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The Euro-American Psyche and the Imaging of Samoa in the Early 20th Century

Max Quanchi

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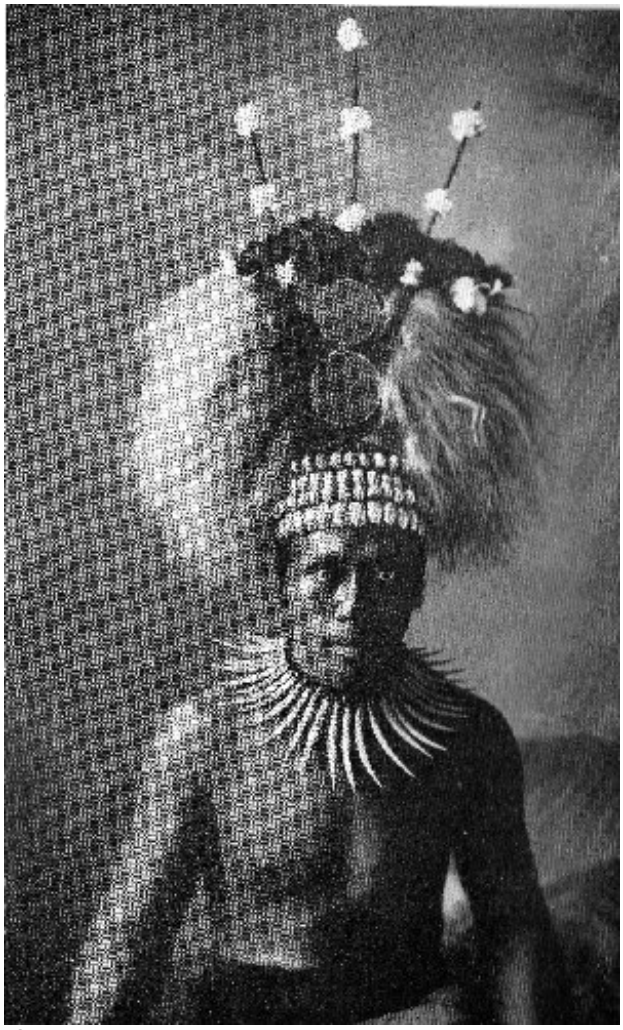
By Max Quanchi

Drawing on English language sources and material from Western Samoa (now Samoa), this examination of photographically illustrated serial encyclopaedia and magazines proposes an alternative historical analysis of the colonial photographs of Samoa, the most extensively covered field in Oceanic photographic studies. Photographs published between the 1890s and World War II were not necessarily from that era, and despite claims in the text of illustrated publications of an unchanged, enduring, archaic tradition in Samoa, the amazing variety of content and subject matter often offered contradictory evidence, depicting a modern, adaptive and progressive Samoa. Contrary to orthodox historical analysis, the images of Samoa in illustrated magazines and encyclopaedia were not limited to a small, repetitive gallery of partially clothed women and costumed chiefs.

At the end of the 19th and early in the 20th century, the editors of illustrated publications in Europe, Australia, New Zealand and the United States produced a huge archive of photographic images as a fascinated Euro-American audience glanced down jungle paths at hidden, "primitive" tribes deep in the jungle—a visual genre once *National Geographic, Asia, Wide World Magazine, Tour du Monde, Walkabout, Sphere, The Queenslander,* the *Auckland Weekly News* and other illustrated magazines became best-sellers. Motivations deep in the colonial psyche enticed photographers, magazine editors, postcard suppliers, photography studios and travelogue writers to publish images of the Pacific Islands—with captions such as "a native type", "a typical village", "warrior", "chief" or "belle"—in response to the rapidly expanding Euro-American interest in remote, indigenous people and a belief that all indigenous people shared a common material culture, rituals, dance, decorative arts, partly clothed bodies and a harmonious relationship with nature. The islands of the Samoan archipelago, divided into US, German and later New Zealand territories, were presented photographically, noted Alison Nordström, in "a few manageable and marketable clichés which consistently presented Samoans as primitive types inhabiting an unchanging Eden that did not participate in the Western world of technology, progress and time." [1]

A survey of photographically illustrated magazines, newspapers and serial encyclopaedia suggests that the "Samoa" found in the public domain at the turn of the century [2] did occasionally present simple depictions of life-in-nature and an archaic past. However, they were more likely to depict a modern, urban Samoa characterized by capitalist economic expansion and benevolent colonial administration, with school, governor's residence, plantation, street scene, rural road and harbor-front scenes representing progressive colonial rule. Photographs of a modern Samoa were more prevalent in the public domain than a traditional ornately dressed *taupou* (the leading chief's daughter) and *matai* (chief) posing in ceremonies and village settings. The typical weekly or monthly encyclopaedia instalment, illustrated newspaper or magazine pictorial feature was visually a mélange; being educative, promotional, ethnographic and an attempt at alterity, motivated by the photographer, author and reader's desire to accommodate and accentuate difference. As the choice to publish a particular Samoan photograph was market-driven, but also accidental and dependent on irregular access by editors to new photographic stock, borrowed postcards and mail from distant Pacific Island correspondents, the depiction of Samoa in the popular early 20th century illustrated media defies singular categorization.



