KEITH DIXON

# ACCLIMATISING TO HIGHER GROUND

*The realities of life of a Pacific Atoll People*

# ACCLIMATISING TO HIGHER GROUND

sidestonepress

KEITH DIXON

# ACCLIMATISING TO HIGHER GROUND

*The realities of life of a Pacific Atoll People*

Published by Sidestone Press, Leiden
www.sidestone.com

Lay-out & cover design: Sidestone Press
Photograph cover: view of the island of Bora Bora in French Polynesia By eqroy: stock.adobe.com
Back cover: https://www.mining-journal.com/politics/news/1377480/judgement-day-imminent-for-controversial-solomon-islands-mine
(Wagina, in Solomon Islands, the first I-Nikunau diasporic community to have arisen outside Kiribati)

ISBN 978-94-6426-029-8 (softcover)
ISBN 978-94-6426-030-4 (hardcover)
ISBN 978-94-6426-031-1 (PDF e-book)

# Contents

# PART I

## Introduction

Life is not a problem to be solved, but a reality to be experienced – Soren Kierkegaard

The broad scholarly value of this study lies in illuminating and stimulating interest in the demographical, economic, social and political dynamics of peoples associated with atolls, particularly in the Pacific. A clue about why this might be a topic of interest lies in my title, *Acclimatising to Higher Ground*. While scientists of various disciplines can argue all they like about what constitutes an atoll, and so come up with an all-encompassing definition, and then inquire about how they form and such like (see Goldberg, 2016), their feature of immediate importance is that the entire land they comprise is at or near sea-level. Put that together with popular beliefs about the level of the world's oceans rising because of melting ice sheets at the poles and similar phenomena associated with greenhouse gases, climate change, etc., and the image conjured up are people on atolls needing to move somewhere else, where the ground is literally higher. But, in addition, the move which atoll dwellers make elsewhere geographically might be considered in terms of moving to higher ground in a metaphorical sense, demographically, socially, economically and in similar analytical categories, or at least not suffering falls to lower ground in those categories as a result of emigrating from their atolls.

The study is about *I-Nikunau*, a people so called because of their indigenous, ancestral, and continuing connections with Nikunau, a closed-lagoon atoll almost at the centre of the Pacific Ocean (coordinates 1.3475°S, 176.4512°E) (Goldberg, 2016). The study comprises a retrospective analysis of *I-Nikunau*: I have surveyed their present circumstances and analysed how and why they have arisen. The analysis was performed using a series of 14 themes, for example, geography, demography and economy, hence "themes of analysis", and is reported accordingly, that is as a series of "thematic circumstances" under the headings "geographical circumstances", "demographical circumstances", "economic circumstances", etc. Much of the study's importance stems from perceived inadequacies in these circumstances, individually and collectively, and a consequent desire to improve them.

Nikunau (otherwise spelt Nukunau and charted too as Byron's Island[1]) is the life world of more than 85% of its present approximately 2,000 inhabitants; they self-identify as *I-Nikunau*, being descended from, or married to, persons of various origins associated with the atoll for more than a millenary, as supported by indigenous accounts and anthropological, archaeological, ecological, ethnographic, sociological and other studies (Addison & Matisoo-Smith, 2010; Alaima et al., 1979; Autio, 2010; Di Piazza, 1999;

Dickinson, 2003; Geddes, 1977; Goodenough, 1955; Grimble, 1921, 1933, 1989; Hockings, 1984; Kambati, 1992; King & Sigrah, 2004; Lambert, 1966b; Latouche, 1983b; Lewis, 1988; Lundsgaarde & Silverman, 1972; Macdonald, 1982a; Maude & Maude, 1994; Maude, 1963, 1977, 1991; Sabatier, 1939/1977; Takasaka et al. 2006; Teweiariki, n.d.; Thomas, 2003; Willmott, 2007). Furthermore, the atoll has continuing significance for more than another 5,000 living persons who, if not born on Nikunau themselves, are descended from someone in the last three generations or so who was. Most of these 5,000 others comprise a diaspora, which I use in the broad senses of a people who identify with a place, that is Nikunau Atoll in this study, and who have settled in groups elsewhere, and the collection of places inhabited by the groups and the actual dispersion processes (see Cohen & Van Hear, 2008). Over the past few decades, this diaspora has steadily extended to other Pacific places and further afield (e.g., to Great Britain, because of Nikunau's colonial links thereto between 1892 and 1979). Regarding the groups in each place, I refer to them as "diasporic communities" (cf. Shuval, 2000), using "community" in the sense of a body of people who live in the same place and have ethnicity or culture in common.

In the global scheme of things, Nikunau and *I-Nikunau* are largely anonymous, let alone significant, and so it might be easy to dismiss this study as trivial. However, they are attracting the world's attention along with the other atolls which constitute the sovereign state of the Republic of Kiribati[2] and where about 120,000 *I-Kiribati*[3] reside (Bedford, Bedford, Corcoran & Didham, 2016; National Statistics Office, 2016). As intimated above, this is because Nikunau and these other atolls are enmeshed in climate change, as manifested in weather patterns and ocean currents changing, and sea-level rising, with potentially devastating consequences for the land, its flora and fauna, and for marine resources, including through fresh water being compromised and the ocean being affected by acidification and temperature rise (see Corcoran, 2016; Kambati, 2011; Kuruppu & Liverman, 2011; McIver, Woodward, Davies, Tebikau & Iddings, 2014; McLean & Kench, 2015; Mimura et al., 2007; Oakes, Milan & Campbell, 2016; Rytz, 2018; Spencer, 1997; Storey & Hunter, 2010; Weir, Dovey & Orcherton, 2017). How rapidly these things are occurring is reflected in these issues not even being mentioned in national plans or other reports compiled in the colonial or immediate post-colonial period (see Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony, 1970; Green, Bukhari & Lawrence, 1979; Government of Kiribati, 1983; Pitchford, 1981). Indeed, they barely sparked international attention until as recently as 1985 (see Pernetta & Hughes, 1990). Thus, not least among inadequacies of *I-Nikunau's* present circumstances is living with the swiftly emerging prospect of having to abandon these atolls, remove to higher ground and acclimatise to this ground, wherever it may be (see Donner & Webber, 2014; Nei Tabera Ni Kai Video Unit, 2009, 2010; Nunn, 2013; Oakes et al., 2016; Smith, 2013; Tatoa & Hogan, 2008; Thomas, 2001; White et al., 2007; Wyett, 2014).

As indicated above, this prospect is one facing the world's many other atoll dwellers and is prompting global speculation about all manner of things. High among these are matters connected with emigration from the atolls, including people being labelled "refugees" and going reluctantly through the possibly trying processes of immigration to and resettlement in other countries. One such country is New Zealand (or *Nu Tiran*), where there are already diasporic communities of *I-Nikunau* (e.g., see AJ+, 2014; Bedford & Bedford, 2010; Edwards, 2014; Fedor, 2012; Roman, 2013; Thompson, 2016; Williams, 2008). What these matters might mean for *I-Nikunau* on Nikunau, elsewhere in Kiribati and in New Zealand is incorporated into this study, and so should probably broaden its appeal to

its subjects and to scholars examining other peoples in similar circumstances. This is in keeping with Donner (2015a) calling for not only deeper scientific understanding, but also greater cultural understanding, to assist atoll people battling climate change, including ways to relocate people with dignity.

Besides, the study provides other insights, including how connections between *I-Nikunau* have been maintained over great distances and through time, and how tradition has been taken to diasporic communities on urban islands and in metropolitan countries, and adapted. It is anticipated that these other insights will be valuable, including as an illustration of method and bringing out the interconnections among the various thematic circumstances and the often separate, academic disciplines with which they are associated. For *I-Nikunau* in particular, these insights are relevant in various ways. They can assist in evaluating how adequate their circumstances are, including by recognising and delving into inadequacies of the present. They can prompt discussion about future circumstances, and inform actions intended to address inadequacies and otherwise make these future circumstances better than they would be in the absence of these insights. That is, the insights should be valuable to *I-Nikunau* in addressing the future, including taking action to meet their needs and aspirations.

The rest of this research monograph is separated into 18 chapters. In Chapter 1, I outline, explain and discuss the study approach, my standing in relation to *I-Nikunau*, the validity of *I-Nikunau* as a study identity and the processes for gathering and analysing empirical materials. Part II comprises a narrative of *I-Nikunau* in the Present, both on their atoll and in diaspora; it is separated into three chapters, each covering this Present in particular places. Part III analyses *I-Nikunau's* Present in Retrospect, and is separated into 14 chapters each relating one of the aforementioned thematic circumstances, the last three of which synthesise the findings as a whole. In Part IV, I conclude the research monograph, reflecting again on its value, giving some synthesis to the retrospective analysis and advancing other opinions.

The final point to make before proceeding is to explain the quote from Soren Kierkegaard I have put at the beginning. As explained in the upcoming chapter, I have spent time living in Kiribati. A telling cultural difference I experienced was at social gatherings where a mix of *I-Matang* (i.e., indigenous persons of Europe, in particular being fair-skinned)[4] and *I-Kiribati* were assembled, for example, on the "beach" at sunset on Fridays after work and a game of football: after the usual pleasantries, the conversation among *I-Kiribati* turned to life in general and particulars of the here and now, and possibly the weekend ahead. In contrast, the conversation among *I-Matang*, most of whom were aid project workers on contacts of several months or a couple of years, usually turned to (re-)constituting the everyday and less-immediate phenomena around them into "social problems" which, in their eyes, were facing *I-Kiribati*, whether living further along the beach, elsewhere on the atoll, or in general (cf. Silverman, 2004); and of course, plenty of "solutions" were also generated. Meanwhile, I just watched the sunset, sipped my cold beer and smiled.

# 1

# Research Approach

Being concerned to improve understanding of the demographical, economic, social, political and similar circumstances of *I-Nikunau* as a people, including in diaspora, I have made a detailed analysis and taken a long view. To effect this in practice, I analysed the present-day circumstances of *I-Nikunau* descriptively. Then, I analysed the circumstances by themes and retrospectively, in order to explain these circumstances and understand their dynamics. I wove the empirical materials at my disposal into a rich, chronological, socio-historical, analytic description of the physical and social conditions of *I-Nikunau*, spatially and temporally (cf. Carnegie & Napier, 2002; Pentland, 1999). This rich narrative covers changes in *I-Nikunau's* circumstances as far back as the empirical materials allowed, and demonstrates connections between these circumstances and not only emigration and immigration (see Thompson, Howden-Chapman & Fougere, 2017) but also diaspora.

My approach is predicated on the popular, if inexact, assertion that *History matters*: that is on the idea that "Placing [behaviours and events of consequence] in time – systematically situating particular moments (including the present) in a temporal sequence of events and processes – can greatly enrich our understanding of complex social dynamics" (Pierson, 2000, p. 72), not to mention "that it is only in retrospect, after observing the structure and its transformations, that it is possible to know the nature of the structure [in a social, anthropological sense]" (Cohn, 1980, p. 219). Concomitantly, the approach resonates with contentions by several authors (e.g., Burnett, 1998; Haller, Portes & Lynch, 2011; Roman, 2013; Thompson; 2016) that immigration and settlement are complex processes involving perhaps several generations at least, not just the persons who relocated geographically.

## 1.1 Validity of Chosen Themes

In Part I Introduction, I mention carrying out retrospective analysis using 14 themes. I leave the details of these themes of analysis until reaching Part III of the monograph, in which that retrospective analysis is presented as a series of thematic circumstances. However, here it is important for me to relate how the themes in question arose and clarify their validity. The themes were induced, or emerged, as I worked through the empirical materials iteratively, comparing and contrasting these materials with scholarly literature, sense making, revision and interpretation, all under the auspices of undertaking analysis, synthesis and interpretation. Figure 1 shows four themes I had in mind early on; the figure is deliberate in picturing these four themes as overlapping. It was through applying these four that the others arose, through division in some cases and extension in others.

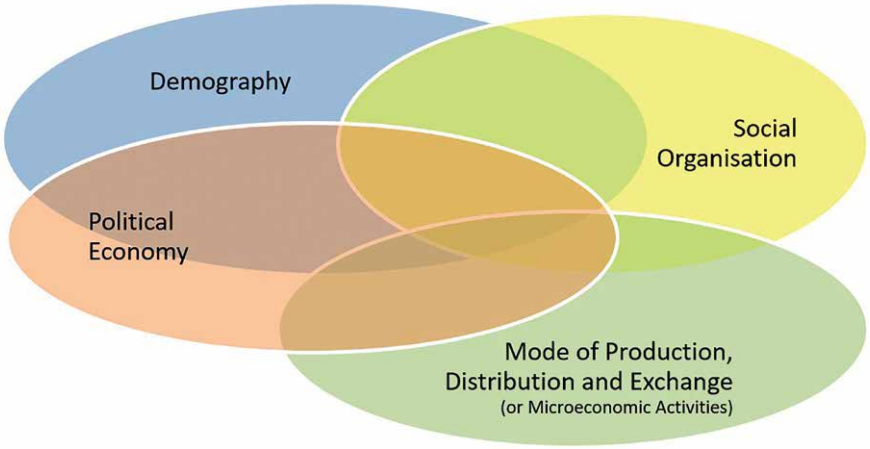



*Figure 1*. Initial Themes of Analysis.

I appreciate the subjective nature of the four initial themes, and certainly the 14 into which I expanded them; another researcher approaching the same challenge would probably have devised a different list and an alternative arrangement. Besides, the themes reflect my predominantly *I-Matang* culture and thinking, informed by literature mostly written by people of similar kind. Indeed, among *I-Nikunau*, traditionally at least, not only are the themes questionable but also the idea of division and classification is alien, just as in *te mwaneaba* (≅ traditional meetinghouse), for example, thinking and activities are wholistic, rather than separated into religion, politics, business, etc.

Nevertheless, such divisions and classifications have been common for some time in official documents of a development planning, island profiling and reporting nature about *I-Nikunau*, but not necessarily for or addressed to *I-Nikunau* and other *I-Kiribati* (e.g., see Government of Kiribati, 1983, 2016b; Office of Te Beretitenti and T'Makei Services, 2012b). However, there is much to suggest that this perspective is external, fostered by colonial and aid organisation officials and consultants (e.g., see Asian Development Bank, 2009a, 2009b; Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony, 1957, 1970; Macdonald, 1998). Even so, an interesting variant is evident in Ministry of Internal and Social Affairs (2007),[5] which in departing from the traditional, wholistic thinking has at least a suggestion of being more *I-Kiribati* than *I-Matang*. The variant in question is based on a motto of some longstanding, and that now appears on the coat of arms of the Republic of Kiribati (see Figure 2). The motto reads "*te mauri, te raoi, ao te tabomoa*" and seems to have been used to close speeches in *mwaneaba*, etc. for at least several decades, although I was not able to find it recorded as such, say in Arthur Grimble's writings of the early 20th century (e.g., Grimble, 1933, 1989, 2013; Maude & Maude, 1994). However, he does report it in a protective incantation on Marakei Atoll.

The motto has been translated variously into English, including words and terms such as health, welfare, being alive and well, being safe and sound, prosperity, peace, justness, stability, civility, calmness, togetherness, conciliation, honour and respect (Grimble 1989; Trussel & Groves, 2003). In Ministry of Internal and Social Affairs (2007), *te mauri* was aligned with people, demography, natural resources, water, environ-


*Figure 2.* Coat of Arms of the Republic of Kiribati (Source: Republic of Kiribati, 2016).

ment, health, education, housing, social welfare and social infrastructure. Similarly, *te raoi* was aligned with social capital, community life, local institutions, crime and the justice system, religion, political authority and governance. In addition, *te tabomoa* was aligned with economic activities and economies, modes of production, transport and communications infrastructure. I try to use this arrangement in my analysis and attempting to synthesise it.

## 1.2 Validity of *I-Nikunau* as a Study Identity

A further, equally important issue of validity concerns my choice of *I-Nikunau* as the study identity, compared, that is, with obvious alternatives of a larger population, such as *I-Kiribati*, or a geographical identity, such as Nikunau Atoll or the Kiribati Archipelago, or a national identity, such as the Republic of Kiribati. Choosing *I-Nikunau* or Nikunau is consistent with a trend in the Pacific literature away from studying island groups with European names or countries which have arisen out of colonies – Nikunau was part of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony (hereafter, the Colony, or, in citing references, GEIC)– and towards studying events and circumstances of significance to local or sub-national identities. The latter would include those representing the boundaries of pre-colonial polities (Davidson, 1966; Grimshaw, 1999; Howe, 1979), being cognisant that up to the 1880s, Nikunau was not only politically autonomous from neighbouring islands but also it comprised six, largely autonomous, territorial polities, each governed as gerontocracies (Macdonald, 1982a; Maude, 1960, 1963).

As for choosing *I-Nikunau* over Nikunau, this is consistent with engaging in the history of "ordinary people in their local setting" (Burke, 1991, p. 238), otherwise referred to as history from below (Grimshaw, 1999, p. 715). It is in keeping with an argument proffered by Morrell (1960) in relation to the writing of history in the Pacific, that "the proper subject of history is not an area but a community" (p. 1). In respect of the Kiribati Islands, choosing the people of a single island is consistent with arguments of Macdonald (1996b) that:

> the primary identity was with the extended family household [≅ *mwenga*] and its landholdings [≅ *aba*], then with a larger district grouping, still linked through the male line by common descent [a reference to *utu*, *kainga* and *boti*], and then with the island. Intermarriage might have established linkages to other adjacent islands to which descent might also be traced but this was usually beyond the horizon in a political as well as geographic sense. (p. 39)

Moreover, following over half a century of emigration, studying only Nikunau Atoll would lead to losing sight of *I-Nikunau* residing elsewhere, whether temporarily or permanently, and whose demographical, economic and other circumstances could provide valuable insights. In other words, it would mean omitting two significant phenomena. First, the pattern produced by *I-Nikunau* going away temporarily was circular, and so akin to a concept referred to sometimes as *circular labour migration* (see Bedford & Bedford, 2013; Shlomowitz & Munro, 1992). Second, the effect of *I-Nikunau* emigrating permanently and mainly to particular places has given rise to communities whose members continue to identify with Nikunau as their place of origin, alongside identifying with their place of settlement; in aggregate, these communities now make up an *I-Nikunau* diaspora (cf. Bedford & Bedford, 2013). Of further interest is that these two phenomena have been successive, with the ascendance of temporary absences from Nikunau having given way in the past two generations to the ascendance of permanent resettlement.

Studying *I-Nikunau* in the context(s) of circular labour migration and diaspora opens up possibilities of obtaining a macrocosmic view of the Pacific, past and present (cf. Howe, 1979). It thus aligns with Macdonald's suggestion for studies to examine broader "'imperial' or hegemonic relationships affecting the world more generally than just the Pacific, and the underlying forces that drive them" (1996b, p. 30) (see also Hezel, 1988). Taking such a view enables consideration of reciprocity effects arising on Nikunau (cf. Bedford & Bedford, 2013), or of diaspora being agents of change in their place of origin (Page & Mercer, 2012), and of diaspora and the emigration which brought it about amounting to *deterritorialised development* (Connell & Corbett, 2016).

Besides, studying *I-Kiribati* as a whole, including its diaspora, would open up too many possibilities because, while there are similarities among the peoples of the different islands (Morrell, 1960; Rennie, 1981), there are also differences. In turn, these differences have given rise to different ways in which these peoples have responded to similar influences (Geddes, Chambers, Sewell, Lawrence & Watters, 1982; King, 1996; Lawrence, 1983; Macdonald, 1982a), and so to different human circumstances and consequences. Indeed, studying *I-Kiribati* as a whole would overlook two phenomena. First, *I-Nikunau* have formed an urban atoll diasporic community on Tarawa Atoll, which is the Republic's seat of government and only large settlement which can described as "urbanised" (Jones, 2012). Second, *I-Nikunau* are part of *I-Kiribati* diasporic communities in, usually metropolitan, places (e.g., New Zealand's *Te Waipounamu* (or South Island)) where these are more practical than having separate *I-Nikunau* diasporic communities.

### *1.2.1 Utu*

In quoting Macdonald (1996b) above, I inserted the term *utu*. As this term is used in explaining next how I was able to go about collecting empirical materials, I should describe it first. *Utu* is a vital and longstanding institution of *I-Nikunau* society and that of neighbouring islands, and has equivalents in other Pacific societies (see Geddes, 1977; Goodenough, 1955; Grimble, 1952; Lundsgaarde, 1974; Macdonald, 1971; Maude, 1963, 1977; Maude & Maude, 1931; Morrell, 1960; Ratuva, 2014). *Utu* refers to persons who have "a behavioural relationship of enduring, diffuse solidarity" (Lundsgaarde & Silverman, 1972, p. 98 – this definition seems inspired by Burridge, 1957, and Eisenstadt, 1956) through either consanguinity or affinity, and so essentially embracing birth, *tibutibu* (≅ adoption of close kin) and marriage, although it has been suggested by Lambert (1966a) that other essential non-biological factors, on some northern islands in the Kiribati Archipelago at least, are a common history, co-residence and economic cooperation.

A further elaboration is inferred by Maude (1963), who explains that a person's *utu* is in theory an indefinitely extensible category of near and distant kindred, but in practice one bounded by knowing with whom one shares a common ancestor. In my experience, this often amounts to scores or even hundreds of people, given the still keen knowledge of genealogy among *I-Nikunau* and other *I-Kiribati*, the common ancestor being possibly several generations back, and so long dead. However, nowadays, *I-Nikunau* usually distinguish between *utu*, being short for *utu ni kaan* (≅ close kin), and *koraki* (i.e., broader-kindred *utu*) (personal communications from Hegnes Dixon and Dick Overy). Thus, depending on the context, the term *utu* is often used to refer to near kindred sharing a common ancestor, say, within four or five generations and exhibiting this solidarity; *koraki*, on the other hand, are usually more distant contemporary consanguine relatives, with whom the solidarity is not quite as keen but still quite strong.

## 1.3 Empirical Materials

I amassed empirical materials from a mixture of primary and secondary sources. The primary sources have involved participant-observation, akin to immersion. For 35 years, I have been a member by affinity of a bilateral kinship category, group and network, which *I-Nikunau* might refer to as *ana utu* [insert name of person] *ni kaan* – the generic word in this term, namely *utu*, is elaborated in the previous section. During the 35 years in question, I have stayed on Nikunau, lived within diasporic communities of *I-Nikunau* on Tarawa, New Zealand's two main islands and Great Britain, and I have visited communities in Solomon Islands and on Nauru – the latter was defunct by 2005 because its raison d'être, that is phosphate mining, had ceased.

Being permitted to capitalise on my affinal ties to *I-Nikunau* in these and other ways has been vital to achieve the richness of narrative I referred to earlier. I used this insider knowledge and experience to gather together empirical materials myself – by identifying and articulating situations and events I experienced, observed or was told about – and analysing and interpreting these materials in the grey space between participant insider and outside observer. My experiences have been further enriched by countless stories and anecdotes from *utu ni kaan*, *koraki*, expatriate *I-Nikunau* and *I-Kiribati* in diasporic communities, and *I-Matang* who had resided in Kiribati temporarily at various times between the 1960s and 2000s, some of whom are part of other *utu* by affinity. More details about applying these methods and using these sources are provided in relating findings in Part II.

The secondary sources are empirical materials collected and processed by others and which I made efforts to verify, re-interpret, question in terms of perspective – see Cohn (1980) on the varied approaches among anthropologists and historians, to name but a few – and apply. These materials range in time and attitude over some 10 generations[6] since the earliest recorded encounter, according to Maude (1961), of *I-Nikunau* by *I-Matang*, namely by Commodore Byron and his ships' crews during their circumnavigation of the world (Officer on Board the Said Ship, 1767, pp. 135-138). Of these sources, the vast majority either only make slight mention of Nikunau, *I-Nikunau* or the situations and events I observed or heard and read about elsewhere, or they only refer more generally to *I-Kiribati* (or Gilbertese, as they were referred to for a long time). Nevertheless, I have found all these materials applicable in one way or another to Nikunau and *I-Nikunau*, even though they may not single out the atoll and its people by name.

An issue arising is about the efficacy of secondary sources, stemming from some historians arguing that primary sources are imperative, traditionally privileging them based on what Merino (1998) criticises as "putative objectivity" (p. 607) (see also Hezel, 1988). Being concerned to reflect *I-Nikunau*, a society in which writings of any sort have been considered unnecessary, and thus rare, to privilege primary over secondary sources would be to silence past secondary records of *I-Nikunau* and other *I-Kiribati* voices and materials (e.g., Kambati, 1992; Koch, 1965/1986; Latouche, 1983b), compared with official colonial records (e.g., GEIC, 1976; *Land (Copra) Tax Register 1910-1916*).

A further matter is that *I-Matang* are responsible for most of these secondary sources. Thus, despite whatever attempts authors may have made to downplay their backgrounds and perspectives (see Hezel, 1988; Lal, 2007), they bring into play the issue of *I-Matang* writing about Pacific peoples but being largely concerned with *I-Matang* issues (see Alaima et al., 1979), including any desire to gate-keep, and so restrict what issues have been researched, by whom and how (cf. Teaiwa, 2018). This shows in the preponderance of literature being about exploring and discovery; commercing, including extracting natural resources (e.g., whale oil, whalebone, spermaceti, ambergris, phosphate, tuna), trading for commodities (e.g., coconut oil and copra), and blackbirding, indenturing, conscripting and recruiting labourers and transporting them to various places; evangelizing, educating and preventing, treating and curing disease, illness and infirmity; imperial and colonial warring, governing and civilising, developing and aiding economically and socially, nation building and strengthening of non-traditional institutions post-independence; testing weapons of mass destruction; and conserving, protecting and reinstating the natural environment, and, especially of late, addressing climate change and its consequences (cf. Macdonald, 1982a; Routledge, 1985).

From an *I-Nikunau* perspective, the matters just enumerated seem to be a misunderstood mishmash of things which *I-Matang* and others (e.g., Chinese, Samoans, other *I-Kiribati* even) have done, and about which *I-Nikunau* received little by way of explanation. This has often applied even when said *I-Matang* and others actually resided on or visited Nikunau (e.g., as beachcombers and castaways, traders, missionaries, officials of the Great Powers, aid organisation workers, field researchers). It has certainly applied to the most influential foreigners, most of whom have never visited Nikunau, having plied their authority, expertise, etc., from a distance within Kiribati (e.g., from Butaritari, Beru or Tarawa Atolls or Banaba (or Ocean) Island) or from outside it (e.g., from Suva, Honiara, London, Malua, Rome, Melbourne, Sydney, Canberra, Manila, Washington DC, New York).

## 1.4 Intent of Applying My Methods

I referred at the beginning of Part I Introduction to illumination and stimulating interest, with the implication of there being things to be concerned about. This concern comes from me, as the researcher, and underpins an intention for this study to have beneficial outcomes, including improving *I-Nikunau's* future circumstances from a critical, better-informed and comprehensive standpoint (cf. Smith, 2012). Having produced the study, however, there is some doubt in my mind as to whether it will empower *I-Nikunau*, in particular, whether it addresses the sorts of issues which interest them or which they see, or will come to see as, relevant and important. While this seems to be a question for all research and the researchers who conduct it, I am cognisant of the question being complicated by the cultural gap between the subjects of this research and the *I-Matang* world I mostly inhabit. This brings me back to the issue of my being *I-Matang*, and being regarded and treated as such by *I-Kiribati*, notwithstanding 35 years of affinal ties. As Sabatier (1939/1977) indicates, citing an anonymous source, "after ten years in the islands you think you know the local people; after twenty-five years you doubt it and after forty years you are firmly convinced that you do not know them" (p. 341).

# PART II

## *I-Nikunau* in the Present

> For us climate change is not an event in the future. It's an event that we're dealing with now…our entire survival is at stake – Anote Tong

Of approximately 7,000 people presently identifying as I-Nikunau worldwide, barely half were born on Nikunau and no more than 1,800 normally reside there (Kiribati Local Government Association, 2013). Indeed, even though they adhere to the I-Nikunau identity, about a third have never actually set foot on Nikunau, a proportion that has increased significantly for two generations and will continue to do so. Furthermore, the largest population of I-Nikunau in one place comprises the approximately 2,600 now normally resident on Tarawa Atoll, where there are possibly upwards of a further 800 persons with consanguinal or affinal links to Nikunau which are more tentative.

The rest of the diaspora, comprising another 2,800 persons or so, live elsewhere, either in the Republic (i.e., on either other islands in the Kiribati Archipelago (≈ 500) or the Line Islands (≈ 700)), or on other Pacific Islands (including Solomon Islands (≈ 1,200), New Zealand (≈ 150), Australia (≈ 50), Fiji, Vanuatu, the Marshall Islands and Papua New Guinea), or further afield (including on Great Britain (≈ 20) and elsewhere in Europe, and North America) (see Figure 3) (cf. Bedford & Bedford, 2010; National Statistics Office, 2013, 2016; Office of Te Beretitenti and T'Makei Services, 2012b Solomon Islands National Statistics Office, 2021; Teaiwa, 2014; Thompson, 2016 ; Walsh, 2020). Except that, as is indicated in Part I Introduction, where the number of members who may identify as *I-Nikunau* is not great, in practical social terms the diasporic community they are part of is more accurately described as one of *I-Kiribati* than of *I-Nikunau*.

How this applies in the community in Great Britain and in the now half dozen communities in New Zealand (cf. Roman, 2013; Thompson, 2016) is reflected in pan-Kiribati names adopted by the formal bodies established in these communities to organise events and perform other functions (e.g., Kiribati Tungaru Association, Christchurch Kiribati Community). It may also apply in the traditional and urban diasporic communities in Solomon Islands because of how these came about (see Donner, 2015b; Schuermann, 2014; Tammy, 2011)–these communities arose through successive migrations of peoples from Nikunau and other islands in the Kiribati Archipelago, first, to different islands in the Phoenix Islands, and then, barely a generation later, from there to different islands in Solomon Islands.

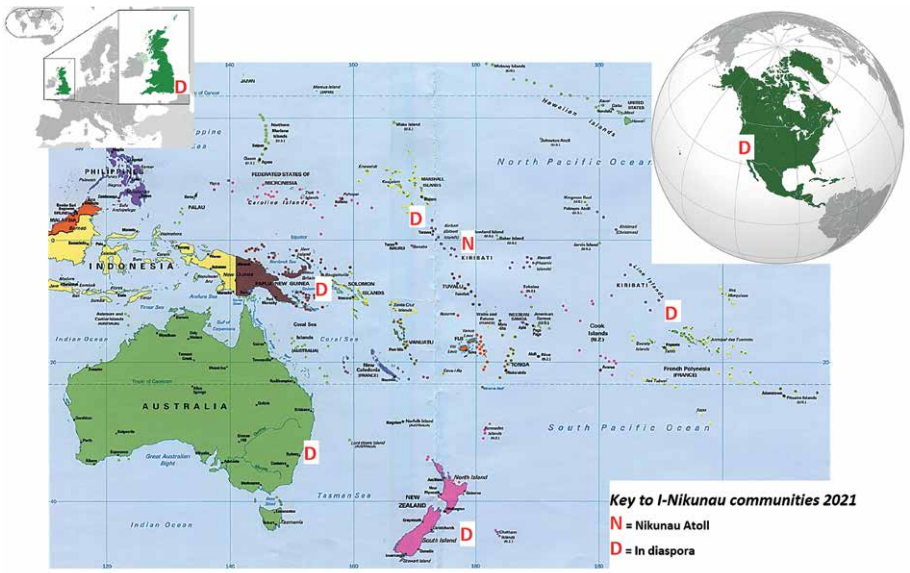



*Figure 3.* Nikunau and the *I-Nikunau* Diaspora.

The rest of this chapter is intended to provide descriptive foundations for the circumstances I analyse retrospectively under different themes of analysis in Part III. In order to do this pragmatically, I contend that the ≈7,000 may be thought of as comprising three categories:

- those living traditionally, including on Nikunau and other Outer Islands[7] in the Kiribati Archipelago and Line Islands, and on Ghizo, Alu and Wagina Islands in Solomon Islands;
- those living in an urban island settlement, particularly Tarawa but also Honiara and Gizo, and perhaps Suva, Nadi and Majuro; and
- those in metropolitan countries.

Furthermore, given that to describe all instances of each category is beyond my experience, I have used those on Nikunau to illustrate the first, those on Tarawa to illustrate the second, and beyond Kiribati, those in Great Britain and New Zealand to illustrate the third. Thus, these descriptive foundations are arranged in three chapters, Chapters 2 to 4.

Before presenting each illustration, it is useful to clarify some points. The description of Nikunau in Chapter 2 is based on various written and oral secondary sources and my participant-observations during five visits between 1985 and 2009, which totalled four months. Where the written secondary sources are based on studies of neighbouring islands, I have used Nikunau informants and my participant-observations to satisfy myself of their relevance and validity. As my first and, to most intents and purposes, only language is English, and the language of Nikunau is a version of *te taetae ni Kiribati* – to clarify, most *I-Nikunau* I met on Nikunau spoke only a few words of English – I relied on my spouse to interpret conversations, as well as explain many aspects of life the two of us observed and participated in

during my visits. My spouse was born and brought up on Nikunau. She moved to Tarawa to complete her schooling. Afterwards, she went onto tertiary study there and overseas, working as a teacher on Nikunau for a year or so in between. Since, we have been together, on Nikunau during the visits mentioned above and in the other places covered in the following paragraphs.

The description of Tarawa in Chapter 3 is also based on various written and oral secondary sources and participant-observations. The latter occurred for six periods between 1985 and 2009. These included a two-year residence spent in a family house typically rented to a temporary *non-I-Kiribati* resident involved in an aid project or a senior government official, and, indeed, originally built for colonial officials; and five shorter visits, totalling six months and spent in several *I-Nikunau mwenga*. The descriptions of Great Britain and New Zealand in Chapter 4 are also based on written and oral secondary sources and participant-observations. The latter were from inside *I-Kiribati* metropolitan diasporic communities on *Te Ika-a-Maui* (New Zealand's North Island) (1987-1997), Great Britain (1999-2006) and *Te Waipounamu* (2007-). In all these places, as on Nikunau, I used my participant-observations to satisfy myself about the relevance and validity of the written secondary sources.

Regarding participating on Tarawa and in the two metropolitan countries among *I-Nikunau* and *I-Kiribati*, the comments above about English and *te taetae ni Kiribati* still apply. Although mother-tongue *te taetae ni Kiribati* speakers I met in these places had more English, many lacked practice in speaking it, very much so on Tarawa and to a large extent in New Zealand; I found them reluctant to converse, other than in short, one-on-one conversations. The exceptions were among the speakers who lived in mixed *I-Matang-I-Kiribati* households, which is the dominant situation in Great Britain but is much less so in New Zealand, and among most young people in New Zealand, probably because of the English-language school system there.

What I say about English corresponds with the work in New Zealand by Roman (2013) and Thompson (2016). Thompson associates the word *maama* (or *mama*) with this reluctance or shyness, which she also perceived as applying to other situations in which shyness is accompanied by seemingly inappropriate smiling or laughing. In fact, the word *mama* makes up part of the word *kamama* which is used later in this research monograph as the equivalent of shame, a way of demeaning oneself and suffering public embarrassment, including becoming *te bai n rang* (≅ a laughing stock) (see Trussel & Groves, 2003). However, *kamama* not only applies in the context of answering questions which have a correct answer by giving an incorrect answer, and so displaying ignorance, but it also applies to showing off by giving the correct answer (McCreary & Boardman, 1968). Thus, there seem to be cultural impediments to using research methods involving other than one-on-one conversations.

# 2

# On Nikunau Atoll

Nikunau (area 19 km$^2$, pop. 1,789 – National Statistics Office, 2016) is comprised of coral and shaped like an elongated figure of eight (see Figure 4). None of the land is more than 5m above the vast Pacific Ocean around it. Although there are obvious signs of soils being poor and rainfall intermittent (see Di Piazza, 2001; Ministry of Internal and Social Affairs, 2007), the atoll is mostly covered in trees, bushes and other flora (for a list, see Fosberg & Sachet, 1987). Except there are three small lakes, one of which is an ephemeral or hypersaline lagoon (Goldberg, 2016; Wester, Juvik & Holthus, 1992); and there are collections of various fabricated objects, reflecting human settlement and activities. The distribution of much of the flora also reflects this human existence, vital to which are *I-Nikunau's* activities on not only the land but also the ocean, including the fringing reef which runs the length of the atoll's western shore – the eastern shore lacks such a feature, the beach there falling much more steeply into the ocean. A satellite view is available from EarthStreetView.com (2014) and a tour video from Teuea (2010).

The various fabricated objects referred to above, and mostly shown as settlements, etc. on Figure 4, reflect past and present activities of *I-Nikunau* and various other types of transient residents and visitors. *I-Nikunau* mostly reside in the six *kawa* (≅ a clustered settlement or converged village) positioned intermittently along the south-west facing shore, and so adjacent to the fringing reef there. From northwest to southeast, their names and populations are Muribenua (pop. 250), Tabutoa (pop. 146), Rungata (pop. 847), Mwanriiki (pop. 184), Nikumanu (pop. 293) and Tabomatang (pop. 69) (National Statistics Office, 2016).

An unsealed road runs through each *te kawa* and connects them. Beyond Tabomatang, the road runs past that *kawa's* cemetery to the atoll's southern-most tip; here Taburitongoun, a highly esteemed *te bakatibu* (≈ an ancestor beyond the seventh generation), is alleged to maintain a spiritual presence (Kambati, 1992; Latouche, 1983a, 1983b; Maude, 1963), and this is symbolised by *te boua-n-anti* (≅ a spirit stone or shrine) dedicated to him.[8] In contrast, the road to the north-west of Muribenua terminates at one of the atoll's most modern features, the airport, which a group of British Royal Engineers constructed about 1970. Until recently, this was the only road on the atoll, apart from a few narrow tracks running to the eastern side through *buakonikai* (≅ bush lands); an unsealed road, to which the tracks across the atoll connect, now runs along the northeast facing shore.

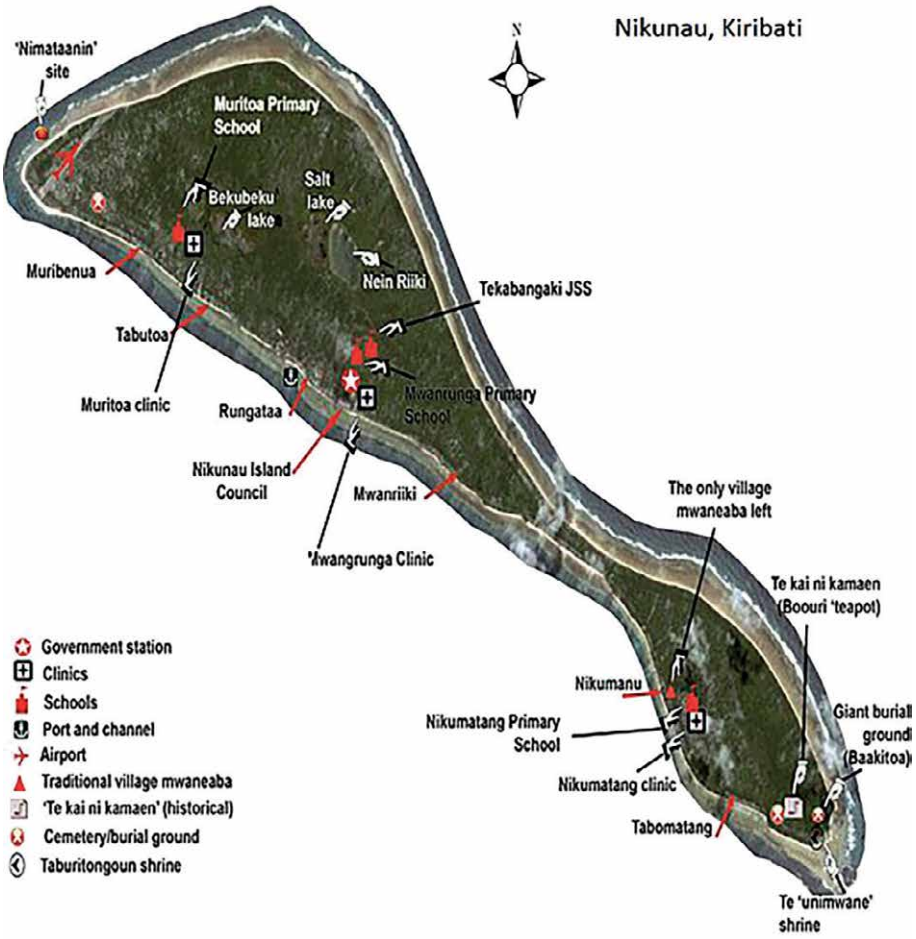



*Figure 4.* Nikunau Atoll (Source: Ministry of Internal and Social Affairs, 2007, p. 15).

Each *te kawa* mostly comprises areas on which *I-Nikunau* dwell as households. Known as *te mwenga*, each is formed of several separate *buia*, *kiakia*, *okai*, *bareaka*, *bata* and other constructions.[9] These are all types of small and medium-sized huts and other shelter-like structures, some on stilts or with platforms, built of local materials (i.e., thatch, poles, coconut binding, etc.), and having different functions, including sitting/eating, cooking, sleeping and storage, and canoe sheds. Where appropriate, these structures contain traditional furniture, which mostly takes the form of walking/standing, sitting, sleeping and other mats (cf. Koch 1965/1986), although a few imported cabinets, cupboards, chests of drawers, etc. have come to supplement them. The spaces between these structures are used to dry copra, fish, pandanus pulp, etc., to wash clothes, and to accommodate an open fire area, sometimes a well (communal wells with solar-powered pumps are also available) and even a grave (cf. Hockings, 1984).

Positioning graves here is a recent return to tradition, as each *te kawa* still has a cemetery, usually on its fringe, away from residential areas, as originally mandated under

now defunct Colony Government regulations (e.g., Regulations for the Good Order, 1933). These regulations also account for *mwenga* comprising each *te kawa* being arranged still in two very orderly rows running parallel to the shoreline and either side of the aforesaid road. The regulations also applied to matters of water and sewerage, specifically the provision of wells and latrines in *te mwenga* and the actions of bathing and defecating. However, these actions are now completed on the seashore, by and large, there being little concern for maintaining latrines for various reasons (e.g., lack of concern about privacy and pollution, lack of technical knowledge, cultural repugnance, higher priority of other subsistence work) (cf. Hockings, 1984).

Regarding other modern conveniences and utilities, there is no gas on the atoll and electricity generation is localised, with small petrol/diesel generators, solar cells and batteries in use but only on a limited basis because of scarcity, unreliability and cost (cf. Ministry of Internal and Social Affairs, 2007). This limits the use of household and other equipment and machinery, so impairing many phenomena which even on Tarawa, let alone in metropolitan countries, may be taken for granted. Examples include lighting, cooling and refrigeration, cooking, computing, telecommunications, entertainment media, and mechanised manufacture and engineering. Among things in common or limited use are pressure lamps and battery torches, kerosene stoves, battery-powered radios, local and imported non-electric musical instruments, and petrol and diesel-powered equipment (see Mala, Schläpfer & Pryor, 2009, about similar matters on Abemama).

The word *mwenga* also translates as households, the one word having two meanings, and so indicating synonymy between geographical place and social residency (Hockings, 1984). Thus, *te mwenga* comprise members of *te utu* (see Chapter 1.2.1) residing together, the average number being 5-6 persons on those *te mwenga* areas still occupied (National Statistics Office, 2013). However, I say "still" because evident from even casual observation are the significant numbers of dwelling areas which are unoccupied in five of the six *kawa*, Rungata being the exception, as explained below. This state of affairs is attributable to entire *mwenga* emigrating from Nikunau to Tarawa, usually in a few stages over several years, rather than all at once, for reasons discussed as the research monograph unfolds. Nevertheless, there are about 365 *mwenga* households on the atoll (Kiribati Local Government Association, 2013).

The two or three most striking buildings in each *te kawa*, and indeed on the whole atoll, are cultural and spiritual, reflecting still what Hockings (1984) describes on neighbouring Onotoa Atoll as "an intense investment in cultural symbolism" (p. 458). On my last visit to Nikunau in 2009, Nikumanu was peculiar in still having *te mwaneaba*, although many of its formal uses, dating from well before 1820, had ceased; such *mwaneaba* were once "masterpiece(s) of Gilbertese culture" (Sabatier, 1939/1977, p. 99), serving as social, political and religious centres of a "*mwaneaba* district" and as inns for visitors.[10] However, I understand that for reasons touched on by Bennett (2018), that is a group culturally responsible for performing its contribution being unwilling to do so, *te mwaneaba* in Nikumanu too is in a state of disrepair (Kiribati Local Government Association, 2013; confidential personal communication, 2019). But even that is more than can be said for *mwaneaba* in the other *kawa*, a few standing stones on overgrown sites being all that remain of them.

It is another kind of cultural and spiritual building which has usurped the functions, symbolism, etc. once reserved to *mwaneaba*. I refer to Nikunau's abundance of churches,

which are in many regards equally striking as one approaches the atoll from sea or air, or when one visits each *te kawa*. All six *kawa* have a church associated with the Kiribati Uniting Church (KUC) (until recently known as the Kiribati Protestant Church (KPC))[11] and four – Tabomatang and Tabutoa are the two exceptions – have a Roman Catholic (RC) church. Adjacent to each church is an *I-Matang*-style, non-traditional dwelling for the pastor and her or his family, or the priest and companion clerics, etc. Furthermore, each church has a structure adjacent to it which is almost as striking as the church itself and is usually referred to, for obvious reasons of appearance, as the church *mwaneaba*, or simply *te mwaneaba*.[12] Indeed, these church *mwaneaba* are seemingly in more frequent use than the churches themselves, for various administrative, social and recreational activities (Ministry of Internal and Social Affairs, 2007). In addition, each *te kawa* also usually have *uma* (≅ small meetinghouses), sometimes associated with different groups of *mwenga* in *te kawa*, or where community groups (e.g., *kawa* welfare groups, young men's groups, women's groups – see Kiribati Local Government Association, 2013) meet and hold functions.

Each *kawa* also boasts either a small trade store, or, failing that, a kiosk, all selling basic provisions, and, in the case of stores, purchasing copra from copra cutters. The items available from these outlets include white rice, white flour, white sugar, oil/fat/dripping, stick tobacco, cigarettes, black tea, instant coffee, evaporated milk, powdered milk, cabin (or navy) biscuits, corned beef, chewing gum, tomato ketchup, tinned vegetables and fruit, soap, toothpaste, matches, lamps, fishing lines, hooks and nets, bicycle parts, pots and pans, knives and spoons, tools and other metal goods, cloth, radio and torch batteries, kerosene and petrol, timber and cement, and *nangkona* (or kava). Except the last item, I observed these in 1987 and 2009, and the extent of this list had changed little over that time, as is the case compared to lists which can be compiled from earlier writers (cf. Catala, 1957; Couper, 1967; Lewis, 1981). The concept of stores is of long standing, dating in at least two cases from the 1870s, and all this time they have represented the extremis of successive maritime trading networks, the present network involving trading and, mostly container, shipping companies based around the western Pacific Rim and Fiji. The legal forms of stores now vary between being branches of *Te Bobotin Nikunau* (or The Nikunau Cooperative Society) and *mronron*, which comprise members drawn from kinship groups, *kawa* or churches.[13] However, no matter what form ownership has taken, the incomes of *I-Nikunau* have rarely warranted the import of much more than basic goods, other impediments being lack of knowledge of many goods, procurement and storage difficulties (e.g., no refrigeration), and reluctance to experience unfamiliar goods.

Most *I-Nikunau* on Nikunau make their living, etc. in traditional ways, to which the goods available from trade stores are incidental, relatively speaking. In and around their *mwenga* and *kawa*, their days are perceived not in hours but in the daylight from dawn to dusk and the darkness of the evening. Mostly according to gender and age (see Grimble, 1933; Lawrence, 1983; Rose, 2014), they spend six days a week performing domestic chores (e.g., fetching water, cleaning, cooking, feeding the pigs), going to school, socialising, and engaging in *kawa* and church activities, fishing on the reef or the ocean and cultivating, harvesting and performing other work on their *aba* (≅ plots of land, some near *te kawa* and the rest in *buakonikai* nearby or at a distance)–McCreary and Boardman (1968) note their focus on the here and now, and their behaviour having a rhythm and being diurnal. Subsisting from the reef and ocean involves using fish traps, canoes and an array of traditional and imported equipment, to acquire a wide variety of fish and shellfish. On land,

many of the bushes, trees, etc. have been propagated and cultivated to yield victuals for everyday or ceremonial use (e.g., coconut, *kamwaimwai* (= coconut molasses), *karewe* or toddy,[14] pandanus fruit, pawpaw, breadfruit, pumpkin, *bwabwai* (≅ swamp taro), pig meat, fowl, cabbage, banana, sweet potato, fig), medicines, ornaments, building materials, tools, fuel and fertiliser (Ministry of Internal and Social Affairs, 2007) (cf. Lawrence, 1983; Lewis, 1981; Luomala, 1974). The resulting domestic produce is part of a subsistence and victuals distribution and exchange process, which in official statistics and the like is largely undercounted, or even neglected, despite its importance to *I-Nikunau* and other *I-Kiribati* standards of living (cf. Gibson & Nero, 2008). Furthermore, the coconut palms also yield the coconuts used to produce almost the only the cash crop, copra.[15]

Daily routine life on Nikunau is punctuated each week by observance of *Te Tabati* (= the Sabbath). As well as church going, some activities are encouraged by religious (and temporal) laws and legal decisions, and other activities are prohibited, including work, play, pastimes, games and sports. The prohibitions apply more so among the near half of the islanders who adhere to the Reformed Protestantism of the KUC – this church grew out of the London Missionary Society (LMS), becoming localised and independent in the 1960s – rather than the similar proportion who are now RCs.

Life is also punctuated less frequently by various other observances. These are to celebrate or commemorate various critical life passages (e.g., births (particularly of the first-born child), first birthdays (referred to as *te koro n ririki* or *raniwi*, rather than birth date, this celebration may previously have been determined by the appearance of baby teeth), *katekateka* (= first menstruations – see Kutimeni Tenten, 2003) (now celebrated intermittently or, especially in diasporic communities, substituted by 18th and 21st birthdays), marriages, and deaths and burials) and festivals (e.g., New Year, Easter, National Day, Christmas); and to welcome to the atoll, and so usually to every *te kawa*, various people (e.g., temporary *non-I-Nikunau* residents and short-term *non-I-Nikunau* visitors, *I-Nikunau* who have been absent for a limited period, visiting *I-Nikunau* diaspora), and to farewell these same people. These observances usually involve *botaki* (≅ festive or other large social gathering), some lasting up to several days and invariably involving a feast of victuals and programme of entertainment, prominent in which are *batere*, *ruoia*, *kabuti*, *mwaie*, *kabure* and other various forms of dance, along with music, songs and poems (Autio, 2010; Dambiec, 2005; Grimble, 1989; Sabatier, 1939/1977; Whincup, 2005). They are held in church *mwaneaba*, in the lesser community buildings, or on *mwenga*. Participation is a matter of course, although the roles in which someone might be cast can vary, both according to age and gender, and according to being an *utu* member, through *te kawa* resident or member of a church congregation, to island resident (cf. Autio, 2010, pp. 155-176).

Arrangements for these events, along with oversight of *kawa* affairs generally, are mostly in the charge of *kabowi* (≅ (council) meetings) in *mwaneaba* of *unimane* (≅ wise, respected and ascendant old men); hence, what I term "*mwaneaba* councils". As well as being part of tradition, these councils are important for tradition continuing. This tradition, often referred to as *te katei ni Nikunau* (≅ the Nikunau Way), or just *te katei*, has equivalents on the other islands in the Kiribati Archipelago and is oral (or unwritten) and ever-developing (cf. Rennie, 1981). It comprises beliefs, rules, regulations, ceremonial rituals, precedents and other practices to which *I-Nikunau* are subject, thus forming a code of customary kinship, social and political relationships. The councils are custodians of *te katei*, not only enforcing it, and thereby regulating conduct in *te kawa*, but also updating it.

Indeed, just as tradition is dynamic and becomes modernised, so is the form of these *bowi* (≅ meetings) and how they are conducted, as reflected in differences I observed from one *kawa* to another and in the same *kawa* on successive visits with several years in between (cf. Autio, 2010; Geddes, 1977; Kazama, 2001; Lawrence, 1983; Macdonald, 1971, 1972; Maude, 1963; Thomas, 2001).

Nikunau has other prominent fabricated objects that, while associated with *kawa* and their residents, are outside them and may be labelled "non-traditional". By way of explanation, the formal administration of the atoll is vested in the Nikunau Island Council, sometimes known as *Te Kabowi n Abamakoro* (= The Council of the Island). Among other things, this council provides a limited range of public services, as indicated in the next few paragraphs. Its principal premises, at one time referred to as the *government station*, includes a flagstaff, a relatively new administration building (the previous one, and the records it contained, were consumed by fire in the 1990s), courthouse, community development centre, prison, post office and guesthouse for visitors (Ministry of Internal and Social Affairs, 2007). Adjacent to these are several recently built, traditional-looking *mwenga* for employees of the council and of the Republic Government, or *Te Tautaeka*, the name *I-Nikunau* have accorded to it and its predecessor, the Colony Government. All these are located on the southern outskirts of Rungata (see Figure 4) (Kiribati Local Government Association, 2013).

The atoll also has three clinics and three primary schools, each positioned about midway between the two *kawa* they serve (see Figure 4), which in one case means adjacent to the Island Council administrative complex. The clinics have sleeping areas for in-patients, and so are sometimes referred to as island hospitals, although they are staffed by a nurse or two, not by doctors, and have only the most basic amenities and limited supplies of imported medicines, dressings, etc. The schools comprise classrooms, a school *mwaneaba* and lesser buildings, and shaded areas for outdoor activities (Kiribati Local Government Association, 2013; Office of Te Beretitenti and T'Makei Services, 2012b; Republic of Kiribati, Ministry of Education, 2011). Together, the three primary schools cater for 360 pupils. They feed the atoll's junior secondary school, the Tekabangaki JSS, established relatively recently, in 2001. It is also located on the southern outskirts of Rungata and has a roll of almost 200 students.

These facilities near Rungata, and the people participating in them and living there, go some way to explain the relatively recent phenomenon of the population of Rungata being almost equal to the populations of the other *kawa* combined, and for very few, if any, *mwenga* there being unoccupied, in contrast to these other *kawa* . This population includes a disproportionate number of the atoll's 100+ *non-I-Nikunau* residents, probably all of whom, however, are *I-Kiribati*. Their primary reason for being on Nikunau is their paid work with the Island Council, the Republic Government (e.g., as primary and junior secondary school teachers, nurses at the clinics, or financial or legal administrators) or churches. Thus, most are part of a cash economy which is more prevalent around Rungata than the rest of the atoll. This accounts for a proprietary trade store having been established nearby only within the past decade or so, and for this store seeming to be more prosperous than the stores in *kawa*. Furthermore, it attracts custom from copra cutters living in nearby *kawa*, who can just as easily sell their copra to this store as they can to the stores in their *kawa* and find it better stocked probably than the other stores. The counter attraction of the other stores is that the copra cutters may have a stake in them as *mronron* members, be it through their *kawa* or their church.

Various public services formally under the auspices of the Island Council and Republic Government are available on Nikunau. However, compared to those on Tarawa, they are fewer in number, much less resourced and of limited capacity. The number of Island Council employees varies but around 30 non-casuals comprise the core (Kiribati Local Government Association, 2013; Ministry of Internal and Social Affairs, 2007), and they are the biggest line item of the council's expenditure – more than the other line items combined in fact (confidential personal communication, 2009). The Island Council is dependent on the Republic Government for funds, with, formally, 80% of its budgeted revenue being comprised of grants from annual appropriations the Republic Government makes to its local government ministry. In practice, however, this percentage is even more, because local revenue collection is not very effective. *I-Nikunau* either have difficulty in paying taxes, etc., especially in times of drought, or are reluctant to pay them (cf. Ortega, 2008). In any case, by virtue of local choice, these taxes no longer include a land tax. The upshot of these uncollected revenues is that salaries and wages of Island Council employees are sometimes in arrears or are foregone altogether, and that means these employees cannot pay their local taxes either. The Republic Government employs nearly 40 persons on the atoll (Kiribati Local Government Association, 2013; Ministry of Internal and Social Affairs, 2007), most of them posted there, sometimes reluctantly. They are paid out of appropriations to that government's various ministries (e.g., of education, health), in the same way as such employees on Tarawa are. Republic Government employees are usually better qualified and generally paid more than Island Council employees are, and are more certain of being paid than the latter.

In contrast to a significant minority of residents of Rungata being largely dependent on their cash incomes, the rest of *I-Nikunau* only need cash for some things, as enumerated below, being able to produce much of other things they need through subsistence activities. I estimate it as unlikely that the mean fortnightly cash incomes of a traditional *I-Nikunau te mwenga* exceeds AU$70 (or < AU$1 per day per person), not including any value placed on subsistence produce and on tangibles and intangibles enjoyed without cash payments. There are a few sources of these cash incomes, as follows.

For many *mwenga*, the main source of cash is from cutting copra. However, although copra cutters can sell all the copra they can produce at a guaranteed price to their local trade store – the stores act as purchasing agents for the Republic Government, which presently buys all the copra and ships it to Tarawa, either as an input for the copra processing plant it built on Tarawa in the 2000s or for onward sale overseas – income from this source is neither great nor reliable, especially given a seeming increase in the ever-present vagaries of rainfall (cf. Ministry of Internal and Social Affairs, 2007)– Kiribati Local Government Association (2013) shows it varying between AU$300,000 and $600,000 annually, so averaging about AU$30 per *mwenga* per week (see also Kidd, 2012). *I-Nikunau* over 67 or 70 years of age[16] are entitled to a monthly non-contributory pension of either AU$50 or $60 from the so called Elderly Fund (established 2004) of the Republic Government. Some *I-Nikunau* obtain a little casual paid work from the Island Council or otherwise (e.g., stevedoring when a cargo ship arrives – see Ministry of Internal and Social Affairs, 2007), but work done for other *I-Nikunau* or for the church, including repairs and maintenance, rarely results in cash income. Some *mwenga* receive cash remittances from those *utu* either working away temporarily or absent permanently, in an urban island or metropolitan country diasporic community (Ministry of Internal and Social

Affairs, 2007; cf. Green et al., 1979). However, given the lack of *kaako* (literally, cargo, and meaning stock or inventory) for sale in stores on Nikunau, and that their prices reflect the costs of shipping, etc., remittances in kind can be more useful than those in cash are, as has always been the case (cf. Pitchford, 1981). Thus, there is a practice of longstanding for *I-Nikunau* working away to purchase goods where they work and ship them home, including as accompanied baggage at the end of contracts. This was exemplified by those who worked on the phosphate islands of Banaba and Nauru, where they could shop in stores catering primarily for *I-Matang* staff, etc. and ship their purchases to Nikunau on the labour recruiting ships administered by the Colony Government. Nowadays, an issue faced by *I-Nikunau* and other *I-Kiribati* working away are avoiding freight costs, excess baggage charges, etc. arising from transporting goods home themselves.

Regarding spending, its results and related matters, purchases from a trade stores are limited to the foreign victuals and manufactures listed above as available in those stores; these items have become as an accustomed part of *I-Nikunau* life as traditional subsistence produce from land and sea. The aforesaid remittances in kind might include tools and other hardware, fishing equipment, radios, video and audio equipment, motion picture and music storage media, and push-bicycles and mopeds/scooters – the handful or so of other motor vehicles on the atoll are pickups and light trucks, which are owned by the Island Council or a church. *I-Nikunau* also use cash to pay school fees, church contributions and, perhaps, Island Council tax – nowadays, no Republic Government taxes are levied on subsistence incomes. The contributions *I-Nikunau* make in cash to their churches are used to buy materials to repair and maintain buildings, and to meet local and national expenses. Contributions in kind (e.g., labour, materials) are also made, including that *mwenga* take it in turns to feed KUC pastors and women produce handicrafts, which the churches send to Tarawa, where they are sold to raise funds.

Having alluded to them a few times, I should say that Nikunau's formal links and connections with the outside world include postal and tele-communications, and sea and air transport (cf. Green et al., 1979). Regarding communications, some services of long-standing are available at the Island Council administrative complex, including postal and money transfer services from and to Tarawa, the other islands and beyond. Radio broadcasts have reached Nikunau from Tarawa since the 1960s, and my experience in the 1980s was for Nikunau to receive broadcasts in *te taetae ni Kiribati* for a few hours each day from Radio Kiribati, a Republic Government-owned organisation– Radio Kiribati also relayed the English-language news from either Radio Australia or the BBC World Service, but this was usually turned off to conserve the precious battery power. However, since then the reliability of the broadcasts has been impaired by deterioration of the transmission equipment on Tarawa. Since 2010, Nikunau has had satellite telephones, making it possible technologically if not financially, to dial direct to and from the rest of the world; up until then, the telephone service was limited to a radiotelephone at the Island Council administrative complex for only a few hours each week. Since the new telephone service became available, access to the Internet has been possible but this is severely restricted by the aforementioned lack of electricity and by hardware and subscriptions being too expensive. Broadcast television has never been available.

Regarding transport, to reach the atoll for my five visits I flew to its airstrip, taking the usually weekly air service between Nikunau and Tarawa, a 600-kilometre flight of four hours' duration, involving stops on Tabiteuea and Beru – at various times the service was

more frequent, usually twice weekly if sufficient aircraft were in service. The alternative would have been a voyage lasting several days on the passenger-cargo ship(s) which ply the central and southern islands commencing from and returning to Tarawa. These ships call intermittently, rather than working to a fixed schedule, and their frequency, while never having been great, is in long-term decline. The ships stand off Nikunau near a passage through the reef leading to the wharf at Rungata, which has operated since at least the 1880s (Sabatier, 1939/1977). The main store and copra shed of the once prosperous *Te Bobotin Nikunau* are a stone's throw from this wharf. With aeroplane passenger and freight capacity limited and fares high (Ministry of Internal and Social Affairs, 2007), *I-Nikunau* depend on these ships, including if they need or want to travel to Tarawa or elsewhere. Although travel by canoe to neighbouring Beru is possible logistically, few attempt it nowadays (cf. Bedford, Macdonald & Munro, 1980).

Reflecting difficulties of travelling away from Nikunau, most *I-Nikunau* resident on Nikunau visit other islands only sporadically. The main reasons for such visits are family reasons or to participate in religious body events, governmental meetings or organised sports tournaments. Some may travel to visit the southern Kiribati Islands district hospital on Tabiteuea or the central hospital on Tarawa, but the reality is that *I-Nikunau* usually go without health treatment if it is not available at the clinics on Nikunau. Longer absences elsewhere may be because of attending school or being involved in indentured, waged or salaried employment, or seeking such employment. On finishing junior secondary school at about 14 years of age (i.e., Year 9 in educational parlance) some young people go onto senior secondary schools, which are mainly on Tarawa (including North Tarawa) but also on Beru, Tabiteuea, Nonouti, Abemama and Abaiang Atolls, with various possibilities after that, more likely as not, away from Nikunau. Most, however, end their formal schooling at this age, many of them becoming full-time members of their subsistence-based *mwenga* on Nikunau. Even so, some are able to spend time elsewhere; for example, they may join *utu* on Tarawa, including in the hope of finding paid work there, or, they may obtain places on work schemes outside Kiribati (e.g., the Recognised Seasonal Employer scheme in New Zealand). Indeed, these longer temporary absences, whether catalysed by education or employment, have increasingly given way to the aforesaid phenomenon of *I-Nikunau* leaving permanently and making a life elsewhere, but usually as part of the diaspora.

In the above and later chapters, there may be places in which life on Nikunau sounds simple, noble or idyllic even. Such a romantic view comes easier to the observer than the participant, I suspect. In the cold light of day, life on Nikunau, now and in the past, has been undoubtedly hard, frequently affected by droughts, rough seas and other adverse climatic conditions to name a few. Even so, *I-Nikunau* more than survived: they developed practices to utilise their environment in its totality and, of necessity, they learnt how to maintain a delicate balance between human and nature, as reflected in the way their culture evolved in harmony with the environment. Although many changes have occurred to their traditional way of living and making a living, some basic elements, temporal as well as spiritual, of traditional practices are still recognisable today in and around *kawa*. As reflected in Chapters 3 and 4, these have been carried elsewhere, deliberately, unobtrusively and otherwise, as part of the process of diaspora. In later chapters, I examine how things have travelled in the other direction, affecting life on Nikunau profoundly.

# 3

# On (South) Tarawa

Tarawa Atoll (area 31 km$^2$, pop. 63,000 – National Statistics Office, 2016) comprises several coral islets surrounding a substantial tidal lagoon (see Figure 5); nowhere are the islets more than 5m above sea-level. The atoll is less drought prone than Nikunau is, and so has more fresh water – the source on both islands is a subterranean freshwater lens, fed by rainwater, floating over seawater (see Corcoran, 2016; Storey & Hunter, 2010; White et al., 2007). Although this additional quantity of fresh water means the vegetation is potentially lusher and more productive than on Nikunau, this potential is compromised by demands put upon freshwater reserves, particularly during the frequent short droughts. These demands stem from not only the size of population, but also the pattern of settlement and the resulting variation in population density along the atoll.

A map of the entire atoll is produced in the left-hand image Figure 5. This image further distinguishes North Tarawa (shown as yellow islets) and South Tarawa (red islets). South Tarawa is then shown in a bit more detail in the right-hand image. The population of North Tarawa is a mere 6,600 (National Statistics Office, 2016), and while as not as rural and traditional as Nikunau is, it still has some of these trappings. These trappings are despite the influence of the population and other circumstances of South Tarawa, from which it is separated at Buota by a lagoon to ocean channel, which is fordable at lowtide.

South Tarawa has a population of over 56,000.[17] Alongside its circumstances mentioned in S1.2 as being the only large, urbanised settlement in Kiribati, it has the only significantly monetised economy (Asian Development Bank, 2002; Kidd, 2012). Both these circumstances coincide with its present status as the Republic's seat of government and, before the Republic was inaugurated, the headquarters of the Colony Government, following the restoration of colonial rule from 1943.[18] Its population density and monetised economy put land on Tarawa at a premium, whether physically or financially, and so, except for shade trees and shrubs, it has been largely cleared of vegetation. This has occurred over the past six decades to make way for an almost continuous ribbon development running either side of the atoll's only sealed road, which stretches some 30 km from the south-west tip of Betio to Buota in the east and was recently modernised, modern road furnishings and all (World Bank, 2016). The ribbon development comprises several thousand constructions, including residences and premises of community, governmental, religious and commercial bodies[19] (Bishop et al., 2011; Castalia Strategic Advisors, 2005; Jones, 2012, 2016; Office of Te Beretitenti and T'Makei Services, 2012c; Roman, 2013; White et al., 2007).

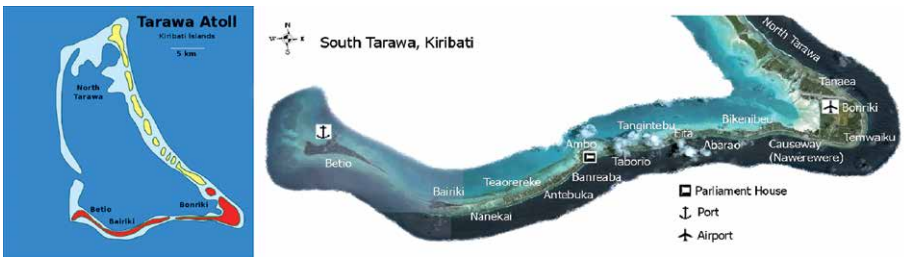



*Figure 5.* Map of Entire Tarawa Atoll (Source: Tarawa, n.d.) with Larger Scale Map of South Tarawa (Source: Bishop, Burhan, Lowen & Zhu, 2011, p. 7).

Some of its developed areas are occupied by *I-Tarawa*, but most are long-leased or have been purchased from them, the Colony Government having legislated for and entered into many such continuing agreements. Consequently, the Republic Government is the largest single landholder (Bishop et al., 2011; Corcoran, 2016) but there are many other *non-I-Tarawa* with this status, many of them the commercial, community, religious and governmental bodies referred to above.

The picture of Tarawa just painted, that is as urban, monetised and market-based, and the political centre, are most obvious from buildings, etc, associated with governmental bureaucracies, government or state-owned and private businesses, church, and other "non-traditional" and "quasi-traditional" organisations, as well as some settlements featuring modern dwellings. Even so, there are also significant numbers of more traditional-looking *mwenga*, and these are still being erected. Of further significance is how Tarawa's many residents have been increasingly drawn into the economy and its "non-traditional" modes of production, distribution and exchange,[20] as workers, consumers, householders, worshippers, users of public amenities and services, taxpayers, and members of commercial and social organisations (Asian Development Bank, 2002; Doran, 1960; Government of Kiribati, 2005; Green et al., 1979; Office of Te Beretitenti and T'Makei Services, 2012c; Pitchford, 1981; Roman, 2013) (cf. Wickramasinghe & Hopper, 2005).

South Tarawa is also where 95% of the 2,600 strong *I-Nikunau* diasporic community on Tarawa lives, many of the other 5% making up the increasing overspill of people and *mwenga* across the as yet uncausewayed lagoon-ocean channel onto lower North Tarawa. In contrast to Nikunau, their *mwenga* are dispersed along Tarawa, and interspersed between them are *mwenga* of *I-Kiribati* from other islands and the aforesaid multiplicity of premises of various bodies. In these circumstances, *I-Nikunau* are less likely to have any historical kinship ties with neighbouring *mwenga*, and so their interactions are often less substantial and may be insubstantial, varying with other factors, such as children playing together and young adults being freer to socialise and even marry.

Some *mwenga* (in the sense of dwelling areas) resemble those on Nikunau in terms of structures, wells, graves, spaces, etc. (see Chapter 2), although their layouts and amounts and uses of space reflect Tarawa's much denser population, its water issues – rainwater tanks are common, to compensate for the inadequacy of wells and the intermittency of the public water system – and other constrictions. The structures on *mwenga* also reflect their attempts to imitate modern single and double-storey dwellings of imported designs and materials; these are quite common on Tarawa and many *I-Nikunau* live in them,

being entitled to a rental property, if available, as part of their employment with the Republic Government.[21] This imitating arises from structures on *mwenga* incorporating timber, cement, bricks, corrugated metal, prefabricated items, fittings, electric wiring and power points, and other imported building materials – how these are used in construction may not be what their distant manufacturers intended. The use of imported materials is because producing traditional materials on Tarawa is constrained by lack of available land and any potential for supply from even nearby Outer Islands (e.g., Abaiang, Maiana) is frustrated by transport and other difficulties. Besides, *I-Kiribati* sometimes perceive imported materials, and their outward appearance when constructed, as being superior, which because of the climate and lack of design knowledge is dubious (cf. Weir et al., 2017). This perception extends to imitating the interiors of dwellings of imported designs occupied by *I-Matang*, or which were previously so,[22] and so acquiring many items of furniture (e.g., beds, tables, chairs, chests of drawers, cabinets) and electrical equipment (e.g., lighting, refrigeration), for which mains supply electricity is reasonably accessible; in contrast to what was said in Chapter 2 about the rarity of many such items on Nikunau.[23]

Compared with Nikunau, their *mwenga* (in the sense of households) are larger, typically comprising between 6 and 12 persons, usually of three generations, and sometimes even four. As more *I-Nikunau* have immigrated, or grown up and had children themselves, the area of land occupied and the number of *mwenga* have increased. However, these increases have not kept pace with the growth in persons, and so the numbers in each *te mwenga* have gradually increased (cf. Green et al., 1979), living conditions have become increasingly crowded and strains have been put on incomes, the amounts of victuals available, etc. (cf. Office of Te Beretitenti and T'Makei Services, 2012c). These are among reasons for members of the oldest generation(s) moving from one *te mwenga* to another at irregular intervals, and indeed for members of other age groups to do so, in contrast to practices on Nikunau. However, other reasons for this fluidity are at least as important, including their adult offspring taking it in turns to look after the older generation according to *te katei ni Nikunau*, the traditional role of grandparents in teaching grandchildren, the modern need for *unaine* (≅ wise and respected old women), in particular, to mind grandchildren while parents attend places of paid employment, social tensions between the generations, and the possibility of each *te mwenga* sharing in the state and employment-related pensions of these old people.

*Te mwenga* activities encompass choring, socialising, grand parenting, schooling, paid employment and, perhaps, storekeeping and producing victuals for sale, etc. The significance of these last three, which amount to generating cash to be able to purchase a high proportion of their needs, reflects conditions somewhat removed from the subsistence lifestyle of their counterparts on Nikunau; that is to say, satisfying their *mwenga's* needs for victuals and similar is beyond what virtually any can grow, or gather or fish, themselves.[24] Although the shade trees and shrubs among these dwellings include coconuts, breadfruit and pawpaw, these now make only a minority contribution to *te mwenga* victuals, fuel and building materials, as does the restricted keeping of pigs, which are usually reserved for major *botaki* – the rights to take produce from any remaining traditional *aba* largely rest with *I-Tarawa*, although some *I-Nikunau* may share in these rights through marriage to or descent from *I-Tarawa*. Furthermore, with so many people using the lagoon, reef and area just beyond the reef, the quantities of seafood these yield, though substantial in total, are insufficient per capita to satisfy the potential demand (Doran, 1960; Locke, 2009;

Mangubhai et al., 2019; Office of Te Beretitenti and T'Makei Services, 2012c; Roniti, 1988; Thomas, 2002). Concomitantly, there is little fishing or cultivating work to occupy the time of people willing to do such work.

To elaborate on *mwenga* obtaining cash from various sources, the main ones are as follows. Women (see Rose, 2014) and men perform paid work locally of varying statuses (e.g., casual, part-time, full-time) and all levels of seniority, mainly with government ministries and departments, government businesses, public institutions and other governmental bodies, or with private businesses, religious organisations and non-government organisations.[25] They share in the running of micro businesses, sometimes of a proprietorial nature but more often organised as *mronron*. *Utu* working and living overseas remit money and goods to them (Borovnik, 2006; Bedford et al., 2009). Former government workers receive public service retirement benefits from the Kiribati Provident Fund and, as mentioned earlier, everyone over 67 is entitled to a non-contributory monthly pension. I estimate that fortnightly cash incomes from all sources of the substantial majority of *mwenga* on Tarawa do not yet surpass AU$750, with many being barely half that;[26] nevertheless, these amounts are 5 to 10 fold more than on Nikunau.

While notes and coins are still by far the main form of commercial transactions, formal income increasingly passes through bank accounts, from which it can be withdrawn either by visiting a bank branch or by using one of the automatic teller machines which have been introduced in the past decade. For those in official employment, the amount received is nett of deductions for income tax, and of rent in the frequent case of government and some other workers occupying houses tied to their employment. Much of the amount received is paid out quickly. Some is used to pay for items received on credit at *mronron* stores or is collected by moneylenders to repay payday loans – the country's only bank does not issue credit cards and customers with current accounts or overdraft facilities are in a minority. Further amounts are then disbursed daily on basic victuals, whether locally produced (e.g., bread, doughnuts, ice blocks, fish, eggs, vegetables, bananas[27]) or imported (e.g., the list of victuals, etc. in Chapter 2, which expanded over the past few decades, to include soft drinks, beer and other canned beverages, cordial, cereals, tinned fish, meat and dairy, frozen mutton flaps, boiling fowl and chicken) (cf. Catala, 1957; Grimble, 1933; McNamara & Westoby, 2014). They are also disbursed on personal and domestic expenditures (e.g., bus fares, public utilities, school fees), and donations to various *utu*, Nikunau community bodies and churches (see Kuruppu, 2009, Ratuva, 2014).

Occasionally, some cash can be saved temporarily, with the prospect of financing *botaki* for such family events as weddings and *te koro n ririki* or *raniwi*, or with a view to making purchases of clothes, household durables, television/video equipment, music players, computers and, perhaps, a motor vehicle, although the latter still seems beyond the means of many, despite how motor vehicle numbers have increased dramatically since the 1980s. However, many *mwenga* seem under increasing financial strain as the gap widens between the cash available and the number of persons and possibilities for spending they see around them. An increasing proportion of youths who have left school can only chore around *te mwenga* and do domestic or similar work for *utu*, rather than perform paid employment, because the supply of jobs is not keeping pace with the numbers wanting work (Curtain & Dornan, 2019; Duncan, 2014; Government of Kiribati, 2005). The latter is despite many jobs in the public service still being created and retained as much to provide employment as to carry out activities and produce output; the employment is a means

by which external government revenue (e.g., fishing licence fees) can be shared among *I-Kiribati mwenga* (cf. Pitchford, 1981).

In adapting their social organisation to their surroundings on Tarawa, various phenomena are noteworthy. *I-Nikunau* are engaged in *te mwenga* activities and other economic, social, cultural, religious and political pursuits, still in keeping with *te katei ni Nikunau*, albeit a much modernised version of tradition. This includes being almost as oblivious as *I-Nikunau* on Nikunau are to time measured in hours and minutes. However, in work situations, particularly among *I-Nikunau* in full-time public service or similar formal employment, where working hours are set (e.g., from 8 a.m. to 4.15 p.m. on Mondays to Fridays, with a one-hour lunch break), they are "government personnel" or similar, grappling with alien structures, processes, procedures and schedules, either left behind by the Colony Government or recently arising from aid organisation projects of a modernisation and technology transfer nature (cf. Sillitoe, 1998; Sillitoe & Marzano, 2009) and of mixed consequences, etc. (cf. Dean, Green & Nunn, 2016). During these periods, they can seem to be different persons, even giving rise to the impression that some are leading a double life.

*I-Nikunau* social and community groups on Tarawa draw members from *mwenga* in various ways. In order of size, small to large, and perhaps importance (extremely to fairly), these groups are orientated around *utu*, religious denomination, *kawa* on Nikunau, and being *I-Nikunau* (rather than *I-Tarawa*, *I-Beru*, *I-Butaritari*, etc.) (Office of Te Beretitenti and T'Makei Services, 2012c). Most of these groups retain various social and cultural practices reminiscent of Nikunau, including holding *botaki* regularly. Indeed, such *botaki* and other commitments are among several settings where social mixing occurs, including work, school, church and neighbouring *mwenga*, and so possibilitate gradual integrative changes to identity (cf. Berry, 1997, 2005). A related feature is that these social and community groups are responsible for forming and operating the abovementioned *mronron*. Their operations, like those of any more proprietorial micro businesses, range between retail kiosks or slightly larger (but still small) stores, small-scale producers baking bread and donuts and freezing ice blocks (or ice-lollies), producers and vendors of lunchtime takeaways, catchers and hawkers of fish, and payday moneylenders.

*I-Nikunau* have adapted their social organisation to their new, more densely populated and constructed surroundings in significant ways, as exemplified in the form and content of these *botaki*. Thus, the quantity and variety of victuals served are mostly greater than on Nikunau, reflecting what is available on Tarawa; there is a strong tendency for purchased imported victuals to replace subsistence produce, more for reasons of availability than appearances. Compared with Nikunau and tradition generally, *botaki* are shorter, lasting between a few hours and 36 hours, rather than up to several days. Except for births and funerals, they are held mainly on Saturdays, and, if longer than a day, start on Friday evenings, rather than on the other non-Sabbath days; this is because attending places of employment and school are a well-established part of *I-Nikunau's* daily programme on weekdays, even if they might still have a lower priority than *te mwenga*, *utu* and religious obligations.

Given the propensity for the number of groups to which *te I-Nikunau* has an affiliation (e.g., they may include groups from other islands to which the affiliation is through marriage or similar), *botaki* which *te I-Nikunau* and their *mwenga* are eligible or invited to attend on Tarawa are more frequent than on Nikunau. However, whereas participating in such *botaki* would be mandatory on Nikunau, this is no longer practical on Tarawa,

because they clash with each other and with other commitments. Another reason for not participating in *te botaki* is that *te mwenga* is unable to afford the contributions of victuals or cash donations expected from those who attend.

Aside from formal events, life for *I-Nikunau* is filled with much interaction. They journey along Tarawa frequently on foot or by bus to visit each other and help each other in many other ways socially and economically – this includes being loyal member-customers of *mronron,* and working in these and on other tasks (e.g., child-minding, house construction) without receiving wages. Within and among *mwenga*, they spend much time on storytelling, *maroro*/*winnanti* (≅ informal chatting/gossiping), playing games, etc. (cf. Sabatier, 1939/1977). Remarkable about continuing traditions are how *utu* and *koraki*, living and deceased, feature in stories *I-Nikunau* share repeatedly; these stories concern micro events and, parenthetically, life changes and matters of interest around them (see Gilkes, 2006).

The various forms of dance, songs, etc., serve a similar function in passing on important matters of culture, etc. inter-generationally. Performances, practices, etc. not only continue as a matter of cultural identity as much on Tarawa as on Nikunau (see Chapter 2) but they have become a matter of national pride (Teaiwa, 2014; Whincup, 2005). There is also an element of tradition in the extremely popular recent innovations of beauty pageants, such as take place during the four-day National Day event on Tarawa each July. These pageants lead to the choosing of Miss Kiribati and Mr Kiribati, and seem to be a meld of traditions around the maturing and coming out of young men and young women (see Grimble, 1921; Hockings, 1984; Luomala, 1980) and of celebrity culture from elsewhere, reflecting the increasing availability over recent decades of Hollywood and other motion pictures on contemporary media (e.g., reels of film, videotapes, DVDs).

Regarding contemporary cultural media on Tarawa, motion pictures, etc. whether produced legally or pirated, have been in abundant supply for over three decades – many are brought home by seafarers and others who have been away working. A broadcast television service also operated on Tarawa from 2004 to 2013 but is now in abeyance. The Internet arrived on Tarawa in the late 1990s and access to it has grown significantly in the past decade, including for recreational use. These developments have given rise to a slow but incessant trend towards individualistic and small group pastimes, ones which are somewhat passive and alien; in particular, many able, and mostly young, people often seem preoccupied by these pastimes, alongside their engagement with *mwenga* and community group activities.

Mention was made in Chapter 2 of the place of *te katei ni Nikunau* in providing for governance, order and control in *kawa* and over *kawa* affairs. *I-Nikunau* social and community groups on Tarawa have adopted these arrangements and adapted them to some extent; for example, serving in governance groups has been extended to include persons of both gender who exhibit knowledge and ability, rather than be restricted to men on the basis of age (i.e., to *unimane*). Similar has run right through to the top of formal institutions, with women and younger men occupying a significant proportion, if not the majority, of senior positions in the administration, control and governance of schools, hospitals, businesses, government ministries, etc. This includes the positions of *te beretitenti* (≡ president) and members of *Te Mwaneaba ni Maungatabu* (i.e., parliament – its members are usually referred to as MPs, for members of parliament), to which the Constitution of Kiribati 1979 permits *I-Nikunau* to seek election, as well positions on Tarawa's local governments – that is the equivalents of the Nikunau Island Council. Once

elected, they may be appointed as ministers, as indeed has happened to a few over the past five decades (e.g., see Index of /sites/docs/hansard, 2014; Macdonald, 1982a). However, the constituencies on Tarawa in which *I-Nikunau* cast their votes comprise a mixture of island populations, and so other factors and associations are more important to winning elections than identifying as *I-Nikunau*. Similar applies on the Line Islands, although *I-Nikunau* there make up a greater proportion of the population than on Tarawa and have often provided their MPs, just as Nikunau has always elected *I-Nikunau* as its MPs, although this is not guaranteed constitutionally, only that the MPs from there must be elected by its resident population of registered voters. This last is in accordance with provisions in the Constitution casting *I-Nikunau* and other *I-Kiribati*, regardless of gender and adult age, in the role of citizens of a single nation-state.

The provisions in the Constitution also infer a right on *I-Nikunau* and other *I-Kiribati* to use the apparatus for governing the Republic to hold people in authority accountable; formally, at least, this accountability covers matters of public finance, taxation and capital investment, among many others, in keeping with rights, checks and balances typical of a hybrid Westminster system of government. However, many citizens on Tarawa still seem at least a little flummoxed by the technologies of government in use around them, let alone their counterparts on distant Nikunau, etc. The technologies concerned include ones involving the English language, written records and documents generally, accounting documents and information, and similar things inherited from *I-Matang* officials who ran the Colony Government.[28] They also include the technologies introduced or elaborated since by officials and consultants of a hotchpotch of supranational, multilateral, transnational, international, national and non-governmental organisations, and consulting firms (hereafter "aid organisations")[29] (see Dixon, 2004a; Dixon & Gaffikin, 2014; Hassall, Kaitani, Mae, Tipu & Wainikesa, 2011; Ieremia, 1993; Macdonald, 1970, 1982a, 1996a, 1998; MacKenzie, 2004; Smith, 2011).

Regarding the attraction which Tarawa currently holds for *I-Nikunau*, while there still seems a predominant net inflow from Nikunau, this flow is not entirely in one direction (National Statistics Office, 2013). Tarawa gradually became the centre of everything most modern about the Colony after the restoration of the Colony Government and its decision to embark on social, economic and political development policies founded on the principle of *centralisation* on Tarawa; this ascendance of Tarawa was fuelled further by the cessation of phosphate mining on Banaba and the establishment of the Republic (Connell & Lea, 2002; Doran, 1960; GEIC, 1970; Green et al., 1979; Macdonald, 1982a, 1998; Maunaa, 1987; Pitchford, 1981). However, as already alluded to, the growth of Tarawa's population has led to scarcity and over-exploitation of the resources on which its inhabitants can subsist; this scarcity and over-exploitation applies not only to the habitable and cultivatable space on land and to fresh water, but also to the lagoon and reef of the atoll and the ocean surrounding it. Now Tarawa is the centre of everything most "developed" and "affluent" about the Republic, including much which *I-Nikunau* feel is undesirable. Thus, *I-Nikunau*, among many others, are increasingly coming to see Tarawa as far less attractive in certain matters than it once was.

