Journal of Pacific Archaeology – Vol. 11 · No. 2 · 2020

– ARTICLE –

Encounters With Stone: Missionary battles with idols in the southern New Hebrides

Stuart Bedford[1,3,*], Dijana Haskell-Crook[4], Matthew Spriggs[2,5] & Richard Shing[5]

ABSTRACT

A fundamental goal of Christian missionaries in the Pacific was to depose indigenous deities and substitute them with Christian beliefs. Hence, they were constantly battling indigenous idolatry and idols. The islands of the southern New Hebrides were the first locations in Melanesia where missionisation was attempted with strategies and philosophy heavily influenced by the practices of the London Missionary Society in Polynesia. On the island of Aneityum idols were primarily unmodified stones which were regularly offered to the church in a sign of conversion and which in some cases were incorporated into mission buildings. Guided by oral traditions, a cache of such stones was excavated at the mission station at Anelcauhat, southern Aneityum. They highlight the ongoing negotiation between *kastom* and Christianity in Vanuatu that began more than 150 years ago.

Keywords: idols; sacred stones; missionisation; Aneityum; New Hebrides

> Oh, the intense excitement of the weeks that followed! Company after company came to the spot, loaded with their gods of wood and stone, and piled them in heaps, amid tears and sobs of some, and the shoutings of others, in which was heard the oft-repeated word 'Jehovah! Jehovah!' What could be burned, we cast into the flames: others we buried in pits twelve to fifteen feet deep: and some few, more likely than the rest to feed or awaken superstition, we sank into the deep sea. Let no Heathen eyes ever gaze on them again! (Paton 1890:192).

INTRODUCTION

From the time when Christian missionaries first stepped foot onto the shores of the New Hebrides (Vanuatu since 1980), and for generations afterwards, they wrestled with competing indigenous cosmologies. It was the standard missionary experience and challenge across the entire Pacific, as one of their fundamental goals was always to replace one spiritual world with another. To achieve this, missionaries were obliged to immerse themselves in indigenous languages and culture to develop an understanding of how these populations understood and framed their world in general and the spiritual world in particular. Strategies were then developed on how best they could then be challenged and supplanted. This ultimately involved attempts at a complete transformation of people's everyday lives and their religious cosmologies, as missionaries soon concluded there was essentially little discernible differentiation between the two (Douglas 1989; Flexner 2016; Gardner 2006; Mitchell 2013; Spriggs 1985). While it was understandably often difficult for missionaries to accurately gauge how successful their challenges to intangible spirits might be, they vigorously encouraged Pacific islanders to reject any 'idolatry' associated with spirit worship. As demonstrated in the excited epigraph[6], the rejection of 'idols' was interpreted as solid confirmation, and most often a public demonstration, of a rejection of indigenous

1 Archaeology and Natural History, College of Asia and the Pacific, The Australia National University, Canberra, Australia.
2 School of Archaeology and Anthropology, College of Arts and Social Sciences, The Australian National University, Canberra, Australia.
3 Max Planck Institute for the Science of Human History, 07745 Jena, Germany.
4 Miami State High School, Queensland, Australia.
5 Vanuatu Cultural Centre, Port Vila, Vanuatu.
*Corresponding author: stuart.bedford@anu.edu.au
Submitted 12/4/20, accepted 22/7/20. First online 7/8/20.

6 This great celebration of 'idol' destruction is recounted by John G. Paton and relates to events that occurred on Aniwa Island, southern New Hebrides in late 1860s. In recent archaeological research on the same island informants pointed out (to SB) a deep pool in the fringing reef near the former mission station where more powerful stones had been dumped in the sea. The pool remains sacred. They also noted that not all stones had been given up, specifically mentioning that those that influenced the marine harvest had been hidden and curated. Agnes Watt recalls sacred stones still being used on Aniwa to produce rain in 1876 (Watt 1896:178).

deities and spirits.

British missionaries representing the London Missionary Society (LMS) were the first Anglophone missionaries who went to the Pacific, being initially dropped off in Tahiti, Tonga and the Marquesas in 1797, only 28 years after the first of the voyages of James Cook (Gunson 1978; King 2011: 9). The initial efforts of the LMS began with modest funding and a strategy of sending skilled craftsmen and their families with limited schooling in theology or linguistics into the field. They struggled for many years to gain converts due to their lack of suitability in terms of language and culture (Gunson 1978) but began to gain increasing numbers of converts over the decades, due to a whole range of factors, one of the most important being that leading chiefs ultimately saw some advantages in absorbing aspects of Christianity. Increasing funding and institutional support also developed over the decades. The strategies and costs involved with conversion required generating as much support from home as it did on foreign shores and villages. Books were published by various LMS missionaries and printed in their tens of thousands and regular, invariably positive, updates in periodicals such as the LMS publications *Missionary Chronicle*, *Missionary Sketches* and the *Evangelical Magazine* were widely available to an invested public. One of the themes in the writings and actions of LMS missionaries in Polynesia that is described in endlessly recurring detail was a focus on the purging of 'idolatry' and associated 'idols' (Ellis 1831; Williams 1838). This was hardly surprising as the rejection of idolatry was one of the core doctrinal beliefs of the Reformed Protestant tradition and of the LMS, based on the first of the biblical Ten Commandments prohibiting idolatry, 'You shall have no other gods before me' (Irving-Stonebraker 2020: 7–8). As noted by King in relation to the LMS in Polynesia 'at the core of the actual conversion process was a conspicuous public display of sacrilege committed towards marae and towards idols' (2011: 30). All Anglophone missionaries who went to the Pacific would have been familiar with such doctrines, strategies and activities through the teachings of various Protestant institutions and the publications of the LMS. As a pioneering institution in the Pacific their activities were closely followed and widely publicised. One of the most well-known of the LMS missionaries was Reverend John Williams who had first arrived in Polynesia in 1817 (King 2011: 21–25). His book, *A Narrative of Missionary Enterprises in the South Sea Islands*, was first published in 1837[7]. It narrated the approaches and achievements in Polynesia from the 1810s to the 1830s. The accounts are drenched with triumphant stories of how Polynesian idols were 'cast out', burnt or mutilated, rejected, kicked and displayed as trophies (Williams 1837: 44, 51, 59, 65, 73, 74, 85–86, 94, 107–110, 116–117 etc.). In one instance Williams recounts a sermon given to a community on Atiu in the Cook Islands, where idols described as being analogous to trophies of war, which he had brought from Aitutaki in the mission boat, were displayed in the church. In the sermon given at the same occasion, quoting excerpts from the bible, he 'commented upon what is said by David and Isaiah in reference to idols' (1837: 85).[8] The extirpation of 'idols' then was not something particular to Polynesia but could be connected over the millennia to Biblical history and conversion from its very beginnings and was fully justified, indeed even an obligation and requirement in heathen lands.

