lineage’s territory. For families, and lineages, that have come to reside permanently outside their territory, a faegra feast exchange will be held to ensure that their children can continue to reside and garden in that area. The head of a family will already have in place the necessary relationships and understanding with the land-holding lineage for himself but without a faegra he will be concerned that with his passing, the gardens he worked and the house he built may return to another lineage. A faegra
mitigates this concern.

In Hirolegu two lineages went about the process of holding a fapegra. These two lineages worked together to hold the feast so that they can continue their long association and residence in Domielo territory (See Figure 4.1). One of these lineages was the family of the eldest Domielo man. His eldest son Ambrose had led the negotiations to bring logging to Hograno. He also was the sitting provincial member for the west Hograno area. As such, he was held in high regard among the community but had stressed to me on numerous occasions how important it was that he had organised a fapegra. I initially was intrigued by this as his standing among the community was strong but his position with his own father’s lineage seemed precarious. Ambrose had made a video and taken many digital photos of the feast and he was determined to record the event should anyone come to question his family’s place in Hirolegu in the generations to come.

But Ambrose was not the only head of a lineage keen to ensure the feast was executed as it should be. William, who had been living in the Hirolegu area since the early 1970s, was also heavily involved in the preparations for the fapegra. William articulated the contemporary issues surrounding its importance. He said the coming of logging to Hirolegu brought with it the notion of primary and secondary rights to the distribution of logging royalties. William, having lived in the area as long as any of the Domielo group was still not a primary rights holder and was allotted a much smaller slice of the logging royalties. Ambrose was in the same position as William but as
chief negotiator between the logging company, the license holder and the community, Ambrose was much better placed to gain access to the royalties. For William, the splitting of the community into two by the primary and secondary rights system made his family’s position marginal, and holding this feast all the more important.

5.5 Saints Days

Saints days provide yet another platform for competitive feast exchanges and occur in each village throughout the calendar year. The Book of Common Prayer (Church of Melanesia 1985: 36-44) lays out the calendar of potential festivals and corresponding dates in which a church building may be dedicated. The church building in Hirolegu was dedicated to St Phillip and James but after the schism, the AOC congregation came to occupy this building and it was re-dedicated to the Transfiguration of Jesus on August 6. The CofM congregation built another church in Hirolegu and kept the original Festival day of St Phillip and James held on May 1.

Every Saint’s Day has a similar structure and over the course of a year I attended all the Saints Days held in west Hograno (Matatoku, Susubona, Galilee, Kilokaka, Hirolegu, Biluro and Taruna). Attending Saints’ Days is primarily the duty of the catechists and leaders of the Mothers’ Union. Clergy as well should attend. Others of course are permitted to attend a Saint’s Day but it is catechists whose absence would be noted. All the village must come
together to host the Saint’s Day and the guests who come from neighbouring villages begin arriving the night before for the festivities the following day. Most guests attending a Saint’s Day hosted in another village will try and arrive in the host village before dark and catch the evening prayer. The host village will have already spent the week organising food and practicing for singing and dancing performances to entertain guests. It is a time where the chiefs of the village get a chance to show their leadership in organising the event. The village, through the chief, will ensure all guests are billeted with families and in almost all cases the guests will have extended family with whom they can stay. Should notable clergy or national parliamentarians be in attendance then the rest house maintained by the village will be offered to these men and women of renown.

After settling in and attending evening prayer, the guests return to their billeted families for dinner. In fact, knowing how much to cater for such an event when you are unsure of the numbers is challenging. This is also a point of concern for the guests as well. Who should attend a Festival Day is difficult to judge. Someone could attend a Saint’s Day from each village but the hosts obviously are keen that not everyone attends. It would be terribly embarrassing if many attended and they could not all be provided for. For example, two catechists and their families seemed about the right amount of people to attend a church Day from a neighbouring village. I recall one occasion where more than thirty people from Hirolegu attended the Kilokaka festival day, and while no one from Kilokaka complained about the numbers
attending, it was mentioned in subsequent days to me that too many went and this was not only embarrassing but meant many may come from Kilokaka for the festival day in Hirolegu as payback.

While the order of proceedings for a Saint’s Day are the same across the district, the events that unfold on the day are not. I have included here two Saint’s Days I attended which show the negotiations occurring at the periphery of the church services that make each festival a dynamic social event for the fund-raising and the distribution of food.

5.5.1 St Phillip and James Day in Hirolegu

For the CofM congregation of Hirolegu, their Saint’s day fell on May 1. What made this day different from other Saint’s Day was the involvement of AOC congregation in the CofM ‘Bring and Buy’. Having been surprised at the assistance and involvement of the CofM congregation on Transfiguration Day (AOC) the year before, there was no other option than to get involved for AOC members.

After evening prayer the ‘Bring and Buy’ began and three corrugated iron lean-tos had been constructed for sellers to present and sell their wares. Two of these stalls were for the CofM and one for the AOC. The Grand Bazaar as it was being called officially opened with a prayer. The delay in opening the ‘Bring and Buy’ built tension and as soon as the stall keepers declared the event open mayhem followed as villagers ran toward those items they were most interested in. My wife’s banana cake sold in seconds and
men behind the counter of each stall spruiked their wares with the AOC stall competing with the CofM stall. One seller would yell out his discounted prices only to be bested by the opposing congregation’s spruiker. It made for an exciting afternoon. After communion the following morning a CofM catechist read out the funds raised by each stall. The AOC stall raised just over six hundred Solomon dollars and the CofM stall two thousand dollars. Competition between the congregations was a feature of the schism period.

5.5.2 Ascension Thursday in Galilee

The village of Galilee lies along the banks of the Kholoseru river. The enclosing headland of Mufu shelters a large river mouth and allows for this expanse of water to extend back up river for some kilometres before becoming a shallow rocky creek. I looked forward to the Saint’s Day in Galilee because the one church building was used by both the CofM and AOC congregations and I was keen to see how activities would be organised together. For example, who would be giving communion? Would it be the CofM priest or the AOC priest?

From Hirolegu, the new AOC priest was accompanied by a churchkeeper and catechist. AOC catechists and churchkeepers also came from Mamotu, Taruna and Susubona. The CofM catechists and churchkeepers came from the neighbouring villages of Kilokaka and Khomoro. I was disappointed at the evening service to learn that no CofM priest was in attendance. This meant Moses, the AOC priest from Hirolegu would be giving communion.
After the service we returned to our hosts home for dinner. Dinner was followed by ‘Bring and Buy’.

With morning came communion and many were in attendance. Notably, the AOC priest gave communion and no CofM parishioners participated. In the chiefs’ speeches after the ceremony, Chief Andrew talked to this issue. He said how disappointed he was, that a village, like Galilee was not attended by priests from both churches. If this a CofM had come then the village together could have participated in Communion. He said to those gathered that they should ensure their priest attends if there was an issue with communion because all must do this together. When I asked others about the non-attendance of the CofM priests some said that the CofM had largely given up on Galilee and had left it to the AOC. One AOC parishioner said to me on the issue of Communion, ‘why attend church if you are not going to participate.’ The tension between the congregations in Galilee was much higher than that of Hirolegu and having to share a church building was a key difference between the two villages.

5.6 Christmas

Christmas celebrations follow a similar approach to the West with a few notable exceptions. One of these differences is the feast exchange called ‘House to House’. In this feast exchange a table is drawn up of all the households of Hirolegu and placed on an A4 sheet of paper and pinned to
the wall of both churches. The table contains two columns and a number of rows. In each column is a household and households occupying the same row must exchange food between them. For Hirolegu, with two rival churches, the coming together of both churches for the ‘House to House’ was read as a sign of improving relations between the two congregations.

My family was placed in a row with the village headman, Thomas, and as the day progressed after the names were posted on the paper, it soon became apparent that the exchange was competitive. I asked a number of people what people expected to exchange with me and the answer I was given was that this sort of thing was an event to exchange produce from the garden, not goods from the store. Having only just finished planting our first crop of sweet potato, we did not have any produce from the garden to exchange so my wife and I were left with no other choice but to use goods we had received in parcels from family back in Australia and food items that were had shipped from Honiara. I soon become comfortable with our decision when I saw many people going back and forth from the store buying goods. I asked the store keeper whether the purchases were for the ‘House to House’ and he replied that of course they were. I asked one couple why they were buying from the store when I was told we should be using produce from the garden and a bystander, over hearing my question, replied ‘because they want to win’. I then asked what it was they were going to win but received no answer and only a look of surprise that I would ask such a thing.

By mid-afternoon, everyone was returning from their gardens. The items
people were exchanging were being placed at the front of their houses in plain view. We had a box containing food stuffs, some books and toys but this seemed so small in comparison to the bags of sweet potato, sugar cane and water melon piled up on each household’s front steps. In some cases decorations made of woven palm fronds and flowers adorned the entrance to their home, attracting one’s eye to the produce piled below. For those that could afford it, even twenty kilogram bags of rice were placed on the pile.

With Christmas Eve came the anticipation of the communion service. All in Hirolegu awaited the arrival of the Bishop to hold the service. The news I heard was that the Bishop was making the tour throughout Hirolegu and would be here at 7:30pm. By 9:30pm the Bishop had arrived to lead prayer and I was in attendance to make the first reading and be involved in the intercession. By the time I returned home it was close to midnight and the Christmas carol groups were yet to make their rounds of each household. Because of the schism there were two choir groups making the rounds. I understood now the purpose of the display of produce on the front step. As the choir groups made their way around they observed what was being given. Something that I had wondered earlier, given the dispersed nature of Hirolegu. By the time I had heard both choir groups and given a cash donation, it was well into the early hours of the morning.

Morning prayer on Christmas day felt very much like any other morning prayer. Given the communion service the night before, many slept in and did not attend morning prayer. The first task though on Christmas day was
dealing with the aftermath of the ‘House to House’. All the produce had to be carried back and forth from Papari to Shekoblahi, from Hirolegu to Camp and so on. A boat was used to ferry goods back and forth but this was compounded by the walk up to Hirolegu carrying twenty kilogram bags of produce. By lunch time, myself and a few others had finished moving the gifts around and I was exhausted. I longed for the day to end as it involved significant physical labour. A feast after lunch was organised and we attended this. The event involved sharing cooked food amongst all the families of Hirolegu and speeches from a number of chiefs and myself.

5.7 Tithing

Tithing is new to Anglicanism in Isabel and a practice introduced with the rise of the AOC. A blackboard is placed in the kitchen. Symbols are placed on the blackboard for fish, sweet potato, pig and other produce consumed by the family. To the right of each symbol a tally is kept of how many of those items are consumed. When it came around to Sunday the tally of produce consumed was added up and for every ten sweet potato consumed, one was given to the Church as a tithe. The kitchen ledgers I saw were ledgers of primary produce consumed and not cash earned through cropping, fish exports, or logging. Likewise, primary produce harvested for special occasions like swamp taro was rarely itemised on the kitchen ledger. Further the cooking of donuts and bread for special occasions were not entered on
the ledger either.

If cash was available, one tenth of this would be given to the Church by placing the cash in an envelope and leaving the envelop in a bowl on the altar. If the family had no cash available for church that day then the equivalent one-tenth amount was taken to church and left at the entrance to the store. No shame was associated with bringing produce rather than cash and in most cases members of the congregation would buy any produce tithed, converting those items into cash anyway. The value of the produce tithed was a decision of the buyer.

Large cash payments as tithe were infrequent. Large cash tithes occur from the sale of rough sawn timber, reef fish exports to Honiara, copra harvesting, and other cash crops. While one tenth of these earnings should go to the Church, the money made from these activities was kept secret but if a tithe was made the amount became widely known. One example of this was the tithe of a chief who gave one tenth of his logging royalties. However, tithing has not meant the end of circulating a collection plate at Sunday services. Both tithes and offerings were collated by the catechist and entered into a ledger behind the altar. Once a month the church administrator arrived, collected the tithes and distributed the tithes as wages to the clergy and catechists and churchkeepers.
5.7.1 Background to Tithing

When Legumana decided to adopt a tithe to fund the work of his new church he looked to SDA pastors for advice. These pastors drew Legumana and his congregation’s attention to Matthew 6:33 especially his statements about all things are God’s things and therefore we should give back: ‘But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you’ (Matthew 6:33). However Malachi 3:6-12 gives the clearest demand of the reciprocity that comes with giving and the blessing of one’s harvest that will be returned to those that tithe.

For I [am] the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept [them]. Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the LORD of hosts. But ye said, Wherein shall we return? Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye [are] cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, [even] this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that [there shall] not [be room] enough [to receive it]. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your
ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in
the field, saith the LORD of hosts. And all nations shall call you
blessed: for ye shall be a delight some land, saith the LORD of
hosts. Malachi 3:6-12

Here, the notion that the nation, that the ground can be robbed implies
a debt to the earth and this passage resonates with the horticulturalists
of west Hograno. In renewing this bond through tithes to the Church the
horticulturalist renews the truth of the Bible for their way of life. The AOC,
in taking a lead from other churches like the SDA who emphasise these
passages for their own fund-raising, had created a reason for their existence
vis-à-vis the CofM.

5.7.2 Tithe versus Target

The key point of difference between AOC and CofM concerns tithing or the
rule of one-tenth. For the AOC the adoption of tithing was a financial ne-
cessity. What distinguishes an AOC from a CofM follower in west Hograno
is the one tenth. CofM congregations argue they give one tenth, they just do
not enforce or institutionalise this giving as a tax. Of the people surveyed,
overwhelmingly the interviewees said that the difference and reason for leav-
ing the CofM was the burden of the ‘target’ as set by the CofM Diocese.
AOC parishioners said the use of target by the Diocese to raise funds was
unfair and was never reciprocated or spent in their parishes.
For those I interviewed, the tithe was a tax but very much unlike the ‘target’ of the CofM. The tithe was collected by the parish for the parish. It was clearly understood by the laity that the tithe paid for the wages of churchkeepers, catechists and priests. The fruits of their labour came back as wages for the work these office-bearers did within the Church. But the target was set by those outside the parish. One disadvantage of introducing wages for catechists and churchkeepers was it eroded the value of volunteering for roles in the Church. Taking up duties with the AOC means being paid but the CofM this development was potentially threatening. How was it going to keep its catechists and priests if better wages were on offer in the same village for the same specialisation? While not equivalent, the CofM responded by offering free education at CofM schools for the children of catechists.

5.8 Summary

Comparing this chapter to Chapter 4 raises a telling difference between the relationship of people to land. This has an impact on the way churches are organised. The first point to make is the very explicit way that ritual activity, in the form of feast exchanges, addresses issues around the place of people on territory. The fapegra ensures lineages can continue to garden in another lineage’s region and the gano thaego assures the alienable property of the father goes to his children. The protracted simede rite, spanning eighteen months, reestablishes kinship relations between lineage members who have
married, moved away and are spread across the district. But in the preceding chapter the nature of power that dwells in lineage territory is more implicit, hidden and unspoken.

For the Maring, the Anglican missionaries created the first trade stores and from these stores flowed the power of the Christian God as white rice (LiPuma 1988). As the Maring came to know about their trade routes and where to purchase similar goods as the missionaries so too did they open up their own trade stores and the lure of the mission diminished. Anglicanism itself is not unaccustomed to feasting in its many religious events but in west Hograno, the exchanges that take place feed the Church as well. Christians no longer brings goods from afar but bless their own gardens nearby.