These matters are evident in observations made about Tarawa by *I-Kiribati* who have emigrated from there to New Zealand or who are keen to do so. They see Tarawa as offering cash employment only for some, and being short on day-to-day and lengthier economic and social opportunities, and otherwise generally lacking in prospects

(see Fedor, 2012; Thompson, 2016). These negative conceptions go hand-in-hand with how Tarawa is suffering increasingly from lack of urban planning, overcrowding, water, sanitation and public health issues, physical degradation and inadequate natural food resources (Corcoran, 2016; Green et al., 1979; Jones, 2012, 2016; MacKenzie, 2008; Maunaa, 1987; McCreary & Boardman, 1968; Office of Te Beretitenti and T'Makei Services, 2012c). For example, to put the population of South Tarawa into perspective, it is 25 times that of Nikunau and lives on an area of 16 $km^2$, which is less than 85% of the area of Nikunau. Over and above these matters, for those with an eye on longer-term issues, Tarawa, like Nikunau, has an insecure future because of the level of the sea rising.

# 4

# Beyond Kiribati

This chapter covers diasporic communities in the metropolitan countries of Great Britain in the northeast Atlantic and New Zealand in the south-west Pacific. Despite being poles apart, both are predominantly English speaking and part of the Anglosphere in terms of the majority culture and largest ethnic group. However, New Zealand, like Kiribati, comprises islands located in the Pacific Ocean. Moreover, the majority ethnic population just referred to, often labelled *Pākehā*, is a settler population, part of *Tangata Tiriti* (≅ people of the Treaty of Waitangi 1840) or *non-Māori*. The latter are one side of a so called bicultural society, the other side being the indigenous *Māori*, or *Tangata Whenua* (≅ people of the land). While *I-Kiribati* are by definition part of *Tangata Tiriti*, whether they or others see it that way is questionable. Indeed, given physical resemblances between *Tangata Whenua*, *I-Kiribati* and other Pacific Peoples (sometimes labelled *Pacifica* or *Pasifika*) in New Zealand, it is not unusual to come across the term *Māori and Pasifika* in official papers and the like (e.g., New Zealand Government, 2019).

As further information available about Great Britain and New Zealand is commonplace, I have not felt it necessary to give as much detail about them as I supplied in previous chapters about Nikunau and Tarawa; however, I have brought some matters to attention where relevant. I start with Great Britain because it is the older of the two communities I describe and because, in its first decade or so, the community in New Zealand followed a similar pattern to how the community in Great Britain had developed. Another matter to note is that I have included more analysis of how the diasporic communities arose than is the case in describing Tarawa in Chapter 3. The reason for this choice is that, particularly in New Zealand, the process of diaspora is very much still part of the present circumstances of these communities (see Thompson et al., 2017), whereas the equivalent for Tarawa comprises a significant part of the analysis in Part III.

## 4.1 On Great Britain

The older members of the diasporic community in Great Britain comprise about 20 couples who met while one partner, mostly British *I-Matang* and male, was residing temporarily in the Colony or Republic, usually on Tarawa and usually from being employed, before 1979, as a colonial administrator or a professional or technical staff member in a colonial institution (e.g., school, hospital), or, since 1979, as a professional, technical or other aid organisation worker. The other partner, usually the female, was *I-Kiribati*, possibly *I-Nikunau*, usually living on Tarawa and probably

working in situations in which they met *I-Matang*. Notwithstanding any vestiges of colonial policy to discourage *fraternising with the natives* (see GEIC, 1962; Hyam, 1986, re the Crewe Circular of 1909; Ministry of Overseas Development, 1977; confidential personal communication, 2001, from source based in the Colony in 1970s), the couples formed relationships resulting in marriage. When the temporary residents' contracts were completed, the couples, sometimes already with young children, chose to live in Britain. This movement of couples occurred in dribs and drabs between the 1960s and 1990s: since, aid from Britain in the form of resident experts and volunteers on Tarawa has virtually ceased, making recent new arrivals from Kiribati a rarity. Thus, while the present diasporic community on Great Britain still includes many of the original partners, they are outnumbered by their children, their children's spouses, their grandchildren, etc.

On the couples or families reaching Britain, their initial settlement and the normality aspects of their family's life were facilitated by the partner of British origin, who usually possessed some capital (often out of savings from well-paid contracts they had through working in Kiribati) with which to establish a home, etc. and who proved to be something of a go-between for the *I-Kiribati* partner in her (or his) entirely new environment (cf. Roman, 2013, re *I-Kiribati* immigration to the United States of America (USA)). However, although the couples arrived in Britain independently, and were based throughout much of England and Wales, and Scotland even, the *I-Kiribati* partner soon used her (or his) *I-Kiribati utu* and related networks to establish contacts with similar families who had preceded them, helping each other and engaging in *maroro*/*winnanti* and storytelling.

As the number of families in contact increased, including that they began to organise (e.g., forming the Kiribati Tuvalu Association, the forerunner of the Kiribati Tungaru Association), and so a diasporic community formed. The community meets frequently for various events, highlights of which are traditional victuals and traditional dance performances. These events include an annual National Day weekend, which also attracts people who have resided/worked in Kiribati, but have no blood or family ties there, and their offspring, etc. (see Kiribati Tungaru Association, 2019). Outside these events, members of the community of different age groups continue to maintain habitual contact face-to-face and via all manner of electronic and social media (e.g., see Kiribati Tungaru Association UK, n.d.).

Through the events, the storytelling and similar the children and grandchildren are conscious, by and large, of their links to Kiribati and its *te katei* (e.g., reciprocity around kinship, the ascendance of the various forms of dance, the insignificance attaching to time as measured by clocks), these being among the goals of the Kiribati Tungaru Association, reflecting a concern common among *I-Kiribati* diasporic communities, and *I-Kiribati* generally, to maintain, or not to lose, their culture and identity (cf. Burnett, 1999; Gheuens, 2017; Roman, 2013; Thompson, 2016).

Indeed, not only do the young know something of its culture and language, and maintain links with each other through identifying with Kiribati, but also many have visited Kiribati, usually as still young adults. These visits are facilitated through the regular verbal contact senior *I-Kiribati* in the community in particular have maintained with *utu*, etc., mostly on Tarawa but even on Nikunau and the so called home islands of other community members, particularly since the coming about of low-cost or even free modern technology applications (e.g., Skype, Facebook Messenger, WhatsApp Messenger).

Otherwise, in many respects the lives of most members of the community, particularly those brought up in Britain are generally "normal" for the many places they have settled in and for the socio-economic class (mostly middle, professional or skilled working) with which they have most to do. Thus, members of the community exhibit quite strongly much of what Berry (1997, 2005) labels "integration".

## 4.2 On *Te Ika-a-Maui* and *Te Waipounamu* (Aotearoa New Zealand)

The population of *I-Kiribati* in New Zealand – presently between 2,000 and 3,000 based on Statistics New Zealand (2014)–is now the largest in any metropolitan country.[30] The majority of this population lives in and around urban centres, although there are sizeable clusters living in rural settings. The largest concentrations are on the northern and southern outskirts of Auckland (e.g., Mahurangi, Otahuhu, Pukekohe). However, numbers are also significant elsewhere on *Te Ika-a-Maui*, including around Hamilton and north of Wellington, both along the Kapiti Coast and up the Hutt Valley, and on *Te Waipounamu*, including in Marlborough, Canterbury and Southland (see map in Figure 6) (Fedor, 2012; Roman, 2013; Statistics New Zealand, 2014; Teariki, 2017; Thompson, 2016).

Notwithstanding being widespread geographically, these *I-Kiribati* are in regular contact, even to the extent of holding *botaki* two or three times a year to which households from all the places on one island or the other are invited (e.g., see Macintosh, 2011; Ritatitautua, 2017). However, it is more accurate to say that, rather than only one, New Zealand now has several diasporic communities, as evidenced by the separate formal organisations they have established (e.g., Christchurch Kiribati Community, Kiribati Waipounamu Community, Wellington Kiribati Community) and the frequent *botaki* and other gatherings for meetings, sports (e.g., volleyball), dance practices, pastimes, church activities, etc. they hold in each community (cf. Roman, 2013).

These diasporic communities differ from the one in Britain in three ways: in being mainly comprised of immigrants of more recent origin; in being predominantly of *I-Kiribati* blood; and in still being fuelled by continuing immigration, as well as natural growth – 33% were born in New Zealand and the median age is 21 (Statistics New Zealand, 2014). However, the second was not the case originally. A small diasporic community materialised in New Zealand between the mid-1970s and late-1990s. Its composition, origins and forms of interaction were mostly similar to that in Britain, involving mixed marriages in Kiribati between *I-Nikunau* or other *I-Kiribati* and *I-Matang*, some from New Zealand and some from Britain, and these families then settling in New Zealand (e.g., see Betuao, 2005; Dreaver, 2005). Except, the community also included a noticeable number of temporary residents in the form of university or other tertiary scholarship students and members of ad hoc parties of labourers. The community was mostly spread around *Te Ika-a-Maui*, but with a handful of persons in Dunedin (i.e., on *Te Waipounamu*), largely because of its university medical school (cf. Crocombe, 1992).

The present contrast between the diasporic community in Britain and the several in New Zealand arose from subsequent developments. Instead of the previous dribs and drabs of mixed race families and students, increasingly more of the immigrants were entire *I-Kiribati* singles, couples or families, intent on settlement and work, and the rate of immigration increased (see data for "years since arrival" in Statistics New Zealand, 2014). As Roman (2013) and Thompson (2016) find, these immigrants were incented to leave


*Figure 6*. Map of New Zealand (Source: Ezilon Maps (2015) (adapted)).

Tarawa by the negative circumstances they were enduring, as enumerated in Chapter 3. What is more, they were attracted by the economic, social and other opportunities they perceived as on offer in New Zealand, including paid employment and greater income, better victuals, housing and health and welfare facilities, a cleaner environment, and better prospects for their children.

Two factors combined to make most of their moves possible: the lawful possibility of immigrating to New Zealand, and kinship and similar relationships with members of extant diasporic communities. Longstanding, enthusiastic bi-lateral cooperation existed between the New Zealand and Kiribati Governments, along with cooperation among educational, religious and temporal voluntary organisations (e.g., see Crocombe, 1992). The

lawful possibility arose through increases in such cooperation, paving the way of immigration administratively in three respects. First, it improved the immigration processes for *I-Kiribati* students who had graduated in New Zealand. Although most returned to Kiribati after completing their courses, some then returned to New Zealand to work (see Bedford, 2008), thus giving them higher incomes and other advantages from their education than would have been the case on Tarawa; some were motivated by other reasons too, such as to renew local relationships perhaps. They had little difficulty with immigrating and job finding because they sought work in professional areas in which skills were short (e.g., medicine) and their qualifications were recognised in New Zealand – this recognition contrasts significantly with the experience of other *I-Kiribati* trying to obtain work with New Zealand employers and finding that qualifications obtained in Kiribati are not accepted, often resulting in having to retrain and, in the meantime, to take jobs with lower levels of knowledge, skills and pay (see Gillard & Dyson, 2012; Thompson, 2016).

Second, this bi-lateral cooperation was helpful to various *I-Kiribati* temporary workers who had successfully visited New Zealand and wished to either formalise their de facto situations of already residing in New Zealand, within or outside the immigration regulations (cf. Stahl & Appleyard, 2007), or return there from Kiribati. Concomitantly, and more significantly, visits by other *I-Kiribati* temporary labourers were reinvigorated formally, mostly under Recognised Seasonal Employer schemes (Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment, 2015), the successors of earlier schemes, such as the South Pacific Work Permit Scheme of the 1970s (Crocombe, 1992; Friesen, 2018). The Recognised Seasonal Employer schemes usually involve numerous groups of up to about 30 *I-Kiribati* labourers being supervised by an employer, who contracts the group to an agricultural producer. At first, many were contracted exclusively in the wine-producing provinces of Marlborough and Hawke Bay but increasingly they have been contracted for other agricultural work too (cf. Bailey, 2009). Each group works and lives together, often actually on vineyards, farms and similar settings or in remote, rural townships. Despite their remote locations, these groups are usually able to establish contact with the closest diasporic community to their base, and so join in some of its activities, including *botaki* to celebrate National Day, New Year, etc. Although, in keeping with their visas, these labourers nearly all return to Kiribati after nine months, increasingly they are returning to New Zealand a few months later, when the seasonal work they do resumes (see Maclellan, 2008), and a few may become residents (cf. Bedford, 2008; Crocombe, 1992). The returning and the contact tend towards developing connections to New Zealand, alongside maintaining connections to Kiribati (cf. Reilly, 2011).

Third, this bilateral cooperation gave rise to the Pacific Access Category (which is widely referred to among *I-Kiribati* by the acronym PAC) (New Zealand Immigration, 2017b, n.d.; Stahl & Appleyard, 2007; Thompson, 2016). Indeed, in terms of increase in the numbers of immigrants (see Bedford, 2008; Curtain & Dornan, 2019), this has been the most significant outcome of the cooperation. Immigration applications are permitted from *I-Kiribati* who are likely to settle in New Zealand successfully and make a positive contribution to the economy, but who are unlikely to satisfy New Zealand's two main immigration categories – these are constructed around skills, investors and entrepreneurship (about 60% of intending settlers), and re-uniting families with New Zealand and non-New Zealand citizenship (33%) (Thompson, 2016). Indeed, the Pacific Access Category accounts for only around 5% of all New Zealand permanent immigrants (see Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, 2016) but it accounts for the substantial majority of those who are now coming from Kiribati.

To be eligible for the Pacific Access Category, an *I-Kiribati* needs their name to be drawn in a lottery-like ballot, which is conducted annually by the New Zealand Government and for which they must register and pay an entry fee (e.g., see New Zealand Government, 2016). The selected individuals, together with persons who, under New Zealand's dominant *Pākehā* (white settlers, seen by *I-Kiribati* as *I-Matang*) culture, are classed as their immediate (or "short" – see Black & Huygens, 2007) family, may obtain permanent residency, and eventually even citizenship. However, this long-term settlement is conditional on the adult members of the family achieving certain employment-related and income conditions within a specified period. These conditions result in a good many who succeed in the lottery never becoming permanent residents; these include many who change their minds about emigrating once they consider seriously what may be involved, or who turn out to be ineligible on medical or other grounds, and some who go through the trouble of travelling to New Zealand to try to meet the conditions but, after a few months or a few years, fail in the attempt, and so choose or are made to return to Kiribati.

Kinship and similar relationships have provided the foundations of today's diasporic communities and been the more enduring factor in the moves of *I-Kiribati* families to New Zealand being possible and successful. In recognising this factor, Thompson (2016, p. 67) characterises the relationships beyond kinship as "strong ties" and Roman (2013, p. 86) as "fictive kinship ties"; they resemble what Geddes (1977, p. 390) calls "as if kin" from his observations of the cooperative behaviour of neighbouring *mwenga* on Tabiteuea; they can be expressed in *te taetae ni Kiribati* as *baronga* (≅ to treat as one of the family or clan) (see Maude & Maude, 1994; Trussel & Groves, 2003). According to evidence from Onotoa presented by Roalkvam (2003), these relationships are built around notions of *itera* (≅ sides) and *kawai* (≅ pathways). In any case, these relationships have been effected through habitual contacts, supplemented by frequent meetings and events organised as mentioned above under the auspices of formally established community organisations (i.e., Christchurch Kiribati Community, etc.) and church (e.g., KUC New Zealand and its branches such as Te Aake, Ararata) congregations in each community, and social media exchanges locally (see New Zealand Kiribati National Council, n.d.) and with home (see Nikunau Maneaba on Facebook, n.d.) (cf. Roman, 2013; Shuval, 2000).

Indications of how *utu* and *baronga* relationships have eased the physical and social aspects of *I-Kiribati*'s subsequent moves to New Zealand are intimated in observations below about those who have succeeded in obtaining residency and are part of one or other of the diasporic communities. The relationships in question have gone some way towards making up for being without ready access to a "native" go-between, as featured in the diasporic community in Britain, and the earlier one in New Zealand. However, the one has not been an exact substitute for the other, including that lack of the "native" go-between has meant fewer possibilities for the integration mentioned in characterising how *I-Kiribati* in Britain related to the native population. Indeed, as well as for new arrivals coming to join a community from Kiribati, these relationships have been invaluable support mechanisms within and between each community, including helping *I-Kiribati* to move from one community to another – around 20 families each year move between communities (Statistics New Zealand, 2014). They have also supported Recognised Seasonal Employer scheme labourers.

Regarding the lives led by members of the diasporic communities in New Zealand, it should be borne in mind that, before immigrating, the majority was born or raised

and lived exclusively on Tarawa, rather than Nikunau or other Outer Islands; although home islands can be a keen conversation topic, many have probably never have set foot on theirs. On Tarawa, they would have observed and, perhaps only to some extent, experienced some aspects of modernity but, even so, significant adjustments have been required at the individual, household and community levels in order to live in New Zealand. Indeed, her interviewees told Thompson (2016) about how much simpler life was on Tarawa compared to New Zealand. Thus, compared with living on Tarawa, most *I-Kiribati* moving to New Zealand seem to find almost all aspects of life require a big leap in understanding and present many, often unanticipated or unexpected, challenges. Here are some examples.

Two environmental aspects present various obvious and not so obvious challenges in New Zealand. First, the climate comprises four seasons, all of which are generally cooler and wetter than Kiribati, with droughts being shorter and rarer. This has implications, for example, for clothing, keeping warm and heating houses, and becoming accustomed to cooler climate fruits, vegetables, etc., including consuming such victuals according to season.

Second, the geology, geography and topography are completely different from those of an atoll. Geology gives rise to frequent earth tremors, if not earthquakes. Geography and topography present, and add to the challenges of, moving around and transport. In particular, the challenges for *I-Kiribati* associated with New Zealand having a network of national roads and, within that, networks of urban roads should not be underestimated (cf. Roman, 2013)–it should be recalled that only one road runs along Tarawa (see Figure 5). A further issue relating to travel in New Zealand is how comfortable people who have spent all their lives at sea-level on small islands are with going up and down steep roads (e.g., Crown Range Road, Rimutaka Hill Road) during journeys of 600 km (Auckland to Wellington) or 1,000 km (Invercargill to Blenheim).

While *I-Kiribati* make frequent use on Tarawa of privately-run public (mini)bus services, which run continuously from one end of the atoll road to the other and return, they are less inclined to do so in New Zealand, particularly the adults. Not only are ideas of timetables and bus stops challenging but also the number of bus routes, the complexity of bus networks and network maps, especially when expressed in English, and transferring from one route to another to complete many journeys are perplexing and probably even more inhibiting. For these and other reasons, most journeys undertaken by *I-Kiribati* in New Zealand are done by private motor vehicle, especially in the circumstances that most households have access to at least one private motor vehicle (Statistics New Zealand, 2014), including through shared ownership among groups of households and community groups (Roman, 2013), and seem cheerful about sharing this resource by giving people lifts, etc.

As for journeying to destinations, the onus for knowing what pathways to take usually falls on drivers. For them, similar factors arise about finding their way using road directional signs and maps as those just mentioned about bus network maps. Although the advent of global positioning systems (GPS) has reduced these factors – although GPS is not unknown for sending drivers on narrow gravel roads across precarious terrain – provided a driver has English-language skills, it is still usual for a driver who is going to a destination for the first time to be allowed to follow immediately behind a driver who is already familiar with a route or pathway. These anecdotes are consistent with McCreary and Boardman (1968) claims about *I-Nikunau* mostly being concrete learners and learning by practice, rather than through concepts, process and analogy; however, an issue with

understanding ideas through analogies, metaphors, etc. is teachers and learners having things in common to use as such (e.g., sheep, goats, haystacks, roller coasters, mountains, rivers, trains, snow, canoes, currents, winds, clouds, coconut palms, frigate birds, sea shells, pandanus) and my experience is that these are difficult to find if the two people in the teacher-learner relationship have experienced life quite differently (e.g., one from an equatorial atoll, in the middle of a vast ocean, on which subsistence is the norm, and the other from a large cool temperate island, next to a large continental land mass, on which industrialisation and, indeed, post-industrialisation, is several generations old) (cf. Teaiwa, 2011). The anecdotes also mirrow ideas about pathways being significant in kinship relationships, as related by Roalkvam (2003).

Notwithstanding, this method of practical demonstration of a route to take to complete a journey is a useful metaphor for how extant members of a diasporic community assist and impart their knowledge to newly arriving families. Indeed, the personal stories *utu* and *baronga* tell prospective *I-Kiribati* immigrants before they set off for New Zealand, or similar countries, shapes their perceptions of what is on offer (e.g., see Roman, 2013) and their knowledge of how to go about the journey, at least as much as other sources do (e.g., school learning, official and other information in documents and in video form). However, because these stories sometimes omit bad experiences, and so the information in them is incomplete, they can mean immigrants who rely on them are not forewarned of problems, hardships and mistakes which might be avoided (see Thompson, 2016).

Employment is a significant and challenging aspect of the lives of the adults in the communities. Not only is obtaining paid work necessary to generate income on which to live (i.e., victuals, rent, public utilities, transport, school and work expenses), to repay any debts arising from moving from Kiribati to New Zealand and to save for larger outlays (e.g., a bond (up to four weeks' rent) on a rental house, to purchase a motor vehicle or a dwelling) but also it is a vital condition of being permitted to settle under the Pacific Access Category. To find this work, those successful in the ballot have usually had to travel to New Zealand on temporary visas, either alone or with their partner and children, and search for work. Extant members of diasporic communities have helped them in this, including those individuals who have given sponsorship undertakings to the immigration authorities for these visas (see New Zealand Immigration, 2017c). By implication, these undertakings can entail the sponsors collecting families arriving from Kiribati for the first time at the port of entry (e.g., Auckland or Christchurch Airport), accommodating the family or finding the family accommodation with another family in the community, for weeks or, possibly, months, and helping with other matters of acclimatisation, etc., with further implications of influencing where in New Zealand new arrivals live, that is not just anywhere in cities and towns but in the particular streets and neighbourhoods where there are *I-Kiribati* households already (cf. Gillard & Dyson, 2012; Roman, 2013; Thompson/Teariki, 2016, 2017).

Sponsors or other community members often help in introducing work seekers to prospective employers and vouching for them to these employers. The work most have found is usually in occupations for which local labour is scarce, and so is one of three kinds: urban services, land-based activities and seafaring (see Statistics New Zealand, 2014) (cf. Callister, Badkar & Williams, 2009). Typical of the first are residential caregiving for the elderly, infirm, etc., commercial cleaning, domestic work, supermarket shelf stacking and similar, and construction and other labouring. The second are both close to cities and towns and in remoter places; they include horticulture, market gardening, cheese making, fruit farming, arable

cropping, dairying and vineyards. The third includes crewing the inter-island ferries and coastal ships (cf. Gillard & Dyson, 2012; Roman, 2013; Thompson, 2016; Williams, 2008).

While probably not considered as fully as might be seen as economically "rational", the expectation of being able to earn wages high enough to recover the costs of immigrating is usually part of deciding to immigrate; this may be particularly so in the numerous cases of these costs being financed with help from kin on Tarawa or in New Zealand. Indeed, few *I-Kiribati* arrive with as much capital or savings as more typical economic immigrants to New Zealand in the skills, investors and entrepreneurship category. This is not least because *mwenga* which they were occupying in Kiribati are unlikely to be something they can sell from under parents and other kin they leave behind; and rarely would these kin be able to bestow capital on them in other ways or from other sources; if anything, their kin might be expecting the immigrants to remit money to Tarawa for their support or to enable them to emigrate from Tarawa to New Zealand themselves (cf. Thompson, 2016).

Language is another aspect to present a major challenge, as evidenced from the research of Roman (2013) and Thompson (2016). The main language in New Zealand is English, and though less pronounced nowadays, some Anglo-centricity comes with that, as well as some expectations of Anglo-conformity although *Te Reo* Māori (i.e., the language of the indigenous *Māori*) is present, as are languages and cultures of various immigrant groups, from Asia (i.e., mostly Chinese but with its neighbouring countries quite well represented, along with people from the India sub-continent, or of its heritage, via Fiji), the Pacific, other parts of Europe (e.g., Scotland, Scandinavia, Ireland) and elsewhere (cf. Edens, 2017). The challenge of language arises in the early periods of settlement but often continues. For example, want of English, particularly in the way English is used in New Zealand, especially its oral form (e.g., pace, accents, slang, etc.), hampers adults in moving from the lower paid work many accept on arrival to better-paid employment. It also hampers social interaction below a mere surface level, which otherwise might lead to trust, friendship and other consorting.

Several more aspects, some hinted at already, can present challenges for both arriving immigrants and *I-Kiribati* already quite well established. They include physical aspects of accommodation and forms of housing, and public utilities (including sewerage systems and toileting), and financial or commercial aspects – most dwellings are rented from a private landlord, with rents of between NZ$350-600 per week in South Auckland, NZ$300-500 per week in Christchurch, etc. (see Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment, 2017), rather than either from a governmental body or being owner-occupied (see Statistics New Zealand, 2014). They include notions of household income, spending one's earnings on one's own household, accumulating capital to improve that household and saving for old age. They include victuals and manufactures, modes of production, shopping, consumerism, living with modern equipment and amenities, and other aspects of New Zealand's material culture. They include illnesses and diseases, and accessing and benefitting from health and welfare services and systems. They include education systems, school enrolment and participation, and the relations of parents with the schools attended by their children and their roles in their children's education generally (cf. Gillard & Dyson, 2012; Roman, 2013; Thompson/Teariki, 2016, 2017).

Subsumed in the nature of the challenges these various aspects present are social mores in relations between the members of diasporic communities and the general population, with its broad racial-ethnic spectrum and notions of racism and liberalism/in-

dividualism. All these can be daunting, not least when it comes to having to deal with a government bureaucracy or institution, for example on matters of immigration, social welfare, labour regulation and welfare, income tax, and motor registration and licensing. Most of these dealings involve formal procedures and written forms, declarations, etc. The organisations are invariably far more efficient and officious than *I-Kiribati* are used to, and they work with a mind-set and in languages – I refer here not only to English but also nuanced languages of government, bureaucracy and professional institutions – which *I-Kiribati* can find challenging and perplexing. As alluded to above, similar applies to public systems of hospitals and for healthcare, and of schools and for education (cf. Roman, 2013; Thompson, 2016).

While these aspects and challenges present difficulties, many *I-Kiribati* have overcome them to varying extents, or at least coped with them. This savviness indicates changes to their lives, such that they are more monetised and modern than Tarawa; it also indicates that, although life on Tarawa shows signs of monetisation and modernity, this differs from prevalent behaviours in New Zealand. Indeed, many *I-Kiribati* probably find difficulties in overcoming differences entirely, including the importance of time, work routines, greater place of written communication, and forms and uses of money. These difficulties are apt to keep many in the *I-Kiribati* communities on the periphery of New Zealand's supposed bicultural society but, as *I-Kiribati* are inclined to see it, a society belonging to *I-Matang*. This is exemplified in terms under which *I-Kiribati* are employed and, more often than not, them living what many consider relative poverty, although officially New Zealand does not have a poverty line (see New Zealand Parliament, 2011).

It is further exemplified in social, cultural, religious and political matters generally. Indeed, as alluded to already, integration of New Zealand's diasporic communities with the rest of the population is weaker than in Britain, and so in terms of acculturation and assimilation what Berry (1997, 2005) labels "separation" is far more evident. This is attributable to how most families in the diasporic communities arrived as *I-Kiribati* families already, or as *I-Kiribati* couples who have since had children, or as singles who have since married. Although some of these marriages have involved *non-I-Kiribati*, particularly to someone from a similarly Pacific-orientated community, including *Māori*, often they have been to another *I-Kiribati*. Thus, the children and even the grandchildren arising from many relationships and born in New Zealand have mostly been *I-Kiribati*, whereas had they been of mixed race, this could have led to grandparents and other relatives of different races interacting. It is also attributable to the strong kinship ties they can maintain with people within the diaspora in New Zealand and even on Tarawa, and the sense of being from and belonging to their island(s). These links are now far easier and cheaper to participate in on a daily or other frequent basis through modern technology applications.

This separation and insularity is perhaps more so among adults than youths and children, as the latter experience, notably at school, a great deal more of host country language and culture than many adults do, especially if the adults are spending most of their time at home and among their diasporic community. As Roman (2013) and Thompson (2016) report, in similar manner to Tarawa, *I-Kiribati's* residential neighbours are usually of other races, including from other Pacific Island communities and *Māori iwi*, and although their interactions vary, they may only be slight; besides, there are long-standing patterns of segregation of peoples by main ethnic categories, so Pacific, including *Māori*, from Asian from *Pākehā* (Grbic, Ishizawa & Crothers, 2010). What is more, in work

places, Thompson reports that, although these environments may present opportunities for adults to socialise outside diasporic communities, the nature of some work may not require, or may not afford, any social interaction with other workers (see also Gillard & Dyson, 2012) (cf. Berry, 2005).

The points just made resonate with the issue of how the strength of *utu* or *baronga* relationships may impede social mobility. Indeed, Roman (2013) and Thompson (2016) suggest they may also adversely affect economic mobility and geographical mobility. For households which are not of mixed race, there can be sub-conscious pressure to stay close to the persons, households and communities who helped them become established, including fulfilling, out of a sense of reciprocity, obligations to help newly arriving families. *I-Kiribati* who interact with *non-I-Kiribati* once they are established in New Zealand might be perceived by other *I-Kiribati* as allowing such interactions to interfere with these obligations.

Thompson (2016) bears this out in a perverse way: she reports favourable outcomes for *I-Kiribati* who have established so called *weak ties*, or having non-one-off interactions with *non-I-Kiribati* outside the diasporic community. Through these weak ties, some *I-Kiribati* have moved into better-paid jobs, although that has not necessarily meant they have defaulted on any community obligations; indeed, perhaps the contrary is true, given their higher incomes. However, they may have made other moves, including re-locating to distant places, mostly in a southerly direction (e.g., from South Auckland to Hamilton, Rotorua or Invercargill), and so are not so immediately available to newcomers. Indeed, sometimes reasons for moving geographically have included the frequency of *botaki* and other community expectations (e.g., providing transport through possessing a motor vehicle) absorbing too much of their time, being beyond their means and affecting their mental health (cf. Roman, 2013).

# PART III

## Retrospective Analysis of *I-Nikunau* and Interpretation of their Circumstances

> Life can only be understood backwards; but it must be lived forwards – Soren Kierkegaard

This analysis of *I-Nikunau* is historical and formative, and thematic. Covering at least 10 generations, it discusses how *I-Nikunau's* present and past connect, and how and why changes in their circumstances continue. Before presenting the analysis, three matters need outlining: Nikunau Atoll's de jure and de facto colonial status; the order in which the analysis is presented; and meanings of the 14 circumstances used to structure the analysis thematically.

Reference is made quite liberally in Parts I and II to colonialism, the Colony, the Colony Government, etc., and there is more to come throughout Part III, including in discussing *I-Nikunau's* political circumstances in Chapter 11. However, before going any further, it needs to be appreciated that how outsiders have recorded Nikunau's colonial status contrasts with how *I-Nikunau* seem to have experienced it. As indicated in Part I Introduction, in 1892, Nikunau was annexed to the British Empire, one of the self-proclaimed Great Powers (e.g., see General Act of 1885) with colonial interests in the Pacific region in the 19th century – the others were France, Germany and the USA, as it expanded its continental territory westwards. Related annexations applied to the whole of the Kiribati Islands and to the Tuvalu (or Ellice) Islands further south. The British Government was obliged to carry out these annexations at the insistence of the German Government, with which it had a then secret agreement (Declaration between the Governments of 1886[31]), to the exclusion mainly of the French. All the annexed atolls were incorporated in a single political unit, to which the British accorded the status of *protectorate* rather than *colony*– see Munro and Firth (1986) for a detailed discussion of events and concerns of the British authorities regarding protectorates and colonies. However, according to Munro and Firth, a colony was what soon eventuated de facto in the northern and central Kiribati Islands, and from 1900 on Banaba, although it was another 20 years before the status of colony became de jure (i.e., from 1916, under the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Order in Council of 1915). In contrast, with de facto administration largely conducted under the auspices of the LMS until 1917, the status of Nikunau and the other southern Kiribati Islands (and the Tuvalu Islands), whether as protectorate or colony, was to most intents and purposes only

de jure. Incidentally, during the colonial period and since, *I-Nikunau* and other *I-Kiribati* seem to have made little distinction between the notions of protectorate and colony; hence, I chose to refer to both entities as just "the Colony" for more than just simplicity sake.

The analysis is presented in 14 chapters each devoted to one of *I-Nikunau*'s thematic circumstances. Their order is based on two main considerations of flow and coherence, namely, attempting to follow the chronological flow of history and positing that themes influence one another. However, it has only been possible to achieve this flow and coherence very roughly, particularly as the influences between thematic circumstances exhibit much reciprocity. Regarding the history, one way of separating this is geographically, that is by the differences in where *I-Nikunau* were living during particular periods, and so I have incorporated a summary of their history in Chapter 5, which deals with their geographical circumstances. In advancing this summary, I acknowledge that this too presents a difference between *I-Nikunau* and *I-Matang*; that is, *I-Nikunau* tell their (his)stories according to the ancestors who were present playing a part (cf. Roalkvam, 2003), whereas *I-Matang* are apt to stress events and arrange them in chronological order according to years counted AD, not to mention bringing in their sense of objectivity and own referentiality (Burnett, 2009b).

Turning now to the 14 thematic circumstances used in the rest of Part III. The 14 correspond to the themes of analysis which emerged, or were induced, as I undertook the several iterations of analysis. Concomitantly, as they emerged, so I used them to interrogate the empirical materials and my previous interpretations of them, so gradually lifting the narratives from the level of description to the level of analysis. I show the 14 together on Figure 7, which is drawn in a way to indicate that, similar to the themes I started with and which are depicted in Figure 1, they overlap. The following is a list of them, together with a short description of what they cover. They are numbered according to the chapter which addresses them.

- Ch.5 Geographical Circumstances: these incorporate questions of where the subjects, namely *I-Nikunau*, have normally lived at different times (Agyemang & Lehman, 2013; Hall, 2012).
- Ch.6 Demographical Circumstances: these encompass such matters as the size and composition of the population of *I-Nikunau*, and their forms of settlement and migratory patterns (cf. Locke, Adger & Kelly, 2000).
- Ch.7 Economic Circumstances: these comprise the economic entities, economic behaviours, subsistence, victuals exchange, income, consumption and wealth associated with *I-Nikunau*, and the economic system(s) by which these phenomena are encompassed. The concept of an economic system embraces modes of production, employment (i.e., including in the broad sense of being engaged in productive activities, whether or not wages are received), consumption, savings and capital formation or investment, imports and exports, and taxation and public expenditure. Allowing for *I-Nikunau* contexts, the economic entities in such a system comprise individuals and the groups or organisations they form or are part of (cf. Blomberg, Hess & Orphanides, 2004; Granovetter, 2018; Johnson, 2013). Categories of occupation are dealt with as economic rather than demographical (cf. Locke et al., 2000). I judged that making the usual distinction between microeconomic circumstances and macroeconomic was unnecessary.

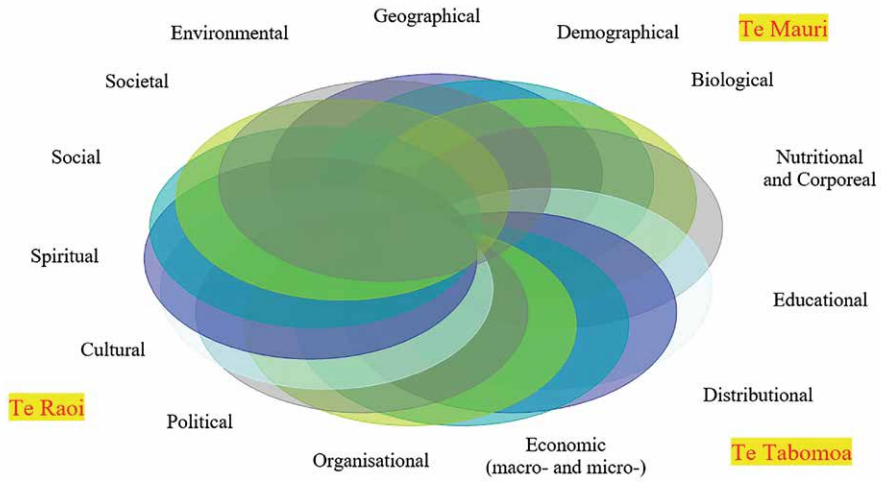



*Figure 7.* Themes of Analysis.

- Ch.8 Environmental Circumstances: these comprise climate, state of land and sea, and similar conditions of nature, including those induced by human behaviours (cf. Hopwood, 2009; Locke et al., 2000; Renaud, Dun, Warner & Bogardi, 2011).
- Ch.9 Biological Circumstances: these embrace procreation among *I-Nikunau* and between them and peoples with different genes or physical features (cf. Anderson, 2012).
- Ch.10 Nutritional and Corporeal Circumstances: these encompass *I-Nikunau's* health and quality of life outcomes associated with the range or quantity of victuals which they consume (cf. Campbell, 1991) and with the physical activities they undertake in going about their daily lives.
- Ch.11 Political Circumstances: these comprise the political systems, and structures or processes of political governance of which *I-Nikunau* have been part, as well as politics, power and related matters (cf. Doronila, 1985; Jones, 2010).
- Ch.12 Spiritual (or Religious) Circumstances: these comprise *I-Nikunau's* religiosity, religious beliefs, religious conversion, religious differences, etc. (cf. Neitz & Spickard, 1990).
- Ch.13 Educational Circumstances: these encompass areas of knowledge in which *I-Nikunau* are educated, and who educates whom and how (cf. Liang & Chen, 2007).
- Ch.14 Social Circumstances: these comprise relations and interactions among *I-Nikunau* and between them and peoples of different languages, cultures, race, etc. They include participation, engagement and involvement, and acceptance and tension in these relations, etc. The circumstances in question encompass such phenomena as social roles and affiliations, individuality and communality, kinship and social structure (including descent, inheritance and marriage), domestic arrangements, social activities, work, leisure, lifestyle, aging, and social resources, including the interrelationship between social systems and the built environment (cf. Hockings, 1984; Levasseur, Richard, Gauvin & Raymond, 2010; Moglia, Perez & Burn, 2008; Pedraza, 1991; Walker, 2003).
- Ch.15 Organisational Circumstances: these encompass such matters as the nature, purpose, performance, structure and process of organisations in which *I-Nikunau* participate or which affect them (cf. Arnold, 1991; Bandury & Nahapiet, 1979; McGoun, Bettner & Coyne, 2007; Young, Peng, Ahlstrom, Bruton & Jiang, 2008). The organisa-

tions in question are made up of groups of individuals comprising *mwenga*, *utu*, cooperative, local-private and foreign-private businesses, religious organisations, socio-environmental and cultural organisations, governmental bodies and aid organisations.

- Ch.16 Distributional Circumstances: these accord with the equitableness with which various material and intangible things capable of being distributed or shared or experienced are distributed among *I-Nikunau*, and between them and other peoples, particularly peoples with whom *I-Nikunau* deal economically, socially or politically, or with whom they share the same social or natural space and time (cf. Arnold, 1991; Gewirtz, 2001; Krueger & Donohoe, 2005; McGoun et al., 2007; Wheatcraft & Ellefson, 1983).
- Ch.17 Cultural Circumstances: these relate to *I-Nikunau's* construction of learnt relations with each other and with other peoples, with things material and intangible, and with their surroundings generally. They embrace relatively loosely structured systems of shared habits, customs, social practices and general conduct so formed, and the symbolism attaching thereto. More generally, culture resides in the human mind; it has been, and continues to be, associated with social development, including separating the cultured from the others. How *I-Nikunau* respond to economic, political, social and other signals, compared or in contrast to other peoples, depends a great deal on their culture (cf. Carnegie & Napier, 2002; Harrison, 2000; Hockings, 1984; Porter, 1997; Thaman, 2003; Walker, 2003).
- Ch.18 Societal Circumstances: these derive from the extents to which *I-Nikunau* constitute a separate society(ies) and to which they are part of other societies. They encompass the nature and composition of the different societies *I-Nikunau* are part of, for example, in terms of customs, laws and institutions, shared or separated (cf. Modell, 2014; Nunn, 2013; Wejnert, 2002). In these contexts, society refers to how and why persons exist together in a state of social order of individuals, *utu*, communities, polities, etc. This existing together may be said to be based on mutual relations, or associations. Thus, societal circumstances encompass ways in which sociuses are linked or tied (Murphy, O'Connell & Ó hÓgartaigh, 2013; "Society", 2017; van der Maesen, 2013).

# 5

# Geographical Circumstances (*te mauri*)

*I-Nikunau* live nowadays on Nikunau and in traditional island, urban island and metropolitan country diasporic communities elsewhere, as shown on Figure 3 and analysed descriptively in Part II. These circumstances fit into a pattern of change which may be summarised historically, starting from at least a few centuries back, and which I have separated into five periods of geopolitics. Up to the end of the first of these, pre-1820 going back for probably more than a millenary, the vast majority of *I-Nikunau* lived on Nikunau. Although having their creation stories (see Latouche, 1983b), the persons, families, etc. who went through ethnogenesis to emerge as *I-Nikunau* probably arrived on Nikunau over many decades if not centuries from various places around the Pacific Rim, southeast Asia/Indonesia and Samoa (Addison & Matisoo-Smith, 2010; Alaima et al., 1979; Di Piazza, 1999; Maude, 1963, n.d.; Sabatier, 1939/1977). Furthermore, emigration from and immigration to Nikunau arose during this millenary from inter-island marriage, kinship and similar ties, and wars, but was seemingly small, having to be effected using canoes, with the stars, cloud formations and other natural means of navigation. It mainly involved peoples who had settled similarly the neighbouring southern Kiribati Islands, namely Beru (50 km distant), Onotoa (110 km), Tamana (140 km), Arorae (150 km), Tabiteuea (170 km) and Nonouti (230 km), and elsewhere in the Kiribati Archipelago. Otherwise, *I-Nikunau* seem to have been largely undisturbed by outsiders (Bedford et al., 1980; Lewis, 1972; Maude & Doran, 1966; Sabatier, 1939/1977).

The four more recent of my five geopolitical periods are as follows:

***From the 1820s to the 1910s***: this was a period of increasing interaction either with various foreigners coming to Nikunau or through *I-Nikunau* being afforded possibilities to go elsewhere. Even so, most *I-Nikunau* continued to live mostly on Nikunau. Except that, at any one time, 10-20% might be working away temporarily (Bedford et al., 1980; Davis, 1892). An important phenomenon was these temporary absentees returning to the atoll with ideas, knowledge and skills, and changed beliefs, values and attitudes, all acquired through interactions with other *I-Kiribati* and *non-I-Kiribati*; life on Nikunau was affected by how these acquisitions were shared and applied (Macdonald, 1982a). Besides, the lives of *I-Nikunau* on Nikunau were affected by various presences of *non-I-Kiribati*, who engaged in previously unfamiliar activities and exerted much social, economic and political influence. These exertions were effected through organisations they established with commercial and religious purposes in mind, and which I refer to in places as

"non-traditional organisations". Much of the interaction with *non-I-Kiribati* during this 100 years might be characterised as informal imperialism – informal because sovereignty was either not claimed (i.e., before 1892) or only de jure (i.e., from 1892 to 1917), and imperialism because, in contrast to forms of colonialism (see Horvath, 1972), there were very few permanent settlers from the *I-Matang* colonial race.

***From about 1918 to the 1950s***: during this period, *I-Nikunau* mostly continued to live on Nikunau but were now de jure and de facto subjects in a British colony. Except, in the middle of the period some were resettled in the Phoenix Islands, whence they were then moved to Solomon Islands towards the end of the period. The interaction with *non-I-Kiribati* during these 50 years might be characterised as formal or administrative imperialism by British officials of the Colony Government, through indirect rule from within the boundary of the Colony but still at a distance (cf. Davie, 2005; Ferguson, 2008; Lange, 2009; Horvath, 1972).

***From the 1960s to the 1980s***: during this period, many *I-Nikunau* continued to live on Nikunau but an increasing proportion had begun the emigration from Nikunau to Tarawa, so initiating the largest diasporic community of today. On Tarawa, the British officials of the Colony Government gradually implemented internal self-rule by *I-Kiribati* and Tuvaluans and then made the territory of the Colony formally independent, with the bulk (i.e., excluding Tuvalu) forming the Republic of Kiribati, of which *I-Nikunau* became citizens.

***Since the 1980s to the Present***: during this period, what has now become a minority of *I-Nikunau*, albeit a substantial one, have continued to live on Nikunau while diasporic communities elsewhere, including in the Republic, have increased in number and size and spread to metropolitan countries. The period comprises four decades of sovereignty. However, on Nikunau and within Kiribati generally, interactions between, on the one hand, *I-Nikunau* and most other *I-Kiribati* and, on the other hand, the *non-I-Kiribati* associated with the hotchpotch of aid organisations supposedly working in partnership with the Republic Government, have increasingly come to feature a national *I-Kiribati* élite of politicians, senior officials in government, and other persons associated with non-traditional organisations, be they commercial, religious, community or governmental (cf. Thomas & Kautoa, 2007). According to distinctions of colonialism induced by Horvath (1972), these are characteristics of neo-imperialism, so bringing into question just what sovereignty means for citizens of the Republic, including *I-Nikunau*.

## 5.1 Comings and Goings, and Seeds of Diaspora

The immediate catalyst for the changes after 1820 were Atlantic whalers; after exploiting other Pacific grounds since the 1780s, they began hunting the On-the-Line[32] grounds during the December to March season, an activity which continued for three or four decades. Nikunau was convenient to this whaling area, and so the whalers made a habit of coming ashore there (Best, 1983; Lever, 1964; Lévesque, 1989; Macdonald, 1982a; Maude & Leeson, 1965; Mitchell, 1983; Morrell, 1960; Ward, 1946; Woodford, 1895). Among the many interactions between whaler and islander was for *I-Nikunau* (e.g., Peter and Thomas Byron) to join whaling ships' crews, occurrences which might be interpreted as the seeds being sown for the pattern of *I-Nikunau* working away, including to where whaling stations were located on other Pacific Islands, possibly including New Zealand. Indeed, *I-Nikunau* labour, male and female, has been in demand ever since for seafaring, agricultural work (plantations, arable and pastoral farms, forestry, vineyards), mining

and similar activities, whose proliferation gave rise to the so called *Pacific labour trade* and the circular labour migration it entailed for *I-Nikunau*, taking them to various places around the Pacific, Indian and Atlantic Oceans and adjacent continental land masses (see Bedford et al., 1980; Bedford, Bedford & Ho, 2009; Bollard, 1981; Couper, 1967; Firth, 1973; Irvine, 2004; Jolly, 1987; Lawrence, 1992; Lewis, 1988; Macdonald, 1982a; Maclellan, 2008; McCreery & Munro, 1993; Morrell, 1960; Munro, 1993; Munro & Firth, 1986, 1987, 1990; Sabatier, 1939/1977; Shineberg, 1984; Shlomowitz & Munro, 1992; Siegel, 1985; Speedy, 2016; Ward, 1946; Weeramantry, 1992; Williams & Macdonald, 1985).

However, between 1908 and 1980, in order to serve the interests of Britain and British Dominions (i.e., Australia and New Zealand), these places were largely restricted by the Colony Government (see Gilbert and Ellice Islands Protectorate (Consolidation) Regulation 1908) to the two phosphate islands, Banaba and, after 1946, Nauru,[33] and it was not just male labourers who were involved but *unimane*[34] as well and families (i.e., a wife and up to two children) (Macdonald, 1982a; Personal communication from a confidential source 2017; Shlomowitz & Munro, 1992; Weeramantry, 1992; Williams & Macdonald, 1985).[35]

Over the years, motives *I-Nikunau* have had to engage in this working away have varied in applicability and importance, and between several for going to places and several for not staying on Nikunau. From early on, the motives for going to places included adventure, curiosity and wanderlust (Macdonald, 1982a), often in response to encouragement taken from stories and information brought to Nikunau both by *I-Nikunau* on their return from having been away and by visitors (e.g., beachcombers, traders). They soon extended to earning cash, the surplus of which they could either use to purchase foreign manufactures to send to *utu* on Nikunau or take back there themselves, or, once facilities existed to do so, remit cash[36] to these *utu* for such emerging needs as school fees, church contributions and purchasing from trade stores. What is more, after a while, there were cultural expectations, backed sometimes by Colony Government processes, that the men in particular would take it in turns to work away, so as to share the experiences, earnings and other benefits among *I-Nikunau* and support *I-Nikunau* back home (Pitchford, 1981).

The motives for not staying on Nikunau included escaping the effect of droughts (see Pastor Iakopo cited by Nokise, 1983, p. 180; Shlomowitz & Munro, 1992) and other natural hardships. Going away also enabled *I-Nikunau* to shake off, at least temporarily, some of the constraints and sterner discipline imposed in their traditionally-minded communities under the absolute traditional authority of *unimane* (see Hockings, 1984), or as experienced because of various church and colonial laws and regulations, as policed by officials of the LMS-controlled *te kabowi n abamakoro* (= the council of the island) and the Colony Government aligned Nikunau Native Government (e.g., see Gilbert and Ellice Islands Protectorate (Consolidation) Regulation 1908; Regulations for the Good Order, 1933) (Macdonald, 1982a; Pitchford, 1981).

Both these types of motives are still valid, albeit adjusted to present circumstances, and added to by the prospect of working away from not only Nikunau but also Tarawa, or Kiribati generally, and with the addenda of likely adverse future consequences of climate change, leading to resettlement on higher ground, in economic and social senses as well as topographically, for example, in New Zealand (e.g., see Radio New Zealand, 2015).

The experiences of the many *I-Nikunau* who went away to work varied somewhat and was not without risks, including presumably the instances of economic exploitation, social abuse and virtual slavery which occurred to islanders generally (e.g., see Shineberg, 1984)–

although many went as indentured labour, evidence of *I-Nikunau* having been blackbirded is equivocal (see Maude, 1981; Speedy, 2015), but evidence concerning *I-Kiribati* generally is clearer (e.g., Tate & Foy, 1965). Furthermore, *I-Nikunau* seem to have been reticent to admit having let themselves in for such bad experiences. Thus, in the stories and information they passed onto others, who were thus encouraged to follow in their footsteps (Macdonald, 1982a), it is not clear how many bad experiences they omitted. Besides, they were reticent about putting others off from experiencing things for themselves. Such traits persist, as alluded to in Chapter 4.2 in mentioning studies by Roman (2013) and Thompson (2016) about recent New Zealand settlement experiences; the personal stories of *utu* and *baronga* which prospective settlers relied to inform their preparations, etc. omitted bad experiences, and so contained incomplete and incorrect information.

## 5.2 Diaspora taking Roots

Up to the 1960s, a majority of any generation who went away as part of circular labour migration or similar returned to Nikunau, sometimes with marriage partners from elsewhere, lived out the rest of their lives there and were buried there – reasons for not returning usually involved marriage or kinship ties to communities on other islands or having perished while away (Bedford et al., 1980). Since, the pattern has changed: the majority still left their work location (e.g., Banaba, Nauru, New Zealand) but many chose to settle permanently on Tarawa, rather than Nikunau (see Bedford & Bedford, 2010; Jones, 2016). This choice arose from Tarawa's monetisation, its opportunities to use their savings to purchase land and acquire durable household items and other assets, including from which to make a living (e.g., trucks), its waged work, the availability of amenities, and its budding cultural reputation as more developed, exciting and progressive. Indeed, things associated with the motives listed above for working and otherwise travelling away from Nikunau were increasingly to be found on Tarawa.

A further reason was that, although parents might have been capable of living a subsistence life on Nikunau, their adolescent children were sometimes not, because most of their childhoods had been spent on, for example, a phosphate island. This probably meant they lacked virtually any experience of essential knowledge and skills, such as being able to fish, cut toddy, grow victuals, materials, etc., and perform some other work, chores, etc. Indeed, they could found it difficult to cope with Nikunau victuals or to behave in keeping with traditional mores of other *I-Nikunau* (confidential personal communication, 2009, from two sources who spent their pre-adolescence on Banaba).

By way of further explanation, whereas *I-Nikunau* were contracted to work on the phosphate islands for only two or three years at a time, during the last few decades of mining, the time they actually spent there lengthened. This arose because more skills were entailed in labouring jobs (e.g., because machinery replaced pickaxes and shovels), and so in order, for example, to save on training costs, the British Phosphate Commission renewed contracts as much as possible, especially to retain the most efficient and reliable workers. Thus, in at least a few cases, a family was absent from Nikunau for as long as 12 years. Children attended the British Phosphate Commission-sponsored schools, which, although no doubt well meant, did not provide learning relevant to living on Nikunau, and, as there was very little need or opportunity for families to engage in even a modicum of subsistence activity life (e.g., because they were supplied with rations, they did not own any land)–a few men would occasionally go fishing out of a yearning to eat fresh fish – neither boys nor girls learnt knowledge and skills associated with this life.

### *5.2.1 Tarawa: Centralisation and Precedence*

The catalyst for Tarawa's various circumstances coming about, as alluded to here and in Chapter 3, occurred about 1950. Following the Colony Government's restoration, its officials initially adopted a reconstruction and development plan of *devolved development* of the Colony (see GEIC, 1946). However, by the early 1950s, new officials were in charge and they changed tack, embarking instead on social, economic and political development policies founded on the principle of centralisation on Tarawa. I now go into further details of this piece of Kiribati history and its population consequences for Tarawa, before returning to *I-Nikunau's* story and the consequences centralisation has had for them so far.

The Colony Government's newly instituted social, economic and political development policies reflected the notion alluded to in Chapter 3 of development as modernisation and technology transfer via projects devised and implemented in a top-down manner using external expertise (cf. Sillitoe, 1998; Sillitoe & Marzano, 2009). The policies and projects relied on capital grants from Britain's Colonial Development [and, eventually, Welfare] Fund (Abbot, 1971), and how they were administered. Typical of the time, the pursuit of efficiency (Hopwood, 1984) was taken for granted, notwithstanding its ambiguities and its absence from *I-Kiribati* culture. Centralising new amenities on Tarawa, compared with spreading them across a score of remote islands, reduced the needs for capital from the fund in question. Being centralised, the facilities would need fewer staff than otherwise and their close proximity would make them more productive. Such economies of scale applied to individual services and to colony administration as a whole, meaning the amenities would be cheaper for the Colony Government to operate. Effecting administrative and political control were also seen as concomitant with centralisation, and so reinforced the belief held in it by *I-Matang* officials on Tarawa and in Honiara (which was, by then, the place of residence of the high commissioner for British Western Pacific Territories) and London. Certainly, centralisation was of greater administrative convenience for those heading the Colony Government than decentralisation would have been (Green et al., 1979; Macdonald, 1982a; Pitchford, 1981).

The beliefs above about employee costs applied particularly to *I-Matang* staff, who despite staff never having had to be recruited in great numbers – the number of *I-Matang* staff reached 50 during the 1950s, 80 in the 1960s and over 140 by the 1970s – comprised the largest item of operating costs and the resource in shortest supply. By comparison, Tuvaluans and *I-Kiribati*, although holding 350 permanent positions by the mid-1950s and then 1,000 by the mid-1970s (GEIC, 1957, 1969, 1976), cost much less to employ, their positions of responsibility being mostly junior and their pay rates being so low. It was also believed that *I-Matang* would be easier, and so less costly, to recruit and maintain if they and their families had ready access to amenities of reasonable quality (e.g., *I-Matang* doctors working at a central hospital on Tarawa would more readily send their children to primary school if there were one of high quality on Tarawa).

Centralisation was also consistent with Britain's policy for implementing decolonisation across its Empire. As Morgan (1980) relates, this policy involved transferring sovereignty to a single government covering the entire territory within each colony's existing boundary, and so keeping the former colonies intact as new nation states, rather than the colonies reverting to the separate polities which existed in pre-colonial times, be it in Africa, Asia or the Pacific. Concomitantly, grants from the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund were easier to obtain if they endowed the intended seat of government of a postcolonial nation

state with public institutions and facilities, commercial supply chains, public utilities, transport facilities and other infrastructure, with the expectation of these being politically strong and capable of sustaining the nation so created. Britain saw this policy as the one which would better serve its interests in post-colonial times. However, in the case of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands, this desired state did not eventuate because the Ellice islanders opted in a referendum to separate from the rest of the Colony, becoming the Dominion of Tuvalu, a constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary democracy (Macdonald, 1982a).

Since Kiribati's decolonisation, the expertise and wealth of aid organisations have enabled them to acquire the upper hand in making many important decisions about development (cf. Sillitoe, 1998; Sillitoe & Marzano, 2009). Decisions they have made about projects and related activities have continually reinforced this centralisation, perhaps unwittingly, and the Republic Government has acquiesced in these matters. Under the changing auspices of *aid*, *development assistance* and *investment partnership*, these aid organisations have supplied Tarawa with all manner of infrastructure, amenities, facilities and systems (e.g., coastal protection, roading, air and shipping port facilities, public utility networks, clinics, hospitals, schools, colleges and other education and training institutions, a library and museum, government accounting systems), expert evaluations and advice, and other aid-in-kind (and occasionally aid-in-cash) (e.g., see Asian Development Bank, 2009a, 2009b; Tables 3 and 6, Government of Kiribati, 2018, pp. 6, 9-29; Tables 16 and 17, World Bank, 2005, pp. 48-49).

This has been effected largely through now innumerable discrete projects and mostly without much real coordination. Aid organisation consultants and officials make frequent visits to Tarawa – only a few of these organisations have ever had offices there – but to nowhere else in the country (cf. Dean et al., 2016). As elsewhere (see Burall, Maxwell & Menocal, 2006; Doucouliagos & Paldam, 2011), the efficacy of these projects, individually and collectively, is questionable, including probably that they have largely reflected economic and political priorities of British and other donor countries and organisation for so-called developing countries, rather than cultural, social, political, environmental and domestic economic priorities of particular countries or communities (Burt & Clerk, 1997; Sillitoe, 1998; Sillitoe & Marzano, 2009; Tucker, 1999). They have been performed with little involvement or engagement with people affected – an exception proving the rule is reported by MacKenzie (2008). This is despite their rhetoric of aiding peoples of the Third World, Developing Countries, the Global South, Emerging Economies, etc., and an espoused desire to reproduce prosperity in these places commensurate with whence donations are coming.

Almost from the start, the policies associated with centralisation had an economic multiplier effect on Tarawa. Not only that but they also fuelled a population increase, initially through immigration of workers and students from Nikunau and other Outer Islands, and from Tuvalu, Britain, Australia and New Zealand. In the 1960s, immigration from within the Colony escalated when, contrary to various concerns, the Colony Government lifted regulations dating from the 1940s about who could live on Tarawa and why, effectively meaning it was a matter for individuals or *utu* to choose (Bedford & Bedford, 2010; Bertram & Watters, 1984; Couper, 1967). Although many Tuvaluans and *I-Matang* left in the decade following the Republic being established, net immigration continued and has still not abated (Roland & Curtis, 2020), despite overcrowded conditions which were were warned of in the 1970s and 1980s (see Green et al., 1979; Pitchford, 1981) and visibly evident by the 1990s. Figure 8 shows the effects on Tarawa's population of this immigration and its consequences in terms of procreation.

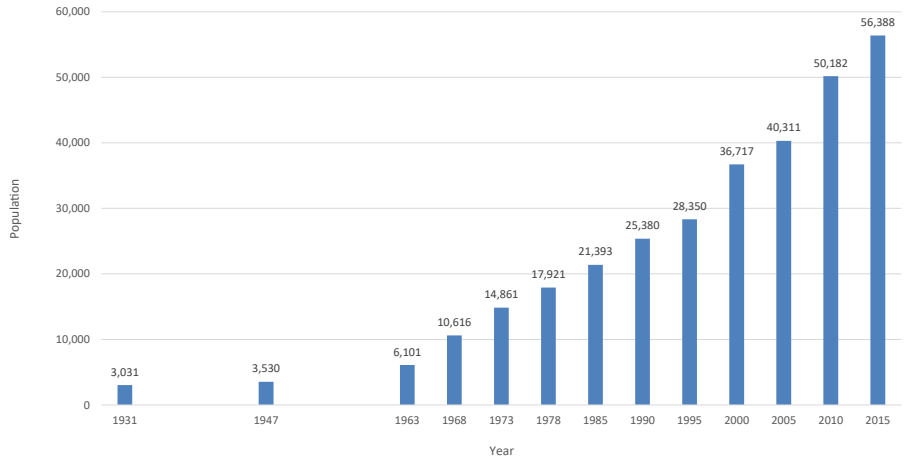



*Figure 8.* Population of South Tarawa 1931 to 2015 (Sources: Maude & Doran, 1966; National Statistics Office, 2016; Office of Te Beretitenti and T'Makei Services, 2012c; Pusinelli, 1947) (NB 1931 and 1947 include the half of the population who then lived on North Tarawa, including because the atoll's government station and the Colony hospital were there then).

The increase in Tarawa's population is some 16-fold compared with before its precedence was cemented by centralisation. This is in stark contrast to the total population of all the Outer Islands combined; their population has risen from about 31,000 in 1947 – when Tabiteuea was the most populated of the Kiribati Islands, not Tarawa – to just over 54,000 now, and so has not even doubled.

### *5.2.2 Consequences for I-Nikunau of Centralisation*

Centralisation had consequences for *I-Nikunau* affecting their geographical, demographical, educational and economic circumstances, and more. As outlined at the start of Part II about *I-Nikunau* in the Present, approximately 2,600 of them now live on Tarawa, as analysed in Chapter 3, having migrated there since the 1950s and procreated. Between the 1950s and 1970s, the largest contingent of emigrants comprised adolescent *I-Nikunau*; as high academic achievers in Nikunau's primary schools, they took up boarding places at the King George V School (KGVS) for boys and, by 1960, the Elaine Bernacchi School (EBS) for girls – this school eventually became co-educational as KGVEBS. Although they might have expected to live away from Nikunau for only a few years, their academic achievements at secondary school, from which achievements at tertiary level followed in some cases, led to emigration which was longer term, or, in many cases, permanent. Work for which they were educated (e.g., medicine, nursing, secondary school and trades teaching, engineering, administration, accounting) was located primarily on Tarawa, as were facilities which they could use (i.e., the hospital, primary schools, shops, the bank, public utilities, etc.), and so they have remained there, married, and had children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. For the initial groups of students, who graduated into mostly colonial public service employment, the effect of going to boarding school was separation from other *I-Nikunau* (see McCreary & Boardman, 1968). However, this separation soon passed, as they took deliberate steps to fulfil accumulating socioeconomic, cultural and

similar obligations they had to *utu ni kaan*; these were besides economic obligations they were able to fulfil by remitting goods and cash to *utu* on Nikunau. These steps included accommodating young *utu ni kaan* (e.g., nephews and nieces) in their *mwenga* on Tarawa and, eventually, their then elderly dependents likewise (cf. Jones, 2016). As for the numbers involved, Zwart and Groenewegen (1968) report 350 *I-Nikunau* residing on Tarawa during the 1968 census, of whom 146 were under 15 years of age.

To begin with, many of young *utu ni kaan* in question also came for educational reasons, including going to primary schools, usually with the intention of going onto a secondary school, or going directly to secondary schools but where boarding was available for them. Their parents and *unimane* on Nikunau had realised that being educated at primary school on Tarawa improved young *utu ni kaan's* chances of passing the secondary school entrance examinations. Indeed, they often saw better prospects generally for these children on Tarawa than on Nikunau, and, in any case, might expect to join them themselves in old age (Burnett, 2005; Dixon & Gaffikin, 2014; Green et al., 1979; Jones, 2016; Macdonald, 1982a, 1996a, 1998; MacKenzie, 2004; Maude & Doran, 1966; Pitchford, 1981). Later, the young *utu ni kaan* coming to Tarawa extended to those of post-primary school age who were unsuccessful in getting places at secondary school. They were encouraged by stories they heard about the different life available on Tarawa and wanted to experience it for themselves. A related matter was that, as phosphate mining ended, first on Banaba (c. 1979) and then Nauru (c. 2000), so Tarawa became where not just *I-Nikunau* but most *I-Kiribati* on Outer Islands went in search of cash employment – the closures of these mines affected about 100 *I-Nikunau* working on Banaba and about 145 working on Nauru, both statistics including families (based on Zwart & Groenewegen, 1968). Going further afield, for example, to New Zealand (see Chapter 4.2), did not arise until about 1990 and in smaller numbers than nowadays.

Regarding *I-Nikunau* emigrating from Nikunau in old age, the accommodating of elderly dependents by their grown-up offspring already on Tarawa obviated a need for these offspring to return to Nikunau to live with these dependents – one reason for parents to bear children was to ensure there would be someone to care for them in old age (McCreary & Boardman, 1968). Had they returned to Nikunau, said offspring would have been expected to complete tasks listed above (i.e., fishing, cutting toddy, etc.), for which they would probably be unfit or unskilled anyway. Said elderly dependents would have been doing these things for themselves when they sent their offspring to Tarawa as young people, but that would have changed as they aged. This movement of elderly dependents has not applied to every *mwenga* on Nikunau: mostly, the *mwenga* affected are those from which all the younger generation had emigrated from Nikunau. However, according to age distribution data for the past 20 years or so (see Ministry of Internal and Social Affairs, 2007; Office of Te Beretitenti and T'Makei Services, 2012b), this movement has resulted in a much lower proportion of *I-Nikunau* over the age of 50 living on Nikunau than would be the case without it, just as the proportion under the age of 14 is similarly much greater, which also reflects the birth rate among women of child-bearing age on Nikunau having been higher than on Tarawa.

### *5.2.3 Phoenix, Solomon and Line Islands*

I now move onto matters related to the present diasporic communities beyond Tarawa. The communities in Solomon Islands were the first to form, like that on Tarawa having

its beginnings in a Colonial Development and Welfare Fund project, indeed even being under way before Tarawa. However, the Solomon Islands' communities contrast with the Tarawa community and the ones in metropolitan countries described in Chapter 4 because, whereas these arose through individuals, immediate families or similar small parties moving in dribs and drabs, the Solomon Islands' communities arose through an organised movement of groups of significant numbers who were to settle in *kawa* created specifically to house them. Their story began in 1938: being concerned that Nikunau and neighbouring islands were too drought prone and infertile to support increases occurring in their populations, Colony Government officials conceived the idea of resettling some *I-Nikunau* on the uninhabited Phoenix Islands[37] (Autio, 2017; Maude, 1937, 1952)–according to Weber (2016), the British Government was also anxious to settle subjects on these islands to ensure they were retained as part of the Empire and not occupied by, for example, the USA. However, barely 20 years later, they and a further contingent of *I-Nikunau* from Nikunau were removed to Ghizo, Alu and Wagina[38] in Solomon Islands under another resettlement project again funded from London via Honiara (Cochrane, 1969, 1970; Donner, 2015b; Fraenkel, 2003; Knudson, 1977; Larmour, 1984; Schuermann, 2014; Tammy, 2011; Weber, 2016).

Although the move from the Phoenix Islands – nowadays the world's largest marine protected area (see Mangubhai et al., 2019)–was mostly attributed to difficulties of *I-Nikunau* surviving there, other reasons were that the settlers became aware of the possibility of relocating to more attractive land in the less remote Solomon Islands and the expenses of administering these extremely remote new settlements were beyond the affordance of the Colony Government (Laxton, 1951; Pitchford, 1981; Macdonald, 1982a). Having the settlers in the British Solomon Island Protectorate was cheaper and more expedient for Colony Government and High Commission officials, no matter any immediate and knock-on implications, foreseen or otherwise. The latter included subsequent and accelerating internal emigration for at least the past five decades from traditional Wagina, Alu and Ghizo to urban Gizo and Honiara (Schuermann, 2014). This emigration, which for a while included Solomon-based families returning from Nauru and Banaba, is akin to that from Nikunau to Tarawa, and has given rise to an urban island diasporic community in Honiara.

It is also worth mentioning here that the experience of costs and other inconveniences by the Colony Government in respect of the Phoenix Islands scheme did not deter the Republic Government from encouraging and financially incenting *I-Nikunau* and other *I-Kiribati* to take part in further resettlement schemes to remote islands. Possibly encouraged by Pitchford (1981), since the 1990s, these have involved three of the even more distant Line Islands, where there are now traditional atoll diasporic communities of significant size, as mentioned in Part II. Living on these islands seems to be proving more tolerable than living on the Phoenix Islands was (see reports about each Line Island available from Office of the President, Republic of Kiribati, 2012).

### *5.2.4 Metropolitan Countries*

I have outlined how aid funding has played a part in *I-Nikunau* immigrating to Tarawa and how it was directly implicated in the resettlement schemes involving the Phoenix and Solomon Islands. The role of this funding in other diasporic movements has been less direct but no less significant. This includes how the personnel whom aid projects enticed to Kiribati gave rise

to the forming of metropolitan country diasporic communities in Britain (see Chapter 4.1), the USA (see Roman, 2013) and New Zealand (see Chapter 4.2). These communities mostly began with marriages between colonial officials or aid organisation workers temporarily resident on Tarawa and *I-Nikunau* or other *I-Kiribati*; thence, the couples, sometimes already with children, settled in their present locations. Except, in the case of the two islands of New Zealand, the impetus for immigration to there changed in the 1990s and is now dominated by singles, couples and families who are entirely *I-Nikunau* and other *I-Kiribati*.

The rest of this section focuses on this current emigration of *I-Kiribati*, mainly from Tarawa, to areas around Auckland, Wellington, etc. in New Zealand, comparing it with the emigration of *I-Nikunau* to Tarawa (cf. Green et al., 1979). As one might expect, there are some consistencies between why and how these two emigrations occurred. In particular, the motive of better prospects for their children is important, even ascendant. At least, this was how her informants expressed it to Thompson (2016), rather than as better prospects for themselves. This choice seems to reflect a cultural aversion to being seen as self-seeking and, conversely, a cultural obligation felt to others, in this case their children, and when settled in New Zealand, to *utu* and *baronga* who follow them. Perceiving it in this way may also lessen the dilemma the emigrants experience over not being able to fulfil obligations they have towards *utu* left behind on Tarawa, whether temporarily or permanently.

What is more, as related in Chapter 4.2, most immigrants to New Zealand had come to see Tarawa as short of cash employment and similar opportunities, implying that looking for better, lusher ground, and inevitably higher too, is part of their choice to emigrate. Indeed, the main factor in immigrating to New Zealand in recent years has been to take advantage of bilateral labour immigration schemes (i.e., Pacific Access Category and Recognised Seasonal Employer) (Fedor, 2012; Roman, 2013; Thompson, 2016), with taking up opportunities to study abroad a contributory factor for those offered educational scholarships. In addition, they have relocated with help from earlier settlers. Except, rather than the help coming only from *utu ni kaan*, it has extended as wide as just being *I-Nikunau* or, in many cases, just being *I-Kiribati*.

Another parallel between the two emigrations are the further demographic consequences which have occurred or are occurring of marriage, bearing children, being joined by elderly dependents, etc. However, regarding elderly dependents, *I-Nikunau* have found it difficult for elderly parents to join them in New Zealand, except on visitors' visas of nine months maximum, despite the New Zealand Government's immigration category of re-uniting families living elsewhere with New Zealand citizens and permanent residents. The reasons for difficulties are income and capital criteria associated with most permanent resident or other longer-term visas being beyond the affordance of most *I-Kiribati* families. Furthermore, the only less restrictive dependent parent resident visa is presently oversubscribed and, anyway, is not open to parents who have adult offspring available to look after them on Tarawa or Nikunau – compared with some other races competing in this category, *I-Kiribati* tend to have larger families, for example, because Kiribati has never had a one-child policy and, as elsewhere in the Pacific, its unmet need for contraception is very high (see Daubé, Chamberman & Raymond, 2016).

# 6

# Demographical Circumstances (*te mauri*)

The size of the *I-Nikunau* population, including how it has changed, is an important aspect of the subject of this chapter. The rest of the chapter covers the forms of settlement and elaborates on patterns of emigration and immigration dealt with in Chapter 5.

## 6.1 Population of *I-Nikunau* and of Nikunau

I used population data about *I-Nikunau* in Part I Introduction and in describing their present circumstances in Part II. I also used population data for Tarawa in Chapter 5.2.1. To add to this demographical picture, historical population statistics for Nikunau 1860-2015 are arrayed in Figure 9.[39]

In studying this demographical picture, an important aspect to appreciate is how the total number of *I-Nikunau* has increasingly come to differ from the population of Nikunau. This is according to how persons identifying as *I-Nikunau* have come be living other than on Nikunau and to how persons not identifying as *I-Nikunau* have come to be living on Nikunau. Whereas, after considering these matters, the total number of *I-Nikunau* in the 19th century was about 2,000, today that number is the ≈7,000 mentioned in Part II. Furthermore, back in the 1810s, before working away became a factor (and before the coverage of sources used to compile Figure 9 started), one can surmise that that 2,000 also represented the population of Nikunau, with differences in the respective compositions of identifiers as *I-Nikunau* and residents of Nikunau only arising from interactions with peoples from neighbouring islands and whose effects were probably equally balanced.

Moving on, whereas in 1860, the two numbers were closer than nowadays, even by that time, possibly 200 or so *I-Nikunau* were away from the atoll, either for customary reasons or because of working on ships and other Pacific Islands. Conversely, there were *non-I-Nikunau* on Nikunau, but nowhere near the number there now and their composition was different. As previously, they included other *I-Kiribati* there for customary reasons but, in addition, there were whale men, castaways, beachcombers, itinerant traders, etc. of other races, mainly *I-Matang* and Chinese (Macdonald, 1982a; Maude, 1964). Although these people of other races had gone by the 1930s, albeit having left their genes behind, they have now been more than replaced in number by other *I-Kiribati*, there temporarily. Thus, nowadays, the number of people normally resident on Nikunau is still around 2,000, and is recorded officially as about 1,800 (see Figure 9) because of about 200 *I-Nikunau* being genuinely away temporarily. However, included in this 2,000 are more than 100

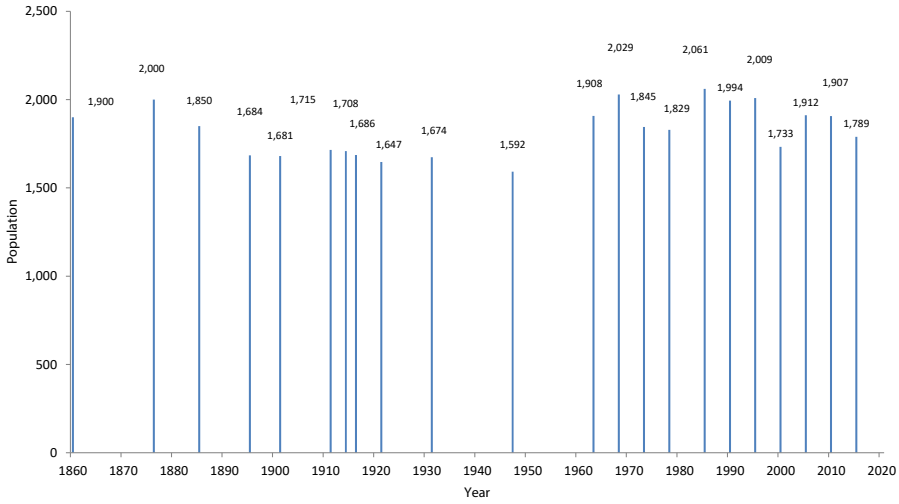



*Figure 9*. Population of Nikunau 1860 to 2015 (Data sources: Bedford et al., 1980; GEIC, 1957; Maude, 1937; Ministry of Internal and Social Affairs, 2007; National Statistics Office, 2013, 2016; Office of Te Beretitenti and T'Makei Services, 2012b; Pusinelli, 1947).

*non-I-Nikunau*, a good proportion of whom are other *I-Kiribati* in the paid employment of the Island Council or the Republic Government.

In addition to the 1,800 *I-Nikunau* just categorised as normally resident on Nikunau, there is a diaspora worldwide of over 5,000, giving the total *I-Nikunau* of ≈7,000. The 2,600 or so diaspora living on Tarawa is the largest single population of *I-Nikunau*, whereas, before the Colony Government instigated its policy of centralisation (see Chapter 5.2.1), the number there was only 32 (Pusinelli, 1947), or about 1% of Tarawa's then longstanding base population of 3,500, which it had either side of the war. However, with Tarawa's population now over 56,000 (National Statistics Office, 2016), the proportion who are *I-Nikunau* is still barely 5%, despite the ≈80 fold growth in their absolute number. The whereabouts of the rest of the diaspora are related at the start of Part II.

Various reasons explain the increase in population of *I-Nikunau* from barely 2,000 in the 1810s to ≈7,000 now. First, judging by settlement patterns on Nikunau and the geographical distribution and size of *aba* held by each individual (cf. Hockings, 1984; *Land (Copra) Tax Register 1910-1916*), the population was already growing naturally in the early 19th century. Afterwards, the rate of growth seems to have increased, probably for several reasons around life expectancy, changes in birth control practices and more opportunities for marriage to *non-I-Nikunau*, both other *I-Kiribati* and *non-I-Kiribati*. Trade improved food security and nutrition (Campbell, 1991), making it possible to feed more children. Outsiders imparted new knowledge about health and wellbeing. The church and colonial authorities enacted regulations covering order, cleanliness, civility and similar (e.g., Gilbert and Ellice Islands (Native Laws) Regulation 1912). New religious mores emerged about abortion.[40] Violent death lessened, including because local warfare reduced (Maude, 1937). *I-Nikunau* mingled with other peoples while participating in the Pacific labour trade and on Banaba, and so the number of persons of mixed blood who are *I-Nikunau* by affinity increased.

The rate of growth was further boosted after the 1950s by the Colony Government's development policies around health, education, water and sanitation (e.g., see Asian Development Bank, 2008; Bishop et al., 2011; Castalia Strategic Advisors, 2005; Doran, 1960; GEIC, 1957, 1969; Veltman, 1982). These further reduced the susceptibility of *I-Nikunau* to the vagaries of drought, and so the effects of famine. They also improved the public health environment, notably as associated with clean water, and increased the availability of effective health and welfare interventions, including around childbirth, infectious diseases and easily treated conditions (Bedford et al., 1980; Macdonald, 1982a; Pusinelli, 1947). The increase in life expectancy arising from all these has been despite the unsatisfactory nature of some developments in nutrition (Lewis, 1988). The development policies also led to the increased immigration to Tarawa outlined in Chapter 5 and, eventually, to adverse living conditions there (see Chapter 3), which may now be adversely affecting life expectancy (McIver et al., 2014; Thomas, 2002). However, the more prevalent effect of this immigration has been to increase the incidence of marriage to *non-I-Nikunau*, and so increase the rate of births per *I-Nikunau* parent.

Two other points about population are remarkable. First, notwithstanding the emigration from Nikunau over the past eight decades to the Phoenix, Solomon and Line Islands, and Tarawa, the atoll's population, as shown on Figure 9, has not so much fallen as fluctuated; indeed, it is now more or less the same as 200 years ago. Some of this sustaining of the population is attributable to the number of *non-I-Nikunau* who have settled on Nikunau, temporarily or permanently. Their reasons for being there vary. They include the aforementioned *I-Kiribati* immigrating as a result of inter-island marriages; beachcombers, castaways, and itinerant and resident traders, all consequent to whaling, coconut oil and copra trading, and similar commerce; clergy associated with the Protestant (LMS then KPC then KUC), and RC Churches; and staff of Colony or Republic and island governmental organisations (Couper, 1967; Goodall, 1954; Latai, 2016; Macdonald, 1971, 1972, 1982a; Maude, 1964; Maude & Leeson, 1965; Munro, 1987; Nokise, 1983; Sabatier, 1939/1977; Speedy, 2016; Wilde, 1998). Indeed, the point at which the population was lowest, being the nearest statistic to World War II, coincides with these outsiders probably being at their lowest because of the wartime cessation of trading and the evacuation in 1941 of the colonial authorities to Fiji.[41] However, probably more important is the emigration which took place then to the Phoenix Islands (see Pusinelli, 1947).

Second, whereas most of the growth in the population of *I-Nikunau* on Tarawa during the 1950s and subsequent decades is attributable to immigration to Tarawa, recently, the ascendant factor has become natural increase among *I-Nikunau* already on Tarawa. Furthermore, although *I-Nikunau* emigrating to New Zealand and similar destinations outside the Republic had previously been resident on Tarawa, rather than Nikunau, this emigration has barely affected the number still on Tarawa.

## 6.2 Settlements on Nikunau

The units of settlement presently on Nikunau and known as *kawa*, along with *mwenga* of which these *kawa* are comprised, are described and explained in Chapter 2. *Kawa* arose through the interventions of LMS and Colony Government officials between the 1880s and 1930s in the name of goodness, orderliness and cleanliness. However, *kawa* were not *I-Nikunau's* traditional form of settlement and nor did they align well with their traditional ideas of kinship.

Before, *I-Nikunau's* units of settlement were areas known as *kainga*, of which, by the mid-19th century, almost 50 were dispersed around the atoll, in contrast to how *kawa* were nucleated and numbered only six. For the names and locations of these *kainga*, see Latouche (1983b, p. 23). These contrasting circumstances of *kainga* being dispersed and *kawa* being nucleated coincided with *kainga* being on ancestral land, whereas *kawa* are not, being primarily only places where people reside. Concomitantly, how *kainga* were established and how their populations were renewed was ancestral. Incidentally, although *I-Nikunau* were obliged to abandon *kainga* as settlements and they have all but disappeared archeologically (cf. Di Piazza, 1999), the term is still used to refer to parts or sections of *kawa*, comprising groups of *mwenga*.

*Mwenga* were also a feature of *kainga*. There were probably between 350 and 450 *mwenga* spread among the 50 *kainga* mentioned above. Each comprised a co-residential *utu ni kaan te mwenga*, usually of 3-7 persons of two or, occasionally, three generations – those of two generations could comprise either parents and children or grandparents and adopted grandchildren. In terms of structures, these were similar to those listed in Chapter 2; that is *buia*, *kiakia*, *okai*, *bareaka, bata* and other constructions. However, in contrast to the tight, ordered formations in which they are arranged in *te kawa,* these *mwenga* were scattered around the total area making up *te kainga* (Hockings, 1984).

Besides *mwenga*, the structures found on *te kainga* included *boua-n-anti* and *bangota* (≅ stone shrines), and *uma ni mane* (≅ men's houses), of which there is a loose equivalent in *te kawa* of today, except it is used by a wider range of community groups than only men (see Chapter 2). The rest of *te kainga* and by far its largest feature by area were *aba*, on which residents of *te kainga* grew various items (e.g., coconut palms, pandanus, *bwabwai*) for victuals, materials, etc. (re traditional victuals, see Di Piazza, 1999; Grimble, 1933; Lewis, 1988; Luomala, 1974; Turbott, 1949). These residents frequented *aba* daily according to the usufructuary rights each *te mwenga* had for cultivating them and taking produce. In addition, situated some way from *te kainga* in *buakonikai*, *te mwenga* had other *aba*. Men would work on these distant *aba* for either a day at a time or a few days without returning home. Furthermore, sea conditions permitting, the men regularly ventured out to hunt and gather on marine areas (known as *maran* and *nama*) situated within and beyond the reef and to which, in traditional times, they also had usufructuary rights[42] (Pole, 1995).

What is more, as well as an area of land, the term *kainga* signified alignment with a type of bilateral kinship group called *boti* (≅ clans), each named after *bakatibu* who founded them (e.g., *te boti* of *Kaokoroa*) (Maude, 1963). All the residents of each *te kainga* belonged to the same *boti*, whereas residents of neighbouring *kainga* were in other *boti*. Political, social and economic relations among neighbouring *kainga* were effected formally by virtue of all belonging to and participating in the district *mwaneaba* (Hockings, 1984; Latouche, 1983a; Lundsgaarde & Silverman, 1972; Macdonald, 1982a). Indeed, the explanation of *boti* is connected to this feature of *kainga* settlement patterns with *mwaneaba* at their heart. The interior of each *mwaneaba* was separated into areas, also known as *boti*, and named according to the members of *te boti* who sat in the area during formal occasions (e.g., *botaki*, *bowi*). Latouche (1983b, p. 74) provides an example of this naming of areas; his floor plan of *Te Atu ni Uea Mwaneaba* in Tabomatang shows the names of 18 *boti*. Incidentally, *te mwaneaba* was sometimes used for other, less formal, purposes, and during these the sitting arrangements might be less structured but due reverence was expected in each area and to *te mwaneaba* overall.

Of further significance is that the founding of particular *boti* originated in *mwaneaba* districts within and beyond Nikunau (e.g., on Beru) (for an explanation, see Maude, 1963). Thus, *boti* names were shared, or replicated, across Nikunau and the many *mwaneaba* throughout the other southern and central Kiribati Islands, depending on whether particular *boti* had *te kainga*, and so members, in a district. What is more, members of *boti* in, say, the Tabomatang district of Nikunau would have had kinship links based on their *boti* with *boti* in the five other districts, and the same from island to island, no matter how many generations these dated from. The extent of this replication is evident from comparing *mwaneaba* floor plans from district to district and island to island – for floor plans from Beru, see Maude (1963), from Tabiteuea, see Geddes (1977), and from Onotoa, see Hockings (1984).[43]

The replication of *boti* names was allied with *te I-Nikunau's* membership of his or her *te boti* being recognised across islands. This was provided he or she could authenticate it, a process which involved the claimant reciting their genealogy to the council in *te mwaneaba* of a district they were visiting, and so having it compared with that of the relevant *kainga* of that district – the genealogies of each *te kainga* shown on Latouche's map of Nikunau (1983b, p. 23) are provided as loose inserts to his book. Once authentication was complete, *te I-Nikunau* concerned was, among other things, entitled to sit in the area of *te mwaneaba* associated with their *boti* during formal occasions, and share in the entitlements, responsibilities and duties of members of that *boti* inside and outside *te mwaneaba* (see Grimble, 1989), and living in *te kainga*.

*Te I-Nikunau* joined their *boti* at some stage of growing up, being initiated as an adult and marrying, as various researchers attempt to explain (see Goodenough, 1955; Hockings, 1984; Lundsgaarde & Silverman, 1972; Maude, 1963). As every *I-Nikunau* was also part of two or more *utu* by virtue of birth, *tibutibu* or marriage, these two bilateral kinship categories existed side by side; to clarify, residents of each *te kainga* could and usually did belong to a variety of *utu*.[44] However, whereas residents of neighbouring *kainga* belonged to a different kinship group in terms of *boti*, the residents of one *te kainga* could and probably did belong to the same *utu* as some residents of a neighbouring *te kainga*. Thus, in Tabomatang and the other five districts on Nikunau, the two categories were manifested as *kainga*, in the sense of people of the same *boti* living in one settlement, and *mwenga* in which all the members of the household were of the same *utu*. An implication of these circumstances of kinship and settlement was that, on top of bonds of *utu* through living together within *te mwenga*, bonds through belonging to the same *boti* engendered far more community mindedness, sharing and dependence among residents of *te kainga* than only geographical neighbours might show. Thus, the circumstances in question provided a solid basis of social structures within the districts and across the atoll, and among *I-Nikunau* and the peoples of the other southern and central Kiribati Islands (Goodenough, 1955; Grimble, 1989; Lundsgaarde & Silverman, 1972; Maude & Maude, 1931; Maude, 1963).