The first efforts at missionisation in Melanesia began in the southern islands of the New Hebrides (Figure 1) in 1839, led by the LMS and John Williams himself, whose initial strategy was simply the deployment of Polynesian teachers. By the early 1840s, all five inhabited islands of the south had resident Polynesian teachers who had varied experiences and success (Miller 1985: 4). Permanently stationed European missionaries began to arrive from 1842[9]. Over the next decade missionaries on these southern islands were frequently engaged with 'idols', often dealing with them in a very similar vein as had been the practice of the LMS in Polynesia. The standard battle lines were drawn and the ferreting out of 'idols' and their often-public degradation were regular features discussed in publications calculated to generate support from a public audience back at home. This paper focuses on the missionisation of the island of Aneityum and more specifically the theme of 'idolatry' and 'idols' and how the pioneering European missionaries on that island engaged in their crusade against indigenous spirits and deities. Natural unmodified stones placed in various settings and comprising a whole range of shapes and sizes, were the primary focus of the missionaries on Aneityum, as spirits known as *natmas* were said to inhabit the stones (Inglis 1887: 30). In engaging with 'idols' we draw on the extensive archival records, oral traditions and archaeological evidence that was gleaned during research on the island from 2013–2015. The latter evidence was associated with a project titled '*Lapita to Liturgy*' that was designed to investigate the full 3000-year human history on the island (Bedford *et al.* 2016). The component associated with missionisation had been inspired both by pioneering research that had demonstrated the value of combining missionary records with archaeological remains on the island (Spriggs 1985) but also by the much more

7 He had contributed regularly to the various LMS periodicals before this. In 1837, 4000 copies were printed and by 1845 a total of 40,000 (King 2011: 6). In 1842 the same book was published in the United States.

8 In the frontispiece of the book a lithograph depicts a large gathering of people at Rarotonga in 1827 many of whom are lining up to surrender their 'idols' to John Williams and party. The illustration is titled with a biblical quote 'And the idols he shall utterly abolish' – Isaiah ii 18.

9 The first European missionaries in the New Hebrides were Turner and Nisbet of the LMS who were landed on Tanna in 1842 but were driven off the island after only eight months (Shineberg 1967: 60).

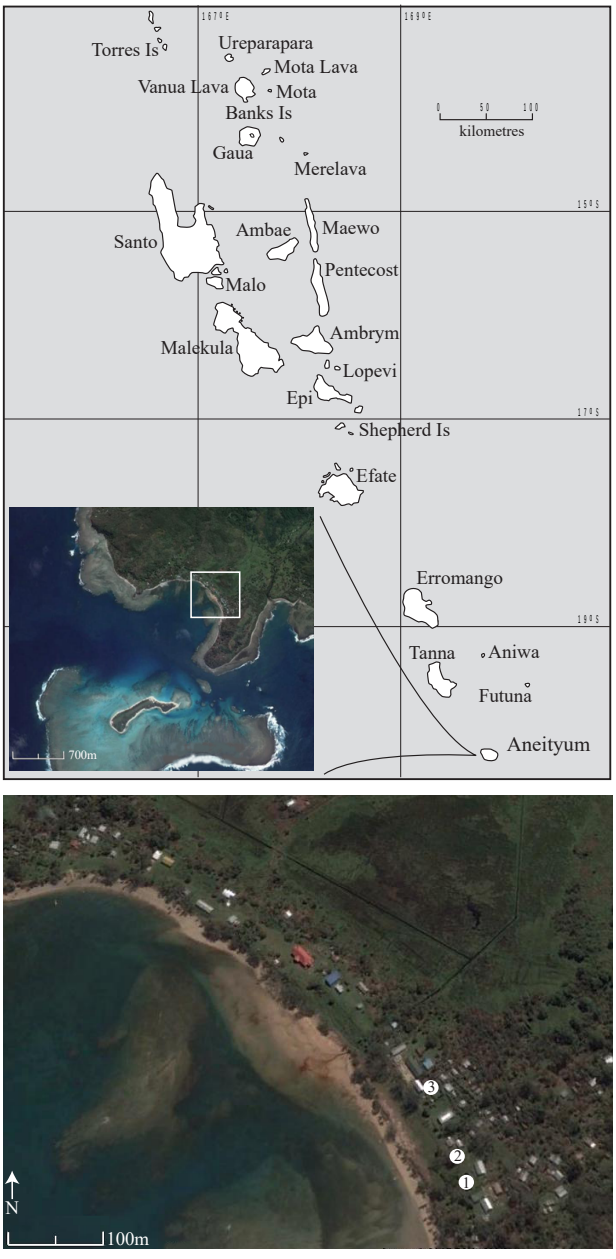

Figure 1. Vanuatu archipelago. Insets (modified from Google maps) are Anelcauhat Bay and Inyeug Island southeast Aneityum, southern Vanuatu, and Anelcauhat Bay showing the location of (1) Geddies stone house; (2) location of excavated sacred stones and (3) the remains of the stone church.

recent archaeological focus on missionisation in Vanuatu by James Flexner (2016) and of course by Angela Middleton and her research on missionisation in New Zealand (Middleton 2008).

During the course of our research on the island we were guided to sacred stones that had been repurposed during missionary activity and shown a location, at the founding mission station at Anelcauhat, where sacred stones were said to have been buried 150 years earlier. Despite some initial scepticism and limited surface evidence, their presence was indeed confirmed following excavation (Crook *et al*. 2015), verifying oral testimony that had been retained for six generations. Despite being unseen for such a long period of time there was no doubt the stones also still retained their spiritual and sacred status amongst a community who had been deemed to have been fully Christian since the 1860s. The reality is that despite the efforts of resident European missionaries on Aneityum over a 50-year period their impressions and interpretations of conversion were never fully aligned with those of the indigenous population. Christianity has not completely replaced *kastom* in the New Hebrides/Vanuatu; rather, it was incorporated into Melanesian tradition (Flexner 2016:12), ultimately producing a range of hybrid spiritualties that continue to evolve to this day.

MISSIONISATION ON ANEITYUM

The missionisation of the New Hebrides archipelago first began in the southern region and it was a venture that also signalled the first efforts in the entire Melanesian region[10]. Aneityum is a relatively small island (160 km^2), the southernmost inhabited island of the group. As was typical of most of the Pacific, other Europeans had got there well before the missionaries. Sandalwood was being cut there from 1830 and this trade continued through to the 1840s. A permanent trading station and, later, whaling depot was set up in the sheltered southern harbour of Anelcauhat in 1844 by Captain John Paddon (Shineberg 1967:98–108). Aneityum subsequently became a frequent port of call for sandalwood and other vessels with 31 visits being recorded over a four-year period to 1848 (Shineberg 1967: Appendix 1). As mentioned, the first missionary efforts were instigated by the LMS under the guidance of Reverend John Williams who had been credited with facilitating Christian conversion over more than two decades in various parts of Polynesia (King 2011:21–25). Williams sailed from Samoa in November 1839 with a contingent of newly converted Samoans who were to be off-loaded on different islands if the conditions were deemed suitable. Samoans were first landed on Tanna[11] and the ship continued to Erromango, but disaster for the expedition struck when Williams and his secretary Harris were killed at Dillons Bay (now often called Williams Bay). The conflict occurred due either to local politics or retaliation against the misdeeds of previous European visitors or a combination of both (Flexner 2016:22–24; Murray 1863:196; Robertson 1902:47–56). However, rather than these dramatic events discouraging further efforts they seemed to reinvigorate the energies of the LMS (Miller 1975:2). In 1841 and 1842,

