

## Appendix A

### Research into the History of the Rotuman Language

The first linguist to classify Rotuman was Horatio Hale, philologist with the United States Exploring Expedition under Captain Wilkes. He interviewed some Rotumans in Tonga in April 1840 and concluded on the basis of this evidence that

their dialect is a mixture of Polynesian words, very much corrupted with those of some other language, unlike any which has been elsewhere found. They show, also, in some of their usages, and some words of their language, traces of communication with their Feejeean neighbours to the south.<sup>1</sup>

R. H. Codrington, working with data compiled by missionaries in the mid-1800s, rejected the classification of Rotuman as an "Eastern Pacific" (Polynesian) language and held that it should be classified as Melanesian, although he acknowledged that "many words and perhaps forms of expression have been in recent times derived from Tonga, Samoa, and Fiji."<sup>2</sup>

According to C. M. Churchward, the Methodist missionary linguist who spent many years on Rotuma and made an extensive study of the language, Rotuman is in no sense a dialect of any other known language, but can best be explained as the result of a fusion of several earlier languages:

It appears to show two Polynesian strata, a distinct Melanesian stratum, and perhaps a slight admixture of Micronesian and some very important elements, which are peculiarly Rotuman. The two Polynesian strata may reasonably be traced to the invasions under Raho and Tokaniua from Samoa (the earlier stratum), and to that under Ma'afu from Tonga (the later stratum).<sup>3</sup> As to the Melanesian stratum, this is too marked and too deep-seated to be explained as due simply to Fijian influence during the past two or three generations. It is more likely, I think, that there was a Melanesian, or partly Melanesian, race on the island when Raho landed. As to the purely Rotuman elements, comprising many of the commonest words in the language, together with its peculiar grammatical structure, these must be

regarded, I consider, as older still: we may speak of them as the aboriginal substratum.<sup>4</sup>

The linguist George Grace, working mainly with phonological and grammatical evidence, and using the criterion of shared innovations to determine family-tree relationships, brought the language into the limelight in 1959 with his conclusion that "Rotuman, Fijian, and the Polynesian languages have passed through a period of common history apart from all the remaining languages of the Austronesian family."<sup>5</sup>

Isadore Dyen, a prominent linguist at the time, rejected Grace's collection of alleged shared innovations as not being robust enough, in themselves, to require his conclusion,<sup>6</sup> and Ward Goodenough argued that any assessment of Rotuman's position must take into account the large number of words borrowed into Rotuman from Polynesian languages.<sup>7</sup>

New Zealand linguists Bruce Biggs and Andrew Pawley compared the vocabularies of Rotuman with Polynesian languages and affirmed a high degree of borrowing by Rotuman.<sup>8</sup> Biggs's contribution has been especially important because he worked out a reliable method for distinguishing the various layers represented in the Rotuman vocabulary. By reconstructing earlier forms of Rotuman and several other Oceanic languages, Biggs found that Polynesian contributions to the Rotuman vocabulary were even greater than had been suspected. He estimated that approximately 20 percent of the basic vocabulary (a 200-word list used by linguists for comparison) and perhaps as much as 43 percent of the total vocabulary had been demonstrably borrowed from Polynesian languages.<sup>9</sup>

Precisely because of such heavy borrowing in Rotuman, Pawley expressed skepticism regarding the use of vocabulary comparisons as a means of assessing Rotuman's genetic connections.

Pawley summarized his thesis as follows:

1. Rotuman but not Fijian has borrowed a considerable proportion of basic vocabulary from Polynesian, and probably from Tongan and Samoan in particular.
2. When this borrowing is excluded, Fijian and Polynesian stand significantly closer in respect to basic vocabulary than do Rotuman and Fijian or Rotuman and Polynesian.
3. That as far as Rotuman is concerned, basic vocabulary has not been stable and the usual assumptions

about retention rates in basic vocabulary cannot be made when dealing with this particular language. Borrowing from Polynesian is demonstrably extensive, and borrowing from other sources may have occurred on a significant scale. Therefore, vocabulary comparisons are not a reliable method for assessing the genetic connections between Rotuman and other languages.<sup>10</sup>

Nevertheless, Pawley did not regard his findings as contradicting Grace's position, since the latter's methods were based primarily on phonology and grammar, with only minor dependence on vocabulary comparisons.