These circumstances and their implications carried on until some way into the 20th century, but gradually weakened as the *boti* kinship group type withered in importance. I go into this in subsequent chapters but something relevant here is how and why *kainga* came to be replaced by today's *kawa*[45] as the form of settlements. The clues to these questions are how prominent churches are in *kawa*, and how traditional *mwaneaba* are absent. The churches were built in the four decades after the Christian missions arrived in the 1870s. Between 1873 and about 1910, resident pastors of Samoan origin, accompanied in

many cases by their wives (Latai, 2016), performed the LMS mission. Their post-conversion *kerisiano fa'a-samoa* version of Christianity included a strong dash of Samoan culture (Nokise, 1983). This *kerisiano fa'a-samoa* included different notions of life in settlements from those underpinning *te kainga* of *I-Nikunau*. Based on these Samoan notions, they brought their *I-Nikunau* converts together in *kawa* adjacent to their mission premises. The main consideration in this was to separate converts from the unconverted still living in *kainga*. The number of converts increased during the 1880s (Nokise, 1983) and, as they did so, *kawa* became the ascendant form of settlements. In any case, the pastors perceived *kainga* as having links to ancestor worship and as a barrier to their authority to perform their mission work, incidental to which was a desire to govern, and so be able to increase conversion and have everyone conform to church law, including observance of *Te Tabati*. Thus, this challenge to the institution of *kainga* amounted to a challenge to the institution of *boti*, and, as alluded to above, it too would ultimately be undermined, although this only occurred some time after the demise of *kainga* (Hockings, 1984).

An added feature of the establishment of *kawa* arose when William Goward became the chief LMS missionary for the southern Kiribati Islands. Possessed of some town planning knowledge, he applied it in developing *kawa* as being model from an aesthetic perspective (Macdonald, 1982a). Thus, *mwenga* had to abut the street at right angles – this made them easy for the pastors and, later, the civil authorities to patrol and inspect (Geddes, 1977; Hockings, 1984)–and conform to standard designs, which incorporated wells and reef-latrines. Maintaining the street and paths adjacent to each *te mwenga* was the responsibility of the occupants, giving rise to an early morning sweeping of the areas in question; curiously, this is still an almost daily occurrence which one sees and hears on Nikunau and elsewhere in the diaspora.

The requirements about the extent, layout and situation of *kawa* and *mwenga* (and demise of *kainga* settlements), and for responsibilities to maintain them, came to feature in regulations officially endorsed, and probably suggested, by the Colony Government but enacted formally by the Nikunau Native Government, which carried them through enthusiastically all the same (Macdonald, 1982a). However, resituating *mwenga* raised issues about *aba*: essentially, *mwenga* were put on *aba* adjacent to the road but in which the then rights of *te aba* did not belong to anyone in *te mwenga*. This de facto loss of their usufructuary rights upset the existing rights-holders and their *utu*, who could have expected to inherit those rights. Hockings (1984) reports disgruntlement over this on Onotoa, to which the Colony Government's response was to declare land adjacent to the road as its property, and then to vest user rights in the head of *te mwenga* settled on each plot. However, the loss of rights often went deeper, being seen by members of *te kainga* whose ancestral land it was as dispossession and denial of rights to use said *aba* in the way they preferred.[46]

Another matter arising from *kawa* replacing *kainga* is for customary inheritance and transfer during the following century or so to have resulted in *te I-Nikunau* owning small plots of *aba* widely dispersed around the atoll. The corollary was for naturally coherent areas of land coming to be divided among many owners; this was inhibiting from a cultivation point of view, as well as inefficient from a rational economic *I-Matang* perspective. Before, fragmentation was modified by collective use of *aba* by residents of *te kainga*, who through sharing *utu* or *boti* were amenable to cooperation and rationalising landholdings. However, on top of *te kainga* disappearing, and so no longer there to effect

rationalisations which were desirable from a community view, the change in question and others of similar kinds have led to a greater sense of individuality and a keener sense of which *aba* belongs to whom (Baaro, 1987; Hockings, 1984; Macdonald, 1971, 1982a; Maude, 1963; Pitchford, 1981; Pole, 1995; Sabatier, 1939/1977; Trussel & Groves, 2003).

The various *aba* ownership and other issues associated with changes related in the previous few paragraphs seem gradually to have dissipated, but some are still bubbling beneath the surface and occasionally come up to that surface. Indeed, *aba* matters are the most common subject of disputes which end up in civil courts, explaining the need on Nikunau for a separate lands court, *Te Kabowi n Aba*. Disputes arise for various reasons, including disagreements over boundaries, encroachment on seldom-used *aba* being challenged, and contested ownership arising from inheritance and other transfers (see Lundsgaarde, 1968b). This is true of Kiribati more generally, especially on Tarawa, where land is at a premium and *I-Nikunau* settlers are sometimes caught up in issues of ownership and occupation. Indeed, the issues just referred to are much more significant and keenly affect *I-Tarawa* as the ancestral landowners, especially as aid organisations, and before them, the Colony Government, have been more keenly concerned about the aforesaid inefficiency of land use.

In the last three decades, a further aspect of settlement to have changed on Nikunau is how the distribution of the population has become skewed, with an increasing proportion of residents living near Rungata (see Chapter 2). When the six *kawa* existing today became ascendant at the turn of the early 20th century, it is probable that there were about 1,700 *I-Nikunau* residing on the atoll and they were more evenly spread than today – the earliest census data available (i.e., Pusinelli, 1947) indicates four *kawa* with between 12% and 17% of the population, and the two outliers being Tabomatang (7%) and Rungata (36%). This was still the case by the mid-1980s, when the population of the atoll had increased to about 2,000 (National Statistics Office, 2013), but without so many *non-I-Nikunau* public service workers present as there are today. Since the mid-1980s, Rungata's population has grown by about 30% in absolute terms and now accounts for almost half the atoll's total population (National Statistics Office, 2016; Pusinelli, 1947; Zwart & Groenewegen, 1968).

Four main reasons explain how the present distribution came about. First, for no obvious reason, emigration from Nikunau in the 1980s and 1990s has emptied some *kawa* faster than others emptied, to the point that Tabomatang for one, now with only 4% of the population (i.e., indicative of a 60% decrease in headcount since 1968 – Zwart & Groenewegen, 1968), may lack sufficient residents to be a viable autonomous social unit. An informant has suggested to me that its low population may be because of its strong adherence to Protestantism, and potential RC settlers not feeling welcome, even though they have *aba* rights there; it is also the most distant *kawa* from the wharf and airport, and, being at the end of the atoll, it sees few through travellers. Second, Rungata's population officially includes the Island Council residential area. Although still small, the number of job positions and amount of casual work with the Island Council and Republic Government has increased. Besides, the pay and conditions of those working for the Republic Government on Nikunau now reflect those on Tarawa, and are a more prominent part of the atoll's economy than hitherto (cf. Ministry of Internal and Social Affairs, 2007). As indicated already, either most of this employment is around Rungata, or Rungata is used as a depot or similar base for daily travel to wherever on the atoll any work has to be done. What is more, much of the full-time employment comes with accommodation, which is

provided in the Island Council residential area in Rungata. This includes accommodation for persons in senior positions, which although they are open to *I-Nikunau* are usually filled by other *I-Kiribati*, for reasons of independence. Because these others have no *mwenga* or *aba* on Nikunau, they stay in the accommodation provided. Third, Rungata's population officially includes those enrolled at the Tekabangaki JSS and boarding or residing nearby, even if only during weekdays or while the school is in session; this residing arises from how difficult daily travel is from *kawa* not adjacent to Rungata. Fourth, limited as they still are, the facilities and monetised aspects of the economy in and around the Island Council administrative area have had a multiplier effect around Rungata compared with the other *kawa*. This is epitomised in the private family store situated adjacent to the Island Council administrative complex being relatively prosperous compared with others on the atoll.

## 6.3 Settlements in the Diaspora

*I-Nikunau* settlements and households vary according to their location being traditional island, urban island or metropolitan country settings. All appear to retain some inspiration from those on Nikunau, past and present, but they have had to adjust to the circumstances where they are located in various, usually substantial ways. On Tarawa, between the 1840s and 1940s, various aspects of colonialism had affected traditional settlements in ways similar to how they had affected traditional settlements on Nikunau. During the Battle of Tarawa, settlements on Betio and Bairiki particularly, but more further along the atoll besides, were severely damaged, if not destroyed, and the clear up and reconstruction caused and possibilitated further changes – despite the organised clear up effort in the mid-1950s to gather materials abandoned by the Japanese forces of occupation (1942-1943) and their American military expulsers,[47] war relics and spent munitions are still evident on Tarawa and unexploded bombs are occasionally uncovered. However, by the time *I-Nikunau* began settling in significant numbers, the precedence of Tarawa, its status as the Colony Government headquarters and its growth in population through immigration were well in train (see Doran, 1960; Maude & Doran, 1966). *I-Nikunau mwenga* have had to fit in with these developments physically and socially (see Chapter 3). This includes some *I-Nikunau* acquiring land from *I-Tarawa* or other owners and, once they were joined by *utu ni kaan* or had families of their own, sub-dividing this land to accommodate the consequent new *mwenga*.

Settlers to Great Britain and New Zealand have made similar but far more substantial adjustments. On Great Britain, the dwellings and households resemble the norms of the British socio-economic class or level of affluence of the *I-Matang* partner in the *I-Matang-I-Kiribati* marriage and of the geographical district in which they are located (e.g., London, Cornwall, Mid-Wales, Lancashire); the links with Nikunau and Kiribati are reflected in decorative features and some social behaviours, rather than the structure, fabric, layout, etc. of dwellings. This also applies among earlier diaspora of *I-Matang-I-Kiribati* settlers in New Zealand, except that the norms are those of the majority *Pākehā* population – although *Pākehā* vary in ancestry among English, Scots, Irish, Scandinavian, Welsh, etc., most seem to have become Anglicised in a peculiarly New Zealand way (cf. Black & Huygens, 2007). However, with immigration continuing in significant numbers, and recent settlers being mostly all *I-Kiribati* singles, couples and families, the earlier diaspora in New Zealand are under greater influence than the diaspora in Great Britain are to behave socially in ways reflecting Nikunau and Kiribati.

For their part, these *all-I-Kiribati* settlers face some challenging aspects of housing deigns and utilisation, among other housing matters alluded to in Chapter 3. Their familiarity with New Zealand dwellings before arriving is often limited to what they have seen from the outside of modern single and double-storey houses of imported designs on Tarawa. Not many have spent much time inside such dwellings, let alone lived in them, and so their experiential understanding of these structures and designs is incomplete, giving rise to various difficult experiences, as noted by Thompson/Teariki (2016, 2017). What seems to occur is that furnishing and decorating their interiors, utilising them spatially, etc. ends up as some compromise or other between *mwenga* on Tarawa and *I-Kiribati* perceptions of dominant cultural (i.e., *Pākehā* or ≈ *I-Matang*) norms for dwellings in New Zealand. Uncontrollable factors affecting this compromise include that fixtures, fittings (including carpets and stoves) and furniture have come with the rented dwellings in which most live. Besides, discretionary incomes are relatively very low mostly, and spending on these matters is usually given a low priority, including behind making community contributions and spending on motor vehicles, entertainment equipment, mobile devices and Internet access (cf. Kuruppu and Liverman, 2011).

A major difficulty many *I-Kiribati* experience with dwelling structure and design has to do with the closed nature of houses, which presumably arises from considerations of weather-tightness, especially during the New Zealand winter, and of *Pākehā's* views about privacy and the function of houses, including as serving what Black and Huygens (2007) refer to as the short family (cf. Buckenberger, 2012), which is less extended than *utu ni kaan* infers. This closed nature contrasts with the open-style *mwenga* familiar to *I-Kiribati* arrivals even on Tarawa, let alone Nikunau, where built structures are spread around a dwelling area and their sides are designed to admit breezes for cooling (see Chapters 2 and 3). These difficulties are particularly challenging for larger, extended families (cf. Berry, 2014), or when families share a house, which occurs frequently through a second or, even, third family being given a place to stay temporarily. The latter arises when the second or third families first arrive in a community and continues while they establish separate households for themselves, which often takes months rather than days or weeks (see Roman, 2013; Statistics New Zealand, 2014; Thompson/Teariki, 2016, 2017).

Establishing their own households is identified by Thompson/Teariki (2016, 2017) as a critical resettlement event for *I-Kiribati* arriving in New Zealand. Intriguingly, in the case of low-rent, and so usually poorly maintained, accommodation, sometimes the household officially renting the property moves out, having found a better, higher-rent property and after vouching to the landlord for the reliability of the family taking over the property and the rental agreement. What is more, the aspiration of many is home ownership, seeing it as freer, more stable and likely to provide a sense of achievement; arguably, this aspiration derives from *te katei ni Nikunau* and the way *mwenga* formed in *kainga* and later *kawa* (see Chapter 6.2). However, *I-Kiribati* families in New Zealand who have achieved this aspiration are a small minority still – the rate according to Statistics New Zealand (2014) is only 11%, and even that may be skewed by including the earlier diaspora of *I-Matang-I-Kiribati* settlers. In any case, even those later settlers who achieve such aspirations may be deterred from changing fixtures and decoration by cultural attitudes to décor and lack of knowledge and skills in use of materials available locally (wallpaper, paints, soft furnishings, etc.).

A further factor is that, although *I-Kiribati* may acquire perceptions of how *non-I-Kiribati* New Zealanders lay out their dwellings and furnish them, and so may feel some obligation to mimic these, they are probably more concerned about what other *I-Kiribati* think of them, as they are probably by far the most frequent visitors to *I-Kiribati* dwellings (cf. Thompson, 2016). Concomitantly, the perceptions they acquire through these visits of how other *I-Kiribati* in New Zealand are seen to live in their dwellings influences them in terms of what is acceptable and not acceptable to these other *I-Kiribati*. This includes that the accusation from other *I-Kiribati* of "trying to behave like an *I-Matang*" is derogatory, and so not something *I-Kiribati* want to leave themselves open to because of how their dwellings are laid out or furnished.

# 7

# Economic Circumstances (*te tabomoa*)

The range of economic circumstances of *I-Nikunau* nowadays is broad, particularly according to where they live, as the descriptions in Part II indicate. On Nikunau, their micro- and macro- economies are barely distinguishable from one another or from social, political, religious and other facets of life; on Great Britain and New Zealand's two islands, indeed even on Tarawa, *I-Nikunau* might be described as part of someone else's macro-economy.

The broadness of their circumstances reflects two fundamentals. First, as extensions of their subsistence economy activities, *I-Nikunau* took willingly to producing and trading coconut oil and, subsequently, copra. Oil was a product for which they already had uses (e.g., anointing their bodies, preparing food, fuelling simple oil lamps, as introduced by beachcombers) and copra replaced tobacco as the form of local currency, not only to purchase trade goods but also to pay "tax copra", and church and civil fines, dues and fees (Couper, 1967; Lawrence, 1992; Maude & Leeson, 1965; Morrell, 1960).

Second, many of them, or their recent ancestors, responded willingly to possibilities of being drawn away from Nikunau to work, be educated and for other reasons, and for dependents and other *utu* following them. As related in Chapter 5, these possibilities began when whalers first took on some men as ship's crew and they have occurred frequently since, to a remarkable assortment of places. However, up to the 1960s, nearly all *I-Nikunau* were still part of the Nikunau economy; it was only afterwards that the geographical broadening of their economic circumstances took effect, as their emigration became permanent.

## 7.1 Copra and Money and Non-Traditional Entities on Nikunau

This use of copra as a form of money as far as most *I-Nikunau* were concerned prevailed for decades. For example, as recently as the 1980s, I was given a bag of copra to take to a trade store with the instructions about the goods I should immediately exchange it for. Today, the notes and coins which *I-Nikunau* receive from depositing copra with a trade store cum copra buying agency may only be in their possession for short periods before being used to make purchases or to pay other extant obligations – incidentally, Nikunau still has no trading bank branches, let alone automatic teller machines or debit and credit card facilities.

Here seems an opportune place to outline the present-day routines of the men working as copra cutters, indicating how these routines are affected by the elaborate process they now must go through to sell their copra, collect their money and, usually, turn at least some of this money straight into goods. The Republic Government is the eventual de jure purchaser of the copra and is represented on Nikunau by designated staff located in the Island Council administrative complex in Rungata. During any weekday morning, a copra cutter can weigh in his (the cutters are still all male) copra at any of the handful of atoll stores which are official copra buying agencies. The storekeeper records each weighing in and compiles a list of all copra received that morning. Around noon, the storekeeper takes the list to the Island Council's administrative complex, where it is processed by the designated clerk. In the course of completing the official paperwork, the clerk calculates the amount which should be paid to each cutter on the list and the total amount; the calculation is based on the guaranteed price per kilogram set by the Republic Government. The clerk hands the processed list to the Island Council treasurer, who then gives the storekeeper the total amount of money needed to pay the cutters. The storekeeper returns to the store and, in the course of the afternoon, the cutters collect the money they are owed by revisiting the store, several hours having elapsed since their earlier visit to deposit their copra. The copra cutters either use the cash received to purchase goods there and then, or hold onto it, either to use it another day or in order to meet any of the few other needs they have for cash.

As brought out in Chapter 2, for many *I-Nikunau* resident on Nikunau, copra is still a significant, if meagre, source of cash; otherwise, many would have very little with which to pay the present day versions of the aforesaid taxes, school fees and church dues or to purchase imported goods. The guaranteed price *I-Nikunau* receive for their copra from the Republic Government is a continuation of longstanding attempts by the authorities on Tarawa to counter what has proved to be a long-term downward trend in its price as a world commodity (see Razzaque, Osafa-Kwaako & Grynberg, 2007). These attempts began with the [Copra] Producers' Development and Stabilization Fund in the 1950s.

Estimates I obtained from the National Statistics Office in a personal communication in 2009 show that a spike in the world copra price reduced the subsidy greatly in 2008 but this was only temporary. In 2018, the subsidy across the whole Republic is estimated as AU$31m (Kiribati Government, 2018). Although the subsidies were funded with assistance from the European Union's Stabilisation des recettes d'Exportation (STABEX) for several years up to about 2000 (see Aiello, 1999), now they are borne by Republic Government general revenue. Given how much of this revenue (usually >60%) comes from licences issued to various foreign vessels to fish for tuna in Kiribati's vast Extended Economic Zone (EEZ) (Williams, Terawasi & Reid, 2017), the subsidies are a method for *I-Nikunau* to share in this revenue while also being encouraged to be active by continuing to produce copra. One curiosity, however, is that the Republic Government is having to portray this guaranteeing of prices as a mechanism to stabilise incomes of *I-Nikunau* copra cutters, along with those on other islands, in the face of fluctuating prices, and so to appear compliant with demands of all their member countries by the Asian Development Bank and similar not to subsidise agriculture.

The references above to taxes, church dues, etc. are an indication that, besides trade stores, the trade in copra, and, indeed, cash remittances received from *I-Nikunau* working away, enabled the establishment and perpetuation of other non-traditional organisations

on Nikunau. Using either copra or cash, *I-Nikunau* have increasingly responded to calls on them to pay church contributions, fines for spiritual and temporal misdemeanours, school fees, various poll, land, copra-export and airport taxes, licence fees (e.g., for bicycles, dogs, stores) and similar (Macdonald, 1982a; Nokise, 1983; Sabatier, 1939/1977). These have been due variously to successive religious organisations (i.e., the LMS and KPC then KUC, and the RC Church), various other community groups and successive governmental organisations (i.e., the Nikunau Native Government and Colony Government, and the Nikunau Island Council and Republic Government). *I-Nikunau* have also made voluntary and involuntary contributions in kind to these same organisations.

Contributions to their churches and most community groups have become so frequent that they are seen as part and parcel of *kawa* or diasporic community life. Thus, *I-Nikunau* mostly approach them with the same willing and cheerful attitude they exhibit towards exertions on behalf of friends or visiting strangers and especially to *koraki*, no matter how distant is the relationship biologically or geographically. In contrast, they have a strong and longstanding aversion to performing unpaid work for *Te Tautaeka*, be it the Nikunau Island Council or the Republic Government; this applies as equally to performing committee work without payment of a sitting allowance as it does to performing manual labour (Macdonald, 1982a). This seems to be a legacy of so-called "communal workdays". These were an involuntary in-kind contribution to works directed under the auspices of the Colony Government. Between the 1900s and the 1960s, almost all adults on the atoll had to complete a specified number of days annually (e.g., see Regulations for the Good Order, 1933). They were extremely unpopular among *I-Nikunau* and were even controversial as far as the British authorities in Westminster were concerned (see Correspondent, 1913).

## 7.2 Dynamics of Economic and Related Developments on and away from Nikunau

Before the 1820s, *I-Nikunau* comprised a small, isolated and so virtually closed, self-reliant, tropical atoll economy. This economy was based on subsisting on poor, drought-prone *aba*, the lakes, reef and nearby parts of a vast ocean (Catala, 1957; Di Piazza, 2001; Republic of Kiribati, 2009; Lewis, 1981; Sachet, 1957; Thomas, 2001). Even so, it is important to appreciate that this would not have meant there was no contact whatsoever with other people, be it on neighbouring islands in the Kiribati Archipelago or further afield, and that this probably meant some innovations (e.g., plants, growing techniques) being introduced intermittently but rarely (cf. Gibson & Nero, 2008). Moreover, nothing was only economic. Thus, participation, transactions, etc. took place as part of a wider awareness and acknowledgement of relationships with *koraki*, customary usufructuary rights in *aba*, including the marine areas adjacent to them, and technical knowledge and skills, magic, spells and rituals (A. F. Grimble 1989; R. Grimble, 2013; cf. Gibson & Nero, 2008). Economic order was indistinguishable from other forms of order, covering affairs which might be classed academically as social, political, spiritual, military, environmental, cultural, etc.

The basic economic units were *mwenga* and *kainga*, as covered in Chapter 6; their constituents eked out a living with the victuals, materials, etc., they procured from the land and marine resources at hand. Any surplus (e.g., of fresh fish) did not lead to barter or other trading – any such taking advantage was seen as *kamama* – but was shared with other kin, or with *baronga*, and an insufficiency was overcome similarly. This non-reciprocal distribution of victuals, materials, etc. extended to cooperation within *kainga*,

for example in major fishing expeditions and on other occasions (Geddes, 1977; Hockings, 1984; cf. Burridge, 1957). Cooperation and assistance were also available from within *utu* and, particularly for significant tasks and projects, from other *kainga* in a district. This applied particularly when specialist knowledge and skills were needed (e.g., to build *bata* and other dwelling structures, canoes and other capital formation activities; to provide medical care and nursing), and in times of crisis. Furthermore, *utu* provided help no matter that they might normally reside on different *kainga*, including outside the district, in which case it was routine for the visiting helper to be fed and accommodated in *te mwenga* (Hockings, 1984). As alluded to throughout Part II, these practices continue in modified forms today wherever *I-Nikunau* are located, including that in diasporic communities the sharing and assistance occurs not only among *utu* but also among *baronga* (cf. Ratuva, 2014; Thompson, 2016).

*Bubuti* is another important traditional practice which survives today in modified form for transferring goods or services among *I-Nikunau*. The practice is as social as it is economic (see Geddes, 1977; Macdonald, 1972; McCreary & Boardman, 1968); basically, *bubuti* entails a person having the right to gift goods or services to another with whom they have some social relationship, or to solicit goods or services from that other, with an obligation on the part of the other to agree. While at the time of the gifting or soliciting, no corresponding action occurs which would turn this into an exchange, there are implications of potential reciprocity in the future, and just as it strengthens social relations among the participants, so there are social limits on how it is conducted (e.g., for it to be seen as begging would give rise to *kamama*). Not only does *bubuti* have continuing significance in the distribution of goods and services among *I-Nikunau* wherever they reside (cf. Duncan, 2014; Ratuva, 2014; Thompson, 2016) but also it is celebrated culturally; this continuity is despite repeated attempts made by the Colony Government to stamp it out (e.g., see Regulations for the Good Order, 1933).

Oversight of the traditional economy was through gerontocratic rule, exercised by *unimane* within each *te kainga*, and, beyond that, within each of six districts. A feature of this rule were *bowi* held in *te uma ni mane* and the aforesaid *mwaneaba* council for a district. This oversight included quasi-taxing of *mwenga* based on income or wealth, levied, for example, to stage ceremonials in *te mwaneaba*. One item on the agenda of a meeting called to organise a particular event would be consideration of the items each *te kainga*, and, by implication, each *te mwenga*, would contribute. I have witnessed, or sometimes been part of, similar kinds of discussion on Nikunau and in diasporic communities. Kazama (2001) and Autio (2010) report similarly in their analyses of the role of the *mwaneaba* on Tabiteuea.

### *7.2.1 Bartering with Foreign Visitors*

Visits to Nikunau by the aforementioned whalers and a few other passing ships signalled the beginnings of changes to the atoll's economy. The visitors bartered with *I-Nikunau* for locally-produced goods and services, for example, coconuts and other fresh provisions, including, eventually, meat from the pigs and fowl bred from stock which whalers entrusted to *I-Nikunau* with this purpose in mind (Macdonald, 1982a), mats and other handicrafts, *kaokioki* (≅ coconut rum), and the services of *nikiranroro* (female captives, slaves and others known to have had sexual relations[48]) (cf. Druett, 1987). In return, *I-Nikunau* obtained *kaako*, for example, various metal implements (e.g., tools, weapons),

trinkets, plugs of tobacco and tobacco pipes, and a share of the fowl and pigs. For *I-Nikunau*, this bartering was a new concept, as implied above in mentioning what was done with a surplus catch of fish.

The proprietors of the whaling ships were particularly after the oil they could process from whale carcasses; it was an important commodity in their ports of origin in Western Europe and New England, being used for, among other things, lighting, heating, cooking, lubricating, and making candles, soap, glue, corsets and umbrellas (Best, 1983; Lever, 1964; Mitchell, 1983; Phillips, 2006). Then, perhaps as the behaviour of whales changed or their stock was depleted (Davis, Gallman & Hutchins, 1988) and, in any case, as the demand for whale products declined in the face of alternatives, some also turned their attention to coconut oil, which had other uses as well and could be accumulated and transported in the same barrels (Maude & Leeson, 1965).

*I-Nikunau's* response to this demand for coconut oil (1840s-1860s) was one of enthusiasm for more trade. They showed even more enthusiasm when the product demanded changed from oil to copra (1870s- ) (see Bollard, 1981); although coconut by coconut, the price received for copra was lower than for oil, they could cut and dry copra more easily and efficiently than they could press oil. Whatever, from the 1840s, *I-Nikunau* were increasingly incented to expand nut harvesting by planting more coconut palms; as this occurred mostly on underutilised *aba*, it did not affect their other land-based subsistence resources. The time they spent on cultivating palms, and cutting and either pressing or, later, drying nuts also increased (Macdonald, 1982a). Although this reduced the time available for other activities (cf. Lewis, 1988), some labour saving devices were among goods which *I-Nikunau* could obtain through trade, thus making them more efficient in conducting some of these other activities, as well as in producing oil and then copra. However, droughts and poor soils were still constraining. On the other hand, the difficult growing conditions meant companies involved in this trade were uninterested in turning Nikunau into a commercial plantation, unlike other Pacific islands they commandeered for this purpose (see Bennett, 2018, 2020).

### *7.2.2 Private Trade Stores*

However, the change to copra, and the resulting higher production potential, incented the half dozen trading companies with bases on Butaritari to change their mode of trading with *I-Nikunau* from passing, or itinerant, to resident. Thus, the companies in question financed *I-Matang* and Chinese agents to establish trade stores on Nikunau. Soon there were at least four stores, two serving single *mwaneaba* districts and two serving two neighbouring districts. The presence of these stores greatly increased *I-Nikunau's* continuous access to victuals, hardware, cloth, implements and other trade goods, and so spurred them to produce more copra (Couper, 1967; Davis, 1892; Macdonald, 1982a; Maude, 1977; Maude & Leeson, 1965; Munro, 1987; Sabatier, 1939/1977; Willmott, 2007).

As to why these stores were entrusted to *I-Matang* and Chinese, and not *I-Nikunau*, although the companies knew little about *I-Nikunau*, they probably perceived them as lacking the capital, connections and reliability necessary to be admitted into their companies and trading networks, to say nothing of any possible social, cultural and racial disdain and condescension, if not hostility, they may have harboured. In any case, for their part, *I-Nikunau's* involvement in proprietorial trade was constrained culturally, which, in studying their neighbours in Tuvalu, Munro (1987) attributes to "kinship obligations,

community solidarity, and ethics of reciprocity which run counter to profit making and economic individualism" (p. 80) (see also Autio, 2010; Macdonald, 1982a, especially pp. 212-213) (cf. Burridge, 1957; Eisenstadt, 1956). Nevertheless, *I-Nikunau* showed enthusiasm for and a high level of participation in the trade which developed because of the stores. This enthusiasm and participation was notwithstanding the companies and their agents undoubtedly having the upper hand in knowledge, skills, etc. This applied in knowing about concepts of trade, commercial manufacture and economic profit, the fairness or otherwise of prices at which goods were sold and copra was bought, and, indeed, the uses to which oil, copra, etc. were put (e.g., manufacturing soap, candles, butter substitute, explosives and livestock feed).

Although establishing trade stores on Nikunau was a sign of prosperity, the stores and the trade were always susceptible to the frequency of droughts (Sachet, 1957) and fluctuations in external demand for copra (Munro, 1987; Razzaque et al., 2007). Over the entire time the stores have existed, these have frequently presented challenges for the viability of stores, the shipping services the stores relied on to bring the *kaako* and collect the copra, and the trade-based, micro-economy on Nikunau (cf. Couper, 1967).

The aforementioned state among *I-Nikunau* of being oblivious to what was happening to the products of their work also applied when they were working away, including in mining phosphate ore, for example, and still does in some cases. Undoubtedly, this comparative ignorance caused *I-Nikunau* disadvantages in the exchange rate between goods and copra, and in the quality of goods they obtained (cf. Bakre, 2008). Even so, *I-Nikunau* were not always easily taken advantage of, and so the period was not free of occasional disputes. However, these were usually over whether the traders might reduce copra prices, giving reasons such as world prices falling (cf. Bennett, 2020), and not over the general circumstances of trade. Whatever, the disputes were most frequently conducted at the level of *unimane* and traders, rather than the individual copra cutter having to take on the trader alone, something individual copra cutters found it difficult to do culturally, as well as for want of personal authority.

### *7.2.3 Cooperative Trade Stores*

The Great Depression period presented a particularly extreme challenge to the stores on Nikunau, shipping around Kiribati and the very survival of the trade throughout the Colony, and had far-reaching consequences. The price of copra crashed so low that the trade stores, then still in private ownership, would have folded had they not been reconstituted as *I-Nikunau* owned and operated cooperatives – I believe there were at least four of these by 1935, registered eventually under the Native Co-operative Societies Ordinance 1940. Concomitantly, the shipping and import-export services at the level of the Colony continued in private hands, but whereas there were half a dozen companies in the 1920s, their number was down to two by the late 1930s, namely W. R. Carpenter & Co. Ltd, then based still on Butaritari, and Burns, Philp & Co, Ltd, by then based on Tarawa. The continuance of the trade was helped by copra prices recovering steeply when a world shortage of oils and fats loomed with the prospect surfacing of a second major war in Europe (Bennett, 2020; Catala, 1957; Couper, 1967; Macdonald, 1982a; Maude, 1949, 1950).

The cooperatives established on Nikunau in the 1930s, together with perhaps a further 40 or so on neighbouring islands in Kiribati and Tuvalu, not only overcame the immediate issue of saving the existing trade but also they marked the beginning of the cooperative

form of ownership across these islands, as at first embodied in *boboti* but then increasingly since the 1980s in *mronron*. This form of ownership is in tune with *te katei ni Nikunau* (Macdonald, 1982a); *mronron* in particular somehow meld distribution based on kinship with using cash to facilitate the process of goods purchased collectively being distributed among members, without the prospect of *kamama* associated with arm's length trading for individual economic gain (Couper, 1967; Green et al., 1979; Munro, 1987; Pitchford, 1981). Besides, *I-Nikunau* probably obtained a better deal because of the stores being reconstituted along cooperative lines, and were more in control of the trade than when it was in private *I-Matang* or Chinese hands. The better deal was despite *I-Nikunau* who participated in the governance and administration of the cooperatives still mostly being at a knowledge disadvantage when dealing with external suppliers and intermediaries from the aforesaid shipping companies. Besides, even though these *I-Nikunau* had gradually acquired knowledge and understanding through participating in the trade now for some decades, many economic and social concepts the trade encompassed were alien to them culturally, being strange or even repugnant. This incognisance endures in modern contexts of trading and other economic relations, and still presents challenges for *I-Nikunau*, including on Tarawa and in metropolitan countries.

Events in the Kiribati Islands during World War II (see Notes 18 and 41) caused a pause in trade from 1941 to 1948, which in turn affected not only *I-Nikunau's* access to trade goods but also the revenues used to operate and maintain churches, schools and government (Macdonald, 1982a). However, when the trade did restart, under the auspices of the Colony Government with capital from London – the Colony Government used this capital to re-establish stores on Nikunau and the other islands as part of its reconstruction activities (see Maude, 1949)–copra prices were higher for a decade than at other times before or since, because the aforementioned world shortage of oils and fats continued. *I-Nikunau* responded to these higher prices by increasing cultivation and production, and so their purchases of imported goods increased, including catching up with hardware replacement which had not been possible during the wartime disruption. The resumption of trade also allowed *I-Nikunau* to resume paying taxes, school fees, licences, fines and other payments to the Colony Government, the Nikunau Native Government and the churches, meaning they too could revive and renew their activities and assets, and, in cases where they had left altogether, even their presences.

A significant change once trade resumed was for the Colony Government to place the stores it had re-established on Nikunau under the ownership of a single cooperative, namely, *Te Bobotin Nikunau*. This cooperative was supplied from Tarawa, where the Colony Government had established a body responsible for the importing and wholesaling of goods, the collection and export of copra, and shipping services. The Colony Government made sure this enterprise had a monopoly by preventing private companies, including the two mentioned above, returning to the Colony after the war. Concomitantly, on Nikunau, *Te Bobotin Nikunau* might also be said to have had a monopoly in the supply of goods and a monopsony in the purchase of copra (Pitchford, 1981). However, these concepts would be unfamiliar to *I-Nikunau* let alone be used to describe the organisation in question, given tradition was largely based on forms of cooperation and inclusion among kinship groups in and around *mwenga*, *kainga*, *mwaneaba*, etc.; perhaps the one peculiarity was that, as with the Nikunau Native Government, *Te Bobotin Nikunau* was a whole of Nikunau organisation, not a *mwaneaba* district one, except that it had branch stores in four of the

*kawa*, corresponding to the pre-war circumstances. Besides, from time to time, one or two church *mronron* stores operated as well, but invariably having to buy their *kaako* from *Te Bobotin Nikunau*. *Te Bobotin Nikunau* remained significant for over four decades, not only economically but also politically, socially and culturally, as was true of its counterparts on Tarawa and other Outer Islands. However, like them, it has declined since the 1990s, resulting in the organisation I observed in 2009 being a shadow of the thriving enterprise I had observed two decades earlier.

This decline of *Te Bobotin Nikunau* contrasts with the enthusiasm still shown by *I-Nikunau* for cooperative enterprises, which lives on at the grassroots level through *mronron (*see Chapter 2). As others have described in writing about *mronron* (see Couper, 1967; Macdonald, 1982a), and as I observed in 2009 while living in *te mwenga* running one on Tarawa, these stores sell the most basic victuals, dealing in the smallest quantities (e.g., a cup of rice, sugar or flour, a spoonful of salt, a stick of tobacco or locally rolled (in pandanus "paper") cigarette) and at all hours, reflecting among other things the meagre incomes of their member-customers.

## 7.3 Further Aspects of Economic Change in Kiribati

Further to the point made above that up to the 1960s nearly all *I-Nikunau* were still part of the Nikunau economy, this was notwithstanding that for *I-Nikunau*, the copra, remittances and imports, comprising not only consumables but also technology, knowledge and beliefs, had all represented economic changes, not to mention political, social and cultural ones. Nowadays, outsiders might perceive the atoll as still largely self-reliant, even closed, because of such factors as its physical remoteness, the lack of export value of its copra and the low earnings of people temporarily working away. However, since the 1960s, there have been changes even more profound economically and otherwise than those earlier ones, as foreshadowed in Chapters 5 and 6 in dealing with geographical and demographical circumstances. The upshot of these recent changes has been that the economy for most *I-Nikunau* since the 1970s has at least incorporated Tarawa, and perhaps for two decades has been more Tarawa than Nikunau. It will be easier to appreciate more fully these changes retrospectively if I first consider the economy on Tarawa and *I-Nikunau's* economic circumstances there, and then return to how the present Nikunau economy has evolved since the 1960s.

### *7.3.1 Tarawa's Economy*

The condition of Tarawa as a monetised economy traces back to the aftermath of the Battle of Tarawa, and the presence of supplied and moneyed American soldiers there and nearby (Macdonald, 1982a; Wright, 2000). Concomitantly, the restored Colony Government was headquartered there de facto and then de jure, from when Tarawa once again became the administrative centre of the Colony.[49] Its role as economic centre also began emerging, including as the centre of the restored import-export trade around copra; indeed, three cooperatives, equivalent to Nikunau's *Te Bobotin Nikunau*, were established and other enterprises besides, the latter in connection with the Colony Government's fledgling development activities (Couper, 1967, 1968; Maude, 1949, 1950; cf. Morgan, 1980).

After the war, under a Labour Government in London, new imperial policies were adopted; these involved development planning and extended to human development and social infrastructure (Morgan, 1980). The Colony Government was required to

implement these policies,[50] and signalled this by drawing up the first national plan for reconstruction and development (i.e., GEIC, 1946). This turned out to be the first of a series which continues today (e.g., see GEIC, 1970; Government of Kiribati, 1983, 2016b), along with other representations suggestive of direction, coordination, altruism and unity of purpose (e.g., United Nations Conventions on Biological Diversity and on Climate Change, the Millennium Goals). In proceeding to implement its plans, the Colony Government applied for capital finance from the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund, with the result that some of the applications were approved and the projects involved went ahead (Macdonald, 1982a; Maude & Doran, 1966).[51]

The gist of these Colony Government activities and their geographical and demographical consequences for Tarawa, and so for Nikunau, are related in Chapter 5.2.1. Concomitantly, the Tarawa economy was transformed in terms of its size and nature. A gradually accelerating series of civil engineering, education, health, housing, social welfare and other projects ensued, few of which could be associated with tradition, and these were accompanied by a steady inflow of people (see Figure 8), mainly from other islands in the Colony, and supplemented from Britain, Australia, New Zealand, etc. by public and commercial administrators, teachers, medical specialists, engineers, etc. and their families. Banking, finance and insurance, telecommunications, public utilities, construction and vehicle maintenance, transport and similar services were established, some as joint ventures between the Colony Government and overseas providers, public or private. The import trade was extended into goods of a modern nature and primarily meant for governmental body, business and domestic use, especially by the small but knowledgeable and economically substantial *I-Matang* community.

Similar has continued since the Republic Government took over. Indeed, except for a brief lull in the early 1980s, development activities affecting Tarawa have not merely continued but accelerated. The lull arose because phosphate royalties from Banaba ceased from 1980 and the incumbent government adopted policies aimed at self-sufficiency and non-dependence on deficit funding from the former colonial power (Green et al., 1979; Ieremia, 1993; Macdonald, 1982a). However, two occurrences in the mid-1980s changed the situation, ended the lull, and gave the Tarawa economy added impetus. First, following international acceptance of United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 1982, the Republic Government was able to charge various foreign vessels for fishing for tuna in Kiribati's EEZ.[52] Second, the new Republic began being "discovered" by the ever-increasing number and wider range of supranational organisations, aid donor countries and organisations, middle-persons and other organisations which were joining the world's fast expanding aid industry – on the growth of this industry and aid organisations, see Brown (2012), Organisation for Economic Development and Cooperation (2013) and Stubbs (2003).[53]

Something of the economic circumstances of *I-Nikunau* on Tarawa has been covered already in Chapter 3, indicating that the level at which *I-Nikunau* participate in Tarawa's economy varies. Occasionally, some have been close to its centre, including being involved in government ministries and state-owned enterprises (e.g., as ministers and government department secretaries, public officials, medical professionals, educators, enterprise managers and staff, etc.). However, as their immigration became fuelled less by education and more by *utu* relationships, so increasingly *I-Nikunau* are spread in their economic statuses, occupations, if any, and pursuits, with many being on the economy's periphery.

Accordingly, they exhibit signs of what even the free market leaning Asian Development Bank (2006) describes as "increased economic frustration" (p. 1), a frustration of quite longstanding (see McCreary & Boardman, 1968) and felt equally by many other people on Tarawa. Even those with some qualifications struggle to derive income from skilled or professional employment (Bedford & Bedford, 2013), or from running their own private business, and so struggle to shake off dependency. Indeed, reiterating Chapter 3, paid employment of any kind is difficult to find, particularly for young adults, because the availability of even casual, unskilled jobs is well below the numbers seeking them.

Perhaps adding to this issue, and certainly not making it any easier, are persisting customary limits around who *I-Nikunau* might regard as legitimate employers (see Note 25), and concomitantly, around whether *I-Nikunau* can employ others in a modern sense (cf. Duncan, 2014). Notwithstanding changes in perceptions reported by Roniti (1985), going outside these limits may still lead to community censure, ridicule, *kamama* and being made *te bai n rang* (Macdonald, 1982a). From a potential employee's point of view, doing so is tantamount to allowing oneself to be exploited by fellow *I-Kiribati* for the latter's private gain. They are the same sorts of limits as apply to obtaining goods from other *I-Kiribati* as part of proprietary trade or to supplying goods to other *I-Kiribati*. The former may be interpreted as a sign of self-seeking and individual ambition, including aspiring to be better than the rest of the community, and the latter as a sign of not being self-sufficient, independent or *inaomata* (see Autio, 2010).

Nevertheless, as Macdonald (1982a) and Roniti (1985) observed in the 1980s, it is increasingly acceptable on Tarawa, not to say imperative, for *te mwenga* to earn a living through organising and administering, say, a trade store, and so being entitled to take an economic share of the cash surplus which may result, or going fishing with a view to landing a surplus catch for hawking. However, for this to be customarily acceptable, there must be a semblance of *mronron* principles involved, such as through involving, and being reliant on, customers, in the form of other *mwenga* having family or other social links to *te mwenga* operating the store. What is more, the prime motive for operating a store should be to provide goods and services to these other *mwenga*. The income so derived should only be incidental to this prime motive and be moderate, which seems to be the case anyway considering the low mark-ups prevailing because of prices being determined according to similar goods being on sale nearby and the hours of work usually involved, whether it be out fishing, producing bread, donuts, ice blocks, locally rolled cigarettes, etc., or just tending the store. Besides, *te mwenga* operating the store are expected to refrain from conspicuous displays of greater affluence or consumption than the other member-participants.

Notwithstanding lack of opportunities to participate in Tarawa's market economy for many able-bodied *I-Nikunau*, particularly among the younger generation, few possess the inclination to return to Nikunau to follow a subsistence life (cf. Couper, 1967), let alone the knowledge and skills or beliefs and values associated with life there; this is despite probably having rights to use *aba* there and the Republic Government guaranteeing them a price for the copra they might produce (cf. Pitchford, 1981). Kuruppu and Liverman (2011) find this applies to many of Tarawa's residents with Outer Island roots; they also find them as being less self-sufficient than Outer Islanders, and more dependent on non-traditional government. Besides, returning to Nikunau might generate a sense of *kamama* about having squandered the opportunity to live and work on Tarawa (confidential personal

communication, 2017). Among the less able-bodied on Tarawa, including members of the older generation, any desire to return to Nikunau is frustrated by their dependence on the younger generation, and so they must stay on Tarawa, probably until they die; this is notwithstanding their having been raised on Nikunau, and so being used to the subsistence life there, and capable of teaching the young about living such a life.

In any case, *I-Nikunau* on Tarawa perceive, probably rightly, that Nikunau continues to lack almost all the material, economic and social amenities they observe on Tarawa, and might occasionally be able to enjoy. What is more, some have also become accustomed to holding positions of authority by virtue of wisdom based on intellectual ability, knowledge obtained through formal learning and merit demonstrated by accomplishments, rather than through age, gender and birth, as prevails on Nikunau, along with various other of the more tradition-orientated provisions of *te katei* (see Hockings, 1984). Especially the women (cf. Kutimeni Tenten, 2003; Rose, 2014), but the men too, have become accustomed on Tarawa to greater individual freedom, be it in their personal conduct and private lives, or in having a political and economic voice.

### *7.3.2 Nikunau's Economy*

I now return to the Nikunau economy, to consider how it has changed, especially in light of the lion's share of development and growth in activities, etc. having been centred on Tarawa. Just as the Colony Government was criticised in the late 1960s by observers sent from London (Ministry of Overseas Development, 1968) and by a plan drafted in the early 1970s by two young economists attached to the so called Regional Development Planning Unit (confidential personal communication, 2006, and Macdonald, 1982a), it is no exaggeration to say that Nikunau, like the other Outer Islands, has been neglected by the aid organisations – some published advisors' reports even refer to Kiribati as the island in the singular, perhaps implying that Kiribati and Tarawa are synonymous (cf. Teaiwa, 2011); many more point out that Kiribati comprises 33 islands but then say no more about the 32 others – and, almost as much, by the Republic Government.

Moreover, Nikunau and the *I-Nikunau* residing there have gradually suffered from an accumulation of so called "backwash", which is to say, negative effects that favourable access to technical and economic resources, growth and development at the centre can have on conditions at the periphery (see Brookfield, 1972; Connell, 2010; Couper, 1967; de Haas, 2010; Myrdal, 1957; Pitchford, 1981; Ortega, 2008; Weir et al., 2017). Emigration and parallel occurrences have resulted in resources, notably in the form of people who performed better at school, being drained from Nikunau to Tarawa; the resources referred to are political, social and cultural, as well as economic. The occurrences include the decline of the nationwide network of *boboti*, and with it *Te Bobotin Nikunau*; and air and sea transport becoming increasingly dependent on a Republic Government which, even at the outset and now increasingly so, tends towards Tarawa-orientated policies, finance and operating practices.

Concomitantly, looking for spread effects (de Haas, 2010; Myrdal, 1957) which counter backwash, the Nikunau economy, though still isolated geographically, has received some economic benefits from the centre. Income from the supply of produce by *I-Nikunau* on the periphery for consumption on Tarawa is one potential form of such benefits. However, this has only been significant in terms of *utu* relationships, not in terms of income and economic activity on Nikunau. Only copra has had any export significance (Green et al., 1979; Ministry of Internal and Social Affairs, 2007; Pitchford, 1981; Office of Te Beretitenti

and T'Makei Services, 2012b) and, as outlined below, the circumstances of it all now going to Tarawa, but rarely further, is more social and political than it is economic, in the sense of the periphery supplying the centre with raw materials or victuals. Nevertheless, selling copra has gradually regained its position as the main source of cash among *I-Nikunau* on Nikunau, not especially because prices and production have increased but because of decline in other forms of income.

Infrastructure and similar projects are another form of potential benefits but, reiterating above, compared with Tarawa, these have been minor and carried out reluctantly. Indeed, many were carried out initially only as a response to the aforementioned criticisms by Ministry of Overseas Development (1968) of the Colony Government because of signs of torpor on Nikunau and the other Outer Islands. Since, some upgrading and extension of earlier infrastructure and facilities has been effected, along with some additional provision, including under the Republic Government; the areas involved have been localised water and sewerage systems, schools, clinics, administrative buildings, a court house, local government staff houses, post and telecommunications, the road, a deeper channel in the reef and a wharf, the airport and scheduled air services (see Chapter 2). However, as alluded to in Ministry of Internal and Social Affairs (2007), Office of Te Beretitenti and T'Makei Services (2012b) and Kiribati Local Government Association (2013), physical maintenance and expertise to effect it seem to have been problematic. Structures were constructed with foreign materials not readily available when needed to be replaced, and there has been a lack of skills, tools and funds (Thomas & Kautoa, 2007; cf. Alejandrino-Yap, Dornan, McGovern & Austin, 2013).

The most visible provisions in recent years through aid donors are the establishment of the Tekabangaki JSS and of Island Council amenities at Rungata, and the supply to the council of several utility vehicles and small lorries (Kiribati Local Government Association, 2013)–vehicles on Nikunau have in the past been few and far between. However, in 2009 I observed the school seeming starved of money for operations and maintenance, compared with ones I visited on Tarawa – while none I visited was resourced particularly well compared, say, to the New Zealand schools I am familiar with, the one on Nikunau was in much greater need of repair and lacked for things which on Tarawa were possibly taken for granted (e.g., mains electricity and lighting, teaching supplies, learning materials). Notwithstanding, resource and other disadvantages, some children still succeed in the entrance examinations for senior secondary schools, which usually means they go to Tarawa to study and it is still the case that not many ever return. As for the vehicles, many were off the road, awaiting parts from Tarawa and beyond. Getting these is problematic because, assuming they can be identified on Nikunau, an order has to go to Tarawa, usually for overseas procurement, and then shipped through Tarawa back to Nikunau. Indeed, some rusting wrecks were accumulating for lack of parts, but the number was nothing compared with the equivalent phenomenon on Tarawa.

Remittances from *I-Nikunau* working on Tarawa and transfer payments to *I-Nikunau* from the Republic Government comprise a third form of potential benefits in the periphery-centre context. Long before the 1960s, remittances from around the Pacific and then from Banaba, Nauru, etc. were of significance to the Nikunau economy; these remittances could be several fold greater than the amount which *I-Nikunau* could earn on Nikunau from cutting copra – Macdonald (1982a, p. 175) remarks on the ratio of remittances to copra in

the southern Kiribati Islands being 4:1 in the 1960s. With *I-Nikunau* taking jobs on Tarawa in the 1960s and 1970s, remittances became significant in the periphery-centre context but then declined in the 1980s and 1990s, as parents and other *utu* dependents accepted invitations from adult offspring to live with them on Tarawa (see Chapter 6).

Regarding transfer payments, in the past decade or so, the aforesaid AU$50 or AU$60 per month non-contributory pensions for *I-Kiribati* over the age limits (i.e., 67 and 70) have not been insignificant in putting cash in the hands of *I-Nikunau* living on Nikunau. However, although one reason for introducing it was to incent people to live on Outer Islands by enabling them to purchase some of their needs there, rather than have to rely on their adult offspring, and so perhaps have to move to Tarawa to join them, it has only been marginally effective in this regard. Indeed, the cash from this pension may actually be an additional incentive for adult offspring on Tarawa wanting their parents to move there and join their *te mwenga*.

Another arrangement constituting a form of transfer payments relates to present dealings around copra. Reiterating all the copra which *I-Nikunau* can produce is now purchased by the Republic Government. The source of revenue the Republic Government uses to make purchases, that is revenue from licences to exploit the tuna fishery, make this arrangement at least as much a means to transfer cash to the hands of *I-Nikunau* on Nikunau as it is a way of procuring raw materials for manufacturing or export. Ultimately, Outer Islands' communities on Nikunau, Beru, etc. are receiving shares of the proceeds of fishing licence fees. What is more, purchasing copra is essential for the government of the day to maintain political support among these islands' inhabitants – the subsidised prices at which copra is purchased from copra cutters is invariably an issue at elections – and more generally for them accepting governance by a Republic Government from Tarawa. Like the aforesaid pensions, the Republic Government now seems to see the transfer payments through copra as an incentive for *I-Nikunau* to live on Nikunau, and not to immigrate to Tarawa, or even to return to Nikunau from Tarawa. However, as alluded to in Chapter 7.2.1, their effectiveness in this regard seems to be marginal at best.

Another significant stream of cash coming to the atoll arises from the grants made by the Republic Government towards the Nikunau Island Council's annual recurrent expenditure. These operating grants are an extension of specific and general grants and subventions introduced by the Colony Government in the late 1960s around minor development projects. These entailed financially restrictive conditions, including in matters of process, reporting and audit, all of which meant a continuing lack of financial autonomy for the Nikunau and other island councils of the time (Macdonald, 1972, 1982a). As explained in Chapter 2, formally, the grants cover five out of every six months of the Council's operating expenditures, and the Council is then supposed to raise enough from local revenues to cover the sixth month. However, it is commonplace for most local taxes not to be collected because of *I-Nikunau* lacking the means to pay (Kiribati Local Government Association, 2013), with the consequence that the Council's employees may be without pay for the month in question. Incidentally, while some of the conditions the Republic Government attaches to these grants resemble in form those imposed by the Colony Government, their substance seems weaker.

It is arguable that these various streams of incoming cash, goods, capital items and personnel have made *I-Nikunau* on Nikunau increasingly dependent since the 1960s on outsiders, including on, first, *I-Nikunau* in the diasporic communities on Tarawa and in the metropolitan countries,

and, second, the Republic Government, sometimes in conjunction with aid organisations. Moreover, the balance between these two has tilted away from private dependence based on *utu* relationships and towards government dependence, although, as intimated above, *I-Nikunau* seem more self-sufficient and less dependent on non-traditional government than Tarawa's residents are (see also Ratuva, 2014). Whatever the case, they, along with residents of neighbouring atolls comprising the southern Kiribati Islands, are reported by some as the most impoverished and vulnerable of all the islands in the Republic (Kidd, 2012).

## 7.4 Metropolitan Countries

Regarding the economic circumstances of diasporic communities, studies of New Zealand by Roman (2013) and Thompson (2016) are relevant. These researchers confirm my observations that *I-Kiribati* arriving in New Zealand quickly realise, sometimes with surprise or even shock, how important money is to being able to live there. This surprise is notwithstanding how supposedly monetised the Tarawa economy is, as related above: the experience of many was that surviving on Tarawa was possible even with seemingly very little money, added to which the quantity of transacting which occurs on Tarawa involving money is much less than is experienced in New Zealand. Some of the latter stemmed from having been under the misconception that there would be a vacant job waiting when they first arrived to smooth their re-settlement, and that the job would come with a house seemingly free of not only rent but utilities, property taxes, insurance, repair costs, etc., either literally or because charges would figure as deductions from wage payments. This misconception may not be as bizarre as it sounds. These are the circumstances which greet workers arriving under Recognised Seasonal Employer schemes. They were, or are, similar to the circumstances which greeted colonial officials, missionaries and aid workers arriving on Tarawa. And they are similar to the circumstances under which many Republic Government employees live on Tarawa.

Roman (2013) relates that the earliest of the New Zealand immigrants who came without a partner with a New Zealand or British connection (see Chapter 4.2) faced particular difficulties, economic and otherwise, because of not knowing anyone in New Zealand to whom they could turn. Even as the numbers in New Zealand grew, many difficulties have continued. Thus, Thompson (2016) relates how, for a time after their arrival, most *I-Kiribati* singles, couples and families have experienced living in the relative poverty which is mentioned in Chapter 4.2. This arises from being obliged on arrival to accept low-paid jobs because often nothing better is available or accessible – the evaluation "low-paid" is by comparison with pay rates in the metropolitan country, not with the pay rates a skilled or qualified person might expect on Tarawa, which are generally even lower (Bedford & Bedford, 2013). The earnings from these jobs are usually inadequate to be able to pay for basic victuals, clothing, housing, utilities, health insurance and school expenses (e.g., school uniforms, stationery, supplies, sports, examination entry, so-called "voluntary" donations), and other essentials in a New Zealand context.

A significant factor in this matter is that not only is obtaining employment necessary in order to live in New Zealand but, as explained in Chapter 4.2, it is also essential in order to obtain the visas needed to re-settle under the Pacific Access Category. Although immigrants might hope to obtain employment before they arrive in New Zealand, it is rare for them to do so. Thus, their initial entry is effected invariably by the adult(s) having a work visa(s) and dependent children travelling on visitor visas. These fixed-term visas are

only converted to residence visas once the adult member(s) of the immigrating family has permanent employment; if such employment is not secured within what the immigration authorities consider a reasonable time, the immigrants must return to Kiribati. Given the imperative of permanent employment, the adults often accept the first job which qualifies as permanent, which usually means starting in a job on the acceptable income threshold, and so low-paid (cf. Roman, 2013; Thompson, 2016)–employers often know about the necessity of immigrants having to have a job and can factor this into the pay and conditions they offer or impose (cf. Reilly, 2011).

As also explained in Chapter 4.2, after a period of settling in, many *I-Kiribati*, through means such as weak ties, have been able to obtain better-paid jobs, and so experience good management practices, protection of unions, and can move to better quality rental housing (e.g., between NZ$400 and NZ$600, depending on location), or even purchase a dwelling, and achieve a high level of contentment (see Roman, 2013; Thompson, 2016). However, at least as many have remained in low-paid jobs, usually with various adverse, economic, social, and physical and mental health consequences. These consequences include exploitation, insecurity, racism and, within households, some domestic abuse and violence. Thompson/Teariki (2016, 2017) points to the mental anguish felt by some of her interviewees for not being able to provide for their families, particularly the children. Moreover, some of her women interviewees remarked on domestic violence occurring, although this violence did not change their perception of feeling safer in New Zealand than on Tarawa (cf. Kiribati Conceptual Framework Working Group, 2015; Lievore & Fairbairn-Dunlop, 2007).

Overall, the median personal fortnightly income of *I-Kiribati* is NZ$565, or only 52% of the overall national median (Statistics New Zealand, 2014). As it is common for households to have two or even more members in full- or part-time work, as much through economic necessity as choice, *I-Kiribati* average household fortnightly incomes are likely to be around NZ$1,500, or 2 to 3 times more than on Tarawa, but still well below the circumstances of New Zealand national median households. The disparity of economic circumstances between *I-Kiribati* households and New Zealand households generally is further reflected in the home ownership rate mentioned earlier: the rate for *I-Kiribati* of 11% compares with a rate of 50% overall (Statistics New Zealand, 2014).

The differing experiences with employment and of labour mobility among *I-Kiribati* households in New Zealand have given rise to quite a wide range of living standards within diasporic communities. However, these disparities have not weakened ties much and communities are still quite tightly knit. Thus, the most obvious consequences of this wide range is that communities have adequate physical, economic and social resources to be internally supportive, the support going some way beyond receiving new arrivals into the community (see Chapter 4.2). Even so, some immigrants have seriously considered returning "home" to Kiribati for economic as well as other reasons (see Thompson, 2016), although how many have done so, or why, is unclear.

### *7.4.1 Backwash and Spread Effects on Tarawa from Metropolitan Countries*

Regarding the effect on Tarawa of emigration to metropolitan countries like New Zealand, so far at least, unlike that from Nikunau to Tarawa, there do not seem to be many backwash effects. This is probably because of how small a proportion of people are involved to date. Indeed, Tarawa may be a net gainer through the spread effects of

remittances in kind and in cash, and of something akin to *Pākehā* concepts of going on holiday (Black & Huygens, 2007) and tourism (cf. Bedford & Bedford, 2013)–having *utu* in a metropolitan country means the accommodation and many other costs of visiting such a country are reduced. However, to most *I-Kiribati*, touring is an unfamiliar concept; most visits to New Zealand are about spending time with *utu*, and if they occur at all, visits to places of interest (e.g., national parks, museums, cathedrals, seal colonies) and partaking in adventures (e.g., jet boating, skiing) are incidental.

Any backwash effects being suffered by Tarawa presently are more to do with globalisation, the nation's dependence on and acceptance of aid, and adverse climatic changes, as alluded to earlier in this chapter and in Chapters 5, 6 and elsewhere. However, should projections about life on Tarawa and other atolls being compromised by rises in sea-level come closer to fruition – this is not altogether certain (see McLean & Kench, 2015)–it is probable that there would be a scramble to emigrate. If so, it will be the younger, academic high achiever, more qualified who will find it easiest to be accepted elsewhere, corresponding to what has happened in Nikunau's case since the 1950s, with the consequence for Tarawa of intellectual and social decline, and almost certainly further backwash on Nikunau and the other Outer Islands.

# 8

# Environmental Circumstances (*te mauri*)

Several references have been made already to how trends in climatic conditions and the level of the sea, and their likely dire consequences for residents of low-lying islands (e.g., insecurity of land, interruption of fresh water and food supply, coastal erosion, flooding), have brought *I-Kiribati*, and by inference *I-Nikunau*, to the world's attention (e.g., see Donner & Webber, 2014; Nunn, 2013; Rytz, 2018; White et al., 2007). What is more, these trends have inspired a stream of aid projects classed as environmental, rather than economic or social, but still predominantly on Tarawa (e.g., see Republic of Kiribati, 2009). However, while on Nikunau the gradual effects of climate change may be things which *I-Nikunau* come to imagine and appreciate as problematic (Ministry of Internal and Social Affairs, 2007; Office of Te Beretitenti and T'Makei Services, 2012b), on Tarawa, *I-Nikunau* face more immediate, very real environmental concerns of impaired living conditions on an overcrowded and environmentally degraded atoll (Office of Te Beretitenti and T'Makei Services, 2012c).

## 8.1 Tarawa's "Worrisome Trend"

This term was used by the Asian Development Bank (2006, p. 1). It is most apparent in the living spaces found on the shores of the most overcrowded parts of Betio. In contrast to *mwenga* or anything of modern design (see Chapter 3), these comprise tightly packed lines of *buia* and *kiakia*, which seem to have arisen by agreements among *utu* to subdivide already crowded dwelling areas, not necessarily with the knowledge or formal approval of the *I-Tarawa* landowners or the leaseholders, which in many cases is the Republic Government (Bishop et al., 2011; Jones, 2012, 2016; cf. Corcoran, 2016; Maunaa, 1987). Whatever, these are a consequence of inter-related or reciprocal factors: reconstruction after the Battle of Tarawa; the enthusiastic construction of infrastructure, and provision of facilities and equipment, by the Colony Government, Republic Government and aid organisations, with insufficient resources and knowledge to maintain them since; seven decades of immigration and urbanisation; a density of human population far in excess of what is naturally sustainable, without urban planning and controls to reduce poor utilisation and misuse of land; etc., etc. (Biribo & Woodroffe, 2013; Carden, 2003; Doran, 1960; Green et al., 1979; Solomon & Forbes, 1999).

A further phenomenon arising in the past three decades in my experience is the incidence of motor vehicles, with perhaps a 100 fold increase since the 1980s – Doran

(1960) reports the presence of only 24 vehicles on Tarawa, compared to over 7,000 in 2007, according to the World Bank (Trading Economics, 2017). In addition there is an obvious change from merely construction and delivery lorries, and minibuses, which provide public bus services and official transport for officials of various government bodies and aid organisations, to the proliferation nowadays of saloon cars and similar private vehicles, owned by single *mwenga* and among *utu* and other social groups. The sheer number of vehicles, much in excess of the capacity of Tarawa's single road running through the middle of its ribbon of residential settlements (see Figure 5), has brought about significant traffic congestion, much air pollution, and many traffic injuries and deaths – the road is so difficult to cross at certain times of the day as to cause some partitioning of the settlements in question. Then, once these vehicles break down irreparably, usually for want of parts and the money to purchase them, they add to the countless rusting vehicles littering the atoll – occasionally, the more obvious of these are collected by the authorities and transported offshore, usually ending up at the bottom of the ocean. The recent modernisation of the road, with street furnishings, signage and all (World Bank, 2016), has alleviated a few issues for the time being but these effects are likely to be short-term, for example, because of needs for maintenance which are unlikely to be met. Indeed, the modernisation may have sent a signal welcoming even more vehicles, and so compounding the issues because of atoll's limited land resources (cf. Goh, 2002).

Ironically, many environmental issues on Tarawa stem from overcrowding having rendered inadequate the very public and private infrastructure which has encouraged the immigration at the root of the overcrowded conditions. Furthermore, the living conditions of most residents, coupled with their straitened economic circumstances and cultural constraints on their adaptive capacity (Kuruppu, 2009; Kuruppu & Liverman, 2011; Mangubhai et al., 2019; Storey & Hunter, 2010; Weir et al., 2017), are giving rise to chronic health problems and economic, if not cultural, poverty (Jones, 2012; Kidd, 2012; McIver et al., 2014; Thomas, 2002) (cf. Bryant-Tokalau, 1995; Connell & Lea, 2002). However, so far, the prospect of living among these conditions is but a mild deterrent on further immigration from Nikunau or other Outer Islands, whether it is for the socio-economic and cultural reasons set out in Chapters 3 and 5 to 7, or for the more recent, somewhat ambiguous reason of climate change (see AJ+, 2014; Locke, 2009; Roland & Curtis, 2020; Smith, 2013).

Neo-liberal policies have been foisted on the Republic Government by some aid organisations (Dixon & Gaffikin, 2014; Tisdell, 2000) and these are not helping alleviate inadequacies of public services for dealing with immediate environmental issues. As inferred in Chapter 7, these policies have often been condensed into ministries (e.g., education, health, transport, local government) having to cut spending overall, and thence to spend much less on consumables in order to leave budgets for employees largely intact. An example of the implications is that refuse vehicles go without routine or other maintenance, and so become unfit to function – most will join the accumulation of scrap vehicles mentioned above – refuse collection employees are idle and refuse goes uncollected, and so residents fly-tip their household refuse near the lagoon and ocean edges – recent initiatives, promoting recycling and neighbourhood rubbish collection and cleaning have gone some way to address this issue but plastics (e.g., ice block wrappers) and other non-degradable waste are still a nuisance (confidential personal

communication, 2017). Similar eyesores one observes, arising for lack of public or private money, knowledge or criticism, include power houses surrounded by diesel waste, unused premises being in a dilapidated state, sea-walls in dangerous states of disrepair (as were causeways and roads until the recent upgrade – see World Bank, 2016), and immobile or unwanted government-owned vehicles rusting in compounds next to crowded residential areas – some were imported for construction projects by aid contractors and then, to avoid the cost of repatriating them at a project's end, gifted to the Republic Government.

For the future, climate change may cause further issues to arise on Tarawa but its most likely effect is to make the matters above worse. This goes back to what I say in Part I Introduction about the already limited fresh water and land resources being reduced further by the rising in sea-level and the already depleted marine resources being reduced further by increases in ocean temperature and acidification (Areke & Mahmood, 2019; McLean & Kench, 2015; Weir et al., 2017).

## 8.2 On Nikunau

The immediate natural environment of Nikunau resembles Tarawa only in the two being low-lying, restricted, narrow strips of land, surrounded by ocean, with maritime equatorial climates, whose obvious features are bright sunshine, intermittent and irregular rainfall, and a daily temperature range between 26° and 34°. Besides having a small population, Nikunau is relatively empty of fabricated structures, although its vegetation (e.g., the quantity of coconut palms) and features such as *bwabwai* pits and fish traps are results of human activity (Lewis, 1981). Nikunau's small population and remoteness from any other population centres mean that its marine areas (i.e., the foreshore, reef and surrounding ocean) are relatively pristine and abundant in seafood. It is also generally free of rubbish, junk, etc., for various reasons. The population is small and largely subsists, and so consumption of imports of packaged goods is low; low incomes also result in low imports. Besides, basic goods (i.e., rice, flour, sugar, tea, salt) which dominate the imports still come in bulk; purchasers bring their containers to carry them away. Aid in kind is low, resulting in few scrap vehicles and similar. Low resources incent greater ingenuity for turning potential rubbish, junk, etc. into useful implements, and so less is thrown away (Ministry of Internal and Social Affairs, 2007).

## 8.3 Diasporic Communities on Higher Ground

Elsewhere, it would be difficult for any of *I-Nikunau's* diasporic communities not to occupy, or be close to, higher ground than is available in Kiribati. However, this living on higher ground is largely coincidental, rather than by design or a matter of policy – the Republic Government elected in 2016 has adopted a policy of adaptation, protection and remaining on the atolls of Kiribati (Government of Kiribati, 2016a), rather than its predecessor's contemplation of emigration (see Rytz, 2018). The populations of Alu and Ghizo are obvious exceptions; the *I-Nikunau* there lived in coastal settlements established in the 1950s, but, in 2007, a tsunami forced them to flee to higher ground, albeit only a few miles distant, where they have chosen to remain (Schuermann, 2014; Weber, 2016). Although *I-Nikunau* in the various diasporic communities are certainly more conscious of the issue of low-lying land being insecure than they were only a decade or so ago (see Fedor, 2012; Kuruppu & Liverman, 2011), it is, to reiterate,

an exaggeration and simplification to claim that *I-Kiribati* moved to New Zealand pre-emptively, in search of higher ground, because of the projected environmental consequences for Kiribati of climate change. However, they did regard Tarawa as overcrowded, and brought this environmental consideration into their decisions to choose to emigrate from there (see Fedor, 2012; Roman, 2013; Thompson, 2016).

As to other aspects of the environmental circumstances of *I-Nikunau's* diasporic communities outside Kiribati, these vary with geography, income and wealth, and so on. Taking as examples the urban areas of New Zealand associated with the larger diasporic communities (e.g., Mahurangi, South Auckland, Porirua and the Kapiti Coast, Hutt Valley), most households, even those with lower incomes, live in less crowded neighbourhoods than many would have previously experienced on Tarawa, and that have modern conveniences which are taken for granted in such places, for example, mains electricity, clean water, sewerage, telephones, broadband, paved footpaths and roads, street furniture, town planning controls and building regulations, regular public services, including refuse and transport, parks and playing fields, schools, and doctors' surgeries. However, as related in Chapter 6, in many, the number of occupants per household is probably similar to Tarawa, taking into account both extended family circumstances and temporarily accommodating second or third families.

Another significant environmental feature facing *I-Nikunau* in New Zealand is the climate (cf. Roman, 2013). Reiterating Chapter 4.2., temperatures are much cooler than anyone from Kiribati is used to, particularly outside the summer season, at night generally, the further south they live (e.g., Invercargill) and if they live in dwellings with inadequate insulation and inefficient heating systems, as many older rental properties have. One consequence is that electricity bills arising from heating their homes can represent a significant financial burden, elevating the physical and mental challenges of coping with poor housing and low incomes (Thompson/Teariki, 2016, 2017). Even so, many *I-Kiribati* seem to adapt to the climate, albeit gradually and sometimes reluctantly. This includes wearing more and warmer clothes and footwear, utilising sunshine as a source of warmth (instead of shutting it out to keep things cool), and by just accepting the cold. However, they are prone to respiratory and other infectious diseases arising from cold, dampness and the rest.

## 8.4 Climate Change and Emigration

With the uncertainty climate change poses for inhabiting the Kiribati Archipelago and other islands forming the Republic, there has been some linking between liberalisation of the immigration policies of New Zealand and other potential countries of immigration with emigration from Kiribati being compelled by climate change. This reason for emigrating is an area of growing concern for observers, researchers and other outsiders, perhaps more so than for many *I-Kiribati* just going about their normal lives. The subject includes smoothing the pathways of immigration to other places, where resettlement would likely entail issues which often accompany forced resettlement. These issues are around the resettlement process, financial hardship, lack of special support, problems with land rights, citizenship and identity – including being regarded by people "native" to the country of arrival as immigrants, and sometimes resented – loss of culture and language, destruction of homeland, and ceasing to be recognised internationally as other than residents in the country of arrival (Collins, 2009; Curtain & Dornan, 2019;

Fedor, 2012; Reilly, 2011; Roman, 2013; Smith & McNamara, 2015; Thompson, 2016; Weber, 2016; Williams, 2008; Wyett, 2014).

Many outsiders see a need for organised bilateral schemes of immigration and resettlement, such as New Zealand's Pacific Access Category, but based on climate change effects (see Brickenstein & Tabucanon, 2014); these would be designed and effected in order that *I-Nikunau* and other *I-Kiribati* would settle and carve out an identity among other ethnocultural groups. Although personal, domestic and neighbourhood matters alluded to here and in other chapters may seem mundane and hardly "environmental" as such, they do reflect the sorts of things about which *I-Kiribati* arriving in a new country need help in understanding, and so their importance in designing schemes of resettlement should not be underestimated.

### *8.4.1 Immigration Information*

An area of interest raised by Thompson (2016) concerns information acquisition by *I-Kiribati* to help their immigration to New Zealand. This matter is one affecting immigrants comprising *I-Kiribati* families, couples and singles regardless of whether their motives for immigrating are climate-change-related or otherwise; however, its importance would increase if forced immigration were to increase because of environmental reasons. As intimated already, *I-Kiribati* arriving in metropolitan countries like New Zealand rely a great deal on *utu* and *baronga* who have preceded them in immigrating. This reliance extends to obtaining most of the information they process being from earlier immigrants, often preferring it to official information, despite some of that seeming to be available in *te taetae ni Kiribati* even (e.g., see New Zealand Immigration, n.d.). The official information, no matter how accurate it might be, is not always appreciated or likely to be trusted because it comes from a non-kin source – it does not help that the example just cited has people whose physical features suggest they are from other Pacific Island countries (e.g., Samoans, Tongans) but have speech bubbles written in *te taetae ni Kiribati*. Besides, the official information is mostly in written form and unidirectional, rather than oral and capable of being discussed in order to bring out its meaning and significance. The official information also seems not to appreciate the circumstances in which most *I-Kiribati* come to New Zealand; either that, or it is not acceptable politically to acknowledge said circumstances, as they are out of kilter with the image of new immigrants, being young, highly skilled and motivated, middle class, probably without children as yet (*e.g.* see images on New Zealand Immigration, 2017a).

The preference for information from *utu* and *baronga* who immigrated earlier is notwithstanding the issues mentioned in Chapters 4.2 and 5 of much of the information received often being as incomplete, inaccurate and insufficient as to be unreliable or tantamount to misinformation (Thompson, 2016). Various reasons account for these inadequacies: even after having been through the experiences of preparing, travelling, arriving and settling themselves, *I-Nikunau* in question may not appreciate the limited extent and other shortcomings of the information they have acquired, may be unable to articulate said information and may remain ignorant of important information. Besides, they may be shy, or, for reasons alluded to in Chapter 5, otherwise reluctant, to impart details of what happened to them, particularly any misfortunes which befell them or other negatives; *I-Kiribati* are probably not unique in taking care not to be seen as *te bai n rang* through being ignorant of "common sense" things and of making mistakes, and still feeling

foolish about the consequences. A related issue is not to want to infer that the potential recipient of the information they could impart does not have the information already or lacks common sense to fathom the situation for themselves. What is more, they may be reluctant to provide information which is tantamount to advice for fear of being blamed if the advice proves incorrect – avoiding blame and any risk of having to apologise are strong traits in *te I-Kiribati* psyche.

# 9

# Biological Circumstances (*te mauri*)

The first physical portrayal of *I-Nikunau* was recorded in July 1765, as reported by Officer on Board the Said Ship (1767, pp. 135-138). Said officer recollects his vessel being greeted by over a hundred naked, male (and one scantily dressed female) "Indians", of an "olive colour" with "fine long black hair" and "remarkably white" teeth, in a multitude of "outrigger" boats.

It might be supposed that those *I-Nikunau* just described, and their descendants for another five decades, were some sort of thoroughbred, with little dilution of their genes, other than through contact with neighbouring islands. However, the inhabitants of the Kiribati Archipelago before the 1820s were undoubtedly descended from a diverse range of peoples, who thus provided a quite wide gene pool (Addison & Matisoo-Smith, 2010; Maude, 1963). While their relative isolation since at least the 15th century meant that they went through a process of bio- and ethno-genesis, their *te katei ni Kiribati* customary practices regarding marriage, clan exogamy (Maude, 1963) and limits of *karikira* (≅ incest), expressed as *e ewe te kaaroro* (≅ the fourth generation goes free) (Grimble, 1921, p. 27; cf. Roalkvam, 2003), protected against inbreeding and genetic drift (re these concepts, see Bittles, 2010).

Since, *I-Nikunau*, similar other *I-Kiribati* generally, have come into widespread contact with *I-Matang*, Chinese, Tuvaluans, other Pacific peoples and people of other races, and so *I-Nikunau's* present biological circumstances are the result of this contact. As inferred in Chapter 7 and elsewhere, this contact has occurred for nearly two centuries on Nikunau, although it was mostly begun about 130 years ago when copra gave rise to traders residing on Nikunau (Pusinelli, 1947); according to Macdonald (1982a), pregnancies arising from casual relationships with foreigners, commercial ones on board whaling ships, for example, were frequently aborted, and so mixed race children were not as common on Nikunau as they might have been before traders took up residence. Indeed, many of the resident traders, whether *I-Matang* or Chinese, arrived as unaccompanied men and were permitted and encouraged to marry *I-Nikunau* by *unimane*; an exception was Rakera Turner, whose story of marrying elsewhere and returning to live and trade on Nikunau (with husband Andrew) is related by Maude (1977). The intermarriage continued with other temporary residents, including pastors. Meanwhile, contact arose at the other places where *I-Nikunau* men and families with children of marriageable age resided temporarily while working. Recent examples are contacts between *I-Nikunau* and *I-Matang* on Tarawa,

particularly between the 1960s and 1990s; as outlined in Chapter 4, these gave rise to the diasporic community in Britain and the initial community in New Zealand.

The descendants of the aforementioned intermarriages retained the given names or surnames of their fathers as their surname. This retention is reflected in contemporary surnames among *I-Nikunau* and around the Kiribati Archipelago in general (e.g., Anro (from Andrew), Kum Kee, Murdoch, O'Connor, Schutz). What is more, some children of the marriages were trained in the knowledge and skills of the outsiders, including in storekeeping, accounting and commerce, and, for example, took over the family's trade store or obtained another elsewhere, as did their offspring (cf. Munro, 1987), with the result that some of these surnames remain prominent in commerce and government today.

Of further significance is that protections against inbreeding and genetic drift have persisted since; this includes possessing the genealogical knowledge to preclude relationships developing between first, second or third cousins. Indeed, in urban and metropolitan diasporic communities in particular, these preclusions are perhaps even wider than only third cousins because, in present generations, details of customary practices and reasons for them have often become blurred and decoupled, and so anyone "related" is precluded from marrying, or at least discouraged by potential community censure. A further change is that choosing marriage partners is nowadays far more up to the partners themselves than to *unimane* and parents, which, as alluded to in Note 48, was mostly the case on Nikunau and elsewhere among the Kiribati Islands (see McCreary & Boardman, 1968), this being so as recently as the 1980s to my knowledge – Nikunau is also reputed to have had a custom of marriage by rape (see Grimble, 1989), perhaps mostly symbolic and being equivalent to elopement. For the diasporic community on Tarawa, this means much more inter-*I-Kiribati* contact, marriage and children; and for diasporic communities elsewhere, it means some broadening with regard to race, ethnicity, etc. of contact, marriage, children and affinal membership of communities, but perhaps not as great as it would be if, for example, the diasporic communities in New Zealand were less separated and more integrated (see Chapter 4.2).

# 10

# Nutritional and Corporeal Circumstances (*te mauri*)

Nutritional and corporeal circumstances are interrelated. A way to express this crudely is as follows: fuel intake in the form of victuals coupled with fuel consumption through physical activities is a determinant of fuel retention as reflected in physical development, body weight and the incidence of morbidity, physical and mental. Among other things, this chapter brings out how victuals, physical activities, and nutritional and corporeal circumstances generally, have connections to demographical and geographical circumstances. For example, a potential source of mental health issues are the stresses of families separated for long perods through family members working away (see Bedford et al., 2009) and through immigrating, say to New Zealand from Tarawa, or even to Tarawa from Nikunau (cf. Lewis, 1981), including struggling afterwards to reconcile conflicts between the traditional and the modern (cf. Namoori-Sinclair, 2020; Thompson, 2016; Wright & Hornblow, 2008).

To clarify these matters, I consider in turn Nikunau and diasporic communities on Tarawa and in New Zealand, including contrasting *I-Nikunau*'s circumstances and the ramifications in each. Although many of their present nutritional circumstances differ according to where they live, the situations they live in and their behaviour, one cannot help but opine that, notwithstanding these sources of difference, *I-Nikunau's* present day nutritional circumstances everywhere coincide significantly with what Lewis (1988) identifies as gustatory subversion and nutritional dependency on metropolitan countries. Moreover, these present circumstances have various health, illness and medical ramifications, as reflected in their corporeal circumstances (see Catala, 1957; Gilkes, 2006; McIver et al., 2014; Thomas, 2002, 2003). Except that in turn these ramifications are affected by the physical activities in which *I-Nikunau* may engage, which vary according to location and the traditional or modern lifestyles associated therewith, as well as according to age, gender and similar personal characteristics and the traditions associated with these characteristics.

## 10.1 On Nikunau

Traditional victuals produced on and around Nikunau, and on which *I-Nikunau* lived through to the beginning of the 19th century are mentioned in Chapter 6: they included an assortment of tree, bush and root crops, and marine species (see Di Piazza, 1999; Grimble, 1933; Lewis, 1988; Luomala, 1974; Turbott, 1949). Preparing food depended on earth ovens and open fires; the raw food was sometimes wrapped in leaves (Lewis,

1988; Di Piazza, 1999). Preservation by drying and using salt were known, as was fermentation.

These victuals have been added to, enhanced, substituted and displaced ever since whalers came to Nikunau. Some arose from introduced flora (e.g., breadfruit, pawpaw) and fauna (pigs, chickens). Mostly, however, they were imported in already processed forms (see lists in Chapters 2 and 3). One of the earliest imports, tobacco, albeit less of a victual than an intoxicant, was even a form of currency, before copra took on that role (see Chapter 7). Methods of food and drink preparation were enhanced with new implements, including pans and kettles, and so expanded to boiling, frying, etc. Distillation was also introduced.

Two experiences which are alluded to in Chapter 5 and elsewhere are of particular significance to the composition of victuals which *I-Nikunau* could access, took to and still influence their diet on Nikunau, with implications for those now in diasporic communities, even metropolitan ones. First, the range of imported victuals sold in trade stores on Nikunau depended on the profitability of copra and whether the trade items could be procured cheaply and had a long shelf life, hence a preponderance of dried, tinned and bottled goods. Second, *I-Nikunau* involved in the Pacific labour trade and circular labour migration were supplied with rations by their employers; among the reasons were to obviate the need for employees to do anything other than focus on the work they were doing in mines or on farms, etc., thus increasing their productive worth and containing costs of production. Indeed, regarding *I-Nikunau* who worked on Banaba or Nauru, the supply of rations was stipulated in agreements and regulations (e.g., Gilbert and Ellice Islands Protectorate (Consolidation) Regulation 1908). From *I-Nikunau* having had little, if any, exposure to some items on the list so stipulated up to at least the 1870s and even 1920 (e.g., see discussion by Rennie, 1985 and data from 1927 in Turbott, 1949), one at least, namely rice, is now a staple and another, tinned corned beef, is a ceremonial delicacy.

Of further significance is that all parties to the supply, demand and consumption of the victuals referred to above have seemed oblivious to their nutritional value or toxicity. Even today, nutritional appreciation among *I-Nikunau*, particularly understanding of choice of victuals, levels of consumption and other dietary matters, seems slight and unimportant, despite the accumulating morbific consequences, such as obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure or hypertension, high cholesterol and other cardiovascular diseases (see Lewis, 1981). While victuals are consumed as physical sustenance, they also play a significant part in social interactions, whether it be on ceremonial occasions represented by *botaki* or as expressions of hospitality, friendship, gratitude and kinship. The actual food and drink items, and their quality (e.g., whether they are still hot or are sufficiently cooled), are often incidental to the social behaviours with which they are associated.

Regarding physical activities, the largely traditional life of most *I-Nikunau* on Nikunau has involved much daily physical activity for most age groups, and still does (Ministry of Internal and Social Affairs, 2007). For example, water is drawn and carried from wells; toddy is cut from the fronds of coconut trees, which have to be climbed; copra and various subsistence crops, and firewood, involve manual cultivation or collection; fish and shellfish are caught or collected manually; walking and cycling are main means of travelling; and sports, pastimes and dancing involve physical exercise (see Chapter 2). Thus, for many *I-Nikunau*, this life does not entail having to make a special effort to engage in discretionary activities out of health and welfare considerations, even if such considerations were part of their psyche. However, this is not true for everyone; probably

an increasing number have graduated to a more sedentary life, especially the elderly, whose number and longevity has increased for various reasons alluded to in Chapter 6.1. It also contrasts with elsewhere, where usually more is achievable with less effort, and so life for most people, young and old, is more sedentary than on Nikunau.

## 10.2 Tarawa

The subsistence victuals and exertions in hunting, gathering, cultivating and harvesting them on Nikunau is in contrast to the circumstances on Tarawa. Unlike *I-Nikunau* on Nikunau, those on Tarawa have little land on which to cultivate crops and fishing is usually unproductive because of over-fishing (see Chapter 3), not to mention loss of previously common skills and unfamiliarity with fishing grounds (Republic of Kiribati, 2009; Office of Te Beretitenti and T'Makei Services, 2012c; Thomas, 2002, 2003). This limits opportunities for physical exercise, particularly among the men, who traditionally have done little of the choring which is still part of live in *mwenga*. What is more, *I-Nikunau's* opportunities to acquire victuals of high quality and nutritional value (e.g., fresh vegetables and fruit, fresh milk, lean meat, fibrous cereals) are somewhat constrained (cf. Thompson, 2016), mostly because they are not physically available, or because what is available is out of the price reach of many. A further constraint is that many victuals are seen as things bought by the more privileged, including *I-Matang*, and, as alluded to in Chapter 6, being labelled as behaving as an *I-Matang* would exposes *I-Nikunau* to *te bai n rang*, even *kamama*.

