# Introduction

## *Sea of Revelations*

> Son of man, thy brethren, even thy brethren, the men of thy kindred, and all the house of Israel wholly, are they unto whom the inhabitants of Jerusalem have said, 'Get you far from the Lord: unto us is this land given in possession'. Therefore say, 'Thus saith the Lord God; Although I have cast them far off among the heathen, and although I have scattered them among the countries, yet will I be to them as a little sanctuary in the countries where they shall come'. Therefore say, 'Thus saith the Lord God; I will even gather you from the people, and assemble you out of the countries where ye have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel'.
>
> —Ezekiel 11:14–17 (King James Version)

In the To'abaita region of northern Malaita, Solomon Islands, thousands of followers of the All Pacific Arise movement actively prepare their nation for its destined return to Israel.[1] The biblical passage referenced above conveys a message of hope and restoration to adherents who see themselves as part of the exiled people of Israel. It assures them that, despite their sense of displacement, God has not forsaken them; instead, God promises to gather them from their scattered location and lead them back to their ancestral homeland. This envisioned return represents more than just a physical restoration; it embodies a renewal of their Malaitan identity as God's chosen people and affirms their spiritual and cultural significance within the region and the broader world.

All Pacific Arise is an evangelical Israelite theocratic movement with approximately 10,000 followers, distributed across dozens of villages within the To'abaita, Baelelea and Baegu-speaking communities (see Map 2), which collectively have a population of around 40,000.[2] The movement is Israelite because many adherents believe that they are descendants of the people of ancient Israel.[3] The movement was established by Reverend Michael Maeliau (1946–2021) in the mid-1980s, rooted in his so-called Deep Sea Canoe vision of a tidal wave originating from Malaita that would encompass the world and reach Jerusalem, heralding the final revelation of Christ. After studying theology in New Zealand and Papua New Guinea during the 1970s and witnessing

spiritual revivals in the region alongside participation in a prayer movement in Israel, Maeliau returned to his homeland of Malaita, 'wounded by grace'. Embracing a theocratic vision for Malaita, he became the movement's chief prophet, affectionately called Papa Michael by his followers. Though Maeliau passed away in October 2021, leaving a leadership void, the movement endures, continuing to inspire people in Solomon Islands and across the Pacific, particularly from Bougainville and Vanuatu.

Over time, in north Malaita the movement's theology and theocratic project evolved, and it underwent name changes from the Deep Sea Canoe Movement to the All Peoples Prayer Assembly to All Pacific Arise. But it retained its foundational eschatological vision of Malaita being a covenanted nation that needed to prepare the world for the Second Coming from the furthest reaches of the earth. Where Jesus spoke of the farthest reaches of the earth as the intended destination for the spread of God's word (Acts 1:8), from that position All Pacific Arise sees it has a key role to play in the return of this so-called Great Commission (Matthew 28:18–20). Acts 1:8 represents both a promise and a commission given by Jesus to His disciples shortly before His ascension. While the commission begins in Jerusalem and emphasizes divine empowerment for the spread of the gospel to all humanity, Maeliau proposes a second dimension to this mandate: the return of the gospel from the Pacific to Jerusalem.

The movement is grounded in multiple prophetic encounters across the Pacific and beyond, with the subtitle of this Introduction, *Sea of Revelations*, deliberately echoing Tongan scholar Epeli Hau'ofa's seminal essay 'Our Sea of Islands' (1993). Hau'ofa offers a powerful reimagining of Oceania that counters colonial and postcolonial representations of Pacific Island societies as small, isolated, and dependent. He instead envisions the region as a vast, interconnected 'sea of islands', a dynamic expanse defined not by the smallness of its landmasses but by the immensity of the sea that unites them. While Hau'ofa's framing of the sea is cultural-political, celebrating the capacity of Pacific peoples to 'craft lives that resonate with the mobility of the ancestors' (Salesa 2023: 9, 63–64), All Pacific Arise extends this vision into the theological. It reimagines the sea as a medium of divine communication grounded in ancestral depth and prophetic insight, where scriptures and revelations circulate across networks. As in Hau'ofa's account, the sea remains the vital connective tissue of the Pacific, but here it is also imbued with a scriptural and revelatory quality, transforming oceanic space into a site of theological significance and spiritual encounter.[4]

In seeking the return of the gospel from the 'sea of revelations' to Israel, communities gather in regular fellowship, participating in prayer, preaching, singing, and dancing as expressions of shared faith and prophetic expectation. Participants wear white-and-blue robes and the Israeli flag is elaborately dis-

**Figure 0.1** Prayer warriors during the inauguration of the Little Rock prayer mountain near the village of Afenakwai, north Malaita, 22 December 2015. Photo by Jaap Timmer

played alongside the flag of Malaita. Some of these gatherings occur at open forested spaces between villages. Large gatherings such as the Feast of Tabernacles or *Sukkot* to celebrate the Exodus from Egypt, nationhood and spirituality take place in the well-constructed Aroma Centre. At the Aroma Centre, individuals also participate in a continuous 24/7 prayer watch for the return to God's original design to be accomplished through Christ and fulfilled in the eschatological renewal of all things. Others gather at so-called prayer mountains to engage in fellowship and experience histories linking Malaita and Israel. The name 'Aroma' is inspired by the Spice Route or Maritime Silk Road, which, according to Maeliau, is a possible path through which Israelites dispersed across the Pacific and could also serve as a route for the eventual return of Malaita, as people see it prophesized to Ezekiel.

Maeliau has also outlined theological teachings and practical guidelines for social and economic frameworks designed to establish a theocracy. While a theocratic movement might appeal primarily to current or future divine mandates rather than past legacies, All Pacific Arise is concerned about the historical continuity of divine intervention and prophetic leadership. Adherents find this idea of historical continuity reflected in local histories and indigenous traditions. This shared reference inspires and encourages people to cultivate unity, justice, reverence for God, reconciliation across lineages and the legiti-

mization of the construction of a new society for the whole of Malaita. The envisioned ideal is a Christian nation of Malaita, where Christian principles and institutions are seen not as foreign, but as the divine manifestation of Malaitan identity, inherently aligned with its cultural essence. While recognizing that Christianization efforts of the early twentieth century were instrumental in ending warfare and, together with the government, promoting modern development, Maeliau emphasizes that the arrival of God's word represents a restoration of Malaitan ancestral custom (*kastom*).[5]

The term 'custom' was introduced during the colonial era to classify the traditional thought processes and practices of indigenous communities. As David Akin points out, 'custom expressed a British vision of Malaitan societies as ahistorical, static, and to some degree unchangeable' (2013: 7). At present, *kastom* carries significant historical associations and roughly refers to 'the complex of values, practices, and other expressions of ancestral or otherwise temporally deep knowledge that lend a moral structure to everyday life of a society' (Demian 2015: 92). By engaging with *kastom*, Maeliau ensures that individual memories align with the community's shared understanding of ancient and biblical rites, and what these mean to the society envisioned in All Pacific Arise. In order to foster that shared understanding, Maeliau draws on material traces such as mountain shrines where offerings were made to deceased ancestors.