But goods from afar may be welcome in the form of rice and other food stuffs but head taxes certainly are not. Rebellion is not unknown in the region (See Section 3.10.1; Bennett (1987: 162)). Governments reproduce themselves through taxes, the CofM reproduces itself by setting a target, and the AOC raises funds through a tithe. But the tithe may have unforeseen side-effects on the role of chiefs. Giving one-tenth needs no mediation by chiefs and the accumulation of these gifts takes place on the steps of the Church every Sunday. Either way, AOC chiefs are now compelled to be even closer to the church.
Chapter 6

Sorcery and Healing

When there is misfortune, death and sickness in west Hograno, the residents look for signs of a sorcerer among them. If the sickness is not life threatening then they turn to local healers who draw upon a range of methods to heal their patients. Both the AOC and the CofM have practising healers in their congregations and members of both churches frequently request the services of specialists to rid their homes of harmful curses when their families become sick or a series of unfortunate events befall the family. Anglicans in west Hograno look to their churches to combat sorcery and heal the sick and in so doing entangle the churches in a system of causation between individuals, kin groups and chiefs around misfortune and death.

The two Anglican churches respond to sorcery and healing in their parishes in similar ways with the CofM setting the template for interactions involving sorcery. The CofM addresses the cases of sorcery through its order of broth-
ers called the Melanesian Brotherhood, which has been in existence since 1925. CofM parishioners make a request through the Church for the brothers to clear their home and village of sorcery. The AOC has no organisation to cleanse areas of harmful sorcery but some of its members can cure the sick using a variety of methods. The popularity of these methods has led to a demand for a healing ministry within the AOC much like the ministry within the CofM. The politics surrounding both the brotherhood and the healing ministry within the CofM and the creation of similar institutions within the AOC attests to the pervasiveness of sorcery in the religious imagination of Anglicans.

The prevalence of sorcery in human societies continues to challenge anthropological theory. Geschiere (1997: 3) has taken the view that witchcraft is a modern phenomena and a key feature of contemporary politics in Cameroon. Its pliability and mutability is key to understanding how sorcery transforms and defies distinction, to the point that the Cameroonian discourse on sorcery erases all distinctions (Geschiere 1997: 57). From the village to the courts to national politics, sorcery mutates and affects all levels of government. It is the cause of a politician’s rise to power and the result of a politician’s downfall. Rather than see sorcery as a function of social upheaval and a process to restore the social order, Geschiere (1997) sees sorcery as a social phenomena that adapts and changes to various social processes so as to be central to the political process of Cameroon.

Another study focused on sorcery and released the same year is Kapferer’s
(1997) analysis of exorcisms in Sri Lanka. Interesting here is the opposite po-
position taken to social processes involving sorcery. Where Geschiere (1997) sees
sorcery as mutable, Kapferer (1997) sees sorcery as generative, as phenom-
enon to create and destroy sociality. In this definition, sorcery and witchcraft
are always contemporary, because by definition, sorcery is a constitutive force
that creates and destroys social relations not a force that responds by mutating
and altering. Importantly, Kapferer sees sorcery as problematic because
it is always incomplete, but generative within the same social process: ‘it
is an inversion of peoples social and political worlds through their imagina-
tion. What sorcery subverts is what sorcery constructs’ (Kapferer 1997: 39).

If sorcery is recursive in the manner suggested here then practices involving
sorcery are brimming with analytic potential for the sorts of inversions
and negations present the rise of the AOC. Likewise, taking Geschiere’s ap-
proach, social action involving sorcery is political and carries political themes
and content relevant at regional and national levels of government. These
two models of social phenomena involving sorcery are both useful to the event
described here. One sees sorcery as a mutable category and asks that analysis
examine the ways sorcery shapes politics and is shaped by politicians. The
other approach asks the analysis to look at how sorcery creates and breaks
political forms and how sorcery inverts and mutates the politics of the day.

In this chapter the death of a young girl in the village sets off a series of
events which lead to a sorcery accusation, the involvement of the Melanesian
Brotherhood and finally to the intervention of the chiefs of the village with a
feast exchange between the father of the deceased girl and the accused. The series of events, as an extended case, are revealing of local politics but at the same time highlight the powerful institutions within the CofM that influence village life and undermine the role of chiefs. For chiefs are not only asked to respond to sorcery accusations, some are healers, while others are accused of sorcery. Local healing involves excising harmful spirits from the patient as well as extracting foreign substances introduced into the patients body that are causing illness. Both types of healing practices pick up latent notions of power that shape changes to Anglican organisation in Hograno.

### 6.1 Exorcism

Spirits (naitu) are prevalent in places beyond the safety of the village. Spirits are split into two broad categories, those of the sea (tahe) and those of the bush (mata). Sea Spirits (naitu tahe) can cause illness in children when they accompany their parents on canoe trips to the outer reefs or neighbouring villages. Bush Spirits (Naitu mata) can catch people unawares as they move between the garden and the village along bush trails. The signs of possession are fevers, constant crying through the night and an inability to sleep. When illness befalls the young and healthy a specialist in exorcising spirits is sought by the family.

In the hamlet where I was staying an elderly man named Charles was a specialist in healing people whose sickness was caused by spirits. I became
aware of his talents because of the frequent visits he made at all hours of the day and night to other residences. When I first started noticing these visits I asked Charles’s son, Matthew, whether he took his children to Charles for help. Matthew said he used his father’s services as well. I then asked whether he had come to know how to heal and cure people and Matthew replied that his father was not interested in showing anyone his techniques and wanted his skills to end with him. Matthew said that his father’s magic was now replaced by the work of the Church. When I saw Charles the following day I asked him whether he wanted his children to take on his healing practices and he said that none of his children were interested in what he could do but he would like to pass it on. Although he came back later and clarified that one of his sons, who is based in Honiara, asked to learn his techniques but he thought what is the point when he does not live in Hirolegu. Charles went on to tell me that much of what he knew was once in a book and he had written down the old words that he used before Christian prayer to heal the sick. He said how he does the healing the right way with prayer. He said that the other healers in Hirolegu have different techniques from him but they did not know the old ways of curing sickness brought on by the spirits. This skill is why many come to him. And Charles came to help us when our daughter Florence, eighteen months at the time, could not sleep and was crying all night. Other villagers, concerned at our situation asked Charles to come and attend to our daughter.
6.2 Clearance

In addition to possessions by spirits, objects can be cursed and cause illness in people that are in contact with the cursed item. These curses are the product of one’s enemies. Evidence of a curse upon an object usually takes the form of ginger bulbs being found in, near to, or under the victim’s house. The discovery of these curses is not a gift belonging to all and specialists are called upon to detect and ‘clear’ the curses. Some individuals with the power to heal may also have the ability to see and lift a curse upon an object but I only heard of curses being placed on houses. There is considerable debate whether specialists can actually see these curses and find the ginger bulbs that might be causing the ill-fortune befalling a family. The process of finding a curse is called a ‘clearance’. When I saw a clearance being performed the specialist circled the house in a crouching position and used their hand in front of their face as a sort of sighting tool to look through the under storey of a dwelling. The specialist would then take a closer look at a particular area of the house and check under the stairwell for any recent disturbances to the sand there. After performing the clearance ritual I saw the specialist report back to the owner that there were no curses upon the dwelling. Those present were very much relieved but the conversation then moved straight to who the occupant was feuding with and why the occupant would ask for a clearance to be performed in the first place. The occupant shrugged his shoulders and said he just wanted to know that his home was safe.
Clearances are also used to describe the work of the Melanesian Brothers when they are requested to rid a village of sorcery. Where local healers and specialists conduct clearances there is some doubt as to the authenticity of the results and the scale of the specialist’s powers, but the same cannot be said of the Brothers. No one in Hirolegu expressed to me their concerns at the conduct of the Brothers or their abilities to discover and dispel curses.

6.3 Laying Hands

The other healers that Charles was referring to perform a number of healing practices but the one I observed on a number of occasions was the use of pamu. One of the two men observed practising pamu was a CofM catechist and the other one was chief Gregson. The Church practised laying of hands but this occurred rarely and only when a Priest was in attendance. I witnessed one laying of hand ceremony in Hirolegu led by a priest. Local healers were busy people and would be seen at all hours of the day and night responding to requests for assistance. There was never any stigma associated with the use of local healers and I knew of no one that refused their services. Chief Gregson, who practices pamu, used this technique on my daughter within the first few months of our arrival.

Our daughter had been ill for a couple of weeks and we thought it was a mild cold. Her sickness must have been discussed by our neighbours after the Sunday service because chief Gregson approached me and asked whether
he could examine Florence and treat her. I obliged but asked could my wife
come first to the house and be here for the consultation as well. I had met
Gregson a couple of times and talked with him most Sundays after church.
Before Gregson began he mentioned Florence’s fall in the first few weeks of
being in Hirolegu. My wife and I were both surprised because Gregson did
not witness Florence’s fall from the landing of our house. Stairs to houses
consist of a ladder of sorts which take some dexterity to go up and down.
There is no rail and the landing has no balustrade but is four and half feet
above ground. Florence one day ran straight out the front door off the end
of the landing and fell to the ground. Gregson obviously knew all about this
incident and told us that such a fall can cause clots in the blood. These clots
then contribute to her illness. Gregson lightly examined Florence’s torso. He
checked her stomach and back. I asked as to how he came to know these
skills and who taught him. Gregson replied that it just came to him and
that healing (kina) was a gift. This gift came to Gregson one day when his
son was very sick and one day he placed his hands on his son and his son
recovered. After telling me this Gregson outstretched his hand and placed it
on Florence’s forehead. With his other hand, he clasped his outstretched arm
hard around his bicep. He then placed his mouth on his bicep and sucked
strongly upon his arm for about a minute. On the bed was a plastic water
bottle that had been cut in half and as he sucked he spat into the make shift
cup. When Gregson had finished there was a reddish liquid in the cup but
it was cloudy also. He said that this blood is the clotted blood from the
fall. He then pointed out a more cloudy substance in amongst the blood and said that this was the panadol we had been giving Florence for her cold. There was a whitish cloudy substance in amongst the blood. Gregson said it was common for this to happen when using this technique as the drugs being taken by the patient come out with the bad blood. He went on to say that is was okay to continue with the panadol but that Florence’s illness was associated with the fall from the landing and that his treatment addressed the sickness caused by the fall not the cold.

6.4 Sorcery Accusations

Severe illness and unexpected deaths can lead to sorcery accusations which in some cases become violent. Where Gregson was able to address my daughter’s illness using his technique to extract bad blood from the sick, in the following social case Gregson is called upon as a chief and negotiator to address rising tensions around the cause of a young girl’s death in Hirolegu. The events span approximately the six months before my arrival in Hirolegu and then occurred sporadically over the period of my field work.

6.4.1 I: Mavis’s Death and Burial

Steven and his wife Elizabeth became aware that their three year old daughter Mavis was seriously ill when Mavis fell and they could not stem the bleeding from a small cut. Steven and
Elizabeth took Mavis the twelve kilometres by boat to Susubona clinic and the nursing staff at the clinic managed to successfully stop the bleeding. Steven’s family returned home but a week later Mavis was bleeding again but this time from the nose. Steven and Elizabeth rushed back to the clinic but the nursing staff could not stem the bleeding and an attempt was made to take Mavis to the provincial centre in Buale. By boat and in good weather, the trip to Buale is 6 hours, but after only an hour into the journey Mavis died from loss of blood. Steven and Elizabeth returned to the village and a church service and burial was organised for Mavis in the following days.

The day after the burial Elizabeth’s mother and father visited Mavis’ grave and noticed a footprint on the freshly turned soil of the grave. Elizabeth’s father told Steven and Elizabeth about the footprint and soon the entire village had gathered around the grave to view the footprint for themselves. Those gathered at the grave site debated whether the footprint might belong to a child or adult, male or female, but no one gathered at the grave was prepared to identify anyone as the owner of the footprint. A CoFM catechist, Barnabas, voiced his opinion that the footprint was indeed evidence of a sorcerer’s involvement in Mavis’ death.

A week after the burial a Requiem Service was held for Mavis at the CoFM Church. All of the village, both AOC and CoFM
congregations, attended. After the service a feast was organised outside the CofM Church and Steven asked Elizabeth’s father to fetch more woven pandanus mats for those gathered to sit on. Jacob, an AOC parishioner and primary school teacher overheard the conversation and joked that maybe Elizabeth’s father should bring some carpet rugs as well since that would be more comfortable. Steven was shocked at Jacob’s joke and could not understand why someone would make light at such a solemn occasion.

Leading up to the Requiem Service, and in the days following, rumours began to spread that Jacob was the sorcerer and that the footprint on the grave belonged to Jacob. A number of people claimed that Barnabas, the CofM catechist identified the footprint as belonging to Jacob.

The footprint on the grave heralded the beginning of a period of heightened awareness and discussion of social interactions. All in the village were now under scrutiny as the presence of a sorcerer meant a reassessment of every social interaction. Some background then to Steven, Elizabeth, Jacob and Barnabas will help in contextualising the sorcery accusation as an extended case.
Steven and Elizabeth

Both Steven and Elizabeth were raised in Hirolegu. Steven’s mother’s father is Domielo and is the eldest and most respected Chief. All of Steven’s mother’s siblings remain in Hirolegu and Steven’s mother’s brother is a provincial member of Parliament. Elizabeth is connected to the Domielo matrilineage through her father’s mother’s second husband. While not as strong a Domielo tie as Steven, Elizabeth’s matrilineage are large in number compared with the Domielo and two of Elizabeth’s father’s brothers families are residents of Hirolegu.

Steven and Elizabeth are members of the CofM. When the breakaway AOC was inaugurated in 2005, Elizabeth, with her siblings and mother, decided to not join the AOC. Elizabeth’s father was initially keen to join the breakaway Church but eventually followed the rest of his family and stayed with the CofM. Steven’s mother tried to convince him to join the breakaway Church. Steven said he was reluctant to join because the breakaway Church was small and did not have any order of brothers, no formal organisation for laity (the Companions), and no church run schools or training centres like that which existed for the CofM. Steven was concerned too that Bishop Legumana was excommunicated from the CofM for misuse of funds and therefore could not be trusted again.

Although Steven’s mother joined the AOC, he was not completely on his own as two of his mother’s sisters remained with the CofM. Either way, Steven did not care whether any of his maternal family were CofM. He was
confident he did the right thing and if support was required all his in-laws were CofM anyway. For Elizabeth though it was important to her that all her family were CofM. She expressed how worried she was, as were her siblings, that her father was entertaining thoughts of joining the AOC. Elizabeth had argued with her father at the time stating that the AOC was only in Isabel and given that her mother was from Nggela (Central Province), they would ostracise not only their mother from her family but they would also have no place of worship when visiting their mother’s family.

**Resources and Emergencies**

An emergency visit to the clinic is a challenging undertaking and required the mobilisation of resources from Steven’s matrilineage. Steven asked his mother’s brother for access to a boat and outboard motor and the required fuel to at least reach the clinic in Susubona. But Steven and Elizabeth had to call upon family assistance again. Mavis needed medical attention soon after their first visit.

After marriage, a couple become more independent of their matrilineage and the raising of their children is the responsibility of the parents (See Section 4.1). Taking children to the clinic is viewed as the responsibility of the parents. There is an expectation that a father should have contingencies in place for emergencies. Not fulfilling family obligations is often the starting place for gossip among others and women judge the role of other men by their ability to support the family in times of need. For example, women might fall
sorry for their peers whose husbands spend too much time fishing and not
enough time drying copra or working the garden (see Epstein 1992: 219).
This sort of gossip could lead to a sense of shame and this emotion has
an intensity which can lead to withdrawal and self-exile. The potential for
Steven to experience a sense of failure because he could not mobilise resources
fast enough may contributed to his frustration and his return to his father’s
land after the event.\(^1\) The funds must be acquired in the form of cash. A
boat must be located and the owner notified and fuel sourced from someone.
These delays proved fatal even though some of these factors were beyond
Steven and Elizabeth’s control.

Jacob

Jacob, the accused sorcerer, married into the Piju matrilineage. Jacob’s sib-
lings also emigrated from their village of birth and settled in new villages to
the west as more tracts of land opened up in the wake of logging activity
(west of Kilokaka).\(^2\) This migration occurs as families look for arable land
close to the sea and where smaller populations mean less pressure on land
and sea resources. Jacob is a teacher and works at the local primary school.