Regarding availability of victuals on Tarawa, it may seem peculiar that not many stores sell fresh local produce, or very many other locally produced items for that matter, the victuals being dried, tinned and bottled, and so preserved (in brine, vinegar, sugar, etc.) or, in recent times, frozen. However, some Tarawa-produced fresh vegetables and fruit are for sale, being hawked in small market areas or at the roadside (cf. McCreary & Boardman, 1968); this also applies to locally caught fish and to bananas from Butaritari. The other exceptions include the aforesaid bread, donuts, ice blocks, locally rolled cigarettes, etc., but usually their sale is limited to *mronron* stores, having been produced by *mronron* members, and at prices which must hardly cover the costs of their ingredients, let alone recompensing the labour they entail. The situation regarding trade stores might be explained by their history there and on Nikunau, etc. of only selling imported items, in exchange for copra and now coins and paper money, and not bothering with local produce, which on Nikunau, etc. was customarily not an object of trade. In any case, now as in the past, various inadequacies seem to frustrate the possibility of internal trade involving Tarawa's urbanised population and nearby, let alone distant, Outer Islands (cf. Green et al., 1979), the aforesaid bananas being the exception proving the rule. These include the unreliability of shipping, copra producers on the Outer Islands being reluctant to switch from a longstanding, now subsidised, cash crop to new crops which it would be more difficult to turn into cash, and many *mwenga* on Tarawa simply lacking money to purchase local fish and garden produce regularly enough for it to be worthwhile for suppliers to maintain supplies. Demand may also be affected by perceptions of local produce being inferior to, or less fashionable than, imported goods (cf. Catala, 1957; Lewis, 1988).

Regarding physical exertions on Tarawa, many paid jobs *I-Nikunau* do are more mental than physical – similar applies among children at school – and they use earnings to purchase goods, transport, utilities and services, and so expend less physical effort for a similar or better result. Thus, to engage in physical exercise on Tarawa equivalent

to that which is a normal part of life on Nikunau is discretionary, and while young people make use of areas set aside for football volleyball and basketball, or otherwise improvise, including swimming in the lagoon, many older *I-Nikunau* choose not to indulge or to indulge at insufficient levels. Insufficient, that is, to offset their consumption of not-so-healthy victuals, etc. (e.g., rice, cabin biscuits, home-baked items containing flour, sugar, salt and saturated fats, diluted cordial), which is probably higher than on Nikunau because much more is readily available and quite cheaply. Thus, many more on Tarawa than on Nikunau are overweight, leading to greater incidence of the morbific consequences listed above.

## 10.3 Aotearoa New Zealand

As Tarawa differs from Nikunau, so it also differs from New Zealand, when it comes to both nutritional and corporeal circumstances. Nevertheless, despite inferences above about *I-Nikunau* in New Zealand having many opportunities to acquire victuals of high quality and nutritional value, no great changes have occurred very quickly to victual consumption and so nutritional circumstances among immigrants who have come from Tarawa; this is despite Thompson (2016) being told by some interviewees that availability of fresh victuals was a reason for immigrating. Indeed, the health issues just alluded to on Tarawa also arise in New Zealand more often than on Nikunau; this is notwithstanding that probably more *I-Nikunau* in New Zealand than on Tarawa are in physical jobs (e.g., labouring, cleaning, farm work) and their working hours, and so physical activities, are longer (see Chapter 7). It is also notwithstanding the many easily accessible sports and leisure amenities in New Zealand, many of which are free, or available to everyone at subsidised prices, through local councils, including special rates for families with low incomes.

The reasons for changes being slow among most *I-Nikunau* in New Zealand seem related to their Tarawa experiences and habits, and to living in New Zealand in all *I-Nikunau* or *I-Kiribati* households, rather than in the mixed race households which were a feature of the early diaspora (see Chapter 4.2). That is to say, knowledge and expectations among the majority of *I-Nikunau* about victuals are based on conditions on Tarawa and no one is on hand in their households to show them any different. They are more familiar with the appearances of victuals available on Tarawa in dried, tinned, bottled, preserved, frozen or ready processed forms (e.g., dried milk, tinned corned beef, vegetables and fruit salad, frozen chicken drumsticks and wings, mutton flaps and sausages, tomatoes in ketchup form) than with same in New Zealand but in their fresh forms (e.g., fresh milk, fresh meat and poultry, fresh fruit and vegetables); similar applies to methods of preparing preserved goods over fresh produce. Not only that but also they are unfamiliar with many other items common in New Zealand but rarely, if ever, seen on Tarawa (e.g., most greens and salads, root vegetables such as parsnips and swedes, prime meat cuts, pip, citrus, berry and stone fruits, various varieties of game, fish and seafood, fresh offal, cheese, yogurt). This unfamiliarity, etc. may be less so among children because of the school curriculum; they be more amenable to healthier victuals (e.g., tap water, fresh fruit and vegetables) and more appreciative of the virtues of lower consumption. However, the adults acquire the victuals and determine what is served at home for meals. Besides, the victuals which feature in marketing campaigns aimed at younger persons, and are part of New Zealand's pop culture, are the less healthier ones (e.g., sugary drinks, burgers, noodles, pizzas and other fast foods).

These claims are exemplified at frequent *botaki* held in New Zealand's diasporic communities. Both through knowledge limitations and wanting to be "traditional", the most popular victuals at these reflect the narrow range of items referred to above and in Chapter 3, save the likelihood of a roast pig, or lamb even, barbecue, ground and other meats, coleslaw, pumpkin, kumara, potatoes, and eggs. Even fish may be absent in the event of members of the community not having caught any or had any brought from Tarawa – many *I-Kiribati* regard the fresh fish widely available from retailers in New Zealand as too expensive. Furthermore, the victuals will mostly be high in salt, sugar or fat, either naturally (e.g., through using cheap cuts of meat) or because of how they are prepared (e.g., using excesses of sugar-based marinades and dressings, salt and saturated fats). Detrimental health effects are widely associated with these victuals, and with the narrower, usually cheaper, range of victuals seemingly consumed at home or otherwise away from *botaki* (cf. Bathgate, Alexander, Mitikulena, Borman, Roberts & Grigg, 1994; Lewis, 1981; Statistics New Zealand and Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs, 2011; Thompson, 2016). Indeed, compared with Tarawa, consumption of victuals is probably higher because in terms of incomes, even from lower-paid jobs, they are cheaper and more readily available than on Tarawa.

A few other factors affect purchase and consumption in New Zealand. First, there can be a perception that if a victual was expensive and privileged on Tarawa, then the same continues to apply in New Zealand, including that their purchase may be regarded as behaving like *I-Matang*, and so risking ridicule. This is notwithstanding how price patterns of fresh produce on Tarawa and in New Zealand are often reversed; for example, many fresh cool-climate fruit and vegetables are far more readily available and cheaper in New Zealand, whereas, as noted above, fresh fish and other seafood are mostly more expensive, certainly in the case of tuna. While being more expensive has the expected effect of deterring demand, the cheapness may not encourage much change in consumption, particularly among households in the lower deciles of the income scale, who may be satisfied with rice, flour, sugar and similar, which are familiar, and cheap anyway, and can at least fill a family's stomachs, even if not very nutritiously (cf. Lewis, 1981).

Second, whereas, apart from breadfruit and pandanus, seasonality does not seem to apply to crops grown in Kiribati, seasonality affects almost all crops in New Zealand. Even so, most crops are available in New Zealand all year round, through either cold storing or freezing them, growing them in artificial conditions or importing them from the northern hemisphere. However, among *I-Kiribati*, just how seasonal fresh victuals are in New Zealand is not always fully appreciated without information exchange and storytelling; nor is it always appreciated how their prices vary accordingly, and so when the most advantageous times to buy occur. For example, in winter, because they are imported or grown under glass, tomatoes and other salad items can be three or four times their summer prices, whereas the prices of root vegetables stay at reasonable levels from harvest time through winter because their storage is relatively easy.

Third, purchasing fresh victuals in loose form, although usually cheaper, can be problematic compared with purchasing them in pre-priced packages. This occurs because of a mixture of language and ability-to-pay issues. For example, purchasing loose produce at, say, a fish or delicatessen counter in a supermarket requires the shopper to state the name of the product and quantity wanted. Purchasing loose produce in a supermarket or self-serve vegetable market requires bagging the items in the produce area and taking them to the

checkout for payment. It is not until the shopper is going through the checkout that the price per unit of measure (e.g., per kg.) of the produce is converted into the price the shopper will be asked to pay, at which point having insufficient funds to make the payment might lead to *kamama*. This can be avoided, and costs known more certainly, by sticking with pre-priced packages, even though their unit price, and so their cost, is higher. Similar awkwardness from language shyness, over possible lack of funds and through social hesitancy can also deter use of other trading venues, business outlets and amenities in New Zealand. These include visiting more traditional shops not set up in the way supermarkets are and which require interaction over a counter or similar. They include restaurants, other eateries and bars, in which victuals anyway are often regarded as far too expensive; and tourist attractions, reasons for whose attractiveness is not always clear culturally.

Incidentally, it is commonplace in New Zealand to pay for even minor purchases using debit cards, devices which are not used much on Tarawa, if at all. These too can be declined for want of funds when making purchases, and so a source of embarrassment, or they may be accepted but take the bank account beyond any authorised limits, so incurring penalty charges for users, which if their income is low can be significant. Credit cards are also widely used in New Zealand but few *I-Kiribati* seem to have them, probably through a mixture of being unfamiliar with them in Kiribati and being mostly in low-paid jobs, and so being regarded by banks and credit card companies as high credit risks.

Regarding physical exercise, and healthier corporeal circumstances, as alluded to above, New Zealand abounds with various free and low-cost amenities, including playing fields, swimming pools, gymnasiums, tennis, netball and basketball courts, bowling greens, golf courses, ski fields and other sports facilities, parks, urban walkways and bicycle tracks, bush and beach walking tracks, rock climbing and hunting areas, and other leisure facilities. However, their use by *I-Nikunau* and *I-Kiribati* generally, be it involving walking up mountains and along beaches or lane swimming, seems constrained by unfamiliarity, awkwardness, bewilderment and cultural misunderstandings, particularly among adults brought up on Tarawa. Yet all these have potential when it comes to *I-Nikunau's* corporeal circumstances, or the extent to which physical activities are a required or discretionary part of the life *I-Nikunau* lead in New Zealand.

The overall effect of victuals being cheaper and opportunities for discretionary physical exercise being shunned is a tendency for many *I-Nikunau* and other *I-Kiribati* in New Zealand to gain weight, which in turn leads to health issues similar to those listed above for Tarawa along with gout, hepatitis and mental stress (cf. Namoori-Sinclair, 2020; Thompson, 2016; Wright & Hornblow, 2008). With personal health services there and in similar metropolitan countries being far better resourced and of much greater extent than on Tarawa, more of these issues are diagnosed and treated, which can in turn lead to ambiguous attitudes by the diagnosed, including continuing to indulge knowing that treatment is available, rather than reducing indulgence, changing behaviours or taking other preventative actions. The various reasons for lack of such actions include lack of knowledge at the individual, family and community level, and expectations in communities to be involved in frequent community or other group events, most of which involve sharing victuals. They also include indulging in physical exercise out of health and welfare considerations not being something which is part of *te I-Nikunau's* culture, which, being founded on traditional life, still operates based on physical activities and efforts being indistinguishable from living that life.

However, children being brought up in metropolitan countries are exposed more to amenities, especially so with New Zealand's broad range of sports and a tradition of them being played at school from a young age. That, combined with community activities involving dancing, means young *I-Kiribati* in New Zealand have more opportunities than adults have for physical exercise (e.g., swimming, rugby, volleyball, dancing, netball, basketball). Besides, they may be more amenable to healthier victuals and to consuming less of them. But these things are discretionary and children mostly have to exercise this discretion themselves because, as explained above, the adults lack experience of the things in question, not having been raised in New Zealand, let alone had experience of its schools, etc. The outcomes vary but with a tendency still among these children towards overweight as they grow to adulthood, and so to exhibit signs of the early onset of health issues connected with nutrition and exercise than many of the other non-Pacific races around them (Thompson, 2016).

# 11

# Political Circumstances (*te raoi*)

The political systems under which *I-Nikunau* live today comprise elaborate and hegemonic nation states, usually characterised as democratic and of whose voting population they are a small or tiny minority. These differ greatly, in geographical extent, size of population governed, scope of responsibilities, type of system, incidence of colonialism, etc., from the traditional *I-Nikunau* system, which was also found on other islands in the Kiribati Archipelago after Uakeia of Nikunau allegedly spread it there in the 17th century (Kambati, 1992; cf. Maude, 1963). Although that traditional system was swept away by waves of informal and formal colonialism during the 19th and 20th centuries (see Chapter 5), some vestiges of it are evident in the informal political systems still existing on Nikunau and among members of diasporic communities not only inside Kiribati but also in other nations enumerated at the start of Part II. However, they are barely provided for in the Constitution of Kiribati 1979 and are mostly missing from the Republic Government structure in a formal sense; aid organisations and other outsiders to Kiribati or Nikunau regard them as informal at best.

As for the political systems of the other nations where *I-Nikunau* and *I-Kiribati* live as diaspora, they are either constitutional monarchies with parliamentary democracies or republics. Whichever, all include characteristics (e.g., equality under the law, separation of powers, universal suffrage, no taxation without representation) associated with the "Westminster System". As its name infers, this system derives from the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and, before that, the Kingdom of England. Therefore, it is unsurprising that, because of its former status as a British colony, many canons of Kiribati's constitution are drawn from this Westminster System. Except Kiribati is a democratic republic, but its form of government is more ministerial than presidential (cf. Green et al., 1979; Takuia, 2016).

Incidentally, the head of state of all the constitutional monarchies referred to above is the same person, although she has titles distinctive to the realm (e.g., Queen of the United Kingdom, Queen of New Zealand). However, each has a different person as head of its political government, usually with the title *prime minister*. Concomitantly, the republics all have elected presidents, which is the case with Kiribati itself, *beretitenti* being the local enunciation of *president*.

The rest of this chapter elaborates on the matters outlined so far. It starts with present government in Kiribati, including the formal system under the Government of the Republic of Kiribati. It then covers how *I-Nikunau* governed themselves traditionally on Nikunau,

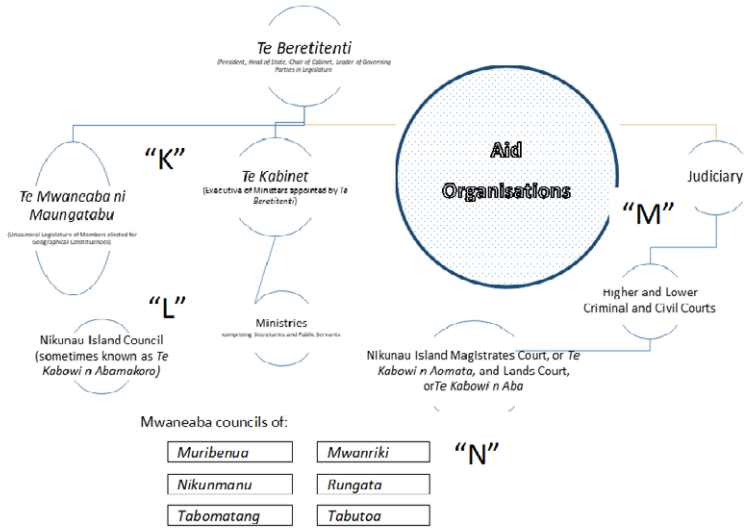



*Figure 10.* Present Structure of Government in the Republic of Kiribati and on Nikunau.

the coming about of colonial rule for Nikunau and of Nikunau being incorporated in the sovereign state of the Republic of Kiribati, and how vestiges of the traditional system have survived, and in what form, on Nikunau and in *I-Nikunau's* diasporic communities on Tarawa and elsewhere. It includes observations about the political standing of *I-Nikunau* and other *I-Kiribati* in New Zealand and elsewhere outside Kiribati.

## 11.1 Government in Kiribati

Kiribati's structure of government is illustrated in Figure 10. The figure is in four segments, two of them formally recognised in the Constitution of Kiribati 1979 and two not. The first two are the republic structure centred on Tarawa and covering the whole country (marked "K") and the official local government bodies on Nikunau (marked "L"). The other two are to recognise the de facto parts played in government by the aid organisations operating at republic level on Tarawa (marked "M") and the traditional *mwaneaba* councils on Nikunau (marked "N"). Their de facto status arises in practices occurring as an adjunct to the formal structure and its processes, procedures, authority, influence flows, etc. The segments marked "K" and "M" occupy the upper portion of the figure, and conversely the segments marked "L" and "N" the lower portion, to indicate the formal hegemony between Tarawa and Outer Islands such as Nikunau. I deal with each segment in turn, starting on Tarawa and then moving to Nikunau and its *kawa*.

The first de jure segment, marked "K" on Figure 10, comprises the directly elected *te beretitenti*, who is simultaneously the head of state and head of the political government. Except, he – there has yet to be a female *te beretitenti* – has to be a member of the legislature, *Te Mwaneaba ni Maungatabu*, as have the ministers whom s/he appoints to form *Te Kabinet*. Following the canon of separation of powers, there is also a judiciary, the high court judges of which are appointed by *Te Beretitenti*, acting in accordance with the advice of others specified in the constitution. The ministers head ministries staffed by public servants, all of them associated with and protected from political interference by

the Public Service Commission. As already noted, a considerable majority of these persons, offices, institutions, etc. reside, or are based, on Tarawa.

The first of the de facto segments, marked "M" on Figure 10, comprises the wide range of aid organisations involved somehow in Kiribati (e.g., through having officials on Tarawa or sending officials to Tarawa intermittently, or sending consultants or other workers there to undertake projects, or sending aid in kind goods there or even aid in cash). These are shown on a par with *Te Kabinet* and ministries to reflect how, through their activities and methods (see Dean et al., 2016), they wield significant influence on the performance of the executive function of government, which 40 years on from the Republic's creation comprises a local (i.e., *I-Kiribati*) élite of politicians, officials and other prominent persons which is still emergent. It is this state of affairs that leads me to the claim first alluded to in Chapter 5 about the political system in Kiribati being characterised by informal imperialism or neo-imperialism (Horvath, 1972).

The second de jure segment, marked "L" on Figure 10, shows the local bodies based on Nikunau Atoll – the diasporic communities on Tarawa and in the Line Islands come under equivalent island councils and courts there. In previous chapters, I have referred numerous times already to the Nikunau Island Council, its financial dependence on the Republic Government and on employees of the council and republic working and living alongside each other at the council's administrative complex near Rungata. I have also mentioned the courts which operate on the same site but which, as depicted in the figure, are separate from the council and owe allegiance to the separate judiciary arm of government.

The second de facto segment, marked "N" on Figure 10, comprises the six *mwaneaba* councils on Nikunau, referred to in Chapter 2 and elsewhere. These traditional councils, comprising *unimane*, the males of the older generation, oversee affairs, organise activities, maintain traditions and regulate conduct in their respective *kawa* (cf. Autio, 2010; Kazama, 2001; Thomas, 2001), and cooperate across the atoll. Furthermore, among *I-Nikunau* on Tarawa, committees resembling these *mwaneaba* councils are used to effect similar purposes in their social and community groups (see Chapter 3), whether these are orientated around *utu*, historical associations with *kawa* on Nikunau, religious denominations, or just being *I-Nikunau*. However, these committees on Tarawa are less traditional in who participates, including women and not-so-old men. I have omitted these from Figure 10, just as I have omitted the formal local government bodies which affect the lives of these *I-Nikunau* on Tarawa and for which some work or are involved politically. However, they are referred to again later in the chapter and subsequently.

## 11.2 From Mwaneaba District Autonomy on Nikunau to Rule from Tarawa

This section analyses how *I-Nikunau* governed themselves traditionally on Nikunau, how colonial rule on Nikunau came about, and how the atoll was then incorporated in a British colony administered from Tarawa, Banaba and then Tarawa again, before being incorporated into the sovereign state of the Republic of Kiribati with Tarawa as its capital.

### *11.2.1 I-Nikunau governing themselves traditionally on Nikunau*

The form of traditional government discussed in this section developed on Nikunau and nearby Beru between the 14th and 19th centuries and, from the 17th century, spread northwards to Tabiteuea and beyond (Maude, 1963). The system was gerontocratic and

based on *mwaneaba* districts, of which the six shown as having councils in Figure 10 had come into existence by the beginning of the 19th century and probably well before then. For example, the *mwaneaba* district around what is now Tabomatang had as its focal point *Te Atu ni Uea Mwaneaba*, as referred to in Chapter 6.2, and comprised the territory of the various *kainga* closest to it and the people residing in *mwenga* on these *kainga*. Besides being related to some of them, closely or distantly, *te I-Nikunau* knew personally all members of the council for his or her district, and they knew him or her. *Te I-Nikunau* could easily walk around the boundary of his or her district in a single day.

These *mwaneaba* councils and their processes were constituted orally, a legacy of *bakatibu* (≅ ancestors), as encapsulated in *te katei ni Nikunau*. Aspects of these councils and this political system they headed feature in the extensive literature dealing with the *mwaneaba* customs, protocols and related matters on Nikunau and elsewhere in the Kiribati Archipelago and Banaba (e.g., Alaima et al., 1979; Geddes, 1977; Goodenough, 1955; Grimble, 1921, 1933, 1989; Hockings, 1984; Kambati, 1992; Kazama, 2001; King & Sigrah, 2004; Lambert, 1966b; Latouche, 1983a, 1983b; Lawrence, 1983; Lewis, 1988; Lundsgaarde, 1968a; Lundsgaarde & Silverman, 1972; Macdonald, 1971, 1972, 1982a; Maude & Maude, 1994; Maude, 1963, 1991; Sabatier, 1939/1977; Teweiariki, n.d.; Thomas, 2001). This literature attests to geographical and temporal variations around a set of ideas which have endured, as discussed by Autio (2010). The essence of these ideas was that cooperation among neighbouring *kainga* sustained the bonds which were integral to living on Nikunau. The *mwaneaba* councils performed their functions wholistically, although they might be analysed as political, judicial, legislative, executive, religious, social, economic, etc., and, in turn, the *mwaneaba* districts can be seen as political territories, legal jurisdictions and religious parishes. The councils were subject to no external authority in a hierarchical sense, meaning that each *mwaneaba* district was politically autonomous.

Internally, although there were no *uea* (≅ monarchical chiefs)–these positions of authority had come to exist by the 19th century on the Kiribati Archipelago's northern islands – some elements of hierarchy did exist, as embodied in the roles of the different *boti* in the proceedings of councils (Maude, 1963); this was besides the hierarchy within society based on age and gender, and so of councils being all males of the oldest generation(s). As related in Chapter 6.2, *boti* were bilateral kinship groups, with each *te I-Nikunau* belonging to one such *te boti*. Each council met in open sessions in their district *te mwaneaba*. The council comprised *atun te kainga* (literally, the heads of *kainga*), the senior *unimane* in each *te kainga* in a district. As each *te kainga* comprised members of the same *boti*, thus each councillor was *atun te boti*, or the head of his *boti*, in the district. During council sessions, *I-Nikunau* sat in the area of *te mwaneaba* named for his or her *te boti*. However, while these trappings suggest airs of community participation and accountability, verging on democratic, oligarchic is another possible description (see Lundsgaarde, 1968b). During these formal *mwaneaba* sessions, which according to Hockings (1984) were only occasional, only *atun te boti* were permitted to speak, doing so from their sitting position at the front of their *te boti*; other *unimane* were more or less obliged to attend and sat immediately behind their *te atun* but were not allowed speak; likewise, all residents of each *te kainga* in the district sitting further back. However, the views expressed by *te atun te boti* during formal sessions, and positions taken on decisions about policies and issues, were subject to counselling beforehand by *unimane* from each *te mwenga* in *te kainga te atun te boti* represented (Hockings, 1984).

Besides superintending conduct in their district and being custodians of *te katei*, *mwaneaba* councils oversaw customary rights and laws which applied to gathering, propagating, cultivating, fishing and other use of *aba* in their respective districts, and resolving disputes. Each council was also responsible for dealings with councils from other parts of the atoll and neighbouring atolls, with disputes over *aba* being frequently at the centre of island politics. Although their task was made easier because of the replication of *boti* from district to district on each island, not all disputes could be resolved peaceably, and so they occasionally led to hostilities between *mwaneaba* districts (Geddes, 1977; Hockings, 1984; Latouche, 1983b; Lundsgaarde, 1968a; Maude, 1963).

Notwithstanding the increasing presence of whalers, beachcombers, castaways and traders between the 1820s and 1870s, the traditional system continued, with each district and its *mwaneaba* council retaining its relative autonomy (Maude, 1960). Indeed, the discreteness and autonomy of districts was reflected in how the traders traded in one district, or two at most, rather than the entire atoll. Although it is inconceivable that the economic, or even social and cultural, influences of these outsiders did not spill over into the political, any political influence appears to have been minor, particularly as patterns of settlement (i.e., in *mwenga* on *kainga*) were not seriously affected (see Hockings, 1984; Maude, 1964). Nevertheless, seeds of political change might have been sown, as was undoubtedly the case among those *I-Nikunau* who returned from living away temporarily with a different view of the world, prompting them to reflect on the political structures and processes on Nikunau, as well as social, religious and cultural matters (Borovnik, 2005; Macdonald, 1982a; Rennie, 1987).

Major longitudinal interventions have occurred subsequently to transform the traditional system to the present one – I identified five such interventions. The interventions affected not only structure but also whence *te I-Nikunau* was formally governed – that is, from within his or her *mwaneaba* district, then at the level of Nikunau Atoll, and then from elsewhere, including for nearly a century, from outside the Kiribati Islands. Moreover, each intervention influenced how Nikunau became part of a formal state covering the Kiribati Archipelago and the other islands in the Republic, how *I-Nikunau* have come to live on Tarawa and elsewhere, and how vestiges of the traditional system remain, albeit outside the formal system. The interventions have also led to the present system being more democratic and less gerontocratic. The following subsections cover this transformation from past to present, considering each intervention I identified in turn, alongside the nature of the political system *te I-Nikunau* was subject to or part of.

### *11.2.2 Informal Colonialism on Nikunau*

The first intervention came from the pastors of Samoan origin mentioned in Chapter 6 and to whose religious activities I shall return in Chapter 12. This subsection in concerned with how they affected the political system, although obviously politics and religion were not unrelated. After an inauspicious start in furthering their theological aims and gaining converts (see Turner cited by Nokise, 1983, p. 168), the pastors began capitalising more on their cultural understandings of *I-Nikunau*, and so, by the 1880s, had gained sufficient hold in each *mwaneaba* district to influence the traditional political processes, structures and functions there; this included gradually converting *atun te boti* and other *unimane* (Garrett, 1992; Macdonald, 1982a; Maude, 1963; Nokise, 1983). Indeed, it is not too strong to say that they subverted these political processes, etc. to further their aim of conversion.

They were so successful that they were able to establish a political body for the entire atoll, *te* kabowi n abamakoro, previously referred to in Chapter 5.1.[54] Concomitantly, as this single council became overarching, the *mwaneaba* councils in each district became increasingly subservient to it, and as *kawa* replaced *kainga* as the form of settlements (see Chapter 6), the distinction between *atun te boti* and other *unimane* began to blur. Thus, when Davis (1892) visited in 1892 intent on annexing the atoll, what he observed politically was *te* kabowi n abamakoro comprised of 70-80 *unimane*; believing it had authority over the whole atoll and its inhabitants, he secured its agreement to become part of what became the Colony.

Just as there was little separation between politics and traditional religion in *te mwaneaba* previously, so the nature of governance exercised by *te* kabowi n abamakoro was as much theocratic as gerontocratic, but reflecting the LMS's Christian values and beliefs instead. These values and beliefs were reflected in the laws *te* kabowi passed, including those running to observance of *Te Tabati*. What is more, the accountability in these laws entailed *I-Nikunau* giving a personal reckoning, eventually to the spiritual being named in Bingham (1907) as *Iehova* (≡Jehovah), or *E tuaña Aberaam* (≡ the God of Abraham), but more immediately to said spirit's earthly representatives, the pastors; this contrasted with extant accountability to *unimane* and *unaine* of the same *mwenga* and *utu*, and of their *kainga* and *boti*. This earthly accountability was manifested in revenues from copious fines imposed for even the most trivial infringements of the above laws and for other minor misdemeanours (e.g., failing to respond quickly enough to a summons to *te mwaneaba*). Said laws were enforced by a profuse force of *kaubure* – this term is probably originates from the Samoan term *j(f) aipule* (Grimble, 1989) and may be translated into English as *wardens* –as also observed by Davis (1892). The fines were paid in copra, the Protestant converts regarding them more with enthusiasm than reticence, as occurred also when the pastors introduced other contributions akin to quasi-taxes. However, as this governance, and its laws and revenue raising, quickly extended to everyone on Nikunau, the fast diminishing few who shunned Protestantism in favour of traditional beliefs and Roman Catholicism resented it. For example, one trader in particular, Frank (François) Even, resisted, thus putting his livelihood, if not his life, in peril (Sabatier, 1939/1977). This led Sabatier, an RC priest, to characterise life for some on Nikunau and elsewhere as "constant tyranny from the Protestants" (p. 181) (see also Macdonald, 1982a).

Amounting to a tidy sum, the pastors used the aforesaid revenues to finance church buildings and equally impressive dwellings – in describing similar built by the RC Church, Sabatier (1939/1977) relates how the building materials (e.g., cement, wood, asbestos, zinc-covered sheeting) were imported from Sydney at great cost – religious activities and personal comforts for themselves (see Latai, 2016) and even their *I-Nikunau* deacons and catechists. Besides, significant amounts of copra and cash left the atoll for the upkeep of the LMS headquarters, whether in Malua in Samoa or, from 1900, at Rongorongo on Beru, and run by *I-Matang* missionaries. Although the dwellings and comforts exposed the pastors to non-Protestant and external criticisms of self-aggrandisement (Grimble, 1952, 1957; Lundsgaarde, 1978; Lundsgaarde & Silverman, 1972; Maude, 1989; Munro, 1996; Woodford cited by Lawrence, 2014), another interpretation is that their circumstances were "a living example of the accomplishments that could follow from Christianity and civilisation" (Macdonald, 1982a, p. 49). Chapter 12 revisits these matters.

### *11.2.3 British Colonial Rule*

The second intervention came from officials of the British Empire; it took the form of formal annexations in 1892 of all the Kiribati Islands and the Tuvalu Islands further south, as detailed in introducing Part III. As mentioned there, while the northern and central islands, and Banaba,[55] soon came to be administered as a de facto colony, Nikunau and the other southern islands remained effectively under the administration of the LMS. Then, in 1918, Nikunau became part of the Colony de jure and de facto, and, notwithstanding the Japanese Occupation (see Note 18), it and the other islands in the Kiribati Archipelago remained that way for over 60 years, the last 10 describable as internal self-rule. Thus, I use three subsections to analyse the period that Britain was seen formally as ruling Nikunau, the first covering rule de jure, the second rule de facto and de jure, and the third when *I-Kiribati*, including some *I-Nikunau*, partook in the system of internal self-rule. However, because it had ramifications subsequently, I start by outlining the British Government's initial reluctance to annex Nikunau and what happened shortly after the Colony was annexed.

The annexations of Nikunau and the other islands were done reluctantly for fear of the consequential costs. Politicians and others in London had significant concerns that in order to finance a colonial administration, whether in the Kiribati Archipelago in particular or potential colonial territories in general, either subventions would be needed from the British Government, or taxes, etc. would have to be levied from British commercial interests in the territory concerned (see Bush & Maltby, 2004; Davis, 1892; Macdonald, 1982a; Morgan, 1980; Morrell, 1960; Munro & Firth, 1986, 1987, 1990; Ward, 1946). Besides, there were concerns about the lack of competent governors and administrators to administer more colonies, and a view that Britain "already had black subjects enough" (the Earl of Derby cited by Tate & Foy, 1965). This concern over incurring costs and an actual shortage of suitable personnel (cf. Grimble, 1952; Macdonald, 1982a) is reflected in a resident commissioner not being appointed until 1894. Furthermore, he was charged above all else it would seem with exercising economy, cost containment and bringing about administrative financial self-sufficiency (i.e., local expenditures had to be met from local revenues) (Morgan, 1980).

What that resident commissioner did, and likewise his successor, are detailed by Macdonald (1982a, especially pp. 76-93). As related in Note 51 to Chapter 7.3, they attained the prerequisite of financial self-sufficiency by 1895 and it was maintained by the Colony Government until its evacuation in 1941; this was despite frequent struggling with expenditure burdens and matters of contention over revenue, especially involving the British Phosphate Commission (e.g., see Macdonald, 1982a, especially pp. 112-122). Meanwhile, said commissioners resolved trading and related issues in the northern islands, where in any case copra, and so the tax-copra on which self-sufficiency was based, was more plentiful than further south. Then, soon after it was added to the Colony and phosphate mining was begun, the Colony Government became involved with Banaba, which is whither subsequent resident commissioners and their slowly growing supporting staff were based from 1909 until 1941. In contrast, between 1892 and 1918, the southern Kiribati Islands generally, let alone Nikunau, were largely neglected, and rule was more de jure than de facto (Grimble, 1952, 1957; Lundsgaarde, 1978; Maude, 1989; Munro, 1996; Sabatier, 1939/1977; Williams & Macdonald, 1985).

#### 11.2.3.1 Rule *de Jure*

The formal annexation of Nikunau is alluded to in Section 11.2.2 in mentioning Davis's presence there in 1892; as described by Morrell (1960, p. 274), Davis performed the annexations of the Kiribati Islands atoll by atoll by virtue of treaties negotiated either with *unimane*, as on Nikunau, or with *uea* in other cases (e.g., Butaritari) (see also Bennion, 2004; Davis, 1892; Ward, 1946). However, the annexation was not put into effect until 1894, when the first resident commissioner arrived in the archipelago. Moreover, in keeping with indications above of insufficient money and being without additional personnel, he spent most of the time on Butaritari and the other northern and central islands to deal with pressing issues there and there was no one else to even visit Nikunau and its neighbours. The main effects of his presence were the enactment of Native Laws 1894, the first of the many laws and ordinances which the Colony Government would introduce, and the issue or re-issue of various regulations, some already applying de jure in places regarded as the British Western Pacific Territories.

As for other atolls, Native Laws 1894 contained provisions for a native government on Nikunau and the establishment of the Nikunau Island Fund, whose revenue would comprise fines for infringing the less serious laws and regulations and a levy on landowners. As evidenced by *Land (Copra) Tax Register 1910-1916*, the latter was the beginning of a successive series of poll and land taxes being imposed, seemingly on individual *te I-Nikunau* but in practice communally. That is to say, the tax copra making up these levies and taxes was probably assessed and collected communally. The collection would follow elaborate negotiations in each *te mwaneaba* about how much Nikunau could afford, given climatic conditions which affected copra yields, and how the burden should be distributed among *kawa* and *mwenga* (Grimble, 1952, 1957; Macdonald, 1971; Maude, 1963, 1977).

Whatever, from 1895, in the absence of any colonial officials in the vicinity, said laws had the effect of the LMS-controlled *te* kabowi n abamakoro continuing as the de facto supreme political authority and serving de jure as the Nikunau Native Government. Concomitantly, said taxes had the effect of according temporal legitimacy to the aforementioned revenue raising activities of the LMS (cf. Munro, 1996). Except, part of revenue of the Island Fund was forwarded to the Colony Treasury, to help cover the costs of administering the Colony. For as long as that happened in a timely fashion, the Colony Government took no more than a cursory, distant interest in the LMS's form of rule of Nikunau and neighbouring islands (Grimble cited by Macdonald, 1982a, and by Maude, 1989). Thus, up to the late 1900s, Nikunau was largely neglected. Except for a few visits or similar short presences (e.g., see Wilde, 1998, as mentioned by Sabatier, 1939/1977), mainly to pacify sectarian disputes between the LMS majority and RC minority. Indeed, although the frequency of visits increased in the 1910s, this was only because of the Colony Government's involvement in recruiting, transporting and eventually repatriating labourers needed by the phosphateers on Banaba (cf. Grimble, 1952).

In the meantime, the LMS had established at Rongorongo on Beru its aforesaid headquarters for the southern Kiribati Islands and appointed William Goward as the chief missionary. Goward gained a reputation for encouraging zeal and excesses among *I-Kiribati* and Tuvaluan pastors he appointed and their congregations – Sabatier (1939/1977) likened Goward's style to that of an autocratic prince bishop. Indeed, the

next intervention arose from the combined actions to curtail these excesses by three outside parties, namely the bishop of the RC Church, based by then in Bikenibeu on Tarawa, and its mission posts and converts on the southern islands, the LMS leadership in Samoa and the Colony Government on Banaba. They forced Goward to retire as chief missionary in 1917, although it was 1919 before he reluctantly left the Colony (Garrett, 1992; Macdonald, 1982a; Nokise, 1983; Sabatier, 1939/1977).

#### 11.2.3.2 Rule *de Facto* and *de Jure*

The Colony Government signalled making its de jure rule of the southern atolls also de facto by establishing the Southern Gilberts District under a district officer stationed on Beru. Consequentially, the status of the Nikunau Native Government seemed to change from merely de jure to de facto too, taking over from the LMS-controlled *te kabowi n abamakoro*, and so began the third intervention I identified, lasting for half a century. However, as with Goward having been the chief missionary who headed a theocratic form of government, so rule still came from an *I-Matang* based on Beru. Furthermore, that person in turn was subject to rule from higher up a structure which was probably more de facto hierarchical and bureaucratic in practice than what the LMS structure had been. Indeed, geographically, it stretched from the six *kawa* on Nikunau up to the imperial palace in London, at least formally; in any case, the highest tiers of government were outside the territory of the Colony and beyond the Pacific region, notwithstanding that the London in LMS might imply similar trappings.

Figure 11 is my attempt at drawing this structure featuring the district officer position on Beru and the formal bodies and post holders on Nikunau. The higher placed of these bodies and post holders were at the level of the island, residing, working or meeting at the government station, which is now the Island Council administrative complex near Rungata. However, the people under them, known as *kaubure* (or, in Native Laws 1894, *kaupuli*) (≅ councilmen) and *bureitiman* (or policemen), were associated with particular *kawa*. In addition, each *kawa* continued to have *mwaneaba* councils but as now, they were outside the formal structure, and so I include them on Figure 11 in the same way as I include them on Figure 10. In giving a title to Figure 11, I have indicated the structure shown lasted from the 1920s until the 1960s but, as far as Nikunau is concerned, the end date is beyond that, the changes in the 1970s and 1980s being to the structure on Tarawa and what lay beyond.

However, that is not to say that the structure and how it functioned in those 50, 60 or even 70 years was immune from external shocks. For example, the district officer was evacuated from Beru in 1941 and a few years after the Colony Government was restored a similar position was re-established with responsibilities which included Nikunau but he was part of a District Commissioner's Office with Colony-wide responsibilities and located along with the rest of the Colony Government administration on Tarawa (Macdonald, 1972). Only in 1969, because of criticisms about the Colony Government for neglecting Outer Islands in favour of Tarawa under its policies around centralisation (see Chapter 5.2.1) (Ministry of Overseas Development, 1968), was the Southern Gilberts District re-established with its district officer once again based on Beru, although seemingly with much less formal authority than previously (see Green et al., 1979)–for similar reasons, the English name of the council was changed to the Nikunau Island Council and its responsibilities and financial relationship with the Colony Government were also reformed via the Local Government Ordinance 1966 (Macdonald, 1982a).

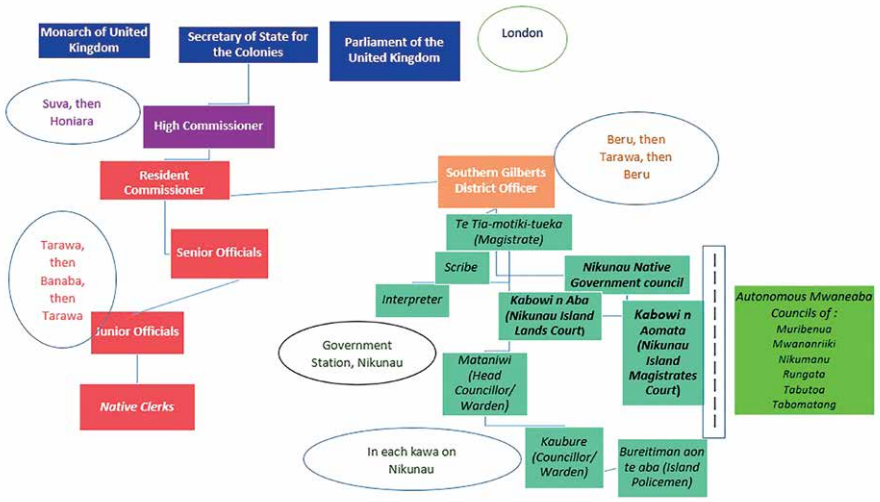



Figure 11. Structure of Government of the Colony 1920s-1960s (NB: posts held by *I-Kiribati* and Tuvaluans are shown in *italics*, and posts held by *I-Matang* are in regular font. Posts are colour coded by location, with locations in ellipses.).

The structure and how it functioned were also constantly affected by internal tensions, mostly between the *mwaneaba* councils, which continued with many of their traditional responsibilities at *kawa* level, and those supposedly with responsibility and authority at the government station. These matters are detailed and analysed by Macdonald (1971, 1972), who then puts them in the broader context of the Colony and its Government in Macdonald (1982a), including the matter just alluded to of the Colony Government on Tarawa neglecting Outer Islands (see also Pitchford, 1981).

Noteworthy also as a source, as well as being part of what happened, is Arthur Grimble, who in 1918 became the first person to occupy the Southern Gilberts District Officer position for any length of time (Grimble, 1952, p. 229). He was accompanied by his family and domestics but otherwise, like his successors, was the solitary *I-Matang* official in the district, which besides Beru and Nikunau, comprised five other atolls lying to the north and south. He turned out to be the first of several such male-only officers up to the 1941 evacuation, Maude (1977) and Bevington (1990) being two of the others.

Going back to Grimble's arrival in 1918, the presence of a district officer on Beru meant there was a Colony Government official much closer to Nikunau than previously, the journey being possible by canoe in fact. This meant an official was seen far more regularly than previously, even if visits were still only intermittent. Nevertheless, the form of colonial rule applying to *I-Nikunau* was what several authors on the British Empire have conceptualised as *indirect* (cf. Bush & Maltby, 2004; Davie, 2005; Lange, 2009; Morgan, 1980; Newbury, 2004; Ward, 1946), the essential quality being a formal layer of government drawn from the colonial subjects, or "natives", between said colonial subjects, in this case *I-Nikunau*, and the layers whose senior officials at least were of the nationality, and usually race, of the colonial power. As indicated in the structure shown in Figure 11, the native layer in this case comprised the members and officers of the Nikunau Native Government council and two native courts, being the island magistrate (referred to as *te tia-motiki-tueka*, although

the traditional meaning of that title equated to the speaker of decisions), the island scribe (*te tia-koroboki*) (later known as the island clerk and treasurer), *mataniwi* (or chief *kaubure*), *kaubure* and *bureitiman*. However, said local officials and the way they ran the local bodies were generally regarded as part of colonial rule, rather than being for *I-Nikunau*: it was the *mwaneaba* councils, from outside the formal structure, who were often the more effective in representing *I-Nikunau's* interests in relation to the Colony Government and its district officer than the official native local bodies and officials were. This is clarified further below.

Incidentally, regarding the Colony Government layer of the system, although those in authority and others were from Britain and its dominions, gradually clerks were employed who were *I-Kiribati* and Tuvaluans, their numbers growing quite rapidly at the successive Colony Government headquarters on Banaba and Tarawa.

The de facto workings of the political system are interesting on two counts: how they affected events at the time and what continuing consequences they have today. Something applying broadly was that typical of relations between colonisers and colonised, how things worked on Nikunau were characterised by a "working misunderstanding" rife among the main protagonists in colonial situations (see Bohannan, 1965; Lundsgaarde, 1968a). Examples are as follows. Whereas *I-Matang* colonial officials, including the district officer, and perhaps native ones, saw themselves as being part of the formal structure depicted in Figure 11, and generally worked to the person above them in a bureaucratic way, as far as *I-Nikunau*, *I-Beru*, *I-Tabiteuea*, etc. were concerned their district officer was *te kamitina* (≈ commissioner).[56] Furthermore, he was perceived by some as not only King George V or his successors' direct representative but also his kinsman; indeed, Grimble (1957, p. 157) relates at least one native in the district believing the king received physically in London the tax-copra *I-Nikunau*, etc. were paying to the Colony Government. Whereas *I-Nikunau* probably saw an autonomous, largely self-reliant island, with opportunities to venture away to work or study and return, *I-Matang* mostly saw a minor administrative territory within a colony they were passing through at the farthest flung corner of their Empire (Grimble, 1952; Macdonald, 1982a). Whereas in such government-related matters as laws, accounts, repositing knowledge, etc., oral traditions prevailed among *I-Nikunau*, *I-Matang* took for granted the technology of writing, privileging written records and dealing with other parties orally and in writing; this included rules, regulations, operating procedures, instructions and everyday official communications all being written. It made only a slight difference to *I-Nikunau* and other *I-Kiribati* that a few items, mainly earlier island laws and regulations (e.g., Native Laws 1894; Regulations for the Good Order, 1933), were written in *te taetae ni Kiribati* as well as English.[57] Whereas *I-Matang* officials believed their intervention in 1918 marked a reduction in theocratic rule and an increase in temporal rule, as far as *I-Nikunau* were concerned much still hung on directions from Beru, albeit now from the district officer rather than the chief missionary. Whereas these *I-Matang* officials saw *native government* as just that, *I-Nikunau* saw it as an extension of *Te Tautaeka*, something they were suspicious of, especially after financial autonomy of the Nikunau and other native governments was whittled away between 1914 and 1917 and all cash reserves they had entrusted to the Colony Government were sequestered. Whereas *I-Nikunau* identified themselves as a people defined by kinship and land ties to their atoll, and so as distinct from the peoples of neighbouring islands and beyond, in *I-Matang* eyes they were merely natives of the Colony, little different from residents of the other Kiribati, or even the Tuvalu, Islands (Macdonald, 1971, 1982a; Walsh, 2020).[58]

The last two examples pertain to the question of where self-rule by *I-Nikunau* ended and rule from outside began. For their part, despite it appearing to accord them much say in government of their atoll, *I-Nikunau* often found the structure and how it functioned blunted traditional authority and enhanced that of the officials in the colonial structure, be they *I-Matang* or other *I-Kiribati*. The notion of their atoll being ruled by outsiders was personified in *I-Nikunau* eyes by the district officer cum *te kamitina*. It was further reinforced through him and the resident commissioner appointing the magistrate and scribe, the two most senior people in the Nikunau Native Government and the two native courts – in addition to administrative duties, the magistrate presided over their meetings and the scribe handled the written records and the finances (Macdonald, 1971). With a view to the appointees being independent in terms of kinship and *kawa*, it became usual for other *I-Kiribati* or even Tuvaluans[59] to occupy these positions, rather than *I-Nikunau*. In addition, there were periods when the district officer even appointed the *kaubure* constituting the Nikunau Native Government; however, most of the time these men were elected formally through popular vote. Either way, they were residents of Nikunau and rarely if ever not *I-Nikunau*. But rarely were they *unimane*, *I-Nikunau's* traditional leaders.

These traditional leaders were reluctant to sit on the Nikunau Native Government because this would signify subservience to outsiders. Moreover, as an act of civil disobedience to express dissatisfaction with the system and frustrate its workings, they refrained from standing in elections, instead nominating their juniors, who, having their *mwaneaba* council's tacit support, were bound to win and thence voice *unimane's* views, concerns and judgments at council meetings, etc. *Unimane* also supported the still extant policy of *I-Nikunau* refusing to carry out committee and related work for the Nikunau Native Government or any other part of *Te Tautaeka* without receiving a sitting allowance or similar (Macdonald, 1971, 1982a).

The basis of this dissatisfaction had its roots in the working misunderstandings enumerated above. Besides, the activities of successive district officers, magistrates and scribes represented increasing pressure on Nikunau and *I-Nikunau* to subserve to values, beliefs, customs, culture, etc. inherent in provisions in Colony Government ordinances, regulations, etc., as made under the hand of the resident commissioner and British Western Pacific high commissioner from time to time (e.g., Gilbert Islands, Island Regulations 1939; Laws of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony 1952; Regulations for the Good Order, 1933; Revised Native Laws 1916). The provisions of these ordinances, etc. covered murder, abortion, rape, assault, theft, prostitution, customary extra-marital sex, sorcery, drunkenness, gambling, marriage, and, as alluded to in Note 16, registration of births, marriages and deaths. Whereas, in many respects, they resembled laws applied by the LMS, their coverage was more temporal than religious – observance of *Te Tabati* was not provided for, for example, although it had been in Native Laws 1894. Furthermore, notwithstanding the note above about some being printed in *te taetae ni Kiribati* as well as English, the values, beliefs, customs, culture, etc. they reflected, deliberately and otherwise, were *I-Matang* rather than *I-Nikunau*. Thus, they recognised individuals, short (or close) family and households (i.e., *mwenga*), and natives forming the geographical cum administrative entities of a village (i.e., *te kawa*) and an island. Although there was passing recognition of *utu*, this was limited to recognition of dependence and inheritance among *utu ni kaan* (Hockings, 1984); conversely, excluded were recognition of the socio-political entities of *boti* and *kainga*, and of *mwaneaba* districts – this pattern was repeated in Colony Government rolls of residents, land registers and censuses.

Further aspects which added to *I-Nikunau* and Nikunau being politically subservient included, first, other ways that district officers influenced the workings of the Nikunau Native Government and, second, the nature of district officers' dealings with officials at the Colony Government headquarters. On the first, the district officer was expected to oversee and evaluate the activities of the Nikunau Native Government's senior officials, including in procedures they followed in the council and courts. He sometimes intervened in the public activities of these bodies, even directing them occasionally, and he was expected to ratify their substantive decisions. He approved their annual estimates, audited their accounts and records, took charge of local revenue they collected and replenished cash expenditure imprests.[60] He provided officials with on-the-job training and development. His race, that is simply being *te I-Matang*, meant being treated with deference by *I-Nikunau* and other *I-Kiribati* (see Bevington, 1990; (Grimble, 1952; Grimble & Clarke, 1929; Macdonald, 1971, 1972, 1982a). Thus, the extent to which rule was truly local and so indirect depended on how the native officials and bodies related to the district officer, and he to them. These relations varied from time to time, including because of the personality, style and competence of the various post holders. Another important factor was how often the district officer could visit Nikunau and how long his visits lasted. For the 20 or so years the district officer was based on Tarawa (1948-69) and had broader territorial responsibilities, his practical influence was less than it was from Beru (1918-1941, 1970-1979).

On the second, as alluded to above, distance and stretched communications affected how district officers fulfilled their formal obligations vis-à-vis the resident commissioner and the other senior officials based at the Colony headquarters on Banaba, and later Tarawa. In practice, district officers exercised a great deal of de facto autonomy in matters which were otherwise formal. However, this autonomy was subject to the district officer making an annual return to report about circumstances, events, etc. in his district and the activities of native governments and courts on each island, including Nikunau (Grimble & Clarke, 1929). For him to be able to do this, the Nikunau Native Government had to submit information to him. In turn, the resident commissioner used these returns and other reports to produce biennial reports to the high commissioner and secretary of state (*e.g.* GEIC, 1932, 1957) and otherwise keep his superiors informed of events, although again communications often took weeks, including to receive acknowledgments, replies and instructions. Whatever, all the formal information flows seem to have been to *I-Matang* but were about *I-Nikunau* and other *I-Kiribati*. They amounted to a primarily temporal political and administrative accountability upwards to men outside *mwenga* and *utu*, and outside of what remained of *kainga* and *boti*. Although reminiscent of earlier changes to accountability involving *Iehova* and the pastors (see Chapter 11.2.2), said accountability was still generally alien in form, content and purpose as far as *I-Nikunau* were concerned and reflected the relationships between London and Nikunau being hierarchical, as inferred by the structure in Figure 11 (cf. Hassall et al., 2011; Sinclair, 1995). Although the upper parts of the structure outside the Colony may have been changing to reflect changes arising from democratic ideas beginning to extend in Britain whereby governments reported to the people (e.g., the Parliament of the United Kingdom increasingly included Labour Party politicians), *I-Nikunau* were not seen as entitled to such reporting until at least internal self-rule eventuated in the 1970s. Indeed, they were not accorded formal entitlement until the Constitution of Kiribati 1979 was enacted, not that that seems in practice to have meant *I-Nikunau* becoming generally cognisant of their new found status

as the People in relation to the Republic Government and the many institutions, processes, etc. it inherited from the Colony Government.

Incidentally, it should not be inferred from how traditional concepts were excluded, nor from the working misunderstandings enumerated above, that district officers and other Colony Government officials were mostly incognisant of these traditional concepts. On the contrary, they frequently encountered them in their work, as, for example, Maude (1963) acknowledges in the case of *boti*, which he found valuable still as Native Lands Commissioner from 1929 to 1938. More obviously, Grimble and Maude both published extensively from their experiential knowledge and empirical materials collected during their times on Nikunau and elsewhere in the Colony. However, notwithstanding their knowledge of the native and any desire to reconcile dealing with *I-Nikunau*, etc. with the responsibilities and functions they had to perform, the various *I-Matang* officiating in the district office or otherwise visiting Nikunau, or just working in the Colony generally, were obliged to meet expectations of their superiors in the colonial chain of command, expectations which usually reflected the latter's unfamiliarity with life in the Colony, their ignorance of Nikunau and life of *I-Nikunau*, and the higher priority they gave to the Empire as a whole and the foremost colonies and mother country.

I allude above to a desire among *I-Nikunau* to counter the official colonial authority exercised by the official native local bodies and officials, the district officer and the Colony Government. Indeed, it was the *non-I-Nikunau* natives among the persons at the government station who were the least acceptable part of the structure, and so the focus of opposition posed by *I-Nikunau* in each *kawa* and across the atoll. This lack of acceptability goes back to the point made above about how *I-Nikunau* were different from the various peoples of the other Kiribati Islands, and certainly from Tuvaluans. *I-Nikunau* disliked and opposed authority exercised by other *I-Kiribati*, or even by *I-Nikunau* who lacked traditional credentials of authority based on *boti*, *kainga*, *utu*, *mwenga*, *baronga*, etc., notwithstanding them being somewhat accepting of *I-Matang* authority.

I also indicated above that it was *mwaneaba* councils, exercising quasi-traditional authority from outside the formal structure, who were often the more effective in representing *I-Nikunau's* political and related interests. These councils were now comprised of *unimane* who headed either *mwenga* or small groups of *mwenga* of the same *utu ni kaan* in a *kawa* (see Chapter 6 and elsewhere). Although much changed from their predecessors even as early as the 1920s, having incorporated many so called post-contact adaptations (see Lundsgaarde, 1966, 1978), they were still a source of knowledge and power through which *unimane* could keep the Nikunau Native Government at a distance and counter aspects of indirect rule which ran contrary to what they saw as *I-Nikunau's* interests. Not standing at elections to the Nikunau Native Government, but instead seeing that their juniors were elected (see above), was part of this stance. But probably even more effective was the prominent positions *unimane* took through being elected to the governing bodies of pre-war *boboti* and *Te Bobotin Nikunau*, thereby controlling the atoll's economic system (see Chapter 7), and so deriving political influence as well.

Regarding *Te Bobotin Nikunau* being used as a political instrument, this was despite how it was set up initially by Colony Government officials, and so differed from pre-war *boboti*, whose grassroots, or *I-Nikunau* native, qualities were potentially stronger because central control was kept at bay (see Hempenstall & Rutherford, 1984; Roniti, 1985). The central control features of *Te Bobotin Nikunau* arose from it being subject to legislation

(i.e., Co-operative Societies Ordinance 1952), and to governance, operating, accounting and auditing rules which provided, among other things, for *I-Matang* registrars and other Colony Government officials to oversee its workings (e.g., approving annual estimates, performing audits and helping decide about distributing profits and appointing managers) (Couper, 1967; Green et al., 1979; Macdonald, 1971, 1982a; Maude, 1949, 1950; Pitchford, 1981). These various rules were devised, codified and updated by the *I-Matang* commercial managers of organisations whom the Colony Government's senior officials had put in charge of importing, wholesaling and shipping (see Chapter 7), in conjunction with said senior Colony Government officials; inputs from members, etc. of *Te Bobotin Nikunau* and its equivalents seem not to have been accorded much notice.

These activities of *mwaneaba* councils often proved a thorn in the side of the colonial system, and prompted various responses by the Colony Government, including some intended to be conciliatory, to reduce tension and improve colonial-native relations (Couper, 1967; Macdonald, 1971, 1972, 1982a). One such response towards the end of this third intervention period included reforms to island government alluded to already in mentioning Ministry of Overseas Development (1968) and the 1966 Local Government Ordinance, including the name, Nikunau Island Council, arising and changes in island body functions. Concomitantly, as alluded to in Chapter 7.2.2, additional public infrastructure and amenities were established, maintained, expanded or bettered, be it at the Island Council administrative complex and elsewhere along the atoll (see Chapter 2). The few such items already in existence had been developed to suit the Colony Government and Nikunau Native Government. Although under their auspices, these owed much to *I-Nikunau* resources and efforts, including the aforementioned involuntary and controversial communal workdays not abolished until 1960. The work done in the late 1960s was more extensive.[61]

However, there were teething problems. Initially, not many projects were proposed, and those which were continued to be mostly according to *I-Matang* ideas, magnitudes and designs (cf. Dean et al., 2016; Sillitoe, 1998; Sillitoe & Marzano, 2009), and so *I-Nikunau* often continued to regard them as being for *Te Tautaeka*. Thus, their approval often did not proceed smoothly – *unimane* were reluctant to agree to the tax increases needed to provide local contributions towards a project's costs – and few actually went ahead. Besides, had they done so, they would have depended a great deal on *I-Matang* project management assistance, which was in short supply. Realising its approach was not working, the Colony Government got the Island Council more involved in subsequent projects and consulted *unimane* and other residents of each *te kawa* about them. These projects, which were often smaller scale, less costly and more relevant to *kawa* and island issues, did proceed, being seen as having community benefits (Macdonald, 1972, 1982a; Pitchford, 1981).

Notwithstanding such teething problems, these public works projects led to improvements in relations the Colony Government and Island Council had with *unimane* and *mwaneaba* councils, Indeed, even though external grants or similar funding in kind and cash was available to finance the projects, because they were able to exert influence at *kawa* level and through their churches and *Te Bobotin Nikunau* over the form and content of projects, *I-Nikunau's mwaneaba* councils were enthusiastic in helping acquire local resources for the projects and in applying them (Hassall et al., 2011). Politically, these developments led to renewed influence of *unimane* in choosing projects and in island governance more generally, through the re-constituted Island Council and courts, as

well as trade, that is through *Te Bobotin Nikunau*. There was also a slight change in how *I-Nikunau* regarded the Colony Government: that is less as an instrument of authoritarian control from Tarawa and more a means of constructive control and source of conditional external funds (Macdonald, 1972, 1982a).

A final noteworthy point about the state of politics during the third intervention is a lack of *I-Kiribati* in any Colony-wide positions of authority, junior clerks excepted, as inferred already and evident from the distribution of posts between *I-Matang* and *I-Kiribati* in the structure shown in Figure 11. This reflects a point made above and which Ieremia (1993) observed retrospectively, namely, that even at independence in 1979, Kiribati not only lacked any nationally known leaders but also the very concepts of a nation and national leaders were strange (see also Macdonald, 1982a, 1996a; Van Trease, 1993a). Moreover, in the 1960s, the Colony Government reinforced its policy of centralisation on Tarawa (see Chapter 5.2.1) in keeping with the British Government's intention of building nations out of its colonies (see Morgan, 1980) despite peoples from the various islands, that is *I-Nikunau*, *I-Butaritari*, *I-Arorae*, etc., and even *I-Tarawa*, not identifying with the territory of the Kiribati Archipelago as a single nation, let alone a nation which included the extended territories of the Colony in the Line and Phoenix Archipelagos.

### *11.2.4 Rule by I-Kiribati*

It was the British intent on nation building which underpinned the fourth intervention. The intervention was mostly felt on Tarawa and involved a change in status from being a Colony, in which the formal political authority lay with *I-Matang*, to a Republic, in which the formal political authority lay with *I-Kiribati*. The intervention was initiated alongside similar developments elsewhere in the Empire, as the British Government responded to pressure from the so-called International Community in the decade or two after World War II. This pressure arose from concerns about the future of colonial peoples and the dismantling of empires, for example, as encapsulated by the United Nations Declaration of 1960. It led to what remained of the British Empire in Africa, the West Indies, Asia and, eventually, the Pacific being decolonised (see Ferguson, 2008; Morgan, 1980), Kiribati being one of the last.

With this decolonisation process in full swing elsewhere in the Empire by the mid-1960s, the resident commissioner was obliged to set in motion a process by which the system of government at Colony level would change from being entirely or largely autocratic, with him being advised by officials (see Figure 11), to one of internal self-rule by *I-Kiribati* and Tuvaluans, at least on paper. The prospect of independence was still on the far horizon, however, with if and how still to be determined, let alone when (Morgan, 1980). In the end, the transfer of political authority from *I-Matang* to *I-Kiribati* was so gradual that it fused with how Kiribati became an independent republic in 1979, the latter itself having been delayed by a referendum in Tuvalu, by which Tuvaluans chose to separate from Kiribati, and by legal disputes over Banaba and compensation to be paid to the *I-Banaba* because of the catastrophic destruction of their homeland under British rule (Macdonald, 1982a). Thus, it is appropriate to consider Figures 10 and 11, and compare them to explain how the latter morphed into the former.

The present *Kabinet* started out as an executive body comprising a mixture of *I-Matang* officials and *I-Kiribati* members, and matured, during what was referred to as a period of internal self-rule, into a cabinet of *I-Kiribati* ministers, including a chief minister.

Except the finance portfolio was held by an *I-Matang* official. The present *Te Mwaneaba ni Maungatabu* started out as an advisory assembly comprising representatives selected from the islands in the Colony, one representative, Teboitabu Biitau, being from Nikunau. It matured into an elected body with powers to scrutinise legislation and call cabinet members to account (Gilbert and Ellice Islands Order 1974). Paralleling these changes to executive and legislative authority, *I-Kiribati* and Tuvaluans were appointed to public service positions of greater seniority than hitherto, usually working alongside *I-Matang* colonial officials in counterpart positions with a view to assuming their responsibilities after *I-Matang* left because of independence being granted. Thus, the public service was intended to be localised, with the counterpart process and other education and training measures supposedly enough for this to materialise effectively. However, generally speaking, during the 1970s, among both politicians and public servants, the transfer of de jure authority from *I-Matang* to *I-Kiribati* proceeded in advance of de facto authority and responsibility (Macdonald, 1970, 1982a).

At independence, all this was formalised under the Constitution of Kiribati 1979. However, as phosphate royalties from Banaba terminated within months of independence, because mining there ceased, the British Government agreed to fund the Republic Government's operating budget deficit for several years but on condition that some *I-Matang* colonial officials carried on in positions created for them in the Republic Government administration, notably in the area of public finance. Otherwise, most positions in the government bureaucracy were localised, no matter about what was said above about the 1970s continuing; that is, many staff appointed to many positions were inexperienced and otherwise unready. This also applied to many *I-Kiribati* who were elected to the first *Te Mwaneaba ni Maungatabu* (Pitchford, 1981) and to some who were appointed as ministers in *Te Kabinet*. Indeed, the same could be said of the first *Te Beretitenti*, Ieremia Tabai, who had not been in the cabinet until taking office as chief minister only a year or so before internal self-rule metamorphosed into independence, and whose election probably came as a surprise to outgoing colonial officials (Ieremia, 1993; Macdonald, 1982a). In contrast, *I-Matang* were retained or recruited in many positions in secondary and tertiary education, training and healthcare institutions and similar professional areas, becoming Republic Government employees.

In Chapters 5, 7 and elsewhere I referred to civil engineering, education, health, social welfare and other projects carried out in the name of economic and social development, emphasising also how they were centralised on Tarawa as a matter of deliberate Colony Government policy, one which served British interests of economy and efficiency at the time and was seen as serving its post-independence political interests – a single nation-state stabilised with strong central institutions and infrastructure (cf. Morgan, 1980). The various political developments I have just briefly outlined were in keeping with this policy and these projects but lagged behind them by a decade or two.

One repercussion of this lag was that few if any *I-Kiribati* politicians or similar leaders had been able to express influential views on these projects or the policy of centralisation which underpinned them. Indeed, although once they were in place these *I-Kiribati* politicians were able to influence the political developments, the extent to which they did so is open to question. True the structure varies from the Westminster system by virtue of its republic format. However, much else about it resembled the system under British colonial rule, with a dash of parliamentary democracy republicanism sprinkled on top. This outcome is explained

by how colonial officials instigated and closely oversaw internal self-rule, arguably to such an extent that in substance their ascendancy continued up to the late 1970s and, in some areas in addition to the public finance area already mentioned, probably beyond, even though in form *I-Kiribati* occupied leading political and administrative positions (Macdonald, 1970, 1972, 1982a, 1983). These officials were prominent in drafting the Constitution of Kiribati 1979, except for local preferences prevailing in the two aforementioned matters (i.e., Tuvalu separating from Kiribati and Kiribati adopting a democratic republic system) and to which most attention has been attracted in the history of this period (Goldsmith, 2012; Macdonald, 1982a; Van Trease, 1993a). Moreover, the structures, processes and systems bequeathed by the colonial power to the Republic Government were designed for empire and were hurriedly adapted for government after independence, but along *I-Matang* lines (cf. Ferguson, 2008), not for government by *I-Kiribati* along *I-Kiribati* lines (Dixon & Gaffikin, 2014; Pitchford, 1981)

The fifth, and current, intervention has seen Kiribati categorised as yet another "developing country", or more precisely a "least developed country" (United Nations, 2017), signifying an imperialistic view of a country in need of aid, including political and administrative aid. This affects the political system under which *I-Nikunau* live today in Kiribati, especially on Tarawa. The intervention arose from outside the Republic, corresponding with concerns about the economic and social conditions of colonised, formerly colonised and other peoples of what has been increasingly referred to as the Global South. These concerns, coupled with actions in the interests of the new Great Powers and an increasing number of aid organisations, produced pressures for various measures, leading to an expansion worldwide of socio-economic aid and the global industry through which it is delivered, as alluded to in Chapter 7.2. As related there and in Chapters 5 and 8 especially, the Republic Government picked up the aid baton and, from the mid-1980s, its politicians and officials have had increased dealings with aid organisations, hence the various infrastructure, amenities, facilities, systems, etc. described so far as surviving on Tarawa, and even Nikunau, besides the many more which have not stood the test of time (Dixon, 2004a; Macdonald, 1996a, 1998; MacKenzie, 2004).

Aid and aid projects were not new to Kiribati of course, having begun in the 1930s under the Colony Government with projects mostly financed from the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund. However, as in other things, *I-Kiribati* politicians, public officials and administrators had little experience of them because they had been handled by the now departed colonial officials. Thus, especially early on, not only them but also prominent *I-Kiribati* associated with institutions inherited from formal colonial or earlier neo-imperial times were extremely susceptible to the influence of the experienced and well-resourced aid organisation representatives with whom they dealt. They still find it difficult to resist the various and often-incongruent opinions expressed under the auspices of aid organisations.

Regarding political and administrative aid, the most overt aspects of this in Kiribati have come from aid workers, consultants, etc., with Anglosphere connections, probably because of its British colonial history and various educational, governmental and other connections with New Zealand, Australia, etc. (e.g., see Crocombe, 1992). Reflecting policies in their countries of origin, they have been particularly active in promoting ideas with a neo-liberal bent, although the projects in support of these have involved an extensive, often conflicting, variety of beliefs, values, motivations and specialities,

including in the conditions they have attached to funding and in the ways the projects are carried out. Indeed, this latter observation applies to aid projects generally, and is significant politically because, despite arrangements between donors and recipients often being labelled nowadays as "partnerships" (cf. Webster, 2008), aid organisations' policy consultants, project implementation staff, etc. invariably have had the upper hand, akin to patronage (cf. Cheshire, 2010), in the dealings around projects, etc., as indicated in discussing Figure 10 and the insufficient practical training and experience afforded to *I-Kiribati*, initially by colonial officials and available since.

Underlying this asymmetry in donor-recipient dealings in Kiribati are such considerations as aid workers' enthusiasm, even zealousness, in seeking out what they perceive as problems for *I-Kiribati* and Kiribati, and in applying, usually off-the-shelf or alien, solutions. The advent of perceived problems of climate change and rising sea-level has added especial impetus to the enthusiasm of outsiders for Kiribati compared with non-atoll countries. Besides, it is not unusual for this enthusiasm to rub off on the still relatively inexperienced, often unworldly and mostly non-expert *I-Kiribati* with whom they are often dealing. Furthermore, most development projects proceed only after being evaluated according to policies and criteria of whichever donor organisation has been involved. This makes *I-Kiribati* issues and desired actions susceptible to stifling by project identification, planning and implementation, including choices of what to evaluate in the first place and of how issues and problems might be addressed. It does not help that matters are particularised and often considered in isolation (see Macdonald, 1982a), that these individual evaluations by outsiders are completed during shorter engagements than in colonial times, and that many donor decisions are made at a distance (Dean et al., 2016).

These claims underpin my observation in conjunction with Figure 10 about aid organisations being a prominent, de facto segment of the political system of the Republic today and their activities and methods being consistent with informal imperialism or neo-imperialism characterising the structure, process and functioning of Kiribati's political system, particularly on Tarawa. It could be argued that, formally, in addition to the donor organisation, *Te Kabinet* of the Republic Government also has to approve each aid project. However, questioning a donor's judgment and generosity is not easy, either culturally, or technically or expertly, including in the area of so-called financial management and control, in which I took particular interest, including as an accounting educator (see Dixon, 2004b). Accountings of one sort or another figure in the roles of *I-Nikunau* as politicians, public servants, citizens and people affected by government activities, sometimes acting more as barriers to participation in consensual governance than as part of pathways to greater involvement. Indeed, some accountings present in Kiribati today might be frustrating efforts of *I-Nikunau* and other *I-Kiribati* to rule themselves as much as they might be helping such efforts.

Examples of how accounting technologies do this include that for the most part they continue to use a foreign language, English. How they are applied, including what is calculated and how, barely reflects *I-Nikunau* or similar *I-Kiribati* values. The accountings have continued from the colonial period to be about *I-Kiribati*, but not to them, and they still have strong elements of secrecy and preclusion. They favour external organisations and their officials and principals, and disadvantage *I-Nikunau*, *I-Kiribati* and the organisations they are supposed to be running, including by making many of these organisations impossible for *I-Nikunau* and *I-Kiribati* to understand (Dixon & Gaffikin, 2014).

More generally on this point about external organisations, the behaviours of aid organisation representatives and the extents of their informal authority in many matters, and their project administrative responsibilities, can often seem akin to them having filled the shoes of the colonial officials who departed the country at or shortly after independence. This is notwithstanding the functional roles of these colonial officials having seemingly been localised and their presence, as a condition of the deficit funding provided by the former colonial power to the Republic Government, having ended when that funding ended.[62] Indeed, it is arguable that for much of the time since the advent of the Republic, aid organisation personnel have been prominent not only at the level of particular projects but also in determining the official direction of the governments under which *I-Nikunau* on Tarawa and on Nikunau have lived. Of particular significance to this prominence have been the political and administrative system projects alluded to above in the areas of governance, financial management and economic structure (e.g., see Dixon, 2004a).

## 11.3 *I-Nikunau* in the Political System

I alluded above to national politics surfacing in Kiribati only in the 1960s at the earliest, and even then only for small numbers of *I-Nikunau* and other *I-Kiribati*. This has been followed only gradually by peoples of the various islands (i.e., *I-Nikunau*, *I-Butaritari*, *I-Arorae*, etc., and even *I-Tarawa*) identifying more with the territory of the Kiribati Archipelago and other remnants of the Colony as a single nation; likewise, a national *I-Kiribati* identity gradually emerging (see Lundsgaarde, 1968a; Macdonald, 1982a, 1996a, 1998).

As for actual involvement of *I-Nikunau* in the political system, this has been commensurate with a people comprising 4-5% of the adult population of Kiribati, and now of Tarawa. Several *I-Nikunau* rose to prominent official positions and holding political office during internal self-rule and since the Republic was inaugurated. Examples include the MPs Beniamina Tinga, who was vice-president 2000-03, Tiwau Awira, who was a member of *Te Kabinet* 1979-94, and Tauanei Marea, who has been Minister for Health and Medical Services since 2016 (see Index of /sites/docs/hansard, 2014; Macdonald, 1982a, 1983; Parliament of Kiribati, n.d.). More formally, since *Te Mwaneaba ni Maungatabu* was created, Nikunau Island has had one and then two parliamentary seats, with voting open to all the atoll's residents, *I-Nikunau* or otherwise. Elsewhere, *I-Nikunau* can vote in elections according to where they reside and are registered as voters, be it on Tarawa, Kiritimati, Tabuaeran, etc.

These elected persons and holders of political office are besides the many *I-Nikunau* now working in the public service in various middle-ranking and junior administrative, technical and professional positions. Administrative positions and, increasingly, political office have been associated with educational attainment, rather than being *I-Nikunau* or another home island, whereas previously, initially under the pre-war Colony Government, a system of *home island* quotas operated in the appointments processes for native clerks and similar officials, albeit alongside educational attainment.[63] The quotas were in order to maintain some sort of fairness or equality in the distribution of paid work positions across the islands constituting the Colony. Even so, the Colony Government came in for criticism for seeming to favour Tuvaluans over *I-Kiribati* in administrative posts (Macdonald, 1982a). Similar quotas featured in practices associated with labour recruitment for the Pacific labour trade, the phosphate islands and even recent circular labour schemes. Gaining political office has also increasingly followed on from a successful career in the public service or other non-traditional organisations on Tarawa, including churches.

Furthermore, notables with national political status and other prominence have for some time superseded *mwaneaba* district and single island notables (cf. Macdonald, 1982a). Even so, as indicated above, the overall number of *I-Nikunau* involved are proportionate to *I-Nikunau* as a proportion of the adult population of Kiribati, and now of Tarawa.

Regarding the people being elected as MPs, in 11 elections held since 1979, those for the Nikunau Island constituency have invariably identified as *I-Nikunau*. Besides that, to date, only men have been successful in elections for the seats in question. However, any of those elected for Nikunau have found it difficult to fulfil their duties as MPs, etc., unless they lived on Tarawa, and so those not there already have joined the diasporic community there, subsequently tending only to visit Nikunau occasionally, including to campaign during elections. As for seats on other islands where there are *I-Nikunau* diasporic communities, on Tarawa and the Line Island factors other than being *I-Nikunau* come into play in being elected. On other Outer Islands on which *I-Nikunau* reside but where they are integrated into the People there, the same criterion as on Nikunau usually applies, that is identifying as *I-Nikunau*, *I-Butaritari*, *I-Arorae,* or whichever island identity applies.

The present political system casts *I-Nikunau* in the roles of individual citizens and the People of the Republic, rather than subjects in an empire or members of *boti*. Despite these roles, however, the notion of the Republic Government giving a formal account to an *I-Nikunau* or broader *I-Kiribati* audience, on Tarawa, Nikunau or elsewhere, is impaired by the structure, process and technology (e.g., the accounting system) of government being largely unchanged in substance, if not in form, from the days of the Colony Government. This may seem a strange claim to make, given the significant amount of aid project activity there has been in the past 40 years in the areas of administration, policymaking, governance, management and information systems. However, if anything, the continuing imposition through these projects of administrative methods, expertise, ideas, materials processes, structures, systems, technology, etc. of an Anglosphere nature, albeit with a neo-liberal bent not associated with government methods in colonial times, has reinforced the aforementioned hierarchical nature of government, in which accountability is mostly upwards. Indeed, the structure's external origins are epitomised by the form accountability takes, at least constitutionally.

Said accountability resembles that of colonial times, being shaped around and focused on foreign concepts (e.g., written reporting up the structure and public reporting about propriety, stewardship and performance), and concerns (e.g., financial intentions and outcomes) (see Chapter 11.2.3.2). Besides, the quasi-colonial systems involved infer *I-Nikunau* being accountable to those with governmental authority, rather than the other way around, so making it far better suited to outsiders than to *I-Nikunau* or broader *I-Kiribati* audiences, and so, unwittingly or otherwise, is consistent with charges of a strong external, neo-imperial influence continuing (Dixon & Gaffikin, 2014; Hassall et al., 2011; Ortega, 2008; Ratuva, 2014; Macdonald, 1996a, 1998; MacKenzie, 2004). However, a substantial redeeming feature when it comes to traditional accountability is that, on small islands, even one as densely populated as Tarawa, residents can observe much and can be much observed. Similarly much can be heard, mostly face-to-face, in the forms of *te kakarabakau* (≈ formal debating and discussing) and *maroro*/*winnanti*. How much knowledge and power this gives to the aforesaid *I-Nikunau* or broader *I-Kiribati* audiences, when cast in the role of The People, is open to question; but it does seem to be effective during elections and by deterring politicians from conspicuous consumption or public displays of aloofness and pomposity.

Back on Nikunau, just as economic developments on Tarawa have had accumulated backwash effects on Nikunau (see Chapter 7), so the same can be said about the political developments outlined above. Apart from all else, emigration in general, and emigration of Nikunau's more intellectually able in particular, have drained resources from, and so weakened, political institutions at the atoll and *kawa* levels, including church and cooperative organisations as grassroots political forces – this is particularly evident at Tabomatang, whose population of <70 is barely half that of when I paid long visits there 30 years ago.

However, on paper at least, at the island level, Nikunau continues to have local government and local judicial offshoots of the system on Tarawa (see Figure 10). Indeed, on a positive note, the formal political bodies on Nikunau seem closer to *I-Nikunau* than they were a decade or two ago. This is notwithstanding some wariness carried forward from when these bodies, and especially the Nikunau Island Council, were regarded not as grassroots bodies but as extensions of *Te Tautaeka*, be it the Colony Government or the Republic Government (Hassall et al., 2011; Ortega, 2008). Reasons for the closer-ness include the following four occurrences:

- although resident district officer positions were in the government administrative structure inherited from the Colony Government, the Republic Government soon disestablished these. This was in response to local disapproval of such arrangements once the *I-Matang* incumbent was replaced by an *I-Kiribati* – the disapproval was grounded in *te katei*, there being unwillingness to accept an *I-Kiribati* in such a lauded official position above *unimane* in a political system which was no longer topped by *I-Matang* officials, and so without *I-Matang* authority.
- the Republic Government seems further away, less interested and less intrusive. Some of this dates from the 1980s and 1990s, when emergent national leaders and newly promoted senior officials were preoccupied with setting up the new state on Tarawa (e.g., see Government of Kiribati, 1983) (Ieremia, 1993; Macdonald, 1982a, 1996a; Pitchford, 1981; Van Trease, 1993b). Since, said leaders and officials have been grappling with the effusion of aid and the population growth and other unfamiliar issues materialising on Tarawa (e.g., see Biribo & Woodroffe, 2013; Bishop et al., 2011; Castalia Strategic Advisors, 2005; Connell & Lea, 2002; Duncan, 2014; Locke, 2009; Thomas, 2001).
- some work has been conducted on decentralisation, political as well as economic, albeit largely by consultants to the Republic Government, and to the Colony Government just before its formal winding-up (e.g., Corcoran, 2016; Green et al., 1979; Maunaa, 1987; Ortega, 2008; Pitchford, 1981; Roniti, 1988). The reports, Ministry of Internal and Social Affairs (2007) and Office of Te Beretitenti and T'Makei Services (2012b) were associated with or resulted from the same United Nations' project as Ortega's study was and has had some effect, albeit tentative and difficult to specify, as is the case with other reports since Ministry of Overseas Development (1968)
- the wholly elected council is headed by an *I-Nikunau* mayor, directly elected by residents of the atoll (Kiribati Local Government Association, 2013), in contrast to previous arrangements involving a magistrate from another island.

This closer-ness is notwithstanding what was mentioned earlier about most of the Island Council's funding coming from the Republic Government and that past controls are still in place, albeit in modified form. These controls include the following. The Island Council's

annual budget is subject to limits set by Republic Government officials on Tarawa. Financial administration is subject to controls from Republic Government officials based on Nikunau and who answer to Tarawa. Financial audits are conducted by audit teams sent from Tarawa. The Republic Government appoints the Island Council's senior staff, who are usually posted from Tarawa and originate, at least ancestrally, from other islands.

## 11.4 Quasi-traditional Governance on Nikunau and within Diasporic Communities

This section discusses how vestiges of the traditional system have survived, and in what form, on Nikunau and in *I-Nikunau's* diasporic communities.

At *kawa* level on Nikunau, traditional and grassroots politics goes on, although many *unimane* heads of families are on Tarawa and their *utu* have sometimes been reticent to deputise for them in what amount to quasi-traditional *mwaneaba* councils and other *bowi* within *kawa* – see Lundsgaarde (1978) for a similar situation arising on Tabiteuea in the 1970s compared with the 1960s. The way activities are organised and controlled at *kawa* level by these councils, including the holding of various special events, reflects much of the insularity of *mwaneaba* districts and *kainga* in the past (see Hockings, 1984) (cf. Autio, 2010; Kazama, 2001). Besides, the *mwaneaba* councils continue to oversee affairs, maintain traditions and regulate conduct. Thus, *te kawa's unimane* appear to hold sway in the organisation of its social life, reflecting that *te mwenga* have emerged as the basic kin units socially and in matters both economic and political. However, depending on the nature of the events, etc. which *te kawa* is called on to organise, it is more apparent that more sharing of this authority is going on among other adults living there. A further factor in the workings of *mwaneaba* council is that, whereas for a long time the significant majority of *I-Nikunau* on Nikunau were LMS-KPC-KUC, four *kawa* now have significant minorities or even majorities who are RC. The matter now arising is the availability of a venue for a non-partisan *mwaneaba* council of any of these *kawa* to meet in, given the traditional *mwaneaba* having collapsed.

That it is possible for the tradition of *mwaneaba* councils to have continued through to the present day, albeit in forms which are adjusting to other present day circumstances, is probably due in no small way to how *mwaneaba* councils acted as a counter to colonialism, as described above. Then, however, they exercised greater political authority among *I-Nikunau* than nowadays because in those days most *I-Nikunau* were normally resident on Nikunau, and were part of its economy and political system, and backwash effects vis-à-vis Tarawa were barely evident. The councils also probably cooperated more with each other then, following their experience at the turn of the 20th century mentioned above of having been under *te* kabowi n abamakoro and, from the 1950s, because of how they cooperated in the oversight of *Te Bobotin Nikunau* (see Chapter 7). Perhaps now, such cooperation is seen in diasporic communities more, particularly as in New Zealand, where they are small, spread out and facing new challenges associated with, for example, immigration, settlement, a market economy and a society of modern and postmodern values.

In these diasporic communities outside Kiribati, governing bodies of associations, such as are mentioned in Chapter 4, including Kiribati Tungaru Association and Kiribati Waipounamu Community, use similar arrangements to their Tarawa or Nikunau equivalents. The other *I-Kiribati* making up these governing bodies are generally familiar with the vestiges they retain of *mwaneaba* councils because of how the *mwaneaba* system

was dispersed around the Kiribati Islands in the 17th century and subsequently. It is within the communities themselves and these associations, community organisations, etc. where politics arises for many members of diasporic communities outside Kiribati (and indeed on Tarawa). As alluded to already, the communities often set themselves up formally according to local law for such reasons as it being a requirement of hiring venues for events and making successful applications for community event funding, and because of internal protocols, recognition of roles and speaking on a community's behalf, for example, to local and national government organisations and occasionally to media, formal and social (e.g., New Zealand Kiribati National Council, n.d.).

As this politics plays out, how *te mwenga* comprise the basic kin units politically is one matter which is more obvious than it is on Nikunau, be it socially or economically. For example, membership subscriptions of these community groups are denoted not by per person but by per household, regardless of household size. In the case of economics, these household units coincide to a significant extent with the norms of Anglosphere societies around them. However, within the community the unit *te mwenga* reflects not only how members come together regularly and where (see Chapter 4) but also how power, authority and status among a community is exercised or allocated. For example, usually the most senior *I-Kiribati* males are expected to speak for their *mwenga* on community matters. Except that this role falls to the most senior female if the husband is *non-I-Kiribati*, and this situation makes it easier for all the women to enjoin with the political process than was traditional, and which is still the case on Nikunau or even Tarawa (cf. Rose, 2014).

Otherwise outside Kiribati, in metropolitan countries, *I-Nikunau* are very much on the political periphery of the nations and towns or cities in which they live, being entitled to vote if they qualify as citizens or residents, but not much else, at least as *I-Nikunau* or *I-Kiribati*. Thus, they tend to have to muddle through the political, administrative and service arrangements laid down by the authorities, whether in matters of immigration, housing, healthcare, schooling, labour practices, tertiary education, taxation, welfare, local government, elections, the structure and process of governments and parliaments, etc.

# 12

# Spiritual Circumstances (*te raoi*)

*I-Nikunau*, wherever located, are mostly practising Christians and frequently involved in church activities, as indicated throughout Part II. Indeed, to separate church activities from other activities is easier to say than to do, on Nikunau especially. The conversion of most of them to the LMS version of Christianity back in the late 19th century has already been alluded to in Chapter 6, because it was accompanied by changes to the settlement pattern on Nikunau. I also explained in Chapter 11 how, following this conversion, the LMS was in the political ascendancy on Nikunau and neighbouring islands up to 1917. I also explained in that chapter that this ascendancy waned partly because of how it affected RCs and that the RC Church expressed concerns about this to the Colony Government. Notwithstanding these events, some traditional beliefs and rituals continue, but mostly below the surface or in ignorance of their origin (Hockings, 1984; Macdonald, 1982a).

In this chapter, I outline matters relating to these traditional beliefs, building on allusions to them in previous chapters. I then go on to explain how, following on from the steps the Colony Government took to replace rule by the LMS with its system of indirect rule, existing RCs on Nikunau were able to be more open about their religious allegiance and gradually other *I-Nikunau* left the LMS and joined them. Out of this, an RC-Protestant duopoly arose and it continued on Nikunau virtually intact, at least until recently. Elsewhere, however, particularly on Tarawa and in metropolitan countries that duopoly has been broken through small but significant numbers of members of these diasporic communities joining other Christian denominations, notably the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and the Seventh-Day Adventists (SDAs), and the Bahá'í Faith, which came to the territory in 1954 (Hassall, 2006). As mentioned in Chapter 2, a further complication still unfolding at the time of writing is for a majority of the congregation previously associated with the KPC, the main Protestant Church, to have decided to change its name to the KUC, and then for a breakaway organisation to be established and adopt the previous KPC name. I also deal with other matters which affect or are affected by *I-Nikunau's* spiritual circumstances, past and present.