The shrines for old worship feature a formation of rocks and forms a tabu-sanctum (*gwa biʻu*) where spiritual leaders or 'priests' (*wane ni foʻa wane* or *aofia*) used to sacrifice to ancestors (Hogbin 1939: 105-110; Keesing 1970 and 1982: 128–42; Maranda and Maranda 1970; Burt and Kwaʻioloa 2001: 15–29).[6] Furthermore, the shrines have historically served as maps of the ancestral past, rich with the legacies of prominent figures. Roger Keesing notes for the Kwaio that 'shrines and sacrifice, and the propitiation of ancient ancestors . . . provide a kind of mapping of the history of social relationships, an enactment of the past as it continues in the present, through the invisible but ubiquitous present and powers of the *taʔa baʔita*, "people of olden times" (lit. "big people"), who watch over their descendants' (1982: 85). The stone formations represent an enduring built environment, embodying a tangible reality that transcends the present.[7] They give material form to a spiritual social order that remains stable amid all the changes people experience.[8]

Maeliau interprets these shrines as linking Malaita to a shared Israelite heritage, arguing that their functions across the island exhibit striking similarities. In this view, Malaitan shrines constitute the most enduring *kastom* foundations for a Christian nation of Malaita, mediating time and serving as the portal between ancestral and Christian power. Rituals performed at the shrines weave these two forces together. Frozen in narrative time, the shrines facilitate a visionary exchange between Malaita and Israel, allowing power to flow in both directions. As sites of ever-present connections with the past, they bring to-

gether *kastom*, rooted in Malaita's original polity, with the present and future of the Christian nation. Malaitan shrines are no longer so much about emplaced narratives of origins, migrations, wars and so on, the groundedness of cosmology, or evidence in the politics of landedness (Rumsey and Weiner 2001); instead, they are presently enmeshed in the realm of scripture, a world seen as God's creation, and the visionary landscapes depicted by Maeliau.

Maeliau plays a pivotal role in shaping these new meanings of the shrines into a political theology by linking new revelations to this grounding in Malaita's *kastom*. The primary aim is one of history making in order to gain control over temporal change and political sovereignty since the introduction of Christianity. The histories that detail this are narratives of nationhood (Otto and Thomas 1997) and they assert a distinctive authority in support of claims to Malaitan sovereignty. Therefore, they also exemplify the profound interconnection between Christianity and politics (Tomlinson and McDougall 2013).

This book primarily examines the histories crafted by Maeliau and others who follow in his footsteps. Central to this exploration is an effort to understand notions of cultural continuity in relation to aspects of global evangelical and Pentecostal sensibilities, which provide frameworks for interpreting oneself and the world. I refer to evangelical and Pentecostal denominations together, as they merge within All Pacific Arise, blurring the lines between the two. Simon Coleman and Rosalind Hackett (2015: 10) note several commonalities between evangelical and Pentecostal: a mistrust of fixed and hierarchical liturgies, a strong emphasis on proselytizing, the desire for a 'personal relationship' with God and scripture, and the division between those who have and have not committed themselves to Christ. In addition, the 'grammar' of All Pacific Arise's theology and history largely follows David Bebbington's (1989) summary (as described by Coleman and Hackett [2015: 10]) of the key features of evangelicalism: conversionism (the need to turn away from sin and towards belief in God); Biblicism (scripture is the ultimate guide); activism (building an alternative state as an example this book explores); and crucicentrism (through Christ's sacrifice, spiritual life is universal). In the following sections I will introduce the origins of All Pacific Arise and the temporality of Malaita's covenant that forms the basis Maeliau's project and the histories that underpin it. Before I do that, let me outline the scope of this book and the underlying research.

## The Journey of My Research and This Book

*Prophetic Histories* does not aim to provide a comprehensive study of All Pacific Arise, nor does it serve as an ethnography of the movement.[9] Instead, it centres on a single individual: Reverend Michael Maeliau, the prophet-leader of the movement. By focusing on Maeliau, my aim is to highlight his theolo-

gies and histories that he developed for a group of people poised to embrace credible interpretations of their histories. I explore his speeches, sermons and writings, drawing insights from interviews and conversations with him, people close to him, and many others in north Malaita. Through this exploration, I seek to unravel the meanings of his prophetic histories – historical narratives that are interpreted, framed, or written in light of prophetic insight or theological purpose – revealing how they resonate with broader narratives prevalent throughout the region.

From 2003 to 2016, I made several visits of a few weeks, focusing much of my time in the villages of Manakwai and Ngalifa'asi, as well as the broader Malu'u region. Although the movement's congregation was too vast to cover comprehensively, my base in the predominantly Jehovah's Witnesses community of Ngalifa'asi allowed me to explore neighbouring villages, attend All Pacific Arise services and visit the Aroma Centre. These conversations, conducted primarily in Solomon Islands Pijin and English, were enriched by the assistance of many in identifying key concepts in To'abaita language, providing insights into the narratives and evolving theology of this dynamic movement. In addition, previous studies of To'abaita culture have been crucial foundations for my inquiries, especially H. Ian Hogbin's *Experiments in Civilization: The Effects of European Culture on a Native Community of the Solomon Islands* (1939) and Ian Frazer's 'Man Long Taon: Migration and Differentiation amongst the To'ambaita, Solomon Islands' (1981).[10]

I also observed prayer gatherings in Honiara and witnessed All Pacific Arise marches through its streets, where participants carried the Ark of the Covenant like the Israelites' march for the liberation of Jericho. I gathered impressions from onlookers and later reflected on these events in discussions with insiders, deepening my understanding of their significance. Above all, I spoke with Michael Maeliau on several occasions, having the longest conversations with him in Brisbane in June 2012 and during a two-week journey to Israel with a delegation, the so-called Jerusalem Council, from the movement later that year. During this trip, I also engaged with followers of the Jerusalem House of Prayer for All Nations on the Mount of Olives, a religious movement with which Maeliau has been affiliated for years, several Messianic Jews hosting the group from Solomon Islands, and members of MASHAV, Israel's Agency for International Development Cooperation, who had previously visited north Malaita. Additionally, I conversed with other prophets in north Malaita, spoke with the Honorary Consul for Israel in Honiara, and had discussions with government and development workers in Malaita working in collaboration with MASHAV.