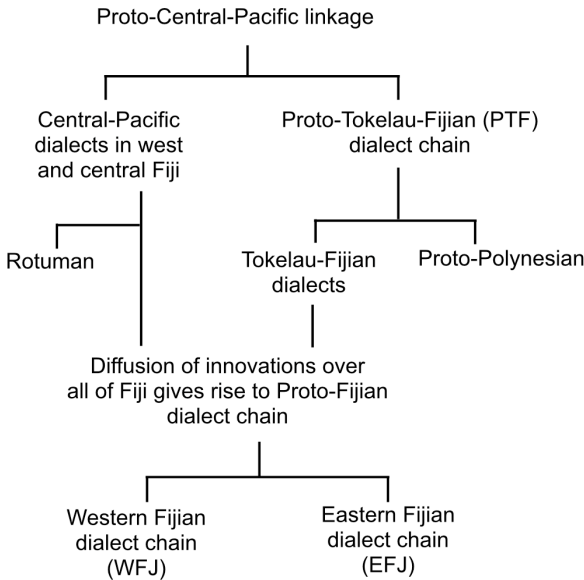
Both the phonology and grammar of Rotuman have presented comparative linguists with additional problems to ponder. For example, authorities have differed in their listing of Rotuman vowel sounds, with Codrington listing seven, A. M. Hocart twelve, and Churchward fourteen.<sup>11</sup> Biggs, after working with a Rotuman informant in Auckland, concluded that the proper number is ten, which have been derived from the five original Polynesian vowels.<sup>12</sup> These disagreements and an important part of the dynamics of phonological and grammatical change in the Rotuman language appear to be the result of a process called metathesis, in which the placement of the final vowel (V) and consonant (C) in a morpheme ("base") or meaningful part of a word are switched when the words are used in different ways. This switching results in a new phonetic pattern.

Summing up his thesis on this topic, Biggs suggested:

At some time in pre-Rotuman, the dynamic being unknown, the language innovated wholesale metathesis of final syllables of bases. The metathesis had grammatical function and the non-metathesised forms continued to exist side by side with the innovated forms. Previously base shapes had been (C)V(C)V; now final consonants occurred in the base shapes (C)VVC. Possibly simultaneously with the metathesis, but more probably after an interval of time each metathesised form was reduced one syllable, by (a) reducing the less sonorous of two vowels to a semi-vowel, or (b) coalescing two similar vowels in the quality of one of them, or (c) coalescing two unlike vowels and retaining features of the quality of each.<sup>13</sup>

The main grammatical function of metathesis is the designation of what Churchward has termed "definiteness and indefiniteness," a role comparable to that played by articles in English (e.g., *a* and *an* versus *the*),<sup>14</sup> for example, *famori* 'ea (the people say), but *famör* 'ea (some people say).

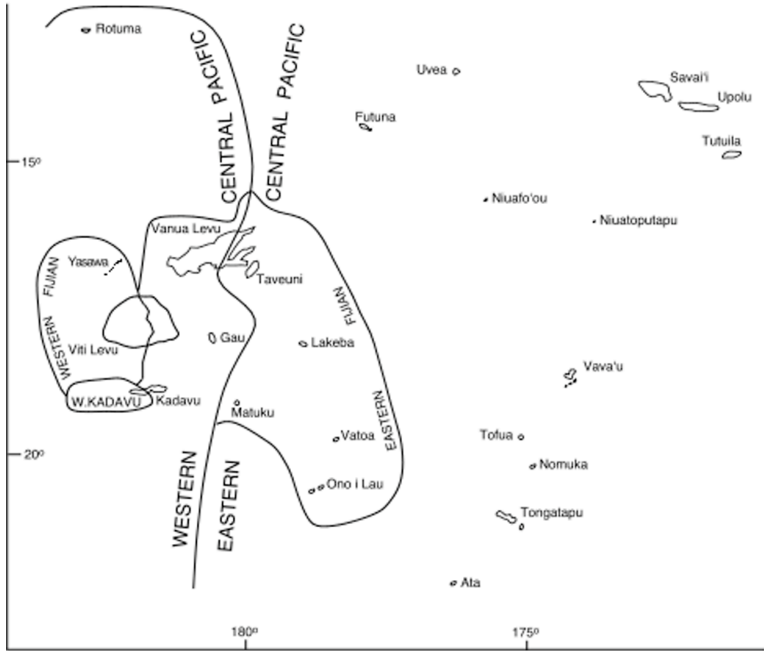
In a later development, Pawley and his associates researched such nonstandard languages in Fiji as the dialects of Vanua Levu, Taveuni, and the Yasawas, and although he did not regard the evidence as completely convincing, Pawley asserted that it points rather consistently in one direction—that Rotuman belongs in a sub-grouping (Central Pacific) that includes Fijian and the Polynesian languages, and that within this group there is a special relationship between Rotuman and the Fijian group, and particularly between Rotuman and the languages on the western side of Fiji.<sup>15</sup>