\(^1\)Epstein (1992: 228) documents, in his study of the emotions in social life among the
Tolai of New Britain, two forms of shame which highlight the subtle difference between
shame and guilt. The Tolai distinguish between \textit{vavirvir} and \textit{nirwe} with the former being
embarrassment-shame and the latter shame-guilt. Shame then, for the ethnographer, is
more overt as it is ‘observed in the public arena; guilt, by contrast, save in some ritual
contexts, lacks such social “visibility”’ (Epstein 1992: 231). As Epstein (1992: 231) warns,
the opacity of guilt as observable social phenomena does not mean a society has no concept
of guilt and instead only shame.

\(^2\)See Figure 2.4.
In this capacity he is privileged in that nurses and teachers are the only occupations that locate the employee in their home village while still maintaining a wage income. Teachers and nurses therefore have the benefit of their subsistence gardens to supplement their wages. Jacob is largely dependent on his in-laws for access to gardening land and manual labour for tasks like house construction and land clearing. Being a teacher means Jacob is often involved in organising large public gatherings like fund-raising events, church meetings and sporting activities. His loud voice needs no megaphone and he is comfortable telling jokes in front of a large or small gathering.

Jacob’s teaching colleague at the primary school is Elizabeth’s father. It was Elizabeth’s father who noticed the footprint on the child’s grave. Footprints are a component in forms of harmful sorcery. Piercing a footprint with a sharp stick or knife is known as *churumala* (White 1988: 276). Making a noose with rope and tightening it around the footprint of a victim is another form of sorcery known as *sosolo* which causes illness in the victim. Although the footprint on the grave was read as a sign of a sorcerer’s attack on the child eventuating in death, footprints are powerful signs of human presence and physical action.

Drawing on the symbolism of the footprint as a tie to land, Barnabas’s father named the area where his family are located *kaimala* which means to go back over one’s footprints or more generally to return to one’s land. Barnabas’s father is the only member of the Domielo matrilineage to remain with the CofM. By not following his matrilineage, Barnabas’s father cleared
the path and strengthened the hand of those families that wished to remain
with the CofM but were not Domielo. Although Barnabas’s father’s claim
to Domielo land is weakened because he has no sisters, he still is Domielo
and therefore has a right to make decisions about access to land and sea
resources. Barnabas’s father, in a way, underwrites the presence of a CofM
congregation on Domielo territory. This was critically important when the
CofM congregation decided to build their own church. There could be no
question, with Barnabas’s father on their side, as to the legitimacy of a
new church on Domielo land. By building a new church though, the CofM
congregation were effectively creating a new village (White 1992: 107).

Barnabas

Barnabas lives on his father’s land. His mother comes from Kilokaka to
the west which is the ancestral home of Elizabeth’s father’s matrilineage.
The residents of Kilokaka resisted all attempts by chiefs and priests of the
breakaway AOC to join the breakaway Church. Barnabas is a CofM catechist
and since childhood has been interested in knowledge and practices of sorcery
in Hograno. He was interested in joining the Melanesian Brotherhood as a
younger man but eventually married and missed the chance. Like Jacob,
Barnabas married into the Piju matrilineage and Jacob’s wife and Barnabas’s
wife are sisters.

Since a child, Barnabas has had a keen interest in sorcery practices and
heals the sick by combining prayer with the laying of hands and dowsing

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the ill with holy water blessed by Anglican priests and Melanesian Brothers. Steven told me that Barnabas aspired to join the Brotherhood but his mother’s brother, a CofM priest, declined his application on the grounds that he might misuse the power to heal and the power to curse bestowed to the Brotherhood. Barnabas is very much situated in the ambiguous zone between catechist, healer, and sorcerer. He plays a critical role in the interplay of Christian beliefs and sorcery.

6.4.2 II: Steven and Jacob Cross Paths

Steven and Jacob avoided each other but crossed paths at the trade store. Accompanied by Barnabas, Steven was purchasing fish hooks when Jacob walked by drunk. As Jacob passed the trade store Jacob joked that he was guilty and raised his arms, as if to surrender, and then continued on his way. Steven thought Jacob’s behaviour both inappropriate and unusual and later confronted Jacob about his behaviour asking him why he acted so strangely and said he was guilty. Jacob would not acknowledge his question and did not answer Steven.

When tensions are building or relations strained between people in west Hograno the first strategy is to avoid the other party. This is exactly what happened between Steven and Jacob. Both their families avoided each other. This means planning trips along tracks in a way that decreases the chance
of passing those you are in conflict with. If by chance you do cross paths, both parties would not talk directly to each, remain silent, or communicate through a third party. This can seem to an outsider unemotional, but it certainly is not. When tensions are high between individuals and families many have told me of getting home and crying or waiting until church to express emotions about conflict with others. Personal prayer before a church service is a time to weep and express sadness. This personal sadness is noticed by others in the congregation and is the source of much rumour and speculation.

The tension between Steven and Jacob was not unlike that of the AOC and CofM Church communities in that both conflicts were expressed through avoidance practices. These practices are similar with regard to one’s in-laws. Avoidance has a template of sorts, a code of behaviour, which is engaged when social relations are strained. The strategies of course work best with those that can be avoided like members of another matrilineage or family-group. Within the family group, tensions could reach a point of being unbearable and in these cases one might decide to leave and visit one’s mother’s brother’s family for example especially if they live in another village. Self-imposed exile is sometimes the only course of action.

When Steven and Jacob did cross paths, Jacob’s drunkenness meant his guard was down and the exchange lent further weight to the claim he was a sorcerer. Places like church and the trade store are areas for public gathering that cross matrilineage land boundaries and become areas for contestation.
Without them avoidance is easier as travelling to gardens or fishing grounds means following well worn paths of your own family or matrilineage. Jacob then was doubly caught, he was drunk and near a trade store and he reacted badly. The rumours of his involvement in the death of Mavis were on his mind as well as Steven's, and his joking behaviour, like his joking behaviour at the Requiem, further cemented his guilt in the minds of Steven and Barnabas. He was now even saying so, Steven expressed to me. A drunken confession soon became denial when Jacob was confronted by Steven.

Face to face confrontation is interesting in light of strategies of avoidance. Being bold is certainly a sign of a brave, maybe even slightly crazy person. Contrastingly, the confidence to confront and speak up is a sign of a potential big man and leader. Face to face confrontation, being bold and scared of no one, are qualities Steven prides himself on, so he told me. Avoidance and confrontation go together, they are both ‘coping strategies, available for use in a variety of inter-subjective situations’ (Jackson 1998: 152). As much as people are impressed and value following the rules of avoidance as a form of respect, he or she who is brazen and aggressive, is read as powerful and strong.

6.4.3 III: Jacob’s Father Dies

Jacob's father was terminally ill around the time of Mavis’ death and had to be moved to Susubona to be near the clinic. Jacob for some months before and after the death of Mavis was
travelling frequently to be by his father’s side and assist relatives in caring for his father. Four months after Mavis’ death, Jacob’s father died. During this time Steven and Elizabeth returned to Steven’s father’s land which is over a day’s paddle from Hirolegu. With Steven and Elizabeth absent, talk of sorcery and Mavis’ death simmered down. Barnabas and Jacob kept their distance from each other and remained in Hirolegu.

Approaching death is a time for the passing on of secret knowledge (See Section 4.4.1). In west Hograno terminal illness and old age signals a time for the telling of secret knowledge. Likewise, burial sites remain important physical markers of a matrilineages source of power and attachment to particular localities. And as White (1992: 43) recounts, visiting shrines involves retelling stories of the past.

With Jacob’s father seriously ill, many rumours circulated that Jacob may as a result of his father’s passing be in possession of sorcery. Further, Susubona is a long established village with a history of sorcery accusations. Susubona has a number of elderly big men with considerable knowledge of the past and therefore of sorcery as well. Being a member of this cohort, Jacob’s father had strong links to sorcery if only by association. The village of Susubona too has been visited by the Brotherhood on previous occasions and during these visits the brothers have discovered sorcerers and cleared many houses of curses and harmful magic.

The passing of Jacob’s father further lent weight to the argument that
Jacob was in possession of sorcery. A dutiful son, who had worked hard in caring for his ill father, would surely be informed by his father of his methods of sorcery, so some speculated. Whether it was his offspring or his sister’s offspring who were the recipients of Jacob’s father’s sorcery was irrelevant. The recent passing of his father was a powerful time when an elderly man exercises his will upon his descendants and the future of the matrilineage. Through the transfer of knowledge, whether real or perceived, the agency of an elderly man expecting to die stands in complete contrast to the misfortune of an unexpected death. Around the time of Jacob’s father’s death there was no hostilities between Jacob and Steven. But Jacob’s father’s passing was an important event as would become clear over the coming Christmas period.

6.4.4 IV: Christmas Emigrants

During the Christmas vacation period (December to January) relatives working in Honiara and out-marrying family members return to Hirolegu. Steven and Elizabeth, like others, returned to be with their families. Barnabas’s brother Kingsley, who is a member of the Melanesian Brotherhood, also returned at this time. It was Kingsley who reignited debate over Jacob’s sorcery. Kingsley sensed powerful spirits near Jacob’s house and also told his brother Barnabas that he had seen Jacob’s name on a list of known sorcerers practising in Hograno District. Kingsley said Jacob’s Father’s name was on the list. This information fuelled
rumour throughout the village and Jacob’s immediate family, his wife and children, became increasing uncomfortable at large gatherings like church services, feasts and fund-raising events.

Over Christmas time, family members working in other provinces return home. Those that have married and moved to other villages return home also to be with family and the mood is festive. Those living permanently in the village also get an enlarged labour force as their children who must board to attend high school return home and can be set to work in the garden. Stories and tales from Honiara filter through the village with the return of the wage labour force. The return of Kingsley, Barnabas’s brother, brought special knowledge regarding sorcery. For many, a Melanesian Brother’s word is final in discussions and debate over the presence of sorcery. In turn being a brother means being capable of personal feats beyond the everyday. Although some brothers may not have the power to see and locate curses and spirits, others may have strong powers to heal the sick, or divine the future. These views are the views expressed by residents of Hirolegu and not Melanesian Brothers themselves. Much of what a Melanesian Brother learns as an acolyte in the order is a mystery to outsiders and this further heightens their authority and mystique. The specialist role and authority of the brotherhood introduces a social category that has authority outside the realm of local chiefs and bigmen. When Barnabas’s brother Brother Kingsley returned home for Christmas Barnabas was able to confer with him on matters that were in dispute in the village. As a Brother, Kingsley’s words
would for many be final on the matter and Kingsley’s suggestions as to a course of action to deal with sorcery and the presence of spirits would be taken on.

But the Brothers rarely visit Hirolegu and so traditional healers address misfortune and illness in their absence. Much like the role of the catechist who leads prayer in the absence of the Priest, traditional healers heal and combat sorcery in the absence of the Brothers. When Kingsley alerted Barnabas to the presence of powerful magic about Jacob’s house, Barnabas now had the evidence to embolden his claim that Jacob was indeed a sorcerer and the sorcerer involved in Mavis’ death. News began to spread around the village that the Brotherhood were aware that Jacob was a sorcerer. Further rumours continued that the Brotherhood had identified Jacob’s father and that a list of known sorcerers in Hograno district had both Jacob and his father’s name on it. These stories made Jacob and his family uncomfortable and Jacob decided he had to do something about it. He went to the Chiefs.

6.4.5 V: Court of Chiefs

Almost a year after Mavis’ death, Jacob, in response to the persistent rumours that he was in possession of sorcery, went to the chiefs of the village for help. He said to the chiefs that his family was being threatened and harassed by Barnabas. Interestingly, one of the chiefs had recently returned from a provincial government workshop that discussed empowering chiefs through
changes to the Provincial constitution. These changes would give chiefs the authority to hold court and resolve disputes in their jurisdictions. The village council of chiefs saw Jacob’s case as an opportunity to put these constitutional changes into practice.

The first Friday of May was set for the Chiefs’ Court to hear the case of Barnabas versus Jacob. In preparation for the hearing the chiefs held two village council of chiefs meetings to try and understand what they had to do under the newly empowered council of chiefs system and ensure that the court hearing ran smoothly on the day. The chiefs advised Barnabas and Jacob to prepare their evidence and speeches and arrange for witnesses to come and present at the Hearing.

The court hearing began at 9 o’clock in a class room of the village primary school. Underneath the blackboard and in a line were placed seven plastic chairs on which sat each member of the village council of chiefs. Sitting at the teacher’s desk, to one side of the blackboard, was the chairman for hearing. The student desks were split into two sides. On one side were observers of which I was the only one and on the other side sat the defendants and their witnesses. Gathered outside the classroom was the public and since the classroom has no sealed windows and doors, all of the proceedings of the court could be heard. Before the hearing began the Chairman asked Barnabas where his wit-
nesses were and Barnabas replied that he had witnesses but none were available today. One witness who was from the village was helping his in-laws prepare land for a rice-farming project. An AOC catechist gave the opening prayer and the chairman commenced the hearing by stating that the reason for the hearing was accusations of sorcery against Jacob.

Jacob was the first to speak. He read from a prepared speech and argued that Barnabas had defamed his character, threatened and harassed his family, and made untrue statements that he was a sorcerer. Jacob said that he too had heard stories about his father’s supposed knowledge of sorcery and that his father had passed this knowledge onto Jacob before his death last year. Jacob called two witnesses. The first witness, Jacob’s wife’s parallel cousin, described how she had seen a list of sorcerers written by the Brotherhood and that Jacob’s name was not on the list. The second witness was Jacob’s wife who gave a short speech vouching for Jacob’s character.

With Jacob’s defence complete the chiefs began cross examining Jacob’s witnesses trying to elicit more information about the list of known sorcerers and who might have this list and where it could be found. No evidence was drawn from the witnesses by the chiefs. The chiefs then called Barnabas to give his speech and asked for Barnabas’s witnesses to leave the room. Barnabas
enumerated the events over the last year whereby he came to the conclusion that Jacob was a sorcerer. He told of how, while staying in Honiara with his brother, Brother Kingsley, that he discovered the Brotherhood were aware and had detected powerful sorcery in the presence of Jacob. Barnabas then called his two witnesses who both give short statements that the list has been lost. It became apparent after questioning from the chiefs that there were supposedly two lists of known sorcerers. One with Jacob’s name on it and another without. The hearing concluded and the witnesses and defendants were asked to leave. The chiefs then discussed the case. They all concurred that it is important that they are seen to not take sides but be decisive. They agreed that there was no evidence to conclude Jacob was a sorcerer and decided not to punish Barnabas for defamation or harassment. Because of the stalemate it was decided that Barnabas and Jacob participate in a *luluhu* food exchange as a form of reconciliation to end the matter.

The conflict between Barnabas and Jacob resulted in them both taking two different courses of action. Those courses of action involved drawing on external sources of authority in an attempt to clear their name. Barnabas went to Honiara to assist his father in lobbying another logging company to return to the village and harvest more timber. During this visit Barnabas, while staying with his brother and other Brothers, mustered up support and
gathered evidence regarding Jacob and Jacob’s father knowledge of sorcery. There was no higher authority on the matter than the Melanesian Brothers so their input lent weight to Barnabas’s suspicions. Here, Kapferer’s (1997: 225) emphasis on sorcery as a dynamic and constitutive force has particular salience. Both the Brotherhood and the council of chiefs vie for control over the space made available by the accusation of sorcery. The presence of sorcery brings the Brothers to the region, if only talk about them, but at the same time confirms the potential territorial power of spirits commanded by healers and sorcerers, who chiefs represent.

Jacob frequents Honiara to collect his wages from the government for his position as primary school teacher. For many in Hograno it is cheaper to return to Honiara by ship than to travel to the provincial centre at Buale. Going to Honiara means a wait for the return trip and it was during one of these trips that Jacob sought advice from family and a lawyer as to how best to end these accusations of sorcery. The use of his wife as a character witness and his argument that Barnabas had defamed his character went against someone of his standing as a teacher and representative of the government.