At the outset, some interlocutors held reservations about my research, concerned that I might depict the movement in an unfavourable light. Familiar with anthropological literature on Melanesia and aware of how colonial officers often labelled religious movements, Maeliau was concerned that I might por-
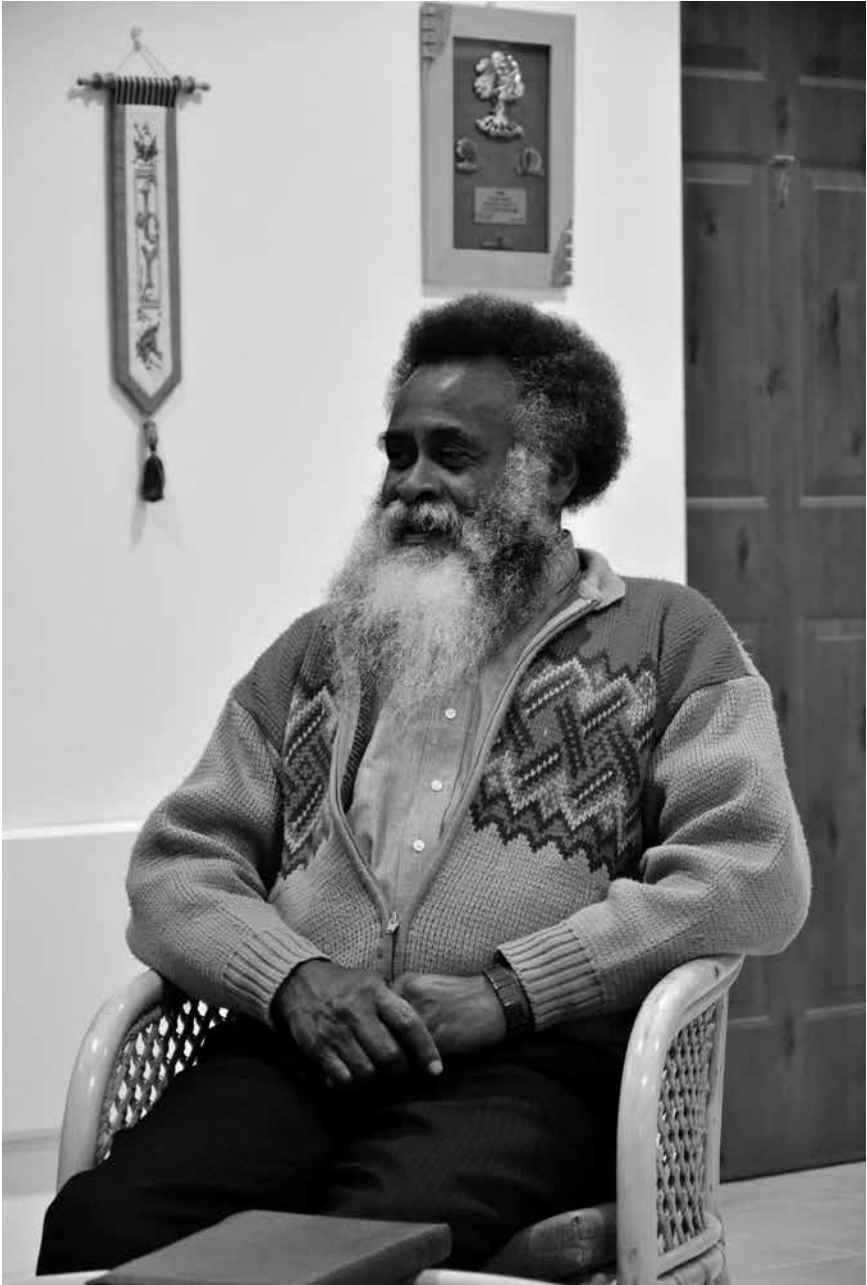
**Figure 0.2** Reverend Michael Maeliau during a meeting in Tiberias as part of an All Pacific Arise prayer convocation in Israel, 12 December 2012. Photo by Jaap Timmer

tray his movement as a 'cargo cult', driven by an irrational worldview and a self-aggrandizing charismatic leader. However, after Maeliau had the opportunity to read some of my writings, the perspective shifted. He grew to appreciate my attempts at understanding the movement. Nevertheless, Maeliau always continued to hold a degree of doubt about the extent of my grasp on the movement because of my agnostic perspective towards God. Nonetheless, he appreciated my inclination to transcend secular limitations within my academic discipline. This inclination is evident in the final chapters of this book, where I seek to incorporate the mystery of God into the framework of anthropology.

This book might be described as an 'ethnographic biography', akin to Michael Herzfeld's *Portrait of a Greek Imagination* (1997), which examines the works of novelist Andreas Nenedakis through the lens of an ethnographic understanding of various aspects of Greece. Similarly, this book's narrative of Maeliau goes beyond his personal life by focusing on his prophecies, thoughts and texts to explore broader sociopolitical dynamics, drawing on insights from other ethnographers studying history and religion in Solomon Islands and the wider Pacific region. This is not the first monograph to focus on the leading person of a religious movement in the Pacific. Perhaps most well known is Peter Lawrence's (1964) account of Yali's role in the cargo movement in the Madang District of Papua New Guinea. While Lawrence's book outlines the life trajectory of Yali, it offers limited insight into his evolving worldview, relegating the 'cosmic order' of the movement to a later part of the narrative, by which time Yali himself has largely receded.

Similarly, Paliau Maloat, the prophetic leader of a well-documented movement in the Manus region of Papua New Guinea, has received more scholarly attention for the narrative of his life than for the development and trajectory of his theological ideas. In a recent study drawing on Theodore Schwartz's four decades of observations of the Paliau Movement (1953–95), Schwartz and Michael French Smith describe Paliau as a 'protean figure, melding politician and prophet, moving smoothly between creating revolving loan funds and reinterpreting the Bible in a Melanesian idiom' (2021: 11). While they touch on his revelatory dream of Jesus showing him the true Bible and his Long Story of God, 'a religious narrative about creation, revelation and redemption' (Otto 1998: 83), and access to truth via *tingting* (a concept joining the spiritual and material), Paliau's theology is largely backgrounded in favour of analysing the political trajectories of the movement and the regional diversity of its cults.[11]

## How Malaita Became Covenanted

Prayer gatherings of All Pacific Arise are rooted in a longstanding tradition that dates back to the 1920s, when the South Sea Evangelical Mission sailed

around the region in the *Evangel* mission boat, staging Gospel Rallies of Conventions. The Mission was originally established in 1886 as the Queensland Kanaka Mission (QKM) on the sugarcane plantations along the Queensland coast, where thousands of Malaitans laboured from the 1870s to the early twentieth century (Corris 1973; Moore 1985). The QKM was founded by the New Zealand-born Florence S.H. Young on her brother's Fairymead sugar plantation near Bundaburg in 1880 (Young 1925). The Young family adhered to the theology of the Open Plymouth Brethren and drew influences from the English Keswick Convention. These two doctrinal streams introduced several foundational elements to the QKM: a rejection of hierarchical church structures, a strong emphasis on biblical rituals, a cautious stance towards the state and a commitment to interdenominational evangelism. From 1904, the organization became active in Solomon Islands as the South Sea Evangelical Mission (SSEM) which later became the South Sea Evangelical Church (SSEC) and 'Malaita's largest and most politically active church' (Akin 2013:28; Moore 2017: 28, 144).

The early Christian message to Malaitans revolved around personal salvation, which was seen as a divine gift bestowed through faith in Jesus Christ. It placed emphasis on direct communication with the Holy Spirit and the eternal grace of salvation above the pursuits of education and the advancements of modern development, exalting the soul's redemption as being most important (Young 1925; Ross 1978: 170; Barr 1983: 111; Burt 1994: 240–41). Revivals and awakenings were frequent, marked by moments when 'God's Spirit so overwhelmed the six or eight present that, one after another, they fell to their knees, pouring out their souls to God, laughing and crying with sheer joy' (Young 1925: 216). By 1906, hundreds of Malaitans were baptized, making up nearly a quarter of the Mission's converts, and many returned to Malaita to take Jesus back home (Moore 2009; Moore 2017: 144–50). Over the years, the SSEM has cultivated To'abaita spirituality through its enduring emphasis on autonomous community life, a sustained focus on living in a state of grace, and the mediation of spiritual power through prayer and divine revelation. And, as Ben Burt notes for the Kwara'ae of central Malaita, 'spiritual inspiration played an important role in the development of mission Christianity, as well as in reactions against it' (1994: 240).