10 Not known as Melanesia at the time but rather Western Pacific.

11 The ship had first visited Futuna, a 'Polynesian outlier', and although no Polynesian teachers were landed at that time, they had engaged in cordial relations (Murray 1863:11).

further missionary visits under the direction of Reverend Murray were to bring Samoan and Rarotongan teachers who were landed on all the southern islands of the New Hebrides (Liuaʻana 1996; Munro & Thornley 1996; Murray 1863: 28–29). Samoan teachers were the earliest missionaries on Aneityum. The first were Fuataiese and Tavita and their respective wives who were established at Epeke, on the north of the island in 1841. In 1842 two more Samoans teachers, Apolo and Simeona, were landed to strengthen the missionary work in the north. The latter, with a new arrival, Pita, was subsequently shifted to Anelcauhat in the south of the island in April 1845 to begin the missionary program there (Munro & Thornley 1996; Miller 1975; Murray 1863: 28–30). The strategy of the LMS was simple and followed the same pattern as that which had been largely successful in Polynesia for decades. If the Polynesian teachers could successfully establish a foothold and even begin to convert the indigenous communities, then this would lay the groundwork for the arrival of European missionaries.

It would not be for another three years that the first European missionaries arrived to settle on Aneityum. In the competition for souls, it was French Catholics fleeing from New Caledonia who actually got there first to establish themselves on the island at Anelcauhat in May 1848 (Douceré 1934: 53–54; Miller 1975: 32), although they had left by 1850 due to sickness (Inglis 1887: 40–42). Two months after the French, in July 1848, representatives of the Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia arrived. The party included the Reverend John Geddie and his wife Charlotte, Isaac Archibald, a lay catechist, and his wife, all from Nova Scotia and Reverend Thomas Powell and his wife Jane who were LMS missionaries in Samoa (Inglis 1887: 39–42). They were all initially housed in the dwellings of the Samoan teachers Pita and Simeona who had established themselves on the southern end of the bay in 1845. Archibald and the Powells had all left after two years but the fledging mission station was guided through its development by the Geddies for another 24 years, until 1872. The station remained continuously occupied by resident European missionaries from 1848 until 1892, and then more sporadically visited by resident missionaries from either Futuna or Tanna into the 1930s (Miller 1986: 146–47, 157). The missionary compound, although returned to customary ownership with Vanuatu's independence in 1980, continues to be used today by Aneityumese Presbyterians as their headquarters.

The Presbyterian mission at Anelcauhat had very humble beginnings but the missionaries had ambitious plans. The island was to be a beachhead, where the Aneityumese could be trained as teachers and sent forth to missionise other islands of the New Hebrides and beyond. In this respect it was modelled on the strategy of the LMS missions in the Cook Islands and Samoa where seminaries were established in 1839 and 1844 respectively (Inglis 1890: 219–242; Turner 1861: 124–141; see also Ash 2020). At its peak, the Anelcauhat mission contained numerous, and in some cases grand structures, including schoolhouses, a study, a stone mission house and a stone church[12], a courthouse, a printing house as well as an extensive cemetery (Jones *et al.* 2020; Miller 1975: 157; Zubrzycka *et al.* 2018). In order to reinforce missionary activity on the island, the Scottish Presbyterians Reverend John and his wife Jessie Inglis were settled at Aname in the northern part of Aneityum in 1852, where they remained for another 24 years. The Aname mission ultimately became a large complex replicating much of what was found at Anelcauhat. In addition to this the missionaries made major efforts in establishing self-sustaining mission schools (56 at their most numerous) in all the districts across the island (Spriggs 1985: 36). Aneityum remained the headquarters of the Presbyterian Mission to the New Hebrides for many years and Aneityumese teachers were prominent in aiding the missionisation of the southern and central islands of the New Hebrides (Inglis 1890: 219–33). However, despite the substantial missionary investment and their long-term aspirations for missionary establishments on Aneityum their ultimate objectives were severely curtailed by the massive depopulation of the island that had begun even before their arrival but had reached catastrophic proportions by the 1880s (Spriggs 2007: 278–305).[13]

Not surprisingly the influence of the LMS, with its apparently successful approaches and missionising philosophy, that had been played out in Polynesia over many decades, can be seen as having influenced the thoughts and strategies of missionaries, both Samoan and European who first went to the New Hebrides. They either had been trained by the LMS or had first-hand experience of LMS operations or had read or heard of their exploits. Strategies employed in the southern New Hebrides, from the training and placement of indigenous teachers to spread the word initially and convert influential chiefs, to the learning of the languages and establishing an intimate knowledge of indigenous customs and beliefs, the printing of biblical texts and regular reporting on mission progress and challenges to a wider public audience to gain financial support, had all been tactics the LMS had previously employed in Polynesia. The establishment of substantial central mission stations managed by European missionaries and their associated locally managed satellites was also standard procedure. Building and other supplies and teachers had been sourced from LMS stations in Samoa from the very beginning[14] of

12 Claimed by Geddie to be the second largest in the entire Pacific at the time of its construction (Miller 1975: 254). Remains of the two stone structures, the 1853 house and the 1860 church, both built using locally sourced stone and Aneityumese labour, still stand today (Jones et al. 2020; Zubrzycka et al. 2018).

13 From a population of around 3500 in 1852, as recorded by missionaries, it had been decimated three decades later, and by the early twentieth century had lost 90% of the total (Spriggs 2007: 278-305).

14 The LMS representatives Reverends Henry Nisbet and George Turner and their wives had come from Samoa in 1842 along

the New Hebrides mission enterprise and Samoa remained an important supply line for decades. The Geddies had spent eight months in Samoa before arriving on Aneityum familiarising themselves with missionary methods in that part of the world (Inglis 1887: 51) and brought with them from there pre–cut timber to build their first house (Patterson 1882: 180). The Powells, were LMS missionaries who had been assigned to accompany the Geddies during the initial establishment of the mission on Aneityum. They had been stationed in Samoa since 1845 (Inglis 1887: 39–40). Inglis noted that during his eight years of missionary work in New Zealand before coming to Aneityum he had met many of the leading figures of the LMS and was familiar 'with their modes of conducting their mission work' (Inglis 1887: 51). But perhaps what had been as inspirational as anything in influencing missionary strategy and impressions in the early missionary period in the New Hebrides were the LMS associated publications, both books and magazines that dated from the 1810s onwards, supplying detailed accounts of missionary experiences. They were distributed across Great Britain and much of the newly colonised globe (Wingfield 2017: 125). Direct evidence of this is seen with the first European missionaries on Aneityum. Inglis in a biographical passage on John Geddie recounts early influences on his life including that 'His father's house was full of missionary books, and was regularly supplied with missionary periodicals'… 'his boyish cravings for literary excitement were gratified…by the publications of the London Missionary Society' (Inglis 1887: 249). Through these he was said to be 'fully acquainted with the principles, character, and history of that time-honoured society' (Inglis 1887: 250). Inglis himself was equally familiar with LMS exploits through their publications, regularly mentioning them in passages in his own various articles and books (Inglis 1887: 36; 1890: 246).