Through Jacob and Barnabas two very different domains of knowledge were presented in the context of the chiefs’ court which resulted in a traditional feast exchange as a form of reconciliation. Gathering evidence, for or against the use of sorcery, nevertheless situates sorcery at the centre of multiple and conflicting sources of power. Sorcery empowers this conflict, a rupture centred around ‘the control over knowledge, particularly the knowledge
of social relations' (Bastin 2003: 169). Sorcery configures and disrupts social relations necessitating a response from chiefs, lawyers, and Brothers. The chiefs respond through a new initiative to empower themselves as the voice and authority of the village. The chiefs though, and Jacob, a teacher and employee of the government, see this authority as an appropriately modern entity with its discourse of constitutions, plaintiffs, defendants, defamation and harassment.

Barnabas however sought support in the authority of the Brotherhood. Melanesian Brothers are viewed in Hograno as having the skills and gift to see and identify the presence of sorcery. No one I asked was prepared to doubt this claim. Others, who claimed to be able to detect the presence of sorcery but were not Brothers, were frequently dismissed as frauds. Members of the SOMA were often described as frauds in association with spirits, healing and sorcery (See Section 3.3). Whenever I questioned the validity of claims of sorcery made by the Brotherhood, the response was always one of surprise that I would question something so clear and self-evident. The Brotherhood, in regard to anti-sorcery were the final word. Barnabas then, with a sibling as Melanesian Brother had an expert’s advice to bolster his claims that Jacob was a sorcerer.

The chiefs considered Jacob’s legalistic defence and Barnabas’s monastic evidence. Of the two approaches the chiefs were interested most in the lists of known sorcerers in Hograno. Obviously much rumour surrounded these lists outside of the court hearing and when it came to discussing the lists in the
court only Jacob’s witnesses had any information. Both Barnabas’s witnesses were unavailable. And later when I asked one of his witnesses about the list he said that there were two lists in circulation, but he only saw one list and it had Jacob’s father’s name on it.

Lists, minutes or meeting, ledgers and reports are all artefacts to engage in modern life. When a meeting is convened over how to assign sections of plantation to families, a minutes of meeting are recorded. In the preliminary meetings held by the council of chiefs, minutes were once again taken. If the list could be shown as evidence then Barnabas had an argument. No list could be found and the Chiefs made a decision which very much related to the what they had jurisdiction over, land and its rights of use and the exchange of produce from these resources, a feast exchange.

6.4.6 VI: Luluhu

Jacob and Barnabas with the help of their families brought food parcels to the *luluhu* feast exchange. All the chiefs who attended the hearing two weeks earlier were in attendance. The food brought to the exchange consisted solely of raw garden produce: kumera, pana, casava, bia, and sugar cane. The occasion was a brief affair and one chief gave a speech telling those gathered that what is important to forgiveness is forgetting. And in forgetting we move on. Barnabas and Jacob shook hands and then shook the hands of every chief. During the event Steven circled
the gathering, collected his shark baiting rigs which were hanging nearby, and washed them at the water-pipe with a disapproving, and menacing demeanour.

A luluhu is a traditional feast exchange associated with compensation for any breach of taboo or customary law especially to the victim. It was pointed out to me that luluhu is possibly not fitting in this case as no one was found guilty and no victim identified. Although it was stressed with regard to feasts, luluhu was the most suitable for this particular case. In this case, one chief argued the European handshake was probably fitting as well but as one chief commented to me, in terms of west Hograno understanding, a handshake would be meaningless unless food was brought from the garden. In this way the whole family was involved.

The case however missed someone. In all of this Steven was not involved. At the chief’s court and the luluhu, only the families of Jacob and Barnabas were included. Steven and his family observed only. As Steven paced around the luluhu feast exchange it was clear to all that the matter was still raw.

6.4.7 VII: Travelling Monks

A week after the Chief’s Court news spread that the Melanesian Brothers were on tour in Hograno District. A number of village residents were on the same return ship from Honiara and saw the brothers alight at Kaevanga wharf (See Figure 2.4). Many
hoped the Brothers’ tour would stop in Hirolegu but no one was sure. I was told some were concerned their house may not be safe while others felt only the Brothers could establish the truth about Jacob and the death of Mavis. In the following days daily conversation was dominated by talk of the Brothers. This reached its climax when a number of men returned from community work associated with extensions to the Susubona clinic. One returning labourer told me that the Brotherhood had already visited Susubona. During the search for malevolent spirits the Brotherhood revealed two sorcerers. I was told that one alleged sorcerer confessed to twenty murders and that this sorcerer killed an Anglican Priest the previous year. The labourer added that the other sorcerer denied using any form of sorcery or having in his possession a magical skull called *khorapha’u*.

Steven told me that should the brothers come and show evidence of Jacob using *khorapha’u* then he would physically harm Jacob. But over the following weeks the Brothers never came. They travelled along the coast but avoided coming to the village. In another village to the west the Brothers uncovered another two sorcerers but as it looked likely that they may return via the

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*Khorapha’u* literally means hole in the skull and it is a form of sorcery where the sorcerer keeps a powerful skull of his ancestor and then obtains the discarded food or clothes of the intended victim, places the items in the skull, and then speaks a secret incantation on the skull. The victim becomes sick and eventually dies.
village a request came through from the Bishop of Isabel Dio-
cese for the Brothers to return to the provincial centre of Buale
immediately.

The following Friday an injured logging labourer returned to
the village to recuperate and before long an impromptu party
ensued. A number of younger men pooled resources for alcohol
and obtained boat transport to purchase alcohol from Susubona.
By midnight the alcohol was finished and two of the drunk men
made their way to a CofM catechist’s house and demanded he
give them the communion wine. The catechist handed over the
wine as he feared the men might harm him and his family as
they were carrying machetes. Drinking at the party was Steven
and he quietly left the party telling those in attendance he was
heading home. Steven did head home but only to get a knife
and screwdriver. He walked to Jacob’s house and demanded that
Jacob speak with him. Jacob kept out of view so as not to enrage
Steven further but Steven pushed through the front door and
forced Jacob’s wife out of the way. Steven punched Jacob in
the face but by this time Jacob’s wife’s brother had arrived and
managed to get Steven out of the house.

As news of the touring Brothers made its way up the Hograno coast,
their activities and exploits dominated discussions and conversations on a
daily basis. Residents returning from the clinic or activities in other villages
brought news of the Brotherhood and the sorcerers they had discovered. In particular the village in which the clinic is located and where Jacob's father is from and died actually requested the tour formally through the CoFM. Their response upon arrival in the village resulted in the discovery of a sorcerer using *khoropha’u*. The head brother of the tour it was said had the power to see spirits and beings in the employ of sorcerers and was not from Isabel but Makira. He could make the *khoropha’u* talk and reveal its master sorcerer. Upon discover of the sorcerer the touring Brothers confronted the sorcerer and asked him to confess. There are conflicting stories as to whether the accused sorcerer denied it or not. The touring brothers discovered another sorcerer in a nearby village and this accused sorcerer denied having any *khoropha’u* or murdering anyone through sorcery. In both cases everyone I asked said that the two accused sorcerers were guilty irrespective of what they may have said. I spoke with the brother of one of the sorcerers and he was angry and surprised that his brother did not confess. He added that his brother should hand over his *khoropha’u* and end these old ways before even more shame was heaped on their family.

### 6.5 Summary

This extended case of the sorcery accusation against Jacob was not resolved by the chiefs court or the subsequent feast exchange. But the accusation revealed the continuing tension that existed at the time between the two
Anglican church groups. Jacob turned to the chiefs because the AOC did not have any specialists to prove his innocence and declare that he was not a sorcerer. Barnabas and Steven had the benefit of strong connections with the Melanesian Brotherhood through the CofM. The case showed the mutability of sorcery by drawing out the continuing tensions between the two church communities and exposing the weakness of AOC to the hidden powers of individuals in the community who acted outside of Christianity.

The chiefs became involved because they were asked to and their response in the face of the sorcery accusation was to generate something new. They created a chiefs court and mimicked the proceedings of a local court and heard evidence from both sides. They acted as adjudicators to the accusation and their form of reconciliation used the exchange of food and the sharing of produce as a way to build unity between the two sides. Feast exchanges, like the luluhu and others described in Chapter 5, affirm relations between kin groups and here the sharing of food between families establishes a common ground for social relations to be repaired. Were Steven involved in this exchange then events may not have escalated as they did. However, the invention of the chiefs court shows the constitutive force of the sorcery accusation, but this force was incomplete. The case revealed the the limits of chiefly control. Chiefs have a capacity to control the flow of produce from the ground through produce to exchanges between people as they did in the case of the luluhu between Jacob and Barnabas. Chiefs are also among the healers who draw out, through the use of pamu, the foreign substances that
invade the human body. But the presence of sorcery was drawing on foreign forces as well, like the Melanesian Brotherhood.

The case then brings into relief the growing need for churches to counteract the powerful and hidden forces of spirits and sorcerers that can breakout and be beyond the control of local politics. The longevity of these forces are difficult to address. The rise in sorcerer may be linked as much to increases in logging and the exploitation of the interior as it is to latent ancestral forces associated with matrilineage groupings. Either way, both the AOC and the CofM look to foreign influences to address these forces. But the AOC has no institution like the Brotherhood to address sorcery and conduct clearances of houses and villages. The CofM, through the power of the Brothers, has a monopoly on witch hunts. Alternatively, both the prevalence of sorcery in west Hograno and the ineffectiveness of the chiefs to address it may explain why the chiefs were so receptive to idea of starting the AOC. The new church brings with it the potential to establish their own institutions within the Church to address sorcery accusations and make new connections with foreign power that they can call upon for local situations. This eagerness to engage with a new Anglican church from America is what I turn to in the following chapter.
Chapter 7

The National Convention

The rise of the AOC meant the re-organisation of the relationship between chiefs, the congregation, priests and the Bishop. The AOC remained Anglican but the creation of a new church and the resulting administration of its parishes was to be revealing of the effect of Anglicanism on the social organisation of west Hograno. New relations of power were forming between the local politics of chiefs and priests with the politics of bishops and the global Anglican Communion.

In this chapter I describe the event of the First National Convention of the AOC which took place over four days in the village of Biluro. The event brought to together all the chiefs aligned with the AOC and the clergy that came to join them. As the programme for the convention unfolded it became apparent that those in attendance were hesitant about how the AOC was run and going to be governed into the future. These concerns and the chance
to experience the internal functioning of a church hierarchy was new to the chiefs in attendance and revealing of the distance local chiefs had to the Church administration in the days of the CofM. Further, the economy of the AOC, especially the management and distribution of funds, was at the forefront of the many debates and questions raised by the delegates to the convention. The event that sparked the rise of the AOC was Legumana’s misuse of funds but at the same time, the foremost reason to split from the CofM was discontent at the taxes the CofM levied on its parishioners.

7.1 First National Convention

Zephaniah Legumana came through my host village only two months after our arrival. He came to see our Stanley, a qualified electrician, and Legumana invited me to attend the First National Convention of the AOC. The event went over four days and involved all the clergy of the AOC. The convention was well attended by chiefs and clergy of Hograno District. Chiefs though, well outnumbered the clergy. The Bishop’s home village of Biluro was the location for the event and the large two story rest house in Biluro was used as a meeting place. Upstairs was ample room for everyone to sleep and downstairs was a large open air meeting room. The running of the convention was formal. When I arrived the chiefs were still in prayer at the Church of St. Albans. When they finished we walked to the rest house and had coffee and biscuits. I was introduced to everyone and the chiefs were then led to the
meeting room downstairs where they sat down and began practicing swearing allegiance to the Bishop.

The meeting room was arranged much like a class room with a desk in front of the blackboard and desks and stools arranged in lines facing the blackboard. After each chief practiced swearing allegiance the room became silent. Everyone sat at their chairs for a minute or so and then from the back of the room a voice cried out ‘Chairman!’. Everyone rose. Down the middle of the room strode a priest carrying a staff and behind him was Bishop Legumana. Chief Vuhamana led the Bishop to the front table and both of them stood at the front desk. The chiefs then made a line down the centre of
the room in front of the desk where Legumana was standing. Each chief held
a piece of paper inscribing their oath of allegiance and one by one they signed
the paper and added it to the pile in front of Legumana. Once signed the
chiefs returned to their seat. When the allegiance ceremony was complete
one of the priests led the group in the singing of a hymn. A bible reading
followed.

The priest read Luke 10:38-42. The reading from the Gospel concerned
Martha, who in the presence of Jesus, complained to him that her sister
was not helping with food preparations. The priest interpreted the passage
saying that we, unlike Martha, should not let everyday matters distract us
from following the word of God.

Legumana then addressed the chiefs. He read a letter from the leader of
the AOC Worldwide, Right Reverend Jerry Ogles. He followed this with his
own speech. Legumana emphasised order and discipline in the conduct of
AOC members and then he went on to state that the funding from America
had run out and that tithing from Hograno had subsided. The Church,
Legumana said, must have a new vision. He said ‘we are a church on mission,
not a church on employment’.¹

When we returned from a break the Chair made a number of announce-
ments rebuking the behaviour of the chiefs. The first was to not smoke
inside. The second was to not consume the food and drink from the Bishop
and priests table and the third was to bow when entering and leaving the

¹A ‘church on mission’ is also the motto of the CofM.
meeting room. It was during this session that Legumana asked for questions from the chiefs. The first question asked what was the status of infrastructure projects undertaken by the Church? The answer Legumana gave was that funds were limited and labour resources were not forthcoming. The next question queried why are we buying land in Honiara? To this Legumana said the Honiara land acquisition was to establish a regional headquarters. Biluro however, was to be the headquarters for the Diocese of Isabel. Legumana argued that he was also the Presiding Bishop over the Philippines and so needed a presence in Honiara as well. Questions then turned to the training of priests and would there be a bible college. If there was going to be a bible college who would be the teacher? Legumana said that he was a qualified teacher and that he would be the teacher at the bible college. Another Chief pointed out that a priest had defected back to the CofM because of the career opportunities being offered to the clergy there. A chief then asked about disputes over land in Biluro and would this affect plans for the AOC office and bible college? Legumana said that through paperwork and archiving, the decisions made by chiefs would be kept with their signatures so that future generations would know why and whom gave land to the Church.

After we broke for lunch each parish delivered an annual progress report. The reports went through the size of their congregations, the number of births, deaths and marriages as well as baptisms and confirmations. Each

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2I later discovered after asking chiefs attending the event that Legumana was referring to voluntary labour from the parishes that chiefs are seen as responsible for organising and mobilising resources to attend building activities in Biluro.
parish also raised issues concerning their congregations. The issues concerned falling attendances on Sundays due to the introduction of an inter village soccer competition, the defection of a village back to the CofM, interest in the establishment of a Healing Ministry and acknowledgment of faith healers, and land disputes arising from foreign mining interests taking leaders away from guiding and helping with fund-raising for the Church. The Mothers’ Fellowship also delivered a report which was read out by one of the priests. In the report the women explained that they had changed their name to the Mothers’ Fellowship to distinguish themselves from the Mothers’ Union of the CofM.

Then came the Chief’s report read by Stanley Vuhama. In his speech Stanley said that chiefs stand side by side to the Bishop. He continued that the success of the Church in Hograno was because of the support of chiefs. He then made reference to the importance of apostolic succession for the Church and that the Bishop had restored this to the Church. They no longer were ‘floating’ and that the Bishop was the ‘Rock of the Church’. Following Chief Vuhama came the Church’s project supervisor. He made reference to Peter the Rock and said that a ‘house is important. No house, then no where for church.’ The Project Supervisor thanked the chiefs for their contributions to development and that estimates were in place for the houses which were to be the Diocese office and quarters. He said that the big men of the Church need to sign a document to make people come to work. He went on to discuss the timing of construction activities over the coming months and
concluded that ‘it is not my work, but the work of God, of church’.

