

Mbau Fijians

Data source: eHRAF

Secondary source

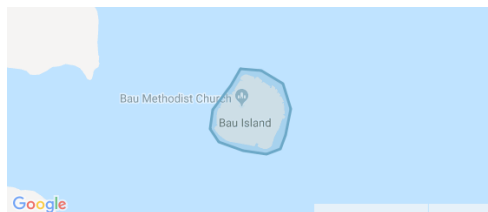
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Entry tags: Melanesia, Religious Group, Oceanic Religions

The Mbau Fijians are the native inhabitants of Fiji's Bau Island. This entry focuses on the Bau chiefdom around the time of 1840, prior to the 1874 cession of Fiji to Great Britain. This focal time also occurs prior to substantial Christian influence, which began in 1854 following the chief of Bau's conversion to Christianity. Traditional Mbau Fijian religious beliefs involve a supreme god, ancestral spirits/ghosts of the deceased, and various deities. Priests are the means of connecting to and communicating with the realm of the supernatural. Priests lead religious practices and hold positions of great influence, working closely with chiefs. Because religious beliefs are bound up with the functioning of society, this entry considers the religious group to be coterminous with society at large.



Date Range: 1820 CE - 1840 CE

Region: Bau Island, Fiji

Region tags: Oceania, Melanesia, Fiji

Bau Chiefdom, Island of Bau, Fiji ca. 1840

Status of Participants:

✓ Elite ✓ Religious Specialists ✓ Non-elite (common people, general populace)

Sources

Print sources for understanding this subject:

- Source 1: Deane, W. 1921. Fijian Society. London.
- Source 2: Waterhouse, J. 1866. The King and People of Fiji. London.
- Source 3: Toganivalu, D. 1911. Customs of Bau before the Advent of Christianity. Transactions of the Fijian Society.
- Source 1: Divale, W. 2004. Codebook of Variables for the Standard Cross-Cultural Sample. World Cultures: The Journal of Cross-Cultural and Comparative Research.
- Source 2: Murdock, G.P. & Wilson, S.F. (Jul., 1972). Settlement patterns and community organization: Cross-Cultural Codes 3. Ethnology, 11(3), 254-295.
- Source 3: Tuden, A. & Marshall, C. (Oct., 1972). Political organization: Cross-cultural codes 4. Ethnology, 11(4), 436-464.
- Source 1: Murdock, G.P. (1967). Ethnographic Atlas. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press.
- Source 2: Williams, T. (1860). Part I. In G.S. Rowe (Ed.), Fiji and the Fijians. (pp. 1-209). New York: D. Appleton.

- Source 3: Calvert, J. (1860). Part II. In G.S. Rowe (Ed.), *Fiji and the Fijians*. (pp. 210-551). New York: D. Appleton.
- Source 1: Spencer, D. M. 1941. *Disease, Religion and Society in the Fiji Islands*. Monographs of the American Ethnological Society 2: 1-82.

General Variables

Membership/Group Interactions

Are other religious groups in cultural contact with target religion:

— Yes

Notes: According to Waterhouse (1866:69-70), Rev. William Cross attempted to establish a Christian mission within the Bau Chieftdom, but the chief, citing the fact that he was currently at war, convinced the Reverend that "there was no prospect either of security or success at Bau...". "These [Fijian] islands were taken over as a Crown Colony by Great Britain in 1874 and the Fijians had come under European influences of various sorts for nearly a century before this time. The first missionaries arrived in 1837 and settled in the Lau Islands from whence they spread over the entire group" (Spencer, 1941:viii).



Is there violent conflict (within sample region):

— Yes

Notes: SCCS Variable 1649, Frequency of Internal Warfare (Resolved Rating), indicates that internal warfare seems to occur constantly any time of the year (Ember and Ember, 1992; Retrieved from Divale, 2004).



Is there violent conflict (with groups outside the sample region):

— Field doesn't know

Notes: SCCS Variable 1650, Frequency of External Warfare (Resolved Rating), indicates that no resolved rating was made (Ember and Ember, 1992; Retrieved from Divale, 2004).

Does the religious group actively proselytize and recruit new members:

— No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for active recruitment of new members.

Does the religion have official political support

— Yes

Notes: "The influence of the priest over the common people is immense, although he is generally the tool of the chief. Indeed, these two personages most usually act in concert" (Waterhouse, 1866:405).