Soon after the introduction of Christianity and government in the region, tensions began to arise between these two domains of power. As I will detail in the next chapter, these tensions were often the result of individuals struggling for power, but were also due to concerns relating to the moral and ethical principles of personal conduct and group formation. These concerns stemmed from changes in settlement patterns, rapid shifts in worldviews, and the emergence of diverse perspectives on traditionally assumed hierarchies, social roles, exchange obligations, mortuary rituals, the significance of ances-

tors, and shifting group and regional and island identities. More specifically, the introduction of government and mission regulations led to the erosion of traditional indigenous social structures, which were gradually replaced by government-appointed leaders and religious teachers whose allegiance to the mission varied. Traditional leaders lost power, and the new leaders forsook warfare and became inclined to look beyond the boundaries of kin group loyalties and obligations. As one of Ian Hogbin's informants told him this during his fieldwork among To'abaita in 1933 when he inquired about a famous ancestor:

> No! No! I heard all about that as a child, but now I do not think about such things. We young men cannot go to war, so the battles of our fathers are not important. Talk of battles we leave to old men and children . . . Fighting is finished. *Now we are one big people.* (Hogbin 1939: 159, emphasis added)

Christianity promoted the concept of a 'one big' unified people, with congregations grounded in a broader, universal theology. In other words, it encouraged forms of sovereignty that unite individuals within a shared Christian public sphere. Initially, Christian leadership derived its authority from engaging with the spiritual realm on behalf of relatively small groups. Over time, the formation of organized churches gave rise to religious teachers and leaders who provided pastoral, theological guidance and dispute resolution to larger groups (cf. Burt 1994: 234). Expanding these horizons further, many decades later, religious leaders like Maeliau began envisioning an island-wide unity for Malaita.

While it is useful to pursue a 'secular' explanation for why north Malaita became a fertile ground for the rise of All Pacific Arise, no single factor from the list below, or their combination, can fully capture the origins of the movement. Nevertheless, I will highlight several overarching themes that may shed light on its emergence. Over time, Malaita's population has been deeply influenced by labour migration, evangelical Christianity, anti-colonial protest, ethnic conflict and national political developments. While these influences are not unique to Malaita and are shared with other regions in Solomon Islands, Malaita stands out for its strong history of resistance, social discontent, engagement in sociopolitical movements, urban dominance, expressions of masculinity and pervasive feelings of marginalization (Moore 2017: 5–6). Additionally, as Clive Moore notes, Malaitans numerically dominate Solomon Islands. Malaita is the most populous province in the nation: around 175,000 or nearly a quarter of the total population of the country's population.

Since the early twentieth century and spanning the colonial era, Malaitans have been actively involved in labour trade, often through coercive measures introduced by the British government to incentivize plantation work in the

region and, as mentioned, in Queensland. This involvement extended to roles in military industries during the Second World War. Moreover, they have consistently held important positions in government and various business sectors, a trend that persists to the present day. The migration of Malaitans to the capital Honiara has resulted in increasing pressure on the customary lands of Guadalcanal, often angering local landowners. Landowners were also angered by increasing flows of settlers near the oil palm plantations east of Honiara and inadequate royalties from these plantations and the Gold Ridge gold mine about 30 kilometres southeast of the capital. Tensions between groups intensified as governance and political processes gradually deteriorated, accompanied by increasing corruption, particularly pronounced in the logging industry (Bennett 1987), which further worsened the situation.

From 1998 to 2003, consistent civil unrest and militancy, although not widespread across the entire nation, significantly impacted Guadalcanal, Malaita and Western Province. Western Province experienced this impact due to evacuees and the presence of Malaitan residents. Escalations of violence started with the forced removal, with the active involvement of political leaders, of tens of thousands of Malaitans from their homes, violent clashes between rival militias, the loss of around 200 lives, and a devastating political and financial crisis (Bennett 2002; Fraenkel 2004; Moore 2004; Dinnen 2008; Fry and Kabutaulaka 2008; Braithwaite et al. 2010; Allen and Dinnen 2017). An Australia-led Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI), spanning from 2003 to 2013, 'lent a fist' to a regional neighbour to reinstate law and order (Wesley 2023; Brown 2024). Having effectively suppressed the conflict, RAMSI swiftly transitioned into what can be termed as 'mission creep' (Powles 2006). The intervention evolved from its original scope of peacebuilding into an ambitious and expensive endeavour to build a state, concentrating heavily on bolstering the central government, the judicial system and the state police. Unfortunately, this approach rendered the peripheral areas largely stagnant and failed to acknowledge grassroots initiatives aiming to pursue justice and assert sovereignty from the bottom up (Hansen and Stepputat 2001; Das and Poole 2004). But, as I learned from people involved in All Pacific Arise in north Malaita (a region labelled by RAMSI as extremely volatile) around this time, they too often sought 'to be seen like the state' or 'to become like the state' (Scott 2009; Fisher and Timmer 2013).

Well before the conflict, concepts of state-like sovereignty were discussed in north Malaita, though largely through the lens of Christian theology and traditional practices. It has often been noted that throughout the Pacific, it is not state apparatuses but Christian churches and theology that reached far and deep and became a basis of national integration (Jolly 1994; Clark 1997; Young 1997; Timmer 2019; LiPuma 2000). As Bennett notes in her essay on new directions in the study of the decolonization of the Pacific, 'the churches reached

across village, language and island boundaries and bound together disparate peoples, an effect further enhanced by the ecumenism of the 1960s and 1970s' (2013: 324). As a result, the people who explore sovereignty include theologians, readers of international Christian literature, listeners to Christian radio broadcasts, those engaging with a variety of voices from regional preachers, visitors from Israel, a network of Messianic Jews in Israel and many others. As I will demonstrate in this book, through these connections, people inhabit multiple worlds, weaving their personal experiences into a collective and increasingly shared reimagined history.

## Exploring the Time That Remains

This reimagined history of Malaita intertwines an interpretation of Western historiographical narratives about the region's past with a renewed centring of the Pacific in its connection to Israel. After a significant revival in Malaita in 1970 (Griffiths 1977; Strachan 1984), which solidified the role of spiritual power within SSEC ritual, 'especially through spiritual 'gifts' that enable people to communicate messages and power from God' (Burt 1994: 242), prophecies have revealed to the people that their island is the first nation of the furthest reaches of the Pacific, which has been chosen to lead the way back to Jerusalem. As said, these prophecies strengthened the movement's connections to the older local traditions of ritual communication with ancestor spirits, as well as a return to the old QKM-SSEM tradition of fostering local autonomous communities. As a result, All Pacific Arise began to move away from the SSEC, cultivating a deeper sense of the Holy Spirit and prioritizing the autonomy of local congregations in north Malaita. Furthermore, these developments spurred the creation of novel historical narratives for Malaita, according to which the centre of the world and the start of the end of times are in the Pacific and Jerusalem.