Day two of the convention went much like the first. First we sang popular hymns. Following this was a Bible reading from Corinthians 1. A priest then said a prayer. Bishop Legumana made his entrance the same as the day before with Chief Vuhamana announcing ‘Chairman’ and all the Chiefs rising as the Bishop was led to the front by the staff bearing Vuhamana. The Bishop immediately chastised the chiefs for not attending evening prayer and heading straight for the river to wash instead. He said, as leaders, chiefs must lead by example and attend prayer. He then parsed the minutes from the day before in exacting detail and corrected grammar and spelling mistakes. The process took sometime and when the job was finished the Bishop said ‘these minutes would be going to Jerry Ogles in America. He will be reading this and it must be correct.’

Bishop Legumana talked for the entire second day. He talked at length about the meaning of apostolic succession and why this was so important to Catholics and Anglicans. He described the difference between Catholics and Anglicans in terms of apostolic succession. He said ‘we Anglicans emphasise the witness of the apostles not the apostles themselves.’ The point of this background into the lineage that connects back to the apostles for the ordination of priests was important for Legumana’s following point. Legumana said the CofM call the breakaway group of Anglicans from Hograno ‘a floating church. They say, we have severed our link with the Archbishop of Canterbury.’ The breakaway group of Anglicans, as Legumana described in
pijin, were ‘Master Lieu’. A word used for unemployed youth on the streets of Honiara. Legumana then raised his arms while holding the Certificate of Ecclesiastical Order from Jerry Ogles and said ‘we do not float anymore!’

Proud of his renewed place in the line of descent back to the apostles, Legumana then described the Memorandum of Understanding between the AOC of Solomon Islands and its American counterpart. He made the chiefs repeat after him the Memorandum of Understanding. Legumana also drew attention to an amendment he made to the original memorandum. The paragraph Legumana revised originally read:

These two Jurisdictions do affirm that the Anglican Orthodox Communion Worldwide shall be the Worldwide Governing Ecclesiastical Authority for all member churches who unite under this agreement. Further; we do agree that the Bishop of Melanesia shall be the Presiding Ecclesiastical authority to that area described as Melanesia subject to the concurrence of the Anglican Orthodox Communion Worldwide in matters involving Belief, Faith, Practice or Worship.

Legumana changed the last sentence to read ‘the Bishop of Melanesia shall be the Presiding ecclesiastical, financial, and spiritual authority of the Church. Legumana then made the chiefs repeat this changed paragraph. With everything ‘straight’, as he put it, Legumana then went over every paragraph of the newly drafted constitution line by line. The draft constitution was obtained from the American based church of Jerry Ogles and Legumana had
made minor but important changes to the document so that where ever executive powers were deferred to a board of trustees, Legumana added the conjunction ‘and the Presiding Bishop’. These changes were made clear to the audience and received in silence.

On day three of the convention the first topic was the Anglican Worldwide Communion that the chiefs and clergy now belonged. Legumana had produced a world map with cut-outs of each presiding Bishop over the country in which those Bishops had authority (See figure 7.2). One of the chiefs asked what were the sizes of the congregations of each of these churches. Legumana answered, ‘you will have to go on the Internet to find that out’. The next order of business was the assigning of priests to parishes. One priest rose to the rank of Archdeacon and another to that of Senior Priest.

We then came to the resolutions for this inaugural National Convention. The first discussion concerned the recent split in the Church founded by Legumana. At the time all I knew about the split was that two brothers who were key figures in the initial breakaway from CofM had fallen out with Legumana and decided to start again. The brothers, one a lawyer and the other a successful business man, were from east Hograno. This new split kept the name ECOSI. Legumana said that the Episcopalians were too much like the Pentecostal church Kingdom Harvest and had strayed too far from Anglicanism. One of the chief’s commented that should we not show mercy

\footnote{An implausible suggestion given that communications infrastructure in the district is limited to HF radio.}
to those ‘sitting on the fence’ between Orthodox and Episcopal. Legumana responded by way of example. He said ‘Jesus has shown what is wrong here.’ He went on to give the example of a roman coin. He said ‘on the back of the coin is Caesar’s head and that Jesus had said in the Gospels (Matthew 22:21) you either serve Caesar or serve God.’ Legumana concluded, ‘yes, god might be merciful, but he is also straight forward.’ A lengthy debate ensued. When I did get a chance to follow up on the debate, and ask others to translate, they said the chiefs were stressing that the point being made by the chief was that demonising other denominations to that extent was unhelpful. Too much animosity between the two Anglican churches was keeping families apart.

Followup sessions on Day 3 were a further opportunity for Legumana to press home his point about the clear and straight forward position of the Bishop as the paramount authority of all activities of the Church. His first
point turned to the reason the two brothers running the ECOSI had left his side and forced him to start again. He turned to the blackboard and described the constitutional changes that were put to him by the two brothers. He said their plans had no support for the concept of apostolic succession. He said their proposals asked for the Church to be run by a board of trustees. He said this board did not include him. He said it was above him. He, like the chiefs, was subordinate to the board. ‘The board of trustees makes the Bishop a useless man’ he declared. He said he is like a cow with a ring through its nose being pulled along by the board. ‘How can this be’ argued Legumana, ‘a Bishop must have a qualification. The blind cannot lead the blind’ said Legumana, referring to the proposed board of trustees. But it did not stop there. The brothers, with the assistance of the sitting member of Parliament demanded a fixed three year term for the Bishop and that the memorandum drawn up with Jerry Ogles places the Bishop with authority over the Church. Otherwise, concluded Legumana, ‘I am just a Sunday school teacher.’

The day closed with Legumana returning to the vicissitudes of tithe collection. He said the defection of Koge, Kholotubi and Koisisi villages away from the AOC was a blow to the raising of funds through tithes and that the loss of a competent treasurer was a further problem with development options for the church. Legumana noted sarcastically that there was nothing in the budget for his wages. One of the chiefs asked of Legumana why they did not earn money from business investments like Eto did with his Christian Fellowship Church (see Harwood 1971, Tuza 1977, Trompf 2004). Legumana
said that Eto’s Church was led solely by him and that Eto could tell everyone what to do. This church though was governed by free speech and Legumana was not the sole ruler of the people.

The final day of the convention arrived. The bible reading this time was from Matthew 9:35-38 and the Priest’s discussion of the passage concerned the role of chiefs when they returned home. The priest said the chiefs were like the shepherds of Jesus’ time and that they had to go back and tend to their flock. When the chiefs and Legumana went over the minutes of the day before, a discussion developed about the CofM compared to the AOC. Some of the chiefs felt that the AOC was becoming too much like the Church they left behind. Legumana reassured them that even the vestments of the priests is more traditional with the AOC. The debate moved to tithing. Some of the chiefs were confused about the system and Legumana said that this is understandable. He said that tithing is only new to Hograno and that it would take some time getting used to the system. The Seventh Day Adventists on the other hand were taught the tithe whilst still children and therefore had a lifetime to become used to this form of income management. This discipline would come to Hograno in coming years, Legumana reassured them.

The following session moved to the quarterly grant which comes from the American AOC called the ‘allocation’. The chiefs were keenly interested in how this amount which was USD $10500 a quarter was spent. Legumana said that the money was spent on offices in Honiara but as costs rose Legumana
had to move back to Biluro. Legumana said that the allocation pays for the clergy’s wages when there are tithing shortfalls and things like clothing and the transport costs of visiting priests from America. The cost of the visit by a foreign missionary was high and the Bishop had to purchase a boat hull and outboard motor to ferry the missionary between the different parishes. Chiefs then said that in their villages where the split was strongly felt some paperwork as to where this money was being spent would go along way as to convincing others of the sound financial practices of the Church. Legumana said that he was held to account by Jerry Ogles himself.

The final session of the convention concerned the adoption of a Healing Ministry in the AOC. One priest said that the Healing Ministry cannot exist without a constitution first because the Healing Ministry cannot be controlled otherwise. A debate developed about all that was good and bad with the healing ministry SOMA inside the CofM. One priest joked that there was a mistake in the acronym as it should read ‘Satanic Outreach Ministries Abroad’. Another priest continued that the idea that some members of the community could lift curses from buildings was ‘outside scripture’. This practice the priest called ‘clearance’ and he said that ‘no one is righteous besides God’. The Priest continued that it is ‘OK to pray for a sick man’. Another priest added that it is ‘OK to heal but this clearance does not belong to us’. Legumana then weighed into the debate and said ‘clearance is out of hand and out of control’. Legumana then suggested that the motion be reworded and that a Healing Ministry be adopted through the clergy, so that
they are responsible for its activities.

7.2 Summary

In the debate surrounding ‘clearances’, we see the demand for the AOC to have some way of combating harmful sorcery that at least addresses the same role as the Brotherhood does for the CofM. Further, the chiefs continue to push for legitimacy and assurances that their involvement, and those they represent, can continue to practice their healing techniques with the blessing of the Church. Without some recognition of local healers and the power of sorcerers and ancestral spirits, then the longevity and relevance of the AOC in west Hograno will be limited. Even the suggestion made by Legumana that a Healing Ministry should be run by the clergy has the challenge of bureaucratising a phenomena that mutates too rapidly to the relations of power between the Church, chiefs and kin groups.

Another attraction of the AOC to the chiefs, the clergy and the Bishop is the immediacy and directness at which they are in relation to the perceived powerful foreign AOC based in America. Certainly a reason for the attraction to the AOC is the potential broader influence the AOC offers the chiefs (cf. Tomlinson 2009: 76). It provides a platform to engage and negotiate with larger foreign organisations beyond that of the village domain. Further, the formal relationship and memorandum of understanding signed by the Bishops was expressed succinctly in Vuhamana’s words that the AOC floats no more.
A concise statement, but one that captures the role of the chief as connecting and relating the Church back into matrilineal territory and a statement that is revealing of the nature and source of political power in the region. One is mobile, foreign and floating and the other grounded, below and immobile.
Part II

Segmentary Church Society and the Revelation of Government
Chapter 8

Segmentary Church Society

Lineage allegiances have transformed Anglicanism to the extent that there are now three Anglican Churches in Hograno District. This trifurcation is interesting because Anglicanism has been transformed along political not theological lines. In this chapter I explain how this has come to be so through the conception of what I call the segmentary church society. At its core, this type of society is a particular innovation in Christian practice where the politics of the segment comes to empower and transform the Church. I have deliberately used the word Church over Christianity because it is the physical connection between a Church and lineage territory that is fundamental to this form of society.

The evidence from previous chapters which support my position are four-fold. The first of these is the primordial connection members of a lineage have with their territory. This connection demands that a Church be estab-
lished in a territory by both a Chief, as spokesman of a lineage (White 1997: 240, see also Hviding 1996: 88), and a Priest, as the ritual specialist. The second observation involves the experience of a lineage as an ontological category and I draw upon recent developments in Solomon Islands ethnography to support this. However, the ontological approach to kinship necessitates a closer look at research in Melanesia on kinship and the development of a new approach to Melanesian personhood called relationality. Critically, relationality has focused theoretical interests in the region on the social construction of the Melanesian person at the expense of research on the politics between groups along linguistic, denominational and demographic lines. The third point follows from the second as it concerns an analysis of the large feast exchanges of the region where lineage members are brought into territory at birth and returned to territory at death. These rituals incorporate Christian practice in the reproduction of a lineage and show the creative nature of the lineage in Hograno religiosity. Distinctions are made at this juncture between feast exchanges that fit the relational model and others that do not.

8.1 Hierarchical Opposition

Throughout my analysis here, and in the ethnographies of other Melanesianists which I discuss in this chapter, is the relevance and theory of society developed by Louis Dumont. His work has often been criticised for being overly structuralist and even apolitical. This is a complete misreading of his
work and in this chapter I emphasise the potential of his work in the understanding of new political formations. So it is at this juncture that I pause to reconsider the theoretical perspective advanced by Dumont in relation to the distinctions made between the domains of the political and the religious. Dumont bequeathed to anthropology a model of society that was holistic and he developed a theory of society which was not hindered by an overemphasis on sub-domains within a society like kinship, economics or religion. Dumont was aiming at a higher prize and thus was interested in developing a system of understanding about a society at a particular point in time as a hierarchy of values. But this notion of a hierarchy of values is often reduced to a system of morality (see Graeber 2001: 17).

The system of values that Dumont devised has come to be known as hierarchical opposition and one of the model’s transformative operations is the idea of encompassment. Hierarchical opposition is the idea that two values may be opposed but they are not opposed equally. One of the two values is preferred over another, or valued more than the other one. These preferences give rise to a hierarchical ordering of values. The oft cited example for this is the distinction between right and left where many societies privilege right-handedness over left handedness. The right encompasses the left but the encompassing identity, the right, is dependent upon the subordinate identity, the left. Both must be present. This idea of values structured into levels has often led to misinterpretations of the system where the hierarchy is see as a form of social stratification, a taxonomy, and a system of rank.
While these processes may well be understood in and through the model of hierarchical opposition, they do not define it. Rather, hierarchical opposition is geared toward revealing the differentiation between individuals and between groups, as a whole (Dumont 1972: 54, Parkin 2003: 42).

The model is useful because it is well suited to describing the structural relations within a society without overwhelming the analysis with eurocentric categories and sub-domains. For example, hierarchical opposition does not demand the analyst separate social processes into the domains of the political and religious. Processes may warrant and reveal these domains but even then the domain of the religious, for example, may be encompassed or subordinated to the political in varying conditions and events. An example of this very sort of structural relation is seen in Dumont’s analysis where the totalitarian state is an extreme form of egalitarianism (Dumont 1986: 153). The members of the fascist state are equal where each individual possesses an intrinsic quality, defined as a race. This markedness then defines all those outsiders as lacking in this quality, as subordinate to the master race. In this way, the model has explanatory value in coming to understand the politics of European states and democracy. It is also well suited to revealing the sorts of processes behind conflict and conflict between groups within a society. Interestingly, the Dumontian model has come to be seen as a model to understand morality. While this is useful, the full potential of the model is reduced. Rather than explore the hierarchy of values and the social groups that are arranged, transformed, and reversed through their decisions and
ideology, the tendency becomes more to understand the complexity and hierarchy of the morality of a society with the aim of revealing its paramount value.

Looking to the work of Joel Robbins (2004), hierarchical opposition is used to understand Urapmin morality. In Robbins’ reading, Dumont provides the tools to understand the change in values with the coming of Christianity and in particular the clash of paramount values between pre-Christian values and Pentecostalism. This clash hinges on the ultimate reduction of the Dumontian theory into a distinction between modern and non-modern societies whereby modern societies hold individualism most dear and non-modern societies value holism above all else. While none of this contradicts the model of hierarchical opposition it does not exploit its full potential. For the model addresses the dynamics of social change within groups, within a society, as much as it does cultural change over a single group in a society over time. A hierarchy of values helps in coming to understand the clash of values between the relationality of the non-modern Urapmin with the intensely individualist values of Pentecostal Christianity (Robbins 2004: 293). While not directly referring to Dumont, Lattas (1998: xxxi) makes a similar critique of the work of Burridge (1995) and Lawrence (1964) in his re-analysis of cargo cults where he argues analysis of cargo cults tends to reduce politics to morality, in a way that I see happening to Dumont’s theory.

I agree with Lattas, but pursue the politics of Church conflict in and through the work of Dumont using his model in a different way from Robbins.
What interests me is the differentiation in values between the congregations of Hograno during the rise of the AOC and how this differentiation brought about a radical reorganisation of their Christian communities. Choices have been made to breakaway from the CofM and these groups have come into conflict with their neighbours. While this conflict was not deadly in the way that fascism was among European states in the twentieth century the idea that a set of values may be suppressed and the side-effect of this suppression is a new political form suggests that the model accommodates change. The first of those values that are critical to an understanding of politics is the concept of territory in west Hograno.