It is in these LMS publications that discussions of indigenous idolatry and idols feature so prominently. While the attitudes towards idolatry paralleled Presbyterian doctrine the fact that LMS had had experience in the Pacific for many decades prior to missionisation in the New Hebrides, their strategy in many ways acted as a guide as to how missionaries might tackle such challenges in a new environment. It is clear that throughout the early missionising of Aneityum there were direct parallels of method, meaning and strategy that were adopted in dealing with indigenous deities and their tangible representations as espoused by the LMS.

IDOLS AND IDOLATRY ON ANEITYUM

It was as early as 1814 that the LMS announced the beginnings of a collection of curiosities, to be housed in London, that were being sent from abroad by their pioneering missionaries (King 2011: 53–67; Wingfield 2017). The LMS Museum was opened to the public soon afterwards (1815) displaying a range of exotica, including 'idols from the South Sea, Africa, the Ultra Ganges and India' (King 2011: 54–55). The collection of idols to be displayed as trophies indicating triumph of Christianity over paganism became a distinct focus of some of the LMS missionaries in Polynesia, in particular John Williams. Great excitement was generated by the arrival in London at the LMS Museum of the idols of a senior chief, Pomare II of Tahiti, who had converted to Christianity in 1806 and presented his idols for display to the LMS in 1816. Their arrival and exhibition at the LMS Museum were widely promoted in the *Missionary Sketches* of 1818. These were a collection of 10 items, mostly ornately carved or decorated items that were relatively easily transportable, having arrived from Tahiti in a specially built 'case' via sandalwood and whaling ships (King 2011: 53, 57–58).

Both the Geddies and the Inglis' became fluent speakers of Aneityumese soon after their arrival and all became increasingly familiar with local customs, social systems and traditions (Gardner 2006: 302; Spriggs 1985). A key aspect of conversion was of course to develop an understanding of the Aneityumese spirit world. Both Geddie and Inglis discussed their interpretation in detail in published accounts (Inglis 1887: 29–36, 1890: 17–35; Miller 1975: 115–118). Supposedly malevolent ancestral spirits or spiritual beings known collectively as *natmas* were a keen focus as it was they according to missionary interpretation 'who ruled over everything that affected the human race' and that 'earth, and air, and ocean were filled with *natmasses*' (Inglis 1887: 30). There were sacred areas where rites were performed, at times in association with wooden altars (Murray 1863: 26) but 'stones were the chief fetishes, or representatives of the *natmasses*: these were of all sizes, from that of a pebble to blocks of some tons weight' (Inglis 1887: 29–30). People would pray and present offerings to these stones in association with a whole range of daily activities.

Progress in terms of conversions on the island was initially limited, with Geddie often complaining of a lack of progress and of himself and those associated with the mission being constantly threatened by hostile chiefs and other individuals (Murray 1863: 49–58, 77). However, by the early 1850s there were some signs, recounted by the missionaries seemingly for an outside audience, that sacred stones associated with *natmasses* were being discarded and or surrendered or broken up, providing increasing evidence, for them at least, of the success of conversion. In December 1851 Geddie noted:

> superstition declines fast, even among the heathen. There has of late been a great destruction of sacred groves in this district.… Sacred stones, which were supposed to be inhabited by natmases, are now despised by many of the natives. They may be found strewn about the settlement in every

with the materials for the erection of their 60-foot-long mission house (Turner 1861: 7).

> direction. Not a few study what indignity they can show to them. Offerings to the natmases have in a great measure ceased, wholly of course among those who avow themselves Christians; and the heathen themselves are becoming ashamed of them' (Murray 1863: 85).

Then more practically and with a hint of the potential for ongoing denigration he stated that 'if we had a little mission schooner to sail among the islands, we could even now ballast her with the cast-off deities of Aneiteum' (Patterson 1882: 308). Geddie noted in his diary for December 1, 1853 a visit to a large black rock on the reef at Umej to the east of Anelcauhat:

> This rock was supposed to be a Natmass and was venerated by the natives. Two wells in the rock full of salt water were pointed out to me, in which the natives used to dip food intended for sick persons. In the largest hole we caught some fish which the teacher ate raw. After the desecration of the rock in which the natives joined we returned to the shore (Miller 1975: 110).

A later diary entry of January 16, 1855 records a revenge attack by Christian Aneityumese on a heathen community at Ijipdav, some hours west of the mission headquarters. He noted:

> They destroyed the sacred groves and scattered the natmasses to the winds. There is one large sacred stone in this place, on the safe keeping of which, the existence of the world is said to depend. The story is that if this stone should be broken, then the heavens will descend and come in contact with the earth, and destruction will follow. A party of Christian natives went to this sacred stone and endeavoured to break it with other stones (Miller 1975: 187).

Inglis at Aname in the north of the island recounted similar experiences in the later 1850s. In the following passage he supplies the most revealing summary of missionary cognisance, strategy and philosophy in relation to Aneityumese idols:

> I may here give a brief account of one of our natmasses, which may be accepted as a typical case. His name was Rangitafu,[15] he belonged to Nohmunjap [Anamanjop], a district to the west of our Mission station. Rangitafu was a block of whinstone, about five feet long, a foot and a half broad, and a foot thick. He was a sea-god, and presided over shipwrecks…One day, when we were preparing to erect our Teachers' Institution, without my knowledge, the chief and people of the land in which Rangitafu was worshipped made a frame of wood, placed the natmas thereon, and some thirty men carried him two miles on their shoulders, and brought him to the Institution, to be laid in the foundation. But we did not hide him away underground – I thought we could utilise Rangitafu to a better purpose… As the stone was admirably adapted for the front-door step of the Institution, so we set it apart for that purpose; and that it might remain as a perpetual trophy to the power of the Gospel, we laid the well-known natmas, with all needed Masonic honours, as the principal step before the principal door of this important building. At Ashod, Dagon fell prostrate on the threshold before the ark of God. On Aneityum, Rangitafu, for about eight and twenty long years, has been trodden underfoot by every one that has entered into that temple of ours, in which the Word of God has been taught…' (Inglis 1887: 32–33) (Figure 2).

Missionary structures were key symbols of the missionary enterprise that extended beyond simply their imposing visual prominence and representations of the idealised ordered Christian landscape to ontological purpose, particularly as some of the construction work involved large sections of the community and were centres for conversion. The inclusion of sacred stones within the structural elements of the buildings aligned with the theological intentions of the mission. The positioning of sacred stones within high traffic areas was intended further and continually to emphasise the supremacy of Christianity and to degrade and strip power and meaning from indigenous idols and places of worship.[16]

As per earlier LMS practice, and as exemplified in the case of the *natmas* Rangitafu from northern Aneityum, indigenous teachers and members of the wider community were encouraged to renounce, souvenir and surrender idols as incontrovertible evidence of a transfer of allegiance and as an example and inspiration to others (see also Ash 2020). Geddie noted in 1854 that teachers had been established at

15 This name seems clearly to be a Polynesian loan. In the neighbouring Polynesian Outlier of Futuna, it would mean literally something like 'sky-forest' or 'heaven-forest' (Dougherty 1983: 459, 522).