This mapping of the world contrasts with European histories that bind Europe and the Pacific as antipodes and as interwoven fields of activity (Salesa 2023: 68). In addition, Salesa (2023: 22–23) observes that these histories have for generations implied that the lands and waters of the Pacific were void – uninhabited, uncharted or unclaimed. This enabled Europeans to manufacture a power vacuum, the notion that their own absence justified their eventual presence (cf. Banner 2007). Scholars have frequently mirrored this impulse, driven by what Salesa calls the 'need to write, to research, to speak, to fill a silence or perceived gaps' (2023: 23), thus sustaining a cycle of interpreting and 'discovering' where they presumed emptiness.

While European histories often follow a linear trajectory, the histories central to All Pacific Arise are shaped by unfolding events within the 'time that remains' – the interval between the already (the arrival of the Messiah) and the

not yet (the second coming) – giving them a distinct character (cf. Coleman, Hermkens and Tomlinson 2024). This time that remains diverges from *chronos*, which refers to time in its quantitative, sequential form, typical of conventional European historiography, a modern, teleological, clock-bound progress that moves from past to present to future. *Chronos* time casts Malaitans in a transitional phase between a time of darkness and the light brought by Christianity and modern development. In contrast, All Pacific Arise's provides a 'temporal sovereignty' (Rifkin 2017) that emphasizes qualitative, opportune or decisive moments. It is a time of *kairos* as French historian François Hartog defines it in his exploration of the Christian order of time (2015: 56–63; 2021, 2022). *Kairos* time emphasizes a direct and immediate connection to God.

Hartog shows how the Greek terms *chronos*, *kairos* and *krisis* have been employed from early Christianity onwards to grasp time and to play with it. Hartog defines *kairos* as 'opportunity, the decisive moment' (2015: x) before the judgment (*krisis*), and emphasizing a direct connection with God (2015: xiii). *Kairos* is 'an intermediary between the time of human beings and the eternity of God' (2015: 12). In All Pacific Arise, *kairos* is experienced as different from *chronos* – it is a millennial time that is Malaita's original temporality, rooted in its divine Israelite heritage. *Kairos* underscores a spiritual and theological reclamation of time, positioning Malaita at the centre of the Second Coming. Arguably the most powerful factor in the evolution of these histories is that followers of All Pacific Arise tend to be radically open to the Holy Spirit. Living in 'the immanent presence of God', as Maeliau tends to call it, opens their ontology into *kairos* but also into new spaces and deep times of a Christian nation.

To understand how members of All Pacific Arise navigate the linear flow of chronological time alongside the anticipation of messianic time, we need to acknowledge that the past shaped within All Pacific Arise diverges from histories grounded in conventional notions of historical veracity. Certain subjects, such as the events discussed in the next chapter relating to the returning plantation labourer and first missionary Peter Abuʻofa, the presence and functions of offerings to ancestors, and the anti-colonial Maasina Rule movement (1944–53), serve as reminders that the histories documented in this book are deeply rooted in the Toʻabaita cultural past. This cultural past is reflected in a collective memory of key historical events, an ensemble of ideas common to the group (Connerton 1989; Halbwachs 1992). That contemporary collective memory incorporates events that a classical historian might dismiss as lacking historicity, such as the idea that Malaitans already followed Judaic rules long before the advent of mission Christianity in the region because in the deep past, an Israelite ancestor from the Middle East landed on Malaita.

Maurice Halbwachs' (1992: 84–119) well-known chapter on religious collective memory highlights how religion functions as a framework for collective memory, shaping how groups remember and interpret their pasts in align-

ment with shared beliefs, practices and values. Halbwachs argues that religious memory is among the strongest as it is shaped through shared narratives in relation to rituals and symbols that guide how individuals recall events, often embedding those memories within a larger, sacred context. Importantly, religious memory does not simply preserve historical facts; it reinterprets them in light of contemporary needs and theological priorities.

While not mentioning the time that remains, Halbwachs highlights how religious memory operates within a sacred understanding of time and space that is not confined to linear, historical time; they are part of *kairos* and they are re-experienced cyclically through rituals and liturgical calendars. Thus, religious memory has a certain permanence as it addresses timeless truths and the fixed cosmic order:

> Below and outside the succession of events, the sacred beings of religion are conceived as supernatural substances that remain identical and escape the law of time. From then on, the religion of today is not only the commemoration of the past for believers; since his resurrection Christ is present in the Church at every moment and in all places. The Church can hence allow without the apparent contradiction that new revelations occur. But it tries nevertheless to link these new data to the ancient data and to place them within the body of its doctrine, that is, of its tradition. (Halbwachs 1992: 119)

Within this temporal framework, religious memory, like all memory, is a selective process of remembering and forgetting. Halbwachs' insights into religious collective memory emphasize how religion serves not only as a repository of shared meaning, but also as an active force in its creation. Rather than being static, religious memory is dynamic, continuously adapting alongside the community, while remaining anchored in foundational beliefs and traditions. Through this process, it sustains social cohesion and continuity, even in times of change or crisis.

Dipesh Chakrabarty's (2008) critique of the provincialism inherent in Europe's historical narratives is particularly relevant here. He argues that historical accounts are not simply built upon a universal framework of linear time and causality, but are instead deeply shaped by cultural differences. This challenges the assumption of a singular, objective history, highlighting the ways in which historical consciousness is always situated within specific cultural contexts and multiple temporalities. To analytically engage with multiple temporal orders calls for research that ensures that each receives recognition and appreciation proportional to its significance in people's lives. Such approach would, for instance, reveal when the principles of historicism, as critiqued by Chakrabarty, dominate due to their alignment with the temporal logic of

modern progress, and when spiritually or divinely influenced pasts are valued, adhering to distinct principles of time reckoning. This approach could serve as a critique of Chakrabarty, suggesting – along the lines of Carola Dietze's (2008) critical reading of his concept of 'history on equal terms' – that the aim should not be to deconstruct Western historicism, but rather to engage with it as one among many valid temporal frameworks.[12] Below, I will further elaborate on this insight to build a theoretical framework for identifying how people in Malaita navigate and utilize multiple and layered orders of time.

## Time Banditry

In order to explore the significance of engaging with different and multiple temporalities for the anthropology of Christianity, I will briefly discuss this field's concern with rupture since the works of Birgit Meyer (1998) and Joel Robbins (2004, 2007). Many of the theoretical contributions build on Joel Robbins' 2004 book on the Urapmin of Papua New Guinea and its ethnographic and theoretical focus on the break with the past. Robbins investigates how conversion to Christianity brought about a transformation in their temporality, generally in terms of the past having become a domain of moral torment. His monograph shows that the break with the past is central in the worldview of Urapmin converts to Pentecostalism and argues that this should discourage anthropologists from focusing too heavily on continuity.