8.2 Inviting the Church in Territory

Anglicanism draws upon the primordial connection of people with territory for its legitimacy. This relationship finds its physical manifestation in shrines and other sacred places where evidence of past habitation and ancestral events are found. Around Hirolegu, the named sites of former fortifications used to protect a lineage against invaders from other islands during the late nineteenth century and remain powerful locations which can affect the well-being of the living today. The potential threat to humans is too great to warrant logging these areas. Shrines are secret and hidden places and White (1992: 117) recalls being taken to a stone shrine in the rainforest. Further, White (1992: 117) accords the multiple ancestral shrines of a village
area as finding their singular form in the construction of a Church building. Church buildings too are built on foundations of concrete. They are permanent stone and steel edifices on territory which contrast sharply with the brief lifespan of sago palm wall and roof cladding used on household residences. But in White’s (1992: 117) view Church buildings contrasted with ancestral shrines because they ‘potentially transcended the social distinctions between particular individuals and descent groups’. He remarks further that the genealogical connections of the congregation became ‘subdued’ and often ‘submerged’ with Christianity. Here, the Church transcends descent groups but only by subduing them. This is an interesting double take for it suggests that there is an underlying contradiction in Christian practice in Isabel. At one and the same time, submerged genealogical connections continue to percolate through to the Church. The Church then stands in an encompassing relation with the lineage and its territory where the congregation expresses the subordinate position of the Church vis-à-vis the lineage ancestors but the latter remains essential for the Churches presence in territory. White has suggested that the conversion from many ancestral spirits to one God has loosened the connections between the lineage and its ritual practices. But I do not take the view that ‘many’ ancestors is some how incongruent with monotheism. Rather, ancestral spirits are a single category in relation to the lineage therefore conversion has not been as disruptive to the relation between the lineage as initially thought (see Lévi-Strauss 1966: 224).

The construction of a new Church building in Hirolegu is telling of this
relation between the Church and lineage territory. Church construction is led by chiefs. Chiefs who reside on their own lineage territory do not need to seek the permission of others to commence the project. This dynamic revealed itself during the early years of the breakaway movement. In Hirolegu, the eldest lineage leader and most respected chief, John, chose to join the AOC. This event made it difficult for anyone to remain with the CofM. One man expressed to me that he could not stay with the CofM because of John’s decision and so he joined the AOC But after a few months he returned, and when I asked him why he did this he said that another chief of the same lineage as John remained with the CofM and that this meant a great deal.

Before long a second Church was being built in Hirolegu. Churches then, require the blessing of chiefs. Where lineage members remained with the one Church then only one Church building was used. For Hirolegu, this meant the two congregations had to coordinate the usage of the Church building. When lineage members go their separate ways new Church buildings can be built. In the case of the festival day I attended in Galilee, the AOC and CofM congregations shared the same building. As Andrew’s speech at the Galilee festival reveals, tensions remain high between the two congregations but the chiefs refused to have another Church built.

During the tumultuous events after his sacking, Legumana went to the chiefs of his home district. The man he sort out first was Vuhamana who described in detail those early days where the chiefs of Hograno tried to convince the CofM to reinstate their Bishop. They failed in this endeavour
but they made a very strong point about the Church on lineage territory. In his words, it ‘is the chiefs that welcomes the Church to the village’ and ‘it is the chiefs that hold the Church’. Moreover, Vuhamana wanted to teach the Archbishop of the CofM a lesson about this relation. He did this through food by telling chiefs to not arrange a feast for the Archbishop on one visit and then on his second visit the chiefs fed him. The Archbishop’s well being, and the well being of the Church, are a function of the chief and his villagers. Vuhamana also drew on the early mission stories of the first chiefs who lead mass conversions in their own villages. He turned to the stories of chief Soga and chief Figrima and highlighted a parallel between his time and that of the coming of the Christians. The missionaries entered the village in and through the chiefs back then, and so too does the Archbishop enter the village in and through the chiefs today (see White 1992: 157-180). As spokesmen of their lineage, chiefs cast the Church into territory but the Bishop inaugurates it.

8.3 Primordiality

Lineages are a descent group with a primordial connection to land. The group may be dispersed and members may reside on another’s lineage territory but there always remains a fundamental link between a group and an area of land and sea. A lineage as a lived category extends beyond Hograno because members in Honiara, and those few that travel abroad, continue to adhere to their obligations of membership in wage remittances, in resourcing feasts
and in the economy of logging and fish exports. Lineage members may reside over a number of villages especially where the lineage is of quite some size. For these lineages the coming together at major feasts like the fapegra, gano thaego, and lululu becomes particularly salient. Residence in a territory is important as well, as no lineage member would restrict access to gardens and reefs to those outside their lineage for subsistence needs. But for large events, and those that involve a number of lineages, access to natural resources must be negotiated. The organisation of the khaurao fishing event was interesting for what it showed about access to fishing grounds. The khaurao fishing event was in aid of a simede but the grounds belonged to another lineage. Chiefs must negotiate access in this situation.

A lineage is segmentary in that the social form is defined by its relationship to its neighbours. The strength of any one lineage is potentially offset by is neighbouring lineages. This can be understood in terms of the political strengths and the potential members that may become involved in a dispute but it also goes to a more religious dimension as well. There will be strengths in terms of the knowledge lineage leaders keep about their territory and how to draw upon their territory for strength. Younger men look to the elders of the lineage in anticipation that secret knowledge about the lineage and its territory will be passed down to them.

Lineages do not cease. I was always received with surprise when I asked about the end of lineage and more importantly, a point where a lineage becomes disassociated from its territory. There is not a sense of any social
extinction. Removing a segment is unimaginable. Each lineage as a segment carries out the same functions. But there is also a recursive nature to a lineage. When interviewed many would conflate a lineage with a moiety and use the name of a moiety for the lineage. Regarding naming, lineages were named after a female ancestor to convey a name for themselves when confronted by questions from an outsider. Otherwise, there is no need to express a name. Moiety names though are useful in conveying relatedness to more distant neighbours and hence the prevalence of named moieties. But my characterisation of the lineage is not a harking back to 1960s anthropology. Instead I see the lineage as an ontological category and find support for this position in the critique of relationality stemming from Scott’s ethnography of the Arosi. But before introducing Scott’s critique some background to relationality is required.

8.3.1 From Personhood to Pre-social Identities

Questions of personhood have come to obfuscate our understanding of larger political processes. With the focus on the nature of personhood, the changing nature of church, government and kinship formations gets less attention. And it is here that we need to take a fresh look at the approach taken by Melanesianists in regard to kinship and exchange. A good place to start is with the impact of the anthropological research in the Mount Hagen area of Papua New Guinea. In the Hagen area segmentary forms of organisation prevail and these groups are called clans, descent groups, or patrilineages.
The nature of the Hagen clan has puzzled researchers for over fifty years and the debates about its nature have led to major shifts in the understanding of personhood and kinship relatedness in Melanesia.

Group solidarity, or more precisely membership of patrilineal descent groups in the western Highlands of Papua New Guinea, was proving difficult to resolve where the solidarity of descent groups was threatened but dependent on ties through women (Strathern 1988: 52). So to progress the understanding of Highlands collective life Marilyn Strathern sought to analyse how gender categories were constructed and reproduced. The assumption of earlier anthropologists, Strathern (1988: 57) argued, was the struggle of establishing a unitary identity (individual) in collective life (society). To understand gender, kinship and politics in Mount Hagen Strathern (1987) put forward an alternative conceptualisation of personhood ‘not as a prior condition but as a product of kinship differentiation. Here differentiation between kin, as between the sexes, is taken as a given: exchanges work to produce persons and wealth’ (Strathern 1987: 298). Her approach was to demote intrinsic descent criteria and promote the reproduction of relations in the constitution of the person. But where her analysis makes a clear case for a theory of personhood, the reasons for the persistence of patrilineal descent groups (sub-clans and clans) in Mount Hagen society is more difficult to establish.
Exchange

The Hagen clan is without genealogy but instead is reproduced by the maintenance of relations. The clan is a deeply political construct as Strathern argues ‘Hagen clans are above all units of collective action’ (Strathern 1988: 257). In keeping though with the partible nature of Melanesian sociality the Hagen clan encompasses parts of other clans because individuals of one clan must marry and maintain relations with other clans. Adherence to a rule of exogamy between clans necessitates these inter-clan relations and interestingly Strathern (1988: 200) observes '[m]oka, warfare, and affinal exchanges work to keep particular clans apart and sustain the discrete social identities of spouses by reference to these origins'. A clan then is constituted through the relations its members create, maintain and sever through marriage, warfare and ceremonial exchange. But at the same time Strathern (1988: 253) notes that '[c]lan land, clan food, and clan ancestral support are all equally essential for growth, and kinship exchanges give these paired sources of growth equal recognition'. Quite rightly then, a Hagen clan is not primarily defined by patrilineal descent, but is it primarily constituted through the relations of its members? Yet a collectivity that aligns, fights and competes with isomorphic collectivities must itself be an entity with relations; relations which transcend the relations between members. By way of the Strathernian model of highlands sociality a ‘reference to origins’ can only be a prior social relation. The character of a Hagen clan is a previous marriage, the last fight and a prior feast exchange. The Hagen clan then is a local polity, but it does
not have an ancestral character prior to interactions, relations and practices. This model may limit the analysis of Highlands societies especially with regard to disputes over clan land.

Segmentation

For the western highlands, of which Mount Hagen is the provincial capital, Disputes over land involving Hagen clans were documented in a film trilogy by Connolly and Anderson. The final film of the series, Black Harvest focused on fighting between the ulka and kulka clans after a security guard was killed during a robbery. The event and subsequent fighting raise the problem of collective action and the effects of cash-cropping on sub-clan and clan territories in the western Highlands. Henry (2005) went to the region to study how the fighting abated and discern the form by which clan and sub-clan segments established peace. In an analysis that diverges from the view that warfare and wealth exchange are interchangeable relations, Henry (2005: 435) shows that peacemaking was achieved between clans by drawing upon neutral church and state structures that lie outside segmentary politics. The cause of the conflict was the introduction of coffee as a cash crop which propagated unequal access to money between competing clans, and dialectically the manipulation of the coffee industry by those same clans (Henry 2005: 440). Neutral outside forces though, I would argue, can only remain neutral for a time where segmentary clans and sub-clans pervade. The Hagen clan persists through missionisation, colonisation and globalisa-
tion (world commodity prices) by capturing and transforming structures in a segmentary fashion. There is a danger in a model of sociality that is confined to existing social relations to overlook the potential for ontological categories which orientate and emplace collective formations like the Hagen clan. This is not to suggest that Hagen clans are unchanging but I do want to acknowledge the potential for a priori categories to orientate segmentary politics (cf. Ernst 1999).

Lineage before Relations

Alternatively, Scott (2007b,a) has put forward the proposition that the turn toward a Melanesian sociality obscures the possibility that ‘some Melanesians conceptualise something antecedent to, prerequisite from, and ultimately beyond the plenitude of all possible relations’ (Scott 2007a: 340). To do this Scott (2007a: 339) presents the idea of a matrilineage among the Arosi of Makira\(^1\) as a unique, pre-human category that is autonomous and territorially emplaced. Rather than be cornered by Barnes’s cumulative filiation or Strathern’s recursive relationality, Scott (2007b: 27) makes particular mention of the problem of mortuary rituals for a model of Melanesian sociality especially where ‘mortuary rituals appear to reference processes of return to primordial or pre-social root categories’. For the Arosi then, a matrilineage cannot only emmanate from social interactions but rather is a category that is stable, static and pre-social (Scott 2007b: 33-4). To make this claim Scott

\(^1\)Makira Province is in the south eastern Solomon Islands and the Arosi are located on the island of Makira (formerly called San Cristobal.)
must be sensitive to myth and Arosi cosmology and the ways in which the Arosi transform a mythic pre-social space into a dynamic socialised space in Makira. A Makiran matrilineage persists because of its primordiality and cosmogonic significance.

**Origins**

Addressing a similar question, Godelier asks why lineages persist and to make his argument he critiques Sahlins’ argument that chiefly and segmentary modes of production are analogous. Sahlins (1968: 75) defined the tribe as a social unit characterised by a familial mode of production which is a consequence of a segmentary form of social organisation, kinship and multi-functionality. By multi-functionality Sahlins (1968: 15) means each segment (tribe) carries out functions in the economic (owns land), religious (prepares and officiates in rituals) and political spheres (takes sides). While Sahlins (1968: 14) qualified his ideal type definition of the tribe, Godelier (1977) saw the definition as neoevolutionism and attacked the placement of tribal society on a scale between the band type of hunter-gatherer societies and the modern state. For at the primitive end of the scale segmentation, kinship and multi-functionality, argued Godelier (1977), also defines the band form and equally tribal societies may contain a dominant tribe ruling over dominated tribes (Godelier 1977: 89). But rather than ask for the abandonment of the concept of the tribe for say segmentary societies or chiefdoms, Godelier asks the analysis move away from definitions that telescope analysis by verifying
the presence of kinship rather than what are the conditions that give rise to a familial mode of production. This is evident in Sahlins grouping chiefdoms with segmentary societies because they share a familial mode of production and therefore are tribal. Godelier contends that tribes with chiefs and tribes with lineages are different as the surplus value in a chiefdom goes to a ruling group not as cause of the mode of production but as a cause of the ruling chiefs. Godelier (1977: 95) then orientates the analysis toward the determinants of a lineage mode of production. What are the conditions which give rise to lineage based units of production and organisation? From what has been presented thus far, for the highlands kinship exists only as an outcome of existing relations but for Makiran kinship emerges from a primordial and pre-social space.

8.3.2 Death

Scott (2007b: 27) suggested death involves a transition (return) to a pre-social state that affirms the persistence of a multiple matrilineal identities. Monnerie (1995) similarly analyses, the Mono-Alu society of the western Solomons region from a Dumontian perspective by situating the matrilineage as emanating from the cosmogonic asymmetric relation of grandmothers (subterranean / sub-aquatic) and grandfathers (sky and air) which in turn is encompassed by the opposition of original ancestral spirits that have never been men with the ghosts of the recently deceased. Mono-Alu funerary rites especially the cremation ceremony, argues Monnerie (1995), involves feeding
the remains of the deceased to the ancestral grandmother of the deceased person’s matrilineage (latu). During the rite a spear dance occurs where the father’s latu and the mother’s latu compete for the container holding the deceased person’s remains with the father’s latu eventually losing. The affinities between this rite and the gano thaego are striking. The ceremony concludes with men of the deceased latu embarking in a canoe and feeding the remains to the sub-aquatic grandmother. But the cosmological category cannot be fully understood without a description of its asymmetrical opposition, grandfather. Where grandmothers are shared between some latu, grandfathers are not. Grandfathers distinguish each latu. While this might allude to a moiety or clan organisation above that of the matrilineage, Monnerie (1995) provides no discussion of the sort. Grandfathers inhabit the surface and the world of living and are often represented by birds. Monnerie (1995: 115-6) concludes that the contrast and complementarity of grandmother and grandfather in Monu-Alu society is both a conception of society and the universe which informs the relations of male and female, the living and the dead, the above and the sub-aquatic, generational distinctions of grandparents and grandchildren. Through cremation the Mono-Alu assert the primacy of the mother and grandmother’s latu which brings the sub-aquatic domain to the surface through ritual.\(^2\) Mono-Alu kinship is cosmological and group formations like the latu are conceived through ritual especially mortuary

\(^2\)The simede though did not directly articulate a sub-aquatic domain of the grandmothers but the emphasis on emplacing and permanence is very similar.
practices. But Scott (2007b: 27) depicts the Arosi matrilineal identities as unique and distinct from each other making them cosmological categories or what he describes as a poly-ontology (cf. Mosko 2010: 216). For Monnerie (1995) however the Mono-Alu matrilineage as distinct in terms of grandfather but the grandfather is encompassed by grandmothers which are shared between groups of matrilineages. Nor does Monnerie (1995) describe a unique cosmogonic myth connected with each matrilineage. The character of the Mono-Alu and matrilineage is analogous to that of the Arosi matrilineage when compared by way of their singular ancestral identity. But Monnerie (1995: 125) adds that the Mono-Alu matrilineage is further encompassed by spirits (nitu) which are categorised into the ghosts of the recently deceased and the original spirits. The evidence for the encompassment of the domains of grandfather and grandmother by nitu is found in the mortuary ceremonies which follow the cremation and aim to transform the deceased into a ghost. The ceremonies involve a series of morning and evening sacrifices of meat which are associated with grandmothers and grandfathers. During these sacrifices the ghost learns of its role to provide meat to the living and ritual involves addressing both the ghost of the recently deceased and the original spirits. The original spirits must be present to aid in the transformation of the deceased into a ghost and lead the deceased to their place in a volcano on Bougainville. Officiating over the mortuary practices is also a political act as the officiant of the practices establishes a dead chief as the ghost of the village and therefore confirms his place as the living chief of the village.
(Monnerie 1995: 124). What were multiple categories of being as grandfa-
thers, in Monnerie (1995) hands are encompassed by the category of original
spirits. In one sense the category of original spirits reduces and simplifies the
specificity of matrilineage identities as evident in the grandfathers of each
latu but this would be misleading as the complexity of hierarchical relations
in Monu-Alu socio-cosmic thought attests.

