A Note on Spelling

Except for quotations from primary sources, I have generally used modern standard Fijian and Tongan spelling for personal names and place names. There are two notable exceptions: in the case of Ma’afu’s wife, Elenoa Gataialupe, I have adopted the Fijian spelling throughout the book, rather that the Tongan ’Elenoa Ngataialupe. In the case of their only surviving son, Siale’ataongo, I have used the Tongan spelling, rather that the Fijian Sialeataogo. In both cases my choice conforms to the variants most often encountered in published works.

It should be borne in mind that there is no glottal stop in standard Fijian, so that the chiefly title is written Tui, as in Tui Lau. Its Tongan equivalent does feature a glottal stop: Tu’i, as in Tu’i Kānokupolu.

The Fijian alphabet, devised by missionary David Cargill, features several letters whose pronunciation differs from both Tongan and English:

B is “mb”, e.g. Bau (pronounced mbau)
C is a hard “th”, e.g. Cakobau (pronounced thakombau)
D is “nd”, e.g. Nadi (pronounced nandi)
G is “ng” as in “sing”, e.g. Golea (pronounced ngolea)
J is “ch”, e.g. Jone (pronounced CHO-nay)
Q is “ng” followed by a hard “g”, e.g. Qamea (pronounced nggamea)