"Samoan chief with headdress" (photographer "Martin, Auckland"). First illustration under "Samoa" in World of Today *1907, Volume 4, p.181*

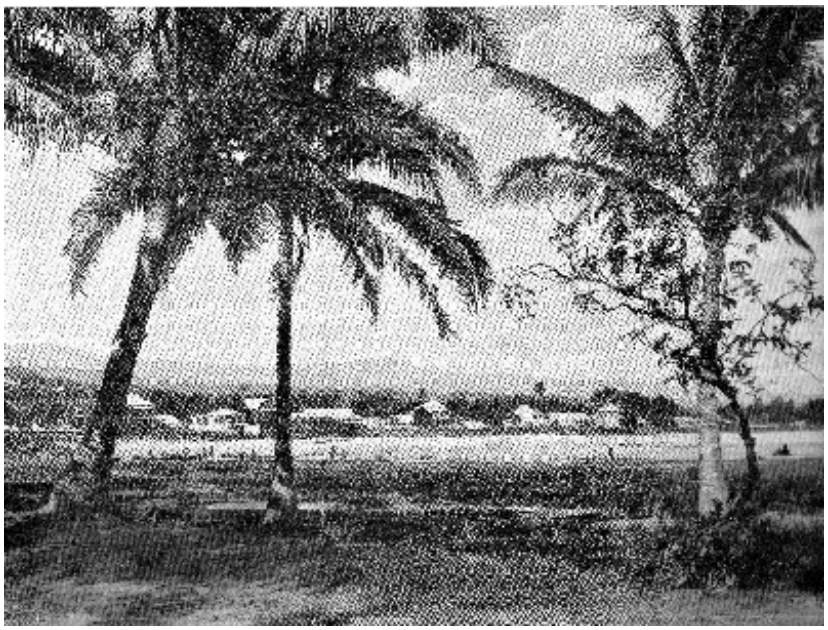
"Natives and canoe, Savai'I", under "Samoa" in The World of Today*, Volume 4, 1907, p. 187.*

A People of Legendary Proportions

The entry on Samoa in 1907 in the serial encyclopaedia *The World of Today,* included a studio portrait of a young man with an *ulalei* (whale tooth necklace) and an elaborate *tuiga* (ceremonial headdress). To remind readers of the authenticity it was captioned "Photo". The encyclopaedia's title page suggested readers would find "a survey of the lands and peoples of the globe as seen in travel and commerce" [3] and presumably the staff of British, American and German companies and the occasional ship's passenger would see men with similar physical appearance and dress should they visit Samoa. Readers were told Samoan men kept their hair long, wore it in "different fashions" and that warriors "affect a type of turban", but the photograph depicted a young man with short hair and a ceremonial headdress associated with rank and title, rather than a turban. The Samoan "type", characteristically a studio portrait, was already a cliché by 1907 and widely available in Apia, Auckland, Sydney and Europe as prints or postcards. In Apia, the photographers John Davis, AJ Tattersall and Thomas Andrew posed several anonymous young men around 1893 in the studio with a necklace, *tuiga* and often a club, as well as named and un-named young

women in similar exterior poses wearing *tuiga* and holding clubs or knives. [4] The continuing presentation of these staged portraits, and as I argue their misuse as signifiers of Samoa, is demonstrated by their use on the covers of two recent scholarly works on Oceania, in both cases using a portrait by Thomas Andrews. [5]

The last in the series of six Samoan photographs used in *The World of Today* in 1907 was a serene family portrait of a man, woman and four children sitting on small outrigger in a lagoon on Savai'i Island, the westernmost island in the Samoan archipelago. However, accompanying this image was a text warning of Samoan bellicosity, martial ardour, headhunting, throat cutting and war-mongering fleets that raided Tonga and Fiji. Were readers to assume the father was relaxing with his family during a respite from the usual round of brutal, grim unbridled savagery? The readers of serial encyclopaedia probably discounted the contradictions between text and image, being tutored early in the boom in published illustrated material that photographs were not recording reality, but what outsiders imagined of Samoa. However, we need to know more about the reading habits of early 20th century encyclopaedia purchasers, casual readers and photograph browsers—did they absorb discerningly both caption and image, or did they glance superficially at only the black and white and coloured photographs? As the two narratives were often opposed and unrelated, readers may have accepted that photographs carried truth and were therefore educative, and that captions, full of romantic, colonial and travelogue conventions, were merely entertainment. The author/photographer in Samoa also had little influence over captioning decisions by editors in Sydney, Berlin, Paris and London and captions often mediated the visual evidence in alarming ways. Although photographs, captions and accompanying texts projected contradictory meanings and opposing narratives, it seems editors and readers were comfortable with this manner of knowing Samoa.