## 12.1 *I-Nikunau's* Traditional Spiritual Beliefs

When the first pastors arrived, *I-Nikunau* were adhering to various traditional beliefs, spiritual features and rituals. These had accumulated over centuries and were largely indistinguishable from the temporal (Grimble, 1989). Traditional spiritual associations were made with the structure and orientation of buildings on *mwenga*. Religious features found in *mwenga* and *kainga* included *boua-n-anti* and *bangota;* these were dedicated to *bakatibu* and other *anti* (≅ spirits, possibly of the first human *bakatibu* of the *boti*)–for an illustration of *te anti* stone, see Alaima et al. (1979, between pp. 18 and 19), and for *te bangota*, see Baranite (1985, p. 78)–and were decorated and adorned regularly with offerings of food. I mention in Chapter 2 *te boua-n-anti* at the south-west tip of Nikunau dedicated to Taburitongoun a highly esteemed *te bakatibu* who is alleged to maintain a spiritual presence there. Each *te kainga* had its totem, usually a real creature whom *te boti* more generally, in other districts and on other atolls, held in high regard and, for example, were forbidden to hunt or eat (Grimble, 1933, between pp. 20-21).

However, undoubtedly the most striking religious features of all on Nikunau were its six *mwaneaba*. Grimble recognised each as a "tabernacle of ancestors in the male line" (quoted by Maude, 1963, p. 11), one of their vital characteristics being that the relics of their founder were kept in a place in the roof and, on ceremonial occasions, were taken down and washed – for a photograph of this practice on Tabiteuea, see Alaima et al. (1979, between pp. 18 and 19)– (see also Hockings, 1984; Lewis, 1988). Their religious significance to each district carried on alongside their social, cultural and political functions, and being inns for visitors.

As for spiritual practices in the lives of *I-Nikunau*, magico-religious practices were not only integral to various critical life passages of *mwenga* and *kainga* residents, but they also featured in everyday activities (A.F. Grimble, 1989; R. Grimble, 2013). These activities required much knowledge and many skills (e.g., fisherman, cultivator, warrior, dancer, victuals preparer), some of them specialist skills (e.g., architect, canoe builder, composer, choreographer), and, as is not unusual in most societies (see Abrahamson & Fairchild, 1999), the exercise of these by *I-Nikunau* included attendant magic, spells and rituals – these circumstances are remarked on by Grimble and Clarke (1929), who advised their subordinate district officers that "[S]imple magic rituals and charms are the concomitants of every conceivable form of native activity" (p. 6).

A further aspect of *I-Nikunau's* traditional spiritual beliefs are their creation stories and other mythistories, as documented by Latouche (1983b) during fieldwork on Nikunau in the 1970s.

## 12.2 Religious "Conversion"

Some *I-Nikunau* were converted to Christianity, both RC and Protestant, or other religions, while away working in places under French, English and German influence. They returned with stories of their new religion(s) and wished to practice them at home, giving rise to clashes with longstanding traditional beliefs among *I-Nikunau* and, in the case of RCs, with the LMS missionaries still just getting established on Nikunau (Macdonald, 1982a; Sabatier, 1939/1977). However, despite these *I-Nikunau* influences, or of whalers, beachcombers, castaways and traders who frequented the atoll, *I-Nikunau* adhered to their traditional beliefs for much of the 19th century. Having said that though, through this working away and the presence of these outsiders, it was the case that, at least privately, Christianity was being practiced on Nikunau by a few people for at least

a few decades up to the 1870s. Any subsequent conversions of *I-Nikunau* on Nikunau, however, were private rather than en masse.

The prelude to the mass conversion of the later 19th century was that, in the 1870s, the Samoan District Committee of the LMS sent representatives to perform a mission to convert *I-Nikunau* and other peoples in the southern Kiribati Islands to Christianity. For the first 25 years, this mission was effected by pastors and their wives trained at the LMS theological college and regional headquarters at Malua, and so who were mainly Samoans. Pastor Iosefatu, who arrived in 1873, was the first of four pastors who resided on Nikunau in the 1870s, and a further 11 were so resident afterwards, the last arriving in 1901; each stayed for upwards of eight years, some spending the rest of their lives there (Latai, 2016; Nokise, 1983).[64]

Although their start was inauspicious, the pastors had mostly succeeded in the mission of conversion by 1890 (Baranite, 1985; Garrett, 1992; Goodall, 1954; Grimble, 1989; Maude & Maude, 1994; Maude, 1967; Nokise, 1983; Sabatier, 1939/1977). Artefacts of this success include the churches, church *mwaneaba*, pastors' dwellings and the former church, now government, primary schools, as mentioned in Chapter 2, all built then and since with labour and (proceeds of) copra contributed by their congregations. The congregations also maintained these structures and took turns feeding and looking after the district pastor in their *mwenga* (Macdonald, 1971, 1982a). As now, congregations were formally organised, with committees and lay officials.

Concomitant with this religious success, the pastors achieved something of a political success, which as elaborated in Chapter 11.2.3.1 brought about an almost unfettered theocratic-colonial regime on Nikunau and across the southern Kiribati Islands; unfettered, that is, by either the vestiges of the traditional methods of rule or the British colonial authorities. However, the extent of the pastors' political success was despite activities of this nature being as a means to being successful in converting *I-Nikunau*, but vital to it nonetheless. The pastors gained influence among *atun te boti* and other *unimane* in *mwaneaba* and wholesale conversion of the population followed. As outlined in Chapter 6, the pastors were not unfamiliar with various aspects of *te katei*, including the ways of *te mwaneaba*, because some of the concepts underpinning these traditions also applied in traditional Samoa under *kerisiano fa'a-samoa* (Maude, 1963).

Regarding *mwaneaba* in particular, the pastors eventually persuaded *I-Nikunau* to end the aforesaid practices relating to the relics of the founder and to afford them a proper burial.[65] In a related development, not only was the religious function of district *mwaneaba* superseded by the use of churches for religious rituals but also church *mwaneaba* took over their function as a place for social gatherings; the traditional *mwaneaba* premises fell into disrepair, with the result related in Chapter 2 that on Nikunau today a few standing stones are all that remain of five of them, with the sixth, in Nikumanu, in a precarious state of repair. Concomitantly, the skills to build or maintain *mwaneaba* using traditional materials and methods were lost through disuse.

A further indication of the pastors' success was that when clerics of *Les Missionnaires du Sacré-Cœur* (or Sacred Heart) *de Jésus*, representing the RC Church, arrived on Nikunau in 1888 (Sabatier, 1939/1977), they initially expulsed them, and did so on more than one occasion subsequently. However, despite persecution and discrimination against them, a few people on Nikunau were not deterred from adhering to this alternative brand of Christianity. They included *I-Nikunau* who had been away labouring (Macdonald, 1982a)

and traders, notably the previously mentioned Frank Even, an Irishman by the name of Harrison and Tom Day (or O'Day) (Munro, 1987; Nokise, 1983). Indeed, it had been they who encouraged the RC Church to send missionaries to the Kiribati Archipelago in the first place and who assisted their escape from Nikunau in 1888 – another trader on Nikunau, by the name of Smith, helped another group of RC missionaries in similar circumstances in 1899. As far as Nikunau was concerned, the RC Church was largely kept at bay for three decades, including the period covered next.

Despite the success they had had across the southern Kiribati Islands, the Samoan pastors were criticised for their conduct by William Goward, in assuming the role of chief LMS missionary in 1900 (see Chapter 11); he described them as "inconsistent, incompetent and un-Christ-like" (Macdonald, 1982a, p. 89)–Goward's criticism echoed much previous criticism levelled at Samoan missionaries by their *I-Matang* counterparts (see Munro, 1996). Using this pretext to reform the mission, Goward and his wife Emmeline established a training school for *I-Kiribati* pastors and teachers, male and female, at the mission headquarters at Rongorongo – for photographs of the school and other facilities at Rongorongo, see Alaima et al. (1979, between pp. 50 and 51) and University of Southern California Digital Library (2017). This training helped renew the mission and localise the organisation. The curriculum extended to mission administration and to teaching in mission schools. The graduates were posted to Nikunau and the other islands, eventually replacing the Samoan incumbents; except as late as the 1920s, Samoans were still posted to Kiribati to fill positions at Rongorongo mainly (Latai, 2016).

The headquarters at Rongorongo was an additional call on the revenue the pastors collected on Nikunau and its neighbouring islands under their control, additional that is to the spending mentioned in Chapter 11.2.2 on church buildings and pastors' living costs. The revenue funded the LMS's education and training activities, printing and publishing – the works included a translation of the Bible from English into *te taetae ni Kiribati* by Bingham (1907)[66] and *te taetae ni Kiribati* versions of prayer books and hymnbooks)–and general administration. The political control of Nikunau, including through *te* kabowi n abamakoro, was important to this revenue being raised. Thus, under Goward, the quasi-political nature of the mission continued. Indeed, his new headquarters represented a more immediate and so more active upper echelon, one through which the LMS mission would expand throughout the Kiribati Archipelago, and to Banaba, Nauru and beyond (Garrett, 1992).

During Goward's chieftainship of the LMS, sectarian persecution and discrimination towards anyone or anything to do with the RC Church also continued. However, the few RCs on Nikunau and neighbouring islands controlled by the LMS persisted in their beliefs and practices. It was this persistence and that of the RC Mission itself, after the Colony Government ended the LMS's rule in 1918 (see Chapter 11.2.3), which helped the RC Church establish itself on Nikunau. However, hostility towards it and its adherents continued (Garrett, 1992, 1997). Then, as the size of the RC congregation grew, rancour arose on both sides – in percentage terms, the ratios of RCs to Protestants within Nikunau's population were 19:81 in 1931, 23:77 in 1947 (Pusinelli, 1947) and 29:71 in 1968 (Zwart & Groenewegen, 1968), and in 2012 both are about 47%, the rest being other denominations or traditional (Office of Te Beretitenti and T'Makei Services, 2012b).

Relations between the two churches and their adherents today are still beset by some conflict, hostility, rivalry, rejoinders, and claims and counter-claims, even, of sectarianism, although this has reduced decade on decade and become more subtle, whereas before

there was much physical violence (e.g., see Maude, 1967; Sabatier, 1939/1977). This struggle, conflict etc. between Protestant and RC was mirrored throughout the Kiribati Archipelago, not just on the LMS-controlled southern atolls. Incidentally, in analysing events across all the atolls generally, Macdonald (1982a) notes that some of this division, hostility and violence may have been a continuance of intra-island animosity existing before the Christians arrived, with people joining one church primarily because their adversaries joined the other.

What is more, both churches showed similar attitudes, albeit with ever-decreasing levels of physical violence, towards members of other Christian denominations and other faiths, including when the organisations concerned applied formally to enter the Colony or Republic and establish premises on Tarawa – the first to do so were the SDAs in 1947 (Pusinelli, 1947). By 2012, 10% of Tarawa's population is now affiliated with these others, whereas on Nikunau, the proportion is barely 3% (Office of Te Beretitenti and T'Makei Services, 2012b). But those proportions seem to be on the increase, one informant telling me that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints now has about 100 converts (5%) on Nikunau and is considering erecting a place of worship. In addition, many *I-Nikunau* and other *I-Kiribati*, especially on Outer Islands, also indulge in traditional beliefs, at least secretly.

### *12.2.1 Fundraising*

Finance and fundraising through fines, contributions and activities have long been a central feature of religious activities, as alluded to above and in several previous chapters. In 1918, by virtue of the Colony Government posting a district officer to Beru and assuming de facto control of Nikunau and the other southern Kiribati Islands (see Chapter 11.2.3.2), the streams of revenues from fines, quasi-taxes, etc. to the LMS on Nikunau and beyond were interrupted; the LMS headquarters had been almost entirely dependent on this revenue, which had been coming not just from its congregations on Nikunau and its neighbouring islands but from these islands' entire populations by virtue of its de facto rule (Macdonald, 1982a). It more or less made up for this lost revenue by expanding or re-designating some of the existing contributions from its congregations and having these congregations turn to other ways to gather revenue, or fund raise, for local and headquarters' uses. Thus, informal tithes on copra and cash remittances were instituted, social events were staged with fundraising appendages, handicrafts (e.g., coconut mats, fishing hats, knives of sharks' teeth) were produced and sent to Banaba and, later, Tarawa, for sale to temporary residents and visitors, particularly *I-Matang* (see Catala, 1957), and trade stores were operated – these are referred to in Chapter 7.1 as church *mronron*.

From the outset, this fundraising placed greater work burdens on *I-Nikunau* associated with the LMS, as they had to continue paying taxes, fines and, later, licence fees, etc. but to the Colony Government instead of the LMS. This led some to switch their allegiance to the RC Church (cf. Gilkes, 2006). Thus, they joined others who had favoured it because the RC clergy paid its adherents, for example, in tobacco, for work done and services rendered; these included building churches and supplying the clergy's domestic needs (e.g., victuals, house materials)–unlike the LMS, the RC Church had external, albeit meagre, benefactions to call on, and *I-Nikunau's* contributions were less involuntary (see Sabatier, 1939/1977). However, for several decades, the majority stayed with the LMS, and thence the KPC and KUC; it has only been during the last five decades that the proportion of RCs on Nikunau has increased from the 26% of 1968 to its current level of 47%.

Today, the KUC continues the various avenues of fundraising just enumerated, be it on Nikunau, Tarawa and in diasporic communities elsewhere, with some enhancements; for example, bingo sessions are popular among communities on Nikunau (Ministry of Internal and Social Affairs, 2007), Tarawa and in New Zealand. What is more, across the Kiribati Archipelago, island congregations compete for the prestige of which island can send the greatest amount to the KUC headquarters on Tarawa. In the four largest congregations in New Zealand, namely, Auckland, the Bay of Plenty, the Kapiti Coast and Invercargill, apart from general fundraising to provide for routine expenses, capital has been or is being accumulated to purchase dwellings for pastors and land on which they plan to erect churches.

## 12.3 Consequences of Christianity for *I-Nikunau*

Spiritual conversion, and the political control which accompanied it by the LMS in particular, has had continuing consequences for *I-Nikunau*. Reflecting afterwards on what he found on taking up the post of district officer on Beru in 1918 (see Chapter 11.2.3.2), Grimble opined that when the Samoan pastors and then Goward were ascendant they had degraded anything about *I-Nikunau* which prevented promotion of Christian myths, superstitions and impostures as superior, heroic, etc. He opined that the clerics had made *I-Nikunau* and their neighbours "ashamed of his ancestry, ashamed of his history, ashamed of his legends, ashamed practically of everything that ever happened to his race outside the chapel and the class-room" (cited by Macdonald, 1982a, p. 133, and by Maude, 1989, p. xxiii) (cf. Bakre, 2004). Following time spent on Onotoa six decades later, Hockings (1984) claims that

> the many physical manifestations of traditional communal spiritual activity – the *kainga*, the *bangota*, the *uma ni mane*, the initiate huts– have all but disappeared in this general process of the desanctification of everyday life, and in their place stands the church. (p. 472)

However, to attribute these many changes solely to Christianity would exaggerate; just as to claim that they have all been negative is inaccurate. Many other factors were at work, associated with people other than missionaries visiting Nikunau and *I-Nikunau* returning from working, etc. away with a changed perspective on life. Not only that but also the new religion(s) appealed positively to most *I-Nikunau*. The religions afforded opportunities to come together in ways different from the traditional *mwaneaba* (Hockings, 1984). They entailed stories about the outside world, and the introduction of knowledge, practices, etc. In producing written translations of the Bible, etc. in *te taetae ni Kiribati*, the English- and French-speaking missionaries (e.g., Hiram Bingham, Ernest Sabatier) adapted the Modern Latin alphabet to suit *te taetae ni Kiribati* in a way still ascendant today. *I-Nikunau* learnt to read and write, and quenched a thirst for knowledge, including at mission schools; at first, these catered for all ages, but then concentrated on children of primary or elementary school age and, later, of secondary school age. This was an alternative source of knowledge to *unimane* and *unaine*, and so satisfied a desire among some *I-Nikunau* to be less dependent on elders and less predisposed to their authority.

The missionaries instituted many other things, with widespread and long-lasting consequences. They introduced new food plants, notably breadfruit and pawpaw (Nokise,

1983). They introduced the days of the week, including *Te Tabati*, and holy days, so imposing a new sense of chronological order on *I-Nikunau*, although even now keeping to time is not a strong point, even in diasporic communities. As indicated in Chapter 2, *Te Tabati* observance is still very evident, particularly among Protestants but among RCs too, in their different ways. Similar applies to Easter and Christmas as religious festivals.

Several restrictions (via laws, regulations, penalties in the form of fines, etc.) were placed on *I-Nikunau* stemming from what the LMS missionaries in particular regarded as "evils", as listed by Grimble (1989, pp. 315-318). *I-Nikunau's* practice of nakedness (cf. Officer on Board the Said Ship, 1767, pp. 135-138) was banned in the names of modesty, etc. The obligation to wear clothes led to the import of cloth and acquisition of skills and equipment (e.g., needles, sewing machines) needed to make clothes (Latai, 2016); it also led to afflictions such as tuberculosis and skin diseases from wearing clothes unsuited to the climatic conditions (see the school photographs referred to in Chapter 12.2). Being modestly attired, also gave some freedom to post-pubescent young women to be seen and appear in public, whereas traditionally they had been closely supervised (see Note 48), even confined, usually pending marriage (see Grimble, 1921).

Restrictions on abortion as a birth control method (see Veltman, 1982) led to bigger families (cf. Latai, 2016). These restrictions are still in place, although abortions are still performed in traditional ways. Birth control and family planning through contraception are encouraged (see Pitchford, 1981), including that teams of specialists make occasional visits from metropolitan countries, especially to Tarawa. Attempts to restrict *tibutibu* were withstood, preserving much of the social and economic benefits of this practice, which continues today. However, its misunderstood "informality" (e.g., lack of government authority and recognition in official documents) can present problems for families trying to immigrate to metropolitan countries.

The missionaries were concerned with the level of intoxication from alcohol and nicotine, especially among men. Restrictions on the import of alcoholic beverages were reasonably successful, as were those on locally produced ones, more or less – Nikunau was still *dry* when I visited in the 1980s. Today, among *I-Nikunau*, there are those who drink alcohol and those who abstain, with the latter being the greater proportion, particularly on Nikunau. In any case, *nangkona* drinking has become fashionable in recent years, particularly among groups of men, both in diasporic communities and now on Nikunau itself, where there are several bars, some private and some associated with churches (Kiribati Local Government Association, 2013; National Statistics Office, 2013). While intoxicating, *nangkona* is often associated with lower levels of physical violence than alcohol, although opinions about this differ, and the after-effects on work, etc. are raising criticisms (Grace, 2003; Kiribati cabinet minister, 2013; Kiribati people 'cursed', 2017).

Similar restrictions on tobacco on Nikunau failed miserably, with the incidence of stick tobacco, pipes and self-rolled cigarettes still high, although even there, and far more obviously on Tarawa, these have given way over the past few decades to manufactured cigarettes. Whatever, smoking tobacco is still widespread among *I-Nikunau* wherever they reside. The incidence of tobacco use in metropolitan country diasporic communities is notwithstanding that many have taken heed of the strong messages sent out by public health advocates about its deadly consequences and the price signals accompanying these messages – according to Statistics New Zealand (2014), of 22% of *I-Kiribati* who have smoked regularly since the age of 15, a third claim to have given up. However, in Kiribati,

the messages are less strong and there are no such price signals; indeed, for a time the price of tobacco was controlled in similar ways (i.e., downwards) to rice and other staple imports and school exercise books. Thus, 44% of the adult population of the Republic smokes tobacco (National Statistics Office, 2013).

Curtailments of sexual promiscuity led to reductions in the activities of *nikiranroro* and the diminution of polygynous relationships, including *eiriki* (≅ sexual relationships between a husband and his wife's unmarried sisters), and of customarily sanctioned extramarital sex involving, or as entailed in, *tinaba* relationships (≅ sexual relations between a wife and her husbands' uncles) (see Grimble, 1957, 1989; Hockings, 1984). They also impacted the forms and frequencies of dance, which LMS clerics often referred to as lewd acts, along with accompanying songs, poems and music (Macdonald, 1982a), although in contrast new songs were introduced as a means of spreading and encouraging the message of the missions (Latai, 2016)–the RC clergy encouraged more mellow forms of dance by incorporating them into the Mass (Nokise, 1983, Sabatier, 1939/1977). However, dancing was never stamped out and, as indicated in Chapter 3 and elsewhere, it has re-emerged as an object of national pride, with participation being widespread, including in diasporic communities (see Autio, 2010; Dambiec, 2005; Kiribati Tungaru Association UK, n.d.; New Zealand Kiribati National Council, n.d.; Whincup, 2005).

For diasporic communities generally, church is a potential sphere for mixing with the other *I-Kiribati* among whom *I-Nikunau* live geographically. This potential is most evident on Tarawa, where church activities often draw people from across diasporic communities of the different islands in the Kiribati Archipelago, a routine example being the many children who attend church high schools.

A further phenomenon in diasporic communities outside Kiribati is a dichotomy between joining existing congregations of the same faith and establishing a congregation limited to *I-Kiribati*. Thus, in various centres in New Zealand, for example, RCs, although meeting together for some RC *I-Kiribati* occasions, have tended to use churches serving the multiracial communities in which they live, and so usually worship in English – Statistics New Zealand (2014) report that 960 (45%) of *I-Kiribati* in New Zealand identified themselves as RCs. On the other hand, most Protestants – estimated as 890 (38%)–rather than attend extant local churches, have preferred being loyal to the KUC and establish their own congregations. To this end, the KUC headquarters on Tarawa posts pastors from Kiribati to live and serve among its four largest congregations in New Zealand, as listed above, and visit the other communities; and deacons are recruited and trained from within all the communities to assist these pastors. KUC events are held within and among members of these diasporic communities, and occasionally, over long weekends, across these communities – venues range from members' homes and community and church halls to campgrounds and *marae* (≈ *mwaneaba* associated *Māori iwi*) hired for said weekends. Next to identifying as *I-Kiribati*, and organising around that, the KUC is a further means in New Zealand of community support and association, around language and culture (worship is in *te taetae ni Kiribati*), and part of maintaining separation from other peoples in the country. I understand that the Kiribati RC Church has begun to follow suit in places in New Zealand where the numbers of RCs are large enough to warrant it.

# 13

# Educational Circumstances (*te mauri*)

*I-Nikunau's* educational circumstances can be clarified by distinguishing between traditional and modern, or as I call it here, formal. The formal is common to virtually all *I-Nikunau* wherever they are located, deriving as it does directly or indirectly from Britain, more or less. Indeed, in terms of being perceived by either adults or children as "education", the formal is very much part of *I-Nikunau's* recent past and present (see Part II and Chapter 5.2) and now seems ascendant in all locations. Moreover, that ascendancy is reflected in earlier chapters in which I have outlined wider consequences that developments of formal education, and participating in it, have had for *I-Nikunau*, including emigration (see Chapters 5.2), national political participation (see Chapter 11) and religious beliefs (see Chapter 12). However, this ascendancy is notwithstanding oft expressed explicit desires among older generations for younger generations, particularly away from Kiribati, to learn *te taetae ni Kiribati* and about Kiribati culture (e.g., see Thompson, 2016). Thus, concurrent with the formal, in both *mwenga* and *mwaneaba* on Nikunau, and corresponding places within diasporic communities, vestiges of traditional education are particularly important and significant in matters of social conduct, language and culture. Hence, wherever they are located, *I-Nikunau* participate both in these vestiges of the traditional and in the formal, although the mixtures of the two differ according to distance from life on Nikunau, among other things.

## 13.1 Outline of Formal Education

The formal education in which *I-Nikunau* can now participate is divided into primary, secondary and tertiary levels. Common to each level are teachers, curricula, examinations, qualifications, principals or head teachers and school governance committees or councils. What differs across levels, albeit more in the past than now, are the locations of the schools, colleges, universities or other institutions where education, teaching and studying are conducted; these locations include Nikunau, Tarawa and a few other atolls, and overseas, including metropolitan countries. The rest of this section covers actual participation and its location.

Within Kiribati, *I-Nikunau* participate in formal education as a matter of course up to Year 9 (i.e., 13-14 years of age) in primary and junior secondary schools on Nikunau (see Chapter 2), Tarawa and other islands on which they are brought up. Those whose academic attainment is sufficient, as measured using common national examinations, go

on further, including to senior secondary schools (Years 10 to 13), which, apart from schools with limited provision on Beru, Tabiteuea, Nonouti, Abemama, Abaiang and Tabuaeran, are all on Tarawa. All these schools share a school year, February to December, which coincides with southern hemisphere practices in Fiji, New Zealand and Australia. Each has its weekly timetable of classes, which are conducted largely in classrooms by recognised, qualified teachers. Particularly above primary level, these classes are divided into year groups (i.e., the students are mostly sorted by age) and into subjects (e.g., mathematics, English, geography, science), which are defined in syllabuses, these syllabuses being reflected in mostly English-language textbooks, other learning resources, examinations and other forms of summative assessment.

Success at the primary and secondary levels of the system, and indeed of the system, is predisposed towards individual students going onto the next level or stage, with stages covering a school year, and ultimately attending an English-language university overseas, thus reinforcing the importance of the outside world, English-language curriculum. Or, to put it another way, the system has been based consistently on pushing out pupils or students who fail at the end of a stage, and so the successful students are those remaining after the rest have been filtered out. Having said that, opportunities nowadays to leave the formal system before Year 13 and still go on to tertiary qualifications are probably greater than ever before, as outlined below. It is also now easier to resume formal education as an adult, and so have a second chance. However, this is much less the case than in metropolitan countries with diasporic communities, where adult education provision is far more extensive than on Tarawa.

In the diasporic communities, children invariably participate in the education systems of their place of abode. In the metropolitan countries, this is something most parents are highly desirous of, often advancing it as a reason for having immigrated, as Roman (2013) and Thompson (2016) find among *I-Kiribati* immigrants in New Zealand. These metropolitan country systems are mirrored by the formal system in Kiribati, for reasons given next, and so need not be described in more detail here. Except, school is usually compulsory until Year 11, and, in any case, many of the general population of students stay on until Years 12 or 13, or go onto to tertiary institutions to study vocational qualifications. The proportion of the general population of students succeeding at Year 13 and going onto degree-level tertiary study, mainly at universities, has been increasing for some decades, and seems to be of the order now of 30%. The same is probably true for the equivalent proportions of *I-Nikunau* and other *I-Kiribati* students even though these proportions are undoubtedly less than the proportions for the general population of students are (e.g., re New Zealand, see Education Counts, 2019), the more so in families who are entirely *I-Kiribati*.

Similarly in Kiribati, an increasing proportion of those who graduate from junior and senior secondary schools (i.e., having passed exams associated with Year 9 or higher, including even Year 13) go on to Tarawa's non-degree tertiary institutions (e.g., the Institute of Technology,[67] Marine Training Centre,[68] Fisheries Training Centre, School of Nursing, Teachers' College) but they are still very much a minority of the population of persons of the appropriate age. Most of those who succeed in graduating through to the end of Year 13 apply for aid donor and local scholarships to attend university institutions and similar overseas, including the main campus in Fiji of the University of the South Pacific or its law campus in Vanuatu. Some succeed in their applications, but because these scholarships are increasingly insufficient compared with the numbers graduating, many do not. Those without scholarships can study on Tarawa at the

University of the South Pacific Kiribati Campus, usually with a view to obtaining a scholarship subsequently; or they can enrol at non-degree tertiary institutions (see above), enter the paid employment workforce, or do other things – few, if any, seem to have private means to go to overseas universities, although perhaps that might arise more, particularly if *utu* overseas are willing and able to sponsor them. Some scholarships are also awarded to *I-Nikunau* and other *I-Kiribati* who are already employed in the public service, including enabling them to study for masterates and doctorates.

## 13.2 Retrospective Analysis of Education on Nikunau and within Kiribati

The formal system in Kiribati reflects its introduction and maintenance by outsiders, whether under the auspices of religious bodies (since the 1880s), the Colony Government (between the 1920s and 1970s) or the Republic Government (since the 1980s). Playing assorted parts at various times have been assistance from or influence of British, New Zealand and other *I-Matang* teachers (e.g., see Crocombe, 1992), British, Pacific and other foreign examinations boards, international professional teaching bodies, foreign higher and further education institutions, and aid organisations. As alluded to already, for the most part, the curriculum derives from, and is mostly about, the outside world, there being little provision, if any, for knowledge and skills associated with living on atolls, either in quasi-traditional ways or otherwise, let alone about Nikunau or Kiribati in particular. Indeed, although most teachers are now *I-Kiribati*, the syllabuses, qualification standards, methods of teaching and learning, etc., along with the beliefs, values, knowledge and skills underlying their training in Kiribati and overseas, still reflect what the aforesaid outsiders, spiritual or temporal, and particularly from Britain, New Zealand, Australia and the other Anglosphere countries, have regarded or now regard as appropriate for pupils and students of different ages (see Burnett, 2009a).

In contrast, traditional education was all about *I-Nikunau* on Nikunau, whether in areas one might label curricula, methods of teaching and learning, knowledge and skills, values, beliefs or structures. The vestiges of the traditional system which remain on Nikunau reflect the ways *I-Nikunau* now live there, as recounted in Chapter 2 and various sections of Chapters 5 to 12. Education in traditional dancing is a prime, overt example of such vestiges, one that binds *I-Nikunau* there with *I-Nikunau* in all the diasporic communities, at times resembling what Autio (2010) gleaned from her study on Tabiteuea in 1999-2000. She observed schooling in dance as frequent and intensive, taking the form of dancing practices, arranged and conducted by *unimane* and *unaine* with expertise in choreography and dance instruction. In metropolitan countries, especially when a formal event is in the offing (e.g., a National Day gathering), the area of dance is similarly ascendant in the traditional education which goes on in people's homes and in the community, led by those who have inherited this expertise. For some visual examples, see British Museum (2017), EventFinda (2014) or PixMasta Studio (2017).

### *13.2.1 Traditional Education*

Notwithstanding, these vestiges of traditional learning are a far cry in content and method from the traditional education systems, as pieced together by various authors (e.g., Grimble, 1921, 1933, 1989; Hockings, 1984; Teweiariki, n.d.). These differentiated between educating boys and young men and educating girls and young women in the knowledge and skills

each gender required to enable them to live materially, socially, culturally, etc. on Nikunau in past times. Its gender basis was reflected in how *unimane* oversaw the teaching of older boys and *unaine* oversaw the teaching of young children and older girls; the teaching was conducted on *mwenga*, *kainga*, *buakonikai maran* and *nama*. Ascendant probably up to the 1880s, traditional education led to these young people being initiated into *I-Nikunau* society as adults, and so in such roles as marriage partners, parents, domestics, fishermen, cultivators, crafts persons, participants in ceremonials, dancers and warriors.

Two other aspects of traditional education are noteworthy. First, the curriculum featured knowledge of self genealogically, given the social categories of *utu*, *boti* and *kainga* being based on ancestry (Goodenough, 1955; Lundsgaarde & Silverman, 1972; Maude, 1963). This part of the curriculum also comprised ancestral traditions, customs, religion, rituals, stories, technologies, etc. Second, a distinction was made between some knowledge, skills, spells, etc. being generally shared among everyone and some being restricted to only a select few. That is, for reasons of place in the community and honour, architecture and building construction (see Hockings, 1984), canoe building, composing and choreography (see Autio, 2010), medical practice, midwifery and similar were jealously guarded specialisms, knowledge, skills and spells being passed orally, preciously and secretly from a person of one generation to a kinsperson of the next generation (Lawrence, 1983).

### *13.2.2 Mission Schools*

Aspects of the traditional curriculum system which were practical when it came to living on Nikunau survived for quite some time, some until now. However, the LMS Mission and, later, the RC Mission tried, usually successfully, to vanquish any aspects they saw as perpetuating animism, paganism, heathenism, savagery, etc. (Macdonald, 1982a), or otherwise obstructed or impeded their aims of converting individuals and communities, and retaining those converts. Concomitantly, the LMS pastors put in place the forerunners of the present formal system, establishing and maintaining mission schools on Nikunau and neighbouring islands; these were vital to conversion. This occurred alongside providing something of the nature of secondary education for aspiring pastors, catechists and other teachers, perhaps at Malua but certainly once the training school at Rongorongo was established (see Chapter 12.2).

Reiterating Chapter 12.3, these mission schools gradually made children of elementary, or primary, school age their main concern. They combined religious instruction with ideas of cleanliness, etc. being next to godliness, and with developing abilities to read, write and do arithmetic. The teachers initially comprised the pastors from Samoa and local catechists whom they trained. Even so, the teaching was in *te taetae ni Kiribati*, more or less. It was then taken over by the graduates, both *I-Kiribati* and Tuvaluan, male and female, from Rongorongo. Having vanquished much of the traditional system, the LMS's schools were as much part of its theocratic-colonial regime as the spiritual and political structures and processes the pastors had put in place as outlined in Chapters 11 and 12. Their ascendancy was virtually unchallenged until the RC Church gained a permanent foothold on the atoll in the 1920s, and established schools for their converts too, with *I-Kiribati* teachers trained at Manoku on Abemama (Sabatier, 1939/1977; Garrett, 1992).

From then on, a dual system prevailed. Sabatier (1939/1977) explains that the two churches were obliged to provide a primary school in every *kawa* "for fear of losing the young people" (p. 212) to the opposing camp. In the four *kawa* where both the LMS and RC

denominations had converts, the LMS and RC schools, along with their churches and other buildings, were situated at opposite ends of each one; this was in keeping with the pattern in most *kawa* on most of the other islands, with "the big *mwaneaba* for dancing in the centre" (Sabatier, p. 320). The pattern followed tacit agreement between the two churches but can be interpreted as characterising a continuing sectarian divide even within *kawa* (see Chapter 12.2).

The educational activities of the missions were reinforced by the Colony Government, many of whose policy philosophies still seem to persist under the Republic Government (Burnett, 2002, 2009a). In 1920, it established an Education Department – this was based on Tarawa rather than the then Colony Government headquarters of Banaba – and stipulated that young *I-Nikunau* (aged 7-16 years) must attend primary school. However, the Colony Government lacked a policy of, and funds for, development interventions (see Chapter 11.2.3), and so until the 1960s the actual schools, and most of the funding, were provided by the two churches, with parents being obliged to pay school fees to the churches. The two churches also continued to provide training for *I-Nikunau* or other *I-Kiribati* aspiring to be primary school teachers at the facilities mentioned above and later on Tarawa. *Te taetae ni Kiribati* continued as the language of most teaching; except not all imported learning materials were translated from their original English form and English was taught as a subject.

### *13.2.3 Primary Schools*

In the 1960s, the Colony Government took over primary education provision in the Colony. This brought the religious division of schools on Nikunau to an end, and marked the coming about of the atoll's three extant primary schools, since when they have been operated under the auspices of the Colony Government and then the Republic Government, along with virtually all others in the country. The provision for the training of primary teachers also changed, the Colony Government establishing the temporal Tarawa (now Kiribati) Teachers' College. Although many of the graduates of this college passed through KGVEBS, where English was officially the language of tuition for many years, the language they brought to the primary school classroom has continued to be *te taetae ni Kiribati*[69] – virtually all KGVEBS students, including those from Tuvalu, spoke *te taetae ni Kiribati*, notwithstanding punishments being inflicted on those caught doing so when and where this was prohibited by the school rules (confidential personal communications from a former teacher and former student, 1998). Scholarships for teacher education overseas have supplemented this training, although only a minority of these has gone to primary level teachers, compared with those at secondary level. Some supplementing of *I-Kiribati* teachers has occurred at primary level on Tarawa and even on Nikunau, through an intermittent supply of *non-I-Kiribati* missionaries, contract teachers and volunteers, notably from the American Peace Corps between 1973 and 2008 (e.g., see Myers, 2001).

### *13.2.4 Secondary Schools*

As indicated above, the first post-primary (or quasi-secondary) education institution at which *I-Nikunau* could enrol was arguably the pastor training school at Rongorongo. The students attended as boarders, taking them away from Nikunau for months or years at a time, and even longer, perhaps even permanently – pastors were usually posted to islands other than their own. Same applied to the RC Church's training school on Abemama.

In 1922, a post-primary boarding school, named KGVS after the then king and located next to the Education Department on Tarawa, marked the first move by the Colony Government into providing schools. Although seeming to break with the policy of not being involved in local social development, such development motives were not paramount in the idea for KGVS: instead, it was intended only to educate a limited number of *I-Kiribati* and Tuvaluan young men to perform clerical work for the Colony Government and British Phosphate Commission, or to act as native government officials – the annual intake for the first several years was about 20. A significant ingredient of this education was English, because graduates needed English to perform the clerical work for which their studies were intended to prepare them. However, the original intention of KGVS was soon displaced by a more magnanimous approach, albeit after some rancour between two groups.

The one group had initiated KGVS; it was somewhat conservative, comprising the older Colony Government officials (e.g., Grimble, who was by then the Resident Commissioner) on Banaba and senior officials in Suva and London. The other group, more liberal in its thinking, comprised the *I-Matang* teachers who had arrived from Britain and its dominions to establish KGVS, staff of the Education Department on Tarawa and some younger officials in the Colony (e.g., Maude) and Suva (Burnett, 2005; Macdonald, 1982a; Maude, 1977).

The conservative group expected that most *I-Nikunau* would spend their lives on Nikunau and pursue a *kawa* life (to fish, cut toddy and copra, be parents, contribute domestically, be Christians, etc.), perhaps going to Banaba, Nauru, etc. as labourers for short periods (see Burnett, 2007; Lundsgaarde, 1974). They were concerned that, if too many *I-Nikunau* and other *I-Kiribati* were educated to too high a level, including in English, it could raise their expectations unrealistically, and one result of this might be social disgruntlement and even political discontent. Indeed, restricting numbers and the curriculum was consistent with Resident Commissioner Grimble's Museum Policy, which, according to Maude (1977), was based on the belief that the Kiribati and Tuvalu Islands were incapable of development, and so best kept "a close preserve inviolate from European rapacity" (p. v). In a parallel development, Grimble compiled the aforementioned Regulations for the Good Order (1933), whose extended array of restrictions on various matters (e.g., *tibutibu*, canoe use and fishing, curfew, holding *botaki* and dance events, and entering the government station) provide "a classic statement of the paternalistic nature of the administrative structure that had emerged" (Macdonald, 1982a, p. 127) and, presumably, of the restricted curriculum envisaged in the formal education system, if and when it was temporalized. The missions supported this group, believing advancing their education might reduce *I-Nikunau's* willingness to accept church discipline and, in any case, wanting to retain their roles as providers of primary education.

In contrast, the liberal group, especially the teachers, had other ideas, and it was these which prevailed, particularly once Grimble was out of the picture by the mid-1930s. They wanted to extend the curriculum and increase participation at secondary level, and revise the philosophic rationale of the system. Indeed, they sought a review of the Colony's capacity for development and of the Colony Government's roles in development (Macdonald, 1982a). Between them and their successors, they extended the KGVS curriculum to broader academic subjects than were required merely to clerk. Nevertheless, this curriculum included English as the officially prescribed medium of teaching, learning and everything else (Burnett, 2005, 2009a; Macdonald, 1982a),[70] and it is only quite recently that English's officially prescribed

exclusivity at KGVEBS has changed. The teachers and their allies also steadily increased student intakes at KGVS, an expansion their immediate post-war successors continued; this expansion was despite shortages of funds, personnel and physical resources, both during the Great Depression and after the school was re-established beside the Colony being restored – indeed, delays occurred to a Colonial Development and Welfare Fund development project to upgrade the school in the early 1950s.

The 1950s successors of this liberal group were also instrumental in establishing EBS, which eventually opened in 1959, also financed from the fund and after one or two deferments because of the post-war shortages, and notwithstanding conservative attitudes to the education of young women, including among *I-Kiribati*. Furthermore, under its project approval remit, although EBS was only supposed to educate young women in a manner seen as suited to their gender (Burnett, 2002), that restricted curriculum was also short-lived; indeed, barely a decade later, the merger occurred to bring about the co-educational KGVEBS, with a curriculum which distinguished a lot less according to gender roles than befitted local traditions, although conservative norms about gender roles then current in Britain did prevail (e.g., in areas of sports and technical subjects, and boys tending towards sciences and girls towards arts). Places at KGVS and EBS, and then KGVEBS, soon became much sought after, and while the number of places was expanded, this expansion could not keep pace with demand for places. This led to the creation of an annual common entrance examination for all primary school pupils in order to select intakes.

It also led the KPC (now KUC) and RC Church, and, later, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and Seventh Day Adventist Church to establish co-educational schools in the secondary field; the KPC and RC Church's increased involvement in secondary education coincided with their withdrawal from the primary sector. Most of this provision was on Tarawa although there were schools on Beru, Nonouti, Abemama and Abaiang. As well as a response to insufficient secondary level places being available for their children, the churches' involvement was a way for each faith to attract and retain young people, as had been the case in the primary sector area. The entrance examinations for KGVEBS also came to be used by these schools; they took the second cut, with the rest exiting the system after completing primary school (see Burnett, 2004).

Secondary education continued under the Republic Government as above during the 1980s. Except, the Republic Government tried to provide most Outer Islands with community high schools. But this notion was rejected by so many parents that these schools failed to materialise; the parents' objection was that the curriculum of the proposed schools contrasted with KGVEBS, being orientated to practical subsistence, local vocations and young people remaining on their Outer Island (see Hindson, 1985). In the meantime, notwithstanding the expansion of KGVEBS, including through new school premises, and further provision arising from investment in secondary education by churches, increases in demands for places was not met with increases in supply. Thus, secondary education was becoming even more selective, and further away from being universal.

To address this in the 1990s, the Republic Government first established two more secondary schools, and then it established the junior secondary school system, which meant by the early 2000s at least one school on most islands, including the Tekabangaki JSS at Rungata mentioned in Chapter 2. Concomitant with these junior secondary schools being created, the existing secondary schools were re-designated as senior secondary

schools (Years 10 to 13), entailing an increase in the number of places available in these year groups. Even so, study at this senior level is far from universal, and as was the case for secondary education from Year 7, an entrance examination is now used for selection into Year 10.

The two additional secondary schools have some relevance for *I-Nikunau*. One was established on Tabiteuea with the intention that it should serve the southern Kiribati cluster of islands, including Nikunau. The other on Tabuaeran is to cater for the increased new-settler population (including *I-Nikunau*) in the Line Islands. However, similar to the church schools named above on Outer Islands, both are much smaller and less resourced than KGVEBS is. The continuing smallness of the school on Tabiteuea derives from its unpopularity among *non-I-Tabiteuea*, including *I-Nikunau*. Although it is closer to Nikunau geographically than Tarawa is, this is not so in terms of convenient travel. What is more, most potential *I-Nikunau* students do not have *utu* on Tabiteuea with whom they can live, whereas they do have such *utu* on Tarawa. Both schools have often been unpopular also with teaching staff, who are used to life on Tarawa, rather than on Outer Islands.

Establishing the junior secondary school system was a major step in a Republic Government policy to make entry to secondary education universal and compulsory, rather than selective, based on examinations. It means that all children on Nikunau can now stay at school until at least Year 9 and need not leave the atoll to do so. However, how they and their parents see these developments is not straightforward, as discussed later in the chapter.

With the Republic Government taking over secondary education from the Colony Government, so the teaching staff were localised. The important role *I-Matang* teachers had in secondary education policy is related above. Such teachers continued at KGVEBS and other secondary schools well into the 1990s, although gradually *I-Kiribati* joined the staff of these schools, so much so that virtually all their permanent teaching staff are now *I-Kiribati*, as has been the case in primary schools for much longer. Moreover, until very recently, most of these staff, especially the senior teachers, were themselves KGVEBS students in the period when most teachers were *I-Matang*, and so were inculcated in the ways of these times, albeit that they went on from KGVEBS to obtain degrees and teacher qualifications overseas. Even so, these teachers have localised methods somewhat, if not the syllabus contents, including that, as mentioned above, the language of teaching has increasingly become *te taetae ni Kiribati*, both for practical reasons, as teaching positions were localised, and as a matter of cultural policy, in keeping with markedly changed international attitudes to indigenous languages (e.g., Welsh, *Te Reo* Māori).

Nevertheless, English is still important at school because most of the textbooks in use are in English, not to mention that they often portray Anglosphere contexts. The delivery of the syllabus and the practising of English are helped by the supply of missionaries, contract teachers and volunteers in the secondary sector being more extensive and dependable than in the primary sector. What is more, the futures of many students include English-language study at universities or other tertiary institutions overseas and working for the Republic Government, etc. in written English, at least, and probably spoken English too (e.g., in dealing with aid organisations, international church groups). Besides, English is also the language of students aspiring to work overseas or to emigrate.

### *13.2.5 Tertiary Study*

On the subject of tertiary education for *I-Nikunau*, the opportunities for tertiary study, whether local or overseas, have come about through a mixture of Colony or Republic Government and aid organisation activities. Similar to even junior secondary provision until very recently, participation in tertiary study has invariably involved *I-Nikunau* being away from Nikunau, with consequences of many *I-Nikunau* staying away permanently, except to visit. Indeed, provision within Kiribati got underway only in the Colony Government's last decade or so. It established the vocational institutions mentioned above for seafarers, fishers, teachers, nurses, clerks and tradespersons. As with KGVEBS, etc., the administrators and teachers at these institutions were originally English or other *I-Matang*, and the language of tuition, etc. was English. The Colony Government was also party to the aforementioned University of the South Pacific being established in Suva in 1968 as a regional university; as well as its present 12 member countries, the New Zealand and British Governments were involved (University of the South Pacific, 2018). The Republic Government is now one of the University of the South Pacific's principals, making an annual grant towards its operating expenses. In 1976, the university's Kiribati Campus was opened as a one-room office on the KGVEBS campus in Bikenibeu on Tarawa. The Kiribati Campus was moved further along the atoll to the present site at Teaoraereke in 1978; that campus was subject to a major redevelopment in 2015. The Kiribati Campus now caters for as many as 3,000 students, mostly studying part-time degree, diploma and certificate courses, using distance learning materials supplied from the main campuses in Fiji or Vanuatu but tutored on Tarawa by a variety of mostly casually employed tutors, *I-Kiribati*, *I-Matang* and others. Assessment is also conducted locally but is administered from the main campuses, with students taking the same assessments as students based in other countries.[71]

Before this local provision was established, *I-Nikunau*, along with other *I-Kiribati*, were going overseas to obtain tertiary education. This was initiated in the 1920s when a few *I-Kiribati* attended the Suva Medical School (now part of the Fiji National University) to train as medical dressers (see Fiji National University: College of Medicine, 2016; "Fiji Medicine Men," 1944; GEIC, 1957). Numbers, subjects studied, whether academic or vocational, and places visited gradually expanded, so much so that the local provision referred to above was also instituted, as demand and supply warranted and resources became available.

For many years, the numbers participating locally and overseas tended to reflect the Colony Government and then Republic Government's estimates of how many persons with particular specialist knowledge and skills would be needed according to national plans (see GEIC, 1970; Government of Kiribati, 1983). Although national plans (e.g., Government of Kiribati, 2016b), the availability of scholarships and similar still influence student choices of what to study and where, now most subjects across the sciences, arts, humanities and professions are studied; levels of study are bachelor, master and doctor, and places of study have included Fiji, Vanuatu, Papua New Guinea, Australia, New Zealand, Cuba and the United Kingdom.

While the recent expansion of the University of the South Pacific Kiribati Campus has meant more studying at undergraduate level is occurring in Kiribati, the preference is still to go overseas to study at this and postgraduate level – growth in demand for courses at the Kiribati Campus is because increase in numbers of Year

13 students has outstripped increases in the number scholarships available, and so the proportion who can obtain scholarships to study overseas is falling. Meanwhile, the vocational institutions on Tarawa have expanded but even so, demand from the youth population has continued to outstrip what they are able to supply. Reasons for this demand include simply that the youth population on Tarawa is growing quickly through procreation and immigration. Besides, the numbers wanting work on Tarawa exceeds the supply of jobs available, and qualifications are seen as improving job prospects. Studying is also a means of keeping busy, as well as a source of a living allowance. Furthermore, the courses and qualifications are seen as an avenue to obtaining work overseas, perhaps in an effort to emigrate. Indeed, a course has recently commenced at one institution covering the agricultural, horticultural and vinicultural knowledge and skills needed by workers who might participate in Recognised Seasonal Employer schemes in New Zealand.

In these vocational institutions, much localisation in staff and language has occurred, but perhaps not quite as much as in secondary education, particularly in the matter of advisors to the principals, rather than the teaching staff. A reason for the presence of foreign advisors is that aid organisations and the Republic Government have tried to more than just raise the standard of qualifications to those in metropolitan countries but have imported overseas programmes and qualifications, with students on Tarawa being assessed in common with students studying in those countries. One intention is so that emigrants will find their qualifications are accepted by employers in the countries where they go for work or even to settle (see Chapter 4.2 and below). However, whether this importing of courses and qualifications makes sense is questionable, given that for the time being most students will stay in Kiribati after graduating, if indeed they do graduate – foreign courses usually involve not only alien ideas but also alien contexts, so adding to the difficulty of passing them (see Dixon, 2004b).

Regarding teachers, teaching and curricula experienced by *I-Nikunau* and other *I-Kiribati* studying overseas, although sometimes other foreign languages may be involved (e.g., medical training received in Cuba is conducted in Spanish), English is the main language of study in the countries to which students are sent. The curricula derive from ideas, concepts, contexts, etc. relevant to the home countries of the institutions, as well as the English-language research literature and English-language textbooks. The lecturers, teachers, etc. may be from various countries, but few, if any, are ever Kiribati expatriates. Not only that but also most are unlikely to know much about Kiribati, except as a likely casualty of sea-level rise, and many may not have even heard of it. Same pertains to the authors of the distance-learning materials, etc. which comprise the increasing but still limited range of undergraduate courses available at the University of the South Pacific Kiribati Campus. A saving grace is that many of these courses are tutored by *I-Kiribati* in a combination of *te taetae ni Kiribati* and English. Furthermore, the position of director of the Kiribati Campus has been held by *I-Kiribati* for over three decades, with most support positions likewise.

## 13.3 Esteem and Impact of Non-Traditional Education

The great enthusiasm *I-Nikunau* have shown for knowledge about the outside world is often remarked on by people reminiscing about their visits to Nikunau and time they spent in *mwaneaba*; authors including Grimble (1952), Maude (1977) and the like confirm such

experiences. As related in Chapter 5.1, curiosity was a major factor in *I-Nikunau* and other *I-Kiribati* joining up as ship's crew or taking up other opportunities to travel elsewhere; on their return, the stories they told about what they saw encouraged others to do likewise. One appeal of churches was the stories spoken and written in *te taetae ni Kiribati* from the Bible, etc. This enthusiasm applies to knowledge of their own world, as they see it or even as interpreted by outsiders. It applies to the forms this knowledge can take, be it orally, as traditional stories or in presentations voiced by teachers and others from elsewhere; or in written and cinematic forms, as introduced by churches, colonial and aid sources and commercial sources. It applies to the skills needed to access said knowledge, including listening, speaking, watching, reading and writing, and in seeking meaning from what is spoken, observed or written.

As claimed in Chapter 12.3, outside knowledge, and ways of acquiring and applying same, was additional, even an alternative, to what *unimane* and *unaine* have had to offer; it enabled some *I-Nikunau* to be less dependent and predisposed to these elders and their authority, including making inquiries, posing questions and finding answers without offending these elders. Moreover, curtailment of the traditional education system was not something *I-Nikunau* resisted very much, retaining parts which suited them, be it "survival" skills for living on a remote, tropical atoll, aspects of the genealogy or how to dance. Indeed, this last item is a subject in which demarcations between the traditional and the formal have long persisted, with traditional dance being learnt from one's elders not from schoolteachers (cf. Autio, 2010; Macdonald, 1982a). More generally, in Kiribati and elsewhere, *unimane* and *unaine* still figure in the personal development of young *I-Nikunau*, more so than have been my latter day experiences and observations of people from elsewhere and of other cultures.

### *Qualifying to Emigrate*

Among parents and young adult learners, the aforesaid enthusiasm for learning knowledge about the outside world has been evident in their preferences for their children, and even themselves, to study subjects and gain qualifications which might give them opportunities to leave Nikunau and the *kawa* subsistence life there – see mention above of the failure of community high schools–(Burnett, 1999, 2007; Dixon, 2004b; Geddes et al., 1982; McCreary & Boardman, 1968), or nowadays, to leave Tarawa, because of its adverse living conditions and insecure future (see Chapter 3). *I-Nikunau* have come to see qualifications as enablers of emigration on their terms, rather than under the categories *environment refugee* or *climate refugee* (cf. Smith & McNamara, 2015; Williams, 2008). This is notwithstanding the frequent experiences of recent immigrants that qualifications obtained in Kiribati (e.g., in teaching, nursing and various trades) are not recognised in metropolitan countries in which they have sought to settle, including New Zealand (see Chapter 4.2). Most of those affected have not always appreciated the problem until after their arrival and have usually had to accept low-paid, unskilled jobs, at least temporarily. Thompson (2016) finds that, in order to obtain better jobs, many caught in this situation have either upgraded their qualifications to ones which are recognised or are intent on doing so. Alternatively, they were studying for new tertiary education qualifications anyway; this was more often among adult women than their male partners (cf. McCreary & Boardman, 1968), as borne out in findings published by Statistics New Zealand (2014) about the gender of adults studying.

### *Knowledge Varying by Location*

The mixtures between the outcomes of traditional and formal education differ according to where *I-Nikunau* are located, be it in traditional island, urban island or metropolitan country settings. On Nikunau, the learning of *non-I-Kiribati* knowledge of any sort is limited mainly to the school classroom and textbooks, and, away from school, stories told by returning residents and foreign visitors, motion pictures and church texts. Indeed, the exposure to learning of an *I-Kiribati* nature, except as it derives from Nikunau, can also be rare, such as extending only to the teacher being from another island and having trained on Tarawa. This may be such that students on Nikunau know more about the outside, Anglosphere world of textbooks and motion pictures than they do about Tarawa, other islands in the Republic or neighbouring Pacific countries.

On Tarawa, the potential exposure to *non-I-Kiribati* learning is undoubtedly greater than on Nikunau. This includes seeing foreign visitors and returning residents, and having much greater potential to mix with them, and through accessing the Internet. However, it is still often dominated by their exposure to knowledge at school. Conversely, largely missing from this learning are things about life on Outer Islands, including knowledge and skills for surviving on atolls traditionally (cf. Weir et al., 2017). This is other than through what they learn from stories told by their grandparents perhaps.

In metropolitan countries, the formal education received by *I-Kiribati* children reflects life in general around them, more so than is the case in Kiribati; one reason for this is that the curricula and textbooks used, like those in Kiribati, reflect the Anglosphere world. At school, reflecting life in general away from the home or community, Kiribati barely rates a mention, either in the main curriculum or in extra-curricular activities, unless it is to do with global warming and climate change (Bedford & Bedford, 2010; Fedor, 2012; Gillard & Dyson, 2012; Taberannang, 2011; Thompson, 2016). That this even applies in New Zealand is notwithstanding its various idiosyncrasies, both among the dominant *Pākehā* and because of bi- or multi-culturalism. I am referring to the coverage in New Zealand schools of things Māori and things Pacific, both within the curriculum and through extra-curricular activities for so-called Pasifika students (e.g., Pasifika speech competitions – see Riccarton High School, 2017). However, in these, Kiribati is somewhat incidental to Samoa, Tonga, etc.

This state of affairs is understandable both from the points of view of the so-called Pasifika Community itself and of the New Zealand authorities[72] and their schools. The population of *I-Kiribati* in New Zealand may be significant by Kiribati standards but makes up a tiny proportion only of the population with affiliations to any of the Pacific Islands, as illustrated in Figure 12 (see Bedford, 2008; Bedford & Bedford, 2013; Wright & Hornblow, 2008). Moreover, *I-Kiribati* comprise barely 0.05% of New Zealand's population, and so are an insignificant minority, so much so that there is no separate box for them to tick on official forms, whether related to education or other governmental administration processes – *I-Kiribati* are expected to tick the *Other Pacific* box. In any case, in normal parlance at school, and elsewhere, *I-Kiribati* children, and adults, are often referred to as Pacific Islanders or Pasifika, rather than *I-Kiribati*. However, among the persons comprising this(ese) category(ies), *I-Kiribati* are gradually being acknowledged more as distinct, although even among these persons, the question, "Where's that?" is still not unusual. The upshot the matters just raised is that *I-Kiribati* children's exposure in New Zealand to tacit and explicit knowledge about Kiribati and *I-Kiribati* mainly occurs at home and during regular diasporic community activities, rather than at school (cf. Burnett & Bond, 2020).

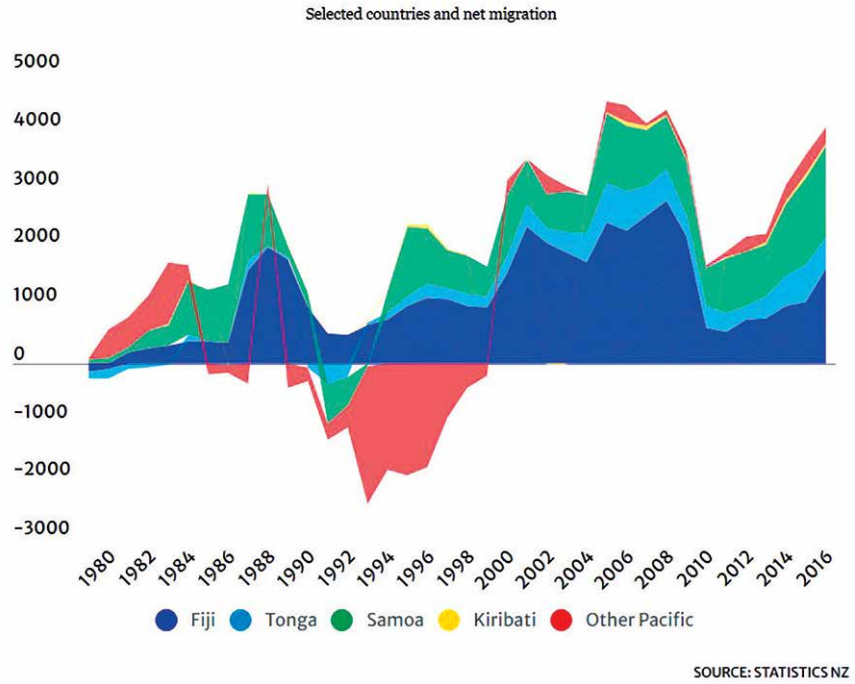



*Figure 12.* Pacific Islander Net Immigration to New Zealand 1979-2016 (Source: Edens, 2017).

The same is true in other diasporic communities as it is in New Zealand. Thus, the constitution of the Kiribati Tungaru Association in Britain includes among its aims references to furthering tacit and explicit knowledge about Kiribati and *I-Kiribati* among community members, including children, the knowledge often extending to language, dancing and culture generally (see Kiribati Tungaru Association, 2017, 2019). That this is effective is reflected in what is said in Chapter 4.1 about members brought up in this diasporic community visiting Kiribati as young adults.

### *Conflicts between Traditional and Formal Education*

Continuing the theme of the compatibility of traditional and formal education, while the two complement each other in some respects, they can also conflict. On Tarawa, let alone Nikunau, participation in formal education has meant outside knowledge of questionable relevance displacing arguably still valid knowledge for *I-Nikunau* and other *I-Kiribati*. Two significant areas of *I-Nikunau's* cultural circumstances are particularly concerning, namely, their knowledge of their material culture and sustaining life in general on Nikunau and similar places, and their legends, history and ancestry (cf. Republic of Kiribati, 2009).

In New Zealand, particularly in non-mixed *I-Kiribati* households, my observations suggest that *unimane* and *unaine* are concerned for the spiritual well-being and general discipline of the young in the face of the temporal education rendered in the schools which most *I-Kiribati* children attend. This is consistent with divergences between learning at school and learning at home. The school curriculum encourages students to speak out, challenge, criticise and so on. As Roman (2013) points out, parents and grandparents do

not always appreciate these qualities, leading to confusion, even conflict, when children behave at home according to this school curriculum. Further confusion arises at school when children behave as they are taught at home: their teachers are apt to criticise them for not participating in discussions and not expressing opinions. An additional complication arises because of what I said in introducing Part II about *kamama* attaching no matter whether a person answers a question correctly or incorrectly; this further discourages curiosity and encourages introversion (McCreary & Boardman, 1968).

A related dilemma I observe for parents in New Zealand, as borne out by Roman (2013) and Thompson (2016), is whether or not to encourage their children to mix socially with *non-I-Kiribati* children; some parents fear not only loss of language and culture but also exposure to undesirable activities, including roaming the streets at night and substance abuse. However, no matter what their parents' views are, children do mix at school, as encouraged by the school curriculum, be it in academic activities, sports or other pursuits.

Another matter pointed out by Roman (2013) relates to relations between students, teachers and parents in New Zealand. He indicates *I-Kiribati* parents, fathers especially, are not used to the amount of parental involvement there is in raising children in New Zealand compared with Tarawa. This involvement ranges from participating in parent-teacher sessions at school to spending time with children at home or at sports and on outings. For example, some parents find it peculiar culturally to take children on tours of the countryside to look at flora, fauna, landscape and other geological features, or to visit any tourist and leisure attractions, let alone those with an educational slant, such as museums, art galleries and theatres.

## 13.4 Formal Education and its Wider Consequences

In Chapter 12.3, relating Grimble's assessment of the effect of the LMS in the southern Kiribati Islands, I make mention of the impact of the mission schools, and so there is no need to repeat that here. Similarly, in Chapter 5.2, I mention the impact of KGVS, EBS and then KGVEBS on *I-Nikunau*, and other Outer Islanders, emigrating from their islands and residing and often settling on Tarawa. This(ese) school(s), in its various guises and at various junctures since its inception(s) has played other significant parts in shaping Kiribati and *I-Kiribati*, including many *I-Nikunau*, be it in terms of other immigration pathways, or gender emancipation, language use and other cultural aspects. To reiterate and elaborate, the schools' location on Tarawa meant that *I-Nikunau* who succeeded in the annual entrance examinations taken on Nikunau went to study on Tarawa. Although many returned home to Nikunau, etc. for each December-January break, shipping schedules permitting, they in effect lived on Tarawa while completing their multi-year programme, and so swelled its population. Furthermore, after graduating, the work and life which most suited them was on Tarawa, and so their immigration there was likely to be longer term, if not permanent.

A further twist arose during the 1960s. It having become clear that pass rates in the annual entrance examinations were increasingly skewed in favour of children schooled on Tarawa, parents on Nikunau, like those elsewhere, sent their children of primary school age, and eventually even pre-primary school age, to live with *utu* on Tarawa in order to be schooled there (Burnett, 2002; confidential personal communication from a former student who went through this process, 1987), thus swelling immigration even more. The reasons for study on Tarawa proving advantageous in the entrance

examinations included greater exposure among primary school students to the English language, including because in the past some teachers were *I-Matang* and now because of the incidence of the Internet; the better physical resources available in schools there than on Nikunau; the wider experiences of life to be had on Tarawa in general; the learning materials and similar available there about life outside the country, including though the national and other libraries, motion pictures and the Internet; and young persons on Tarawa having fewer subsistence work comitments than those on Nikunau have (Burnett, 2005; Pitchford, 1981).

With the advent of junior secondary schools, a further twist has been added. School up to Year 9 is now universal but beyond that it is still selective, with annual entrance examinations held in Year 9 to select who will be admitted to senior secondary school at Year 10. An expected equivalent bias in these examinations towards graduates from junior secondary schools on Tarawa means Nikunau-resident parents still have an incentive to send children to live with *utu* on Tarawa to try to overcome this bias. Conversely, it might be hypothesised that the establishment of the Tekabangaki JSS has made it even more difficult for *I-Nikunau* living on Nikunau to reach the more highly regarded schools on Tarawa because students who have studied on Nikunau for three years beyond primary are competing for places with students who have done likewise on Tarawa.

Regarding senior secondary schools, two other things to say about the present are as follows. First, the difference in status of some church secondary schools vis-à-vis KGVEBS has gradually changed, especially the church schools whose curriculum has extended to more temporal areas or which appear to be better resourced than KGVEBS is. Indeed, this change is so much so that one or two church schools now compete with KGVEBS to recruit the students topping the entrance examinations. What is more, increasing proportions of their graduates have gained scholarships to enable them to go onto tertiary study. Second, although the various government and church schools mentioned above as being on Outer Islands continue to operate, the students from Nikunau, and *I-Nikunau* in general, who succeed in the entrance examinations mostly attend senior secondary schools on Tarawa, including because they can stay with *utu* there, whereas many lack for *utu* on the atolls with senior secondary schools which are closer to Nikunau than Tarawa is geographically, namely, Beru, Tabiteuea, Nonouti and Abemama. Besides, the KUC school on Beru seems to be struggling to survive (Office of Te Beretitenti and T'Makei Services, 2012a).

On the matter of EBS and then KGVEBS's role in gender emancipation, the beginnings of this are outlined in Chapter 13.2.4, and the trend has continued there and at other secondary schools, especially on Tarawa, and then affected women's status in employment, politics and community organisations. On Nikunau, where attitudes to gender in *kawa* are still traditional and rather conservative (confidential personal communication, 2017, from an election candidate) (cf. McNamara & Westoby, 2014), some officials of the Island Council and courts, and representing the Republic Government, are held by women. The position in *kawa* on Nikunau is despite longstanding community groups advancing the cause of women (e.g., *Reitan Aine Kamatu* or RAK, about which see Rose, 2014, and TaNiMwaRuTaMu – see Ministry of Internal and Social Affairs, 2007).

Regarding language, I allude to this numerous times up to now, including the challenge English in particular poses for *I-Nikunau* and other *I-Kiribati* wherever and whenever it is used, given *te taetae ni Kiribati* is their everyday language. Reiterating too, the question of the language of tuition, textbooks, ideas, assessment, etc. arises in schools in Kiribati,

as Burnett delves into in his work on school education (see esp. 2005, 2009a). He argues English being (one of) the language(s) of instruction, presents something of a double-edged sword. For *I-Nikunau* taught on Nikunau, while at primary school and, since 2001, at Tekabangaki JSS, English has always presented difficulties, and proved disadvantageous, including in advancing through the formal education system or into paid employment requiring literacy. This is compared with anyone taught on Banaba and, later, Tarawa, and anywhere else where pupils were exposed to English-language usage more than on Nikunau. Indeed, for the vast majority of *I-Nikunau* and other *I-Kiribati*, whether on Nikunau and other Outer Islands or even on Tarawa, English, particularly spoken English, remains only a school language.

*I-Nikunau* and other *I-Kiribati* living outside Kiribati and in the midst of people whose mother tongue, or common language, is English are also affected by the issue of English competence. This is particularly so if they live in non-mixed *I-Kiribati* households and are part of diasporic communities, in which *te taetae ni Kiribati* predominates, as is the case of most *I-Kiribati* in New Zealand. By way of background to this matter, Statistics New Zealand (2014) reports that 230 (16%) of *I-Kiribati* born in Kiribati but living in New Zealand cannot speak English, compared with 420 (68%) of *I-Kiribati* born in New Zealand who cannot speak *te taetae ni Kiribati*. Among factors behind these differences are how old children were when New Zealand became their place of abode, and how long they and other members of their household have been in New Zealand. Other factors are the language children are expected to use at home, the length of time they have attended school in New Zealand, and their exposure to efforts among older generations away from Kiribati for younger generations to learn *te taetae ni Kiribati* and about Kiribati culture.

Gillard and Dyson (2012) draw attention to the predicament for many parents in New Zealand of whether they should try to make English a household language, either beside *te taetae ni Kiribati* or otherwise; this is assuming that such a choice is possible, which it may not be if the parents themselves lack competence in English. This is part of a wider dilemma for these parents of how much exposure their young children should have to English before they start pre-school or primary school. The perception that lack of English will disadvantage their children when they start is often borne out by events, particularly when the number of *I-Kiribati* attending a school is tiny; indeed, they might be exposed to teasing or worse from children of other races (Thompson, 2016). This is notwithstanding evidence that learning a mother tongue before English may enhance a child's ability to learn English and other languages, and to do well at school (Clarke, 2009).

English competence has broader consequences within these same diasporic communities. For example, my experience at the frequent *botaki* in New Zealand is of separate groups arising between children, and adults for that matter, according to how comfortable they are in speaking *te taetae ni Kiribati* compared with English, and vice versa. It is also my experience that, notwithstanding some competence in spoken and written English derived from everyday situations, English presents a barrier in official or business situations, including completing forms (see Chapter 4.2) and conducting face-to-face transactions (see Chapter 10.3).

# 14

# Social Circumstances (*te mauri ao te raoi*)

*I-Nikunau's* social circumstances are interrelated with their other circumstances, as the way I have drawn Figure 7 is meant to emphasise. Thus, many of these social circumstances have been at least touched on already, and so this chapter is mainly about matters I adjudge to be important for encompassing other relevant matters. The matters in question include *mwenga* as the basic kin units; *botaki* and community; *te katei ni Kiribati* and differentiation; *aba*, lands and people; *unimane*, *unaine* and other age and gender statuses; genealogical accounts; and social categories and resources of a colonial and post-colonial nature. I survey how these matters have been changing, recognising their significance sometimes waxing or waning. I also consider how they have come to differ according to where *I-Nikunau* are located, as exemplified by metropolitan New Zealand compared with urban atoll Tarawa, and compared with traditional Nikunau.

## 14.1 *Mwenga* as the Basic Kin Units

Among *I-Nikunau* socially, *mwenga* comprise the basic kin units, as comes through in Part II *I-Nikunau* in the Present; this is alongside their importance to *I-Nikunau's* demographic (see Chapter 6), economic (see Chapter 7) and political (see Chapter 11) circumstances. For reasons, among others, of geographical separation and economic independence, this may be more apparent in New Zealand than on Tarawa, and then again clearer than on Nikunau. However, that is not to say that the situation of most *I-Kiribati* households in the several diasporic communities in New Zealand resemble even tentatively the norms of the Anglosphere society around them. Indeed, except for *Māori iwi* and diaspora of other Pacific Island states (e.g., Samoa, Tonga), the sense of *mwenga* interdependence, helping each other out, cooperating, coming together and belonging as part of daily life (cf. Thompson, 2016) is much stronger and somewhat different in nature compared with most of the other ethnocultural groups among which these *I-Kiribati* diasporic communities live, including those originating, for example, in several of Asia's most populous countries.

It is arguable that this characteristic of *mwenga* interdependence, no matter whether on Tarawa or in New Zealand, reflects the social circumstances familiar to *I-Nikunau* on Nikunau, present and past, not only since *kawa* became the ascendant form of settlement but also before, when *kainga* were the ascendant form (see Chapter 6.2). For example, on occasions when I stayed in Tabomatang in the 1980s, *mwenga* of each *te utu* were at times so closely knit as to be difficult for me to distinguish, as a then uninitiated outsider. What

is more, all *mwenga* were part of *te kawa*, and for the frequent political, social and cultural activities going on in it were expected to complete preparatory work, take contributions of victuals, etc., and be participants.

On Nikunau, another traditional social feature of *mwenga*, as again I observed in the 1980s, was the important place of senior women in their organisation, including in how these women organised the younger women and the children in domestic choring and such like (cf. Rose, 2014). Moreover, all the women were involved in *kawa* and church activities, such as weaving mats, baskets, and fishing hats, and rolling string and cigarette "paper". When not around, the children were often attending the *inter-kawa* primary schools (see Chapter 13) or, in the case of older boys, were with their fathers. For the men's part, the many who were able-bodied fished and worked *aba* belonging both to them and to those whose owners were working away or otherwise absent, whether this turned out as temporary or permanent. Infirm and old men stayed in *te kawa*, socialising in *te mwenga*, if not in *te mwaneaba*. This picture continues today, albeit affected by changes related above to demography, the economy, etc.

The patterns of daily life in and around *mwenga* and *kawa* I have just described are reflected on Tarawa and in New Zealand. Except, men's work is often in waged or, even, salaried jobs and women too are often in employment, and *mwenga* rely economically on goods and services bought with cash, rather than acquired through subsisting, very much more so in New Zealand (see Chapters 3, 4.2, 7.2, 7.3 and 10).

## 14.2 Community Activities and *Botaki*

Beyond *mwenga*, a regular diet of communal activities goes on, including in or near the church *mwaneaba* or the other communal venues available in *kawa*. As alluded to in the previous section, they include daily routine gatherings of *unimane* to eat, smoke and talk as one group. Similarly, anyone and everyone can partake in communal pastimes, including with card and board games, playing and listening to music, engaging in other sports and entertainment, traditional and modern, and watching motion picture films.

Before the spate of contemporary media, a screening occurred of one film each week. Thus, during my stays on Nikunau in the 1980s, a film would arrive via the weekly internal air service and be screened on successive nights in the six *kawa* along the atoll.[73] The social, cultural and other significances of these films should not be underestimated. For many *I-Nikunau*, they were a rare opportunity to observe the world beyond Nikunau, neighbouring islands, Banaba or Nauru, albeit as slanted by Hollywood and other English-language filmmakers. Although few seemed to follow the dialogue or felt an inclination to relate to the plot, *I-Nikunau* attended enthusiastically at these screenings, and wondered at a world very few had had a chance to observe in person.

Church-related activities are still ubiquitous on Nikunau. This includes strict observance of *te Tabati*, which was the one day that the weekly reel-to-reel film was not shown in any *te kawa*; other forms of entertainment and pastimes were likewise forbidden. It extends to almost daily activities of various age and gender groups in fundraising, committee work, prayer and hymn gatherings and such like.

The communal activities also include celebrations of festivals and similar, entailing *botaki* involving the whole *te kawa* or portions of it (e.g., residents from a particular area of *te kawa*, young men's groups, women's groups, *kawa* welfare groups) for up to a few days, and similar shorter events to welcome, be hospitable to and farewell visitors.

Indeed, the most memorable activities from time I spent on Nikunau in Tabomatang, Tabutoa and other *kawa* were the *botaki* which took place in their *mwaneaba*, resembling those on Tabiteuea analysed by Kazama (2001) and Autio (2010). Staging these events involved a community effort from everyone. *Bowi* of *unimane*, or the quasi-traditional *mwaneaba* councils discussed in Chapter 11.4, determined the format, programme and, if discretionary, the timing of such events, as well as the contributions from each *mwenga* and the allocation of other responsibilities. I also participated in *te raniwi* (≅ celebration of a firstborn) and *te bomake* or *taumate* (≅ funeral), each held around *mwenga* of those affected, again including *botaki*, but with contributions mostly from the affected *utu ni kaan*.

Social events, activities and related matters like those just covered are frequent features of diasporic communities (see Chapters 3 and 4); I have participated in countless such events, usually from their periphery. Whether it be Tarawa or metropolitan countries, their timing and organisation invariably take account of other aspects of participants' lives. Most such aspects are external to the communities and their activities, and either do not occur on Nikunau or are under the control there of the same people who decide about events, in which case the events take higher priority and other aspects are revised to fit around them. The most obvious aspect which affects timing and organisation in New Zealand are participants' various employment commitments, which given the status of most people's jobs are not regular weekday, nine to five commitments, with personal choice for taking holidays. Children and young persons going to school and similar, or being involved in organised sports and extra-curricular activities, is a second obvious aspect.

Further differences apply in metropolitan countries compared with Nikunau and Tarawa. New Zealand can be used to exemplify these differences. Two practical matters there are the availability, conditions of use and costs of suitable venues, particularly those in which overnight stays in communal sleeping areas are permitted (e.g., *marae*, campgrounds, etc.); and travelling time and costs, particularly away from the Auckland conurbation. The distance between places in which *I-Kiribati mwenga* made up coherent groups was one reason for separate diasporic communities forming in New Zealand, once they have had a concentration somewhere of sufficient numbers to be regarded as big enough.

New Zealand also exemplifies a further difference; that is in who has responsibility for decision making about special events, etc. As well as the men whom tradition would lead one to expect, the persons making these decisions are groups comprising women and younger persons of either gender. Furthermore, in order to be able to transact with venue hirers, grantors, etc., formal associations have been incorporated and these groups make up their committees. Incidentally, in Great Britain, whereas for quite a time the *I-Kiribati* women partners in the mixed-race marriages made most decisions, albeit assisted by their *I-Matang* husbands, who often acted as go-betweens with third parties, that has now passed onto some of their grown-up children of either gender. On Tarawa, who makes these sorts of decisions began changing in the 1960s (see McCreary & Boardman, 1968), with a person's education and status at work gaining significance in terms of who makes up *te bowi* and actually participates in and influences decisions. However, in regard to gender, the situation there is still somewhere in between the situations on Nikunau and in New Zealand.

## 14.3 *Aba*, Lands and People

*Aba* comprising the atoll and marine areas adjacent to it were a significant social resource for generations of *I-Nikunau*, at least up to the third quarter of the 20th century; this applied even to *I-Nikunau* absent from the atoll. *Aba* bolstered individuality in among traditional societal constructions on Nikunau of *boti*, *kainga* and *utu*. *Te I-Nikunau* were born on their *aba*, and they conversed with each other, subsisted, worshipped, established *mwenga*, had children and were buried on them – indeed, Trussel and Groves (2003) give the translation of *aba* as land, people and generally the world. Thus, this social significance of *te aba* to *te I-Nikunau* paralleled its demographic (see Chapter 6.), economic (see Chapter 7) and political (see Chapter 11) significances, among others; moreover, they were prepared to defend their customary rights to *te aba*, physically or litigiously (see Baaro, 1987; Lawrence, 1992; Lundsgaarde, 1968b, 1974; Lundsgaarde & Silverman, 1972; Macdonald, 1971, 1982a; Maude & Maude, 1931; Maude, 1963; Pole, 1995; Roniti, 1988; Sabatier, 1939/1977; Thomas, 2001).

One way these social significances can be appreciated is from the number of terms in *te taetae ni Kiribati* which relate to *aba*. As these terms also bring out other important social relations in *I-Nikunau* society (cf. Grimble, 1989, re Butaritari), I shall enumerate them. Ownership implied enjoying usufructuary rights to *te aba* in life, and mostly to pass these rights on at death to a member of *utu ni kaan* as *te aba n utu* – for an elaboration of how this worked and its consequences in terms of landholdings and *boti-utu* relations, see Hockings (1984). However, there were exceptions and the list was extensive (Maude & Maude, 1981; Pole, 1995; Trussel & Groves, 2003), including the following. *Te aba n tibu* or *toba* was given for *tibutibu*, the adopted child obtaining the rights as if a natural child. *Te aba te bora* or *n tinaba* was given as part of *tinaba* relationships – the Christians eventually stamped out these relationships (see Chapter 12). *Te aba ni kakua* was given as a mark of gratitude for assistance. *Te aba ni mumuta* or *kuakua* was given as a reward for nursing. *Te aba n tangira* was a gift for other reasons. *Te aba n nenebo* or *nebonebo* formed compensation for murder, other serious wrongdoings, breach of promise of marriage, etc.–this compensation ended when the Colony Government instituted the practice of crime against, and punishment by, the state.[74] *Te aba n toka* stemmed from wars, which led to *aba* belonging to the vanquished being shared out (and captured former owners being enslaved or driven away)–any wars in the Kiribati Archipelago (e.g., on Tarawa) were curtailed in the early years of Colony Government – an example concerns an invasion of Nikunau by Teinai and his followers from Beru (see Maude, 1963, p. 16).

## 14.4 *Te Katei ni Kiribati* and Differentiation

Accepted behaviours and similar, as embodied in *te katei ni Kiribati*, are a feature during the events recounted in Chapter 14.2 and in the relationships associated with *aba* just enumerated, as well as more generally within *kawa* and diasporic communities. Such things as a persons' duties, responsibilities, obligations and limits of discretion under *te katei* seem generally understood but if these are not clear, or are infringed, then it falls to whoever comprises *te bowi* (i.e., *unimane*, the committee, etc.) to decide or act.

Looking further back, for much of the 19th century, social controls, etc. were widely impressed in the traditional education system outlined in Chapter 13.2.1 for initiating young people into society as adults, warriors, marriage partners, parents, etc. (see Grimble, 1921).

*Te katei* then evolved for *I-Nikunau* with the coming of the missions and other exposure they had to life and values associated with *I-Matang*, including through formal education and while working away. For example, *te katei* was modified to bring about observance of *te Tabati*, albeit in different ways depending on church affiliation. Even so, the version on Nikunau was, and has remained, traditional, with communal mores, obligations and expectations of individuals by age and gender being quite stringent still, and boundaries set around potential individual freedoms, or *differentiation* (cf. Autio, 2010).

This state of affairs is easier to see when contrasted with *te katei* applying on Tarawa. There, according to my observations and various informants, adherence has weakened somewhat in the past three or more decades. Similar applies to New Zealand, certainly compared with Nikunau and compared with Tarawa. Furthermore, even further weakening applies in Great Britain compared with New Zealand, almost certainly because of the *I-Matang* partner in the mixed marriages which formed the basis of the community there and, over and above that, the degree to which the diasporic community there is integrated with host nation communities, rather than separated from them, as is the case in New Zealand (see Chapter 4). However, the most pressing reasons for this weakening, or relaxation, of *te katei* temporally and spatially seems attributable to the onset of modernity, as reflected in and experienced through tenets of formal education, awareness and experience of values and general conduct in more liberal societies, participation on social media, and having more private possessions.

Moreover, *I-Nikunau* today are increasingly less connected to any original source of the controls incorporated in *te katei*, including by how the population is turning over, with one generation giving way to another, each seeming increasingly "enlightened". Thus, on Tarawa even, the proportion of the adult population with no experiential knowledge of life on Nikunau is quickly increasing. This is starting to happen in New Zealand in regard to experiential knowledge of life on Tarawa, let alone Nikunau. Thus, on Tarawa, ways brought from Nikunau have been displaced by ways formulated on Tarawa; and in New Zealand's case, ways brought from Tarawa are being displaced by ways formulated in New Zealand.

Concomitant with these various changes, especially the more recent ones, generations of *I-Nikunau* have become increasingly conscious of their capacities as individual selves and being part of a short family, and of the responsibilities and obligations which accompany these. Although this individuality tends to be more evident among *I-Nikunau* as one moves away from Nikunau into urban island and then metropolitan country diasporic communities, individuality has never been entirely absent among *I-Nikunau* on Nikunau. Indeed, based on studies among *I-Tabiteuea*, there is every indication that this individuality existed before *I-Matang* entered the scene and *I-Nikunau's* desires to be "differentiated" and "undifferentiated" are of long standing or part of tradition (see Autio, 2010).

One basis of this individuality, or differentiation, among a tradition of community, or undifferentiation, was *te I-Nikunau*'s holdings of *aba*. A further basis of his or her individuality was the specialist knowledge and skills he or she secreted from generation to generation (Geddes, 1977). As indicated in the previous section regarding *aba*, these individually held resources were as much social as demographic, economic and political. However, as also alluded to in that section, this individuality was obscured by their social, political and religious constructions of *boti*, *kainga*, *utu* and *mwenga*, which were at the centre of traditional *I-Nikunau* society, until they were disturbed and challenged by activities involving traders, missionaries and Colony Government officials.

*Te I-Nikunau*'s innate individuality was initially fuelled by the demise of *kainga*, which also had repercussions for the status of *boti* and caused major revisions to *utu* (see Chapter 6.2). These changes occurred alongside the heart of social control moving from the traditional *mwaneaba* (and *te kainga*) to the church *mwaneaba*; later, the cooperative enterprises and *Te Tautaeka* (including its island-based subordinate bodies, the Island Council and courts) came in the mix as well (cf. Hockings, 1984). Concomitantly, individuals (e.g., *te I-Tabiteuea*, *te I-Nikunau*) assumed a greater sense of personal and exclusive user rights to particular *aba* (Goodenough, 1955; Hockings, 1984; Lundsgaarde & Silverman, 1972; cf. Polanyi, 1957). The result was for previously obscured individuality to be made plainer and become more apparent.

Four further developments have brought out an even greater consciousness of self. Moreover, even though the four came from during the colonial period, they still have substance, albeit in more modern guises. They are particularly important in diasporic communities for whom ancestral *aba* are now mostly only of symbolic importance. First, conversion from beliefs about *I-Nikunau* living on Nikunau and the spirits of their ancestors living on Matang, etc. (see Latouche, 1983b) to Christianity entailed *te I-Nikunau* changing to whom they gave a reckoning. Instead of a shared reckoning by all *I-Nikunau* only to *unimane*, including because these *unimane* were expected to depart soon for Matang to meet these ancestors, *te I-Nikunau* was also obliged to give something of a personal reckoning to *Iehova* (see Chapters 11.2 and 12.2) and his Earthly representatives. Second, engaging in copra production, trade and paid work across the atoll, in the maritime trade and on lands beyond, as distinct from subsistence work around *kainga*, gave rise to *te I-Nikunau* participating in contracts and markets as an individual (see Chapter 7). Third, taxes (including the performance of communal workdays), school fees, fines, and licence fees were demanded from *te I-Nikunau* individually by governmental bodies (see Chapters 7 and 11.2.3). Fourth, the laws of the Colony Government, although cognisant of short family and households (i.e., *mwenga*), placed responsibility, obligations and restrictions on individual *te I-Nikunau*, and anyone who broke these laws was charged, tried and punished as an individual (see Chapter 11.2.3).

Of further significance in diasporic communities in metropolitan countries is for *I-Nikunau* to experience, and so be drawn into, an individualism of a modern kind. This individualism is rife in the ascendant Anglosphere cultures of these countries and easily rubs off on *te I-Kiribati*, particularly among those at school; indeed, as alluded to in Chapter 13, it is a deliberate aspect of the curriculum, and so their learning. This exposure is often a source of tension in *te mwenga*, particularly those spanning three generations, namely persons of school age, working age parents and the latter's elderly parents. Concomitantly, members of the eldest generation can be frustrated to find that, having reached the condition of *unimane* or *unaine*, these have lost some of their social status of yesteryear.