**Figure A.1** Language family tree showing position of Rotuman

The recent work of Hans Schmidt has by and large confirmed Pawley's hypothesis that Rotuman belongs to the Central-Pacific language group and that its closest relatives are Fijian dialects in northwest Vanua Levu (see this volume pp. 10–11).<sup>16</sup> Paul Geraghty argued that after the people who settled Rotuma departed from their homelands in Fiji, these areas were conquered by the militarily superior

chiefdoms in east Viti Levu (Bau, Rewa, etc.), and consequently their dialects today resemble the East-Fijian ones more closely than the West-Central-Pacific ones they had belonged to earlier (see map).<sup>17</sup>



Intersection of primary subgroups of Central Pacific with contemporary subgroups of Fijian. From Schmidt 1999, 203; adapted from Pawley 1979, 39.

## Notes to Appendix A

<sup>1</sup> Hale 1846, 103–104.

<sup>2</sup> Codrington 1885, 402.

<sup>3</sup> The reference here is to Rotuman legends concerning such events. See Titifanua and Churchward 1995, 7–14, 23–28.

<sup>4</sup> Churchward 1938, 80.

<sup>5</sup> Grace 1959, 65. The Austronesian language family comprises over 1,000 languages, including many of the languages spoken in New Guinea and the rest of Melanesia, in Indonesia, the Philippines, Malaysia, Micronesia, and Polynesia. Also included are some languages spoken in parts of Taiwan, Vietnam, and Cambodia.

<sup>6</sup> Dyen 1960, 1965.

<sup>7</sup> Goodenough 1962, 406.

<sup>8</sup> Pawley 1962; Biggs 1965.

<sup>9</sup> Biggs 1965, 412.

<sup>10</sup> Pawley 1962, 11.

<sup>11</sup> Codrington 1885, 402; Hocart 1919, 256; Churchward 1940, 13.

<sup>12</sup> Biggs 1959.

<sup>13</sup> Biggs 1965, 6–7.

<sup>14</sup> Churchward 1929, 1940.

<sup>15</sup> Pawley 1996.

<sup>16</sup> Schmidt 2000

<sup>17</sup> Geraghty 1983, 1996

## Appendix B

### Rotuman Phonetics

CONSONANTS (14): *f, g* (like *ng* in "sing"), *h, j* (nearly like *tch* in "pitch"), *k, l m, n, p, r, s, t, v*, and ' (glottal stop).

VOWELS (10): *a, ʌ, á, ä, e, i, o, ö, u*, and *ü*. The principal vowels (*a, e, i, o, u*) are pronounced as in Fijian and Samoan, or roughly as in calm (but shorter, unless written *ā*), set, sit, obey, and put; *ʌ*, which is between *a* and *o*, is nearly the same as *a* in "want" or "swan" or as *o* in "cot"; *á* and *ä*, which are between *a* and *e*, approximate, each in its own way, the sound of *a* in "cat" or "fan"; *ö* and *ü* are pronounced as in German. The sound of *ö* is somewhat like that of *er* in "her" or *or* in "word." The sound of *ü* may be produced, or approximated, by endeavoring to pronounce *ee* as in "see" while the lips are kept rounded as if pronouncing *oo* in "boot" (adapted from Churchward 1940:13).