Are the head of the polity and the head of the religion the same figure:

— Yes

Notes: "...the principal chief is often the high priest..." (Waterhouse, 1866:419).

↳ Are political officials equivalent to religious officials:

– Yes

Notes: SCCS Variable 757, Political and Religious Differentiation, indicates that there is considerable overlap between leaders (Ross, 1983; Retrieved from Divale, 2004).

↳ Is religious observance enforced by the polity:

– Yes

Notes: Chiefs enforce taboos (see Williams, 1860:183-185).

↳ Polity legal code is roughly coterminous with religious code:

– Yes

Notes: Polity code is roughly coterminous with religious "tabus" (see Waterhouse, 1866:417-420).

Is there a conception of apostasy in the religious group:

– No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for a conception of apostasy.

Size and Structure

Number of adherents of religious group within sample region (estimated population, numerical):

– Estimated population, numeric: 6500

Notes: Williams (1860:80) estimates the total population of the Fijian Islands (80 islands) to be about 150,000. Calvert (1860:495) estimates the population of Mbau Island to be between 6,000 and 7,000.

Are there recognized leaders in the religious group:

– Yes

Notes: "The priests exercise a powerful influence over the people, an influence which the chiefs employ for the strengthening of their own, by securing the divine sanction for their plans" (Williams, 1860:178).

↳ Are leaders believed to possess supernatural powers or qualities:

– Yes

Notes: The priest is the means of communication with the gods. "When one of his tribes is about to engage in war, the chiefs and gentlemen assemble round his priest in the temple. The head chief then says, 'We pray thee, lord, to appear.' Soon the priest becomes inspired, and his word is thereupon considered as the utterance of the god. His promises are pledges made by the god; and his warnings intimations from Daucina [supernatural being] himself. Before his departure he drinks kava; and then the priest quiets down into a mere man again." (Waterhouse, 1866:363).

↳ Are religious leaders chosen:

– No

Notes: "The priesthood is generally, but not invariably, hereditary" (Williams, 1860:178).

Scripture

Does the religious group have scriptures:

Scripture is a generic term used to designate revered texts that are considered particularly authoritative and sacred relative to other texts. Strictly speaking, it refers to written texts, but there are also "oral scriptures" (e.g. the Vedas of India).

– No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the presence of scriptures among the Mbau Fijians.

Architecture, Geography

Is monumental religious architecture present:

– Yes

Notes: According to Murdock and Wilson (1972), column 6 Large or Impressive Structures [Note: Identical to SCCS Variable 66], "The most impressive structure (or type of structure) is a temple, church, commemorative monument, or other essentially religious or ceremonial edifice".

Are there different types of religious monumental architecture:

– Yes

Notes: See questions below for examples of different types of religious architecture.

↳ Tombs:

– Yes

Notes: "The spot on which a Chief has been killed is sometimes selected as the site of the bure, which is generally placed upon a raised foundation, thrown up to the height of from three to twenty feet, and faced with dry rubble-work of stone" (Williams, 1860:174).

↳ Temples:

– Yes

Notes: "Nearly every town or village has one or more bures, or 'temples'" (Williams, 1860:174).

↳ Devotional markers:

– Yes

Notes: Large sacred stones are used as places of offering for certain gods and goddesses, as well as "to denote the locality of some gods, and the occasional resting-places of others" (Williams, 1860:173).

Are there specific sites dedicated to sacred practice or considered sacred:

— Yes

Notes: Large sacred stones are used as places of offering for certain gods and goddesses, as well as "to denote the locality of some gods, and the occasional resting-places of others" (Williams, 1860:173).

Are pilgrimages present:

— Yes

Notes: "Pilgrimages are sometimes made to Nai Thombothombo, the northern point of Mbua Bay, and the spot whence the spirits of the departed embark for the abode of Ndengei" (Williams, 1860:187).

Beliefs

Burial and Afterlife

Is a spirit-body distinction present:

Answer "no" only if personhood (or consciousness) is extinguished with death of the physical body.

Answering yes does not necessarily imply the existence of Cartesian mind/body dualism, merely that some element of personhood (or consciousness) survives the death of the body.

— Yes

Notes: "Some speak of man as having two spirits. His shadow is called 'the dark spirit,' which, they say, goes to Hades. The other is his likeliness, reflected in water or a looking-glass, and is supposed to stay near the place in which a man dies" (Williams, 1860:189). "The soul is supposed to linger about the earth for four days. On the fifth night, it is usual to provide some means of comforting the relatives by causing laughter, as the spirit has now actually departed" (Waterhouse, 1866:326).