## 14.5 *Unimane*, *Unaine* and other Age and Gender Statuses

As just alluded to, gender, age and categories of same (e.g., male-female, young-old) are further important aspects of social circumstances which can be used to surface contrasts temporally and spatially. That is, between past and present, and according to whether *I-Nikunau* are living in traditional island, urban island or metropolitan country settings. Gender roles and behavioural expectations in general, while prevailing to some extent

(see Secretariat of the Pacific Community, 2010), are less marked today than at any time previously, including in the general conduct expected, permitted and tolerated because someone is male or female (see above and in other chapters where men, women and gender are written about) and in the knowledge and skills learnt and practised (see Chapter 13.2) (cf. Grimble, 1921, 1933; Hockings, 1984). Additionally, this is appreciably more so the further one moves away from Nikunau (cf. Autio, 2010), although, even on Nikunau, women are accepted in such former male roles as deacons, pastors and governmental administrators. However, it is probably significant that these examples are non-traditional roles arising from colonial interventions, and occur in non-traditional organisations.

In the matter of relations between ages, while older people, particularly those accorded the status of *unimane* and *unaine* still command respect, these relations have altered such that, as alluded to already, worldly knowledge and formal qualifications count at least as much as age, and gender for that matter, particularly in urban island and metropolitan country settings, where these criteria apply in other respects (e.g., positions in workplaces, determinants of income and wealth). Indeed, my longitudinal experience of the status of *unimane* on Nikunau is that from being ascendant in the late 1980s, this ascendancy seemed to have deteriorated considerably barely 20 years later. However, I should add the caveat that my later observations were brief and not as well situated as my earlier ones were, when I resided in *kawa* for several weeks at a time. Indeed, extended fieldwork studies in the late 1990s on Tabiteuea by Autio (2010) and Kazama (2001) would suggest *unimane* retain not only respect but also authority. However, Tabiteuea is reputed to be more traditional than neighbouring islands are (Autio, 2010), and so may not be a reliable proxy for how things stand on present day Nikunau.

## 14.6 Genealogical Accounts

Previous sections elaborate on *te I-Nikunau's* traditional identity with *utu ni kaan* living together as *mwenga* on its *aba*, then with the larger kinship groups and social categories running though society, namely, *kainga, utu*, and *boti*, within and beyond the district and even the atoll; and on modern equivalents of this identity. Records form an important corollary to these changing identities, as well as to social transfers of rights in *aba*. Thus, what had developed well before the turn of the 19th century was an indigenous accounting of social, economic and cultural significance, the facets of this accounting being genealogy or ancestry and something akin to asset registers and of intellectual property. To amplify, this accounting integrated the ancestry of *I-Nikunau*, living and dead, with an inventory of *aba* associated with Nikunau; it recorded who presently had rights to each item and the history of how these rights had come about. That these are a form of accounting, social and otherwise, is supported by the striking similarities between them and those in Winiata's typology of *Māori* resources (see Gallhofer, Gibson, Haslam, McNicholas & Takiari, 2000), not to mention discussions of Gibson (2000) and Greer and Patel (2000) about accounting of Australian Aboriginals.

The process for keeping these records was also significant to social relations. Said records were entirely oral and of longstanding, being passed from one generation to the next, both between affected individuals and among *unimane*, being part of, or an extension to, their custodianship of *te katei*. The records pertaining to an individual were passed to them as part of the rights of passage to adulthood (see Chapter 13.2.1)

and to being accepted as a member of *te boti* (see Grimble, 1952). A young person developed the ability to recite those applying to him or her. This knowledge and ability was important to establishing one's place in society and in supporting one's claims to rights associated with *boti* and *aba*. Indeed, as indicated in Chapter 6.2, if a person was at some time to visit a *mwaneaba* district where they were not known, they could authenticate their *boti* by reciting their ancestry through several generations and have it compared with the local oral records and understandings of their *boti* kept by *unimane* at the place visited (see Maude, 1963, p. 52). Authentication entitled them to sit with their *te boti* during, for example, formal social, spiritual and political proceedings of *mwaneaba*, and to receive hospitality and accommodation from members of *te boti* in question.

The role of *unimane* in the latter is an example of how oral records and understandings were a source of their knowledge-power and status. *Unimane* were reputed to be able to recite genealogical records of their *boti* or *kainga* and *utu*, and to not only know the name of every *aba* held by members of their *utu* but also to be able to describe them, their boundaries and their history of ownership – for versions of these records recited by *I-Nikunau unimane* and recorded in writing, see Latouche (1983b)–I also had access to Uering (1979).[75] An extension of the knowledge-power and status conferred on *unimane* through the records was the authority they gave *bowi* of *unimane* in *mwaneaba* to adjudicate over disputes about *aba*, usually after hearing the litigants state their cases but occasionally through formal combat between the litigants, as conducted under the control of *bowi* (Lundsgaarde, 1968a).

During the 20th century this source of knowledge-power and status of *unimane* was challenged by the Colony Government, at least as far as *aba* were concerned. It instituted *kabowi n aba* (≅ lands courts) on each island to replace the judicial proceedings in *mwaneaba*. However, for a while at least, the proceedings of *te kabowi n aba* on Nikunau might not have seemed substantially different from those in *mwaneaba*. Eventually, though, they came to involve fewer jurists, whose source of authority and appointment process were colonial not ancestral; it covered the whole of Nikunau, not just one or other of the districts; and it came to be advised by an official with formal legal training (e.g., see Townsend, 1951). *Te Kabowi n Aba* of today on Nikunau, and its equivalent on Tarawa, are the outcome of this Colony Government intervention, and the characteristics just enumerated are evident in their structure and how they operate. The Colony Government also made various attempts to replace the oral with the written (e.g., *Register of Landowners and Lands 1908*), seemingly threatening the high regard in which the oral records and *unimane* have been held among *I-Nikunau*. However, the resulting series of written registers did not prove very successful (Pole, 1995), and so hardly diminished the importance of the traditional records in the proceedings in *Te Kabowi n Aba* even now. The same is true of further attempts under the auspices of the Republic Government, mostly at the behest of aid organisations. Said organisations are equally impatient about restrictions in *te katei* impeding various aid objectives (see Duncan, 2014; Government of Kiribati, 1983; Ministry of Works and Public Utilities, 2011). In the next section, I return to these questions including why land registers have been less than successful.

As genealogy and *aba* continue in importance among *I-Nikunau*, so does the use of oral records and understandings, albeit that their form, context, application and

meaning are much adapted, particularly in diasporic communities. Already mentioned in this chapter is their use on Nikunau in *Te Kabowi n Aba* as evidence for settling disputes about *aba* and rights to them, and they are used too on the other islands in the Kiribati Archipelago, including Tarawa. For *I-Nikunau* residing outside the Kiribati Archipelago with no practical intention of returning, the significance of their *aba* there, along with the matters with which acquiring *aba* was associated, are diminishing or have already been lost, and so too is their need of *aba* records. This is notwithstanding many *I-Nikunau* in diasporic communities, particularly in metropolitan places, still claiming to have *aba* on Nikunau. However, rather than as a place on which they and their descendants might eventually resettle, reside, make a living, etc., these claims are mostly socially and culturally symbolic, including identifying with Nikunau and being *I-Nikunau* (cf. Shuval, 2000). Concomitantly, in the prolonged absence of their ancestral owners, many of these *aba* are utilised by *utu*, and perhaps maintained and regenerated by them as per the concept of usufruct. As time passes, and one generation replaces another, their de facto possession fuses with de jure user rights, and so ownership, as it is understood on Nikunau, including by incorporation in oral records and understandings of same.

The records and understandings of genealogy also continue in use to check for consanguinity, particularly to avoid *karikira* in the choosing and approving of marriage partners, which as alluded to in Chapter 9 has been a concern of longstanding (Grimble, 1989; Maude, 1963). More than that, given the spread of the *I-Nikunau* diaspora, knowledge of one's ancestry can be significant in making introductions among not only *I-Nikunau* but also *I-Kiribati* generally, and in joining a diasporic community. Thus, when meeting someone unfamiliar but who speaks *te taetae ni Kiribati* or is otherwise identified as *I-Kiribati*, one of the first things *I-Nikunau* do is to try and ascertain whether they are related, as well as establish what friends or acquaintances they have in common. More formally, if any strangers or newcomers are present at a *botaki* in New Zealand, the proceedings are usually opened by everyone present sitting in one circle and each person in turn introducing themselves according to their ancestry and the island(s) whence these ancestors originated. These particulars are conditions for participating in community events, and part of expecting and receiving accommodation and hospitality from seemingly distant relatives during a visit or extended stay (cf. Hockings, 1984). Nevertheless, given how liberally the status of *baronga* is recognised in diasporic communities away from Kiribati, and especially in metropolitan communities (see Chapters 4 and 5.2.4), lack of kinship is unlikely to be used as a reason to turn away a visitor: being able to speak *te taetae ni Kiribati* or being vouched for by a mutual acquaintance is invariably enough to be accepted and accommodated.

The similarities between oral records of *I-Kiribati*, and the kinship practices they underlie, and those of *Māori* (see above) and some other settler peoples in New Zealand has helped in forming relations and developing mutual understandings between the diasporic communities there and the peoples they live among, for example in hiring *marae* for special events. These similarities also mean the authorities in New Zealand have some familiarity with said practices, even if sometimes representatives of these authorities are apt not to respect them. Meanwhile, official policies in New Zealand still reflect New Zealand's dominion legacy and the approaches once utilised in Kiribati by the Colony Government.

## 14.7 Social Categories and Resources of a Colonial and Post-Colonial Nature

I now turn to social resources of a colonial and post-colonial nature (e.g., hospitals and health systems, schools and education systems, prisons and penal and correction systems). Many such resources have been referred to in most previous chapters, from which it is plain that, within Kiribati, they are far more abundant on Tarawa than on Nikunau, and that, notwithstanding some access issues for diaspora (cf. Arlidge et al., 2009), they are more abundant in metropolitan countries than on Tarawa. Furthermore, beginning in the post-war decades, the extent of these resources within Kiribati has steadily increased but far more so on Tarawa than on Nikunau, largely because of centralisation policies, conscious (see Chapter 5.2.1) and less witting. Besides, whereas much external capital, from the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund and aid organisations, lies behind development on Tarawa, most of the capital for social resources on Nikunau has had to be contributed by *I-Nikunau*, usually involuntarily, an exception being the cooperative ventures referred to in Chapter 7; the involuntary nature of their contributions was epitomised most by communal workdays (see Chapter 11.2.3.2). As well as contributions to state and church, *I-Nikunau* have had to expend capital in order to comply personally with ever more stringent living regulations; for example, *I-Nikunau* had to gather materials for and work on maintaining and improving *mwenga* and *te kawa* to bring them up to *I-Matang* specifications (see Chapter 6.3).

The corollary of this precedence of Tarawa, and Nikunau's Cinderella status, is that compared to their kin on Tarawa, the reality for most *I-Nikunau* on Nikunau has been, and still is, one of exclusion from the social resources now present within Kiribati but located on Tarawa. When in need of more than, say, basic primary education, or, nowadays, basic junior secondary education, or rudimentary outpatient or short stay medical care, most *I-Nikunau* residing on Nikunau have gone without. Except, that is, if they passed the school entrance examinations (see Chapter 13.4) or participated in specially arranged excursions (e.g., a visit to Tarawa by a team of Australian medics might mean an organised visit there by selected *I-Nikunau* to receive treatment). Otherwise, not many *I-Nikunau* can afford the passage by ship, assuming a convenient ship has been at hand, and, even fewer, the airfare.

Since their inception in the early 1970s, scheduled air services have been beyond the means of most *I-Nikunau* resident on Nikunau, if travelling on their own behalf. Instead, most *I-Nikunau* having to travel privately to Tarawa, or perhaps elsewhere, do so by ships whose main function is to carry freight. These ships work to what, at best, may be described as a changeable schedule, and so are unreliable for anyone expecting to travel from A to B within specified time limits. However, they do call on Nikunau as part of landing and collecting organised groups, such as children coming from and going to Tarawa between the end of one school year and the beginning of the next. *I-Nikunau* are used to fitting in with their erratic schedules, and seem to think nothing of "delays", "inconvenience", etc., which are things they seem unfazed by on Tarawa or in New Zealand either.

This dearth of social resources of a colonial and post-colonial nature on Nikunau is notwithstanding what was occasioned about 1970 by the report of Ministry of Overseas Development (1968) into torpor on Nikunau and the other Outer Islands, compared with relative vibrancy on Tarawa and, at that time, Banaba. Concerns were also emerging then among British officials on Tarawa and in Honiara and London about the increasing flow of immigrants to Tarawa. As indicated in Chapters 7.2.2, 11.2.3.2 and others, projects with at least some aspects of social welfare, improvement and development were among

those performed to address these concerns and restore Nikunau and the other islands as attractive places to live. However, the issues on Tarawa arising from immigration of *I-Nikunau* and other *I-Kiribati* have since been given a much greater priority by the Republic Government, assisted by aid organisations, along with establishing and strengthening the Republic Government itself. As brought out in previous chapters (see Chapters 5 to 7), this prioritising of Tarawa over the other islands has prompted an almost vicious circle of more immigration, more issues, more responses and more immigration. Hence, the gap between social resources on Nikunau and those on Tarawa regathered any momentum it lost in the early 1970s and has widened dramatically since. Thus, for *I-Nikunau* and other *I-Kiribati,* even being on the periphery of Tarawa's economy has been preferable to remaining on their islands and be increasingly marginalised socially, as well as economically, politically and in other ways.

This marginalisation was plain during my last visit to Nikunau in 2009; buildings belonging to *kawa*, churches, schools, trading and the Island Council showed neglect in terms of physical maintenance and uses (cf. Ortega, 2008), reflecting and corresponding with a noticeable number of *mwenga* being unoccupied (see Chapter 2). Notwithstanding observations related in Chapter 11.4 about the continuing importance of *mwaneaba* councils, neither the frequency nor importance of *unimane* gatherings were as obvious as they were two decades earlier, probably for lack of *unimane*. As indicated in that earlier chapter, many *unimane* who formally should be heads of *mwenga* reside on Tarawa with some of their adult offspring, and so it seems to fall on their offspring still on Nikunau to act for them, but some seem reluctant or unable to do this. Consequently, the communal social life I observed in *kawa* on that last visit seemed subdued for want of leadership, as well as for want enthusiasm and even participants.

Regarding social resources and much else on Tarawa, aid organisations continue to express frustrations with the land situation there. For some time, they have seen buying and selling land as an important part of their recipe for economic development and efficient use of resources, including that such transactions are a necessary aspect of potential foreign investment (cf. Connell, 1987). In the previous section, I mentioned aid organisations, like the Colony Government previously, wanting to establish an official written land register(s), separate from anything traditional or reflecting the value of land as socio-cultural nature, rather than only economic. These organisations generally see such a register(s) as vital to transactions in land being commonplace, presumably with estate agents and similar, typical of metropolitan countries but unheard of in Kiribati.

This impatience of aid organisations over the land situation in Kiribati is notwithstanding the customary restrictions on disposing and acquiring *aba* through trade. The root of these restrictions is that, as discussed in Chapter 14.3, the social and kinship-ancestral significances of *aba* to *I-Nikunau* and other *I-Kiribati*, and so the socio-cultural value arising therefrom, not to mention the meanings and practices of *aba* ownership, uses and conveyancing which accompany this value. Anyone wanting to assess the value of land to *I-Nikunau* and the other *I-Kiribati* on most of their atolls in past times would need to think in socio-cultural terms, using qualitative means. The extent to which this is still true may have changed but is still not much closer to the land being primarily a commodity and ownership being predominantly economic (Baaro, 1987; Lawrence, 1992; Lundsgaarde, 1968a, 1974; Macdonald, 1982a; Pole, 1995). What is more, trading in *aba* is likely to bring *kamama* on sellers: sellers would be putting themselves ahead of their descendants in order to make easy money, instead of making a living in ways by which

usufructuary rights to *aba* would be passed on. The various written land registers failed because in compiling them, *I-Matang* who did this sought to base them on premises akin to British commercial views of land and of systems of land ownership. In these, land is primarily a commodity, whose source of, and reason for, ownership is predominantly economic, and on which a financial value can be put, using quantitative measures. Further, interrelated reasons for failure were that they were in written form and they were neither under the control of *I-Nikunau's* traditional leaders nor took account of their knowledge.

So vital are the restrictions referred to above that they are supplemented in the Constitution of Kiribati 1979 by restrictions on *non-I-Kiribati* being able to purchase land in the Republic. These constitutional provisions have countered lesser laws and official policies proclaimed under the auspices of successive Republic Government administrations permitting and encouraging land sales in keeping with neo-liberal ideas, advice, etc. from the aid organisations under discussion. Thus, notwithstanding any formal legal possibilities, *aba* are still difficult to trade as if they were a commodity, although more so on Nikunau and the long-settled Kiribati Islands generally than on the recently settled Line Islands. It is on Tarawa, however, where the aid organisations feel the restrictions particularly keenly, as far as the foreign investors, for whom they seem to be rooting, are concerned.

The situation with land on Tarawa also affects Outer Island diasporic communities there, including *I-Nikunau*. These effects are alluded to in Chapter 3. The background is that, although the social significance of *aba* on Tarawa to *I-Tarawa* may be diluted, it still applies, and so affects settlers and organisations there. Indeed, most settlers reside on *aba* over which *I-Tarawa* still have rights or claim to have rights (see Chapters 3, 6.3 and 8.1). However, because of its history as the Colony Government headquarters and now main political and commercial centre of the Republic, these rights and claims have gone through great upheaval and so are much more complicated and confusing than on the other Kiribati Islands (see Chapter 6.2). To some extent, those *I-Tarawa* most affected have been appeased in practice by receiving lease payments at regular intervals, largely from the Republic Government (cf. Bishop et al., 2011; Corcoran, 2016).

In metropolitan countries, the abundance of social resources, along with employment opportunities, has been a major attraction for singles, couples and families of predominantly *I-Kiribati* blood to immigrate, including so that children can access schools and otherwise enjoy better prospects (cf. Thompson, 2016). Nevertheless, *baronga* and similar social aspects of diasporic communities seem at least as important for *I-Nikunau* to remain there, especially the more recent arrivals, rather than having to return to Kiribati. In any case, the availability of social resources for those settling in metropolitan countries has its less savoury aspects: their rights of access to these resources, along with perceptions of how much use they make of them, can be a reason for being resented by existing populations, some of whose members see immigrants as free riding on these resources. The argument is usually along the lines that immigrants have not contributed any of the capital which has accumulated in the schools, hospitals or similar amenities. Coupled with that, because of the menial, low-paid jobs they hold, they are perceived as not paying much tax; or are perceived as receiving unemployment and other social welfare benefits through being lazy and reluctant to work (e.g., see "Daily Mail Comment," 2012; Slack & Brown, 2016). These jibes, some of them clearly recited with racist intentions towards "brown-skinned foreigners", can deter *I-Nikunau* from taking up their full legal entitlement to, or otherwise making use of these resources, even though this does not stop the jibes or impress those making them.

# 15

# Organisational Circumstances (*te raoi*)

*I-Nikunau*, wherever located, participate in more organisations nowadays than was the case traditionally, and they are otherwise affected by the activities of even more organisations. In addition, the further *I-Nikunau* live away from Nikunau and tradition, such as on Tarawa or in New Zealand, the greater and more complex is the web of organisations around them or affecting them, and conversely, the more peripheral they are in the arrangements of how most of the organisations in question are run.

To analyse the present organisational circumstances of *I-Nikunau* it is useful to distinguish between quasi-traditional organisations and non-traditional organisations; this dichotomy was referred or alluded to in earlier chapters, including Chapter 3. Classifying particular organisation types as one or the other is mostly self-evident. However, despite their derivations from commercial and religious organisations of external origin, there is a case to regard *mronron* and KUC congregations as quasi-traditional than as non-traditional. Indeed, a more practical way to distinguish types of organisation which are quasi-traditional from types which are non-traditional is according to the degree to which *I-Nikunau* and other *I-Kiribati* are on the periphery of the arrangements for running the organisations in question.

*I-Nikunau*'s peripheral status vis-à-vis non-traditional organisations, whether commercial, religious, community or governmental in nature, is particularly relevant to the present day and the future, since these organisations influence their lives significantly. This peripheral status seems to derive from difficulties *I-Nikunau* have connecting with the range of economic, political, social and cultural matters with which many non-traditional organisations concern themselves, and difficulties they have comprehending the paraphernalia (e.g., types, structure, procedures, history, raison d'être, financing, legal status, accounting methods) involved in such organisations. A major source of these difficulties is that these non-traditional organisations were constructed physically and socially over many decades, if not centuries, before *I-Nikunau* encountered them; for example, re the British Empire, see Ferguson (2008), and the international monetary system, see Eichengreen (2019). Furthermore, the principals of these organisations have been intent on effecting and achieving objectives they set and from which they derived benefit not on *I-Nikunau's* terms but on their terms (e.g., commodity acquisition, trading for profit, creating a source of labour, stamping out of one religion and converting people to another, and effecting states of subjection, order, civilisation, development and neo-

liberal enlightenment). Indeed, it has often been the case that *I-Nikunau* suffered or were harmed in the course of these organisational activities, perhaps not always intentionally, but in careless ways whose consequences could have been foreseen, for example, backwash on Nikunau and overcrowding on Tarawa.

Having alluded to circumstances and evidence for the above statements, claims, etc. in previous chapters, in the following sections I review and synthesise those I adjudge important, all the time alluding to *I-Nikunau's* tradition and its adaptation in the face of externally-inspired challenges.

## 15.1 Tradition and Effects of Initial Challenges

As first indicated in Chapter 5, traditionally, *I-Nikunau* lived as *mwenga* as part of *kainga* within *mwaneaba* districts. These organisations were involved in matters with which *I-Nikunau* chose to be, or were content to be, concerned, and were run by them according to *te katei* structures and procedures passed on in traditional systems of education, etc. As Hockings (1984) opines, the organising of *I-Nikunau* communities was founded on the *boti-mwaneaba* scheme, *boti* concerning themselves with the affairs of *kainga*. Concomitantly, *mwenga* affairs, including births, deaths, etc. were the remit of *utu*. When conflicts or disputes occurred, *boti* and *utu* were counterfoils in terms of power, especially as rights relating to *aba* were widely distributed, and passed down through, within and among *utu*, rather than *boti*.

These traditional organisations were challenged and significantly changed or replaced following the arrival on Nikunau and in its vicinity (*e.g.* Beru, Nonouti, Tabiteuea, Tarawa, Butaritari, Banaba) of representatives of foreign commercial and then religious organisations, and eventually governmental organisations. The non-traditional organisations these outsiders established continued as offshoots or similar of the overseas organisations they represented. Further to what is related above about their objectives and histories, although varying in purposes, each possessed a logic derived from their similar place(s) of origin, said places and logics being quite different from any to be found on Nikunau or elsewhere in the Kiribati Archipelago in almost every respect one can imagine. What is more, before reaching or otherwise affecting Nikunau, their systems of personnel, procedures, ideas, purposes, interests and financing had spread far and wide, Nikunau being about as far as they might spread at the time, and probably still.

Not only were *I-Nikunau* generally ignorant about these organisations, systems and the networks they constituted, and their history, but also the outsiders were not quick to enlighten them, perhaps not thinking it was important or realising such knowledge was of economic, social and political value to them vis-à-vis *I-Nikunau*. Even so, the organisations established on Nikunau and in its vicinity were adapted to fit with conditions among *I-Nikunau*. However, most of the adaptation was on *I-Nikunau's* part, rather than the organisations' (cf. Lundsgaarde, 1966). Furthermore, for quite some time, *I-Nikunau's* participation in the activities of these non-traditional organisations, even on Nikunau, was almost always on the outside – marriage to traders led to a few exceptions perhaps – if not physically then socially, culturally, economically and politically. It took major events or other influences offshore (e.g., the Great Depression, World War II, international pressures for European decolonisation) to change fundamentally *I-Nikunau's* relations with each of the non-traditional organisation types. Furthermore, a lack of alternatives, other than for the organisation(s) to lapse, was often the reason that *I-Nikunau* or *I-Kiribati* were allowed to be more involved, or stepped in to fill a vacuum in the space vacated by outsiders.

The organisation types in question, be they commercial, religious, community or governmental, were also subject to gradual changes from within, but increases in *I-Nikunau* or *I-Kiribati* involvement through these changes were selective and usually conditional on various inductive cum acculturation processes, many of them portrayed as education and training. For example, *I-Nikunau* offspring of *I-Matang* traders were trained by their fathers, etc. in the art of storekeeping and made familiar with ideas of private ownership, the business entity as separate from the person, profit and arm's length transactions (see Chapter 9). Prospective pastors studied at the LMS headquarters at Rongorongo and acquired Protestant ethics, or were expected to (see Chapter 12). Prospective clerks studied at KGVS on Tarawa and assimilated cultural nuances wrapped in the syllabuses of the various subjects (see Chapter 13). Even so, involvement of *I-Nikunau* and other *I-Kiribati* led to some adaptation of these non-traditional organisations to reflect *te katei* and Kiribati beliefs, values and culture, as is exemplified next in the successive systems of maritime trade, and then the systems of colonial-imperial administration of Nikunau.

### *15.1.1 The Maritime Trade*

Bartering with whalers apart, this trade had begun by the middle of the 19th century and trade stores were operating on Nikunau in the 1870s, as per their history set out in Chapter 7. After six decades in private hands, during which *I-Nikunau's* participation in them and the succession of maritime trading networks of which they were part, economically and logistically, was largely restricted to the lowest levels of these networks – *I-Nikunau* were either copra cutters, supplying the networks from the outside, or employees, at no higher a level than store-workers, deckhands and other toilers (Couper, 1968)–*I-Nikunau* stepped in and took them over. They did so to maintain means of exchanging their copra for the goods and cash on which they had become somewhat dependent. District Officer Maude acquainted *I-Nikunau* with ideas around the cooperative forms of ownership, having seen and been impressed by them in Tuvalu (see Catala, 1957; Maude, 1949, 1950). By applying these ideas, *I-Nikunau* were able to reconcile running the commercial stores with notions in *te katei ni Nikunau* of community and social undifferentiation. Each of *I-Nikunau's te boboti* was governed by an elected committee, on which *unimane* predominated, and they frequently convened *bowi* of members (e.g., a whole *kawa*). *Boboti* administration and accounting was performed, for little or no formal payment, by a few *I-Nikunau*, who had probably derived the requisite knowledge and skills from being involved in private or church trading, or native government administration on Nikunau or elsewhere.

In addition to addressing the immediate issue of the trade of copra for imported goods continuing on Nikunau, this change also marked cooperative ownership, with semblances of traditional organisations adapted to commerce, being the norm on Nikunau now for over eight decades. This is despite the life of the original *boboti* established on Nikunau having been short lived, affected by the wartime pause in trade. However, with this war over, the restored Colony Government, with Maude as resident commissioner, helped *I-Nikunau* establish *Te Bobotin Nikunau*, whose importance to *I-Nikunau*, not only in an economic sense but also politically (see Chapter 11.2), lasted over 50 years, before being superseded by *mronron*.

*I-Nikunau* generally saw *Te Bobotin Nikunau's* ascendancy as being for the common good, with community savings providing financial and social capital. Its authority derived from *unimane* from around the atoll being involved in its governance, enthusiastically so,

and *bowi* of members being convened regularly. That authority was seen to be exercised in a broadly beneficial, social way, rather than a narrowly beneficial, economic way. Low prices were charged for goods, calculated usually on a standardised 12.5% mark-up, and, correspondingly, fair prices were paid for copra. Although surpluses, if any, could be distributed to members as cash bonuses, usually in proportion to purchases, they were mostly used for expansion, including into functions which were novel to *I-Nikunau*, such as screening films and staging other activities for the enjoyment of entire communities and providing savings and loans banking arrangements, an extension of those organised under the auspices of the Colony Government (Catala, 1957; Couper, 1967, 1968; Dixon & Gaffikin, 2014, esp. p. 694; Lawrence, 1992; Macdonald, 1971, 1982a; Maude, 1949, Roniti, 1985).

*Te Bobotin Nikunau's* decline over the past 25 years or so (see Chapter 7.1) might be linked to a string of interrelated economic, organisational, administrative, ideological and cultural reasons, including the following. Although Nikunau's population has remained about the same over this period despite emigration, incomes from copra and remittances probably fell in real terms, as well as in relative terms vis-à-vis Tarawa and further afield. However, if this has happened, it has not affected other trading entities continuing, or even starting up (i.e., *kawa* and church *mronron*, and, in one case, a proprietary store); indeed, these are now out-competing *Te Bobotin Nikunau*, including as agents authorised for handling copra on behalf of its single buyer, the Republic Government (see Chapters 2 and 7). Emigration has reduced the supply of intellectually able persons and *unimane* on Nikunau. The cooperative network of training and support across Kiribati has also declined, particularly on Tarawa. At the behest of aid organisations which have become so influential in the structure of the Kiribati economy, the Republic Government has adopted neo-liberal policies, and these favour competition and disfavour cooperation; its cooperative oversight agencies responsible for regulation, development, education, training, etc., have been starved of funds and outside assistance, and allowed to run down. The importing and exporting channels into and out of Tarawa, and the distributing of goods within Kiribati, were deregulated as part of these neo-liberal policies and several businesses became involved.

For *mronron* and other trading entities on Nikunau, Tarawa and elsewhere, this deregulation has meant no longer having to go through the likes of *Te Bobotin Nikunau* in order to obtain goods for resale. The ones on Nikunau seem to have chosen to deal directly with businesses on Tarawa because *Te Bobotin Nikunau* has not responded to opportunities afforded by more goods being available on Tarawa for importing to Nikunau, and the equivalent has occurred on Tarawa. Although in number, if not in size, most of these trading entities on Nikunau and Tarawa are run along the cooperative lines disfavoured by the aid organisations, they have a stronger grassroots character in keeping with local culture, compared even with the likes of *Te Bobotin Nikunau*, which, when push came to shove, were associated in *I-Nikunau's* and other *I-Kiribati's* minds with *Te Tautaeka* (see Roniti, 1985).

Indeed, seeing *Te Bobotin Nikunau* decline, *unimane* and *I-Nikunau* generally reacted by switching their support to *kawa* and church *mronron*, and so hastened that decline. This switch may also be seen as moving away from a single, atoll-wide organisation to several district or *kawa* level organisations. Whatever, *kawa* and church *mronron* seem to be seen by *I-Nikunau* at least as legitimate as *Te Bobotin Nikunau* for being run along cooperative lines. The ideas of private traders and private profits, favoured by supporters

of neo-liberalism but resented during the pre-cooperative era, continue to be kept at bay, at least on Nikunau, if much less so on Tarawa. Only now perhaps is this form being threatened by the prospect of stores run along more proprietorial lines, including branches of those which have existed for three decades on Tarawa, mostly in the hands of naturalised *I-Kiribati* or those of mixed *I-Matang* or Chinese ancestry, and Nikunau-based businesses which resemble them. Indeed, some of the substantial trading and service entities the Colony Government handed over to the Republic Government have recently either been privatised or been closed down and their lines of business taken up by new private businesses.

These ideological changes notwithstanding, the Republic Government has had to sustain its role as a monopsonist in the trade with copra cutters (see Chapter 7), despite some ire from aid organisation representatives who see this primarily as economic interventionism and a form of agricultural subsidies. The intervention came about because *Te Bobotin Nikunau* and its equivalent on other islands declined so much that their cash flows were insufficiently buoyant to provide the working capital for the copra purchasing process. The guarantee which the Republic Government now gives copra cutters relates both to price and receiving cash on the same day as they deposit their copra, the detailed process for which is set out in Chapter 7. As indicated in that chapter, this intervention was a political, social and economic necessity; Outer Island MPs realised that the continuing support of copra cutters on Outer Islands, by responding to their demands for increases in the price paid for copra, was vital to their re-election. However, one wonders if the intricate process through which copra cutters must go to obtain money for their copra is not meant to deter them from actually taking up this support in full.

### *15.1.2 Island Administration*

The history of the Island Council, including *te* kabowi n abamakoro, the Nikunau Native Government and the associated island courts, is set out in Chapter 11, with additional material in Chapter 12, tracing its links to the Samoan pastors and their immediate successors, who effected political administration to further their spiritual ambitions. The idea of a government based specifically on territory, rather than *kainga-boti* kinship, not to mention its functions (e.g., island rules, island taxation), were new concepts or applications.[76] So too was the oversight it endured from Beru after 1900, first from those at the LMS headquarters and then by the Southern Gilberts District Officer.

Nevertheless, it appeared that *I-Nikunau* controlled the council and courts, by dint of the people who filled the positions associated with these organisations, and of the highest official positions (e.g., the island magistrate and scribe) being held by other *I-Kiribati*, if not *I-Nikunau*. However, this appearance somewhat disguised the amount of authority lying with the district officer, who when all said and done was a single chief, a concept at odds with *I-Nikunau's* tradition of distributed authority in which *uea* were tabu – hence Tabi(u)-te-uea Atoll. Financial control processes, which entailed, for example, approving council estimates and auditing council accounts (see Nikunau Native Government Cash Book 1915-1933), were significant ways in which the district officer wielded his authority, apart from simply being *te I-Matang* (see Bevington, 1990)–that being *I-Matang* mattered is borne out by the district officer positions being disestablished almost as soon as they were localised (see Chapter 11.3).

These processes (see Grimble & Clarke, 1929), and the attendant reporting about *I-Nikunau*, their atoll and the Southern Gilberts District (cf. Ellice Islands District Report, 1936), were quite disproportionate to the quite paltry amounts of money involved as far as the revenues and expenditures of the Colony Government were concerned (Dixon & Gaffikin, 2014). This disproportionality is exemplified at different times as follows. In the 1920s, the annual expenditure on Nikunau was less than £400 (< AU$32,000 at 2019 prices) (Nikunau Native Government Cash Book 1915-33), compared with the Colony Government's revenue and expenditure of about £55,000 (≈ AU$4.4m at 2019 prices) (Macdonald, 1982a). In the 1950s, the expenditure incurred by the Nikunau Native Government was still less than AU£1,000 (< AU$35,000 at 2019 prices) annually (Island Fund Estimates – Nikunau, 1957-67), whereas the Colony Government's annual recurrent expenditures were about AU£450,000 (≈ AU$14m at 2019 prices) and it was administering a further AU£35,000 (≈ AU$1.2m at 2019 prices) annually of capital grants from the British Government for economic and social development projects (GEIC, 1957). Thus, the means of control were arguably less about money per se, than how a colonial official could oversee and intervene in organisations which the colonial authorities portrayed as belonging to *I-Nikunau* (cf. Neu, Gomez, Graham & Heincke, 2006; Newbury, 2004). As for the colonial authorities themselves, although their district officer was subordinate to persons further up a hierarchy (see Figure 11), geographical remoteness meant he could exercise much of their authority with little interference from them; indeed, the aforesaid reports were one of the few ways his distant superiors actually exercised theirs.

The parallels between, on the one hand, the council and courts and, on the other hand, the trade stores are noteworthy. Both were at the lowest levels of their respective systems, one of imperial governance and colonial administration and the other of maritime trade, and so subject to control by mostly *I-Matang* outsiders placed near and far. However, it should not be overlooked that persons at upper levels of the two systems had common interests and often colluded. Just as the financial control processes over the council were significant in effecting this *I-Matang* control, so similar processes applied to the trade stores, first between *I-Matang* or Chinese trader and company, and then, and more so, when the stores were reformed as *boboti* under *I-Nikunau* member-governance and administration. What is more, for as long as the trade stores were run by *I-Matang* and Chinese agent-traders, these processes served largely commercial purposes, with principals using reports to evaluate the security of their invested capital and the profits and returns on this capital. Thus, once the principals and their agent-traders, or the proprietary traders, evaluated that trade was no longer going to be profitable in the future, or were just stuck for cash because of the effects of the Great Depression, they cashed up as best they could, leaving *I-Nikunau* and the district officer to pick up the pieces (Maude, 1949).

Thereafter, on paper at least, control of *boboti* began to converge with how the council was controlled, especially once *Te Bobotin Nikunau* was in place and subject to the Co-operative Societies Ordinance of 1952. The financial oversight and other provisions of this legislation afforded plenty of scope for political, as well as commercial, control (cf. Roniti, 1985). However, unlike the council, distant political control of *Te Bobotin Nikunau* was impeded by *unimane's* enthusiasm for it in principle and because it was financially viable in its own right, as measured by its profit and loss account, and not dependent on Colony Government funding like the council – the council's dependence was effected through a combination of the form of accounting (i.e., revenues and expenditures

were budgeted and accounted for separately), and it being burdened with recurrent costs of social development projects initiated by the Colony Government (see Chapter 11.2.3.2). Besides, between the late 1940s and 1970, district officers being based on Tarawa, rather than Beru, hampered their ability to control the council and cooperative.

Jumping forward to the present, geographical remoteness from Tarawa continues to mean that the local authorities have a great deal of autonomy. Moreover, in discussing the present set up in Chapter 11.3, I used the description "closer-ness" to depict relations between *I-Nikunau* residing on Nikunau and these atoll-based authorities, who no longer have to work through anyone based on Beru or the other neighbouring islands. However, I also suggested that, as with economic developments, accumulated backwash effects on Nikunau had adversely affected island administration and other aspects of its political circumstances. Correspondingly, although the Republic Government continues to include in its budget the Island Council's funding grant and the remuneration for its staff who are located on the atoll, and the money for this expenditure is received on the atoll reliably, the amounts involved have not increased much compared with the colonial times outlined above. To give an idea of how much is involved, in the 2000s, the Nikunau Island Council's annual expenditure is reported as being around AU$112,000 (Hassall & Tipu, 2008), compared with the Republic Government's annual expenditure of AU$85m (Government of Kiribati, 2009). In 2017, the Republic Government budgeted recurrent expenditure was about AU$195m, and the budgeted development expenditure about AU$244m (Kiribati Government, 2018). Of that, less than 5% of the recurrent expenditure and only about 10% of the development expenditure was planned for all 15 Outer Islands comprising the Kiribati Islands, of which Nikunau is only one.

## 15.2 Colonial and Traditional Traits in Present-day Organisations

A further issue about non-traditional organisations is that despite how *I-Nikunau* and other *I-Kiribati* have tried to localise and otherwise adapt them to reflect Kiribati beliefs, values and culture associated with *te katei*, etc., many of their colonialistic traits are still evident four decades after the Republic Government was inaugurated, making them distinguishable still from the much adapted traditional organisations. Retaining some colonialistic traits has arisen through the non-traditional organisations being part of hierarchical and networked structures which go well beyond Nikunau in particular and Kiribati generally (e.g., see Figure 10). Examples of these structures span religion, trade and government. *I-Nikunau* clergy and their congregations are incorporated into elaborate, worldwide-networked organisations. The RC Church is a single organisation headquartered in the Vatican City, and the KUC is affiliated with the World Council of Churches and the World Communion of Reformed Churches. The vast majority of goods bought by *I-Nikunau* at trade stores run by *I-Nikunau* or other *I-Kiribati* is produced elsewhere and imported through commercial networks. *I-Nikunau* comprise the Nikunau Island Council and some are prominent in the governing and administering the Republic, a sovereign state which is part of some greater world order, including that its renewal and development involves supranational organisations and other aid organisations.

Quasi-traditional organisations are also subject to the aforesaid colonial traits through exhibiting some subservience to non-traditional organisations. Within Kiribati, and perhaps more so on Nikunau than on Tarawa, they can exert some political influence,

being a legitimate part of indigenous society. However, whether those on Tarawa in particular actually exert this influence is a moot point, the question perhaps being why they would not do so. The answer seems to lie in continuing self-perception of inferiority, in knowledge and skills, technology, culture and race, inferiority which the different outsider groups (e.g., aid organisation staff, foreign politicians and diplomats, foreign business people, foreign religious body representatives) seem unable to address even if they wish to. Outside Kiribati, their political influence is minimal, even in countries where local quasi-traditional organisations are influential. Invariably in diasporic communities in metropolitan countries, the quasi-traditional are dwarfed by the non-traditional, just as the *I-Kiribati* population is but a small percentage of the entire population, and where they are invisible politically (e.g., in New Zealand, they are outside the *Pākehā-Māori* model of New Zealand politics).

As to traits of tradition retained by quasi-traditional organisations, there are various examples. Although *kainga* were seemingly obliterated when the LMS and then the Colony Government sought order and control of *I-Nikunau* by resettling them in *kawa* (see Chapter 6.2), kinship relationships persisted through *utu* and *mwenga*. Indeed, the concept of, and the relationships entailed in, *baronga* are based, in the case of Nikunau, on adjacency of *mwenga* (cf. Geddes, 1977), in the case of Tarawa, on home island affiliation (cf. Green et al., 1979) and, in the case of metropolitan countries, on language and identifying with Kiribati. It is even possible to argue that the incidence of *baronga* relationships bears some resemblance to *boti*, the institution which seemingly lost significance alongside the demise of *kainga* just referred to and was itself eventually obliterated.

The official structure and processes of quasi-traditional organisations exhibit other traditional traits side-by-side with modifications borrowed from the non-traditional, usually complementing one another, but occasionally conflicting. Whereas tradition relies entirely on the oral for transacting business and keeping records, the quasi-tradition also incorporates the written, including by having written constitutions, written agenda, minute books, and written or electronic documents dealing with proposals for events and schemes, financial and other reports, and various records. Whereas gender and age still mean a great deal in tradition (cf. McNamara & Westoby, 2014), the quasi-tradition allows women (cf. Rose, 2014) and younger people not only to speak but also to carry the day in making and implementing decisions. Whereas consensus has to be reached in tradition to determine decisions – these are then spoken by *te tia-motiki-tueka* (≅ the speaker of decisions)[77] and everyone signals their willingness to accept, for example, by clapping in unison three times – the quasi-tradition allows decisions to be reached sometimes by a simple majority, and it may be unnecessary (if inadvisable) for the minority to have to be persuaded and then signal acceptance (cf. Taberannang, 2007). Whereas in performing roles or tasks, or implementing decisions, any special responsibilities and skills required in the tradition are exercised or organised by the kinship group who are the keepers of those special responsibilities and skills (see Geddes, 1977; Grimble, 1989), the quasi-tradition provides for officials to be elected or appointed, and for the implementation of decisions to be assigned to them, usually implicitly, as an extension of making the decisions, and having the time, resources and abilities to do so, acquired independent of kin groups, for example, at school, by consulting reference materials in libraries or on the Internet, or by using *non-I-Kiribati* contacts (i.e., the weak ties mentioned by

Thompson, 2016). Whereas in tradition everyone knows who is responsible for doing what, and if they do not do it, they bring *kamama* on themselves and their kin, to whom they know they will have to answer, without having to report, the quasi-tradition often provides for reporting and accountability to be more explicit. However, the latter provision is often ineffective because, in the tradition, the consequence for anyone who brings *kamama* on someone else, by questioning that someone else's behaviour outside *te katei* understandings based on kinship relationships (see Geddes, 1977), is to bring *kamama* on themselves.

As alluded to already, this *kamama* is quite different from that recognised by outsiders in using such words as reckoning, accountability, answerability and stewardship. Two sources of these outside ideas are referred to in discussing non-traditional organisations. The one source was nominally *Iehova* and his Earthly representatives, in distant Malua, Beru, London, and later Sydney and the Vatican City, which in practice meant pastors, priests and nuns residing on Nikunau serving in the churches. The second source was nominally the sovereign of Great Britain, and her or his high and resident commissioners, which in practice meant the district officer during his intermittent visits to Nikunau. This second source has been superseded by tenets of transparency and accountability, foisted on *I-Kiribati* through neo-liberal policies advocated by the more influential aid organisations (see Dixon & Gaffikin, 2014).

## 15.3 Conflicts between the Traditional and Non-traditional

It is on Tarawa that the contrast between traditional and non-traditional organisations and practices is most conspicuous and conflictual nowadays. The traditional arises from the *I-Nikunau* diasporic community (and the equivalent communities associated with the other Outer Islands), and indeed *I-Tarawa*, having established organisations on Tarawa in which practices from their home islands are replicated. As well as *mwenga*, etc., they often establish *mronron* and church groups within the diasporic communities of the different islands and these traditional or quasi-traditional practices extend into these groups (cf. Green et al., 1979). The non-traditional arises from the Colony Government, which initiated an increasing array of activities in the names of post-war reconstruction and economic, social and, eventually, self-government development, and from the Republic Government, with no end of encouragement and incentives from officials, experts, consultants, etc. associated with aid organisations. The latter seem far more concerned with functionality, than with culture – they seem even to regard functionality as acultural – and so have little understanding of why things show signs of failing when they are present, let alone why they fall apart after they leave.

The Republic Government not only continued the Colony Government's behaviour but also has made it possible for non-traditional, private business activities to expand, and so give rise in the area of commerce, notably on Tarawa, to the aforesaid situation of an array of enterprises, ranging from ones owned by the Republic Government, or in which it is a joint-venture partner,[78] to the many which are entirely private, be they either quasi-traditional cooperatives (i.e., *mronron*, etc.) or proprietary, and so lacking in much tradition other than for sake of appearance or similar "marketing purposes". Consistent with the claims made above, quasi-traditional organisations associated with the *I-Nikunau* and other Outer Island diasporic communities on Tarawa sit beneath, or are subservient to, these non-traditional organisations.

## 15.4 Diasporic Communities

In relation to diasporic communities, while the discussion above about non-traditional organisations focussed on these organisations bringing ideas, objects and similar into Nikunau and elsewhere in the Kiribati Islands, so these same organisations, commercial, religious and governmental, are also significant as the main vehicles through which, as early as the 1820s, *I-Nikunau* spent time away from Nikunau. In recent decades most of this going away has been tantamount to permanent emigration, whether intentional or through one thing leading to another, within and outside the Kiribati Archipelago, and so giving rise to the diaspora. These claims are illustrated in various places in Chapters 5 to 14, including the following.

*I-Nikunau* taking up positions as deckhands, etc. on the periphery of the 19th century maritime trade proved to be the forerunners of *I-Nikunau* continuing to be involved in seafaring work, as facilitated for the past 50 years by the Marine Training Centre. *I-Nikunau* labouring since the mid-19th century for commercial organisations engaged in mining and various forms of agriculture around the Pacific and beyond is exemplified nowadays by their participation in Recognised Seasonal Employer schemes in New Zealand, which are mostly associated with vineyards, dairy farming and fruit farming. *I-Nikunau* intent on the priesthood received education and training on Beru, Abemama, Abaiang and, later, Tarawa, and these atolls are among those on which the churches sited their secondary schools which selected *I-Nikunau* have attended since. *I-Nikunau* were among the native staff employed by the Colony Government as it expanded, particularly in the decades after World War II. In preparation for this work and for reasons of a social development nature, *I-Nikunau* were admitted to secondary schools and tertiary colleges which the Colony Government established on Tarawa. These schools and colleges are now run under the auspices of the Republic Government, and the curriculum continues to be geared to *I-Nikunau* earning a living doing non-traditional work for non-traditional organisations, primarily Republic Government services and businesses, and mostly on Tarawa or otherwise away from Nikunau.

While working for non-traditional organisations has been the longest-lived factor in emigration, along with education and training to some extent in preparation for such work, significant instances of emigration have resulted from organised resettlement schemes. This applies to *I-Nikunau* establishing settlements on Solomon Islands and Line Islands. The two schemes in question were devised and implemented by the Colony and Republic Governments respectively, with financing from outside donors; both reflect long-held considerations and concerns, alluded to in Chapter 5.2.3, among some Colony Government officials and advisors about overpopulation of Nikunau and the Kiribati Islands generally, and which persist (e.g., see Autio, 2017; Curtain & Dornan, 2019; Green et al., 1979; Maude, 1937, 1952; McCreary & Boardman, 1968; Pitchford, 1981; Veltman, 1982). Further schemes for *I-Nikunau* and other *I-Kiribati* are now being mooted among the Republic Government, aid organisations and others, as they weigh up the prospect of the atolls of Kiribati becoming uninhabitable through climate change, rise in sea-level, etc. (see Kuruppu & Liverman, 2011; Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Program, 2015). Incidentally, although the Pacific Access Category has the inklings of a bilateral arrangement with a foreign government around climate-induced re-settlement, when it was devised by the New Zealand and Republic Governments, the primary intentions were to assist New Zealand in addressing shortages of labour in urban services

and agriculture, and provide relief from unemployment among *I-Kiribati* and a further stream of remittances for Kiribati (Thompson, 2016). Even now, its place as a response to *I-Kiribati* having to emigrate because of a rise in sea-level is more a matter of speculation of observers and commentators than an element of the present official policies of either government (e.g., see Government of Kiribati, 2016a).

While *I-Nikunau* and other *I-Kiribati* interactions with non-traditional organisations increase after they immigrate to metropolitan countries, various traits of tradition are evident in many aspects of life in their diasporic communities, thus justifying the use of the "diaspora" label. This is particularly so in organisations they have established in their diasporic communities (e.g., Christchurch Kiribati Community, Kiribati Tungaru Association, Kiribati Waipounamu Community), whose quasi-traditional qualities are evident in the matters with which these organisations mainly concern themselves, how these organisations function operationally, and how they are constituted and governed (e.g., on the basis of *mwenga* rather than individuals). These traits and qualities contrast with those in local organisations, be they commercial (e.g., shops, banks), religious (e.g., Anglican churches), community (e.g., scout groups, philanthropic trusts) or governmental (e.g., territorial authorities or local councils, government ministries interested in the Pacific), the contrast being most evident in dealings between the organisations in question. For example, diasporic community organisations apply for community grants, hire campgrounds and other venues, and maintain bank accounts with local organisations. Such considerations also come into dealings in Kiribati between aid organisations and *I-Nikunau* and other *I-Kiribati* organisations, including those associated with the Republic Government (see Chapter 11.2.4).

# 16

# Distributional Circumstances (*te tabomoa*)

*I-Nikunau's* distributional circumstances can be considered in terms of how things are distributed in three contexts:

- the distributions among *I-Nikunau* forming a community in the same social and geographical space (e.g., on Nikunau or in a single diasporic community);
- the distributions between *I-Nikunau* and other peoples with whom they occupy the same space (e.g., on Tarawa or where in New Zealand there is a diasporic community); and
- the distributions between communities of *I-Nikunau* in different geographical spaces (e.g., in New Zealand compared with urban atoll Tarawa and compared with traditional Nikunau).

Examples of things which are subject to distribution in these contexts include wealth, welfare, power and risk from a rise in sea-level. As can be inferred from these examples, distributional circumstances range across, and are intertwined with, circumstances and occurrences which are economic, social, political, environmental, etc. To amplify, economically, the distributions are reflected in *I-Nikunau's* comparative material wealth, including personal belongings, *mwenga*, *aba* and similar, their comparative subsistence produce and incomes, and their comparative consumption and savings. Socially, they are reflected in, among other things, their relative status, welfare and wellbeing. Politically, they are reflected in their relative power, influence, rights and such like (Wheatcraft & Ellefson, 1983). Environmentally, they are reflected in, for example, their relative circumstances of demography and their relative prospects or risks in the face of expected trends associated with, say, climate change, etc. (cf. Thomas & Twyman, 2005).

## 16.1 Distributions among *I-Nikunau*

Among *I-Nikunau* forming a community, things capable of distribution, or the things which are distributed by virtue of events and situations, are referred to in the descriptions of the present in Part II and the analyses in Chapters 5 to 15, as are how the present distributions have come about or how they are occurring presently. Age, gender, kinship groups and similar are among the factors associated with how these distributions vary in each community, just as they have been historically on Nikunau. But in addition, particularly among *I-Nikunau* living in urban and metropolitan diasporic communities,

other factors besides these have come into play, notably education, employment and remuneration rates, marriage and relations outside the community. The disparities of the various distributions have gradually increased within communities because of so many factors, traditional and modern, and the interplay among them, and the subsequent effects of consequential factors too.

Even so, it has been my experience that *I-Nikunau* and most other *I-Kiribati*, wherever located geographically or otherwise, have usually taken steps to avoid conspicuous displays of being advantaged or better endowed, economically, socially, educationally, etc. than others of their community, in whichever diasporic community they are part of, or even happen to be visiting. This quality of avoiding conspicuous displays of greater wealth, authority, knowledge and similar endowments coincides with observations by Hockings (1984) and Autio (2010), among others, of *kawa* and other traditional units, particularly in the southern Kiribati Islands; indeed, any such displays are usually greeted with mirth from one's peers, and so one is made *te bai n rang* (cf. McCreary & Boardman, 1968). Concomitantly, those disadvantaged or poorly endowed, while accepting of support, are keen to maintain at least an appearance of self-sufficiency.

Despite the spreading of *I-Nikunau* away from Nikunau to form various diasporic communities, adherence to these traditions and self-restraint or suppression are still noticeable, although they have been adapted or substituted by things more modern or in keeping with the circumstances which particular communities experience, according to their geographical situation, and so been weakened compared with behaviours on Nikunau. Arguably, there is a direct correlation between this noticeability and the number of community members who meet together regularly and the frequency with which these members deal with each other. *I-Nikunau* are commonly generous among each other with whatever they are able to give, and this is encouraged from generation to generation; and they expect the same of each other. This is done within the context of respect for form, tradition and kinship relationships, and an expectation that some effort is being expended in acquiring knowledge of these. A further feature is that the principle of *tabu te uea*, or there are no chiefs, is usually adhered to, and infringing this is seen as a conspicuous display of authority and power. However, this does not prevent someone from exercising specialist knowledge, skills or contacts on behalf of the community when these are called for.

## 16.2 Distributions between *I-Nikunau* and Others

Turning now to where *I-Nikunau* share space with other peoples and so have dealings with these other peoples, severally and jointly, *I-Nikunau* seem to hope for similar generosity, reciprocation and humility to that which they practice among themselves but have come to expect much less most of the time. This expectation has arisen from their past first-hand and other dealings with *I-Matang* and a few other peoples who, in matters of commerce, government and social relations, have pressed home such advantages as knowledge, skills, technology and rhetoric, and convey hubristically senses of privilege and social pre-eminence, and a justification, or natural right, to colonise or imperialise (cf. Said, 1994); stories passed onto *I-Nikunau* by their forebears have added to these expectations. Thus, as alluded to in Chapter 7, *I-Nikunau* have shared in the economic benefits of trade, employment and exploitation of natural resources (e.g., whales, copra, phosphate, tuna) but invariably the lion's share seems to have gone to *I-Matang* or other outsiders. However, over time, the share accorded by outsiders to *I-Nikunau* in these various distributions

seems to have been more respectful of the latter's position as the underdog, or on the weaker side of asymmetric relationships, and, more recently, of their human rights and their rights as "individuals".

Additionally, *I-Nikunau* can themselves be a barrier to this sort of change, being overly respectful still of *I-Matang's* seemingly superior knowledge, technology and material goods, and continuing to defer to *I-Matang* as a people, as in colonial times (see Bevington, 1990), while tending to be embarrassed, even ashamed, of what they consider as either traditional or as their knowledge, etc. being inferior (see Chapter 12). For example, I myself encounter the long held notion that *I-Matang* men possess wide expertise in all technology associated with the outside world, being able as a matter of course to repair muskets, watches, car engines, computers, etc. These mentalities of deference, acquiescence, interpolation, inferiority, etc. on the part of *I-Nikunau* and other *I-Kiribati* are particularly significant in the sphere of development, resulting in the research, methods, findings, opinions, etc. of external consultants, who are usually *I-Matang* still, often going unscrutinised, unchallenged and inadequately understood by *I-Kiribati* (cf. Connell & Corbett, 2016; Dean et al., 2016; Dixon & Gaffikin, 2014), and so being given far more weight than would be the case among a conversation, meeting or audience of fellow *I-Matang*. Examples where this applies are law making, governance, macroeconomic policy, public administration and business practices, infrastructure and construction, education, health, environmental issues and deploying information technology, as mentioned or alluded to in previous chapters.

Despite there still being room for change among *I-Matang* (and other *non-I-Kiribati*) in their attitudes towards and status accorded to *I-Nikunau* and other *I-Kiribati*, things have come quite a long way since Officer on Board the Said Ship (1767, pp. 135-138) wrote about "naked indians". Similar since *I-Matang* warships were sent on patrol later to inspire "good behaviour" (Sabatier, 1977, p. 148) among "the various tribes of savages who are subject to no laws" to give "countenance and support to peaceful traders" (Wilson in general instructions to officers of British ships operating from the Australia Station in 1879, cited by Macdonald, 1982a, p. 65; see also Simmonds, 2014). Notions among the Great Powers to care for and help islanders, including *I-Nikunau*, and stopping them from being abused, particularly through being kidnapped, abducted or lured on board ship (see Macdonald, 1982a) and while working away, led to legislation in Great Britain, notably the Pacific Islanders Protection Acts of 1872 and 1875 (see Ward, 1946). A few years later, *I-Nikunau* were discussed indirectly and paternalistically by the officials of the Great Powers in terms of having a modicum of rights, but with said Powers there in a colonial capacity

> to watch over the preservation of the native tribes, and to care for the improvement of the conditions of their moral and material well-being, and to help in suppressing slavery, and especially the slave trade. They shall, without distinction of creed or nation, protect and favour all religious, scientific or charitable institutions and undertakings created and organized for the above ends, or which aim at instructing the natives and bringing home to them the blessings of civilization. (General Act of 1885, Article VI)

These sentiments among the Great Powers and similar persisted for some decades. Globally, they are evident in the Covenant of the League of Nations (League of Nations, 1919)–Article 22 mentions "a sacred trust of civilisation." Locally, the sentiments were incorporated in the instructions to district officers issued by Grimble and Clarke (1929)

(cf. Bevington, 1990; Macdonald, 1971, 1972, 1982a; Maude, 1977). Alas, the civilising of said native tribes under these policies extended to appropriation and destruction of their lands, slavery and other forms of economic exploitation, obliteration of their beliefs and values, and genocide even (see, for example, Davie, 2000; Edwards, 2014; Ferguson, 2008; Gibson, 2000; Gowdy & McDaniel, 1999; Greer & Patel, 2000; Kearins & Hooper, 2002; King & Sigrah, 2004; Macdonald, 1982a; Neu, 2000; Neu & Graham, 2006).

Notwithstanding the social hypocrisy and economic and political subterfuge associated with it, under this civilising policy paradigm which the Great Powers espoused, *I-Nikunau* experienced the beginnings of the social and economic development analysed in Chapters 5 to 7, and the political development analysed in Chapter 11. Their social status also began to rise, although it was still heavy on supplicancy; they became what amounted to "subjects", rather than "non-persons". From these beginnings, and as the civilising policy paradigm gave way to a policy of modernising, they were eventually accorded the statuses of "subjects capable of internal self-rule" and then of "citizens of a modern republic" (see Morgan, 1980; Tucker, 1999; Willis, 2005). Subsequently, under the neo-liberalising policy paradigm being championed by selected aid organisations, they had their citizenship status added to with such statuses as "customers", "clients" and "rational economic individuals in a neo-liberal society", at least in the writings of officials associated with said aid organisations, as they have rolled out projects of structural adjustment, economic reform, privatisation, etc. (see Barokas & Rubin, 1988; Dixon, 2004a).

A further parallel development in metropolitan countries was that *I-Nikunau* were recognised as persons eligible to obtain visas and immigration papers, and so be accorded such statuses as visitors, workers, students, permanent residents and citizens, with associated political, social and economic rights and obligations. The coming about and growth of diasporic communities in various countries of this sort indicate the extent to which applications have been approved, visa and other papers issued, and the statuses in question accorded.

Similar trends of *I-Nikunau's* rising entitlement to rights (and incurrence of obligations), social status, etc. are noticeable in numerous other respects. The following five examples relate to trends spanning the past two centuries in the areas of conditions of employment, extraction of natural resources, participation in organisations and status of language. The first example relates to *I-Nikunau* working away from Nikunau, which has gone on since the 1820s (see Chapter 5). In the 19th century many, including those who were indentured labourers, endured near-slavery, racism and similar economic and social exploitation (see McCreery & Munro, 1993; Munro, 1993). By the early 20th century, changes were becoming noticeable; in particular, wages, other emoluments (e.g., housing, rations) and other employment conditions on Banaba, and later Nauru, gradually improved and, contemporaneously, were probably better than for work elsewhere in the Pacific (cf. Shlomowitz & Munro, 1992), which in any case they were prevented from taking on (see Chapter 5); these changes went hand in hand with industrial or related disputes (e.g., over prices charged at the employer's stores) (see Williams & Macdonald, 1985).

Improvements to the conditions under which *I-Nikunau* have worked outside Nikunau, and more recently, outside Kiribati have continued; for example, they now prevail, at least officially, for *I-Nikunau* working worldwide as seafarers and, in New Zealand, on Recognised Seasonal Employer schemes (Bedford et al., 2009). However, all along the way, wages and conditions have been inferior to those of white labourers, including, for example, in the

phosphate industry in Australia and New Zealand. Nowadays, most of the work given to *I-Kiribati* on, for example, Recognised Seasonal Employer schemes, is work which local New Zealand labour, of whatever colour and ethnicity, is unwilling to do, including because wage rates are unattractive and, probably more importantly, conditions are unacceptable (e.g., having to live in remote places and work irregular, unsocial hours, moving among places which are dispersed around a region), and there still being potential for exploitation, intended or otherwise. Again, Recognised Seasonal Employer scheme workers are an example; they are at a disadvantage in dealing with employers, or at least feel so, and so are reluctant to exercise fully their written contractual rights or legal protections under local employment laws (e.g., rights to a minimum wage, holiday pay, etc., health and safety protections) (cf. Reilly, 2011). In any case, some of these rights, if received in the letter, are eroded by excessive deductions for transport, accommodation and victuals – the abusive overcrowding endured in Blenheim by 22 workers on a Recognised Seasonal Employer scheme ("Kiribati workers go home", 2008) is a widely reported example in which the *P*ākehā perpetrator was criticised by some but defended by others (see Van Wel, 2008).

The reluctance, etc. just mentioned on the part of Recognised Seasonal Employer scheme workers is notwithstanding potential and actual help from extant members of diasporic communities. However, although they may be more familiar with laws, rights and customs pertaining to work, accommodation and similar, they too suffer disadvantages and are open to exploitation in the workplace and in other aspects of life (cf. Roman, 2013; Thompson, 2016). These *I-Nikunau*, etc. arrive in New Zealand on a mixture of work and accompanying family visitor visas, but with the prospect of permanent resident visas under the Pacific Access Category, provided they comply with their visas and attain the employment-related and income criteria laid down under this Category by the immigration authorities, as explained in Chapter 4.2. The work most take to satisfy these criteria is usually low-paid, resulting in them living in relative poverty for some time after their arrival (see Chapters 7 and 13) and can be with bad employers and at places where they must endure workplace discrimination, even from other workers of Pacific heritage (see Thompson, 2016). Although many move to better-paid jobs subsequently, just as many remain in the low-paid job sectors, with adverse consequences for entire families.

Alongside raising further, similar issues in relation to having to rent poor quality houses let by bad landlords, Thompson/Teariki (2016, 2017) notes language and similar personal inadequacies impeding access to official support for *I-Nikunau* and other *I-Kiribati* singles, couples and families arriving in New Zealand under the Pacific Access Category, let alone the temporary workers there on Recognised Seasonal Employer schemes. This support takes various forms, including processes of approaching official bodies (e.g., the Tenancy Tribunal in New Zealand) which can settle disputes in landlord-tenant or employer-employee relationships, and written information aimed at either preventing getting into predicaments in the first place or indicating what remedies exist for persons when they find themselves in these predicaments (e.g., Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment, 2017). More generally, it is one thing for a country to have laws about social equality, or against gender, racial or similar discrimination, but quite another for temporary migrant workers or recent settlers to be in a strong enough position vis-à-vis other peoples or the authorities to perceive themselves as anything approaching culturally, socially, politically or economically equal, let alone take advantage of such legal protections (cf. Reilly, 2011).

The second example pertains to exploitation of the ocean adjacent to Nikunau. Reiterating Chapter 5, whaling was conducted in the vicinity of Nikunau between the 1820s and 1870s, the ocean being exploited ruthlessly by whaling ships without any international legal recognition of *I-Nikunau* having any economic rights, and so of entitlement to any form of rent, royalties or similar – I doubt the very idea of economic rights to the high seas or the atmosphere even occurred to anyone involved at that time, this being still the case on terra firma even.[79] However, they did derive trade goods from whalers in exchange for supplies, etc. and some employment at the level of deck hands.

In complete contrast, under the auspices of the Republic Government, *I-Nikunau* and other *I-Kiribati* now receive significant licence fees from the fishing fleets exploiting the tuna fishery within Kiribati's EEZ (see Chapters 5 and 7). Even so, these fees are a small proportion only of the reported value of the fish caught, and illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing is perceived as a significant occurrence (Fedor, 2012; Mangubhai et al., 2019)–an EEZ of some 3.55 million km$^2$ is difficult to surveil, even with assistance from the Royal New Zealand Air Force (New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2015). What is more, many potential present benefits of the fees are foregone because the Republic Government has been persuaded by aid organisation advisers to contain its expenditure well below what this fees revenue might afford, and so run significant surpluses, which are then invested outside Kiribati – see Chapter 7 and outline of the Revenue Equalisation Reserve Fund in Note 47. Meanwhile, income obtained directly by *I-Nikunau* and other *I-Kiribati* from the presence of the fishery is limited to personal goods and services (e.g., present-day equivalents of *kaokioki* and *nikiranroro* – see Chapter 7) supplied to ships' crews during onshore leave on Tarawa (see Bohane, 2006; McNamara & Westoby, 2014); there is no employment for *I-Nikunau* and other *I-Kiribati* either at sea or onshore.

Moving to the third example, the lack of employment opportunities for *I-Nikunau* and other *I-Kiribati* just mentioned in the second example contrasts with those they derived from mining of Banaba, and from which they also derived some royalty benefits by way of what the British Phosphate Commission paid to the Colony Government, especially between 1967 and 1979 (see Note 51). However, in that case, the royalties arose from mining only affecting *aba* of *I-Banaba*, not land or ocean to which *I-Nikunau* had some ancestral, economic or social claim. Thus, the main interest of *I-Nikunau* in Banaba was as a place to labour, just as Nauru was and New Zealand is now. Correspondingly, *I-Nikunau* saw themselves as not much more than mineworkers, entitled to wages, etc., rather than entitled to a share in the phosphate deposits as a saleable commodity. Indeed, notwithstanding the two islands having been established by British authorities within the same single polity by 1900, and recognised as such by the other Great Powers, as explained in Chapter 11, *I-Nikunau*, at that time and during the decades after, regarded Banaba and the other islands in the Colony as separate social and political entities from Nikunau and did not take on a national *I-Kiribati* identity until much more recently. Thus, as far as *I-Nikunau* have been concerned, it has been *I-Banaba* who have suffered various wrongs at the hands of the British Government, the British Phosphate Commission and British dominion interests for most of these decades.

These wrongs include dispossession and exploitation of, and banishment from, their land, and their deportation to and continuing exile on Rabi (e.g., see Edwards, 2014; Hindmarsh, 2002; Kempf, 2003, 2011; King & Sigrah, 2004; Macdonald, 1982b; McAdam,

2014; Sigrah & King, 2001; Silverman, 1971; Teaiwa, 2005, 2015). The wrongs in question were hardly made good when, under International Law and similar changes, indigenous landowners obtained rights to royalties and similar, or when the English courts found in favour of the cases brought by *I-Banaba* against the British Government (i.e., Rotan Tito and Others v. Attorney- General 1971 R. No. 3670; Rotan Tito and Others v. Waddell and Others (No. 2) 1973 R. No. 2013). Not only were the royalties meagre (see Weeramantry, 1992) but also, as indicated in Note 51, they were shared between the Banaban Royalties Trust Fund (and its predecessors) and the Colony Government, whose share was in lieu of all taxes on profits, employees' remuneration, imports, store sales, etc., as well as, eventually, for development of the Colony and to boost the Revenue Equalisation Reserve Fund. Although the court's judgement (see Megarry, 1977) included monetary compensation, this was arguably not enough in the circumstances. What is more, the court chose not to make an order for restoration work be carried out on Banaba, ruling this as unreasonable and impractical (Tabucanon, 2012).

For their part, *I-Banaba* were probably as upset by what *I-Nikunau* did on their island as they were by what *I-Matang* staff of the British Phosphate Commission did, showing this in acts of protest even as the last of the phosphate workers were leaving in 1980 (confidential personal communication, 2009, from someone who, as young person, was among those boarding the last worker-repatriation ship). For these reasons, I have not incorporated more about royalties from the mining phosphate on Banaba into this example of trends in *I-Nikunau's* distributive rights vis-à-vis outsiders. However, that is not to say that the degree of concern among *I-Nikunau* for the plight of *I-Banaba* remains unchanged from what it was. No doubt *I-Nikunau* on Banaba, and even on Nauru, had concerns for what the indigenes suffered, in so far as they knew about it – the *I-Banaba* were after all out of sight on Rabi after 1945. But greater identification with Kiribati as a national identity in recent decades and the availability of more critical information about the plight of the *I-Banaba*, including through face-to-face mixing, in New Zealand for example, has increased *I-Nikunau's* awareness of past wrongs (see Cooper, 1998; Weeramantry, 1992). Another factor in this seems to be *I-Nikunau's* greater appreciation of issues around human rights and care of the environment (e.g., land restoration after mining, greenhouse gas emissions, ocean pollution), and of redress for past wrongs and their present-day consequences. This last matter is something which has come to the attention of diasporic communities in New Zealand through proceedings and settlements under the auspices of the Waitangi Tribunal (see Ministry of Justice, 2017).

The fourth example pertains to *I-Nikunau's* involvement in non-traditional organisations, be they religious, community, commercial or governmental. Having been on the periphery of these, *I-Nikunau* have come to fill positions of greater responsibility and authority in each type, as related in Chapter 15. In churches, having once been mostly confined to the flock, more became deacons, and some became, or now can potentially become, pastors and senior pastors, and priests and bishops. In government and politics, having largely been restricted to the status of native tribes and native subjects for the first several decades of the Colony Government, albeit with some men occupying native or island government positions of *kaubure* and similar, and a few being Colony Government clerks, the gradual emergence of *I-Kiribati* self-rule and then the advent of the Republic saw some *I-Nikunau* rise into senior administrative and political positions at nation-state level, and even join supranational organisations.

Changes in relation to church and state organisations notwithstanding, contributing to church and state infrastructure and administration, and having to comply personally with ever more stringent regulations, placed economic and social burdens on *I-Nikunau* during colonial times, as noted in Chapter 14. These burdens affected the daily activities in which *I-Nikunau* were involved, mostly to fulfil their obligations to their *utu* and *kawa*. These activities included obtaining subsistence produce from their *aba*, the reef and the ocean, and, through producing and selling copra, obtaining the various trade goods which came to be classed as necessities almost. Only a portion of these impositions was offset using imported technologies in order that activities could be completed more efficiently. Maude evaluated their aggregate effect as a "hitherto unsuspected degree of poverty" (1952, p. 66), noting that this effect was not entirely appreciated by the relevant authorities. These burdens continue on Nikunau and Tarawa, and have parallels elsewhere, including self-imposed ones relating to establishing and maintaining religious networks in metropolitan countries (see Chapter 12). Having said that, it is arguable that the burdens are significantly, or more than entirely, offset by their benefits.

In commerce, whereas marriage and mixed-race descent might have once been the only way into the business side of the copra trade or of acquiring similar commercial status, the way the trade was organised under the auspices of *boboti* saw *I-Nikunau* take up official positions of governance and administration. Although their elevation in commerce came at a time of crisis for copra and the entire world's other commodities, this predicament proved short-lived (see Chapters 7 and 15). Before, the incomes *I-Nikunau* derived from coconut oil/copra started out as barely 5% of the price which their produce realised elsewhere (i.e., New South Wales, New England, Western Europe, etc.). After, under *boboti*, it surely rose, although even then they probably hardly ever reached 15%. As alluded to in Chapter 7, *I-Nikunau* were disadvantaged vis-à-vis *I-Matang* by ignorance of, first, what *I-Matang* were doing with the oil or copra (i.e., manufacturing soap, etc.), and, second, of how *I-Matang* markets, trading and accounting practices worked. These particular disadvantages in commerce exemplify the nature of those prevailing still but in different forms, depending on location. That is, the actual vital knowledge needed on Tarawa or, say, in New Zealand, has changed, but the notion that *I-Nikunau* lack such knowledge, understanding, etc. has not, despite formal education, scholarships, tertiary study and the rest, because these formal processes of learning have been inadequate in their coverage of the areas enumerated above and previous chapters where being disadvantaged and being in asymmetric relations are discussed.

The fifth example pertains to language. Having been at various disadvantages with other peoples for lack of literacy, including because the main language of literacy they have met is English, *I-Nikunau* have seen the status of *te taetae ni Kiribati* as a written language gradually increase more widely than merely in the bible (Bingham, 1907) and other religious texts, as well as be accepted as a spoken language in non-traditional organisation settings. This has redressed a little of the imbalance between *I-Nikunau* and *I-Kiribati* who are largely without English, and *I-Nikunau* and *I-Kiribati* who are comfortable with speaking and working in English, although they normally use *te taetae ni Kiribati* in everyday life. Not only that but also this acceptance of *te taetae ni Kiribati* as not as inferior to English as it once was means that *I-Nikunau* in Kiribati are less excluded in dealing with outsiders (e.g., visiting representatives of aid organisations (see Note 29) and of commercial and religious organisations) on grounds of the social status of their

language. Even so, lack of English has meant *I-Nikunau* face practical limitations, such as in travelling, or trying to settle, outside Kiribati, and in accessing the myriad of external items (e.g., educational materials, entertainment) which have become increasingly available on Tarawa, a trend which has accelerated since the arrival of the Internet in the late 1990s. They also continue to be disadvantaged in Kiribati by the volume of reports, consultation documents, project proposals and job advertisements which presume formal and technical English. Moreover, whereas lack of *te taetae ni Kiribati* does not disqualify someone from working as a consultant, advisor, etc. in Kiribati, lack of English does.

## 16.3 Distributions between *I-Nikunau* Communities

Turning finally to distributions as part of relations between communities of *I-Nikunau* separated geographically, while diaspora and circular migration have entailed reciprocity at different levels between such communities, their different locations, and so geographical separation, has given rise to rather obvious disparities in distributional circumstances. These disparities are brought out in previous chapters, in which I have placed particular emphasis on comparing Nikunau with Tarawa environmentally, politically, economically, socially, etc., and then both with New Zealand – this allows for the pattern of *I-Nikunau* usually having moved first from Nikunau to Tarawa and then, perhaps a generation or more later, from Tarawa to New Zealand.

To recap some things I said or inferred previously and which are relevant to distributional circumstances, the Nikunau natural environment is much more pristine certainly than Tarawa and probably than New Zealand, despite the latter's clean, green image (see Roper, 2012). *I-Nikunau* on Nikunau are much more politically autonomous, in complete contrast to New Zealand, where they are basically powerless; on Tarawa, *I-Nikunau* have as much power among *I-Kiribati* probably as they are a proportion of the *I-Kiribati* population, although some of that power is curtailed by aid organisations being a major political force vis-à-vis *I-Kiribati*. While economically, life in New Zealand is more cash-based and costs of living there are higher, so too are incomes. Although some of those incomes are remitted to Tarawa and Nikunau, even after that, *I-Nikunau* in New Zealand mostly have more disposable income and belongings than *I-Nikunau* on Tarawa do, and certainly have greater access to free and low-priced facilities, including education, health, welfare, social and leisure facilities, and these facilities are generally of a much better standard.

On Nikunau, facilities and similar are scarce compared with what is on Tarawa, largely because aid organisation projects, and before that, Colony Government projects, have been heavily weighted in favour of Tarawa at the expense of Outer islands (Thomas & Kautoa, 2007); indeed, Nikunau did not even rate a separate mention in such plans as GEIC (1970) and Government of Kiribati (1983), and Outer Islands in general are referred to only in passing, incidentally or as if unimportant (cf. Connell, 2010). Moreover, reiterating above, *I-Nikunau* have had to provide many of the physical resources through which most of their atoll's infrastructure and administration has arisen, whether these be traditional, church or state.

# 17

# Cultural Circumstances (*te raoi*)

The cultural and related circumstances of the peoples of various islands in the Kiribati Archipelago, including *I-Nikunau*, have attracted outside attention from time to time over the past 100 or so years, in areas such as myths, legends and traditions, social organisation, kinship, identity, ancestry, custom, land tenure, maritime culture, material culture, architecture, diet and food preparation, and song and dance. I have referred widely to many of these studies in previous chapters. I hope that it is abundantly evident from those chapters that *I-Nikunau*, whether on Nikunau or in diasporic communities, inhabit a bounded world around shared habits, customs and general conduct, which are distinct from those of *non-I-Kiribati*. What may be less evident is that same is so for *I-Nikunau*, as distinct from other *I-Kiribati* on their various home islands, the more so as the others' islands are distant from Nikunau (Grimble, 1989; King, 1996; Macdonald, 1982a).

Notwithstanding that this latter claim may be less accepted, I used it as part of my argument in Chapter 1 to justify my choice of *I-Nikunau* as the study identity, rather than *I-Kiribati*. This is even acceding that homogenising forces (e.g., greater mixing of residents while away from their islands, informal and formal colonial rule, formal education) have reduced distinctions between *I-Nikunau*, *I-Beru*, *I-Tabiteuea*, *I-Tarawa*, *I-Butaritari*, etc. still resident on their respective atolls over time, and so are they not as great as they once were. Moreover, in their diasporic communities, including on Tarawa and, say, New Zealand, cultural and other distinctions between *I-Nikunau* and other *I-Kiribati* are also much less clear, increasingly so as time elapses since leaving Nikunau, and since leaving Tarawa, or being born into the diasporic community.

Concomitantly, just as differences can be found in the general conduct of people in one place across even short periods of time, so across the various places where *I-Nikunau* now live, their shared habits, customs and general conduct have come to differ as those who have left Nikunau, or left Tarawa, have adjusted to their place of settlement, including mixing with people there, whether *I-Kiribati* or *non-I-Kiribati*. Furthermore, change in diasporic communities, such as on Tarawa and in New Zealand, is also being driven by generational change, including where the youngest generation was born and has been brought up. I have attempted to capture these ideas in the following paragraphs.

During a study of secondary education, cross-referenced to anthropological, archaeological, ecological, ethnographic, sociological and other studies, indigenous accounts, etc., Burnett (1999) delved into cultural awareness among *I-Kiribati*, bringing

out their perceptions of how their culture has been changing. The areas his informants singled out as those of greatest cultural change were oral traditions, magico-religious beliefs and practices (cf. Grimble, 1921, 1933, 1989; Kambati, 1992; Latouche, 1983b; Sabatier, 1939/1977), trade and use of money (cf. Asian Development Bank, 2002; Couper, 1967), relationships and social organisation, including gender roles and children's roles (cf. Geddes, 1977; Goodenough, 1955; Lundsgaarde, 1966; Lundsgaarde & Silverman, 1972; Rose, 2014), *mwaneaba* (cf. Autio, 2010; Lundsgaarde, 1978; Maude, 1963) and diet (cf. Catala, 1957; Di Piazza, 1999; Grimble, 1933; Lewis, 1981, 1988; Turbott, 1949). More formally, a group of *I-Kiribati* writers (i.e., Baranite, Roniti, etc.) compiled the series of articles on cultural changes published in Mason (1985). Similarly, Alaima et al. (1979) comprises a series of papers by *I-Kiribati* writers who, in writing about aspects of pre-history and history, refer to culture and changes to cultural circumstances obliquely. More recently, Teaiwa (2015) attempts to question the structural ruptures to cultural circumstances caused by informal and formal colonial or imperial interventions, pointing out their far-reaching material, economic, political and spiritual consequences, desirable and undesirable (cf. Thaman, 2003).

As reflected in my collected experiences and observations over quite some time, at a *botaki* in *te mwaneaba* on Nikunau or at a public hall in New Zealand, many habits and customs, and conduct in general, would strike, say, new *I-Matang* guests as quite different from what they are used to. A profusion of symbolism is involved in both settings, reflecting the point made in Chapter 2 about *I-Kiribati* making an intense investment in cultural symbolism (Hockings, 1984). A cultural guide could describe, translate and explain the proceedings, interpret meanings they hold among *I-Kiribati*, and otherwise enlighten the visitors. Even so, most visitors would probably still have difficulty "getting it", for want of deeper background on *I-Nikunau* (or *I-Kiribati*) life experiences, and how these experiences interrelate and relate to things, material and intangible, with which they identify and hold as important, and on what "makes them tick". Besides the reasons the guide gives for the proceedings may often be reduced to something to the effect of, "Because that's the way we do things; it's part of our culture," the origins of the proceedings, symbols, etc. having been lost in time, space and logic. Similar applies to *I-Matang* as visitors to *kawa* and *mwenga* or as observers of conduct of *I-Nikunau* and *I-Kiribati* generally. What is more, *I-Nikunau* from Tarawa visiting Nikunau or New Zealand and participating in the same events, although seeing and hearing many things with which they were familiar, not least the language, might still require guidance, to either adjust to tradition on Nikunau or adjust to the New Zealand version of the proceedings in Auckland, Wellington, or on *Te Waipounamu*.

If combining their visit to Nikunau with visits to other Outer Islands, *I-Matang* or other *non-I-Kiribati* would notice many similarities going from island to island, particularly among adjacent islands, but if they took the trouble they would discern differences too, and might be able to link these differences with what marks out people from each island, including *I-Nikunau* from the rest. However, for these visitors to make these distinctions would be very difficult at a gathering of *I-Kiribati* from several islands on, say, Tarawa. This would be even more so in a metropolitan setting like New Zealand, where behaviour is some amalgam of the habits, etc. from the different home islands, and is tempered further by a mixture of absence from Kiribati and conditioning in New Zealand, be it anything from the availability of materials to the mores of time.

## 17.1 *I-Nikunau* Culture

So far the discussion in this chapter about *I-Nikunau's* cultural circumstances comprises something of a mishmash of ideas, concerns, things, etc., and so is resemblant of a study by Sewell (2005), in which, having brought out the anthropological foundations of culture, which is whence most of the studies cited above derive, and recent extensions into many other disciplines, he argues that culture has come to be interpreted in two ways. Either, it is a theoretical category abstracted from social experience and its complex realities, and so is distinguishable from other categories, including economic, political, etc. Or, it stands for a bounded world of beliefs and practices, synonymous in many respects to a society, and so used in such phrases as Kiribati culture, Western culture, pop culture, material culture, etc. (cf. Kuruppu, 2009). Having criticised both these, Sewell concludes that dialectic consideration of culture is useful in discerning "a sense of the particular shapes and consistencies of worlds of meaning in different places and times and a sense that in spite of conflicts and resistance, these worlds of meaning somehow hang together" (2005, p. 93).

By virtue of including this separate chapter on culture, I may seem to have adopted the first of the two interpretations listed above of what culture is. However, previous chapters contain many references to what can be construed as elements of culture, past and present. These references in other chapters also raise how elements of culture have been changing, including the changes brought about through *I-Nikunau's* varying geographical circumstances, which I characterise as traditional island, urban island and metropolitan country nowadays. Taken together, the relevant materials in these earlier chapters accord with dialectic consideration of culture. For example, in Chapter 14, general conduct associated with interdependence is shown as ever-present, but alongside emergence or clarity of individuality. These matters are reflected in changes related in Chapter 7, among other places, including a continuing regard for cooperative forms of trade in the form of *mronron* but an increasing propensity for families to operate proprietary businesses and for individuals to do work for other *I-Kiribati* in employer-employee relationships. More generally, analysis and discussions in those other chapters indicate that traditional objects and relationships, and habitual ways of knowing, interpreting, perceiving, doing, appearing and behaving, have been adapted, reconstructed, augmented, replaced or displaced. These changes and their cultural ramifications are reflected in, among other things, the mode of production (e.g., cultivating copra and trading it for goods and services) (see Chapter 7), religion (i.e., converting to Christianity) (see Chapter 12) and the political system (e.g., being part of a formal structure and process within the Republic and a semi-formal structure and process beyond its boundaries) (see Chapter 11).

On the other hand, despite apparent changes in particular circumstances (i.e., geographical, demographical), there do seem to be constancies, or at least some areas where cultural change is much slower than in other areas. For example, *I-Nikunau* in Kiribati, whether on Nikunau, Tarawa or elsewhere, comprise quasi-traditional communities which are based around their *utu*, church, and, on Tarawa, home-island *kawa*, home island and, to a limited extent, affiliations with the name of their work place – the latter are particularly keen when ministries and such like have held dancing competitions (see Nei Tabera Ni Kai Video Unit, 2000), and so dancing practices were held among the performers and their respective choreographers. As for *I-Nikunau* in New Zealand and other metropolitan countries, despite many exhibiting urban life styles, the diasporic communities they comprise retain various social and cultural practices reminiscent perhaps of Nikunau but

certainly of a meld of the various islands in the Kiribati Archipelago. Indeed, as Firth (1973) implies about the Kiribati Islands before their annexation by the British authorities and their subsequent political unification, eventually as the Republic, it is culture which binds these *I-Kiribati* communities. Same applies in diasporic communities outside Kiribati: the formal organisation of communities in New Zealand, for example, have written rules and are registered with Charities Services in New Zealand, or whatever, but culturally, these conditions are surplus to requirements; they exist mostly as practical conditions for the communities to function as entities recognised under New Zealand law, and so able to obtain grants from funding bodies, hire venues, own equipment (e.g., for sports or playing music) or real property, etc. (see Chapters 12 and 15).