The pre-Christian past has become a painful and haunting history of sinful ritual engagements with ancestors and the general constitution of society and ethos. At the same time, Urapmin began to enthusiastically engage with a transformative and apocalyptic future. The overall pattern Robbins discerns is that the outside culture of Pentecostalism with its emphasis on rupture continues to impact a culture that engages with it in its own terms (Robbins 2004: 117). It is not that a whole culture is thrown overboard with the advent of the acceptance of a new cosmology, but that the legitimacy of that culture is questioned, reframed in terms of threats to the new way of lives of the born-again who recognize 'the possibility, indeed the salvational necessity, of the creation of ruptures between the past, the present, and the future' (Robbins 2007: 10–11). Such breaks are indeed a central part of Christianity's theology and history, and have in many cases around the world led to novel notions of time that often include struggles between past and present, tradition and modernity, mundane and transcendence, and evil and divine. Across Melanesia, the theme of breaking with the past is pervasive, extending beyond the experiences of the Urapmin. This sense of rupture, often seen as both a hopeful promise and an experienced reality, manifests across various contexts, including religious movements, the emergence of social critique in and along-

side new political parties, and other innovative forms of social transformation (for instance, Jorgensen 2005; Eriksen 2008, 2009; Eves 2010; Hviding and Rio 2011; Hermkens 2013; Tabani and Abong 2013; Schwartz and Smith 2021; Bratrud 2022).

In her reflection on this trend one-and-a-half decades later, Naomi Haynes (2020) concludes that this field is too much coloured by the idea of rupture and is in need of new directions. For this, Haynes introduces the concept of the 'expansive present' to capture the way in which people on the Copperbelt in Zambia live the past as they structure it in the form of the scripture. Haynes uses the term 'expansive present' to describe a temporal orientation observed in Pentecostal Christianity, where emphasis is placed on the immediate moment as a site of divine action, spiritual engagement and personal transformation. This allows a prioritization of the here and now as the most significant locus of religious experience and agency, while still being open to the promises of the future and connections to the past. Such perspective affords a welcome wider space for recognizing how people transform the past into more than just memory and the future into something they might proleptically declare as now. Moreover, it highlights agency in terms of what Simon Coleman refers to as 'historiopraxy' (2011), the active process of shaping, performing, and reinterpreting the past to influence the present and future. Historiopraxy involves blending the repetition of past events with efforts to create new meanings or events, highlighting how people use history to make sense of the world and open up new possibilities.

Similarly, my study highlights the importance of recognizing people's active engagement with time as they strive to shape history and reclaim temporal agency within a spiritual framework of temporal existence in coexistence with *chronos* time. People actively participate in constructing historical narratives, serving as agents of history within a divine context of historical understanding. The significance of temporal agency is gaining increasing attention in studies of temporality, particularly in terms of exploring how individuals intentionally shape their own or others' experiences of time (Flaherty 2003; Ringel 2016; Moroşanu and Ringel 2016; Flaherty, Meinert and Dalsgård 2020). In line with these studies and to emphasize especially Maeliau's integration of widely recognized and commonly used temporal concepts to frame and promote historical narratives for Malaita, I suggest that he is a 'time bandit'.

Drawing on the theme of Terry Gilliam's 1981 British fantasy adventure film *Time Bandits*, Jan Ifversen shows that academic historians are like time bandits, leaping between different historical periods while simultaneously attempting to possess the map of history rather than simply drawing it (2017: 3). They are like the Supreme Being, who at the end of the film rolls the main character, Kevin, up in his map. Kevin, a history-loving boy, discovers a portal in his bedroom wall leading to time-travel adventures with a group of dwarfs

who have stolen a map of time and space. Together, they visit historical eras like Mycenaean Greece, Napoleonic battles and King Agamemnon, while being pursued by Evil, a force seeking the map. Ultimately, Evil is revealed as the Supreme Being in disguise, who orchestrated the events as a test. Kevin wakes up to a house fire caused by a toaster, sees a firefighter resembling Agamemnon and realizes that the adventure might not be over. The story ends with Kevin's parents destroyed by a fragment of Evil as the Supreme Being reclaims the map.

Ifversen emphasizes that while historians too are time bandits, they cannot freely leap from one period to another without considering the constraints of historical time. Instead, they rely on registers of temporal concepts that reflect uncertainty, rupture and discontinuity (2017: 10). This is in line with Reinhart Koselleck (2002) highlighting the significance of such temporal concepts in terms of how Europeans navigate time. His conceptual history (*Begriffsgeschichte*) examines the historical semantics of terms like progress, utopia and crisis. This allows him to highlight the intersections of multiple temporalities in terms of the *Gleichzeitigkeit des Ungleichzeitigen* ('the simultaneity of the non-simultaneous') – overlapping temporal layers (see Jordheim 2012). The concept of *Gleichzeitigkeit des Ungleichzeitigen* is valuable for my analysis of All Pacific Arise, as it highlights moments of interaction between the distinct temporal orders that I have provisionally identified as *chronos* and *kairos*. The meeting of these different orders may at times show 'a grinding of gears, when multiple temporalities overlap' and expose 'the way that historical accounts tend to "freeze" the events depicted even as the event is continuously reworked and altered by the telling itself' (Kleinberg 2017: 132; cf. Robbins 2016).

Furthermore, Koselleck recognized that human life is shaped by the gap between past experiences and future expectations, and it is through temporal concepts that we bridge this gap. Reflecting on the applicability of Koselleck's conceptual history to understanding Pacific temporalities, Chris Ballard (2018: 283) concludes that identifying the appropriate concept is crucial for articulating distinctly Pacific senses of temporal dimensions. In such a culturally diverse region, many concepts could serve this purpose and even for All Pacific Arise, one might pick a few, including 'prophecy' and 'genealogy'. However, the most central temporal concept connecting the lived past with the envisioned future is *kastom* because All Pacific Arise situates *kastom* within a biblical past characterized by Hebraic traditions, serving as a symbolic representation of Malaita's chosen status and the interconnected role of its inhabitants in the culmination of time.[13] The concept of *kastom* has received significant attention in studies of Pacific peoples 'as a liable and dynamic term of legitimation . . . as much as an ideology directed towards the future as the past' (Jolly 2013: 193, see also Keesing and Tonkinson 1982; Jolly 1992b; Lindstrom and White 1994; Rousseau 2004; Akin 2013; Demian and Rousseau 2019; Hirsch and Rol-

lason 2019). My study confirms this, and I will show how *kastom* 'celebrates . . . a quotidian continuity and creativity in indigenous culture' (Jolly 1992a: 193), an effective mode of action or way of doing things that includes ethical behaviour, law, religion, politics, etc. In its various expressions, *kastom* enhances the potential for a liberating framework of historical perspective. In the context of All Pacific Arise, *kastom* aligns with the three discourses identified by Geoffrey White (1993): (1) *kastom* as sacred knowledge, recognized as reflecting pre-Christian traditional and original Judaic traditions; (2) *kastom* as legal practice, or the guiding ethos of traditional society, seen as analogous to Mosaic Law; and (3) *kastom* chiefs, or customary leadership, now equated with biblical and masculine prophetic figures.