Belief in afterlife:

— Yes

Notes: "The principal residence of the gods, and of all departed spirits, is called Bulu" (Waterhouse, 1866:406).



Is the spatial location of the afterlife specified or described by the religious group:

— Yes

Notes: "According to general opinion, the future world is to be much the same as the present. The Fijian Mbulu is the abode of departed spirits, where the good and bad meet, and the road to which is long and difficult; for although we often hear the natives talk of going to Mbulu as a plunge into the sea; and though every island and nearly every town, has its Ndrakulu or Thimbathimba, yet these are but the portals where the spirit enters that mysterious path, the arrival at the termination of which is a precarious contingency" (Williams, 1860:191).

Reincarnation in this world:

— No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the presence of a belief in reincarnation.

Are there special treatments for adherents' corpses:

— Yes

Notes: "Corpses at Bau were generally interred inside the house. If anyone died his grave would be dug in the place where he died, the grass and mats would be taken up and the grave dug; it was not usual to dig deep like the graves of these times. When buried the grass and mats were spread again on top of the grave" (Toganivalu, 1911).

↳ Cremation:

— No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the presence of cremation.

↳ Mummification:

— No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the presence of mummification.

↳ Interment:

— Yes

Notes: "Corpses at Bau were generally interred inside the house. If anyone died his grave would be dug in the place where he died, the grass and mats would be taken up and the grave dug; it was not usual to dig deep like the graves of these times. When buried the grass and mats were spread again on top of the grave" (Toganivalu, 1911). "A shallow grave is dug, broad enough to contain the man and his strangled companions. Four branches of a tree called tarawaukarikaka are placed at the bottom of the grave, the mats are spread, and the dead are then lowered" (Waterhouse, 1866:324).

↳ Corpse is flexed (legs are bent or body is crouched):

— I don't know

Notes: Not specified.

↳ Corpse is extended (lying flat on front or back):

— I don't know

Notes: Not specified.

↳ Corpse is upright (where body is interred in standing position):

— I don't know

Notes: Not specified.

↳ Cannibalism:

— Yes

Notes: "Cannibalism is part of the Fijian religion, and the gods are described as relighting in

human flesh" (Williams, 1860:181). "The cannibalism of the present day is practised on the grounds of revenge, religion, pride, and appetite" (Waterhouse, 1866: 312). [Note that according to Waterhouse, 1866:314, "Women are not generally allowed to partake of human flesh"]

↳ Exposure to elements (e.g. air drying):

– No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the presence of exposing corpses to the elements.

↳ Feeding to animals:

– No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence of feeding corpses to animals.

↳ Secondary burial:

– No

Notes: SCCS Variable 1850, Secondary Bone/Body Treatment: Original Scale, indicates that secondary bone/body treatment is absent (Schroeder, 2001; Retrieved from Divale, 2004).

Are co-sacrifices present in tomb/burial:

– Yes

Notes: "If it is a man who has died, his wife or his mother will be strangled, to be buried with him" (Toganivalu, 1911).

↳ Human sacrifices present:

– Yes

Notes: (Toganivalu, 1911)

↳ Out-group humans are sacrificed:

– No

Notes: Wives and mothers of deceased men are the only individuals described as being sacrificed in burial. These women are in-group members.

↳ In-group humans are sacrificed:

– Yes

Notes: "If it is a man who has died, his wife or his mother will be strangled, to be buried with him" (Toganivalu, 1911).

↳ Other humans are sacrificed:

– No

Notes: No ethnographic examples of other human co-sacrifices (at burial) besides

wives and mothers.



Animal co-sacrifices present:

– No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the presence of animal co-sacrifices.

Are grave goods present:

– Yes

Notes: "When a man died a whale's tooth was buried with him, to be his stone for the screw-pine. it was said that when a man died, his soul proceeded on the road of the spirits till he reached a certain screw-pine, and then he threw at it the whale's tooth which he carried with him; if it struck, he knew that his wife had been strangled, and accordingly he waited at the foot of the screw-pine till the spirit of his wife or mother arrived, and then they went on together" (Toganivalu, 1911).



Personal effects:

– Yes

Notes: "Articles prized by the dead are either buried with them, or laid on the grave" (Williams, 1860:150).

Are formal burials present:

– Yes

Notes: While formal burials are present, "there seems to be no religious ceremony practised at the internments of the Fijians" (Waterhouse, 1866:324).



