THE FIJIAN COLONIAL EXPERIENCE

A STUDY OF THE NEOTRADITIONAL ORDER UNDER BRITISH COLONIAL RULE PRIOR TO WORLD WAR II
Map 1 Colony of Fiji, 1920-1944
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Summary

This book analyses thematically much of the colonial experience of the Fijians earlier this century - their land rights, village and district politics, chiefly leadership, underground movements and various British efforts to 'improve' them.

The major theme is the failure of vague policies fostering individualism and enterprise to interrupt the continuities of a vigorously autonomous social and political world maintaining eight of ten Fijians in a relatively affluent neotraditional order until World War II, despite the deep vein of discontent and material aspirations manifested most clearly in Apolosi R. Nawai's movement, the Viti Company. The epilogue briefly chronicles some of the recent changes in Fijian life which, it is argued, throw into sharper relief the accomplishments of the earlier partnership between Fijian leaders and British officials. Therein lie the historical antecedents of both the economic problems of the Fijian people and their ascendancy in national political life through the first decade of independence.
## Contents

Acknowledgments ix  
Guide to pronunciation xi  
Glossary of Fijian words xiii  
Abbreviations xvii  

Introduction 1  
Chapter 1 New white men without knowledge 12  
Chapter 2 The assault on land rights 28  
Chapter 3 The erosion of hereditary privilege 38  
Chapter 4 The new politics of chiefly power 49  
Chapter 5 The continuities of village life and politics 64  
Chapter 6 Apolosi R. Nawai and the Viti Company 75  
Chapter 7 The vein of discontent 93  
Chapter 8 Compromise for a multiracial society 112  
Chapter 9 The dilemmas of development 129  
Chapter 10 Epilogue: rendezvous with the modern world 148  

Notes to text 164  
Bibliography 191  

Maps  
1 Colony of Fiji, 1920–1944 Frontispiece  
2 Serua 60  
3 Colo North 96