16 This repurposing was recorded as being practiced by the LMS in Polynesia. In Tahiti the floor of Ellis' printing office which was built in 1817 was partly paved with smooth basalt stones dug from the ruins of a neighbouring marae (Murray 1888: 5). Again in Tahiti, Ellis noted that 'Most of their former objects of worship were removed from temples, and some of those mutilated stone figures were actually converted into seats or benches at the doors of the building erected for Christian worship' (Ellis 1832: 337).

Figure 2. Rangitafu, the sacred stone used as a doorstep into the Aname Teachers Institute (Photo: Matthew Spriggs 2011).

Anumetch [Anumej] in the remote interior of the island and that they had recently finished construction of a new schoolhouse. The submission and souveniring of stone idols was a feature of the opening ceremony. 'I have sent some of our chiefs and Church members to be present at the opening of it. The people collected their former deities on the occasion, which made a heap of stones of various sizes and diverse shapes. The party who were sent brought a few of them home with them' (Patterson 1882: 365). However, while missionaries celebrated the submission of sacred stones, they were not completely naïve and were very aware that neither the motives nor the stones were always genuine. At the time of the great celebrations on Aniwa, Paton also noted that a number of people expected payment for the stones and were not very happy when it was not forthcoming, 'On being told that Jehovah would not be pleased unless they gave them up of their own free will, and destroyed them without pay or reward, some took them home again and held on by them for a season, and others threw them away in contempt' (Paton 1890: 192–93). Similarly, on Aneityum Inglis commented that although sacred stones were often said to be destroyed and or brought to the mission in a show of conversion, he thought that 'a portion of them were secretly retained' and continued to be worshipped periodically (Inglis 1887: 30–31). Oral traditions as recounted to us at Anelcauhat indicated that although sacred stones were relinquished to the missionaries and were then often buried, the same individuals would return at night to recover smaller stones. The much more obvious larger stones, however, were left in place to avoid exposing the deception.[17]

While the missionaries on Aneityum and those that followed soon afterwards on the other southern islands of the New Hebrides replicated some of the strategies of the LMS in Polynesia in relation to idols there was one aspect on Aneityum that could not be easily imitated. This was the collection of idols that could be ultimately displayed as trophies and evidence of triumph over indigenous deities to a wider public audience back home. Both Geddie and Inglis were well aware of the LMS Museum in London and the benefits generated in promoting the missionary agenda. However, the natural unmodified stone idols of Aneityum may not have had the same aesthetic appeal as those that had been shipped from Polynesia, and the practicalities of transporting stones that in some cases weighed up to a hundred kilograms or more further limited possibilities. There were though some efforts at imitating idol-display by missionaries in the southern New Hebrides and church institutions in various colonies. In the case of Aneityum, Inglis mentions a single rare carved wooden idol that was ultimately boxed up by Geddie and sent to Pictou, Nova

17 Recounted by VKS fieldworker Frank Inhat during the excavation of the sacred stones at Anelcauhat.

Scotia to be displayed in the missionary museum there (Inglis 1887: 35–36).[18] Paton was reported as showing idols from the New Hebrides when giving sermons at numerous churches when touring New Zealand in 1874 (Anon 1874) and Australia in 1876 and 1877 (Anon 1876, 1877) and Robertson, the Presbyterian missionary from Nova Scotia based on Erromango from 1872, organised an exhibition of 'relics and curiosities from the South Sea' at the Halifax YMCA in 1883 (Lawson 1994: 33). An exhibition at the Presbyterian Knox College Church Hall in Dunedin in 1910 included artefacts and idols from the New Hebrides (Anon 1910)[19]. However, by the mid-nineteenth century changing societal dynamics were impacting on what the wider public outside the Pacific were interested in and had access to and which consequently influenced missionary souveniring (Wingfield 2017).[20] When the LMS opened its Museum to the wider public at the beginning of the nineteenth century with displays of Pacific artefacts, with a particular focus on idols, it had few rivals. In London only the British Museum that had collections from Cook's voyages could claim to have Pacific objects from an earlier period that were accessible to the public (Coote 2017). But by the 1850s and 60s a whole number of museums were being established across the globe outside the church sphere and based on intellectual inquiry rather than missionising propaganda (Flexner 2016: 129–56; Lawson 1994). Alternative sources for Pacific Island material culture were also increasingly available from the mid-nineteenth century. Neither Geddie or Inglis appear to have been enthusiastic collectors for whatever reason, but certainly some of the later missionaries to the southern New Hebrides contributed large, generally relatively idol-light, collections of a whole range of artefacts to various museums located in their home countries, i.e. Scotland, Australia, New Zealand and Canada (Flexner 2016: 129–58, Appendix E).[21] The nature of these collections though was much more in the manner of the missionary ethnographer than the missionary trophy gatherer.

EXCAVATION OF SACRED STONES

The authors of this paper were all involved in a three-year field program of archaeological investigation on Aneityum that was commenced in 2013. Building on earlier pioneering research (Shutler *et al.* 2002; Spriggs 1986) the project's objectives were to investigate further the archaeological and environmental histories associated with the human settlement of the island over three millennia (Bedford *et al.* 2016). Anelcauhat was a very suitable location for such a project. The large flat upper beach terrace that stretches along almost the entire length of the bay is one of the few locations on the island that has not been affected by massive human-induced slopewash that has buried evidence of early occupation on many of the other coastal flats of the island. The large swamp located behind the terrace was ideal for environmental investigations and along with the beach terrace had already provided the earliest evidence for human occupation of the island (Bedford *et al.* 2016; Hope & Spriggs 1982). In the same location was the founding mission station where substantial surface remains could still be identified which aided in the discovery and interpretation of the extensive subsurface mission landscape (Jones *et al.* 2020; Zubrzycka *et al.* 2018). A major focus of the missionary period investigations was the two standing structures built of stone, the Geddie's third house and the large fourth church, but also the printing house where associated pieces of the cast iron press were still located. A fourth location of major interest within the mission station boundaries was where sacred stones were said to be buried. The only evidence of these that could be verified was the flat surface of a single large boulder (81 × 40.5 cm), with EDGAR inscribed into it (Figure 3a), that could be seen at ground level but that was also almost covered by the lawn of the current Pastor's yard. Its identification as a site of significance and the explanation that it was one of a number of buried sacred stones in that location were provided by church elders and members of the wider community.[22]

Excavations were undertaken in and around the area of the exposed stone during the field seasons of 2013 and 2014 with a total surface area of 12 m² excavated. Initial

18 This is described in detail by Inglis who in the same passage links the effort as providing the same purpose as the idols in LMS Museum in London (Inglis 1887: 36).