Domestic (individuals interred beneath house, or in areas used for normal domestic activities):

– Yes

Notes: "Corpses at Bau were generally interred inside the house. If anyone died his grave would be dug in the place where he died, the grass and mats would be taken up and the grave dug; it was not usual to dig deep like the graves of these times. When buried the grass and mats were spread again on top of the grave" (Toganivalu, 1911).



Other formal burial type:

– Yes [specify]: Location not specified

Notes: "A shallow grave is dug, broad enough to contain the man and his strangled companions. Four branches of a tree called tarawaukarikaka are placed at the bottom of the grave, the mats are spread, and the dead are then lowered" (Waterhouse, 1866:324).

Supernatural Beings

Are supernatural beings present:

— Yes

Notes: "It is impossible to ascertain even the probable number of the gods of Fiji; for disembodied spirits are called gods, and are regarded as such. But the natives make a distinction between those who were gods originally, and those who are only deified spirits. The former they call Kalou-vu, the latter Kalou-yalo. Of the former class the number is great; but the latter are without number" (Waterhouse, 1866:355).

↳ A supreme high god is present:

— No

Notes: SCCS Variable 238, Religion: high gods [Note: identical to Ethnographic Atlas Column 34] indicates that a high god is absent among the Mbau Fijians (Murdock, 1962-1971; Retrieved from Divale, 2004). Note: This information is contradicted by that found in ethnographic sources (see alternative answer above).

— Yes

Notes: "Degei ('Inspector') is the supreme god of Fiji. He is the creator of the (Fijian) world, of fruits, and of men. He it was who deluged the world in punishing the sin of his rebellious creatures. He sends forth his sons to visit the earth, who make their report to him concerning the piety of its inhabitants. His sons have performed miracles on the occasion of these visits. He is also a god of anger and of war" (Waterhouse, 1866:356). Note: This information is contradicted by that found in the Ethnographic Atlas (see alternative answer below).

↳ The supreme high god is anthropomorphic:

— I don't know

↳ The supreme high god has deliberate causal efficacy in the world:

— Yes

↳ The supreme high god can punish:

— Yes

Notes: "Degei is evidently a god fond of quietness. At some villages near the sacred mountain, the women pour the water into the pots with great care, guarding against noise, lest the god be offended. If they transgressed, the god would turn the boiling food into serpents" (Waterhouse, 1866: 362).

↳ The supreme high god has indirect causal efficacy in the world:

— Yes

Notes: "Degei ('Inspector') is the supreme god of Fiji. He is the creator of the (Fijian) world, of fruits, and of men. He it was who deluged the world in punishing the sin of his rebellious creatures. He sends forth his sons to visit the earth, who make their report to him concerning the piety of its inhabitants. His sons have performed miracles on the occasion of these visits. He is also a god of anger and of war" (Waterhouse, 1866:356).

↳ The supreme high god possesses hunger:

— No

Notes: "The god most generally known in Fiji is Ndengei, who seems to be an impersonation of the abstract idea of eternal existence. He is the subject of no emotion or sensation, nor of any appetite, except hunger" (Williams, 1860:170).

↳ Is it permissible to worship supernatural beings other than the high god:

— Yes

Notes: "[Degei] is universally known and acknowledged in Fiji; but not worshipped, except near his own cave" (Waterhouse, 1866:356). Williams, 1860 (page 171) also indicates the presence of a god, named Ndengei, who is ranked supreme but less worshiped than some inferiors.

↳ The supreme high god communicates with the living:

— No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence of the supreme high god communicating directly with the living.

↳ Previously human spirits are present:

— Yes

Notes: Previously human spirits are known as Kalou-yalo. "...the natives make a distinction between those who were gods originally, and those who are only deified spirits. The former they call Kalou-vu, the latter Kalou-yalo. Of the former class the number is great; but the latter are without number" (Waterhouse, 1866:355). (Also see Williams, 1860:170). "They [the Fijians] believe that the spirits of the dead appear frequently, and afflict mankind, especially when they are asleep" (Williams, 1860:189).

↳ Human spirits can be seen:

— Yes

Notes: "They [the Fijians] believe that the spirits of the dead appear frequently, and afflict mankind, especially when they are asleep...Spirits are supposed to assume the human form at will" (Williams, 1860:189).