For the west Hograno a similar emphasis exists on mortuary practices as
the Mono-Alu of the western Solomons. The simede brings together lineage
members who may be dispersed across a number of villages to ritually cast
the deceased back into the ground. The event takes years of preparation
and draw on considerable resources of all members all of which must be
coordinated by chiefs. Other labour will be drawn in from other lineages
as well as the actual day of the casting draws near. The priests of the
district gather for the event and their role is to bless the newly cast grave
and headstone on the casting day. Food is important to the event as well as
the day of the casting will be concluded with a feast exchange. I agree with
Scott here, that the event of the simede serves to return the deceased to the
territory of the lineage. The permanence of stone and cement is analogous
to the origin and perpetual lineage to which the deceased belongs.
8.4 Food and Feasts

Food and feasting in Hograno is revealing for the complex approach to territory and the people that are sustained from it, especially in light of the Strathernian model of Melanesian sociality. This is because some feast exchanges in Hograno give strength to the model while other exchanges do not. The feast for the father (gano thaego) reproduces social relations through the feast exchange. Lineages and the alliances between them are strongly juxtaposed as the father’s children draw on their lineage connections to accumulate wealth to distribute to the father. The father’s lineage do the same but it is critical that they do not exchange more than the father’s children’s lineage. The aim of the exchange is to show thanks to the father but most important is securing access to the products of their father’s labour, not their father’s land. Coconut trees, boats, engines, garden produce, houses and businesses are transactable but the land is not. Conversely, such thanks and praise of the father occurs because it would be pointless to do this for the mother. It is not that children take their mother for granted, rather it is that all the other lineages take it for granted that a mother’s children are inalienable from their mother’s land. Relations are not being reproduced through exchange.

The feast called fapregra also raises an interesting issue in relation to land. In this feast families that have not managed to successfully marry into the lineage upon which they reside are encouraged to hold a fapegra to ensure
that their children can be sustained by the territory upon which they reside. It is a feast for the next generation as those arranging such a feast will have already established themselves in relations with the owning lineage. Their worry is that when they pass away so too will their contemporary lineage members to whom they have established alliances. Their children will have to forge these connections themselves and one way to intervene is to hold a feast where enough chiefs of neighbouring villages and all the relevant children are assembled for a public acknowledgment of their family’s place on another lineage’s territory.

Food is central to exchanges between Churches on lineage territory. All Festival days in the District involve the distribution of food and people talk of how well, and how much was made available for the guests from neighbouring villages. Large parcels of cooked food are also provided for each family to take home. Festival days though are frequent and make for a busy calendar of events throughout any calendar year. For this reason the events are not of a scale like the fapegra and gano thaego which happen a couple of times in one’s lifetime. A festival then, involves guests who are priests, catechists, the Mother’s Union / Fellowship, churchkeepers and their immediate family. Festival days are also welcome invitations for neighbours to formally spend time in another village and as such are occasions to freely move between Churches and therefore territories. Of course, people move back and forth between villages all the time but residing overnight somewhere is uncommon. A feature of the Church festival day is overnighting and being ready for
communion in the morning service. Guests are billeted in family homes, entertained during the evening through dance and song, and well fed. Church festival days are an opportunity to spend time on someone else’s territory, a practice which is otherwise difficult or looked on with suspicion. It is also a time for those that live away from their land to return home.

8.5 The Tithe

Food and the relationship between food and land lies at the heart of the single most important difference between the AOC and the CofM. All interviewees saw the system of one-tenth, or tithing, as what distinguished them from the CofM. If we look to territory and the sort of work that dominates life in Hograno, that of horticulture and fishing then tithing lies at the core of the success of the AOC. In one telling interview with a man from Hirolegu the interviewee drew upon biblical references about the harvest and how important it was to give back to God. Doing this ensured the blessing of future harvests. Many who I asked about tithing said that it was the immediacy of it that made it so ‘natural’. One harvests sweet potato and then that Sunday some of that harvest is given back. This is in contrast to the ‘target’ where cash is given to the CofM and the amount one gives in cash is set by the Diocese. Much criticism about the CofM concerned where the tax they collected went and that none of the taxes paid by each family came back to their village. A tithe is set by one’s harvest. The tithe is returned in the
form of a plentiful harvest. Some of the AOC congregation suggested this was evident in the productivity of their gardens compared to those of the CofM in adjacent gardens.

Tithing reveals an interesting set of transformations in Hograno sociality. The land is transformed through the work of people into food which sustains people and the Church. The transformation of food into tithe is further transformed back into the land as seen in the next harvest. Giving to the Church is now a part of this cycle. More succinctly put, the land becomes food becomes people becomes church becomes land. There are strong parallels here to the 'Are'Are of south Malaita. De Coppet (1985: 81) writes of the 'Are'Are conceptualisation of land as ‘strongly subordinated to the land, that is, to their ancestors who are buried there and to whom they are related’. De Coppet (1985: 81) quotes the words of an 'Are'Are bigman who said ‘we live through the Word. The Word spoke and created the land and sea; it spoke again and created the people. This is why land owns people and people take care of land’. De Coppet addresses Godelier’s question with the answer that the territory itself gives rise to the lineage. Accordingly, Hograno Anglicanism exists in relation to territory and the breakaway AOC, to be successful builds upon this cosmogonic power of territory. The land itself is powerful and taken from this perspective one can understand the tentativeness the horticulturalists have of not paying back what they borrow from the land. The popularity of the tithe is because it confirms the west Hograno ideology of the power of territory through contemporary Christian
practices. In west Hogranovo, Christianity no longer encompasses the lineage like it did in the days of the CofM.
Chapter 9

Revelation of Government

The previous chapter detailed the ways in which the Church is empowered and shaped by the primordiality of the lineage in relation to territory. In this chapter however we look to how social practices in west Hograno are encompassed by foreign systems of power and how these systems have changed through the period of decolonisation in Solomon Islands. Central to the notion of foreign power I develop here is the nexus between Christianity and government, in particular colonial rule and missionisation, and since independence, decolonisation and global Christianity. Anglicanism, Catholicism and Methodism for example accompanied colonial rule but in recent decades new Church denominations have developed globally without any links to their country of origin’s government nor the nation states where they take root. These new churches are unlike the mainline Churches that matured alongside colonial powers.
What we see in Hograno is a shift in the relation between wealth, the Church and government. This shift coincides with the process of decolonisation and the change in control was accompanied by a decline in the commercial activity and material wealth of both the CofM and the Government. There are a number of factors in this shift. The first concerns the style of missionisation popular among Europeans in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, which was known as the ‘industrial mission’. The second concerns understandings of race and the affect this has had on decolonisation as the Church and government have come to be Black. The third concerns the innovative ways the west Hograno reveal and access the wealth that underlies lineages, governments and Churches. This access is revealing of the west Hograno understanding of foreign power as a concealed and subterranean power. Churches struggle with comprehending this modality of power as is seen in the relationship between the Melanesian Brotherhood and local groups and it is evident in new Church movements elsewhere in Solomon Islands.

9.1 Industrial Mission

Motivating the idea of the industrial mission were nineteenth century theories of race which saw blacks destined to disappear against the advances of the colonising power (Wetherell 1977: 216). Given this perspective, the task of the missionary was not only converting the heathens but teaching them
the virtues of hard work, routine and commercial activity. The different missionary denominations took to this idea in different ways. At one pole were the missionaries that saw commercial activity as a perversion of the noble Melanesian farmer and at the other pole were the missionaries, like the methodists in New Georgia, who were encouraged to seek profits though the labour of their converts (Wetherell 1977: 222).

Contemporary social practices in Hograno reflect the days of the industrial mission: the community work activities on a Friday, where all the villagers gather to weed the paths and communal areas of the village; the effort being placed on the creation of a bible school for the AOC and the construction of the AOC office building in Biluro; the agenda of the AOC National Convention which focused entirely on the industry of the Church; the allocation of funding from America; the management of the tithe; purchases of land in Honiara; and changes to the bureaucratic hierarchy of the Church administration itself. Through all of this activity, the attention to detail in the paperwork of bureaucratic processes was also a feature of the convention. Meticulous minutes were taken, memorandums of understanding were presented, and loyalty cards were signed by chiefs. These exchanges were administrative, formal and ritualised to the point of being a fetishisation.

But the strongest point made about the idea of an industrial mission came from Vuhamana. He lamented the decline of the once great CofM during the colonial era; of the schools, hospitals, slip-ways and trade colleges that were established right across British Solomon Islands. Irrespective of where mis-
sionaries placed their proselytising on the spectrum between temporal and spiritual pursuits, Vuhamana viewed the decline of the CofM as coming with Solomon Islands independence in 1978. He did not see the role of the chief as one might assume, concerned solely with worldly pursuits while the parish priest attends to the spiritual life of the village. When the chiefs of Hograno wrote a letter to the Archbishop asking for Legumana to be reinstated, the Archbishop told the chiefs to stay out of Church affairs. The Archbishop remained adamant that the political domain of chiefs be separate from the spiritual domain of priests. Underpinning Vuhamana’s disappointment at the decline of the CofM is that the Church did not properly come to know and understand the practices of the industrial mission. The knowledge of industry, administration and managerial practices was not passed on to Solomon Islanders and as he said the source of CofM wealth remains in New Zealand.

The failure of decolonisation and its impact on religious practice was explored by Lattas (2006) among the Bush Kaliai. The partial experiment of the colonial administration in introducing local forms of government by way of village courts, local councils and native representatives shaped Kaliai notions of power. Lattas (2006: 131) argues that this unfulfilled ‘promise...had to be re-consolidated through more radical forms of localisation; villagers responded by uncovering truer forms of self-government, independence, and law via the underground — namely the dead’. In the Pomio Kivung Movement to which Lattas is referring, the world of the dead grounds the political legitimacy of rural villagers in East New Britain especially in light of the
failed attempts at localisation by colonial rule. There are certainly parallels between the focus on the efficacy of bureaucratic techniques like meetings, constitutions and book-keeping in the Kivung movement with that of the National Convention. In particular Lattas (2006) describes Koriam’s discovery of the true hidden constitution of Whites which Kivung followers call the Ten Laws. Koriam’s revelation which undermines the Papua New Guinea (PNG) nation’s sovereignty in favour of the movement, ‘is a modern-day myth of sovereignty, a charter for a government to come’ (Lattas 2006: 137). The Kivung movement locates the true form of knowledge in the subterranean world of the Dead. Secretive knowledge is associated with lineage specialists and sorcery and aspects of the Kivung movement’s engagement with the subterranean world of the dead have parallels with the rise of the AOC and its alignment with chiefs and lineages in west Hograno.

9.1.1 New Georgia

Inversely, it was not the industrial mission which failed in New Georgia but the concealing of the gifts of the holy spirit by the Methodist missionaries. In New Georgia the Methodist mission was seen as a success with extensive plantations, hospitals and schools all managed by a larger than life Reverend Goldie. But after the Second World War all that had changed when Silas Eto headed a breakaway church movement where the gifts of the holy spirit were being experienced in personal, ecstatic experiences called taturu. For Harwood the rise of Silas Eto and the CFC was a consequence of Goldie’s
emphasis on the industrial mission over the devotional life of Christian worship and theology. Implicit in Harwood’s analysis of the ecstatic phenomena that accompanied the rise of the CFC was the idea of the disappearing race. The Blacks must be saved and the intervention by missionaries worked in two ways. New Georgians were freed from the bondage of subsistence horticulture through commerce, through the industry of the mission. Nevertheless, Harwood’s approach is that they remained trapped in the irrationality of their own misinterpretation of Christian belief. Either way they were doomed without Christianity. Without the mission they will be forever stuck in a pre-modern economy. Harwood’s ethnography argued that without Methodism the New Georgians were destined to misinterpret the gifts of the Holy Spirit. But her bias demands another reading. The rise of the CFC and the experience of tataru served not just to distinguish the new way from the old way but to reveal European secrets and knowledge previously withheld by Europeans and their institutions. The following response by a New Georgian is telling:

While we were part of the Methodist church, we couldn’t think or speak well, but were in a state of confusion. Even though I preached the Bible, I continued to keep custom medicines. It was difficult in Methodist times to understand the Bible even in translation. In those days I could read the Bible but couldn’t understand it. I was a man of little faith. But now in the CFC we have been sent the ‘comforter’ promised by Jesus at Pentecost
who can teach us and care for the bodies and spirits of men
(Harwood 1971: 135).

Here, the Methodists were seen to be concealing religious knowledge from their flock, but through tataru, the secrets of Christian power were dramatically revealed. This gift was literally one of translation. Another informant commented, ‘[w]hen the Holy Spirit came into our hearts non-English speakers could read English words and the scriptures’ (Harwood 1971: 142). Critical in this quotation is this idea of concealment and revelation. But it is not a notion of concealment in isolation to other phenomena. Concealment relates directly to the work of the mission and the way missionaries came to teach Christian belief to New Georgians. New Georgians were not surprised that missionaries would only partially reveal the source of their industry and their wealth because it is in the nature of power that it be concealed.

Looking now to the testimony of Phillip and how he came to have the knowledge to command crocodiles. Phillip comes to know these totemic commands through his brother who acquired it by hiding and overhearing his father tell these secrets to someone else. He and his brother told their father that they had overheard him and the father stipulated that they could use this knowledge but in a limited way. Interestingly, this is the same approach taken by the Melanesian Brothers when Phillip spoke to them about his power over crocodiles. An air of secrecy pervades sorcery in Hograno but the way in which sorcerous knowledge was revealed to Phillip is revealing of the nature of power in Hograno more broadly. The position and power of a
person is apparent to all to see but the source of that power is not. Sorcery is powerful because it is concealed knowledge. This concealed knowledge can be revealed in a special way, though particular ritual processes.

In the ‘clearances’ conducted by local healers and the Melanesian Brotherhood, what is revealed are hidden curses placed about houses and the presence of concealed spell components within and under the victim’s home. For the local healer, he is on the look out for buried ginger root about the house. For the Brothers, it is signs of a skull with a hole in it that only the Brothers can see. Power is the potential that an area or a place or a person or an object may have two simultaneous states: a surface state and a hidden potential. Looking back at the CFC, Eto and his followers discovered what had been concealed by the Methodists and its nature was personally engulfing. It was the power of the Holy Spirit. Taking this logic one step further, we can then come to some understanding of the Hograno approach to encompassing forms of foreign power, irrespective of whether they appear as a Church or Government.