19 Billed as one of the 'most attractive' and 'interesting' of its kind ever to be presented before the Dunedin public. There were over 1000 items many of which came from various mission fields but had also been loaned by collectors who were said to be keen to support the church's mission of growing the 'beam of light in the darkness' (Anon 1910).

20 Pacific Islanders were also becoming increasingly Christian and former idols were harder to find and or were being well hidden. Geddie describing his departure from Aneityum in 1864 on furlough said 'he had sought for some of the old gods to bring home, but he could find no god on the whole island but the God who had made the heavens and the earth' (Patterson 1882: 472).

21 564 objects were recorded by Flexner in his study of missionary-donated material from southern Vanuatu held in foreign museums. They overwhelmingly date to the later part of the nineteenth and early part of the twentieth centuries when museums were actively encouraging missionaries to send varied ethnographic collections. Of all the objects recorded by Flexner there are only four small unmodified stones labelled as 'sacred' that are ascribed to Aneityum. They might be associated with natmas, although the connection is uncertain (Flexner 2016: 135, Appendix E).

22 These included former and current Elders of the Presbyterian church namely Phillip Shing, Kenneth Keith Yayohoi, Keith Kenneth and Lalep. VCHSS Fieldworker Frank Inhat and his father Jack Yauotau the oldest man on the island, also confirmed the stories.

Figure 3. Excavation of the sacred stones. a. Initial excavation with elevated boulder seen in foreground (2013); b. Deeper excavation revealed dressed stone debris on top of further basalt boulders (elevated boulder located in bottom left corner) (2013); c. Pit of sacred stones revealed after removing debris; d. Sacred stone pit highlighted with Pit 2 adjacent and Pit 3 in the northeast corner; e. Large elevated boulder removed to reveal pieces of beachrock debris that have been used to elevate and stabilise the 'doorstep'; f. Pit of sacred stones is defined and building debris is being removed from Pits 2 and 3. The elevated boulder has been placed at the edge of the baulk (Photos: Stuart Bedford 2013 [a–c, e] and 2014 [d, f]).

excavation quickly revealed that rather than a single sacred stone there was in fact a pit feature (1) filled with other basalt boulders both broken and intact that appeared to have been deliberately placed at the base of the pit which had then been levelled off with building debris, made up of lime plaster and mortar and waste associated with dressed beach-rock (Figure 3b). Further excavation revealed two extra pits nearby, (2) that was cut by 1 and (3) located adjacent. These were primarily filled with historic building rubble consisting of lime plaster and mortar and lesser amounts of dressed rock waste. Excavation of the pits provided a range of information including detail on their chronology, content, function and likely association (Figures 3c–f). Pit 1 was roughly rectangular in shape and dug to a depth of 35 cm[23]. It comprised basaltic stones both complete with oxidised surfaces and broken examples (Figure 3c).[24] These were all placed at the base of a shallow pit with the one exception, the large boulder that could be partly seen on surface had been deliberately placed above the remaining stones, and stabilised by dressed stone debris beneath it (Figure 3d and e), indicating its potential use as a step. Pit 2, that had been cut and filled prior to Pit 1, was circular in form and had been dug to a depth of 55 cms. It was filled almost entirely with lime plaster and mortar fragments (97%) which could be identified as having come from the walls and floors of a demolished building (Figure 3f). A small percentage (3%) of the fill was also made up of dressed stone debris. The extent of Pit 3 was not able to be fully defined as it extended beyond the excavated area but on one of its defined edges it appeared to be more rectangular in form and was dug to a depth of 50 cms. The fill that was excavated was entirely lime plaster and mortar fragments associated with a demolished building with no evidence of dressed stone. All pits were associated with missionary period buildings and construction activities and they provide indications that missionaries in their efforts to maintain an orderly and well-kept mission compound were consciously burying debris associated with disused buildings. Some process of deconsecration of the defunct mission buildings may also have been involved.

Other artefactual material amongst the fill of the pits was rare, although very informative. At the bottom of Pit 2 there was the base of a large ceramic crock which was associated with arrowroot production, collection and transport, a major occupation of the local communities that was encouraged by the missionaries to raise funds for the mission (Miller 1981: 1). Ceramic sherds, possibly from a single large dinner plate, with a blue on white transfer pattern of Blue Willow style were found largely amongst debris in the upper layers of Pit 2 but a single sherd was also found beneath one of the basalt stones in Pit 1. The accumulated data suggest that the three pits were near contemporary, dug within a short time period to dispose of earlier building debris and bury the sacred stones whilst at the same time constructing a new building. The single large basalt boulder that was deliberately placed above a further layer of basalt boulders is interpreted as being the doorstep into such a structure. The presence of dressed stone debitage is indicative of an upper time limit for the creation of the pits. There were two stone buildings at the mission station. One was the Geddies' house which had been completed by 1852, but it had been constructed with dressed stone that had been purchased from the trading station. The other stone building was Geddie's much larger stone church which was started in 1858 and opened in April 1860 (Miller 1975: 254). The beachrock used in its construction was sourced from the nearby foreshore and had to be dressed before use. Some of the debitage generated from this activity is most likely that found in the excavated pits and if so, would date to the 1858–1860 period.

While the sacred stones are buried at Geddie's mission station and he might well be credited with the deed, the inspiration to repurpose one of the larger stones as a step leading into a building may well have come from Inglis or, as had been the case in Aname, the local teachers or converts who were encouraged to show signs of negativity towards former sacred items and spaces. While there is no historical record of the burial of these stones or mention of the positioning of one of them as a step into a building, there is one location and building that can be suggested as being the most likely candidate. This was the new schoolhouse that had been completed in early 1861 just as a deadly epidemic broke out. Geddie noted that 'since the loss of our church (arson attack) we meet in a new schoolhouse, which was opened only a week before the sickness broke out' (Patterson 1882: 442). A schoolhouse is identified on a 1910 survey map of the mission property in a similar location to where the sacred stones were uncovered and not far from the stone church (Figure 4).

CONCLUSIONS

The ridicule and physical abuse of 'foreign' idols were deeply embedded in Presbyterian missionary psychology and philosophy with justification and guidance found in Biblical and the more contemporary texts and behaviour of the LMS missionaries who had come before them. This comes as no surprise as one of the fundamental objectives and drivers of the missionary enterprise to the New Hebrides and the Pacific in general was to usurp and replace indigenous deities. Tangible representations of those deities of course became a particular focus and in the case of Aneityum it was sacred stones, ranging from large boulders to pebbles, where *natmas* were represented. Public submission of idols was seen by missionaries as conclusive evi-

23 All measurements of depth given here are below the turf which was 10 cms thick.

24 The breaking of sacred stones was encouraged. Agnes Watt, based on nearby Tanna, when referring to mission progress on Aneityum mentions that sacred men had given up their practice and had broken up the sacred stones (Watt 1896: 197).