↳ Human spirits can be physically felt:

— I don't know

↳ Previously human spirits have knowledge of this world:

— Yes

Notes: "Souls liberated from the bondage of the body are not the same as they were in life; for they are endued with higher powers. They come to have a special capacity for doing either good or evil. Thus, if relatives wanted a favor from their dead, they were accustomed to visit the grave, and, after proffering gifts in Fijian fashion, make the request" (Deane, 1921:44).

↳ Human spirits have deliberate causal efficacy in the world:

— Yes

Notes: "A very real conviction sprang up in [the Fijian's] minds that, if they did not attend to the will of the dead man, the latter would assuredly be able to make the survivors suffer for their negligence" (Deane, 1921:42).

↳ Human spirits can punish:

— Yes

Notes: "A very real conviction sprang up in [the Fijian's] minds that, if they did not attend to the will of the dead man, the latter would assuredly be able to make the survivors suffer for their negligence" (Deane, 1921:42).

↳ Human spirits have indirect causal efficacy in the world:

— Yes

Notes: "Souls liberated from the bondage of the body are not the same as they were in life; for they are endued with higher powers. They come to have a special capacity for doing either good or evil. Thus, if relatives wanted a favor from their dead, they were accustomed to visit the grave, and, after proffering gifts in Fijian fashion, make the request" (Deane, 1921:44).

↳ Human spirits possess hunger:

— I don't know

Notes: Food is offered to the spirits of deceased relatives, but it is unclear whether this is done for general propitiation or to satisfy the spirits' hunger. "It is the bounden duty of the children to supply the departed relatives with food and to present him with offerings of various kinds" (Deane, 1921:40).

↳ Non-human supernatural beings are present:

— Yes

Notes: "...the natives make a distinction between those who were gods originally, and those who are only deified spirits. The former they call Kalou-vu, the latter Kalou-yalo. Of the former class the number is great; but the latter are without number" (Waterhouse, 1866:355). "The third class of gods embraces all those objects which the Fijian idolises; such as spots of ground, groves, isolated trees, passages through reefs, animals, fruits, birds, fish, insects, stones" (Waterhouse, 1866:403).

↳ These supernatural beings can be seen:

— Yes

Notes: "It is believed that gods sometimes assume the human form, and are thus seen by men, generally in the likeness of some one particular person" (Williams, 1860:183).

↳ These supernatural beings can be physically felt:

— I don't know

↳ Non-human supernatural beings have knowledge of this world:

— Yes

Notes: "Some of the gods confine their attention to this earth, the higher presiding over districts and islands, and the rest over tribes and families, their influence never reaching beyond their special jurisdiction" (Williams, 1860:172).

↳ Non-human supernatural beings have knowledge restricted to (a) specific area(s) within the sample region:

— Yes

Notes: "Some of the gods confine their attention to this earth, the higher presiding over districts and islands, and the rest over tribes and families, their influence never reaching beyond their special jurisdiction" (Williams, 1860:172).

↳ Non-human supernatural beings have knowledge unrestricted within the sample region:

— No

Notes: (Williams, 1860:172).

↳ Non-human supernatural beings have knowledge unrestricted outside of sample region:

— No

Notes: (Williams, 1860:172).

↳ Non-human supernatural beings know what will happen to you, what you will do (future sight):

— I don't know

↳ Non-human supernatural beings have deliberate causal efficacy in the world:

— Yes

↳ These supernatural beings can punish:

— Yes

Notes: "Occasionally the priest is the medium of communicating to a Chief the general opinion about some unpopular act... 'This hurricane is in consequence of your refusing the Princess to the Rewa Chief. For that the gods are angry, and are punishing us'" (Williams, 1860:177).

↳ These supernatural beings have indirect causal efficacy in the world:

— Yes

Notes: "Rataumaibulu, ('Sir, from Hades,') known also under other names, some being his descendants, is the god of the crops, acting as the Ceres of Fiji. In December he comes from his residence in Bulu, and takes up his abode on earth, causing the fruit-trees to flower and bear fruit. The month is sacred to this god. The people sit quietly, avoiding all noise and unnecessary labour, lest the god be disturbed, and leave the earth before he has finished his work; in which case the season would be unfruitful" (Waterhouse, 1866:365).

↳ These supernatural beings exhibit positive emotion:

— I don't know

↳ These supernatural beings possess hunger:

— I don't know

↳ Mixed human-divine beings are present:

— Yes

Notes: "All Kalou-yalo were originally men. They consist principally of the spirits of chiefs of high rank, and those who have distinguished themselves by sanguinary exploits" (Waterhouse, 1866:400).