What is more, these constancies, or slower changes, along with deliberate attempts to maintain culture, are not a matter of chance but of choice and action, which for diasporic communities outside Kiribati are significant facets of their formal existence; otherwise the culture might easily dissolve through total integration. The most vulnerable example of this is the Kiribati Tungaru Association, whose members are much more integrated into their host metropolitan country than those of equivalent organisations in New Zealand. As indicated in Chapter 13.3.2, it aims, among other things, to teach the young generation in Britain and elsewhere in Europe about culture and traditions of the Kiribati Islands through dialogue and dance (see Kiribati Tungaru Association, 2017). Similarly, *I-Kiribati* who have immigrated to New Zealand in the past decade or two have chosen to establish themselves there in a way which accords with their social and cultural values. According to Thompson (2016), this includes retaining *te taetae ni Kiribati*, continuing to show respect within *baronga*-based structures, dealing with others in the diasporic community on the basis of trust, friendship, mutual dependence and reciprocity based on kinship, *bubuti* and similar, rather than on English contract law, rational economic exchange at arm's length, caveat emptor, etc. According to Fedor (2012), it includes performing various forms of dance, along with music, songs and poems, and going to great lengths to source native materials for dancing costumes from Kiribati. In turn, *I-Nikunau* on Nikunau respond to the backward current of these adaptations conveyed from a distance, or even brought "home", by *utu*, etc. For example, one occasionally sees on Nikunau dancing costumes, dwellings, furniture, etc. not only into which non-native materials are incorporated but also designs as well.

As exemplified in Chapters 3 and 4, *I-Nikunau* living away from Nikunau adapt elements of their culture according to conditions, etc. in their adopted places of abode, and reconstruct learnt relations with each other inside each diasporic community and across communities. These elements and relations differ from place to place because they take account of, and embrace or acquiesce to, the influence of, the other peoples among whom they live in these different places (e.g., other *I-Kiribati*, *I-Matang*, *Pākehā*, Solomon Islanders) and things, material and intangible (e.g., dwellings, victuals, music, sports, modes of production, social relations), comprising these other people's differing cultures. Among *I-Nikunau* within diasporic communities, especially those in metropolitan countries, further dynamics arise from, among other things, variations in their marital status, marriage partners, the ethnic composition of families and the composition of households, and in education, employment religious affiliation and immigration status. Another example within diasporic communities, and which also occurs between them, is in how one generation gives way to another, and so how one generation's experiences

give way to those of the next. Thus, *I-Nikunau* living away from Nikunau on Tarawa are increasingly less likely to have been born and brought up on Nikunau, and in New Zealand, the proportion born and brought up there, rather than on either Tarawa or Nikunau, although still small, is increasing.

The above exemplify how traditional elements of *I-Nikunau's* culture continue to connect traditional Nikunau with urban island Tarawa and with metropolitan New Zealand. They also bring out how their culture is dynamic, and so increasingly diverse, because of the dynamics, or things influencing it, varying by location, etc. Thus, for example, one observes greater differences among *I-Nikunau* in the diasporic community on Tarawa than there is among *I-Nikunau* on Nikunau, and even greater cultural differences among *I-Nikunau* in the diasporic communities in New Zealand, and so a greater cultural range overall. This diversity is notwithstanding the continuing influence on social forms and practices, on Nikunau and away from it, of Autio's (2010) concept of undifferentiation as a cultural principle, which underpins the criticism *I-Nikunau* occasionally aim at some of their kind of "behaving like *te I-Matang*." This principle is clearly in evidence when *I-Nikunau*, or *I-Kiribati*, in diasporic communities away from Kiribati gather in numbers for *botaki* or similar social purposes.

Mention above of native materials being sourced from Kiribati to make costumes used in performing *I-Kiribati* dances in diasporic communities in New Zealand brings out the distinction between but the interrelatedness of material and intangible culture. It reminds us how *I-Kiribati* make things and things make *I-Kiribati* (see Tilley, Keane, Küchler, Rowlands & Spyer, 2006). Regarding the composition of *I-Nikunau's* material culture on Nikunau up to the 1960s, Koch's (1965/1986) study on Nonouti, Tabiteuea and Onotoa seems reasonably reliable, in terms physical objects, their form, range, origin, novelty, changeability, etc., as is so for Hockings's (1984) study focused on buildings and other structures and their cultural ramifications (see Chapter 6.2). Further evidence relevant to culture of an intangible nature, often mixed with the material side, is provided, either purposefully or incidentally, from the different islands at various times by the mixture of authors listed above (i.e., Autio, 2010; Catala, 1957; etc.).

## 17.2 External Influences on *I-Nikunau* Culture

There is abundant evidence regarding how culture on Nikunau, along with the other Outer Islands, has been influenced, intangibly and materially, from outside, giving rise to new beliefs, concepts, implements, knowledge, learnings and interpretations, skills and crafts, values, etc. The general thrust of this evidence is for it to have occurred in two interrelated and, arguably, equally important ways (Macdonald, 1982a; Rennie, 1987). It has been influenced by outsiders coming to the islands (e.g., whalers, traders, missionaries, colonial officials, aid organisation personnel). It has been influenced by *I-Nikunau* and other *I-Kiribati* returning to their home islands, having been away for work, schooling and other reasons, and by their communicating from a distance, especially since social media and the like have become available.

For one thing, these returning *I-Nikunau* and visitors told their stories in *mwaneaba* and at other opportunities, in traditional ways; that is, similar to how genealogy and history were shared. They passed on knowledge of wherever they had travelled to or originated, including something of the nature of the lands the storytellers told about, and of the technologies, customs, economic systems, religions, social conditions, events, leaders,

religious practices, etc. found there. Moreover, these stories incented some listeners to travel away from Nikunau themselves. But one issue was that the stories often left out the storytellers' bad experiences and misfortunes (see Chapters 4.2, 5.1 and 8.4). For another thing, these returning *I-Nikunau* and visitors introduced many of the implements mentioned in previous chapters, including victuals, seeds and plants, livestock, cloth, furniture, fittings, furnishings, money, books, writing materials, weapons, tools, utensils, lighting, push-bicycles, motors, machinery, generators, refrigeration, electrical appliances, musical instruments, audio and video players, computer devices and other equipment. Similarly, they brought knowledge, etc., pertaining, among other things, to fishing and cultivation, cooking, garment making, metalworking, carpentry, coopering, mechanics, reading and writing, education, playing music, conducting religious rituals, jurisprudence, politics, health and well-being, construction, baking, brewing and other local manufacturing.

Noteworthy in the past two decades on Nikunau is the increased incidence of entertainment equipment for screening motion pictures, music videos and similar at will, instead of the once-per-week reel-to-reel films (see Chapter 14.2). Mostly, this equipment, along with petrol generators and solar cells needed to power them, is owned by *kawa* or church groups, rather than a single *mwenga*, as is also the case for other big price items and items which may be interpreted as conspicuous personal displays of social or economic advantage (e.g., motor vehicles). The incidence of computers and related devices was barely evident when I visited in 2009, although the Nikunau Island Council treasurer had very recently obtained a laptop for the first time; this was courtesy of the Republic Government, from whom she was seconded and for whom she also carried out some agency duties. I understand that in the eight years since various devices (e.g., laptops, iPads, mobile phones) have become more evident on Nikunau (Kiribati Local Government Association, 2013), often gifted by *utu* on Tarawa and further afield. However, access to the Internet and similar is still limited, and so their effect on youth culture in particular, or on culture in general, has not been as significant yet as materials copied on CDs, DVDs, USBs, etc. have.

The situation of Tarawa about the Internet, computer technology and electricity to power equipment is quite different from Nikunau, with mobile devices having become commonplace and access to the Internet easier, more reliable and more affordable. As mentioned or alluded to in previous chapters, many things of cultural significance have been possibilitated by this development. One deserving particular mention is the use of social messaging applications at no or very low cost (e.g., Skype, Facebook Messenger, WhatsApp Messenger); these have boosted contact among *utu* wherever they are (*e.g.* Tarawa, London, Christchurch, Wellington, Honiara). Similarly, "friends" and "group members" can share daily events and circumstances through social media (e.g., see Nikunau Maneaba on Facebook, n.d.).

People who a decade ago might not have seen each other for years, and only spoken to each other on the telephone intermittently and at considerable cost, can now see and speak to each other daily using these devices and applications. Not only that but also these people share their knowledge, skills, crafts and experiences, and exchange electronic and physical goods more easily, and so their habits, general conduct and even customs can change, or existing or traditional habits, general conduct and customs can be reinforced. The possibility of producing videos of dancing and other events, and sharing these on YouTube or similar, adds to these possibilities; indeed, YouTube or similar gives access to *non-I-Kiribati* music, dancing, sports, and a whole host of entertainment, technology and the like, providing knowledge, skills and crafts capable of "catching on" and becoming

part of culture on Tarawa, particularly youth culture, so quickening cultural change there compared with previously.

However, that is not to say that previous cultural change on Tarawa was as slow as on Nikunau now. Since the 1940s, the presence there of *non-I-Kiribati* has been much greater, many of them intent on bringing about change in the name of development (e.g., teachers, engineers, consultants). The immigrants to it from other islands, such as *I-Nikunau*, have been younger and more intellectual than the communities they left. Life for *I-Tarawa* and immigrants has gone hand in hand with the much greater preponderance of infrastructure, facility and intangible developments there. Thus, the material culture for many *I-Nikunau* on Tarawa has since the 1950s and 1960s included living in dwellings of non-traditional design and materials, including having walls, doors, windows and rooms; moreover, even most traditional dwellings have been on the mains supply of electricity since the 1980s and 1990s. As indicated extensively in previous chapters, that life has also included exposure to people originating from other islands in the Kiribati Archipelago and from other countries, and to their habits, customs, conduct and culture; and it has included the cash economy, and working for others for set hours in return for cash, and being overseen and instructed in their work by another person from outside their *mwenga* or *utu*. Etc. Etc. The advent of the Internet, etc. is a continuation of the developments which have been part and parcel of cultural change, as well as an accelerator of that change.

On changes to culture more generally over the past two centuries, these have accompanied the displacement of traditional knowledge, skills, and magico-religious and related beliefs among *I-Nikunau*, even on Nikunau, with same originating elsewhere and introduced, whether as described above by returning *I-Nikunau* or visitors, or as part and parcel of conversion to Christianity and the implementation of formal education (see Chapter 12.2 and 13.2.2). The literacy skills in the school system have been inextricably linked by their teachers, first *non-I-Kiribati* and then their *I-Kiribati* successors, with a curriculum established and maintained by successive parties who came from outside Nikunau and Kiribati. That is, first, the churches, which regarded most of traditional culture as the antithesis of their religious mission; second, a colonial government, which was steeped in Britishness, notwithstanding how it reflected developments in British ideas and practices since the mid-20$^{th}$ century, including about education (Burnett, 2009a); and third, aid providers, whose educational thinking has reflected further developments in ideas, particularly those expressed in the English-language. Insofar as this curriculum has included knowledge and skills relevant to everyday life, perhaps unwittingly in many cases, the materials, have been more about that life in places where the curriculum originated, than on Nikunau, Tarawa or similar; for example, the KGVEBS domestic science curriculum, in preparation for Cambridge Board examinations, featured preparation of everyday victuals, but everyday mostly in Cambridge! In regard to items associated with the material culture of Nikunau (e.g., see Koch, 1965/1986), and Tarawa for that matter, the incidence of, for example, imported implements (e.g., tools, boats), made from metal alloys, plastics and similar, has increased, and so use of skills in making locally producible items, and other knowledge connected with their use, etc., have at least declined and mostly been lost altogether (cf. Lawrence, 1983).

What I have just said contrasts with before the 1870s or so, when the older generation, that is *unimane* and *unaine*, covered the everyday life curriculum for living on Nikunau

along with everything else on the traditional curriculum (see Chapter 13.2.1), and so it remained as far as the everyday life curriculum was concerned. Except this was done outside school hours and became increasingly tacit, rather than formal, especially in matters which mission and later teachers saw as unbefitting and actively discouraged (see Grimble's criticism of the mission curriculum cited in Chapter 12.3). Moreover, the knowledge, etc. which *unimane* and *unaine* could pass on about traditional technology and non-traditional technology introduced in their generation was for ever being reduced in value, or even made redundant altogether, because of what was said earlier about much technological change cum material culture occurring as successive *I-Nikunau* returned to Nikunau and outsiders came to Nikunau, both bringing further waves of new technology and knowledge of how to use it. The upshot was for the speed of technological change, and where it was driven from, to undermine traditional ways of passing on technological knowledge and cultural knowledge together. What is more, each wave of new technology, despite much of the knowledge about using it not extending to the ramifications of sustaining it, seems to have been seen, at least implicitly, as a linear and irreversible improvement, with no prospect of future need for technological knowledge no longer in use, traditional or otherwise, and so no need to reposit that knowledge in case its significance and value were to recur.

These losses of knowledge, or failure to hand down knowledge within generations, are notwithstanding oral traditions still being strong and substantial, or the literacy skills which have been acquired in the school system. This decline can be viewed as a threat to *I-Nikunau* being able to sustain life in the very peculiar natural environment on Nikunau without the current level of outside support. Nor does it bode well for the challenges of life on Tarawa either, if the current level of outside support was interrupted (cf. Republic of Kiribati, 2009). Such proposals as organising training workshops and publish booklets on "traditional conservation skills/practices" (see Republic of Kiribati, 2009, p. 57) may be seen as a sign of this threat being appreciated, if not responded to very convincingly.

Regarding the fate of some parts of *I-Nikunau's* intangible culture which were in the traditional curriculum but which mission and later teachers actively discouraged, the most notable of these are stories of myths and legends, history and ancestry, social conduct and social pursuits, including dancing songs and music. As with much traditional technology, many were not passed on in traditional ways from generation to generation, especially between the 1880s and 1980s, the period of LMS and British colonialism. The continued existence of much knowledge of this nature, when imperious outsiders have begun to admit its importance as a human right, etc., is due in no small way to the interest taken in collecting and repositing this knowledge by *I-Matang* anthropologists, historians, etc. (e.g., Autio, Geddes, the Grimbles, Hockings, Koch, Latouche, Lundsgaarde, Macdonald, the Maudes, Sabatier) (cf. Kambati, 1992). As to the future of this knowledge, interest in it among *I-Nikunau* and other *I-Kiribati* has been rejuvenated, notably in diasporic communities, where the methods and resources of education, anthropology and preservation of cultural heritage seem to have been melded with traditional methods (e.g., see British Museum, 2017; Tungaru: the Kiribati Project, 2016).

Dance is the most significant exception of knowledge having been transmitted continuously through traditional means, along with song and music (see Autio, 2010; Dambiec, 2005; Whincup, 2009), despite how critical some religious leaders were of it (e.g., William Goward of the LMS – see Macdonald, 1982a), and how traditional means

of teaching and learning have deteriorated at the hands of formal education and technological change. Having shrugged off this prejudice and other impediments to its survival, dance performances, song and music are still common on Nikunau (see Teuea, 2010) and throughout Kiribati (Autio, 2010). What is more, their presence in diasporic communities (see Chapter 4), usually as a principal feature of major events through which these communities come together (see BPS Productions, 2019; PixMasta Studio, 2017) and in collaborations with host country institutions (see British Museum, 2017; EventFinda, 2014), reflects them being the mainstay of *I-Nikunau's* cultural identity and that of *I-Kiribati* from all the other islands.

Whether the examples just given, and the purposes and activities of the likes of the Kiribati Tungaru Association and the Kiribati Waipounamu Community, are enough to sustain Kiribati identity and culture in these countries, only time will tell. This question is one being contemplated alongside the possibility of having to leave the Kiribati Islands because of sea-level rise. "If we leave Kiribati, our ability to retain our culture as being distinct will no longer be very easy" (Anote Tong in Rytz, 2018, 55 mins).

# 18

# Societal Circumstances (*te mauri ao te raoi*)

To analyse *I-Nikunau's* societal circumstances I make use of the notion of "socie-ties", a word play on the now obscure verb "socie", meaning to ally for some common purpose or to join or bind, and on "ties" in the form of powerful and pragmatic social constructs or institutions (see Quattrone, 2015, 2016). Ten generations ago, being isolated to an extent which is difficult to conceive today, albeit that there was some interaction and commonality with the *I-Kiribati* inhabitants of neighbouring islands, the possibilities of *I-Nikunau* constituting a society seem self-evident – even when they travelled, they always expected to return to Nikunau (see Chapter 5.1). However, this state of being together geographically, and away from virtually everyone else on the planet, was only one of many ties by which they were socied to one another and which gave rise to the society in question. This may be implied from the histories related in various parts of Chapters 5 to 17, which I shall now recap and summarise.

Ascendant among these other ties were *I-Nikunau's* social relationships based on kinship, including *boti* and *utu*; these figured in their demographical, political, spiritual, social and organisational circumstances, among others. Further prominent ties were that *I-Nikunau* lived as, and in, *mwenga* situated on *kainga*, both being physically and socially similar. They shared in the same skills and crafts, and lived on the same victuals procured in similar ways from adjacent *aba*. Their grasp of the world was shaped by what they heard, saw, smelt, touched and tasted on their atoll and the ocean and atmosphere surrounding it. They communicated in a common language, with which they also recorded and expressed orally how, collectively and historically, they interpreted the observations, etc. just referred to, including how they imagined this world had come about, what they were doing in it and what happened to those who died (Latouche, 1983b; Grimble, 1989; Sabatier, 1939/1977). These interpretations and imaginings were an important part of the knowledge, understandings, beliefs and values they shared. All the matters just enumerated were reflected in *I-Nikunau's* long-established, but still dynamic (e.g., see Maude, 1963; McCreary & Boardman, 1968), myriad of common customs, rituals, etc. (i.e., *te katei ni Nikunau*) of 11 or 12 generations ago; these covered the roles they should play out in their lifetimes and how they should conduct themselves, collectively and individually.

Then, about 10 generations ago, *I-Nikunau's* ancestors began to have dealings with whalers, the first of a succession of *I-Matang* to feature most prominently in *I-Nikunau's*

subsequent history, be it as traders, Pacific labour trade employers, missionaries, colonial officials, phosphateers, World War II combatants, aid workers, consultants or the majority population in metropolitan countries where *I-Nikunau* diasporic communities now occur. Their influences took the circumstances of *I-Nikunau* as a people in new directions, as discussed in Chapters 5 to 17, thus changing their societal circumstances, and rapidly so, when one compares how similar changes of equivalent substance and magnitude were spread across the history of scores of generations of *I-Matang*. Sabatier (1939/1977) remarked on this rapidity of change to Gilbertese society a century ago, and Macdonald (1982a) made a similar observation three decades ago; it is a pattern often repeated in many Pacific Island societies (see Nunn, 2013). Here I direct attention to the changes in question by concentrating on the changes in the ties which have socied *I-Nikunau* over the past two centuries.

Geographically, *I-Nikunau* are still to be found on Nikunau, but in a far less isolated state; as well as sharing their atoll with other *I-Kiribati* and outsiders, many of them impermanent or transitory, their economy features imports and exports, and they have transport, postal and telecommunications links to the outside world. *I-Nikunau* are also to be found on Tarawa in sufficient numbers to constitute a diasporic community, but as the people around them on Tarawa are not that different in appearance, language and other social, cultural and economic traits, they exhibit integration (Berry, 1997, 2005) in that society quite strongly, as I claimed in Chapter 4.1. New Zealand and Britain are two of the several other places where *I-Nikunau* now live and where they are part of diasporic communities. But these communities differ in two ways from the one on Tarawa: first, rather than only comprising *I-Nikunau*, these are *I-Kiribati* diasporic communities; and second, whereas the one in Britain exhibits a significant degree of integration into British society, owing to the couples who founded it being a mixture of *I-Matang* and *I-Kiribati*, the ones in New Zealand exhibit high degrees of separation, being mostly comprised of *I-Kiribati* singles, couples and families and still expanding mostly through immigration from Tarawa (see Chapters 4, 5.2 and 6.3).

Demographically, although not usually living on adjacent *aba*, except on Nikunau, *I-Nikunau* still keep close physically, where possible, and socially, adopting communications technology as rapidly as its availability and lowering of costs have allowed, and placing a high priority on having that technology. They also share their *mwenga* with others in their diasporic communities when the need arises. This is reflective of them continuing socially to value kinship highly, within each community and across their communities. That includes the continuing significance for *I-Nikunau* of *utu*, albeit adapted to modern circumstances, as is evident from the extent which *utu* is used in this research monograph in writing about the present (cf. Gilkes, 2006; Ratuva, 2014; Roman, 2013; Thompson, 2016). *Utu's* survival as an institution is probably because it is mainly about blood ties, social and economic rights and obligations over land and other resources, and temporal knowledge (see Chapters 14.3 and 14.4). In this regard, it contrasts with that once equally important institution, *boti*, which was significant to traditional *kainga* settlements (see Chapter 6.2), and pre-colonial religious, political and judicial matters (see Chapters 11.1.1 and 12.1). *Boti* is now virtually extinct as an institution, because of the traditional circumstances just alluded to being targets of colonial change. Indeed, particularly in the geographical absence of very many *utu* around them, *I-Nikunau* have come to also value *baronga* and similar strong or fictive kinship ties. *I-Nikunau* are also cognisant of how kinship is part of

the societies in which they live (e.g., on Tarawa, and within the *Māori* and range of Pacific Island peoples who form part of New Zealand society).

*I-Nikunau* share together in the same victuals, now procured through subsistence and market means of production, distribution and exchange, depending on circumstances, the range of victuals having broadened and changed to some extent. Victuals continue to be as important socially as they are nutritionally, including at *botaki*. Indeed, *botaki*, *bowi* and similar remain a central feature of life on Nikunau and in diasporic communities, and where one can see demonstrations of quasi-traditional conduct, roles, custom, beliefs and values, as people come together for one purpose or another. In metropolitan countries in particular, but elsewhere also, this continuance of quasi-tradition is despite life's economic, social, political and other pressures to behave differently, not only to survive economically but also to conform with local societal mores in order to be accepted and "get on" permanently. This consideration of permanence in metropolitan countries in most cases reflects lack of any intention to return to Nikunau or even Tarawa, except to visit family and, perhaps, out of curiosity about whence one's ancestors originated.

As to *I-Nikunau's* present grasp of the world, this is even more widely shared than in the past among *utu*, *baronga*, etc. through stories based on personal experiences, etc., even on Nikunau. More *I-Nikunau* than ever before have more comprehensive stories, etc. about peoples and societies around them and at a distance, through media of various kinds (e.g., social, video and audio, broadcast, social, print). Supplementing this, and indeed of possibly at least equivalent importance, particularly in metropolitan countries, are formal education and the media just enumerated. Nevertheless, how *I-Nikunau* interpret these experiences, stories, education and media sources, and reach meanings from them individually and collectively, is still bound by the language(s) they work in; in many cases, even among those living in metropolitan countries but not brought up there, this is chiefly *te taetae ni Kiribati*, albeit a modern version to which many words, terms and phrases have been added over the past two centuries, while, over the same period, quite a lot of words, terms and phrases have largely fallen out of use through lack of relevance or applicability. This experience, etc. of the world has led to many changes in beliefs and values, particularly reflecting the societies in which they live. Thus, particularly away from Nikunau through Tarawa and to metropolitan countries, egalitarian, democratic and individual freedom principles have become accentuated, and gender discrimination, gerontocratic authority and even religious observance is somewhat reduced. Nevertheless, adherence to principles of self-reliance and of collective fairness, sharing and hospitality, and aversion to conspicuous personal displays of social or economic advantage continue within and across communities, regardless of the societal circumstances.

Coming to a much-changed grasp or understanding of the world has happened alongside *I-Nikunau* being inducted into an increasingly interdependent global society. This condition even applies to those remaining on Nikunau, as raised above already in some respects but worth repeating and expanding. Thus, they are socially interdependent with the other societies around them, whether *I-Beru*, *I-Tabiteuea*, *I-Tarawa*, etc. in Kiribati, or *I-Matang*, *Pākehā*, *Māori*, Solomon Islander, Chinese, etc. outside it. They are economically interdependent, supplying labour and copra, and permitting foreign fleets, such as from Japan, Taiwan, Korea, the USA and Spain, to fish their Extended Economic Zone for tuna under licence, for example; and in return receiving goods from Japan, China, Australia, etc., services and cash, including that

received by the Republic Government and which it invests abroad under the auspices of the Revenue Equalisation Reserve Fund. They are politically interdependent – some might say dependent – with Kiribati being a member of the United Nations and the International Monetary Fund, to name but two bodies which have some influence over *I-Nikunau* development – others include aid organisations, etc. associated with the governments of Australia, New Zealand, the Republic of China or the People's Republic of China, Japan, Korea, etc. These conditions extend to spiritual interdependence, worshipping the same deity, *Iehova, e tuaña Aberaam*, as do many others around the world, and adhering to the ethical and moral rules associated with the multiplicity of denominations within this religion. They are culturally interdependent, as is exemplified even in the case of diasporic communities in metropolitan New Zealand. The communities in New Zealand, as those elsewhere, seemingly maintain and re-construct their distinctiveness, while simultaneously acquiring footholds in the host community(ies); this is notwithstanding how much separation the communities there still exhibit (Fedor, 2012; Gillard & Dyson, 2012; Roman, 2013; Taberannang, 2011; Thompson, 2016) (cf. Agyemang & Lehman, 2013; Berry, 1997, 2005; Watkin Lui, 2009).

It is through these interdependencies that *I-Nikunau* have been increasingly able to emigrate from Nikunau, and now from Tarawa, to settle on Tarawa and in the Solomon and Line Islands, and now in metropolitan countries. Most of this interdependence is asymmetrical, the distribution of benefits favouring the hosts of the settlement. Nevertheless, the settlers still regard their settlement as advantageous, such as in terms of greater access to cash and to secure their children's futures, as well as theirs. It is through emigration that *I-Nikunau's* societal circumstances have changed and are changing, the changes not only affecting the emigrants but also those left behind, at least for the time being, but who many outsiders and increasing numbers of insiders believe will have to emigrate because of rise in sea-level, otherwise they will perish through drought, changes to living conditions, public health issues, etc. (e.g., see Kuruppu, 2009; Roy & Connell, 1991).

# PART IV

## Conclusion

*Te mauri, te raoi, ao te tabomoa* – Traditional protective incantation (recorded by Grimble, 1933, p. 15)

In this research monograph, I have set out to illuminate and stimulate interest in the demographical, economic, social and political dynamics of peoples associated with atolls, particularly in the Pacific. My title, *acclimatising to higher ground*, raises the reason why such peoples and their dynamics are coming to the attention of more scholars in more disciplines than has been typical, not to mention generating more than the usual curiosity of wider publics. I have focused on the *I-Nikunau* people for two basic reasons. First, for the reasons set out in Chapter 1, in which I indicated that although *I-Nikunau* more or less started out from one atoll, the majority now forms a diaspora, whose coming about is where much of the novelty and value of this research monograph lies, compared with focusing on a territory, such as an atoll or an atoll nation state. Second, simply because I am in a position that Roslender and Dillard (2003) have labelled "privileged" among a culturally homogeneous group of people with indigenous ties to one atoll.

I used empirical materials gathered in this position to construct a rough story. I then elaborated that story and turned the story into the descriptive, retrospective analysis and interpretation now presented in this research monograph. I have done this with extended help from ideas, concepts, evidence, etc. in a large collection I accumulated of secondary sources, many of them cited in the research monograph and listed in the reference list.

The story is partitioned into the 14 themes as set out in Figure 7 and foreshadowed in introducing the analysis in Part III. As indicated there, these particular themes, and the notion of breaking the whole down into such parts, reflects my predominantly *I-Matang* culture and thinking, informed by literature mostly written by people of similar kind. It contrasts with *I-Nikunau* culture, in which thinking, activities, things, rituals, etc. seem wholistic and inseparable (cf. Autio, 2010; Kambati, 1992; Whincup, 2010); this is notwithstanding the national motto *te mauri, te raoi, ao te tabomoa*, and how the three terms it comprises are used as a basis of analysis in Ministry of Internal and Social Affairs (2007). However, I have attempted to present my analysis and interpretation in a way which makes links to previous themes and their histories, without I hope being too repetitive.

Having reached the end of this monograph, my *I-Matang* cultural instincts tell me I need a conclusion, a final answer to the issues, questions or problems raised in the story I have related. However, that is not what this monograph seeks to do. Instead, it

seeks to put on record the story so far, recognising the many likely inadequacies which a passing stranger is apt to include or omit. My intention is for the reader to obtain a sense of the interrelatedness of *I-Nikunau's* circumstances and, from that, appreciate the experiences through which *I-Nikunau* as a People have gone, and are now undergoing, are better understood when considered wholistically (cf. Kuruppu, 2009). Indeed, in leaving organisational, distributional, cultural and societal circumstances to the end, I hope to have provided some synthesising of matters covered in detail under the earlier themes, not only of where *I-Nikunau* are in these respects, but also how they have got there, in order to inform where they are going, not just geographically but in every sense of *te mauri* (including demography, natural resources, water, environment, health, education, housing, social welfare and social infrastructure), *te raoi* (including social capital, community life, local institutions, crime and the justice system, religion, political authority and governance), and *te tabomoa* (including economic activities and economies, modes of production, transport and communications infrastructure).

Regarding peoples of other atolls, in Kiribati, in the Pacific more generally, and elsewhere, the question is whether this research monograph offers anything to them and the researchers, etc. who are studying them. This is not the first research monograph to consider demographical dynamics of peoples, or dynamics of demographic change or history, even in relation to an atoll, nor of any of the other 13 circumstances analysed in Part III. However it is unusual, if not unique, for bringing these issues together in such detail, either for an atoll people or otherwise.

One might therefore wonder why it is unusual, and suggest that it is because it is of no importance. However, in using the accelerating accumulation of research papers about Kiribati, or about *I-Kiribati* as immigrants or settlers, in diaspora, as very often stimulated seemingly by interest in climate change, I cannot help but notice the countless references, incidental or more substantial, to many of the occurrences, events, enduring traditions, abandoned traditions, changes in circumstances, constancies in circumstances, etc. which I have elaborated in this research monograph. One might question the relevance of including some of these matters in some of these papers, not to mention at times the validity and reliability of what is said about them. However, that so many researchers frequently refer to these matters suggests they should be important in grappling with the complexities of research about the future of peoples still inhabiting the world's atolls and dealing with whatever challenges this future may bring, climate-related and otherwise. It is on this basis that I commend this research monograph to researchers concerned with atolls as a source of ideas and a research approach.

# References


Abbot G. C. (1971). A re-examination of the 1929 Colonial Development Act. *Economic History Review*, *24*, 68-81.

Abrahamson, E., & Fairchild, G. (1999). Management fashion: Lifecycles, triggers, and collective learning processes. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, *44*, 708-740.

Addison, D. J., & Matisoo-Smith, E. (2010). Rethinking Polynesians origins: A West-Polynesia Triple-I model. *Archaeology in Oceania*, *45*, 1-12.

Agyemang, G., & Lehman, C. R. (2013). Adding critical accounting voices to migration studies. *Critical Perspectives on Accounting*, *24*, 261-272.

Aiello, F. (1999). The stabilisation of LDCs' export earnings. The impact of the EU STABEX programme. *International Review of Applied Economics*, *13*, 71-85.

AJ+ (Publisher). (2014). Kiribati: The islands being destroyed by climate change. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9P7jXveokDY

Alaima T., Mikaere B., Keina T., Meita B., Kunei E., Uentabo F., . . ., & Kumon U. (1979). *Kiribati: Aspects of history*. Suva, Fiji: University of the South Pacific, Institute of Pacific Studies.

Alejandrino-Yap, C., Dornan, M., McGovern, K., & Austin, J. (2013). *Infrastructure maintenance in the Pacific: Challenging the build, neglect, rebuild paradigm*. Sydney: Pacific Regional Infrastructure Advisory Center. Retrieved from http://www.theprif.org/index.php/news/53-media-releases/136-new-report-infrastructure-maintenance-in-the-pacific-challenging-the-build-neglect-rebuild-paradigm

Anderson, W. (2012). Racial hybridity, physical anthropology, and human biology in the colonial laboratories of the United States. *Current Anthropology*, *53*(S5), S95-S107.

Arlidge, B., Abel, S., Asiasiga, L., Milne, S. L., Crengle, S., & Ameratunga, S. N. (2009). Experiences of whānau/families when injured children are admitted to hospital: A multi-ethnic qualitative study from Aotearoa/New Zealand. *Ethnicity & Health*, *14*, 169-183.

Arnold, P. J. (1991). Accounting and the state: Consequences of merger and acquisition accounting in the US hospital industry. *Accounting, Organizations and Society*, *16*, 121-140.

Areke A. T., & Mahmood, B. (2019). Sea level rise impact on underground freshwater lens: A case study. *Proceedings of Water New Zealand Conference & Expo 2019*. Retrieved from https://unitec.researchbank.ac.nz/handle/10652/4757

Asian Development Bank. (2002). *Monetization in an atoll society: Managing economic and social change in Kiribati*. Retrieved from http://www.adb.org/Documents/Books/Monetization_Atoll_Society/#contents

Asian Development Bank. (2006). *Country strategy and program update: Kiribati (2006-2007)*. Retrieved from http://www.adb.org/Documents/CSPs/KIR/2005/CSP-KIR-2005.pdf

Asian Development Bank. (2008). *Kiribati: Economic management and public sector reform*. Retrieved from http://www.adb.org/Documents/TARs/KIR/42035-KIR-TAR.pdf

Asian Development Bank. (2009a). *Kiribati social and economic report 2008: Managing development risk*. Retrieved from https://www.adb.org/publications/kiribati-social-and-economic-report-2008-managing-development-risk

Asian Development Bank. (2009b). *Kiribati's political economy and capacity development*. Retrieved from https://www.adb.org/publications/kiribatis-political-economy-and-capacity-development

Autio, P. (2010). *Hard custom, hard dance: Social organisation, (un)differentiation and notions of power in a Tabiteuean community, Southern Kiribati* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Helsinki). Retrieved from https://helda.helsinki.fi/handle/10138/23357

Autio, P. (2017). *Discourse on overpopulation, land-hunger and resettlement in the Kiribati National Archives* [Abstract]. Paper submitted to the 11th European Society for Oceanists Conference, Munich, 29 June-2 July. Retrieved from https://www.pacific-studies.net/conferences/public.php?confID=2&action=session_detail&session=64

Baaro N. (1987). The evolution of Kiribati tenures. In R. Crocombe (Ed.), *Land tenure in the atolls* (pp. 30-39). Suva, Fiji: University of the South Pacific, Institute of Pacific Studies.

Bailey, R-L. (2009). *Unfree labour?: Ni-Vanuatu workers in New Zealand's Recognised Seasonal Employer scheme*. (Masterate thesis, University of Canterbury). Retrieved from https://ir.canterbury.ac.nz/bitstream/handle/10092/2957/thesis_fulltext.pdf;sequence=1

Bakre, O. M. (2004). Accounting and the problematique of imperialism: Alternative methodological approaches to empirical research in accounting in developing countries. *Advances in Public Interest Accounting*, *10*, 1-30.

Bakre, O. M. (2008). Financial reporting as technology that supports and sustains imperial expansion, maintenance and control in the colonial and post-colonial globalisation: The case of the Jamaican economy. *Critical Perspectives on Accounting*, *19*, 487-522.

Bandury, J., & Nahapiet, J. E. (1979). Towards a framework for the study of the antecedents and consequences of information systems in organizations. *Accounting, Organizations and Society*, *4*, 163-177.

Bantekas, I., Kypraios, C., & Isaac, K. (2013). Outsourcing law reform in developing countries to private contractors: A human rights perspective. *International Human Rights Law Review*, *2*, 1-16.

Baranite K. (1985). Spiritual beliefs. In L. Mason (Ed.), *Kiribati: A changing atoll culture* (pp. 75-84). Suva, Fiji: University of the South Pacific, Institute of Pacific Studies.

Barokas, R., & Rubin, S. (1988). *Opportunities in privatization of state owned enterprises and private sector development Kiribati* (Project No. 57). Washington, DC: Centre for Privatization. Retrieved from http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNAAZ199.pdf

Bathgate, M., Alexander, D., Mitikulena, A., Borman, B., Roberts, A., & Grigg, M. (1994). *The health of Pacific islands people in New Zealand*. Wellington: Public Health Commission. Retrieved from http://www.moh.govt.nz/NoteBook/nbbooks.nsf/0/19B-684C1D1D40B884C2565D700185D8E/$file/94155M.pdf

Bedford, C., Bedford, R., & Ho, E. (2009). *The social impacts of short-term migration for employment: A review of recent literature*. Hamilton: Population Studies Centre, University of Waikato. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Richard_Bedford2/publication/255624076_The_Social_Impacts_of_Short-term_Migration_for_Employment_A_Review_of_Recent_Literature/links/556dd4b508aeab7772269afd/The-Social-Impacts-of-Short-term-Migration-for-Employment-A-Review-of-Recent-Literature.pdf

Bedford, G. H., & Bedford, R. (2013). Pacific Islands, migration 18th century to present. In I. Ness (Ed.), *The encyclopedia of global human migration* (pp. 2358-2373). Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.

Bedford, R. (2008). Pasifika mobility: Pathways, circuits, and challenges in the 21st century. In A. Bisley (Ed.), *Pacific interactions: Pasifika in New Zealand – New Zealand in Pasifika* (pp. 85-134). Victoria University of Wellington, Institute of Policy Studies. Retrieved from http://www.academia.edu/download/9911815/f8e7a96f573.pdf

Bedford, R., & Bedford, C. (2010). International migration and climate change: A post-Copenhagen perspective on options for Kiribati and Tuvalu. In B. Burson (Ed.), *Climate change and migration: South Pacific perspectives* (pp. 89-134). Retrieved from http://ips.ac.nz/publications/files/6666ee71bcb.pdf

Bedford, R., Bedford, C., Corcoran, J., & Didham, R. (2016). Population change and migration in Kiribati and Tuvalu, 2015-2050: Hypothetical scenarios in a context of climate change. *New Zealand Population Review, 42*, 103-134.

Bedford, R., Macdonald, B., & Munro, D. (1980). Population estimates for Kiribati and Tuvalu, 1850-1900: Review and speculation. *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, *89*, 199-246.

Bennett, J. A. (2018). Pacific coconut: Comestible, comfort and commodity. *Journal of Pacific History*, *53*, 353-374.

Bennett, J. A. (2020). Growing coconut palms in the Pacific Islands: Colliding knowledge and values. Environment and History. Advance online publication. https://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/whp/eh/pre-prints/content-whp_eh_1805

Bennion, T. (2004). Treaty-making in the Pacific in the nineteenth century and the Treaty of Waitangi. *Victoria University of Wellington Law Review*, *35*, 165-205.

Berry, C. (2014). Pacifica housing: A review of existing research. Retrieved from http://www.beaconpathway.co.nz/images/uploads/Report_Turanga(1)_Pacifica_Housing_Review_of_existing_research.pdf

Berry, J. (1997). Immigration, acculturation and assimilation. *Applied Psychology: An International Review*, *46*, 5-68.

Berry, J. (2005). Acculturation: Living successfully in two cultures. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, *29*, 687-712.

Bertram, I. G., & Watters, R. F. (1984). *New Zealand and its small island neighbours: A review of New Zealand policy toward the Cook Islands, Niue, Tokelau, Kiribati and Tuvalu* (Working paper 84/01). Wellington: Victoria University of Wellington, Institute of Policy Studies.

Best, P. B. (1983). Sperm whale stock assessments and the relevance of historical whaling records. *Report of the International Whaling Commission*, *Special Issue 5*, 41-55.

Betuao C. (2005). A kind of heaven. In J. Shennan, & M.C. Tekenimatang, (Eds.), *One and a half Pacific Islands: Stories the Banaban people tell of themselves* (pp. 130-131). Wellington: Victoria University Press.

Bevington, E. (1990). *The things we do for England – if only England knew!* Burley, Hants: Author.
Bingham, H. (Trans.) (1907). *Te Baibara: Ae ana taeka te atua ae kanoana te o tetemanti ma te nu tetemanti ae kaetaki man taetae nako ake e moa ni koreaki iai* (8th ed.). New York, NY: British and Foreign Bible Society, American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. Retrieved from https://archive.org/details/tebaibaraaeanata00bing
Biribo, N., & Woodroffe, C. D. (2013). Historical area and shoreline change of reef islands around Tarawa Atoll, Kiribati. *Sustainability Science*, *8*, 345-362.
Bishop, A., Burhan, I., Lowen, T., & Zhu M.S. (2011). *South Tarawa general land use plan: Kiribati traveling design studio*. Retrieved from https://www.academia.edu/20071668/South_Tarawa_General_Land_Use_Plan
Bittles, A. H. (2010). Consanguinity, genetic drift, and genetic diseases in populations with reduced numbers of founders. In M. R. Speicher, A. G. Motulsky & S. E. Antonarakis (Eds.), *Vogel and Motulsky's human genetics problems and approaches* (rev. 4th ed.) (pp. 507-528). Berlin: Springer-Verlag.
Black, R., & Huygens, I. (2007). Pākehā culture and psychology. In I. M. Evans, J. J. Rucklidge & M. O'Driscoll (Eds.), *Professional practice of psychology in Aotearoa New Zealand* (pp. 49-66). Wellington: New Zealand Psychological Society.
Blakeslee, G. (1922). The Mandates of the Pacific. *Foreign Affairs, 1*(1), 98-115.
Blomberg, S. B., Hess, G. D., & Orphanides, A. (2004). The macroeconomic consequences of terrorism. *Journal of Monetary Economics*, *51*, 1007-1032.
Bohane, B. (2006). Prostitution and Pacific fishing. *Greenpeace International*. Retrieved from http://www.greenpeace.org/international/en/news/features/fish-and-sex-trade131006/
Bohannan, P. (1965). The differing realms of the law. *American Anthropologist*, *67*(6), 33-42.
Bollard, A. E. (1981). The financial adventures of J. C. Godeffroy and Son in the Pacific. *Journal of Pacific History*, *16*, 3-19.
Borovnik, M. (2005). Seafarers' "maritime culture" and the "I-Kiribati way of life": The formation of flexible identities?. *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography*, *26*, 132-150.
Borovnik, M. (2006). Working overseas: Seafarers' remittances and their distribution in Kiribati. *Asian Pacific Viewpoint*, *47*, 151-161.
BPS Productions (Producer). (2019). 40th *Kiribati Independence Celebration NZ – KWAI item 1 performance*. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_ebnxwhoEqc
Brickenstein, C., & Tabucanon, G. M. (2014). Circular migration as climate change adaptation: Reconceptualising New Zealand's and Australia's seasonal worker programs. *Precedente. Revista Jurídica*, *3*, 7-34.
British Museum. (2017). *Object journeys: Kiribati*. Retrieved from http://objectjourneys.britishmuseum.org/kiribati/
Brookfield, H. C. (1972). *Colonialism development and independence: The case of the Melanesian islands in the South Pacific*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Brown, S. (2012). National development agencies and bilateral aid. In P. A. Haslam, J. Schafer & P. Beaudet (Eds.), *Introduction to international development: Approaches, actors, and issues* (2nd ed.) (pp. 143-158). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Bryant-Tokalau, J. J. (1995). The myth exploded: Urban poverty in the Pacific. *Environment and Urbanization*, *7*, 109-130.
Buckenberger, C. (2012). Meanings of housing qualities in suburbia: Empirical evidence from Auckland, New Zealand. *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment*, *27*, 69-88.

Burall, S., Maxwell, S., & Menocal, A. R. (2006). *Reforming the international aid architecture: Options and ways forward* (Working Paper 278). Retrieved from http://www.odi.org.uk/publications/working_papers/wp278.pdf

Burke, P. (1991). *New perspectives on historical writing*. London: Polity Press.

Burnett, G. (1999). Knowledge, schooling and post-school opportunities: An exploration of *I-Kiribati* parents' perceptions of secondary education. *Directions: Journal of Educational Studies*, *21*(2), 83-99.

Burnett, G. (2002). Technologies and discourses of colonialism in education in the Republic of Kiribati. *Directions: Journal of Educational Studies*, *24*(2), 10-23.

Burnett, G. (2004). Deconstructing educational discourse in Kiribati: Postcolonial encounters. In P. Ninnes & S. Mehta (Eds.), *Re-imagining comparative education: Postfoundational ideas and applications for critical times* (pp. 63-83). New York: RoutledgeFalmer.

Burnett, G. (2005). Language games and schooling: Discourses of colonialism in Kiribati education. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*, *25*, 93-106.

Burnett, G. (2007). "Culture isn't what it used to be": Problematizing pedagogies of cultural difference in Pacific education. *Social and Economic Studies*, *56*, 261-276.

Burnett, G. (2009a). Critically theorising the teaching of literacy and language in Pacific schooling: Just another Western metanarrative. *Critical Literacy: Theories and Practices*, *3*(2), 17-32.

Burnett, G. (2009b). The Pacific past that is not one: Problematising re-indigenised Pacific futures. In B. Stroud & S. Corbin (Eds), Handbook on social change (pp. 205-219). New York: Nova.

Burnett, L. (1998). *Issues in immigrant settlement in Australia*. Sydney: Macquarie University, National Centre for English Language Teaching and Research. Retrieved from http://library.bsl.org.au/jspui/bitstream/1/4611/1/BurnettL_Issues-in-immigrant-settlement-in-Australia_RS-10-1998.pdf

Burnett, R., & Bond, S. (2020). 'Pasifika'and 'I-Kiribati'identity in Aotearoa New Zealand:'Dancing'and 'edge-walking'through multiple identities. *Asia Pacific Viewpoint*, *61*, 327-337.

Burridge, K. O. (1957). Friendship in Tangu. *Oceania*, *27*, 177-189.

Burt, B., & Clerk, C. (1997). Environment and development in the Pacific Islands: Introduction. In B. Burt & C. Clerk (Eds.), *Environment and development in the Pacific Islands* (pp. 1-21). Canberra: Australian National University, National Centre for Development Studies.

Bush, B., & Maltby, J. (2004). Taxation in West Africa: Transforming the colonial subject into the "governable person". *Critical Perspectives on Accounting*, *15*, 5-34.

Callister, P., Badkar, J., & Williams, J. (2009). Paid caregivers and domestic workers. *Policy Quarterly*, *5*(3), 38-43.

Campbell, C. C. (1991). Food insecurity: A nutritional outcome or a predictor variable? *Journal of Nutrition*, *121*, 408-415.

Carden, Y. R. (2003). Solid waste-level rise on atoll nation states: A less publicised environmental issue in the Republic of Kiribati. *Australasian Journal of Environmental Management*, *10*, 35-45.

Carnegie, G. D., & Napier, C. J. (2002). Exploring comparative international accounting history. *Accounting, Auditing and Accountability Journal*, *15*, 689-718.

Castalia Strategic Advisors. (2005). *Infrastructure in the Pacific: Obstacles and opportunities for improved performance* (Report for the World Bank). Retrieved from http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTEAPINFRASTRUCT/Resources/PIR_revisedfinal_061205.pdf

Catala, R. L. A. (1957). *Report on the Gilbert Islands: Some aspects of human ecology* (Atoll Research Bulletin No. 501). Retrieved from https://repository.si.edu/handle/10088/4903

Cheshire, L. (2010). A corporate responsibility? The constitution of fly-in, fly-out mining companies as governance partners in remote, mine-affected localities. *Journal of Rural Studies, 26, 12-20.*

Clarke, P. M. (2009). *Supporting children learning English as a second language in the early years (birth to six years)*. Melbourne: Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority. Retrieved from https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/documents/earlyyears/supporting_children_learning_esl.pdf

Cochrane, D. G. (1969). Racialism in the Pacific: A descriptive analysis. *Oceania*, *40*, 1-12.

Cochrane, G. (1970). The administration of Wagina Resettlement Scheme. *Human Organization*, *29*, 123-132.

Cohen, R., & Van Hear, N. (2008). *Global diasporas: An introduction* (2nd ed.). Abingdon: Routledge.

Cohn, B. S. (1980). History and anthropology: The state of play. *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, *22*, 198-221.

Cold War: Fishing for a foothold. (1986). *Time*. Retrieved from http://content.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,961886,00.html

Collins, D. N. (2009). *Forced migration and resettlement in the Pacific: Development of a model addressing the resettlement of forced migrants in the Pacific Islands Region from analysis of the Banaban and Bikinian Cases* (Masterate thesis, University of Canterbury). Retrieved from https://ir.canterbury.ac.nz/bitstream/handle/10092/3234/thesis_fulltext.pdf?sequence=1

Colonial Development Act. No. 5 of 1929 of the United Kingdom.

Connell, J. (1987). Migration, rural development and policy formation in the South Pacific. *Journal of Rural Studies*, *3*, 105-121.

Connell, J. (2010). Pacific islands in the global economy: Paradoxes of migration and culture. *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography*, *31*, 115-129.

Connell, J., & Corbett, J. (2016). Deterritorialisation: Reconceptualising development in the Pacific islands. *Global Society*, *30*(4), 583-604.

Connell, J., & Lea, J. (2002). *Urbanisation in the island Pacific: Towards sustainable development*. London: Routledge.

Constitution of Kiribati of 1979. Kiribati Consolidated Legislation. Retrieved from http://www.paclii.org/ki/legis/consol_act/cok257/

Cooper, J. (Producer). (1998). *Coming home to Banaba*. Milton Keynes: British Broadcasting Corporation.

Co-operative Societies Ordinance. No 67 of 1952. Kiribati Consolidated Legislation No. 14. Retrieved from http://www.paclii.org/ki/legis/consol_act/cso287/

Corcoran, J. (2016). *Implications of climate change for the livelihoods of urban dwellers in Kiribati* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Waikato). Retrieved from https://researchcommons.waikato.ac.nz/bitstream/handle/10289/10442/thesis.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y

Correspondent. (1913, 5 June). Modern buccaneers in the West Pacific. *New Age*, pp. 136-140. Retrieved from http://dl.lib.brown.edu/pdfs/1140814207532014.pdf

Couper, A. D. (1967). *The island trade: An analysis of the environment and operation of seaborne trade among three islands in the Pacific*. Canberra: Australian National University, Department of Geography.

Couper, A. D. (1968). Protest movements and proto-cooperatives in the Pacific Islands. *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, *77*, 263-274.

Couper, A. D. (2009). Sailors and traders: A maritime history of the Pacific peoples. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.

Crocombe, R. (1992). *Pacific neighbours: New Zealand's relations with other Pacific islands*. Christchurch: University of Canterbury, Centre for Pacific Studies and University of the South Pacific, Institute of Pacific Studies.

Curtain, R., & Dornan, M. (2019). *A pressure release valve? Migration and climate change in Kiribati, Nauru and Tuvalu*. Canberra: Australian National University, Development Policy Centre. Retrieved from https://reliefweb.int/report/world/pressure-release-valve-migration-and-climate-change-kiribati-nauru-and-tuvalu-february

Daily Mail Comment. (2012, 21 January). Stop this abuse of British hospitality. *Mail Online*. Retrieved from http://www.dailymail.co.uk/debate/article-2089696/Immigrants-claiming-UK-benefits-report-Stop-abuse-British-hospitality.html

Dambiec, D. (2005). *Music of Kiribati: Song and dance*. Unpublished manuscript, University of New England at Armadale, Australia.

Daube, J., Chamberman, V., & Raymond, E. (2016). Barriers to contraceptive use in South Tarawa, Kiribati. *Pacific Journal of Reproductive Health*, *1*, 188-196.

Davidson, J. W. (1966). Problems of Pacific history. *Journal of Pacific History*, *1*, 5-21.

Davie, S. S. K. (2000). Accounting for imperialism: A case of British-imposed indigenous collaboration. *Accounting Auditing and Accountability Journal*, *13*, 330-359.

Davie, S. S. K. (2005). Accounting's uses in exploitative human engineering: Theorizing citizenship, indirect rule and Britain's imperial expansion. *Accounting Historians Journal*, *32*(2), 55-80.

Davis, E. H. M., Captain RN. (1892). *Proceedings of H.M.S. Royalist*. Retrieved from http://www.janeresture.com/davisdiaries/captaindavis.html and http://www.janeresture.com/nikunau/index.htm

Davis, L. E., Gallman, R. E., & Hutchins, T. D. (1988). The decline of US whaling: Was the stock of whales running out?. *Business History Review*, *62*, 569-595.

de Haas, H. (2010). Migration and development: A theoretical perspective. *International Migration Review*, *44*, 227-264.

Dean, A., Green, D., & Nunn, P. D. (2016). Too much sail for a small craft? Donor requirements, scale, and capacity discourses in Kiribati. In E. Stratford (Ed.), *Island Geographies: Essays and conversations* (pp. 68-91). London: Routledge.

Declaration between the Governments of Great Britain and the German Empire relating to the demarcation of the British and German spheres of influence in the Western Pacific, signed at Berlin, April 6, 1886. Retrieved from http://marshall.csu.edu.au/Marshalls/html/history/UKTreaty1.html.

Di Piazza, A. (1999). Te Bakoa site. Two old earth ovens from Nikunau Island (Republic of Kiribati). *Archaeology in Oceania*, *34*(1), 40-42.

Di Piazza, A. (2001). Terre d'abondance ou terre de misère: Représentation de la sécheresse à Nikunau (République de Kiribati, Pacifique Central) [Land of abundance

or land of scarcity? Ideas about drought on Nikunau (Republic of Kiribati, Central Pacific)]. *L'Homme*, *157*, 35-58.

Dickinson, W. R. (2003). Impact of Mid-Holocene hydro-isostatic highstand in regional sea level on habitability of islands in Pacific Oceania. *Journal of Coastal Research*, *19*, 489-502.

Dixon, K. (2004a). Economic and political reforms in the central Pacific Republic of Kiribati. *Research in Accounting in Emerging Economies*, *6* (Suppl. 2), 21-53.

Dixon, K. (2004b). Experiences of an accounting educator in Kiribati. *Accounting Education: An International Journal*, *13*, 311-327.

Dixon, K., & Gaffikin, M. (2014). Accounting practices as social technologies of colonialistic outreach from London, Washington, et cetera. *Critical Perspectives on Accounting*, *25*, 683-708.

Donner, S. D. (2015a). Fantasy Island. *Scientific American*, *312*(3), 56-63.

Donner, S. D. (2015b). The legacy of migration in response to climate stress: Learning from the Gilbertese resettlement in the Solomon Islands. *Natural Resources Forum*, *39*, 191-201.

Donner, S. D., & Webber, S. (2014). Obstacles to climate change adaptation decisions: A case study of sea-level rise and coastal protection measures in Kiribati. *Sustainability Science*, *9*, 331-345.

Doran, E., Jr. (1960). *Report on Tarawa Atoll, Gilbert Islands* (Atoll Research Bulletin No. 72). Retrieved from http://si-pddr.si.edu/jspui/bitstream/10088/6101/1/00072.pdf

Doronila, A. (1985). The transformation of patron-client relations and its political consequences in postwar Philippines. *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, *16*, 99-116.

Doucouliagos, H., & Paldam, M. (2011). The ineffectiveness of development aid on growth: An update. *European Journal of Political Economy*, *27*, 399-404.

Dreaver, B. (2005). Born on Banaba. In J. Shennan & M. C. Tekenimatang (Eds.), *One and a half Pacific Islands: Stories the Banaban people tell of themselves* (pp. 131-132). Wellington: Victoria University Press.

Druett, J. (1987). More decency and order: Women and whale men in the Pacific. *The Log of Mystic Seaport*, *39*(2), 65-74. Retrieved from http://research.mysticseaport.org/item/l034549/

Duncan, R. (2014). Kiribati: A political economy analysis of constraints to economic growth. In R. Duncan, H. Codippily, E. Duituturaga & R. Bulatale (Eds.), *Identifying binding constraints in Pacific Island economies* (pp. 111-128). Retrieved from http://www.eastwestcenter.org/system/tdf/private/pidpwp018_1.pdf?file=1&type=node&id=34925#page=125

EarthStreetView.com. (2014). *Nikunau Island – Gilbert Islands, Kiribati*. Retrieved from http://www.earthstreetview.com/?lid=2110158_KI_TATOL_01&place=Nikunau-Island-Kiribati

Edens, J. (2017). Where have New Zealand's migrants come from in the last four decades? *Stuff*. Retrieved from http://www.stuff.co.nz/national/92217629/Where-have-New-Zealands-migrants-come-from-in-the-last-four-decades

Education Counts. (2019). School leaver destinations. Retrieved from https://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/statistics/indicators/main/education-and-learning-outcomes/1907

Edwards, J. B. (2014). Phosphate mining and the relocation of the Banabans to northern Fiji in 1945: Lessons for climate change-forced displacement. *Journal de la Société des Océanistes*, *138-139*, 121-136.

Eichengreen, B. (2019). *Globalizing capital: A history of the international monetary system*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Eisenstadt, S. N. (1956). Ritualized personal relations: Blood brotherhood, best friends, compadre, etc.: Some comparative hypotheses and suggestions. *Man*, *56*, 90-95.

Election of Beretitenti Act. No. 29a of 1980. Kiribati Consolidated Legislation. Retrieved from http://www.paclii.org/ki/legis/consol_act/eoba231/.

Ellice Islands District Report for the year 1936 (compiled by D. G. Kennedy). Retrieved from http://eap.bl.uk/database/overview_item.a4d?catId=208048;r=14604.

EventFinda. (2014). *Rungan Kiribati: Kiribati Day*. Retrieved from http://www.eventfinder.co.nz/2014/rungan-kiribati-kiribati-day/auckland/parnell

Ezilon Maps. (2015). *New Zealand map – Physical map of New Zealand*. Retrieved from http://www.ezilon.com/maps/oceania/new-zealand-physical-maps.html

Fedor, I. (2012). *Cultural and national identity in the face of climate change: A case study of I-Kiribati migrants in New Zealand* (Masterate thesis, University of Otago). Retrieved from http://otago.ourarchive.ac.nz/bitstream/handle/10523/2445/FedorIlka2012MA.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

Ferguson, N. (2008). *Empire: How Britain made the modern world*. Melbourne: Penguin.

Fiji Medicine Men. (1944). *Time*. Retrieved from http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,774898,00.html

Fiji National University: College of Medicine. (2016). *Our history*. Retrieved from http://www.fnu.ac.fj/college-of-medicine/2016-03-15-21-32-43/our-history

Firth, S. (1973). German firms in the Western Pacific Islands, 1857-1914. *Journal of Pacific History*, *8*, 10-28.

Fosberg, F. R., & Sachet, M. H. (1987). *Flora of the Gilbert Islands, Kiribati: Checklist* (Atoll Research Bulletin No. 295). Retrieved from http://www.sil.si.edu/DigitalCollections/atollresearchbulletin/issues/00295.pdf

Fraenkel, J. (2003). *Minority rights in Fiji and the Solomon Islands: Reinforcing constitutional protections, establishing land rights and overcoming poverty*. Paper prepared for the United Nations High Commission on Human Rights, Sub-Commission on Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, Working Group on Minorities Ninth Session, 12-16 May. Retrieved from http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/E/SUBCOM/other/E-CN_4-SUB_2-AC_5-2003-WG_5.pdf

Friesen, W. (2018). Beyond the RSE: Systems of Pacific labour migration to New Zealand. *New Zealand Population Review*, *44*, 111-129.

Gallhofer, S., Gibson, K., Haslam, J., McNicholas, P., & Takiari, B. (2000). Developing environmental accounting: Insights from indigenous cultures. *Accounting, Auditing and Accountability Journal*, *13*, 381-409.

Garrett, J. (1992). *Footsteps in the sea: Christianity in Oceania to World War II*. Suva, Fiji: University of the South Pacific, Institute of Pacific Studies.

Garrett, J. (1997). *Where nets were cast: Christianity in Oceania since World War II*. Suva, Fiji: University of the South Pacific, Institute of Pacific Studies.

Grbic, D., Ishizawa, H., & Crothers, C. (2010). Ethnic residential segregation in New Zealand, 1991-2006. *Social Science Research*, *39*, 25-38.

Geddes, W. H. (1977). Social individualisation on Tabiteuea Atoll. *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, *86*, 371-393.

Geddes, W. H., Chambers, A., Sewell, B., Lawrence, R., & Watters, R. (1982). *Islands on the Line, team report*. *Atoll economy: Social change in Kiribati and Tuvalu, no. 1*. Canberra: Australian National University, Development Studies Centre. Retrieved from https://openresearch-repository.anu.edu.au/bitstream/1885/131358/1/DSC_Atoll_Economy_01.pdf

General Act of the Conference of 1885 at Berlin of the Plenipotentiaries of Great Britain, Austria-Hungary, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, The Netherlands, Portugal, Russia, Spain, Sweden And Norway, Turkey and the United States. Retrieved from http://www.waado.org/colonial_rule/general_documents/berlin_act_1885.html

Gewirtz, S. (2001). Rethinking social justice: A conceptual analysis. In J. Demaine (Ed.), *Sociology of education today* (pp. 49-64). London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Gheuens, J. (2017). *Landscape and identity in Kiribati* (Masterate thesis, Uppsala Universitet). Retrieved from http://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1112545/FULLTEXT01.pdf

Gibson, J., & Nero, K. (2008). Why don't Pacific Island Countries' economies grow faster? In A. Bisley (Ed.), *Pacific interactions: Pasifika in New Zealand – New Zealand in Pasifika* (pp. 191-243). Victoria University of Wellington, Institute of Policy Studies. Retrieved from http://www.academia.edu/download/9911815/f8e7a96f573.pdf

Gibson, K. (2000). Accounting as a tool for Aboriginal dispossession: Then and now. *Accounting, Auditing and Accountability Journal*, *13*, 289-306.

Gilbert and Ellice Islands (Native Laws) Regulation. No. 6 of 1912. Retrieved from http://www.paclii.org/cgi-bin/sinodisp/fj/legis/fj-wp_leg/gaeilr1912421/gaeilr1912421.html?stem=&synonyms=&query="gilbert%20islands%20protectorate%20

Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony. (1932). *Report for 1929-30*. London: Colonial Office, Colonial Reports.

Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony. (1946). *Ten year plan of reconstruction and development and welfare*. Tarawa: Author.

Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony. (1957). *Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony and the Central and Southern Line Islands: Report for the years 1954 and 1955*. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office.

Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony. (1962). *General information for the use of government officers newly assigned to the Colony*. Tarawa: Author.

Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony. (1969). *Report for the Years 1966 and 1967*. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office.

Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony. (1970). *Development plan 1970-1972*. Tarawa: Author.

Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony. (1976). *Report for the Year 1974*. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office.

Gilbert and Ellice Islands Order in Council of 1915. Made by the King's Most Excellent Majesty. Retrieved from http://eap.bl.uk/database/overview_item.a4d?catId=208065;r=26299

Gilbert and Ellice Islands Order of 1974. Retrieved from http://www.usp.ac.fj/fileadmin/random_images/home_middle_banners/emalus/Pacific_law_materials/Kiribati_Gilberts/Gilbert_and_Ellice_Islands_Order_1974.PDF

Gilbert and Ellice Islands Protectorate (Consolidation) Regulation. No. 3 of 1908. Retrieved from http://www.paclii.org/cgi-bin/sinodisp/ki/legis/ki-uk_act/gaeipr1908586/gaeipr1908586.html?stem=&synonyms=&query=%22gilbert%20and%20ellice

Gilbert Islands, Island Regulations 1939. Made under section 15 (1) of Part 1 of the schedule to the Native Laws Ordinance 1917. Retrieved from https://digital.library.adelaide.edu.au/dspace/handle/2440/103945

Gilbert, T. (1968). *Voyage from New South Wales to Canton, in the year 1788: With views of the islands discovered*. Amsterdam: Da Capo Press.

Gilkes, B. (2006). Observed space as epistemology non-iconic signifiers in Kiribati. *La Nouvelle Revue du Pacifique (The New Pacific Review)*, *3*, 227-243.

Gillard, M., & Dyson, L. (2012). *Kiribati migration to New Zealand: Experience, needs and aspirations*. Auckland: Impact Research. Retrieved from http://presbyterian.org.nz/sites/default/files/gmo/kiribati/Kiribati_migration_to_New_Zealand.pdf

Goh, M. (2002). Congestion management and electronic road pricing in Singapore. *Journal of Transport Geography*, *10*(1), 29-38.

Goldberg, W. M. (2016). *Atolls of the world: Revisiting the original checklist* (Atoll Research Bulletin No. 610). Retrieved from http://opensi.si.edu/index.php/smithsonian/catalog/view/132/63/2179-1

Goldsmith, M. (2012). The colonial and postcolonial roots of ethnonationalism in Tuvalu. *Journal of the Polynesian Society, 121*, 129-150.

Goodall, N. (1954). *A history of the London Missionary Society 1895-1945*. London: Oxford University Press.

Goodenough, W. H. (1955). A problem in Malayo-Polynesian social organization. *American Anthropologist*, *57*, 71-83.

Government of Kiribati. (1983). *National development plan 1983-1986*. Tarawa: Author.

Government of Kiribati. (2005). *Kiribati: A situation analysis of children, women and youth*. Suva, Fiji: UNICEF Pacific Office. Retrieved from https://www.unicef.org/pacificislands/Kiribati_Sitan.pdf

Government of Kiribati. (2009). *Annual account for the year ended 31st December 2007*. Tarawa: Author.

Government of Kiribati. (2016a). *Kiribati climate change policy*. Retrieved from https://drive.google.com/file/d/1uUDxEPAaEGBvxEcvaa3E851jJtyfXIwS/view?fbclid=IwAR0ZoyX8NmjomLsoo9c_tAieNAf5Mbtxjj-9yBktrZ_afgOPMT-GWauu7ks

Government of Kiribati. (2016b). *Kiribati development plan 2016-2019: Towards a better educated, healthier, more prosperous nation with a higher quality of life*. Tarawa: Author. Retrieved from http://www.mfed.gov.ki/publications/kiribati-development-plan-2016-2019

Government of Kiribati. (2018). *Development budget 2019*. Retrieved from http://www.mfed.gov.ki/sites/default/files/Development%20Budget%202019.pdf

Gowdy, J. M., & McDaniel, C. N. (1999). The physical destruction of Nauru: An example of weak sustainability. *Land Economics*, *75*, 333-338.

Grace, R. F. (2003). Kava drinking in Vanuatu – a hospital based survey. *Pacific Health Dialog*, *10*(2), 41-44.

Granovetter, M. (Ed) (2018). *The sociology of economic life* (3rd ed.). New York: Routledge.

Green, L. P., Bukhari, M. S., & Lawrence, R. (1979). *Decentralisation in the Gilbert Islands*. London: University College London, Development Planning Unit.

Greer, S., & Patel, C. (2000). The issue of Australian indigenous world-views and accounting. *Accounting, Auditing and Accountability Journal*, *13*, 307-329.

Grimble, A. (1921). From birth to death in the Gilbert Islands. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, *51*, 25-54.

Grimble, A. (1933). Memoir no. 12. The migrations of a pandanus people. As traced from a preliminary study of food, food-traditions, and food-rituals in the Gilbert Islands. *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, *42*(165) (Suppl.), 1-50, *42*(168) (Suppl.), 51-84, and *43*(169) (Suppl.), 85-112.

Grimble, A. F. (1952). *A pattern of islands*. London: John Murray. Retrieved from http://nzetc.victoria.ac.nz/tm/scholarly/tei-GriPatt.html

Grimble, A. F. (1957). *Return to the islands: Life and legend in the Gilberts*. London: John Murray. Retrieved from http://nzetc.victoria.ac.nz//tm/scholarly/tei-GriRetu.html

Grimble, A. F. (1989). *Tungaru traditions: Writings on the atoll culture of the Gilberts* (H. E. Maude, Ed.). Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.

Grimble, A. F., & Clarke, S. G. (1929). *Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony: Instructions and hints to district officers, deputy commissioners and sub-accountants*. Suva, Fiji: His Britannic Majesty's High Commission for the Western Pacific. Retrieved from https://digital.library.adelaide.edu.au/dspace/bitstream/2440/100084/1/Instructions%20and%20hints%20to%20district%20officers.pdf

Grimble, R. (2013). *Migrations, myth and magic from the Gilbert Islands: Early writings of Sir Arthur Grimble*. Oxford: Routledge.

Grimshaw, P. (1999). [Review of the book *The covenant makers: Islander missionaries in the Pacific* by D. Munro & A. Thornley (Eds.)]. *Journal of Social History*, *32*, 714-718.

Hall, S. (2012). Geographies of money and finance II: Financialization and financial subjects. *Progress in Human Geography*, *36*, 403-411.

Haller, W., Portes, A., & Lynch, S. M. (2011). Dreams fulfilled and shattered: Determinants of segmented assimilation in the second generation. *Social Forces*, *89*, 733-762.

Harrison, L. E. (2000). Culture matters. *The National Interest, 60*, 55-65.

Hassall, G. (2006). The origins of the Bahá'í Faith in the Pacific Islands: The case of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands. *Journal of Bahá'í Studies*, *16*(4), 33-59.

Hassall, G., & Tipu, F. (2008). Local government in the South Pacific islands. *Commonwealth Journal of Local Governance*, *1*, 6-29.

Hassall, G., Kaitani, M., Mae, P., Tipu, F., & Wainikesa, L. (2011). *Comparative study on local government and traditional governance systems interaction in Pacific Island countries*. University of the South Pacific, School of Governance and Development Studies. Retrieved from http://www.academia.edu/download/14492228/Hassall_-_Traditional_Governance_Study.pdf

Hempenstall, P., & Rutherford, N. (1984). *Protest and dissent in the colonial Pacific*. Suva, Fiji: University of the South Pacific, Institute of Pacific Studies.

Hezel, F. X. (1988). New directions in Pacific History: A practitioner's critical view. *Pacific Studies*, *11*, 101-110.

Hindmarsh, G. (2002). *Report on the Banabans: Formerly of Banaba (Ocean Island) who were relocated to Rabi Island in Fiji*. Apia, Samoa: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. Retrieved from http://www.banaban.info/Minpeople.pdf

Hindson, C. E. (1985). Kiribati – The search for educational alternatives in a Pacific micro-state. *International Journal of Educational Development*, *5*, 289-294.

Hockings, J. (1984). *Built form and culture: A case study of Gilbertese architecture* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Queensland). Retrieved from http://espace.library.uq.edu.au/view/UQ:157846

Hopwood, A. G. (1984). Accounting and the pursuit of efficiency. In A. G. Hopwood & C. Hopkins (Eds.), *Issues in public sector accounting* (pp. 167-187). Oxford: Philip Allan.

Hopwood, A. G. (2009). Accounting and the environment. *Accounting, Organizations and Society*, *34*, 433-449.

Horvath, R. J. (1972). A definition of colonialism. *Current Anthropology*, *13*, 45-57.

House of Commons. (1940). *Colonial Development Fund: Accounts 1938*. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office.

Howe, K. R. (1979). Pacific Islands history in the 1980s: New directions or monograph myopia? *Pacific Studies*, *3*, 81-90.

Hyam, R. (1986). Concubinage and the Colonial Service: The Crewe Circular (1909). *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, *14*, 170-186.

Ieremia T. (1993). The first twelve years. In H. Van Trease (Ed.), *Atoll politics: The Republic of Kiribati* (pp. 309-320). Christchurch: University of Canterbury, Macmillan Brown Centre for Pacific Studies.

Index of /sites/docs/hansard. (2014). Retrieved from http://www.parliament.gov.ki/sites/docs/hansard/?C=N;O=A

International Monetary Fund. (2014). *Kiribati: 2014 Article IV consultation-staff report; press release; and statement by the executive director for Kiribati*. Retrieved from http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/cat/longres.aspx?sk=41583.0

Irvine, H. J. (2004). *Sweet and sour: Accounting for South Sea Islanders labour at a North Queensland sugar mill in the late 1800s*. Paper presented at the 10th World Congress of Accounting Historians, St Louis, MO and Oxford, MS, 1-5 August. Retrieved from http://ro.uow.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1133&context=commpapers

*Island Fund Estimates – Nikunau, 1957-67*. Available in Kiribati National Archives, Tarawa, GEIC Office of Resident Commissioner 10/I/2.

Johnson, P. (2013). This time is different: The microeconomic consequences of the Great Recession. *Fiscal Studies*, *34*, 139-152.

Jolly, M. (1987). The forgotten women: A history of migrant labour and gender relations in Vanuatu. *Oceania*, *58*(2), 119-139.

Jones, M. J. (2010). Sources of power and infrastructural conditions in medieval governmental accounting. *Accounting, Organizations and Society*, *35*, 81-94.

Jones, P. (2012). *The state of Pacific towns and cities: Urbanisation in ADB's Pacific developing member countries*. Manila: Asian Development Bank. Retrieved from https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/29765/state-pacific-towns-cities.pdf

Jones, P. (2016). *The emergence of Pacific urban villages: Urbanization trends in the Pacific Islands*. Manila: Asian Development Bank. Retrieved from https://www.think-asia.org/bitstream/handle/11540/7504/pacific-urban-villages.pdf?sequence=1

Kambati K. U. (1992). *In their own words: A study of the history, nature, and function of oral tradition in Gilbertese society* (Masterate thesis, Australian National University). Retrieved from https://openresearch-repository.anu.edu.au/bitstream/1885/132637/1/JPH_In_Their_Own_Words.pdf

Kambati U. (2011). *Island reports: Issues in relation to climate change*. Retrieved from http://repository.usp.ac.fj/7182/1/Island_reports.pdf

Kazama, K. (2001). Reorganized meeting house system: The focus of social life in a contemporary village in Tabiteuea South, Kiribati. *People and Culture in Oceania*, *17*, 83-113.

Kearins. K., & Hooper, K. (2002). Genealogical method and analysis. *Accounting Auditing and Accountability Journal*, *15*, 733-757.

Kempf, W. (2003). "Songs cannot die": Ritual composing and the politics of emplacement among the Banabans resettled on Rabi Island in Fiji. *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, *112*, 33-64.

Kempf, W. (2011). *Translocal entwinements: Toward a history of Rabi as a plantation island in colonial Fiji*. GOEDOC, Dokumenten-und Publikationsserver der Georg-August-Universität. Retrieved from http://resolver.sub.uni-goettingen.de/purl/?webdoc-2923

King, P. S. (1996). *Land and lineage: The articulation of social and physical space in an atoll village* (Doctoral dissertation, Massey University). Retrieved from http://mro.massey.ac.nz/xmlui/bitstream/handle/10179/1306/02_whole.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

Kidd, S. (2012). *Kiribati country case study: Poverty, vulnerability and social protection in the Pacific*. Canberra: AusAID. Retrieved from https://www.developmentpathways.co.uk/publications/kiribati-country-case-study/

King, S., & Sigrah, K. R. (2004). *Legacy of a miner's daughter and assessment of the social changes of the Banabans after phosphate mining on Banaba*. Paper presented at the Changing Islands – Changing Worlds. Islands of the World VIII International Conference, Kinmen Island (Quemoy), Taiwan, 1-7 November. Retrieved from http://www.banaban.info/ISISA2004Paper-Stacey.pdf

Kiribati cabinet minister wants kava pub curfew. (2013). *RNZ*. Retrieved from http://www.radionz.co.nz/international/pacific-news/225530/kiribati-cabinet-minister-wants-kava-pub-curfew

Kiribati Conceptual Framework Working Group. (2015). *Boutokaan te mweeraoi: A conceptual framework for enhancing I-Kiribati wellbeing*. Retrieved from http://www.pasefikaproud.co.nz/assets/Resources-for-download/PasefikaProudResource-Nga-Vaka-o-Kaiga-Tapu-Pacific-Framework-Kiribati.pdf

Kiribati Government. (2018). *2018 budget*. Retrieved from http://www.mfed.gov.ki/publications/%E2%80%A2-2018-consolidated-budget-book

Kiribati Local Government Association. (2013). Nikunau Island Council: Profile. Retrieved from http://www.kilga.org.ki/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Nikunau-Council-Profile-Final-2.pdf

Kiribati people 'cursed' by kava. (2017). *RNZ*. Retrieved from http://www.radionz.co.nz/international/pacific-news/337777/kiribati-people-cursed-by-kava

Kiribati Primary Materials. (2017). Port Vila, Vanuatu: University of the South Pacific, School of Law, Pacific Islands Legal Information Institute. Retrieved from http://www.paclii.org/countries/ki.html

Kiribati Tungaru Association. (2017). *KTA Constitution*. Retrieved from http://ktaweb.org.uk/?page_id=371

Kiribati Tungaru Association. (2019). *Get-together 2019 photo gallery*. Retrieved from http://ktaweb.org.uk/?page_id=1794

Kiribati Tungaru Association UK. (n.d.). *Timeline* [Facebook page]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/groups/106683622742689/

Kiribati workers go home unpaid. (2008). *Stuff*. Retrieved from http://www.stuff.co.nz/national/580694

Knoll, A. J. (1997). Zealotry among the converted: American Board Missionaries in Micronesia, 1852-1919. In H. J. Hiery & J. M. Mackenzie (Eds.), *European impact and Pacific influence: British and German colonial Policy in the Pacific Islands and the indigenous response* (pp. 100-118). London: I. B. Tauris.

Knudson, K. (1977). Sydney Island, Titiana, and Kamaleai: Southern Gilbertese in the Phoenix and Solomon Islands. In M. D. Lieber (Ed.), *Exiles and migrants in Oceania* (pp. 195-241). Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.

Koch, G. E. (1986). *The material culture of Kiribati* (G. Slatter, Trans.). Suva, Fiji: University of the South Pacific, Institute of Pacific Studies.

Krueger, D., & Donohue, J. T. (2005). On the distributional consequences of child labor legislation. *International Economic Review*, *46*, 785-815.

Kuruppu, N. (2009). Adapting water resources to climate change in Kiribati: The importance of cultural values and meanings. *Environmental Science and Policy*, *12*, 799-809.

Kuruppu, N., & Liverman, D. (2011). Mental preparation for climate adaptation: The role of cognition and culture in enhancing adaptive capacity of water management in Kiribati. *Global Environmental Change*, *21*, 657-669.

Kutimeni Tenten, M. (2003). The relationship between Katekateka and women's ordination in the Kiribati Protestant Church. In L. Johnson & J. A. Filemoni-Tofaeono (Eds.), *Weavings: Women doing theology in Oceania* (pp. 32-42). Suva, Fiji: University of the South Pacific, Institute of Pacific Studies.

Lal, B. V. (2007). Pacific history matters. *Le Journal de la Société des Océanistes*, *125*, 193-200.

Lambert, B. (1966a). Ambilineal descent groups in the Northern Gilbert Islands. *American Anthropologist*, *68*(3), 641-664.

Lambert, B. (1966b). The economic activities of a Gilbertese chief. In M. J. Swartz & V. W. Turner (Eds.), *Political anthropology* (pp. 155-172). Chicago: Aldine.

Land (Copra) Tax Register 1910-1916. Available in Kiribati National Archives, Tarawa, GEIC 4(11)/II 18.

Lange, M. (2009). *Lineages of despotism and development: British colonialism and state power*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Larmour, P. (1984). Alienated land and independence in Melanesia. *Pacific Studies*, *8*, 1-47.

Latai, L. H. (2016). Covenant keepers: A history of Samoan (LMS) missionary wives in the Western Pacific from 1839 to 1979 (Doctoral dissertation, Australian National University). Retrieved from https://openresearch-repository.anu.edu.au/bitstream/1885/110679/1/Latai%20Thesis%202016.pdf

Latouche, J. (1983a). Aspects morpho-sociologiques de la maison communale Tungaru (Iles Gilbert) [Morpho-sociological aspects of the Tungaru communal house (Gilbert Islands)]. *Anthropos, 78*, 701-714.

Latouche, J-P. (1983b). *Mythistoire Tungaru: Cosmologies et genealogies aux Iles Gilbert* [Mythistory Tungaru: Cosmologies genealogies and the Gilbert Islands]. Paris: Societe d'Etudes Linguistiques et Anthropologiques de France.

Lawrence, D. R. (2014). *The naturalist and his 'beautiful islands': Charles Morris Woodford in the Western Pacific*. Canberra: ANU Press.

Lawrence, R. (1983). *Tamana: Atoll economy: Social change in Kiribati and Tuvalu no. 4*. Canberra: Australian National University, Development Studies Centre. Retrieved from https://openresearch-repository.anu.edu.au/bitstream/1885/114815/2/b12909543.pdf

Lawrence, R. (1992). Kiribati: Change and context in an atoll world. In A. B. Robillard (Ed.), *Social change in the Pacific Islands* (pp. 264-299). London: Kegan Paul International.

Laws of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony (rev. ed.) (1952). (W. G. Bryce, Compiler). London: Government Printer for the Government of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony.

Laxton, P. B. (1951). Nikumaroro. *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, *60*, 134-160.

League of Nations. (1919). *Covenant of the League of Nations*. Retrieved from http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/3dd8b9854.html

Levasseur, M., Richard, L., Gauvin, L., & Raymond, É. (2010). Inventory and analysis of definitions of social participation found in the aging literature: Proposed taxonomy of social activities. *Social Science & Medicine*, *71*, 2141-2149.

Lever, R. J. A. W. (1964). Whales and whaling in the western Pacific. *South Pacific Bulletin*, *14*(2), 33-36.

Lévesque, R. (1989). Canadian whalers in Micronesia 1840-1850. *Journal of Pacific History*, *24*, 225-237.

Lewis, D. (1972). *We, the navigators: The ancient art of landfinding in the Pacific*. Canberra: Australian National University.

Lewis, D. E. (1981). *Change and hypertension in the population of Marakei Atoll, Kiribati*. (Doctoral dissertation, University of Arizona). Retrieved from http://arizona.openrepository.com/arizona/bitstream/10150/565493/1/AZU_TD_BOX171_E9791_1981_283.pdf

Lewis, D. E., Jr. (1988). Gustatory subversion and the evolution of nutritional dependency in Kiribati. *Food and Foodways*, *3*, 79-98.

Liang, Z., & Chen, Y. P. (2007). The educational consequences of migration for children in China. *Social Science Research*, *36*, 28-47.

Lievore, D., & Fairbairn-Dunlop, P. (2007). *Pacific prevention of domestic violence programme: Kiribati report*. Wellington: Victoria University of Wellington. Retrieved from http://evaw-global-database.unwomen.org/en/countries/oceania/kiribati/2007/pacific-prevention-of-domestic-violence-program--kiribati-report

Local Government Act. No. 2 of 1984. Kiribati Sessional Legislation. Retrieved from http://www.paclii.org/ki/legis/num_act/lga1984182/

Local Government Ordinance. No. 5 of 1966. Kiribati Consolidated Legislation No. 51 (Repealed).

Locke, C., Adger, W. N., & Kelly, P. M. (2000). Changing places: Migration's social and environmental consequences. *Environment: Science and Policy for Sustainable Development*, *42*, 24-35.

Locke, J. T. (2009). Climate change-induced migration in the Pacific region: Sudden crisis and long-term developments. *Geographical Journal, 175*, 171-180.

Lundsgaarde, H. P. (1966). *Cultural adaptation in the Southern Gilbert Islands*. Eugene, OR: University of Oregon.

Lundsgaarde, H. P. (1968a). Some transformations in Gilbertese Law, 1892-1966. *Journal of Pacific History*, *3*, 117-130.

Lundsgaarde, H. P. (1968b). The strategy and etiology of Gilbertese property disputes. *American Anthropologist*, *70*, 86-93.

Lundsgaarde, H. P. (1974). The evolution of tenure principles on Tamana Island, Gilbert Islands. In H. P. Lundsgaarde (Ed.), *Land tenure in Oceania* (pp. 179-214). Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.

Lundsgaarde, H. P. (1978). Post-contact changes in Gilbertese maneaba organization. In N. Gunson (Ed.), *The changing Pacific: Essays in honour of H. E. Maude* (pp. 67-79). Melbourne: Oxford University Press.

Lundsgaarde, H. P., & Silverman, M. G. (1972). Category and group in Gilbertese kinship: An updating of Goodenough's analysis. *Ethnology*, *11*, 95-110.

Luomala, K. (1974). The Cyrtosperma systemic pattern: Aspects of production in the Gilbert Islands. *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, *83*, 14-34.

Luomala, K. (1980). A mythological charter for "making a boy wild" in the Gilbert Islands. *Asian Perspectives*, *23*, 221-248.

Macdonald, B. (1970). Constitutional development in the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony. *Journal of Pacific History*, *5*, 139-145.

Macdonald, B. (1971). Local government in the Gilbert and Ellice Islands 1892-1969 – part 1. *Journal of Administration Overseas*, *10*, 280-293.

Macdonald, B. (1972). Local government in the Gilbert and Ellice Islands 1892-1969 – part 2. *Journal of Administration Overseas*, *11*, 11-27.

Macdonald, B. K. (1982a). *Cinderellas of the Empire: Towards a history of Kiribati and Tuvalu*. Canberra: Australian National University Press.

Macdonald, B. (1982b). *Massey's imperialism and the politics of phosphate* (Massey University Occasional Publication No. 7). Palmerston North: Massey University.

Macdonald, B. (1983). Elections in Kiribati. *Political Science*, *35*, 58-70.

Macdonald, B. (1996a). *Governance and political process in Kiribati* (Economics Division Working Papers 96/2). Canberra: Australian National University, National Centre for Development Studies.

Macdonald, B. (1996b). 'Now an island is too big' limits and limitations of Pacific Islands history. *Journal of Pacific Studies, 20*, 23-44.

Macdonald, B. (1998). *Pacific Islands stakeholder participation in development: Kiribati* (Pacific Islands Discussion Paper Series No. 5). Washington, DC: World Bank, East Asia and Pacific Region, Papua New Guinea and Pacific Islands Country Management Unit. Retrieved from http://www-wds.worldbank.org/servlet/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2000/02/24/000094946_99031910570558/Rendered/PDF/multi_page.pdf

Macintosh, R. (2011, 26 July). Kiribati independence celebrations. *Marlborough Express*. Retrieved from http://www.stuff.co.nz/marlborough-express/news/picton/5336659/Kiribati-independence-celebrations

MacKenzie, U. N. (2004). *National integrity systems: Transparency International country study report: Kiribati 2004*. Canberra: Transparency International Australia. Retrieved from http://www.transparency.org.au/documents/kiribati.pdf

MacKenzie, U. (2008). *A tale of two CDs: Capacity development and community development in the waste, water, and sanitation sector in Kiribati*. Mandaluyong City: Asian Development Bank. Retrieved from https://think-asia.org/bitstream/handle/11540/2503/tale-2-cds.pdf?sequence=1.

Mackinder, H. J. (1909). Geographical conditions affecting the British Empire: I. The British Islands. *Geographical Journal*, *33*, 462-476.

Maclellan, N. (2008). Seasonal workers for Australia – lessons from New Zealand. *Farm Policy Journal*, *5*(3), 43-53.

Mala, K., Schläpfer, A., & Pryor, T. (2009). Better or worse? The role of solar photovoltaic (PV) systems in sustainable development: Case studies of remote atoll communities in Kiribati. *Renewable Energy*, *34*, 358-361.