"Apia, Samoa"; the second illustration under Samoa in World of Today*, Vol 4, 1907, p. 183.*

A staged performance of kava making, including elements of documentary, portraiture and ethnographic imaging, this was often published; see New World of Today*, Volume 8, p.165; and as a photogravure, see,* People of all nations*, Volume 6, p.4402.*

The four other photographs of Samoa in *The World of Today* in 1907 depicted Apia and its harbour front, a posed group portrait along the coast, a studio portrait of a woman with one breast exposed and captioned "Samoan *taupou* or village virgin", and a posed group portrait of children and youths outside a village *fale* (house) captioned "girls making kava". The youths were not making kava, although the central figure was seated on a mat behind a kava bowl. Other Samoan photographs had long histories, being republished decades later without indication

of their original date of production. For example, an *'alia* (double-hulled sailing canoe) photographed by Tattersall c1902 was intended as a present for the German Kaiser, and although one of the last of its kind to be constructed, it eventually broke up on a beach in Samoa, having proved too big to ship to Germany. The same *'alia* was named as a Fijian canoe in the *Cyclopedia of Fiji*. Photographs of this *'alia* were republished in popular and academic publications in 1907, 1926 and 1936 with the suggestion that it was typical of the presumably still current skills of Samoan shipbuilders and navigators. [6] Another Tattersall photograph c1900, of two Samoans with long fishing poles in a *va'a alo* (a sewn-plank bonito fishing canoe) was republished by Haddon and Hornell in Hawaii in 1936 and by *Walkabout* magazine in Australia in 1946 to suggest long-past, ancient, traditional technologies in harmony with nature. Both failed to note this type of canoe was still in daily use, and is so today. [7]

Could readers distinguish between past and present—was Samoa "unchanged by the years" [8] as *Walkabout* claimed in 1946? Would the ability to draw meaning from the image have been enhanced if readers were informed that certain canoes such as the *amatasi* (large outrigger voyaging canoe) and the *va'a tele* (large double canoe) had actually been displaced by the "modern" Fiji-inspired *'alia* some time prior to 1850? Because photographs were appearing out-of-time, were from different countries, and readers were not being warned about the appropriate chronology of the images, historians today have to be wary of arguing that in a defined era, one or other stereotype or dominant paradigm prevailed. For example, photographs published during the period of New Zealand administration after 1914 were not necessarily from that era. Secondly, despite claims in the accompanying text of an enduring archaic tradition in Samoa, the visual often offered contradictory evidence, depicting a modern, adaptive and progressive Samoa. Thirdly, the images being published in illustrated magazines and newspapers and serial encyclopaedia after 1900 were amazingly diverse in content and subject matter and although there was some repetition of partially clothed women and costumed chiefs, Samoans were mostly portrayed as the modern subjects of a progressive colonial regime. The following discussion, drawing on English language material, proposes an alternative historical analysis of the colonial photographs of Western Samoa (now Samoa), the most extensively covered field in Oceanic photographic studies.

The archive of late 19th and early 20th century Samoan photography is extensive [9] and grew from several very different motivations—the commercial trade by resident photographers in Samoa from the 1890s onwards, the insatiable demand by editors for pictorial material to satisfy the booming early 20th century postcard, illustrated book, magazine, encyclopaedia and newspaper trade, a desire by early museums and repositories to develop "Oceanic" collections (though these collections remained small and were subsequently overlooked), the visits of filmmaker Robert Flaherty [10] and the anthropologist Margaret Mead in the 1920s, the voyeur market in partially clothed bodies and belles and the colonial need for propaganda on the expansion of western commerce, capitalism and imperial control. These motivations to photograph Samoa overlapped. Margaret Jolly argues there was a "close connection between eroticism and exoticism and political and military colonisation" [11] and Alison Nordström adds that the Samoan coverage of magazines like *The National Geographic Magazine* arose from its "role as a vehicle for capitalist and imperialist ideology". [12] However, the visual material published about Samoa across this period suggests that ideologies, colonial rule, photography, audiences and editorial preferences changed between the 1880s and the 1930s, as did conditions in Samoa.

In constructing literary, art and photographic representation of Samoa, historians have typically concluded that Samoans were appropriated by this process. Peter Hempenstall summarised the orthodox historical view of the 1990s, stating "over and over images of the Samoan people have been cannibalised to construct a people of legendary proportions, a template for the fashioning of a wide range of European views about cultural differences, colonial history and the nature of the indigene". [13] Hempenstall noted that historical practice meant Samoans had become an "exemplary indigenous community caught up in the history of western imperialism". [14] In the 1990s, art, literary works, photographs and exhibitions about Samoa were discussed in a series of essays by Linnekin, Nordström, Webb, Edwards, Jolly, Mesenhöller, Fox, Megeo and Maxwell, but their analysis, periodisation and visual categorisation tended to privilege a very small gallery of photographs and ignore the full archive available to audiences in the public domain. This has a parallel in the influence that two French literary accounts of Samoa in 1787 and 1838 had, as Serge Tcherkezoff noted, on long-running "western misconceptions of Samoan adolescent sexuality". [15]