The conceptual history of *kastom* in All Pacific Arise demonstrates that *kastom* serves as the foundation for Maeliau's construction of a master map of the history of Malaita. His visionary insight enables him to speak about the present and future from the perspective of *kastom* in the distant biblical past, through which he perceives what is yet to come. Following Koselleck's theory, I will try to unearth the layers of temporality contained in this use of the concept of *kastom*. In order to do so, it is useful to develop a framework for identifying distinct orders of time as they shape the possibilities that *kastom*, prophecy, Christianity and 'secular' activities offer to interpretation, reflection and the constitution of society.

## The Historicity of All Pacific Arise

François Hartog's historical exploration of the European Christian order of time in *Chronos: The West Confronts Time* (2022) follows in the footsteps of his *Regimes of Historicity: Presentism and Experiences of Time* (2015), in which he introduces the idea of regimes of historicity to highlight moments of a crisis of time – historical periods when the natural order of time is disrupted. In this first major exploration of the usefulness of the concept, Hartog tends to treat regimes of historicity as emerging dominant categories that can elucidate the experience of time and not allowing much space for experiences of time that relate to previous, parallel or emerging regimes. While Hartog is aware of the importance of dealing with multiple regimes operating at the same time (2015: 110), he does not fully explore what this means for the emergence of regimes of historicity. In *Chronos*, Hartog's use of the concept of regime shifts from explaining the succession of regimes following temporal crises to examining how the history of Christianity, particularly through the efforts of church fathers, reveals attempts to mitigate temporal crises. These efforts involve reconciling the daily flow of time (*chronos*) with the 'time that remains'. In essence, Hartog explores how distinct temporal experiences shaped by different regimes are

perceived to clash, generating temporal crises, and how people respond by striving to resolve these crises.

With Christ's arrival, the pivotal event that had propelled history forward had occurred, yet it did not immediately signal the end of time. Thus, the 'time that remains' began to intersect with linear *chronos* time, creating a new temporal understanding that the apostle Paul wrestled with (Agamben 2005).[15] Hartog examines how through time, church fathers grappled with aligning this remaining time with *chronos*. A compelling example is Augustine's *City of God*, where he employs the concept of accommodation. Cain is depicted as the founder of the earthly city, while Abel ascends to the celestial city, with history alternating between these two realms. They remain separate: 'the city of God exists, then, both within and without chronos time, within the chronos time of human affairs and within a kairos time' (Hartog 2022: 68). Augustine's theology underscores the difficulty people face in reconciling disparate temporal orders. Yet, his and other attempts chronicled by Hartog to bridge the time that remains with *chronos* illustrate that examining these tensions between temporal frameworks yields valuable insights into how different temporalities are experienced and used.

Hartog draws on Koselleck's conceptual history to show that during moments of crisis, people contest the commonsense assumptions and expectations of an order of time. He pushes Koselleck's framework further to capture more globally how the past, the present and the future are articulated in relation to each other, expressing particular regimes or orders of time. As a result, the scope of Koselleck's theory is extended from German *Neuzeit* to the *ancien régime* of historicity to the modern regime (with the horizon of progress), the heroic regime (centred around a king as the force of social belonging), the epic regime (centred around perpetual renewal) and the 'contemporary regime of historicity' (presentism). All these examples highlight the applicability of the tension between Koselleck's two categories in other cultural settings. It is important to note that a regime of historicity is not a factual given – it never exists in any pure form – and that it is not a stage of history (Hartog 2015: xvi). A regime of historicity is, as Hartog emphasizes, like Weber's ideal type, a formal category without content 'which can elucidate our experience of time, and nothing restricts it to the European or Western world alone' (2015: xvii). This is also how I use 'regime of historicity' in this book: as a category for exploring the ways in which past, future or present are the dominant orders of time in the context of All Pacific Arise because certain forms of historical time are more possible than others.[14] This approach will enable me to illuminate the intricate interplay of temporal structures within All Pacific Arise.

Inspired by Hartog, this book tries to conceptualise what I call the prophetic regime of historicity prevalent in All Pacific Arise to highlight the contours of the shapes of history making in the movement. It will help to answer

questions as to why certain behaviour and certain forms of history making are more possible than others (2015: xvii). In addition, I will use the conceptual history of *kastom* to shed light on the interactions between the prophetic and the *chronos* regime of historicity as they evolve alongside each other. The concept of *kastom* emerges through interpretations, revelations and the structuring of narratives. Regarding narratives, it is crucial to recognize that the *kastom*-inspired pasts do not inherently contain narrative structures; rather, these narratives are constructed frameworks imposed upon observations, experiences, interpretation and other chronicles (White 1987). Hayden White emphasizes that every history is plotted or shaped into a narrative that weaves together various temporal dimensions. Greg Dening (1997) insightfully refers to such narratives as 'empowering imaginations'.

## The Chapters

Chapter 1 explores how Maeliau's theology for *All Pacific Arise* is shaped by the history of Malaita, which I will outline through the development of the socio-political thought of Shem Irofaʻalu, a key precursor to Maeliau. Irofaʻalu's political theology emerged from the dynamic interplay between early missionary efforts and the tensions between church and state in the region, influencing his vision of Christianity's role within the local community in northern Malaita. These ideas are framed within the emerging prophetic regime of historicity. To investigate the genealogy of this framework and situate All Pacific Arise within it, I focus on three key figures: Peter Abuʻofa, a missionary of the QKM in the late nineteenth century; Shem Irofaʻalu, who became a prophet during the Maasina Rule, an anti-colonial movement; and Maeliau. Together, these figures form a prophetic lineage that is central to the movement, connecting All Pacific Arise to the biblical tradition of prophecy.

In Chapter 2, I explore key dimensions of Michael Maeliau's theology and detail his life journey and the way in which he became a prophet following the 1970 spiritual revival in the region. Following an analysis of Maeliau's Deep Sea Canoe vision, I provide more body to All Pacific Arise's prophetic dimension of historicity as it revolves around prophecy in relation to ancestral burial and ceremonial sites, now widely known as shrines. These stone formations are seen as tabernacles brought by an Israelite ancestor. During prayer gatherings at these sites, people connect with that ancestry and related new pasts for Malaita. The shrines are now experienced as portals through which people travel beyond conventional historiography into biblical times and spaces. Such events happen in the time that remains and highlight tensions between the two regimes of historicity (*chronos* time and prophetic time) and showing layering of temporalities.

Within the constraints of the prophetic regime, those who embrace the idea of Israelite origins and construct new spatial frameworks blend ancestral lineages from the Old Testament with local genealogical traditions through kinshipping. Kinshipping involves movement through both time and space, and Chapter 3 examines several prophetic histories that connect Malaita to ancient Israel in that way. I will situate this technique of 'time banditry' within the broader context of similar efforts in the region. This comparative perspective reveals that attempts to establish an insular nation or kingdom are widespread and requires reconciliation between diverse ancestral origins and the notion of a singular ancestor. I then explore how these newly formed ancestral connections and emerging prophetic leadership exhibit a tendency towards masculinization, reflecting a 'gender nostalgia' that idealizes traditional gender roles from pre-Christian society. The chapter will conclude by examining how this and other social transformations are realized and promoted through the practical implementation of the theocracy, or Kingdom Model.