↳ Does the religious group possess a variety of supernatural beings:

— Yes

↳ Other organization for pantheon:

— Yes [specify]: Varied

Notes: "The rank of the gods below Ndengei [also referred to as Degei] is not easily ascertained, each district contending for the superiority of its own divinity" (Williams, 1860:172).

Supernatural Monitoring

Is supernatural monitoring present:

This refers to surveillance by supernatural beings of humans' behaviour and/or thought particularly as it relates to social norms or potential norm violations.

— Yes

Notes: "Degei ('Inspector') is the supreme god of Fiji. He is the creator of the (Fijian) world, of fruits, and of men. He it was who deluged the world in punishing the sin of his rebellious creatures. He sends forth his sons to visit the earth, who make their report to him concerning the piety of its inhabitants. His sons have performed miracles on the occasion of these visits. He is also a god of anger and of war" (Waterhouse, 1866:356).

↳ Supernatural beings care about taboos:

– Yes

Notes: "About A.D. 1840 one of the tabu sharks was eaten at Navukeilagi, Gau, and all who ate of it died. A fleet of twenty Tasawa canoes were laden with the fruit of the cocoa-nuts, which are dedicated to these sea-gods. This was a grave offence; and the gods pursued them, and succeeded in destroying nineteen of the vessels whose crews had been guilty of the sacrilege" (Waterhouse, 1866:375).

↳ Food:

– Yes

Notes: "About A.D. 1840 one of the tabu sharks was eaten at Navukeilagi, Gau, and all who ate of it died. A fleet of twenty Tasawa canoes were laden with the fruit of the cocoa-nuts, which are dedicated to these sea-gods. This was a grave offence; and the gods pursued them, and succeeded in destroying nineteen of the vessels whose crews had been guilty of the sacrilege" (Waterhouse, 1866:375).

↳ Supernatural beings care about proper ritual observance:

– Yes

Notes: "The place where the deceased has actually died is itself the object of fear. Certain parties are appointed as the toni to continuously lie down on the very spot. This office is performed by the friends of the deceased; and if neglected, the spirit of the departed is said to kill some of its friends, or some of their children" (Waterhouse, 1866:325).

↳ Supernatural beings care about other:

– Yes [specify]: Piety

Notes: "If, on his return from the earth, Uto [supernatural being] reports to Degei [high god] that the temples are deserted, and the offerings neglected, the god causes a hurricane, to rebuke the impiety of its inhabitants" (Waterhouse, 1866:360).

Do supernatural beings mete out punishment:

– Yes

Notes: See questions below for more information regarding supernatural punishment.

↳ Is the cause or agent of supernatural punishment known:

– Yes

Notes: A variety of supernatural beings are described as the agents of supernatural punishment. See questions below for more detail.

↳ Done only by high god:

– No

Notes: While the high god is described as causing supernatural punishment (see

Waterhouse, 1866:360), other spirits, such as previously human spirits, are described as causing punishment (Waterhouse, 1866:325).

↳ Done by many supernatural beings:

– Yes

Notes: While the high god is described as causing supernatural punishment (see Waterhouse, 1866:360), other spirits, such as previously human spirits, are described as causing punishment (Waterhouse, 1866:325).

↳ Is the reason for supernatural punishment known:

– Yes

↳ Done to enforce religious ritual-devotional adherence:

– Yes

Notes: "The place where the deceased has actually died is itself the object of fear. Certain parties are appointed as the *toni* to continuously lie down on the very spot. This office is performed by the friends of the deceased; and if neglected, the spirit of the departed is said to kill some of its friends, or some of their children" (Waterhouse, 1866:325).

↳ Other [specify]

– Yes

Notes: "Degei is evidently a god fond of quietness. At some villages near the sacred mountain, the women pour the water into the pots with great care, guarding against noise, lest the god be offended. If they transgressed, the god would turn the boiling food into serpents" (Waterhouse, 1866: 362).

↳ Supernatural punishments are meted out in the afterlife:

– No

Notes: "The native superstitions with regard to a future state go far to explain the apparent indifference of the people about death; for, while believing in an eternal existence, they shut out from it the idea of any moral retribution in the shape either of reward or punishment" (Williams, 1860:190). "In the after-life of the soul, he saw no irresistible law of retribution working out man's destiny" (Deane, 1921:116).