Underlying the earliest Euro-American and later revisionist 19th century literary and artistic interpretations of Samoa was a conventional Eurocentric sequence of first contact, expanding European control, annexation and global incorporation. In the wake of an affray during a visit by La Pérouse in 1787, the earliest Euro-American image of Samoans was of a distant, muscular, demonic, treacherous and savage race. Jocelyn Linnekin, in the first of the 1990s essays noted above, identified a process from "condemnation to vindication" and eventual revision due to missionary and literary rendering in the mid-19th century. In this change, Samoans were re-imaged from demons to peaceful, beautiful people civilised by contact with Europeans. [16] An extension of Linnekin's argument would characterise late 19th and early 20th century photographers as cementing the revised Euro-American perception of a peaceful Samoa. An extension of this argument into the 1920s would include the romantic, idyllic rendering of Flaherty's film *Moana of the South Seas* and Mead's *Coming of Age in Samoa*. [17]

Nordström argues that after the mid-19th century revision, Samoans were frozen, trapped and "consistently depicted as operating in an unchanging mythic past, unrelated to the realities of the dominant European/American world" [18] but Jolly correctly notes there is a gap between the "consistency of the trope in European visions of the beautiful, partially clad, usually Polynesian women … (and) the shifting character of colonial and strategic relations in the region". [19] Nordström elsewhere acknowledges that the "consistent reiteration of established marketable themes … ignored actual changes in Samoan culture." [20] Analytical confusion continued as Nordström noted, also correctly, that published images "almost invariably suggested topicality in a way that disallowed the possibility of cultural change". [21] Paul Fox, in a discussion on Samoan portraits, argued that visually Samoa drifted back and forth between European narratives of the self, the picturesque, imperialism and "the desire to envision the lost, pre-modern world by means of the representation of the indigenous as unaffected by change". [22] Elizabeth Edwards suggested the there-then often becomes the here-now. This transfer affected early 20th-century audiences, and recent scholars. Edwards concluded that "temporal and spatial processes entangle the event and its images" [23] and therefore tend to change meanings as different audiences view the same photograph. Edwards' seminal analysis of colonial photography raises the intriguing question of how readers in the 1920s and 1930s drew meaning from photographs they assumed were current but were taken in the 1880s or earlier and which were further manipulated by editors to suggest the "old Samoa" of pre-Pérouse days. The evidence in illustrated publications in the 1890s to 1930s indicates there was a degree of what Nordström called a "consistent reiteration" of images, but in Edward's terminology, changing "temporal and spatial processes" were also creating a huge and diverse gallery for Euro-American readers to view and absorb. In the huge photographic output in illustrated publications, Samoans were not depicted frozen in an archaic past and indeed it is difficult to discern any patterns or chronological sequences. In published photographs of Samoa the past and present were juxtaposed, promiscuous and orderless.

In a discussion of *The National Geographic Magazine*'s imaging of Samoa, Nordström privileges three "belle" images although a third of the

photographs published in the 1899, 1919 and 1941 editions of *The National Geographic Magazine* were of roads, plantations, towns, whaleboats and the US administration. Furthermore, captions reminded readers this was not a gallery depicting an archaic past. It was instead a gallery of ethnographic (even photo-journalistic) depictions of a living culture of *siapo*, *fa'alavelave* (reciprocal exchange of food and gifts), chiefly installation, prosperous villages and technically impressive *fale* architecture. [24] Despite claims of consistency of trope and reiteration, the evidence indicates that readers of illustrated serial encyclopaedia were confronted with an undifferentiated globalised iconography rather than a narrow, repetitive gallery of Samoan stereotypes in an unchanging South Seas paradise. Simply put, the visual evidence in mass-circulation illustrated publications does not support the 1990s orthodox academic view of how Samoa was imaged and imagined.

The weekly and monthly instalments of serial encyclopaedia and pictorial magazines were popular, widely available and inexpensive. Bought from newsstands, posted to subscribers or read in waiting rooms, they relied heavily on photography, were patriotic, educational and entertaining and offered glimpses of distant worlds to audiences in France, Netherlands, Britain and the US, all with colonies in the Pacific, and particularly in Germany with *Koloniale Rundschau*, *Petermanns Geographische Mitteilungen*, *Kolonie und Heimat, Bruecke zur Heimat, Koloniales Jahrbuch, Gartenlaube, Illustrierte Zeitung Leipzig* and *Globus*. [25] When instalment 37 of *Countries of the world* appeared, a British serial publication of forty-two instalments ending in 1925, also available as a bound set of six volumes, it presented Sir Basil Thompson's "Palm fringed Edens of Oceania" with twenty-three black and white photographs, one full-page photogravure and five full-colour plates. This issue also included eighty-three photographs of South Africa, Spain, Stockholm and South America. With 103 pages, four maps and 112 photographs, instalment number 37 was typical of the serial encyclopaedia format. Another of Thompson's articles, "Island life in the strange South Seas" appeared in 1926 in *Peoples of all nations* and included ninety-one photographs. Frank Fox's shorter article on Samoa in the same volume included one full colour plate, nine photogravures and nineteen black and white photographs. The visual content on colonies, countries and regions conformed to an editorial formula that had rapidly evolved after the halftone process revolutionised photography's use in printing. Each site was depicted in the same way—studio portraits in traditional costume, exterior group portraits that doubled as scenic views (by positioning the group in the foreground of a townscape, topographical feature, dwelling or village), material culture and symbolic aspects of European colonialism (roads, plantations, public buildings and wharves). This gallery, with varying emphasis on one or other of these categories, also can be found in serial encyclopaedia entries on the Middle East, Africa and Asia.