## Appendix C

### Administrative Officers (Rotumans in Italics)

#### Deputy Commissioners

Arthur J. L. Gordon	1879
F. P. Murray	1880
Hugh Romilly	1880
W. L. Allardyce	1881

#### Resident Commissioners

Charles Mitchell	1881
W. M. Gordon	1882
A. R. Mackay	1884
F. C. Fuller	1889
H. E. Leefe	1891
John Hill	1901
Dr. Hugh Macdonald	1902
Dr. J. Halley	1908
Dr. Hugh Macdonald	1909
W. M. Ramsay	1913
A. A. Wright	1914
Dr. Hugh Macdonald	1914
J. S. Neil	1916
A. E. S. Howard	1918
Dr. Hugh Macdonald	1918
R. C. C. Higginson	1920
W. G. Cornish	1921
Dr. Hugh Macdonald	1921
Dr. William K. Carew	1923
W. Desmond Carew	1924
W. E. Russell	1926
Dr. William K. Carew	1928
Dr. C. J. Austin	1929
Dr. William K. Carew	1930
C. A. Caldwell	1932
W. Burrows	1933
J. McLeod	1933
K. J. Allardyce	1934
Dr. William K. Carew	1934

#### District Officers

A. E. Cornish	1935
H. G. R. McAlpine	1940
Dr. H. S. Evans	1943
A. E. Cornish	1944
F. G. Forster	1944
<i>Josefa Rigamoto</i>	1945
Williame Wainiqolo	1946
<i>Josefa Rigamoto</i>	1947
<i>Fred Ieli</i>	1949
Dr. H. S. Evans	1950
William Eason	1952
W. V. C. Baker	1952
<i>Fred Ieli</i>	1953
Ratu W. G. Bose	1955
<i>Fred Ieli</i>	1955
<i>Paul Manueli</i>	1960
<i>Fred Ieli</i>	1960
Aubrey Parke	1964
<i>Josefa Rigamoto</i>	1964
<i>A. M. Konrote</i>	1966
<i>Fred Gibson</i>	1966
<i>A. M. Konrote</i>	1968
<i>Fred Gibson</i>	1968
<i>A. M. Konrote</i>	1970
<i>F. T. Nakaora</i>	1975
<i>John Tevita</i>	1978
<i>F. T. Nakaora</i>	1978
<i>A. M. Konrote</i>	1980
<i>Firipo Nakaora</i>	1983
Kameli Koto	1985
<i>Viki Epeli</i>	1987
<i>Tiu Malo</i>	1988
<i>Fred Susau</i>	1990
<i>Fuata Fakraufon</i>	1992
<i>Mesulame Solomone</i>	1994
<i>Semesi Kauata</i>	1998
Luke Moroivalu	2000



## Appendix D

### Gagaj 'es Itu'u 1881–2000

#### Noa'tau

Maraf Terio  
Maraf Horosio  
Maraf Manueli  
Maraf Aisake  
Maraf Konrote  
Maraf Fatiaki  
Maraf Marseu  
Maraf Nataniela  
Maraf Solomone

#### Itu'ti'u

Alpat Vanike  
Tiugarea Horosio  
Garagsau Tukagasau  
Teviat  
Rak  
Jiotam  
Alpat Kaitu'u  
Far Atalifo  
Marekao Antonio  
Taksäs  
Kautarfon  
Markao

#### Juju

Osias Tavo  
Tuiporotu  
Vuan  
Uafta Nafaere  
Uafta Tuilakepa  
Titofag Kapieni  
Saititu  
Vuan  
Titofag Aleksio

#### Itu'muta

Manao Iane  
Tuipenau  
Manao Semese  
Pen  
Fagmanuia Sopapelu  
Ravak Arosio  
Fasaumoea Injimo  
Manao  
Osias

#### Oinafa

Tavo Rupeni  
Tavo Fakraufon  
Poar Rupeni  
Tokaniuia Emose  
Kausiriaf Jione

#### Malhaha

Vasea  
Fatafes Fesa'itu  
Tua'ui  
Hanfakag Viliama  
Ufiamorat Kikorio  
Hanfakag Apao  
Fatafes Ufiamorat  
Aisea Tivaknoa  
Fatafes Aisea  
Asoatemur Jiotama  
Tuipeua Savike

#### Pepjei

Mou Aisea  
Mou Nataniela  
Turag  
Firma'oli  
Veragtiarma'oi  
Aufau  
Turag Petero  
Suakma'as