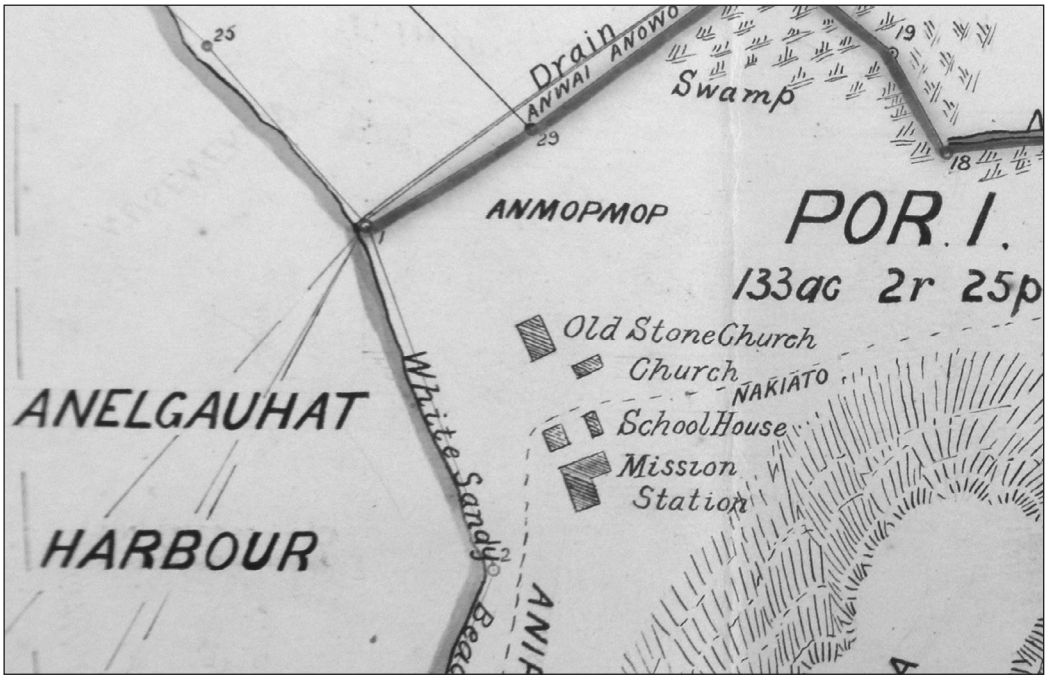

Figure 4. Section of 1910 survey map highlighting locations of mission buildings (Application for Registration 14, Portion 1, Anelcauhat. National Archives of Vanuatu).

dence of conversion and an added encouragement to others. Ongoing abuse and denigration of sacred objects was also standard practice. On Aneityum the placing of sacred stones in zones of high traffic where they were constantly trodden on provided a persistent reminder of the rejection of former deities and the supremacy of Christianity. The collection and burial of sacred stones at Anelcauhat, with one being placed above the others and utilised as a step into a building, echoes the practices of the LMS in Polynesia and is a direct parallel with the practices of Inglis at Aname, northern Aneityum. Strategic placement of such stones may have become such common practice that it hardly merited a mention, as in the case of those uncovered at Anelcauhat. Archaeological investigations of the 56 schoolhouses that were established across all districts by the late 1850s (Spriggs 1985:36) might well reveal that it was a widespread practice across much of the island in association with church related buildings.

The motivation to undertake archaeological investigations of the pit of sacred stones at Anelcauhat was guided by oral tradition as was its ultimate interpretation. The power of indigenous spirits or in the case of Aneityum, *natmas*, remains strong even today having been accommodated or melded with Christian teachings (Flexner 2016; Mitchell 2013). This was demonstrated at Anelcauhat simply by the fact that the burial of multiple sacred stones had been remembered for more than 150-years across a time period of extraordinary disruption. They also clearly retain their power and are therefore due appropriate respect. Both seasons of the excavation of the sacred stones and the associated pits was closely followed by all members of the community, both locally and across the island (Figure 5). The Elders were particularly satisfied although not surprised that their stories had been confirmed. During the excavation period we regularly requested as to what the community now had planned for the newly uncovered sacred stones? There was no hesitation from anyone, all agreeing immediately that once the research was completed, they wished them to be re-buried. This again emphasises that there is a continuing ongoing negotiation between *kastom* and Christianity in Vanuatu that began in the 1840s and continues today (Flexner 2016; Flexner *et al.* 2018).

Acknowledgements

This paper is dedicated to Angela Middleton whose contribution to mission archaeology has greatly inspired others to discover and or reassess a vastly under-researched component of key periods of history both in New Zealand and the wider Pacific. Fieldwork on Aneityum was supported by a grant from the Australia-Pacific Science Foundation (APSF 13–3), as well as financial support for the fieldschools from the School of Culture, History and Language (CHL) in the College of Asia-Pacific at The Australian National University. A number of students who attended the fieldschools helped in the excavation and recording of the sacred stones. Other supervisors on site including Drs Jack Fenner, Matiu Prebble and Frédérique Valentin variously added animated discussion to their interpretation or aided in their recording. Martin Jones of Heritage New Zealand

Figure 5. Aneitymese discussing sacred stones as they are revealed by excavation (Photo: Stuart Bedford 2013).

provided similar support on site and valuable comment an initial draft of this paper. James Flexner also provided valuable comment on a draft of the paper. Two anonymous referees improved the final outcome. The Chiefs and community of Anelcauhat were fully supportive of research in their area and were crucial to its success. The Vanuatu Cultural Centre fieldworker and the then-Chairman of the Island Council of Chiefs for Aneityum, Frank Inhat, was a guide throughout. We must also mention here Kenneth Keith who housed and fed the large group of students and staff involved in the research in Anelcauhat from 2013–2015 with great cheer and knowledge, who sadly passed away in 2018.

References

Anon. 1874. Religious Intelligence. *Daily Southern Cross*, Issue 5115, 14 January 1874, Page 7.

Anon. 1876. *Portland Guardian*, 15 August 1876, Page 3.

Anon. 1877. *Mount Alexander Mail*, 20 January 1877, Page 2.

Anon. 1910. A Missionary Museum. Fascinating Exhibits. *Evening Star*, Issue 14447, 17 August 1910, Page 5.

Ash, J. 2020. LMS engagements with Torres Strait Islander Spiritscapes: A typology of erasure. *Journal of Pacific Archaeology*, 11 (2): 90–100.

Bedford, S., Spriggs, M. & Shing, R. 2016. 'By all means let us complete the exercise': the 50-year search for Lapita on Aneityum, southern Vanuatu and implications for other 'gaps' in the Lapita distribution. *Archaeology in Oceania,* 51:122–30.

Coote, J. (ed.) 2016. *Cook-voyage collections of 'artificial curiosities' in Britain and Ireland, 1771–2015*. Oxford: Museum Ethnographers Group.

Crook, D., S. Bedford, M. Spriggs and M. Prebble 2015. 'Waste Not, Want Not'. Mission Era Appropriation of Sacred Stones in Aneityum, Vanuatu: An Ethnographic Approach to the Archaeological Record. Poster presented at Lapita Eight Conference, July 2015, Port Vila, Vanuatu.

Douceré, V. 1934. *La Mission Catholique aux Nouvelles-Hébrides*. Lyon & Paris: Librarie Catholique Emmanuel Vitte.