Sir John Alexander Hammerton, the editor of several illustrated serial encyclopaedias, noted there was considerable discipline demanded of readers as they switched in each instalment, for example, from Samoa to Spain, and then to South Africa, Sudan, Switzerland and Syria. He wondered if readers "ever had some slight sense of discomfort in leaping in the turn of a page from one end of the earth to another … a certain cogitation is desirable and possible between items in a work of this kind". He suggested to readers the "technical advantage conferred by alphabetisation" meant worrying incongruities would be obscured or mentally set aside. [26] Hammerton's commentary raises the unresolved question—did readers see an undifferentiated global mass of indigenous peoples, thatched houses and exotic views or did they label and memorise unique characteristics of each culture, tribe or clan? By replicating composition and setting, photographers added to the creation of a global stereotype. For example, in instalment 37 of *Countries of the world* both South African and the South Seas "natives" were shown sitting in villages, carrying out domestic duties and labouring in European enterprises. In *Peoples of all nations*, scenes in Samoa and those of a Peruvian Indian dwelling with a jungle background, a Filipino boy about to climb a coconut palm, Zimbabweans dressed in sailor's uniforms and a river-bank group assembling with their canoes could easily be read in a mediated, congruent and conflated understanding of the distant colonial world. [27] Was it Samoa specifically that the reader looked at or "natives" generally? This suggests historians, noting Hammerton's concerns, should analyse Samoan photography in the context of a globalising, photographic and homogenised "other".

Opening illustration to an eight-page photogravure section on clay-based paper in *Frank Fox, "Samoa; a paradise in the South Seas",* People of all nations, *Volume 6, 4401.*

Photogravure, in Frank Fox, "Samoa; a paradise in the South Seas", People of all nations, *Volume 6, p.4406.*

The opening photographs of Frank Fox's 1926 article on Samoa included eight individual and group portraits, with several doubling to provide a view of a *fale*, the braiding of '*afa* (coconut fibre or sennit) or *siapo* (tapa) making. [28] Two portraits doubled as voyeuristic poses. In three portraits, men and women were shown holding weapons. Two photographs of canoes, and two of dancing completed this introductory set. The following ten pages of colour plates and photogravure—where content and message was more pronounced because of the use of special paper, processes and colour—included eight individual or group portraits with two doubling as an *'ava* (kava) ceremony and a display of weapons, *tuiga,* and the *to'oto'o ma le fue* (staff and whisk of orators). Two photogravures depicted *siapo* making and the preparation of dough made from breadfruit. In the 1920s these images might have suggested an unchanged Samoa, but shirts, trousers, leather belts, trucks, steel shovels, umbrellas and cotton print *'ie lavalava* (wrap around) were also visible to remind readers that Samoa was not a land where time stood still, frozen in the past, and excluded from the modern world. In the 1930s-1950s Australia's *Walkabout* magazine focused much less on portraits including only two close-ups and one voyeuristic composition of a partially clothed woman in a stream, thinly disguised as a forest view. There were no studio shots. Two photographs of canoes and one of a village might have suggested an archaic Samoa, but *Walkabout's* readers were left in no doubt that Samoa was fully integrated into the modern world. The opening photographs included a fine road through a fenced, fully developed copra plantation, an ox-cart transporting coconuts, a dance performed on the sports ground for a large public ceremony and the impressive double-storied residence, "Vailima", Robert Louis Stevenson's old home.

Editorial control over imaging is demonstrated by a comparison between *The World of Today*, published in 1907, and *The New World of Today,* a revised edition published in 1922. Only one photograph, a group posed outside a *fale*, was repeated, A voyeuristic studio portrait of a partially clothed *taupou*, a studio portrait of a titled male in full costume, a view of Apia harbour and two group portraits with outriggers and coastal views as a background were replaced in the 1922 edition by a portrait of a young woman dressed in elaborate costume, the New Zealand Administrator's residence, the grave of Robert Louis Stevenson on Mt Vaia, a group portrait of sitting female dancers and a *fale* allegedly belonging to a "well-to-do" Samoan family. There is no apparent evolution or hegemonic discourse shaping this visual record. The portrayal of Samoa was more random than deliberate. If a further comparison is made between the photographs in *The World of Today* in 1907/1922 and the photographs in *Walkabout* and *National Geographic Magazine* in the 1940s and 1950s, a similar randomness is evident. *Walkabout* and *National Geographic Magazine* did present portraits of men and women wearing *tuiga*, dancing, chiefly ceremonies, food preparation, *fale,* canoes, "belles" and jungle views, but modern Samoa was also depicted in plantations, schools, Matson cruise ships, radio stations, churches and administration buildings.