– Yes

Notes: "He whose ears have not been pierced is sentenced [in the afterlife] to drag a large piece of timber (the *dutua*), and drink a filthy mixture. He who has had no house of his own is to have no permanent resting-place in *Bulu* [the after world]. A woman who may not have been strangled on the occasion of the death of her first husband, is now compelled to return to him. Her second husband is to be a widower" (Waterhouse, 1966:413).

↳ Punishment in the afterlife consists of mild sensory displeasure:

– Yes

Notes: "He whose ears have not been pierced is sentenced [in the afterlife] to drag a large piece of timber (the dutua), and drink a filthy mixture" (Waterhouse, 1966:413).

↳ Supernatural punishments are meted out in this lifetime:

– Yes

Notes: See below for more information on supernatural punishment in this lifetime.

↳ Supernatural punishments in this life are highly emphasized by the religious group:

– I don't know

↳ Punishment in this life consists of defeat in battle:

– Yes

Notes: "If any one has offended Rokomoko [supernatural being], the god withdraws his protection [during battle], and the [gun]shot takes effect on the unhappy man" (Waterhouse, 1866:379).

↳ Punishment in this life consists of crop failure or bad weather:

– Yes

Notes: "If, on his return from the earth, Uto [supernatural being] reports to Degei [high god] that the temples are deserted, and the offerings neglected, the god causes a hurricane, to rebuke the impiety of its inhabitants" (Waterhouse, 1866:360).

↳ Punishment in this life consists of disaster on journeys.

– Yes

Notes: "About A.D. 1840 one of the tabu sharks was eaten at Navukeilagi, Gau, and all who ate of it died. A fleet of twenty Tasawa canoes were laden with the fruit of the cocoa-nuts, which are dedicated to these sea-gods. This was a grave offence; and the gods pursued them, and succeeded in destroying nineteen of the vessels whose crews had been guilty of the sacrilege" (Waterhouse, 1866:375).

↳ Punishment in this life consists of extreme sensory displeasure:

– Yes

Notes: "The place where the deceased has actually died is itself the object of fear. Certain parties are appointed as the toni to continuously lie down on the very spot. This office is performed by the friends of the deceased; and if neglected, the spirit of the departed is said to kill some of its friends, or some of their children" (Waterhouse, 1866:325).

Do supernatural beings bestow rewards:

— I don't know

Notes: Insufficient ethnographic evidence to make a confident decision regarding the presence of supernatural rewards.

Messianism/Eschatology

Are messianic beliefs present:

— No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the presence of messianic beliefs.

Is an eschatology present:

— No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for a belief in an eschatology.

Practices

Membership Costs and Practices

Does membership in this religious group require celibacy (full sexual abstinence):

— No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the presence of required celibacy.

Does membership in this religious group require castration:

— No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the presence of required castration.

Does membership in this religious group require forgone food opportunities (taboos on desired foods):

— Yes

Notes: "Dakuwaqa ('Outside-the-canoe,') the Fijian Neptune. He assumes the form of a shark, tattooed on the belly. In his honour, all sharks are saluted when they are seen; and it is tabu to eat the flesh of that fish" (Waterhouse, 1866:373).

Does membership in this religious group require permanent scarring or painful bodily alterations:

— I don't know

Notes: Bodily wounds are inflicted as acts of mourning, but it is not clear if this practice is required. "It is distressing to see the various bodily wounds inflicted as tokens of mourning for the dead. These consist of shaving the head or beard; the amputation of fingers, considered, in regard to the deceased, as being a proof of love next in importance and value to strangling; and the burning, cutting, or torturing of the flesh" (Waterhouse, 1866:326).

Does membership in this religious group require painful physical positions or transitory painful wounds:

— I don't know

Notes: It is unclear whether mortification is voluntary or required. "I [author] had been in Fiji some years before I had good evidence of the existence of the practice of severe mortification among the people. Mbasonga, the Wailevu priest, after supplicating his god for rain in the usual way without success, slept for several successive nights exposed on the top of a rock, without a mat or pillow, hoping thus to move the obdurate deity to send a shower" (Williams, 1860:182).

Does membership in this religious group require sacrifice of adults:

"Adults" here referring to an emic or indigenous category; if that category is different from the popular Western definition of a human who is 18-years-old or older and who is legally responsible for his/her actions, then please specify that difference in the Comments/Sources: box below.