In Vuhamana’s vivid account of the early days of the breakaway ECOSI and AOC, the charge against the defectors was that they were a ‘floating’ Church. At the time, this seemed to me unremarkable, but in light of the argument made in the previous chapter, and the logic of concealment developing here, we can now explain why a ‘floating’ Church is such a slur. A floating Church is without foundation and therefore without territory. But Vuhamana was offended by the slur and demanded Legumana find a ‘link’.
And what does Legumana discover, the link is genealogical. Like the Church in territory, submerged genealogical connections are at the root of Anglican power. It is an unbroken line back to the first Apostles. In the tension surrounding the sacking of Legumana, the CofM congregation demonstrated the foundation of power in Anglicanism by describing the AOC as floating above the genealogical connections of Anglicans. Vuhamana was direct and strong in how he demanded Legumana to find a link.Vuhamana was equally impressed that he both established a link with the AOC of North Carolina and managed to get its leader to Hograno to inaugurate a new Church building. In such an event, two forms of power converge. The legitimacy of the submerged genealogical connections of the American AOC with the Church in territory.

Scott (2007b: 76) reconstructs the role of an Arosi chief in precolonial Makira in order to understand the shape and texture of chiefs in Makira today. Before colonisation Scott (2007b: 76) describes chiefs as being either ‘reigning chief’ or ‘war chief’ (cf. De Coppet 1995, Hviding 1996: 86 & Keesing 1985). The reigning chief, or peacemaster to use the terminology of De Coppet (1995), is akin to the chief already depicted by White for Isabel. He established and maintained relations across matrilineages, ‘building an amicable and mutually beneficial social collectivity’ (Scott 2007b: 76). On the other hand, the war chief or warrior was a source of division and matrilineal exclusivity. Important for this discussion here though are the memories of Arosi about the raising of chiefs from birth and the use of a ceremonial
bath over shell valuables to prepare the child to be a leader. In contemporary Makira, both roles have diminished in prestige and authority (Scott 2007b: 79). But in another parallel with the figure of Figrima for Isabel, the Arosi have similarly celebrated chiefs of the past who were instrumental in bringing Anglicanism to Makira.

The logic of power in Hograno is not one defined by the sphere of Church and another by the sphere of chiefs or Government. Rather, the logic of power has two modes that are in hierarchical opposition. The subordinate aspect is the ‘floating’ or surface power of people, things and institutions. The encompassing power is foundational and concealed. The Church occupies the surface as a known spiritual power for all Christians but it also draws on the concealed power of the lineage in territory. Given this logic then a re-analysis begins to form of churches and the conflicts in which they became embroiled during the ethnic tension.

9.1.2 The Partisan Church

The pervasive understanding of mainline churches in Solomon Islands is as a force for peace; a neutral party that negotiates and leads reconciliation between warring groups (Henry 2005; Macdonald-Milne 2003; Douglas 2007; McDougall 2008). During the ethnic tension the CofM had no choice but to be neutral as its theological college was in north western Guadalcanal, a hot spot during the early stages of the conflict, especially when the holiday resort of Tambea was razed to the ground and a number of violent inci-
dents occurred at a marine science research station nearby. At these events CofM priests, nuns and brothers worked bravely and tirelessly to ensure non-combatants were safe and could return to Honiara. But by 2003 the events were to take a deadly and highly symbolic turn when a Melanesian Brother went missing on the weather coast of Guadalcanal. The CofM sent another group of Brothers to investigate but they never returned. It came to light that the Brothers were murdered and the incident became a symbolic event of the barbarity and senselessness of the ethnic tension years. During the foreign led intervention the search for the missing Brothers became one of the first operations of the RAMSI mission. When the bodies were found and it was revealed that, indeed, the Brothers were dead, the vox populi of Honiara, were shocked that such a calamity could befall the Brothers. The Melanesian Brotherhood were holy men. Men of extraordinary personal power.

Indeed, the Brotherhood are held in the highest esteem throughout Solomon Islands. In Hograno, the word of the Brothers was final on issues of sorcery. Phillip drew upon the advice of Brothers to legitimate his power to ward off crocodiles and the Brothers said that this technique was natural and permissible when requested by those in need. In the excitement that surrounded the Brother’s tour of Hograno they discovered and cleared Susubona of sorcery. In the case of the sorcery accusation against Jacob the Brothers were said to maintain a list of known sorcerers active in Hograno. Barnabas said that it was the Brothers that confirmed Jacob was a sorcerer when he defended his accusation against Jacob.
9.1.3 Secrets and Sorcery

What comes with not just the presence of Brothers but talk about the Brothers are powerful forces that rival that of any force present in the rural area. In fact the Brothers are the most adept at combating sorcery. But this combat is against the sources of power that Phillip revealed came in and through a lineage to individuals. The work and talk of the Brothers both confirms the power of lineage based knowledge and specialisations as well as the presence of sources of power in Christianity.

Being in a position to draw on both sources of power in rural Solomon Islands, and be in a position to legitimate or negate the power surrounding the lineage, contributed to the deadly events on Guadalcanal. Power has a double feature. Above, and apparent is the power of holy spirit and its presence in and through the work of the Brothers but at the same time there is a power in territory that is concealed and implicit.

The power of the Brothers was raised in a criminal trial over the murder of the seven Brothers in 2003. In the trial the prosecution tabled a letter, written by a member of the Guadalcanal Liberation Front (GLF), which described the encounter between the GLF and the Brothers. In the cross-examination the defense argued that the letter was not written at the time of the event, but after the group were arrested by RAMSI. In the letter the GLF commander, Ronnie Cawa argued that his use of violence was in self defense when the Brothers approached with wooden staffs.\footnote{This is a direct transcript taken from the court records.}

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On the 23rd of April 2003, six Brotherhood from the CofM arrived at Ghorombau Village, one of the Guadalcanal Liberation Front GLF Camp. The six Brothers where travel from Honiara by out [board] motor engine and landed at Mbite Village, one of the Solomon Islands Police Force and joint operation force station. The six left their boat at Mbite and walked to Ghorombau Village. When the Brothers arrived at the checkpoint the GLF boys asked them for a check and any authorised letter from Archbishop for them to come over to our territory.

But the three Brothers did not want to check and when the commander-in-charge, Ronny, ordered them to lay on the ground, but only three of them lay down on the ground, the other three were advanced with their walking stick and point the stick to the commander who giving order to them.

The Brothers with the stick trying to make power so that the miracle happened which they believe their walking stick a power can stop the gun to be fired. The three Brothers are fight with their walking stick to the boys therefore the commander give the first warning shot but the Brother did not stop, they continued to advance to the boys with the stick therefore the commander ordered and shot the three Brothers dead at the same time. The other three Brother which heard the order and they lay down on the ground were shouted and said, “Stop kill us and we will tell
you the true story of who sending us for this mission.” The Brothers said that they were sent by Sir Allan Kemakeza and Manassah Maelanga and with the directive of the Archbishop C.O.M. Church of Melanesia Melanesian, Sir Ellison Pogo. The Brothers said on the 22nd of April 2003 at 8.00 pm they had met and discussed with Manassah Maelanga, operation police commander SI police, with some S.O.G. officers at Bishop Dale working household (MDA) of the Church of Melanesian. They had discussed secretly for mission to the Weathercoast of Guadalcanal mainly to collect information from the GLF Guadalcanal Liberation Front.

The Brothers had said if their mission is succeed and they return with first class information the police will able to launch another operation to hunt down the GLF leader, Harold Keke. The three Brothers said that this information are they to be found and collect. Number 1, the position the GLF leader. 2. How many gun with the GLF. 3. How many followers with Harold Keke. 4. Others.

The three Brothers are decided to be kept as the prisoners of war but later they are trying to escape, therefore the commander give a warning shot for them but they still running, therefore the second warning shot but they still continue to run, therefore the command in charge order to shoot them all death becos they disobeying the order.
The Brothers said that the government of Sir Allan Kemakeza sent them for that mission and promised the sum, s-u-m, amount of dollars if they collected some first class information from the GLF loyalist. (High Court of Solomon Islands 2005: 185-7)

Ronnie Cawa understands the place of the CofM as within, or at least, alongside the Solomon Islands Government. Ronnie Cawa and his accomplices were sentenced to life imprisonment for the murders. The defense questioned the Archbishop during the proceedings about both the powers of the Brothers and the involvement of the Archbishop in the expedition of the six Brothers to the weathercoast of Guadalcanal. The Archbishop said he could not speak for the Brothers but said that all the Brothers were staying on his compound (Bishop Dale) in Honiara before setting off to the weather coast.

Research about the conflict in Solomon islands helps in a limited and distance way in coming to understand these events. If we look to the work about the tension (Fraenkel 2004; Moore 2004) we could see the conditions which gave rise to the GLF as that of decolonisation, of a resistance to colonisation often glossed as kastom, as the rise of new pan-island forms of ethnic identity associated with disproportionate development between islands, and as a function of the powerful elites who manipulate the political system for their own ends. In response to the early work on the intervention period, Allen (2009) particularly focused on the rise of a politics of kastom. During the ethnic tension violence was explained as a form of retaliation to affronts to kastom.
And these affronts to kastom are always the same: trespass, violating taboos (especially concerning women) and damage to property. Distancing himself from the work of Fraenkel (2004), Allen (2009: 9) argued that these affronts were more than political opportunism but a resistance movement to foreign power from the grassroots. But in resisting these forces a pan-island ethnicity developed, one side Malaitan, the other Guale (from Guadalcanal). In one sense, the evidence from this thesis agrees with his argument. Politics forms in reaction to threats around territory and the social groups that become that territory, if that is what Allen means by grassroots. But Allen actually makes a Sartrian point. Ethnicity forms in Solomon Islands through a dialectical relationship with the other. In this approach, identity formation is the negation of the other as oneself (Sartre 1960, Lattas 1998: 204). And the approach works well when applied to the urban context of Honiara. Malaitans become a single group in response to the Government, to the foreign intervention, but in doing so the other sources of political power remain unexplored. At least in Frankel and Moore the political elites are always empowered strongly by their local constituencies. These constituencies often correlate with language groups. But importantly, the structure to emphasise, as Allen points out, is the idea of the violation of taboos especially around territory. In the letter tabled in court also, the GLF commander makes a similar claim. He describes the Brothers, and their approach to his territory as threatening. What the analysts have overlooked is the role of religion in the formation of politics in Solomon Islands and this is because of their
approach to religious institutions as one that is benign, neutral and complementary to Government. The GLF commander saw the CofM in completely different terms. CofM was seen as a part of the Solomon Islands Government. This point concurs with the observation of Allen (2009: 9) that ethnicity in Solomon Islands is a resistance to Government.
Chapter 10

Conclusion

What the two previous chapters have show is the continuing centrality of territory to not only the politics of kin groups but to the politics of the Solomon Islands Government and the Church. This observation challenges the view that churches are encompassing systems of power at the grass roots. Churches are as partisan as the politics of the parishioners that worship within them. Fraenkel (2004: 185) argued that the civil war in Solomon Islands was in part the result of the indigenization of Government. I have show that this is also the case for the CofM through the study of the rise of the AOC. But unlike Fraenkel where custom is seen as a problem of Government, I do not see the indigenization of the Church as a problem for Anglicanism. What is clear from the rise of the AOC is the potential for new political formations to emerge from segmentary social organisation which in turn influences provincial and national politics. For countries like Australia that are
attempting to fashion the Solomon Islands Government in their own image, the rise of the AOC shows that transplanting the citizenship based notion of the nation-state to Solomon Islands is doomed to failure.

But commentators continue to see segmentary political formations as a problem. Fukuyama (2008) claims segmentary politics serve allegiances which work against a national consciousness. Obligations to a descent group lead invariably toward corruption. In response to Fukuyama (2008) another political scientist Brigg (2009) took Fukuyama (2008) to task arguing that in fact obligations to share between kin and the notion of reciprocity between segments could actually hold local politicians to account and work against corruption. However, what both these theorists highlight in Solomon Islands is the role of local level politics in nation making and state-building. For Fukuyama (2008), segmentary political systems undermine the state and are a powerful form of social organisation that cannot function at a national level. The lineage is inherently unstable beyond the local (Fukuyama 2008: 2). It is a system Fukuyama states which is ‘perfectly adequate for a small scale subsistence agricultural society, albeit one characterised by a high level of violence’ (Fukuyama 2008: 3). Brigg (2009) argues that descent groups and segmentary societies are not necessarily the cause of social disorder and state failure in Solomon Islands. Brigg states ‘the centrality of relationality’ in Melanesian social worlds deeply undercuts Fukuyama’s assertion about the exclusivity and separateness of descent groups (Fukuyama 2008: 152). While I agree with Brigg that segmentary politics is not the cause of state failure
I do think he overemphasises exchange and relationality as a potential value to underwrite a new form of nationalism in Solomon Islands. The centrality of the territorially emplaced lineage which emerges both in my material and that of Scott (2007b)’s shows that Solomon Islanders identify with their ancestral territory in ways that do not support western forms of citizenship and parliamentary democracy. There is too much creative potential in the politics of the village as the CofM came to learn after defrocking Legumana.

This last point about is expressed poetically through a very popular song known throughout Solomon Islands and the South Pacific. The unofficial national anthem of Solomon Islands, *Walkabout long Chinatown* is known across the South Pacific in much the same way that non-Australians identity *Waltzing Matilda* as the unofficial national anthem of Australia. The song tells of a man at a loose end in Chinatown in Honiara who is down on his luck. He longs to get home and be back with his girlfriend but he is stuck in town. The song captures beautifully the longing for home, especially when in town, that Solomon Islanders identify with, as do many ni-Vanuatu, Papua New Guineans and Fijians.

**Wakabaoti long Saenataoni**

Wakabaoti long Saenataoni
Makem kosi aga long kona
Suti apu sekem hedi, kikim baket eni kaeni

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Ies in laf haf senisi wata-na-tingi

**CHORUS**

Tingting baek
Long ui
Lusim hom
Long taem
Tu iias ova mi no lukim ui
Dats wae mi no laekem ui
Mani karange, karange heti lusim mani

No mata mi dae long Honiara
Samting mi lus, long taem long ui
Bat sapos ui ting long mi ui kan weit go tu iias moa
Letem kam laet sikini longo lelebeti

**Walkabout in Chinatown**

Walking through Chinatown
Set the course and anchored on the corner
Heads up, shook his head, kick the bucket and all kinds in the vicinity
Yeah laugh all you can, you half sensed bare water

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1Bare water is possibly an insult in that even your sweat has no tingle, no taste.
CHORUS    Thinking back
to you
Left home
A long time ago
Two years past and I haven’t seen you
That’s why I don’t desire or think of you anymore
Only fools leave their lover

It doesn’t matter if I die in Honiara
I lost that feeling, from before, of you
But if still you feel for me, wait for another two years
Let that light tall and fair skinned lady be mine

Historian Clive Moore (2006: 64) wrote that the song expresses the ‘delights of wandering through Honiara’s Chinatown’. Certainly, the song does conjure a nostalgic image of Chinatown before the April riots in 2006 but I think this reading misses an important point about Solomon Islands and Solomon Islanders. Town is a temporary, ambiguous and profane place in contrast to the ancestral security of home.
Acronyms


**CFC** Christian Fellowship Church. 48, 68, 73, 74, 81, 94, 230, 231, 233


**ECOSI** Episcopal Church of Solomon Islands. 81, 90–92, 194, 196, 233

**FFA** Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency. 3, 4

**GLF** Guadalcanal Liberation Front. 237, 240–242

**PNG** Papua New Guinea. 230
RAMSI Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands. 108, 236, 237

SDA Seventh Day Adventist. 5, 147, 148

SOMA Spiritual Outreach Ministries Abroad. 51, 52, 116, 178, 198

SSEC South Seas Evangelical Church. 5, 58
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