The most noticeable pattern in the published photography of Samoa is the repetition of individual and group portraits in both studio and exterior settings. Studio portraits taken in the 1880s were published after 1895 when halftone reproduction began and then re-published for the next fifty years as a contemporary depiction of Samoa. Mesenholler notes 63% of the 272 photographs in a Samoan collection at the Rautenstrauch-Joest-Museum of Ethnography in 1911 were portraits. [29] In *Peoples of all nations* in 1926, 65% of the photographs were portraits and if several others are considered as doubling as both a portrait and a view of a *fale,* canoe or *siapo* making, the percentage would be greater. Nearly 50% of Frances Flaherty's photographs in *Asia* magazine in 1925 and 40% of *Walkabout*'s Samoan photographs in 1934-

1954 were portraits. There is no evolutionary sequence apparent in these portraits and they appeared in a random chronology. Even the indexical evidence is conflated and confused across the decades with some sitters carrying or not carrying wooden clubs or steel knives, some with or without *ulalei*, *tuiga, siapo, 'ie toga* or *titi* and dressed in or not dressed in ceremonial costume. The early studio photography that relied on conventional poses, costume, artefacts and painted backdrops to construct an idyllic, archaic, timelessness in Samoa had gradually changed to exterior locations, helped by new camera technologies and a wandering *flaneur* approach as the techniques of portraiture, propaganda and photojournalism began to overlap. That a very small gallery of mostly *taupou* studio portraits, is repeatedly privileged by academic debate and republication, indicates more about the research parameters of today's academics than it does about turn-of-the-century Euro-American perceptions of Samoa.

Conclusion

The claim that "photographs of women, almost invariably young, attractive and partially clothed predominate" [30] in the mass media is challenged by the material presented in serial encyclopaedia, and illustrated magazines and newspapers. A repetition of visual clichés representing a romantic South Seas is evident but not overwhelming. Portraits, scenic views, *fale* or '*ava* ceremonies, Nordström notes, could be republished in the 1920s and 1930s because their subject matter was consistent over several decades, [31] but to note that modernising and civilising influences were present, editors also added to the Samoan gallery a school, trouser- and shirt-wearing plantation workers, a double-storied Apia building or a truck transporting coconuts. Historians also need to acknowledge that images of Samoa in the public domain gathered several meanings as they made a "rapid and distant migration". [32] They were not simply "colonial documents" nor were they only "indoctrinating citizens in the ideology of progress". They were also artefacts of seduction and voyeurism, souvenirs of a Nineteenth-Century passion for collecting and an adventure taken from the comfort of an armchair. They served to contradict their origins and to "replicate the power relations of their production", and as Edwards suggests they "inscribe and present multiple spaces and multiple histories that have the potential to subvert the ideological discourses of the image's creation". [33] Serial encyclopaedia and illustrated magazines did not only portray "indigenous subjects as noble and ignoble savages preserved in pre-colonial time" [34] and it is misleading to categorise photographs as only promoting pro- or anti-colonial attitudes. There is no evidence in illustrated magazines and encyclopaedia that through photography indigenous people could "register their disapproval of (*Germany and)* New Zealand's imperial programme" nor is there sufficient repetition in the illustrated media to support a claim that certain photographers "concentrated on producing images that perpetuated the myth of Samoan's savagery." [35]

The evidence suggests some early 20th-century editors sympathetically depicted Samoans as both traditional and modern. Nordström noted *The National Geographic Magazine* occasionally depicted Samoans in an "unchanging mythic past" and indeed the popular illustrated media did promote a dialogue for readers between what Nordström called "unequal worlds", [36] but the day-to-day practice of early 20th century magazine and encyclopaedia editors contradicts artificial academic categorisations. The many thousands of photographs in the popular mass-circulation media cannot be categorised in narrowly defined dichotomies and oppositions. It is true that "certain photographs or clusters of photographs become signature images" [37] and this can be seen in studio portraits of Samoan men and women adorned with *tuiga,* or the *'ava* ceremony performed by partially clothed females in front of a *fale.* However, as Edwards notes, "extended discourse brings new contexts into play, which may constitute contradictions and which must be embraced by a different explanatory system". [38]

In the serial encyclopaedia *People of all nations* in 1926, the caption to a posed exterior portrait of a young woman claimed, "although royalty exists no more in Samoa, birth and breeding are manifest, as in the gracious figure of this girl of princely origin". [39] The facts are wrong, the combination of adornment and dress probably misleading, the princely genealogy of the woman suspect and its taking, perhaps thirty years earlier, obscured. The caption probably had little impact. For Euro/American readers, an understanding of Samoa came from the content within the frame. But, because each photograph had multiple readings, how can we know today what readers knew and retained about "Samoa" in both their private and collective memory? There is still much to discover about how readers reacted to the contradictory imaging of Samoa they found in the public domain in their weekly or monthly magazine and serial encyclopaedia instalments.

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Notes

1. Alison Nordström, "Paradise recycled; photographs of Samoa in changing contexts", *Exposure,* 28, 3, 1991/1992, 15.

2. For typical, profusely illustrated articles, see Basil Thompson, "British empire in Australasia; island life in the strange South Seas" in *Peoples of all nations*, Volume 2, 897-975; and Basil Thompson, "South Sea Islands; palm fringed Edens of Oceania", *Countries of the World*, 1925, Volume 37, 2925, 3768*,* 3789 and 3753-56 and the cover.