— Yes

Notes: "On setting up the pillars of a temple, and again when the building is complete, men are killed and eaten" (Williams, 1860:174). "The Fijian religion required cannibalism" (Waterhouse, 1866:313).

Does membership in this religious group require sacrifice of children:

"Children" here referring to an emic or indigenous category; if that category is different from the popular Western definition, please specify that different in the Comments/Sources: box below.

— No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the presence of child sacrifices.

Does membership in this religious group require self-sacrifice (suicide):

— No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the requirement of self-sacrifice. The incurably sick may commit suicide, but not for religious purposes (see Waterhouse, 1866:323).

Does membership in this religious group require sacrifice of time (e.g., attendance at meetings or services, regular prayer, etc.):

— No

Notes: "Nothing like regular worship or habitual reverence is found, and a principle of fear seems the only motive to religious observances; and this is fully practised upon by the priests, through whom alone the people have access to the gods, when they wish to present petitions affecting their social or individual interest" (Williams, 1860:175).

Does membership in this religious group require participation in large-scale rituals:

I.e. involving two or more households; includes large-scale "ceremonies" and "festivals."

— Yes

Notes: "The worship of the gods of Fiji is not a regular and constant service, but merely suggested by circumstances, or dictated by emergency or fear. There are, however, certain superstitious ceremonies which are duly observed; such as the *sevu*--[resenting the first-fruits of yams; *tadravu*--an offering

made at the close of the year; the keeping of silence when crossing sacred places; the observance of tabus, and reverencing of shrines" (Williams, 1860:181).

Society and Institutions

Levels of Social Complexity

The society to which the religious group belongs is best characterized as (please choose one):

— A chiefdom

Notes: The Mbau Fijians have two levels of jurisdictional hierarchy beyond the local community, which is reflective of a chiefdom (Ethnographic Atlas column 33, Murdock, 1967; retrieved from Divale, 2004).

Education

Does the religious group provide formal education to its adherents:

— No

Notes: "The education of the children commences at an early age. They are taught by being employed to help their parents in their work, either by looking on, or by rendering as much assistance as they like. When tired, they leave off, and no inducement will cause them again to assist at the time" (Waterhouse, 1866:307). From this information, it can be assumed that formal education is not present.

Public Works

Does the religious group in question provide public food storage:

— No

Notes: SCCS Variable 20, Food Storage, indicates that food is stored in individual households (Murdock and Morrow, 1970; Retrieved from Divale, 2004).

Is public food storage provided to the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

— No

Notes: SCCS Variable 20, Food Storage, indicates that food is stored in individual households (Murdock and Morrow, 1970; Retrieved from Divale, 2004).

Does the religious group in question provide transportation infrastructure:

— No

Notes: SCCS Variable 14, Routes of Land Transport, indicates that unimproved trails are present (Murdock and Morrow, 1970; Retrieved from Divale, 2004). Presumably, transportation infrastructure is not present.

Is transportation infrastructure provided for the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

— No

Notes: SCCS Variable 14, Routes of Land Transport, indicates that unimproved trails are present (Murdock and Morrow, 1970; Retrieved from Divale, 2004). Presumably, transportation infrastructure is not present.

Enforcement

Does the religious group in question provide an institutionalized police force:

— No

Notes: According to Tuden and Marshall (1972; Column 10, Police), "police functions are not specialized or institutionalized at any level of political integration, the maintenance of law and order being left exclusively to informal mechanisms of social control, to private retaliation, or to sorcery" [Note: Equivalent to SCCS Variable 90].

Written Language

Does the religious group in question possess its own distinct written language:

— No

Notes: SCCS Variable 149, Writing and Records, indicates that none are present among the Mbau Fijians (Murdock and Provost, 1973; Retrieved from Divale, 2004).

Food Production

Does the religious group in question provide food for themselves:

— Yes

Notes: The Mbau Fijians rely on fishing and agriculture for subsistence. Gathering provides a supplementary source of subsistence. Source of information from Ethnographic Atlas (Murdock, 1962-1971), retrieved from Divale, 2004; Variables 203-207, 232.



Please characterize the forms/level of food production [choose all that apply]:

— Gathering

— Fishing

— Small-scale agriculture / horticultural gardens or orchards

Notes: The Mbau Fijians rely on fishing and agriculture for subsistence. Gathering provides a supplementary source of subsistence. Source of information from Ethnographic Atlas (Murdock, 1962-1971), retrieved from Divale, 2004; Variables 203-207, 232.