Mangubhai, S., Lovell, E., Abeta, R., Donner, S., Redfern, F. M., O'Brien, M., … & Teetu, S. B. (2019). Kiribati: Atolls and marine ecosystems. In C. Shepherd (Ed.), *World seas: An environmental evaluation* World Seas (2nd ed.), Volume 2: The Indian Ocean to the Pacific (pp. 807-826). Cambridge, MA: Academic Press.

Mason, L. (Ed.). (1985). *Kiribati: A changing atoll culture*. Suva, Fiji: University of the South Pacific, Institute of Pacific Studies.

Maude, H. C., & Maude, H. E. (1931). Adoption in the Gilbert Islands. *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, *40*, 225-235.

Maude, H. C., & Maude, H. E. (1981). Tioba and the Tabiteuean religious wars. *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, *90*, 307-336.

Maude, H. C., & Maude, H. E. (Eds.). (1994). *An anthology of Gilbertese oral tradition. From the Grimble papers and other collections*. Suva, Fiji: University of the South Pacific, Institute of Pacific Studies.

Maude, H. E. (1937). Colonization of the Phoenix Islands by the surplus population of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands. Suva, Fiji: Government Printer. Retrieved from https://digital.library.adelaide.edu.au/dspace/bitstream/2440/79970/3/Printed%20material%20on%20the%20settlement%20scheme.pdf

Maude, H. E. (1949). *The Co-operative Movement in the Gilbert and Ellice Islands* (Technical Paper No. 1). Sydney: South Pacific Commission. Retrieved from https://hekyll.services.adelaide.edu.au/dspace/bitstream/2440/100093/1/The%20co-operative%20movement.pdf

Maude, H. (1950). Mass education through co-operation – The development of the Co-Operative Movement in the Gilbert and Ellice Islands. *Mass Education Bulletin, 2*(1), 10-14.

Maude, H. E. (1952). The colonization of the Phoenix Islands, *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, *61*, 62-89.

Maude, H. E. (1960). *The evolution of local government in the Gilbert Islands*. Unpublished manuscript available in Henry (Harry) Evans and Honor Courtney Maude Papers 1904-1999, University of Adelaide.

Maude, H. E. (1961). Post-Spanish discoveries in the central Pacific. *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, *70*, 67-111.

Maude, H. E. (1963). The evolution of the Gilbertese boti: An ethnohistorical interpretation. *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, *72* (Suppl.), 1-68.

Maude, H. E. (1964). Beachcombers and castaways. *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, *73*, 254-293.

Maude, H. E. (1967). The swords of Gabriel: A study in participant history. *Journal of Pacific History*, *2*, 113-136.

Maude, H. E. (1977). Foreword and notes. In E. Sabatier (Author), *Astride the Equator: An account of the Gilbert Islands* (U. Nixon, Trans.) (pp. i-v, 353-373). Melbourne: Oxford University Press.

Maude, H. E. (1981). *Slavers in paradise: The Peruvian labour trade in Polynesia, 1862-1864*. Canberra: Australian National University Press. Retrieved from https://openresearch-repository.anu.edu.au/bitstream/1885/114682/2/b12494185.pdf

Maude, H. E. (1989). A. F. Grimble as an anthropologist. In A. F. Grimble (Author), *Tungaru traditions: Writings on the atoll culture of the Gilberts* (pp. xix-xxvi). Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.

Maude, H. E. (Ed.). (1991). *The story of Karongoa*: *Narrated by an unimane of the boti Karongoa n Uea on Nikunau in 1934*. Suva, Fiji: University of the South Pacific, Institute of Pacific Studies.

Maude, H. E. (n.d.). *Nei-n Riiki and the coming from Samoa*. Retrieved from https://digital.library.adelaide.edu.au/dspace/bitstream/2440/101567/1/PartII_Series4_Section3_NikunauIsland-Nei-nRiikiandthecomingfromSamoa.pdf

Maude, H. E., & Doran, E., Jr. (1966). The precedence of Tarawa Atoll. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, *56*, 269-289.

Maude, H. E., & Leeson, I. (1965). The coconut oil trade of the Gilbert Islands. *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, *74*, 396-437.

Maunaa I. (1987). Squatters on South Tarawa, Kiribati. In L. Mason & P. Hereniko (Eds.), *In search of a home* (pp. 206-229). Suva, Fiji: University of the South Pacific, Institute of Pacific Studies.

McAdam, J. (2014). Historical cross-border relocations in the Pacific: Lessons for planned relocations in the context of climate change. *Journal of Pacific History*, *49*, 301-327.

McCreary, J. R., & Boardman, D. W. (1968). *Some impressions of social change in the Gilbert and Ellice islands: A report to the Resident Commissioner*. Wellington: Victoria University of Wellington, Department of Social Science.

McCreery, D., & Munro, D. (1993). The cargo of the Montserrat: Gilbertese labor in Guatemalan coffee, 1890-1908. *The Americas*, *49*, 271-295.

McGoun, E. G., Bettner, M. S., & Coyne, M. P. (2007). Pedagogic metaphors and the nature of accounting signification. *Critical Perspectives on Accounting*, *18*, 213-230.

McIver, L., Woodward, A., Davies, S., Tebikau T., & Iddings, S. (2014). Assessment of the health impacts of climate change in Kiribati. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, *11*, 5224-5240.

McLean, R., & Kench, P. (2015). Destruction or persistence of coral atoll islands in the face of 20th and 21st century sea-level rise?. *Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Climate Change*, *6*, 445-463.

McNamara, K. E., & Westoby, R. (2014). Ironies of globalisation: Observations from Fiji and Kiribati. *Journal of Pacific Studies*, *34*, 53-62.

Megarry, R. E. (1977). *Tito and Others v. Waddell and Others (No. 2). Tito and Others v. Attorney-General. Chancery Division Ch D*. Retrieved from oxcheps.new.ox.ac.uk/new/casebook/cases/Cases%20Chapter%2021/Tito%20and%20Others%20v%20Waddell%20(No%202).doc

Meleisea, M. (1976). The last days of the Melanesian labour trade in Western Samoa. *Journal of Pacific History*, *11*, 126-132.

Merino, B. (1998). Critical theory and accounting history: Challenges and opportunities. *Critical Perspectives on Accounting*, *9*, 603-616.

Mimura, N., Nurse, L., McLean, R. F., Agard, J., Briguglio, L., Lefale, P., … & Sem, G. (2007). Small islands. In M. L. Parry, O. Canziani, J. Palutikof, P. J. van der Linden & C. E. Hansen (Eds.), *Climate change 2007: Impacts, adaptation and vulnerability*. Contribution of Working Group II to the fourth assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (pp. 687-716). Retrieved from https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2018/02/ar4-wg2-chapter16-2.pdf

Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment. (2015). *Recognised seasonal employer (RSE) policy*. Retrieved from http://employment.govt.nz/er/rse/

Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment. (2016). *New Zealand residence programme* (Cabinet paper). Retrieved from http://www.mbie.govt.nz/info-services/immigration/oia-responses/new-zealand-residence-programme-2016-17-to-2017-18-redacted-combined-docs.pdf

Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment. (2017). *Tenancy services*. Retrieved from https://www.tenancy.govt.nz/

Ministry of Internal and Social Affairs. (2007). *Nikunau Island: Socio-economic profile*. Retrieved from http://www.climate.gov.ki/about-kiribati/island-reports-2012/nikunau/

Ministry of Justice. (2017). *Waitangi Tribunal*. Retrieved from https://www.waitangitribunal.govt.nz/

Ministry of Overseas Development. (1968). *A socio-economic survey of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands* (G. Mooring, Chair). London: Author.

Ministry of Overseas Development. (1977). *Living in the Gilbert Islands* (rev. ed.). London: Author.

Ministry of Works and Public Utilities. (2011). *Kiribati: South Tarawa Sanitation Improvement Sector Project*. Retrieved from https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/linked-documents/43072-015-rfab.pdf

Mitchell, E. (1983). Potential of whaling logbook data for studying aspects of social structure in the sperm whale, Physeter macrocephalus, with an example – the ship Mariner to the Pacific, 1836-1840. *Report of the International Whaling Commission*, *Special Issue 5*, 63-80.

Modell, S. (2014). The societal relevance of management accounting: An introduction to the special issue. *Accounting and Business Research*, *44*, 83-103.

Moglia, M., Perez, P., & Burn, S. (2008). Water troubles in a Pacific atoll town. *Water Policy*, *10*, 613-637.

Morgan, D. J. (1980). *The official history of colonial development* (Vols. 1-5). London: Macmillan.

Morrell, W. P. (1960). *Britain in the Pacific Islands*. London: Oxford University Press.

Munro, D. (1987). The lives and times of resident traders in Tuvalu: An exercise in history from below. *Pacific Studies*, *10*, 73-106.

Munro, D. (1993). The Pacific Islands labour trade: Approaches, methodologies, debates. *Slavery and Abolition*, *14*, 87-108.

Munro, D. (1996). Samoan pastors in Tuvalu, 1865-1899. In D. Munro & A. Thornley (Eds.), *The covenant makers: Islander missionaries in the Pacific* (pp. 124-156). Suva, Fiji: Pacific Theological College and University of the South Pacific, Institute of Pacific Studies.

Munro, D., & Firth, S. (1986). Towards colonial protectorates: The case of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands. *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, *32*, 63-71.

Munro, D., & Firth, S. (1987). From company rule to consular control: Gilbert Island labourers on German plantations in Samoa. J*ournal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, *16*, 24-43.

Munro, D., & Firth, S. (1990). German labour policy and the partition of the Western Pacific: The view from Samoa. *Journal of Pacific History*, *25*, 85-102.

Murphy, T., O'Connell, V., & ***Ó*** hÓgartaigh, C. (2013). Discourses surrounding the evolution of the IASB/FASB Conceptual Framework: What they reveal about the "living law" of accounting. *Accounting, Organizations and Society*, *38*, 72-91.

Myers, B. H. (2001). *The impact of international experience on teaching with a global perspective: Reflections of returned Peace Corps volunteer teachers* (Doctoral dissertation, Ohio State University). Retrieved from https://etd.ohiolink.edu/!etd.send_file?accession=osu1486399451962413&disposition=inline

Myrdal, G. (1957). *Economic theory and under-developed regions*. London: Methuen.

Namoori-Sinclair, R. (2020). *The impact of PAC Policy on Pacific women's health and wellbeing: The experiences of Kiribati migrants*. (Doctoral dissertation, Victoria University of Wellington). Retrieved from https://researcharchive.vuw.ac.nz/xmlui/bitstream/handle/10063/9312/thesis_access.pdf?sequence=1

National Statistics Office. (2006). *Analytical report on the 2006 Kiribati HIES*. Retrieved from http://www.spc.int/prism/Country/Ki/Stats/CensusSurveys/KI_Final%20HIES%20Report.pdf

National Statistics Office. (2013). *Census 2010*. Retrieved from http://www.mfed.gov.ki/statistics/kiribati-document-library

National Statistics Office. (2016). *2015 Population and housing census volume 1: Management report and basic tables*. Retrieved from http://www.mfed.gov.ki/statistics/documents/2015_Population_Census_Report_Volume_1final_211016.pdf

Native Co-operative Societies Ordinance of 1940. Suva, Fiji: Government Printer.

Native Laws of the Gilbert Islands (British Protectorate) 1894. Suva, Fiji: Government Printer to His Britannic Majesty's High Commission for the Western Pacific.

Native Laws Ordinance of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony. No. 2 of 1917. Retrieved from https://www.usp.ac.fj/fileadmin/random_images/home_middle_banners/emalus/Pacific_law_materials/Kiribati_Gilberts/Native_Laws_Order_1917.PDF

Nauru Island Agreement of 1919. Retrieved from http://www.comlaw.gov.au/Details/C1919A00008

Nei Tabera Ni Kai Video Unit (Producer). (2000). *KPF reitaki 2000: Tape A*. Tarawa: Producer

Nei Tabera Ni Kai Video Unit (Producer). (2009). *Kiribati – A call to the world*. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GDMpmRjCIQE

Nei Tabera Ni Kai Video Unit (Producer). (2010). *Kiribati and climate change*. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v6KYx5J2IhA

Neitz, M. J., & Spickard, J. V. (1990). Steps toward a sociology of religious experience: The theories of Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi and Alfred Schutz. *Sociological Analysis*, *51*, 15-33.

Neu, D. (2000). "Presents" for the "Indians": land, colonialism and accounting in Canada. *Accounting, Organizations and Society*, *25*, 163-184.

Neu, D., Gomez, E. O., Graham, C., & Heincke, M. (2006). “Informing” technologies and the World Bank. *Accounting, Organizations and Society*, *31*, 635-662.

Neu, D., & Graham, C. (2006). The birth of a nation: Accounting and Canada’s First Nations, 1860-1900. *Accounting, Organizations and Society*, *25*, 47-76.

New Zealand Government. (2016). *Pacific quota ballot results updated*. Retrieved from https://www.immigration.govt.nz/about-us/media-centre/news-notifications/pac-quotas

New Zealand Government. (2019). *Budget at a glance: Supporting Māori and Pasifika aspirations*. Retrieved from https://www.budget.govt.nz/budget/2019/at-a-glance/supporting-maori-pasifika.htm

New Zealand Immigration. (2017a). *New Zealand now: Live permanently in New Zealand*. Retrieved from https://www.immigration.govt.nz/new-zealand-visas/options/live-permanently

New Zealand Immigration. (2017b). *Pacific Access Category resident visa*. Retrieved from https://www.immigration.govt.nz/new-zealand-visas/apply-for-a-visa/about-visa/pacific-access-category-resident-visa

New Zealand Immigration. (2017c). *Sponsorship form for temporary entry*. Retrieved from https://www.immigration.govt.nz/documents/forms-and-guides/inz1025.pdf

New Zealand Immigration. (n.d.). *Kakoroa bukin am iango n roko i Nutiran*. Retrieved from https://www.newzealandnow.govt.nz/files/documents/Pacific-Migrant-Guide-Kiribati.pdf

New Zealand Kiribati National Council. (n.d.). *Timeline* [Facebook page]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/groups/568544176648174/

New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. (2015). *Kiribati*. Retrieved from www.mfat.govt.nz/Countries/Pacific/Kiribati.php

New Zealand Parliament. (2011). *Household incomes, inequality and poverty*. Retrieved from https://www.parliament.nz/en/pb/research-papers/document/00PlibCIP181/household-incomes-inequality-and-poverty

Newbury, C. (2004). Accounting for power in Northern Nigeria. *Journal of African History*, *45*, 257-277.

Nikunau Maneaba on Facebook. (n.d.). *Timeline* [Facebook page]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/groups/380419495376444/

Nikunau Native Government Cash Book 1915-1933. Available in Kiribati National Archives, Tarawa, GEIC 4(11)/III 1.

Nokise, U. F. (1983). *The role of London Missionary Society Samoan missionaries in the evangelisation of the South West Pacific 1839-1930* (Doctoral dissertation, Australian National University). Retrieved from https://openresearch-repository.anu.edu.au/bitstream/1885/109332/4/b17986539-Nokise_uili.f.pdf

Nunn, P. D. (2013). The end of the Pacific? Effects of sea level rise on Pacific Island livelihoods. *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography*, *34*, 143-171.

Oakes, R., Milan, A., & Campbell, J. (2016). *Kiribati: Climate change and migration relationships between household vulnerability, human mobility and climate change*. Bonn: United Nations University, Institute for Environment and Human Security. Retrieved from https://collections.unu.edu/view/UNU:5903

Office of Te Beretitenti and T’Makei Services. (2012a). *Beru*. Retrieved from http://www.climate.gov.ki/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/14_BERU-revised-2012.pdf

Office of Te Beretitenti and T’Makei Services. (2012b). *Nikunau*. Retrieved from http://www.climate.gov.ki/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/15_NIKUNAU-revised-2012.pdf

Office of Te Beretitenti and T'Makei Services. (2012c). *South Tarawa*. Retrieved from http://www.climate.gov.ki/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/6_SOUTH-TARAWA-revised-2012.pdf

Office of the President, Republic of Kiribati. (2012). *Kiribati climate change: Island reports: Line Islands: Kiritimati, Tabuaeran, Teeraina*. Retrieved from http://www.climate.gov.ki/about-kiribati/island-reports-2012/

Officer on Board the Said Ship. (1767). *A voyage round the world in His Majesty's Ship the 'Dolphin', commanded by the honourable commodore Byron*. London: J. Newbery and F. Newbery. Retrieved from https://archive.org/details/A020088

Organisation for Economic Development and Cooperation. (2013). *Development database on aid from DAC Members: DAC online*. Retrieved from http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/50/17/5037721.htm

Ortega, M. A. B. (2008). *Strengthening decentralized governance in Kiribati (SDGIK): Evaluation report*. Retrieved from https://erc.undp.org/evaluation/documents/detail/1981

Pacific Islanders Protection Act 1872. Nos. 35 and 36 Victoria Ch. 19. Retrieved from https://archive.org/stream/ImperialAndColonialActsRelatingToThePacificIslandLabourTrade/Imperial%20and%20colonial%20acts%20relating%20to%20the%20Pacific%20Island%20labour%20trade_djvu.txt

Pacific Islanders Protection Act 1875. Nos. 38 and 39 Victoria Ch. 52. Retrieved from https://archive.org/stream/ImperialAndColonialActsRelatingToThePacificIslandLabourTrade/Imperial%20and%20colonial%20acts%20relating%20to%20the%20Pacific%20Island%20labour%20trade_djvu.txt

Page, B., & Mercer, C. (2012). Why do people do stuff? Reconceptualizing remittance behaviour in diaspora-development research and policy. *Progress in Development Studies*, *12*, 1-18.

Parliament of Kiribati. (n.d.). *Historical information on members of the Parliament of Kiribati*. Retrieved from https://web.archive.org/web/20081120191909/http://www.parliament.gov.ki/historical.htm

Pedraza, S. (1991). Women and migration: The social consequences of gender. *Annual Review of Sociology*, *17*, 303-325.

Pentland, B. T. (1999). Building process theory with narrative: From description to explanation. *Academy of Management Review*, *24*, 711-724.

Pernetta, J. C., & Hughes, P. J. (Eds.). (1990). *Implications of expected climate changes in the South Pacific region: An overview* (United Nations Environment Programme Regional Seas Reports and Studies No. 128). Retrieved from http://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/11761/rsrs128.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

Phillips, J. (2006). *Whaling – ship-based whaling*. In Te Ara – the encyclopedia of New Zealand. Retrieved from http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/whaling/page-1

Pierson, P. (2000). Not just what, but when: Timing and sequence in political processes. *Studies in American Political Development*, *14*, 72-92.

Pitchford, J. (1981). *Decentralisation in Kiribati* (Vols. I-IV). Tarawa: Government of Kiribati.

PixMasta Studio (Producer). (2017). *Kiribati Independence 2017 Brisbane highlight*. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3PQ9B8-Uo-0

Polanyi, K. (1957). *The great transformation: The political and economic origin of our time*. Boston, MA: Beacon.

Pole A. (1995). Tenure and sustainability in an atoll nation: The case of Kiribati. In R. Crocombe (Ed.), *Customary land tenure and sustainable development: Complementarity or conflict?* (pp. 54-73). Noumea, New Caledonia: South Pacific Commission.

Porter, A. (1997). 'Cultural imperialism' and Protestant missionary enterprise, 1780-1914. *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, *25*, 367-391.

Pretes, M., & Gibson, K. (2008). Openings in the body of 'capitalism': Capital flows and diverse economic possibilities in Kiribati. *Asia Pacific Viewpoint*, *49*, 381-391.

Pretes, M., & Petersen, E. (2004). Rethinking fisheries policy in the Pacific. *Marine Policy*, *28*, 297-309.

Pusinelli, F. N. M. (1947). *Report on a census taken in the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony in 1947*. Retrieved from https://dspaceprd01.services.adelaide.edu.au/dspace/handle/2440/100087

Quattrone, P. (Presenter). (2015). *Governing 'socie-ties'*. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6D8Ddmvz9v8&list=PLsRNoUx8w3rOvl8DAv-5dXAA72f9MaBWF&index=6

Quattrone, P. (2016). Management accounting goes digital: Will the move make it wiser? *Management Accounting Research*, *31*, 118-122.

Radio New Zealand. (2015). *Climate change migration the focus of Kiribati summit*. Retrieved from http://www.radionz.co.nz/international/programmes/datelinepacific/audio/201772925/climate-change-migration-the-focus-of-kiribati-summit

Ratuva, S. (2014). "Failed" or resilient subaltern communities? Pacific indigenous social protection systems in a neoliberal world. *Pacific Journalism Review*, *20*(2), 40-58.

Razzaque, M. A., Osafa-Kwaako, P., & Grynberg, R. (2007). Long-run trend in the relative price: Empirical estimation for individual commodities. In R. Grynberg & S. Newton (Eds.), *Commodity prices and development* (pp. 35-67). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Register of Landowners and Lands 1908. Available in Kiribati National Archives, Tarawa, GEIC 4(11)/II 6.

Regulations for the Good Order and Cleanliness of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands 1933. Suva, Fiji: Government Printer to His Britannic Majesty's High Commission for the Western Pacific. Retrieved from https://eap.bl.uk/archive-file/EAP110-1-1-3-3#?c=0&m=0&s=0&cv=0&xywh=-1552%2C0%2C5406%2C3071

Reilly, A. (2011). The ethics of seasonal labour migration. *Griffith Law Review*, *20*, 127-152.

Renaud, F. G., Dun, O., Warner, K., & Bogardi, J. (2011). A decision framework for environmentally induced migration. *International Migration*, *49*, e5-e29.

Rennie, S. (1981). Katei ni Kiribati – The Gilbertese way. *Hemisphere*, *26*, 184-187.

Rennie, S. J. (1985). In search of souls: The cultural interaction between Hiram Bingham Jr., the Hawaiians and the Gilbertese through mission contact 1857-1903 (Doctoral dissertation, Australian National University). Retrieved from https://openresearch-repository.anu.edu.au/bitstream/1885/11230/1/Rennie_S.J._1985.pdf

Rennie, S. (1987). Contract labor under a protector: The Gilbertese laborers and Hiram Bingham, Jr., in Hawai'i, 1878-1903. *Pacific Studies*, *11*, 81-106.

Republic of Kiribati. (2009). *National capacity self assessment project: Assessing the capacity of the Republic of Kiribati to implement the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD), United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)*. Retrieved from http://www.sprep.org/att/IRC/eCOPIES/Countries/Kiribati/101.pdf

Republic of Kiribati, Ministry of Education (2011). *Digest of education statistics 2011*. Retrieved from http://www.spc.int/PRISM/images/EducationDigests/COOK%20ISLANDS/Kiribati_Statistics_Digest_2011fin.pdf

Republic of Kiribati. (2016). *Presidential web portal*. Retrieved from http://www.president.gov.ki/president-of-kiribati/

Resture, J. (1998). *War in the Pacific*. Retrieved from http://www.angelfire.com/ar/janer/egan11.html

Revised Native Laws of the Gilbert, Ellice and Union Groups (The Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony) of 1916. Suva, Fiji: Government Printer to His Britannic Majesty's High Commission for the Western Pacific. Retrieved from https://eap.bl.uk/archive-file/EAP110-1-1-3-2

Riccarton High School. (2017). *Christchurch Pasifika Speech Competition results*. Retrieved from http://www.riccarton.school.nz/hail_article/christchurch-pasifika-speech-competition-results/

Richards, R. (1986). The easternmost route to China and the Robertson Aikman charts. *The Great Circle*, *8*(1), 54-67.

Ritatitautua (Producer). (2017) *Kiribati – NZ independence celebration (highlights) the Trusts Arena Auckland 2017*. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_4nxyeTGdlc

Roalkvam, S. (2003). Pathway and Side. In I. Hoëm & S. Roalkvam (Eds.), *Oceanic socialities and cultural forms: Ethnographies of experience* (pp. 115-136). New York: Berghahn Books.

Roland, H. B., & Curtis, K. J. (2020). The differential influence of geographic isolation on environmental migration: A study of internal migration amidst degrading conditions in the central Pacific. *Population and Environment*, *42*, 161-182.

Roman, M. (2013). *Migration, transnationality, and climate change in the Republic of Kiribati* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Pittsburgh). Retrieved from http://d-scholarship.pitt.edu/20112/1/Roman_Anthropology_Dissertation_ETD.pdf

Roniti T. (1985). Leadership in the village. In L. Mason (Ed.), *Kiribati: A changing atoll culture* (pp. 167-179). Suva, Fiji: University of the South Pacific, Institute of Pacific Studies.

Roniti T. (1988). *Management of marine resources in Kiribati*. Suva, Fiji: University of the South Pacific.

Roper, J. (2012). Environmental risk, sustainability discourses, and public relations. *Public Relations Inquiry*, *1*, 69-87.

Rose, S. F. (2014). *Waves for change: The role of the South Tarawa-based women's interests program in the decolonisation process of the Gilbert Islands* (Doctoral dissertation, Queensland University of Technology). Retrieved from https://eprints.qut.edu.au/66735/1/Samantha_Rose_Thesis.pdf

Roslender, R., & Dillard, J. F. (2003). Reflections on the Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Accounting Project. *Critical Perspectives on Accounting*, *14*, 325-351.

Routledge, D. (1985). Pacific history as seen from the Pacific Islands. *Pacific Studies*, *8*, 81-99.

Roy, P., & Connell, J. (1991). Climatic change and the future of atoll states. *Journal of Coastal Research*, *7*, 1057-1075.

Rytz, M. (Director and Producer). (2018). *Anote's Ark*. Retrieved from http://www.anotesark.com/

Sabatier, E. (1977). *Astride the Equator: An account of the Gilbert Islands* (U. Nixon, Trans.). Melbourne: Oxford University Press.

Sachet, M. H. (1957). *Climate and meteorology of the Gilbert Islands* (Atoll Research Bulletin No. 60). Retrieved from http://www.sil.si.edu/DigitalCollections/atollresearch-bulletin/issues/00060.pdf

Said, E. W. (1994). *Culture and imperialism*. New York: Vintage.

Schuermann, S. (2014). *The wantok system, scale and vulnerability: Shaping disaster recovery in an immigrant community of the Western Solomon Islands* (Masterate thesis, San Diego State University). Retrieved from https://sdsu-dspace.calstate.edu/bitstream/handle/10211.3/115528/Schuermann_sdsu_0220N_10146.pdf?sequence=1

Secretariat of the Pacific Community. (2010). *Kiribati family health and support study: A study on violence against women and children*. Retrieved from https://pacific.unfpa.org/en/publications/kiribati-family-health-and-safety-study

Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Program. (2015). *The voice of the Pacific and the Paris Agreement*. Retrieved from https://www.sprep.org/climate-change/the-voice-of-the-pacific-and-the-paris-agreement

Sewell, W. H., Jr. (2005). The concept (s) of culture. In G. M. Spiegel (Ed.), *Practicing history: New directions in historical writing after the linguistic turn* (pp. 76-95). London: Routledge.

Shineberg, D. (1984). French labour recruiting in the Pacific islands: An early episode. *Journal de la Société des Océanistes*, *78*(40), 45-50.

Shlomowitz, R., & Munro, D. (1992). The Ocean Island (Banaba) and Nauru labour trade 1900-1940. *Journal de la Société des Océanistes*, *94*, 103-117.

Shuval, J. T. (2000). Diaspora migration: Definitional ambiguities and a theoretical paradigm. *International Migration*, *38*(5), 41-56.

Siegel, J. (1985). Origins of Pacific Island labourers in Fiji. *Journal of Pacific History*, *20*, 42-54.

Sigrah, R. K., & King, S. (2001). *Te rii ni Banaba*. Suva, Fiji: University of the South Pacific, Institute of Pacific Studies.

Sillitoe, P. (1998). The development of indigenous knowledge: A new applied anthropology. *Current Anthropology, 39*, 223-252.

Sillitoe, P., & Marzano, M. (2009). Future of indigenous knowledge research in development. *Futures*, *41*(1), 13-23.

Silverman, D. (2004). Research and social theory. In C. Seale (Ed.), *Researching society and culture* (2nd ed.) (pp. 59-69). London: SAGE.

Silverman, M. G. (1971). *Disconcerting issue: Meaning and struggle in a resettled Pacific community*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Simmonds, A. (2014). Friendship, imperial violence and the law of nations: The case of late-eighteenth century British Oceania. *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, *42*, 645-666.

Sinclair, A. (1995). The chameleon of accountability: Forms and discourses. *Accounting, Organizations and Society*, *20*, 219-237.

Slack, J., & Brown, L. (2016, 11 August). Six in ten say migrants put pressure on NHS, schools and housing: Poll finds UK is one of the countries most worried about rising immigration. *Mail Online*. Retrieved from http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3734099/Six-ten-say-migrants-pressure-NHS-schools-housing-Poll-finds-UK-one-countries-worried-rising-immigration.html

Smith, J. (2011). *An island in the autumn*. Forres, Scotland: Librario.

Smith, L. T. (2012). *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and indigenous peoples* (2nd ed.). London: Zed Books.

Smith, R. (2013). Should they stay or should they go? A discourse analysis of factors influencing relocation decisions among the Outer Islands of Tuvalu and Kiribati. *Journal of New Zealand & Pacific Studies*, *1*, 23-39.

Smith, R., & McNamara, K. E. (2015). Future migrations from Tuvalu and Kiribati: Exploring government, civil society and donor perceptions. *Climate and Development*, *7*, 47-59.

Society. Def. 7a. (2017). *Oxford English Dictionary*. Retrieved from http://www.oed.com.ezproxy.canterbury.ac.nz/view/Entry/183776?redirectedFrom=society&

Solomon Islands National Statistics Office. (2021). *Census 2009*. Retrieved from https://www.statistics.gov.sb/statistics/demographic-statistics/census

Solomon, S. M., & Forbes, D. L. (1999). Coastal hazards and associated management issues on South Pacific Islands. *Ocean and Coastal Management*, *42*, 523-554.

Speedy, K. (2015). The Sutton case: The first Franco-Australian foray into blackbirding. *Journal of Pacific History*, *50*, 344-364.

Speedy, K. (2016). Constructing subaltern silence in the colonial archive: An Australian case study. *Journal of Australian Colonial History*, *18*, 95-114.

Spencer, T. (1997). Changes in the global environment: Uncertain prospects for the Pacific. In B. Burt & C. Clerk (Eds.), *Environment and development in the Pacific Islands* (pp. 243-263). Canberra: Australian National University, National Center for Development Studies.

Stahl, C. W., & Appleyard, R. T. (2007). *Migration and development in the Pacific Islands: Lessons from the New Zealand experience*. Canberra: Australian Agency for International Development. Retrieved from http://apo.org.au/files/Resource/migration.pdf.

Statistics New Zealand. (2014). *2013 Census ethnic group profiles: Kiribati*. Retrieved from http://stats.govt.nz/Census/2013-census/profile-and-summary-reports/ethnic-profiles.aspx?request_value=24717&tabname=Keyfacts

Statistics New Zealand and Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs. (2011). *Health and Pacific peoples in New Zealand.* Wellington: Authors. Retrieved from http://www.stats.govt.nz/browse_for_stats/people_and_communities/pacific_peoples/pacific-progress-health.aspx#

Steadman, J. P. (2006). *From a mere clean-up contract to changing lives – Engaging the local stakeholders during the remediation of Christmas Island, Pacific Ocean*. Paper presented at 2006 Waste Management Symposia, Tucson, AR, 26 February-2 March. Retrieved from http://www.wmsym.org/archives/2006/pdfs/6143.pdf

Storey, D., & Hunter, S. (2010). Kiribati: An environmental 'perfect storm'. *Australian Geographer*, *41*, 167-181.

Stubbs, P. (2003). International non-state actors and social development policy. *Global Social Policy*, *3*, 319-348.

Style of the British sovereign. (n.d.). In *Wikipedia*. Retrieved 29 November 2019, from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tarawa

Taberannang K. (2007). *The way forward in Kiribati: A case study of the problems facing the emergence of a free media* (Bachelor with honours dissertation, Auckland University of Technology). Retrieved from https://pmc.aut.ac.nz/research/way-forward-kiribati-case-study-problems-facing-emergence-free-media-81

Taberannang K. (2011). *Report from a Kiribati households survey in New Zealand, 2009/2010*. Auckland: Pacific Micronesian Foundation. Retrieved from https://www.academia.edu/871514/A_report_from_the_survey_of_Kiribati_households_in_New_Zealand_2009_2010

Tabucanon, G. M. P. (2012). The Banaban resettlement: Implications for Pacific environmental migration. *Pacific Studies*, *35*, 343-370.

Takasaka, T., Ohta, N., Zhengi, H-Y., Ikegaya, H., Sakurada, K., Kitamura, T., & Yogo, Y. (2006). JC polyomavirus lineages common among Kiribati Islanders: Implications for human dispersal in the Pacific. *Anthropological Science*, *114*, 133-140.

Takuia U. (2016). Kiribati. In S. Levine (Ed.), *Pacific ways: Government and politics in the Pacific islands* (2nd ed.) (pp. 118-131). Wellington: Victoria University Press.

Tammy T. (2011). *Sapon riki ba Kain Toromon*: *A Study of the I-Kiribati Community in Solomon Islands*. (Masterate thesis, University of University of Hawai'i at Mānoa). Retrieved from http://hl-128-171-57-22.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/bitstream/10125/24272/1/Tabe_2011_r.pdf

Tarawa. (n.d.). In *Wikipedia*. Retrieved 29 November 2019, from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tarawa

Tate, M., & Foy, F. (1965). Slavery and racism in South Pacific annexations. *Journal of Negro History*, *50*, 1-21.

Tatoa K., & Hogan, H. (2008). *Baseline study report 2008: Survey of public awareness and attitudes towards climate change: Issues and challenges*. Retrieved from http://www.climate.gov.ki/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Survey-of-public-attitudes-to-climate-change-baseline-study.pdf

Teaiwa, K. M. (2005). Our sea of phosphate: The diaspora of Ocean Island. In G. Harvey & C. Thompson Jr. (Eds.), *Indigenous diasporas and dislocations* (pp. 169-191). Aldershot: Ashgate.

Teaiwa, K. (2014). Culture moves?: The Festival of Pacific Arts and Dance Remix in Oceania. *Dance Research Aotearoa*, *2*(1), 2-19.

Teaiwa, K. (2015). Ruining Pacific Islands: Australia's phosphate imperialism. *Australian Historical Studies*, *46*, 374-391.

Teaiwa, K. (2018). Environmental displacement and resilience in Oceania: Engaging beyond the academy. Paper presented at Dealing with Inequality: Pacific Perspectives, Pacific Futures. 12th Conference of the European Society for Oceanists, Cambridge, 7-10 December. Retrieved from https://www.pacific-studies.net/conferences/public.php?confID=3&action=session_detail&session=110

Teaiwa, T. (2011). Preparation for deep learning: A reflection on 'teaching' Pacific Studies in the Pacific. *Journal of Pacific History*, *46*, 214-220.

Teariki, M. A. (2017). Housing and health of Kiribati migrants living in New Zealand. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, *14*, 1237, 1-11. Retrieved from https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5664738/

Teuea T. (Producer). (2010). *O Nikunau Trip 2010*. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x99d5OYWBxU

Teweiariki T. (n.d.). *Indigenous education in Kiribati*. Retrieved from https://classshares.student.usp.ac.fj/ED253/course%20book%20and%20reader/Teweiariki%20Teaero.doc

Thaman, K. H. (2003). Decolonizing Pacific studies: Indigenous perspectives, knowledge, and wisdom in higher education. *Contemporary Pacific*, *15*, 1-17.

Thomas, D. S., & Twyman, C. (2005). Equity and justice in climate change adaptation amongst natural-resource-dependent societies. *Global Environmental Change*, *15*, 115-124.

Thomas, F. R. (2001). Remodeling marine tenure on the atolls: A case study from Western Kiribati, Micronesia. *Human Ecology*, *29*, 399-423.

Thomas, F. R. (2002). Self-reliance in Kiribati: Contrasting views of agricultural and fisheries production. *Geographical Journal*, *168*, 163-177.

Thomas, F. R. (2003). *Kiribati: "Some aspects of human ecology", forty years later* (Atoll Research Bulletin No. 501). Retrieved from https://repository.si.edu/bitstream/handle/10088/5917/00501.pdf

Thomas, F. R., & Kautoa T. (2007). Pacific island rural development: Challenges and prospects in Kiribati. In J. Connell & E. Waddell (Eds.), *Environment, development and change in rural Asia-Pacific: Between local and global* (pp. 38-55). London; Routledge.

Thompson, M. A. (2016). *The settlement experiences of Kiribati migrants living in New Zealand* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Otago). Retrieved from http://hdl.handle.net/10523/6144

Thompson, M. A., Howden-Chapman, P., & Fougere, G. (2017). Policy changes: Kiribati migration and settlement. *Policy Quarterly*, *13*(2), 82-87.

Tilley, C., Keane, W., Küchler, S., Rowlands, M., & Spyer, P. (Eds.). (2006). *Handbook of material culture*. London: SAGE.

Tisdell, C. A. (2000). *The development of Kiribati: An analysis of trends, issues and policies* (Social Economics, Policy and Development Working Paper No. 7). Brisbane: University of Queensland. Retrieved from https://ageconsearch.umn.edu/record/100031/

Townsend, M. M. (1951). *Lands settlement Nonouti and other documents* (Part II, Series 4, Section 5: [10] Miscellaneous lands records (reports, correspondence, Ordinances etc., 1922-41). Retrieved from https://digital.library.adelaide.edu.au/dspace/bitstream/2440/102121/1/Part%20II_%20Series%204_%20Section%205_%20%5b10%5d%20Miscellaneous%20lands%20records%20%28reports%2c%20correspondence%2c%20Ordinances%20etc%2c%201922-41.pdf

Trading Economics. (2017). *Kiribati – motor vehicles*. Retrieved from https://tradingeconomics.com/kiribati/motor-vehicles-per-1-000-people-wb-data.html

Treaty of Waitangi 1840. Retrieved from http://www.treaty2u.govt.nz/the-treaty-up-close/treaty-of-waitangi/

Tschoegl, A. E. (2005). Foreign banks in the Pacific: A note. *Journal of Pacific History, 40*, 223-235.

Trussel, S., & Groves, G. W. (2003). *A combined Kiribati-English dictionary* (rev. ed.). Retrieved from http://www.trussel.com/kir/dic/dic_a.htm

Tucker, V. (1999). The myth of development: A critique of Eurocentric discourse. In R. Munck & D. O'Hearn (Eds.), *Critical development theory: Contributions to a new paradigm* (pp. 1-26). London: Zed.

Tungaru: The Kiribati Project. (2016). *Home* [Facebook page]. Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/kiribatiproject/

Turbott, I. G. (1949). Diets, Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony. *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, *58*, 36-46.

Uering T. (1979). *An oral account of the ancestry, the place names of kainga where they resided and whence partners originated, and medical and agriculture knowledge and skills* (E O'Connor-Palmer, Scribe). Unpublished document.

United Nations. (2017). *United Nations Office of the high representative for the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing states*. Retrieved from http://unohrlls.org/about-ldcs/

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). (2014). *Migration profiles: Kiribati*. Retrieved from https://esa.un.org/MigGMGProfiles/indicators/indicators.htm

United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 1982. Retrieved from http://www.un.org/Depts/los/convention_agreements/convention_overview_convention.htm

United Nations Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples of 1960. Retrieved from https://www.sfu.ca/~palys/UN-Resolution%201514.pdf

University of Southern California Digital Library. (2017). *Beru*. Retrieved from http://digitallibrary.usc.edu/cdm/search/field/title/searchterm/Beru

University of the South Pacific (2009). *Campuses*. Retrieved from http://www.usp.ac.fj/index.php?id=campuses

University of the South Pacific (2018). *Treasures of the past – the humble beginnings of USP*. Retrieved from https://www.usp.ac.fj/news/story.php?id=2826

van der Maesen, L. J. (2013). Analyzing societal circumstances, sustainability and sustainable urban development: New theoretical and methodological challenges. *International Journal of Social Quality*, *3*, 82-105.

Van Trease, H. (1993a). From colony to independence. In H. Van Trease (Ed.), *Atoll politics: The Republic of Kiribati* (pp. 3-22). Christchurch: University of Canterbury, Macmillan Brown Centre for Pacific Studies.

Van Trease, H. (1993b). The Tabai years. In H. Van Trease (Ed.), *Atoll politics: The Republic of Kiribati* (pp. 48-73). Christchurch: University of Canterbury, Macmillan Brown Centre for Pacific Studies.

Van Wel, A. (2008, 23 October). Smith faces hot backlash over 'racist' remark. *Press*. Retrieved from http://www.pressreader.com/new-zealand/the-press/20081023/281612416229394

Veltman, M. F. (1982). *The population of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony 1931-1973* (2nd print) (Groningen Demographic Reports No. 3). Groningen: Groningen State University, Geographical Institute.

Walker, S. P. (2003). Agents of dispossession and acculturation. Edinburgh accountants and the Highland Clearances. *Critical Perspectives on Accounting*, *14*, 813-853.

Walsh, M. R. (2020). *A history of Kiribati: From the earliest times to the 40th anniversary of the republic*. Independently published.

Ward, J. M. (1946). *British policy in the South Pacific (1786–1893)*. Sydney: Australasian Publishing.

Watkin Lui, F. (2009). *My island home: A study of identity across different generations of Torres Strait Islanders living outside the Torres Strait* (Doctoral dissertation, James Cook University). Retrieved from http://eprints.jcu.edu.au/11642/2/02whole.pdf

Weber, E. (2016). Only a pawn in their games? environmental (?) migration in Kiribati-past, present and future. *Die Erde*, *147*, 153-164.

Webster A. (2008). New Labour, new aid? A quantitative examination of the Department for International Development. *International Public Policy Review*, *4*, 4-28.

Weeramantry, C. (1992). *Nauru: Environmental damage under international trusteeship*. Melbourne: Oxford University Press.

Weir, T., Dovey, L., & Orcherton, D. (2017). Social and cultural issues raised by climate change in Pacific island countries: An overview. *Regional Environmental Change, 17*, 1017-1028.

Wejnert, B. (2002). Integrating models of diffusion of innovations: A conceptual framework. *Annual Review of Sociology*, *28*, 297-326.

Wester, L., Juvik, J. O., & Holthus, P. (1992). *Vegetation history of Washington Island (Teraina), Northern Line Islands* (Atoll Research Bulletin No. 358). Retrieved from https://repository.si.edu/bitstream/handle/10088/5083/00358.pdf

Wheatcraft, A. M., & Ellefson, P. V. (1983). *Equity as a focus of public forestry programs: A review of the Forestry Incentives Program* (Staff Paper Series No. 36). St. Paul, MN; University of Minnesota, College of Forestry. Retrieved from http://conservancy.umn.edu/bitstream/handle/11299/5904/1/Staffpaper36.pdf

Whincup, T. (2005). *Te mwaie: Traditional dance in Kiribati*. Paper presented at 1st International Small Island Cultures Conference, Kagoshima, 7-10 February. Retrieved from http://www.sicri.org/assets/downloads/SICRI05_PDF/SICRI2005_Whincup.pdf

Whincup, T. (2009). *Bwai ni Kiribati: Artefacts of experience*. Wellington: Steele Roberts.

Whincup, T. (2010). Te mwaneaba ni Kiribati. *Shima: The International Journal of Research into Island Cultures*, *4*(1), 113-130.

White, I., Falkland, T., Perez, P., Dray, A., Metutera, T., Metai, E., & Overmars, M. (2007). Challenges in freshwater management in low coral atolls. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, *15*, 1522-1528.

Wickramasinghe, D., & Hopper, T. (2005). A cultural political economy of management accounting controls: A case study of a textile mill in a traditional Sinhalese village. *Critical Perspectives on Accounting*, *16*, 473-503.

Wilde, T. G. (1998). *Memoir of C A Wilde*. Retrieved from http://bigwhalecayowners.com/Personal%20Web%20Page.htm

Williams, A. (2008). Turning the tide: Recognizing climate change refugees in international law. *Law and Policy*, *30*, 502-529.

Williams, M., & Macdonald, B. K. (1985). *The phosphateers: A history of the British Phosphate Commissioners and the Christmas Island Phosphate Commission*. Carlton, Vic: Melbourne University Press.

Williams, P., Terawasi, P., & Reid, C. (2017). *Overview of tuna fisheries in the western and central Pacific Ocean, including economic conditions-2016*. Pohnpei: Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission. Retrieved from https://www.wcpfc.int/node/29889

Willis, J. (2017). When the 'tuna wars' went hot: Kiribati, the Soviet Union, and the fishing pact that provoked a superpower. *Pacific Dynamics: Journal of Interdisciplinary Research*, *1*, 264-281.

Willis, K. (2005). *Theories and practices of development*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Willmott, B. (2007). *The Chinese communities in the smaller countries of the South Pacific: Kiribati, Nauru Tonga and the Cook Islands* (Macmillan Brown Working Paper Series). Retrieved from http://www.pacs.canterbury.ac.nz/documents/Microsoft%20Word%20-%20Willmott_WP17.pdf

Woodford, C. M. (1895). The Gilbert Islands. *Geographical Journal*, *6*(4), 325-350.

World Bank. (2005). *Pacific regional strategy FY2006-2009* (Report No. 32261-EAP). Retrieved from http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/EASTASIAPACIFICEXT/

Wright, D. (2000). *Tarawa 1943: The turning of the tide*. Oxford: Osprey.

Wright, S., & Hornblow, A. (2008). Emerging needs, evolving services: The health of Pacific peoples in New Zealand. Kotuitui: *New Zealand Journal of Social Sciences Online*, 3(1), 21–33.

Wyett, K. (2014). Escaping a rising tide: Sea level rise and migration in Kiribati. *Asia and the Pacific Policy Studies*, 1, 171–185.

Young, M. N., Peng, M. W., Ahlstrom, D., Bruton, G. D., & Jiang, Y. (2008). Corporate governance in emerging economies: A review of the principal–principal perspective. *Journal of Management Studies*, 45, 196–220.

Zwart, F. H. A. G., & Groenewegen, K. (1968). *Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony: A report on the results of the census of the population, 1968*. Retrieved from http://eap.bl.uk/archive-file/EAP110-1-1-4-4#?c=0&m=0&s=0&cv=0&xywh=-463%2C-1%2C4188%2C2448

# Acknowledgements

I acknowledge the assistance of many, many *I-Nikunau*, other *I-Kiribati*, and *I-Matang* with links to Kiribati. Particular thanks are due to Hegnes Dixon for our many conversations around the contents of this research monograph, and for preparing the abstract in *te taetae ni Kiribati*. Some participant-observer empirical materials arose when I was working on Tarawa for the Governments of Kiribati and of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in 1997-99: **t**he views expressed in the research monograph are those of the author and may not represent those of either government. I acknowledge a grant from the University of Canterbury to allow me to visit Nikunau and Tarawa in 2009. Particular thanks for assistance during this visit are due to Tiarum Tiare O'Connor, Ekineti Kenati O'Connor, those working for the Nikunau Island Council, *Te Kabowi n Aomata* (the Nikunau Island Magistrates Court), *Te Kabowi n Aba* (the Nikunau Island Lands Court), *Te Bobotin Nikunau* (the Nikunau Cooperative Society) and Kiribati National Archives. I also thank the late Michael Gaffikin for providing some direction to the study from which this monograph is derived. And I thank participants at the 11th and 12th Conferences of the European Society for Oceanists at Munich in 2017 and at Cambridge in 2018 for comments on parts of the monograph.

## Abstract in Te Taetae ni Kiribati

Te Abam'akoro ae Nikunau, e riki inanon ana tai Te Tia Karikib'ai ae Nareau ngke e tabe n anenea kunana ni katabwenaa te Boo ma Te Maaki. Mai ikanne ao a tia ni maeka anti ma aomata ma aomata ake a bungiaki iaona. A m'akuriia abaia b'a ana toronib'ai man inaomata ao ni kukurei. Kaaro ma tiibu a wantongaia ataei karakinan Nikunau, katein Nikunau ao karinean tuan M'aneaban Nikunau. Rikiaia naba kain Nikunau b'a te boborau n taai akekei ni karokoa ngkai. Te nako Tarawa, Nutiran, Buritan ao ai aaba aika raroa nako. Ana kamateb'ai Te -Imatang aei e boboto iaon karakinan te I-Nikunau ma ana kakam'akuri ma ana waaki iaon abana ae Nikunau AO ni boboto riki iaon m'am'a nangaia nakon aaba ake itinanikun Nikunau ike a riki b'a ianena ao tera aroia ni kakam'akuri mani waaki ngkai ai te naan I-Abatera ngaiia.

# Notes

1 This name arose from Commodore John Byron whose ships, the *Dolphin* and *Tamar* visited the atoll in 1765 during their around-the-world voyage (see Officer on Board the Said Ship, 1767, pp. 135-138). Incidentally, I find it strange not to have been able to find an *I-Nikunau* account, oral or written, referring to this seemingly momentous event.

2 *Kiribati* (/ˈkɪrɨbæs/) is the local enunciation of *Gilberts*. This name arises from Captain Thomas Gilbert, who commanded a British East India Company ship which sailed through the Kiribati Archipelago in 1788 bound from Port Jackson to Canton (Gilbert, 1968; Richards, 1986). Kiribati and Kiribati Islands (and Kiribati Archipelago) are used in this document in preference to Gilberts and Gilbert Islands, except when stating official names or quoting other sources.

3 *I-Kiribati* (/ˈɨkɪrɨbæs/), like *I-Nikunau* (/ˈɨnɪkuːnaʊ/), is a word in *te taetae ni Kiribati* (or Gilbertese), the Austronesian-type language unique to and spoken (and increasingly written) across the Kiribati Archipelago. The prefix "*I-*" attached to an island or group of islands (other examples are *I-Tarawa*, *I-Beru* and *I-Matang*) indicates people with ancestral, social and cultural ties to the island or group in question in an identifying or belonging sense, rather than a mere a residential sense. In relation to Nikunau, *Kain Nikunau* has a similar meaning, although it may infer being normally resident on Nikunau. Incidentally, singular words in *te taetae ni Kiribati* are distinguished from plural ones by being preceded by *te*, and so to refer to a single person, one says, for example, *te I-Nikunau*.

4 This name arises from *I-Kiribati* believing at first that the people in question were from Matang, a place associated with fair-skinned people (Grimble, 1989). *I-Nikunau* distinguish *I-Matang* by skin colour only; while there is some appreciation of language differences, say between English, German and French, much less well understood are differences of Anglosphere country of origin, class and socio-economic status.

5 I am grateful to Uentabo MacKenzie for bringing Ministry of Internal and Social Affairs (2007) to my attention; it is one of a series dealing with most islands in turn using the same contents structure.

6 According to Maude (1963), a generation corresponds to about 25 years. During this study, I used generations to compile a genealogical tree going back six generations for *te ana utu ni kaan* (i.e., my immediate family members). The birth years of the oldest male in the sixth generation was in the 1850s and of the youngest female was in the

1870s. This gap partly reflects male marriage partners being 5-10 years older than female partners are by virtue of how males and females were seen, or initiated, as adults (Grimble, 1921). A gap of this size is also evident in official censuses a century later (see Pusinelli, 1947; Zwart & Groenewegen, 1968; Veltman, 1982).

7 The term "Outer Islands" refers to all the islands in the Republic of Kiribati apart from Tarawa. The term is widespread in the Pacific, most countries having a well-populated urban island or two and the rest being thinly populated (see Connell, 2010).

8 I am grateful to the late Tiarum Tiare/O'Connor for letting his niece, Hegnes Dixon, and myself accompany him to this shrine.

9 For photographs and drawings of these constructions, see Alaima et al. (1979), Hockings (1984), Koch (1965/1986) and Whincup (2010).

10 For photographs and illustrations of *mwaneaba*, see Alaima et al. (1979), Maude (1963) and Whincup (2010).

11 The name KPC dates from the 1970s. In 2014, its bi-annual assembly decided on a name change to KUC. However, some members disagreed so strongly with this change of name that they took legal action about the name-changing process and, anyway, have formed a breakaway church which retains the KPC name.

12 The name *mwaneaba* has come to apply to various buildings of similar shape to traditional *mwaneaba*. On Nikunau, this is generally limited to those belonging to a church, usually in *te kawa* and adjacent to the church itself, or to a school. However, on Tarawa all manner of institutions, corporate bodies and community organisations have buildings they call *mwaneaba*. This name is applied irrespective of the widening disparity in construction, uses and protocols applying in them compared with the traditional *mwaneaba* (see Whincup, 2010).

13 The two words *boboti* and *mronron* were first written by Bingham in the 1850s (see Bingham, 1907). *Boboti*, which roughly translates as a coming together of the people (see Trussel & Groves, 2003) is now used in reference to government-regulated cooperative societies. *Mronron*, which roughly translates as spherical or round (see Trussel & Groves, 2003), refers to informal or proto consumer cooperative societies (Couper, 1968).

14 Toddy is fresh sap obtained from inflorescence of the coconut palm.

15 Copra comprises the dried kernels obtained by collecting, splitting and drying coconuts.

16 Stipulations in laws, etc. regarding entitlements and prohibitions on grounds of age are compromised still by the infrequency with which births were registered, certainly up to the 1980s and possibly even today; this is notwithstanding a legal obligation to register them dating from Revised Native Laws 1916 and the books in which to do so having been available at the government station on Nikunau for almost as long.

17 South Tarawa is widely referred to as just Tarawa, including in this research monograph already and henceforth, except where it is necessary to distinguish South from North.

18 The restoration followed the Colony Government spending two years in exile in Fiji. These started in 1941, when, anticipating an invasion by Japanese forces of Banaba, Butaritari, Tarawa and perhaps other islands, officials at the Colony Government headquarters on Banaba, along with British Phosphate Commission staff and other *I-Matang*, evacuated. Same applied to district officers and some other *I-Matang* in the Kiribati Archipelago and on the Tuvalu Islands. By 1942, the Japanese had established a forward military position for the central Pacific comprising the airstrip and port fa-

cilities on Betio. However, plans they had to restore Banaba as a source of phosphate faltered – the British Phosphate Commission had ceased supplying phosphate to Japan a few years earlier, and on evacuating had destroyed vital installations. In 1943, American-led Allied Forces invaded Tarawa, expelling the Japanese garrison in what became known as the *Battle of Tarawa*. A few Colony Government officials accompanied these forces and recommenced administration of the Colony. Tarawa was subsequently chosen as the Colony Government headquarters (Macdonald, 1982a; Resture, 1998; Wright, 2000).

19 In terms of premises associated with social and political activities, these include churches, primary and secondary schools, tertiary education and training institutions, the large central hospital and a few smaller or even tiny medical facilities, the national library, the museum, coastal defences, embassies and high commissions, numerous offices of non-governmental organisations (NGOs), urban councils and government ministries, and the complex around *Te Mwaneaba ni Maungatabu* (i.e., parliament). Regarding commerce, they also include innumerable retail outlets, which range in size from hawkers' fish stalls and roadside kiosks (of which there are hundreds), to half a dozen supermarkets – by far the largest in 2009 had six aisles and three checkouts but I now understand that between them the supermarkets have about 40 aisles and 20 checkouts (confidential personal communication, 2017)–a few garages, several bars and eating places, various construction and similar business depots, small works producing biscuits and processing seaweed and copra, business offices, storage facilities and workshops, two power generating plants, a few hotels and guesthouses, three or four bank branches, the container terminal, wharves and harbour buildings, and the international airport.

20 By "modes of production, distribution and exchange", I am referring to economic activities and social relations associated with the members of a society transforming natural objects into useful implements, and distributing and exchanging them. This is based on Wickramasinghe and Hopper (2005), who explain that modes of production encompass work relationships and exchange relations, and their consequences extend to urbanisation, cultural beliefs, ideologies, politics and social classes.

21 These dwellings were erected at various times by various interests. The Colony Government erected some to house its incoming *I-Matang*, *I-Nikunau* and other *non-I-Tarawa* employees – these houses were graded according to status and, compared with those for *I-Matang* staff, those for native employees, *I-Kiribati* and Tuvaluans, were of a smaller, cheaper type, often arranged in closely packed rows. The Republic Government erected some for similar employment reasons and for social housing reasons, often in conjunction with aid organisations and as part of aid projects. Foreign governmental agencies, aid organisations and private companies have also erected some to cater for their staff on Tarawa. Some were erected by private citizens, usually of mixed ancestry and still having overseas connections.

22 Most *I-Matang* and other *non-I-Kiribati* involved in governing and administering the Colony and public bodies (e.g., schools, hospitals) on Tarawa, and many working for the Republic Government or aid organisations on contracts in the 1980s and 1990s, were present with their families for at least several months and often a few years, and so lived on the atoll in houses built for this purpose. These houses were gradually taken over for use by *I-Kiribati* working for the Republic Government. Now, people

on contracts to aid organisations, etc. usually have to find accommodation themselves, or it is provided privately by their contracting organisations. Besides, many aid contracts are of the sort nowadays requiring itinerant consultants who only have to visit Tarawa for days or weeks at a time, rather than months or years; they often stay in hotels and guesthouses, and are rarely accompanied by their families.

23 Similar perceptions apply to victuals, clothing, equipment, almost everything in fact.

24 For one reason or another, the once significant practice of victuals (e.g., dried fish, pulverised and pressed pandanus, *kamwaimwai*) being sent occasionally from Nikunau to *utu* on Tarawa has decreased significantly. Cash and imported goods used to be sent the other way but not as an explicit exchange, and this too has declined per capita, if not in aggregate.

25 Many readers may take this state of affairs of working for a living for granted, and may be bemused by it having to be said. However, seen from a traditional *I-Nikunau* perspective, it is still novel (cf. Lawrence, 1983); indeed, there may still be limits to whom *I-Nikunau* regard as legitimate employers in the context of any *kamama* attached either to working for other people or employing people to do work one should be doing oneself (cf. Duncan, 2014).

26 National Statistics Office (2006) reports average fortnightly household incomes on Tarawa were about AU$450 in 2006. The rates of pay for most work seem quite low: pay within the public service is mostly higher than outside it, but even the highest public sector salaries are under AU$20,000 per annum (International Monetary Fund, 2014).

27 The bananas are imported from Butaritari; they are perhaps the only commercial import of significance consumed on Tarawa from any of the Outer Islands.

28 English was the official language of the Colony Government throughout its tenure, including as the written language it expected of the native governments, cooperative societies and island councils. Notwithstanding, at least some district officers came to speak *te taetae ni Kiribati*, some rules, regulations, etc., were translated into *te taetae ni Kiribati*, and one position provided for at native government level was interpreter (see Figure 11). English was also the main language of the British Phosphate Commission.

29 English is the lingua franca among officials of aid organisations and of the Republic Government. Within the Republic Government English and *te taetae ni Kiribati* are both official languages, with English ascendant in written documents, including in legislation (see Kiribati Primary Materials, 2017), official documents (e.g., Government of Kiribati, 2016a, 2016b; Kiribati Government, 2018), aid organisation reports, research about Kiribati and information technology systems, and *te taetae ni Kiribati* the everyday oral language within government, including in *Te Mwaneaba ni Maungatabu* and local and island government.

30 This claim about New Zealand is notwithstanding a rival claim in United Nations Children's Fund (2014) about *I-Kiribati* residing in the USA. I have not been able to corroborate the number it cites of 1,858. However, that number is far more than my Kiribati anecdotal sources suggest and is inconsistent with data in Bedford and Bedford (2013) and Roman (2013)–Roman puts the number in the USA as low as 76.

31 The Declaration effectively divided the Pacific between Britain and Germany, which would then ally themselves against any of the other Powers which tried annexing territory for themselves. The Germans insisted on Britain effecting the provisions of the Declaration relating to territories it, that is Britain, had agreed to take on,

believing this would guarantee the extant supply of labour from Nikunau and other relevant islands to German plantations in Samoa. However, little over a decade later, this backfired on German interests: following the British Government acceding to requests from the Pacific Islands Company to support mining of Banaba, the Colony Government was instructed from London to curtail such as *I-Nikunau* from travelling outside the Colony for purposes of work and, in effect, directing them to Banaba, as elaborated in Chapter 5.1. The Germans, meanwhile, turned to Bougainville (or North Solomons) for their labour (Meleisea, 1976).

32 *Line* probably refers to the Equator. However, see Best (1983) for clarification of positions of whaling grounds.

33 Unlike Banaba, Nauru was never part of the Colony, instead being administered on the British Empire's behalf by Australia from 1919, as per the territorial redistribution provisions negotiated at the Paris Peace Conference and set out in the Nauru Island Agreement 1919. Before, it was part of the Imperial German Pacific Protectorates and other German territories in the Pacific; the League of Nations distributed these territories as mandates among Japan, Australia, New Zealand and the British Empire (Blakeslee, 1922).

34 It was the practice of the authorities on Banaba and Nauru, that is the British Phosphate Commission and the two respective colonial administrations authorities, to house families from each labour supplying island adjacently, thus forming, for example, an *I-Nikunau* community of mixed gender and varying ages. *Unimane* were contracted to liaise between a community and these the two sets of authorities, who saw these extant cultural means as a way to maintain order and social stability in the mineworkers' residential compounds.

35 *I-Nikunau* continued working on Nauru until mining ceased there in the early 2000s.

36 Until the beginning of the 20th century, there were no postal services on Nikunau through which money could be transferred telegraphically or similarly. After 1918, remitting cash through rudimentary banking facilities provided through the district officer and native government was possible but not unproblematic and mostly costly. More recently, notwithstanding how transmitting cash from elsewhere as far as Tarawa became somewhat easier when an Australian trading bank started operations in the 1970s (Macdonald, 1982a; Tschoegl, 2005) and Western Union agents began operations in the 2000s, there are still difficulties other than asking *utu* and friends to carry money on someone's behalf.

37 The report to the British Parliament refers not only to Manra (also known as Hull) and Abariringa (or Canton) in the Phoenix Group – Orona (or Sydney) and Nikumaroro (or Gardner) are omitted – but also to Christmas (now also spelt Kiritimati) Atoll in the Line Islands (see House of Commons, 1940). However, not until the 1980s were any *I-Nikunau* resettled on Kiritimati. Most of this resettlement was 20 years or more after cessation of its use as a military base, including the testing of nuclear bombs; indeed, some settlers were involved in the atoll's eventual decontamination clean up (Steadman, 2006).

38 The names of *kawa* on Ghizo Island are New Manra and Titiana, one of whose four settlement areas is called Nikunau (Schuermann, 2014); on Wagina Island, they are Kukutin, Arariki and Nikumaroro; and on Alu Island, they are Kamaleai and Harapa.

39 The first official census was in 1931, when the atoll's population is recorded as 1,674 (National Statistics Office, 2013; Pusinelli, 1947). The most reliable numbers before that appear to be those calculated by Bedford et al. (1980).

40 Although infanticide is sometimes mentioned in this regard, Carr-Saunders, writing in 1922 (cited by Veltman, 1982) suggests that use of this method was very rare in the Kiribati Islands, let alone Nikunau.

41 Further to Note 18, except for rare visits by Japanese patrols looking for Allied coast watchers and a visit(s) by Allied troops searching out any remaining Japanese troops, World War II passed Nikunau by at a distance. However, some activities in the vicinity were halted, notably the shipping vital to the copra trade and workers going away to Banaba. Indeed, the *I-Nikunau* most embroiled in the violence were those on Banaba when the Japanese invaded – see the story of one victim, Karongoa, who lived to tell the tale, as recorded in Maude (1991).

42 These private customary rights over marine areas, vested in *te I-Nikunau* in the same way as *aba* were, first were eroded and then ceased altogether, according to Hockings (1984). This appears to have followed on from steps the Colony Government took in the 1940s to curtail private rights only to fish traps, leaving the rest of marine areas as commons (Roniti 1988; Thomas, 2003).

43 Hockings (1984) includes an account of how linkages arose through the travels of Taburitongoun (see Chapter 2) between *Te Atu ni Uea Mwaneaba* in Tabomatang on Nikunau and *Te Atu ne Uea Mwaneaba* on Onotoa.

44 In relating that *mwenga* comprising *te kainga* could and would be of a few different *utu*, Hockings (1984) points out that this was more often because any consanguinity between *mwenga* was so many generations ago that it was forgotten than because of absence of any consanguinity at all.

45 *Kawa* were a pre-1820s phenomenon in the sense of settlements outside the ancestral *kainga*. However, such *kawa*, arising from overcrowding in established *kainga*, were more piecemeal than those discussed here (Hockings, 1984).

46 Regarding the significances of land as ancestral, as well material or use-related, similar traditions apply elsewhere in the Pacific, including among Aboriginal Australians, as analysed by Gibson (2000) and Greer and Patel (2000), and *Māori*, as analysed by Kearins and Hooper (2002). Among issues these three analyses raise are native peoples being blatantly dispossessed of land in furtherance of European interests of one sort or another.

47 The scrap amassed during this clear up resulted in a windfall of a few hundred thousand dollars. The Colony Government used it to establish a sovereign fund, the Revenue Equalisation Reserve Fund, or RERF as it is usually referred to (GEIC, 1957). The Colony Government added to this fund with some of the phosphate royalties it received from the British Phosphate Commission in the 1960s and 1970s. The fund really prospered, however, when the Republic Government began making substantial surpluses because of tuna fishery licence fees. As a result of these contributions, through investment income being retained in the fund and through increases in the capital market value of investments – the fund is invested in London and other stock market securities (but not in Kiribati businesses!)–(Pretes & Gibson, 2008; Pretes & Petersen, 2004), the fund has an estimated value of AU$972m (Kiribati Government, 2018).

48 These women were generally unwanted by *I-Nikunau* parents wanting marriage partners for their sons, their preference being for virgins, with consequences that before marriage young women were closely supervised by their *utu* (Grimble, 1921; McCreary & Boardman, 1968).

49 Tarawa had previously been the Colony Government headquarters for a decade or so up to 1908. At the behest of its principals in London, it had then relocated them to Banaba, in order that facilitating the mining of phosphate became its highest priority, including bringing in *I-Kiribati* and Tuvaluan labour. Even so, Tarawa was still prominent in how the Kiribati Islands were administered and as a commercial centre – Sabatier (1939/1977) describes Betio in particular as a "mini-capital" (p. 285), notwithstanding the atoll's government station and the Colony hospital being on North Tarawa then. Once mining on Banaba was resumed after the war, the British Phosphate Commission, being now very much Australian-orientated, was less keen about British officials being present, as long as they could supply it with labour from the rest of the Colony. With the Colony Government headquarters on Tarawa, the commission could carry on its mining and otherwise run Banaba as it wished, largely unfettered by possible colonial administrative interference (Macdonald, 1982a; Williams & Macdonald, 1985).

50 Perhaps strange at this distance in time is that the prospect of expenditure on economic and social development, and so the funding thereof, was not even considered as part of the equation when the Kiribati Islands were annexed: that is because in the 19th and early 20th centuries, such activities were seen as outside the remit of colonial activities (Morgan, 1980). This view only began changing during the Great Depression, particularly when Keynesian economics' ideas began taking root and it became accepted wisdom that providing aid-in-kind to a colony would boost manufacturing industry in Britain and perhaps help a colony develop, hence the timing of the Colonial Development Act 1929 and the dual rationale for establishing the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund (see Abbot, 1971).

51 As alluded to in Chapter 5.2, implementing the original plan (i.e., GEIC, 1946), which rather than centralisation was based on devolved development, turned out to be far from smooth (Macdonald, 1982a). Not only was the post-war period in the Pacific region characterised by shortages of personnel and physical resources but also, since its evacuation to Fiji in 1941, the Colony Government had been entirely dependent on subventions from the British Government, which was itself in dire financial straits following the war (Morgan, 1980). However, this dependence reduced as trade in the Colony was restored and as phosphate mining was resumed – the Colony Government facilitated a resumption in the supply of *I-Kiribati* and Tuvaluan labour to Banaba and the supply of same to Nauru grew in importance (Shlomowitz & Munro, 1992). By 1952, local revenue once again more than covered the Colony Government's recurrent expenditures, meaning that the Colony Government was financially self-sufficient, as it had been from 1895 to 1941. However, for as long as the possibility of subventions from HM Treasury continued (i.e., until 1955), so did the conditions which accompanied them, including tight oversight of budgets, etc. from London-based Treasury officials, which Colony Government officials (and their counterparts in other parts of the Empire – see Morgan, 1980) found difficulty coping with administratively. A further small increase in local revenue arose in the 1960s when the Colony Gov-

ernment persuaded and coerced the British Phosphate Commission on Banaba to increase its per-tonne-of-ore contributions. However, it was 1967 before phosphate mining royalties increased to the extent that the Colony Government made substantial surpluses which were diverted into the Revenue Equalisation Reserve Fund (see Note 47). The increase in royalties arose because the British Phosphate Commission had to change its pricing policy from cost-recovery to market price on the coming about of independence for Nauru in that year: the Government of Nauru became the owner of the mining operations on Nauru, but the British Phosphate Commission still managed it on the new government's behalf, along with the mining it owned on Banaba and it managed on Christmas Island (i.e., the Christmas Island in the Indian Ocean not the one now known as Kiritimati in Kiribati). The profits from Banaba resulting from the change in the pricing policy were shared between the Banaban Royalties Trust Fund (and its predecessors – see Tabucanon, 2012) and the Colony Government (Macdonald, 1982a; Weeramantry, 1992; Williams & Macdonald, 1985).

52 The first fleet to pay such fees was from Japan, in an agreement negotiated by the inaugural Republic Government of Ieremia Tabai (Macdonald, 1982a). However, vessels from some other countries refused to recognise any obligation to pay licence fees. This changed during the controversy which arose after the Republic Government entered into an agreement for vessels from the Soviet Union to fish under licence (see "Cold War: Fishing," 1986; Van Trease, 1993b). Part of resolving the matter to the satisfaction of the former colonial power, its principal ally the USA, and its minions, was that they persuaded the countries which had refused to pay to change their minds and agree to pay (Willis, 2017). Remarkably, only a few years earlier, neither the Colony Government nor others seem to have had any inkling about the great potential of Kiribati's tuna fishery, particularly as a source of licensing revenue; this is evident in, for example, GEIC (1970), Green et al. (1979), Pitchford (1981), Government of Kiribati (1983), and Bertram and Watters (1984). For a historical and current list of licensees, see Williams et al. (2017).

53 Whereas, in the mid-1970s, the amount of grants from the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund and similar totalled just over AU$2m annually (equivalent to AU$12m at 2019 prices) (GEIC, 1976), the budget for 2018 (Kiribati Government, 2018) indicates that the estimated annual value of development projects exceeds AU$244m. This includes AU$65m from the Republic Government's own resources, with the rest mainly comprising the total of values put on aid-in-kind by the 30 or so external donors involved in projects. Each donor keeps accounts for their projects locally or at a distance, and, despite most of the money going to people in places other than Kiribati, to pay for fees, airfares, supplies, etc. (cf. Abbot, 1971), they classify them as grants for Kiribati, or occasionally as soft loans to the Republic Government.

54 Further to referring to the Nikunau Island Council in Chapter 2 as going under the title, *te kabowi n abamakoro*, as the title in question is still associated in many *I-Nikunau* minds with the KUC, I have been reluctant to apply it to the Nikunau Island Council, and so use its English name throughout.

55 The British Government was persuaded to annex Banaba by the principals of the Pacific Islands Company, which had wide commercial and political interests in the Pacific. This persuasion was exerted in 1901, soon after the company's representatives had discovered that it and neighbouring Nauru were rich in phosphate – the company acquired

rights on Nauru from the German authorities (see Shlomowitz & Munro, 1992). As the extent and importance of the phosphate deposits emerged, the company was able to exert even more pressure in London over the administration of the Colony, including having the Colony Government headquarters relocated to Banaba (see Note 49). Thereafter, London expected the Colony Government to facilitate the mining of Banaba's phosphate initially by these private British capitalists (1900-19) and then by the British Phosphate Commission (1919-42, 1946-79), whose interests were supported by the Governments of New Zealand and Australia, the countries where most of the phosphate was used as agricultural fertiliser (Weeramantry, 1992; Williams & Macdonald, 1985).

56 Rarely, if ever, did a resident commissioner now visit the Southern Gilberts District, let alone Nikunau, in contrast to the frequency with which a district officer was seen there, especially when based on Beru. Furthermore, it could take several weeks for communications to travel back and forth between Beru and Banaba, and so the district officer exercised a great deal of de facto authority in various matters which were the formal responsibility of the resident commissioner.

57 By the time Laws of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony 1952 was published, this practice of using both languages seems to have ceased and only English was used. Moreover, under the Republic Government, this latter practice of only English continues more or less (e.g., see Election of Beretitenti Act 1980; Kiribati Primary Materials, 2017), an exception being the Local Government Act 1984, which by 2006 had been translated into *te taetae ni Kiribati* (Ministry of Internal and Social Affairs, 2007).

58 All the native governments were, up to 1917, self-contained accounting entities, separate from the Colony Government; that is, their revenues and their expenditures were theirs, and, on paper at least, they retained the accumulating surpluses, designated as the Nikunau Island Fund, Beru Island Fund, Onotoa Island Fund, etc. By 1917, the total of these island funds amounted to some £17,000 (≈ AU$1.4m at 2019 prices) and the cash representing them was in the supposedly safekeeping of the Colony Government. Enacting Native Laws 1917, the Colony Government sequestrated this cash, using the pretext that the taxes it had raised from the Kiribati Islands and Tuvalu (as distinct from Banaba) in preceding years had yielded insufficient revenues to meet the expenditures it had incurred on these islands. The sequestration followed representations made in London by the principals of the phosphateers in furtherance of their considerable interests on Banaba, in particular wanting to reduce their company's contribution towards costs of Colony Government administration and to shift some expenditures the company was incurring onto the Colony Government on grounds that they were not mine operating costs.

59 I do not know if any Tuvaluans ever held either position.

60 Further to Note 58, Native Laws 1917 and associated regulations provided for all native governments to be accounted for as subsidiaries of the Colony Government. This meant that all revenues collected by native governments belonged to the Colony Government and had to be handed over to its district officer intact; and that all expenditures incurred by native governments had to be authorised by the Colony Government, in effect through the resident commissioner, on the advice of the relevant district officer, approving each native government's annual estimates. The district officer gave the native government's officials an imprest from which to pay these expenditures.

61 The amounts of money spent from Colony Government revenues on Nikunau was never great, even after the idea of Outer Island social development gained some traction in the late 1960s. Thus, a significant proportion of the tax paid by *I-Nikunau* on Nikunau must have been appropriated for Colony Government expenditures elsewhere, which would have been mainly on Banaba and, later, Tarawa. At best, the benefit for *I-Nikunau* or their atoll of these expenditures on these headquarters islands was indirect and incidental.

62 Further to Note 22, the differences between the 1950s-1990s and now applies particularly to consultants proffering policy advice. While some colonial officials, with previous experience in Africa, south-east Asia, etc., were not wholly averse to equivalent practices, today's consultants are apt to treat Kiribati as just another developing country, on which they can write reports about topics and situations they have struggled to evaluate adequately, especially from a local perspective, before moving onto their next assignment. Their perceptions of so-called problems and lists of recommendations can give impressions of being as concerned to tick various boxes on their contracts as to be effective in more magnanimous ways (cf. Bantekas, Kypraios & Isaac, 2013). They share the characteristic of being in Kiribati (usually meaning on Tarawa) for short stays only with operational trainers, installers of systems, construction staff and volunteer workers. The main reasons for this form of contracting, including not being accompanied by families, are to contain costs and how moving in and out of Tarawa is now much easier because of more frequent scheduled air services. One incidental consequence of the difference in lengths of stay, nature of work and way of living compared with the period from the 1950s to the 1990s is the reduced number of mixed marriages occurring. As explained in Chapter 4, these marriages then led to the incidence of mixed couples in diasporic communities in metropolitan countries, which is something to have virtually ceased as a way of these communities being renewed, in Britain and elsewhere.

63 Although the Colony Government used educational attainment in the appointments processes for native clerks and similar officials, it also operated a system of *home island* quotas, in order to maintain some sort of fairness or equality in the distribution of paid work positions across the islands constituting the Colony. Even so, the Colony Government came in for criticism for seeming to favour Tuvaluans over *I-Kiribati* in administrative posts (Macdonald, 1982a).

64 Nokise (1983, pp. 305-328) lists the following men to have served on Nikunau as pastors during this time: Elia, Iakopo, Iopu, Iosefatu (also known as Lilo), Iosia, Iosua, Laofie, Lemuelu, Liuvao, Matafanua, Peni, Ta'ita'I, Uele, Kaisala and Kitiona. The names of their wives are not recorded, although they were active and influential (see Latai, 2016; Rose, 2014).

65 It was somewhat ironic for me to visit a church on Nikunau in 2009 and be shown the relics of an early-arriving Christian clergyman.

66 Hiram Bingham began this and other translations on Abaiang in the 1860s. He worked for the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, which originated in Boston, MA. Its mission was performed in the northern Kiribati Islands until 1917 (see Knoll, 1997; Rennie, 1985) when the LMS spread northwards and took over its work.

67 I worked at this institution in the late 1990s. Most of its courses are focused on trades, including carpentry, mechanics, construction, etc., and on information technology. The courses I staged were in accounting, finance and administration (see Dixon, 2004b).

68 This institution was established in 1967 by Hamburg Sud in conjunction with the British and German Governments and the United Nations (Couper, 2009); it trains aspiring seafarers, who have long been associated with remittances (Borovnik, 2006; Connell & Corbett, 2016).

69 The one exception to primary schools using *te taetae ni Kiribati* as the main language of tuition is a small school on Tarawa which was originally established for children of *I-Matang* colonial staff, and staffed by *I-Matang* teachers. As the number of *I-Matang* families, and so children, decreased, it has increasingly accepted locally-born children, perhaps of mixed race or whose home language is English, or whose *I-Kiribati* parents have opted for an English language education. Moreover, the teaching staff were localised. The playground language became a mixture of *te taetae ni Kiribati* and English (confidential personal communication from some students, 1997).

70 Students were expected to use English everywhere on the campus, and so, as many were boarders, this meant day and night, although some ignored when there were no staff or prefects around (confidential personal communication from a student of the 1970s).

71 I tutored accounting courses at its Kiribati Campus in 1989 and 1997 (see Dixon, 2004b).

72 The New Zealand authorities largely reflect the educated professionals among the dominant *Pākehā* people and culture(s), although *Māori* are acknowledged because of a recently found formal respect among increasing numbers of *Pākehā* for certain provisions in the 1840 Treaty of Waitangi (see Bennion, 2004).

73 The screenings were organised under the auspices of *Te Bobotin Nikunau* (see Chapter 15.1.1) and had been initiated in the 1950s, when arrival of the reels of film was subject to the vagaries of shipping – air services only started in the 1970s.

74 The change to the legal system accounts for the prison in the Island Council administrative complex (see Chapter 2). First built about 1900, the prison reflected that serious criminal acts resulted in perpetrators suffering terms of imprisonment or, in the case of murder, execution. Formerly, under *te katei*, most of these acts had been civil matters and offended private parties had been entitled to compensation in the form of *aba* (or, after 1870, copra), or even enslavement of the offender to that party (Grimble, 1989; Macdonald, 1982a). Casting offenders adrift, lashed to a log or in a canoe, was another punishment for certain sexual offences, including *karikira* (Grimble, 1921).

75 Uering (1979) comprises a transcription by his niece, Aeren Tiare O'Connor, of Uering's oral records; this transcription formed part of a school project. Uering, who resided on Nikunau all his life, visited his sister on Tarawa in 1979. While there, he recited to his niece his lineage back 17 generations (c. 1500), with numerous elaborations, such as the place names of their *kainga* and whence partners came. He could also have recited details of rights to *aba*, reef areas and areas beyond the reef (*e.g.* location and history of ownership), and skills and rituals (*e.g.* location and history of ownership) but these were not transcribed. I thank Aeren for allowing me to read her transcription.

76 Incidentally, the notion of a government based on ruling a People, rather than a land, was not unknown to the colonial power. English monarchs up to Richard Cœur de Lion (c. 1200) had styled themselves King of the English, rather than King of England, and same was true of Scottish monarchs up to and including Mary, Queen of Scots (1542-1567) (Style of the British sovereign, n.d.).

77 The distinction, previously alluded to in S11.2, between *te tia-motiki-tueka's* traditional role in *te mwaneaba* of speaking decisions made by the assembled council and the role of the office as chair and chief official of the Nikunau Native Government indicated in Figure 10 is significant. In Figure 10, the English translation of this title is magistrate (see Native Laws Ordinance 1917). Magistrate indicates a quite different executive and judicial role from that actually found in *te mwaneaba*. Furthermore, magistrate perhaps signifies how some *I-Matang* observers mistakenly interpreted what they saw in traditional *mwaneaba* proceedings as mirroring their experience of monarchy, autocratic ruler, chieftainship, etc., with the person who spoke decisions being perceived as the autocrat making them.

78 As intimated in earlier chapters, the origins of most of the commercial organisations owned by the Republic Government, and the Colony Government before that, can be traced to the post-war restoration of importing, copra exporting and shipping by the Colony Government, and to its development project and other activities (e.g., around procurement, and building and vehicle maintenance). They have gone through various name changes and legal forms, including statutory boards, corporations, companies and enterprises (e.g., GEIC Copra Board, Colony Wholesale Society, the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Development Authority, Kiribati Cooperative Wholesale Society, Bobotin Kiribati Limited, Kiribati Shipping Corporation, Kiribati Shipping Services Limited). In the 2000s, the Republic Government let some close down through being insolvent, as mentioned in Chapter 15.1.1, but the rest are still present one way or another, including one or two which have been privatised. However, *I-Nikunau* and other *I-Kiribati* seem never to have associated the organisations in question with other than *Te Tautaeka*, be it in reference to the Republic Government or, before, to the Colony Government (Couper, 1967; Dixon, 2004a; Duncan, 2014; Macdonald, 1982a; Roniti, 1985).

79 An early example of change is the written lease agreement of 1900 between the "king" of Banaba on behalf of the natives of the island and Arthur Ellis on the part of the Pacific Islands Company (see Williams & Macdonald, 1985, between pp. 38 and 39). Williams and Macdonald remark on such agreements with indigenous landholders being unusual for the times. They also point out how, in the 80 years which elapsed until the phosphate deposits were exhausted and the mining ceased, the legal rights of landowners and similar were better established and were not undermined as much as before by someone's race, gender, etc.

## ACCLIMATISING TO HIGHER GROUND

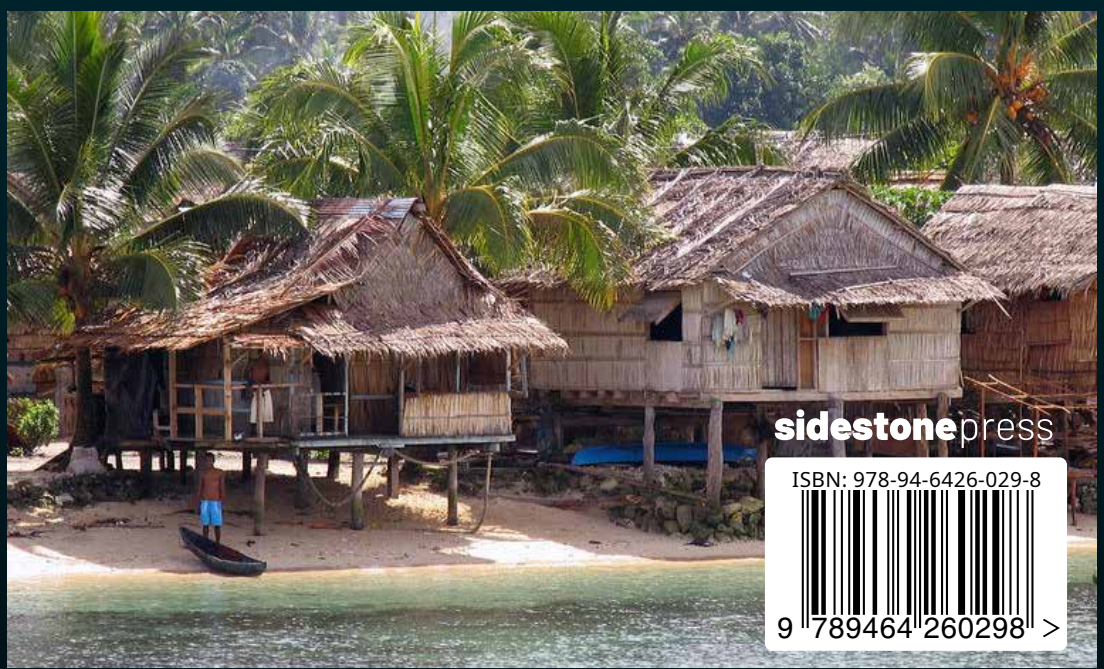
Life for people on atolls is hard, affected by droughts, rough seas and other adverse climatic conditions, and now, rise in sea level threatens their very inhabitance. No wonder kinship is the foundation of atoll societies, traditional and modern! This book presents a multidisciplinary, retrospective analysis of a Pacific Atoll People living in several countries but held together as a diaspora through notions of kinship.

The People have ancestral, cultural, social and continuing residential connections with Nikunau Atoll, at the centre of the Pacific Ocean and once a Cinderella of the British Empire. The analysis explicates their present diasporic circumstances and the pathways through which these arose historically. The intention is to provide a basis for better prospects for succeeding generations from a critical, better-informed standpoint.

The analysis relies on the partisan stance of the author, whose kinship ties with *I-Nikunau* (= people who identify with Nikunau) are affinal, and his 30-year immersion among the People in question. In addition, a large quantity of literature sources and other secondary data are woven into the analysis, as situations and events are grappled with, articulated, interpreted and written into the book.

The circumstances are analysed under 14 themes, namely, geographical, demographical, economic, environmental, cultural, societal, etc. The analysis should stir the waters of recent research about Nikunau and Kiribati, much of it concerned with environmental changes making uninhabitable Nikunau, Tarawa and other atolls where *I-Nikunau* reside, and imagining their resettlement on higher ground, for example, New Zealand, where several diasporic communities exist already.

This recent research refers frequently to the social, cultural and economic matters covered in this book, indicating how relevant and important these matters are to the future of *I-Nikunau* and *I-Kiribati*. Furthermore, this relevance and importance may apply to the future of other peoples still inhabiting the world's atolls and facing whatever challenges this future may bring, climate-related and otherwise.



sidestonepress

ISBN: 978-94-6426-029-8

9 789464 260298 >