3. AHR Moncrieff, ed, *The World of today,* (6 volumes) (London 1907).

4. The naming of portraits was often random and confused by overlapping use of given name, title and honorific, as well as misspelling. For example, a John Davis portrait c1895 is named "Princess Fa'ane" (Casey Blanton, ed, *Picturing paradise; colonial photography of Samoa 1875 to 1925,* [Daytona Beach 1995], illustration 29, page 71) but is named "Sao Tama'ita'i Faamu, daughter of Malietoa Laupepa" in a slightly different pose in another portrait (Malama Meleisea, *Lagaga; a short history of Western Samoa*, [Suva 1987]*,* plate 1). Her full name is Fa'amusami Malietoa. Fa'amu; the shortened version of Fa'amusami, is misspelled Fa'ane on the Davis portrait. (I thank Lau Asofou So'o for alerting me to the spelling error). An early 1900s postcard made from the same photograph was anonymously captioned "A Samoan Dancing Girl". (I thank Max Shekleton for alerting me to this postcard; in the private collection of Max Shekleton, Noumea). Nordström notes the use of a portrait of Fa'amusami on a Muir and Moodie postcard from New Zealand, c1910 and on prints held by museums in the USA. (Nordström, "Paradise recycled",10 and 11-12.). For a more recent use see "Taupou", T Chande Lutu Drabble, *Tusi Pese Fatuga Tuai a Samoa,* (Pago Pago 2000), 128.

5. For Andrews portraits used as covers see Anne Maxwell, *Colonial photography and exhibitions; representations of the native and the making of European identities* (Leicester 1999) and Jeanette Mageo, ed, *Cultural memory; reconfiguring history and identity in the postcolonial Pacific* (Honolulu 2001). The print and postcard collection of the Powerhouse Museum, Sydney (Anne Stephen, ed, *Pirating the Pacific; images of trade, travel and tourism*, Sydney 1993, 40) and the pictorial collection of the National Library of Australia have similar portraits; Judy Annear J, ed, *Portraits of Oceania* (Sydney 1997) 97. See also Blanton, *Picturing paradise*, 71, 86 and 127.

6. This '*alia* appears in Augustin Kramer, *The Samoa Islands; an outline of a monograph with particular consideration of German Samoa*, 2 volumes, translated by Theodore Verhaaren, (Honolulu, 1902-1903), Vol 2, 282; Anon., *Cyclopedia of Fiji*, 1907, 184; Anon., C*yclopedia of Samoa, Tonga, Tahiti and the Cook Islands* (Sydney 1907), 15; JA Hammerton, ed, *People of all nations,* 9 volumes (London 1926), 4394 and AC Haddon and J Hornell, *Canoes of Oceania* (Honolulu 1936-38), 242. Kramer and the *Cyclopedia of Samoa* randomly used photographs from both Fiji and Samoa, of the *'alia* cited above, pap paw and bananas and dance groups; Kramer, *The Samoan Islands*, 165, 171, 282 and 367; *Cyclopedia of Samoa*, 12, 15, and 87.

7. Haddon and Hornell, *Canoes of Oceania*, 1936, 234. In *Walkabout* in 1946 this same photograph of a *va'a alo* was used as the opening or contextualising image; Lawrence Maine, "Report on Samoa", *Walkabout*, Feb 1946, 15.

8. Lawrence Maine, "Report on Samoa, "15-18; for other illustrated *Walkabout* articles, see HJ Manton-Hall, "Memories of Samoa", *Walkabout,* June 1936, 41-43; Myra Drummond, "Apia; pearl of the Pacific", *Walkabout,* March 1941, 13; and Eleanor Fleming, "Western Samoa", *Walkabout,* April 1951, 14-16.

9. Nordström notes that known US repositories hold 15000 photographs of Samoa dated 1870-1925; Alison Nordström, "Photography of Samoa; production, dissemination and use" in Blanton, *Picturing paradise*, 11.

10. Flaherty's wife Francis also published a series of photographically illustrated articles in the journal *Asia* in 1925. See Francis Flaherty, "Samoan immortals; Pictorial" *Asia,* 25, 5, 1925, 393-400; "Setting up house and shop in Samoa" *Asia,* 25, 8, 1925, 639-51 and 709-11; "Behind the scenes with our Samoan stars" *Asia,* 25, 9, 1925, 747-53; "A search for animal and sea sequences" *Asia,* 25, 11, 1925, 954-62 and 1000-1004; "Fa'a Samoa" *Asia,* 25, 12, 1925, 1085-90.

11. Margaret Jolly, "From Point Venus to Bali Ha'i; eroticism and exoticism in representations of the Pacific" in L Manderson and M Jolly, eds., *Sites of desire; economies of pleasure; sexualities in Asia and the Pacific* (Chicago, 1997), 99.

12. Alison Nordström, "Wood nymphs and patriots; depictions of Samoans in the National Geographic", *Visual Sociology,* 7, 2, 1992, 49. See also, H Abramson, *National Geographic; behind America's lens on the world* (New York, 1987) and C Lutz and J Collins, "Fashions in the ethnic other" in their *Reading National Geographic* (Chicago, 1993), 119-54.