Dougherty, J.W.D. 1983 *West Futuna-Aniwa: An Introduction to a Polynesian Outlier Language*. University of California Publications in Linguistics 102. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Douglas, B. 1989. Autonomous and controlled spirits: traditional ritual and early interpretations of Christianity on Tanna, Aneityum and the Isle of Pines in comparative perspective. *Journal of the Polynesian Society,* 98:7–48.

Ellis, W. 1832. *Polynesian Researches, during a Residence of Nearly Eight Years in the Society and Sandwich Islands*. Volume 3. London: Fisher, Son & Jackson.

Flexner, J.L. 2016. *An Archaeology of Early Christianity in Vanuatu: Kastom and Religious Change on Tanna and Erromango, 1839–1920*. Canberra: ANU Press.

Flexner, J.L., Lindstrom, L., Hickey, F., & Kapere, J. 2018. Kaio, kapwier, nepek,and nuk: Human and non-human agency, and 'conservation' on Tanna, Vanuatu. In: B. Verschuuren & S. Brown (eds.) *Cultural and Spiritual Significance of Nature in Protected Areas: Governance, Management and Policy*. London: Routledge, pp. 253–265

Gardner, H. B. 2006. New heaven and new earth: Translation and conversion on Aneityum. *Journal of Pacific History,* 41: 293–311.

Gunson, N. 1978. *Messengers of Grace: Evangelical Missionaries in the South Seas 1797–1860*. Melbourne: Oxford University Press.

Hope, G. & Spriggs, M. 1982. A preliminary pollen sequence from Aneityum Island, southern Vanuatu. *Bulletin of the Indo-Pacific Prehistory Association*, 3: 88–94.

Inglis, J. 1854. Report of a missionary tour in the New Hebrides. *Journal of the Ethnological Society of London (1848–1856)*: 53–85.

Inglis, J. 1887. *In the New Hebrides: reminiscences of missionary life and work, especially on the island of Aneityum, from 1850 till 1877*. London: Nelson & Sons.

Inglis, J. 1890. *Bible illustrations from the New Hebrides*. London: Thomas Nelson & Sons.

Jones, M., Zubrzycka, A., Bedford, S., Spriggs, M. & Shing, R. 2020. 'Death and his body-servant': health, architecture and missionary endeavour at the Anelcauhat Mission House, Vanuatu. *Journal of Pacific Archaeology*, 11 (2): 34–46.

King, D.S. 2011. *Food for the Flames: Idols and missionaries in Central Polynesia.* San Francisco: Beak Press.

Lawson, B. 1994. Missionization, material culture collecting, and nineteenth-century representations in the New Hebrides (Vanuatu). *Museum Anthropology,* 18: 21–38.

Liua'ana, F.I. 1996. Errand of mercy: Samoan missionaries to Southern Vanuatu, 1839–60. In: D. Munro & A. Thornley (eds.) *The Covenant Makers: Islander Missionaries in the Pacific*. Suva: Pacific Theological Seminary and the Institute of Pacific Studies at the University of the South Pacific, pp. 41–79.

Middleton, A. 2008. *Te Puna: A New Zealand Mission Station*. New York: Springer.

Miller, C. (ed.) 1985. *Missions and Missionaries in the Pacific*. Symposium Series, 14. New York & Toronto: Edwin Mellen Press.

Miller, J.G. 1981. *Live: A History of Church Planting in the New Hebrides: Book 2 The Growth of the Church to 1880*. Sydney: The Presbyterian Church of Australia.

Miller, J.G. 1986. *Live A History of Church Planting in the Republic of Vanuatu: Book Four 1881–1920*. Port Vila: The Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu.

Miller, R. S. 1975. *Misi Gete: John Geddie Pioneer Missionary to the New Hebrides*. Tasmania: Presbyterian Church of Tasmania.

Mitchell, J. 2013. Objects of expert knowledge: On time and the materialities of conversion to Christianity in the Southern New Hebrides. *Anthropologica*, 55: 291–302.

Munro, D. & Thornley, A. (eds.) 1996. *The Covenant Makers: Islander Missionaries in the Pacific*. Suva: Pacific Theological Seminary and the Institute of Pacific Studies at the University of the South Pacific.

Murray, A.W. 1863. *Missions in Western Polynesia*. London: John Snow.

Murray, A.W. 1888. *The Bible in the Pacific*. London: J. Nisbet.

Paton, J. 1890. *John G. Paton. Missionary to the New Hebrides*. Second Part. London: Hodder & Stoughton.

Patterson, G. 1882. *Missionary Life Among the Cannibals: The Life of John Geddie, D.D., First Missionary to the New Hebrides*. Toronto: James Campbell & Son.

Robertson, H. 1902. *Erromanga: The Martyr Isle*. Toronto: The Westminster Company.

Shineberg, D. 1967. *They Came for Sandalwood: A Study of the Sandalwood Trade in the South-West Pacific 1830–1865*. Melbourne: Melbourne University Press.

Shutler, M.E., Shutler, R. Jr. & Bedford, S. 2002. Further detail on the archaeological explorations in the southern New Hebrides, 1963–1964. In: S. Bedford, C. Sand & D. Burley (eds.) *Fifty Years in the Field: Essays in Honour and Celebration of Richard Shutler Jr's Archaeological Career*. Auckland: New Zealand Archaeological Association Monograph 25, pp.189–206.

Spriggs, M. 1985. 'A School in Every District': The Cultural Geography of conversion on Aneityum, Southern Vanuatu. *Journal of Pacific History,* 20: 23–41.

Spriggs, M. 1986. Landscape, land use and political transformation in southern Melanesia. In: P.V. Kirch (ed.) *Island Societies: Archaeological Approaches to Evolution and Transformation*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, pp. 6–19.

Spriggs, M. 2007. Population in a Vegetable Kingdom: Aneityum Island (Vanuatu) at European Contact in 1830. In: P.V. Kirch & J-L. Rallu (eds.) *The Growth and Collapse of Pacific Island Societies: Archaeological and Demographic Perspectives*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, pp. 278–305.

Irving-Stonebraker, S. 2020. Comparative history and ethnography in William Ellis's Polynesian Researches. *Journal of Pacific History*, 55 (1): 1–17.

Turner, G. 1861. *Nineteen Years in Polynesia: Missionary Life, Travels, and Researches in the Islands of the Pacific*. London: John Snow.

Watt, A.C.P. 1896. *Twenty-Five Years' Mission Life on Tanna, New Hebrides*. Paisley: J. & R. Parlane.

Williams, J. 1837. *A Narrative of Missionary Enterprises in the South-sea Islands: with remarks upon the natural history of the islands, origin, languages, traditions and usages of the inhabitants*. London: John Snow.

Wingfield, C. 2017. 'Scarcely more than a Christian trophy case'? The global collections of the London Missionary Society Museum (1814–1910). *Journal of the History of Collections,* 29: 109–128.

Zubrzycka, A., Jones, M., Bedford, S., Flexner, J., Spriggs, M. & Shing, R. 2018. Misi Gete's mission house: archaeological investigations of the oldest surviving colonial building in the New Hebrides *Australasian Historical Archaeology,* 36: 38–46.