13. Peter Hempenstall, "The colonial imagination and the making and re-making of the Samoan people", in HJ Hiery and JM Mackenzie, eds, *European impact and Pacific influence* (London, 1997), 65.

14. Ibid., 66.

15. Serge Tcheckezoff, *First contacts in Polynesia; the Samoan case 1722-1848, Western misunderstandings about sexuality and divinity* (Canberra 2004) 10.

16. Jocelyn Linnekin, "Ignoble savages and other European visions; the La Pérouse affair in Samoan history", *Journal of Pacific History*, 26, 1, 3-26. See also Virginia Webb, "Illuminated views; photographs of Samoa by Rev George Brown", in Blanton, *Picturing paradise*, 59-68; and Virginia Webb, "Manipulated images; European photographs of Pacific peoples", in E Barkan and R Bush, eds., *Prehistories of the future; the Primitivist project and the culture of modernism,* (Stanford 1995), 175-201.

17. This film and book have a critical and controversial historiography separate from any image-making role they played in Euro-American knowing of Samoa as a place; see Jolly, "From Point Venus to Bali Ha'i"; Sharon Tiffany, "Imagining the South Seas; thoughts on the sexual politics of paradise in Samoa", *Pacific Studies,* 24, 3-4, 2001, 19-50; and Jeanette Mageo, "The third meaning in cultural memory; history, identity and spirit possession in Samoa", in Mageo, *Cultural memory*, 58-80.

18. Nordström, "Wood nymphs and patriots", 51. See also Alison Nordström, "Samoa; stereoviews and stereotypes", *Stereo World,* 18, 4, 1991, 4-12.

19. Jolly, "Point Venus to Bali Ha'i", 100.

20. Alison Nordström, "Early photography in Samoa; marketing stereotypes of paradise", *History of Photography*, 15, 4, 1991b, 277. None of the photographs discussed by Nordström appear, for example, in a sample including the magazines and serial encyclopaedia *The World of Today, The New World of Today, People of all nations, Asia, National Geographic Magazine* or *Walkabout*.

21. This comment is repeated in Nordström, "Paradise recycled", 6-15 and Nordström, "Photography of Samoa", 15.

22. Paul Fox, “Portraits of Oceania”, in Annear, *Portraits of Oceania*, 15.

23. Elizabeth Edwards, “Time and space on the quarter deck; two Samoan photographs by Captain W Acland” in her *Raw histories; photographs, Anthropology and museums,* Berg, Oxford, 2001, 116-17; also see, Elizabeth Edwards, “Visuality and history; a contemplation on two photographs of Samoa by Capt W Acland, Royal Navy”, in Blanton, *Picturing paradise,* 1997, 49-58; and Elizabeth Edwards, “Negotiating spaces; some photographic incidents in the Western Pacific 1883-84” in Joan Schwartz and James Ryan, eds, *Picturing place; photography and the geographical imagination* (London 2003), 261-80.

24. Nordström, “Wood nymphs and patriots”; H Webster, “Samoa; Navigators Islands”, *The National Geographic Magazine*, 10, 1899, 207-17; LM Quinn, “America’s South Sea soldiers”, *The National Geographic Magazine*, 36, 1919, 267-74; Truman Bailey, “Samoa—South Seas outpost of the US Navy”, *The National Geographic Magazine*, 79, 5, 1941, 615-30.

25. I thank Peter Hempenstall and Andrea Schmidt for alerting me to the range of illustrated publications in Germany.

26. JA Hammerton, “From the editor’s desk”, *Countries of the world,* Vol 37, (London 1925), ii and iii.

27. *Peoples of all nations*, Vol 6, 1926; (Peru) 4042; (Philippines) 4106; (Rhodesia) 4213 and (Rhodesia) 4219.

28. Frank Fox, “Samoa” in *Peoples of all nations, Volume 6*, (Educational Book Company c1926) 4391-4415.

29. Peter Mesenhöller, “Ethnography considers history; some examples from Samoa”, Blanton, *Picturing paradise,* 42-44. 18% of images were of villages or dwellings and 15% of everyday Samoan activities. When the National Library of New Zealand collected 130 prints from Thomas Andrew c 1940, portraits were less dominant and European activities and scenic views featured more prominently; see Nordström, “Early photography in Samoa”, 280.

30. Nordström, “Early photography in Samoa”, 274.

31. Ibid., 281.

32. Phrases in the following paragraph are from Nordström, “Photography of Samoa”, 11; Edwards, *Raw histories*, 108; Maxwell, *Colonial photography and exhibitions*, 11.

33. Edwards, *Raw histories*, 109.

34. As claimed in Maxwell, *Colonial photography and exhibitions*, 165.

35. Ibid., 166 (my phrase added in italics) and 178.

36. Nordström, “Wood nymphs and patriots”, 51.

37. Edwards, *Raw histories*, 12.

38. Ibid., 109.

39. Frank Fox, “Samoa” in Hammerton, *Peoples of all nations*, Volume 6, 4407.