To further situate All Pacific Arise's theocratic nation-building project in the prophetic regime of historicity, in Chapter 4 I examine how histories are temporalized as they are deeply influenced by biblical narratives and an urgent *kairos* moment, and draw upon a combination of empirical events, interpretations of European historiography, toponomy and numerological insights. I show how certain histories situate place and nation names in both Malaita and the Bible, and I investigate numerical correspondences between contemporary prophetic events and those of the past. Through this journey, I aim to show that an examination of the prophetic regime of history must be intertwined with an understanding of *kastom* as it encourages individuals to identify recurring historical patterns in the temporalization of history. In essence, prophetic history in All Pacific Arise, as distinct from established linear and teleological history, remains deeply interconnected with *kastom*.

In Chapter 5, I examine how, in its interaction with *chronos* time, the prophetic regime of historicity generates a dynamic sense of historicity for Malaita that compels political agency. I first focus on a quest for the Ark of the Covenant by Maeliau to show how it serves as a unifying political force, binding Malaitans together as a nation. I then examine futuristic visions for Malaita as the land of Ophir, as articulated by Robert Kaua, who is currently engaged in designing infrastructure development across all nine provinces of Solomon Islands. Next, I analyse Maeliau's political campaign for a future theocracy and his plans for development of Malaita to further demonstrate how elements of the two historicity regimes intertwine in these cases. Finally, I discuss the 2010 Queen's Birthday speech by the Governor General of Solomon Islands, an adherent of All Pacific Arise, which links the political future of Malaita within the nation of Solomon Islands to historical connections between the nation, the Commonwealth and Herbert Armstrong's 1967 theory of British Israelism.

To offer a comparative perspective on political mobilization grounded in the Israelite theory for Malaita, I briefly recount the role of the Hamitic thesis in shaping the dynamics of the Rwandan genocide and connect this discussion to the growing perception of Malaita as an Israelite nation rooted in the Body of Christ, an observation that will also lead into a critique of individualization within the anthropology of Christianity. I conclude by arguing that the All Pacific Arise campaigns, their visions and historical foundations demonstrate how political consequences emerge from the interplay between the prophetic regime of historicity and the *chronos* regime of historicity.

In the Conclusion, I will briefly summarize the key findings of this book and discuss how my study of All Pacific Arise may contribute to integrating theological insights into Christian personhood and political theology. I will engage with recent discussions on the relationship between theology and anthropology, pointing out the current lack of clarity regarding how theology intersects with religio-political formations, often assuming the mystery of God's absent presence. The book closes with an argument for the need to acknowledge the presence of autonomous divine agency, an agency that cannot be entirely reduced to social constructions.

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## Timeline of Michael Maeliau

1946: Born in Dodaia (To'abaita-speaking region).[16]

1963: Attended King George VI Secondary School, Honiara; expelled in 1965 for leading a strike.

1966: Joined Royal Solomon Islands Police Force; resigned after one year to pursue ministry work.

1974: Graduated from the Bible College of New Zealand and Melbourne College of Divinity.

1975: Married Martha Safina Atomea; became a lecturer at the Christian Leaders' Training College, Papua New Guinea.

1976–83: Served as President of the Evangelical Fellowship of the South Pacific.

1980: Received a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Papua New Guinea.

1986: Received the key Deep Sea Canoe vision that inspired the movement by the same name.

1991: Initiated the South Pacific Prayer Assembly (SPPA) in Honiara.

1993–97: Founded and led the Christian Leadership and Fellowship Group; served as Minister of Home Affairs and Commerce.

1996: Hosted Pastor Tom Hess in Honiara and started attending annual convocations in Jerusalem.

1997: Awarded an OBE for church, community, and political service.

1998: SPPA's role in the worldwide prayer watch is officially launched in Jerusalem.

2000: Celebrated SPPA's tenth anniversary; climbed Uluru to urge Jesus' return.

2003: Received revelations in Papua New Guinea; SPPA renamed All Pacific Prayer Assembly (APPA).

2006: Ran unsuccessfully for national parliament as an independent.

2007: Witnessed Sir Michael Somare, Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea, sign a new covenant with God.

2009: APPA separated from the South Sea Evangelical Church; Maeliau defrocked.

2010: Buried the Deep Sea Canoe in Jerusalem.

2011: APPA held a global gathering in Taipei, hosted by Taiwan's indigenous communities.

2015: Received a message on the divine governance of Solomon Islands.

2018: Movement renamed All Pacific Arise.

2019: Attended final All Pacific Arise Council gathering in Israel.

2021: Passed away on 14 October after hospitalization for diabetes.

2023: All Pacific Arise movement symbolically laid to rest in Vanuatu; a rebirth is planned for October in Jerusalem.

## Notes

1. Throughout the book, I adopt the usage 'Solomon Islands' without the definite article, in accordance with contemporary conventions, particularly when referring to the sovereign nation-state rather than the geographical archipelago.

2. James Faiau, who hails from the region and has done research on All Pacific Arise (Faiau 2013), recently confirmed this number (personal communication, 23 December 2024). As the movement gained momentum in the mid-2010s, some gatherings swelled to thousands of participants, although most were smaller, typically attracting a few hundred attendees. The movement is widespread among members of the South Sea Evangelical Church across the northern Malaita peninsula, with a particularly strong presence in the To'abaita-speaking wards 7 (Fo'ondo/Gwaiau), 8 (Malu'u) and 9 (Matakwalao). According to the 2019 Population and Housing Census (Solomon Islands Government 2023), in these areas, evangelicals constitute approximately 30 per cent of the total population of around 16,000, making them the largest religious group. They are followed by Jehovah's Witnesses (25 per cent), adherents of the Anglican Church or Church of Melanesia (14 per cent), Roman Catholics (5 per cent), Assembly of God (5 per cent), Seventh-Day Adventists (4 per cent) and Baptists (4 per cent). Smaller religious communities include members of the Bahá'í Faith, the United Church and Islam. Among Baelelea speakers, All Pacific Arise has gained a strong foothold in wards 6 (Mandalau/Folotana) and 10 (Takwa), with evangelicals making up half of the population in ward 6. Among Baegu speakers, the movement also has

a presence in ward 11 (East Baegu), where evangelicals account for 15 per cent of the population. Collectively, the total population across wards 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 is approximately 40,000, with an estimated 25 per cent actively involved in All Pacific Arise.

3. Some elements within the movement seek bilateral relationships with Israel, aiming for mutual recognition and economic cooperation. While this aspect of All Pacific Arise can be characterized as Christian Zionist, the movement's broader theological framework is Israelite in nature.

4. In this book, I will use the terms 'the Pacific', 'Oceania' and 'Melanesia', while recognizing that this naming fails to fully capture the complex realities of these regions. Currently, there is an active contestation around these names, as well as the historical and future identities they carry (Salesa 2023: 1–17, 32–33, 44; kuʻualoha hoʻomanawanui, Christina Bacchilega, and Joyce Paulani Warren 2024: 1–3). I recognize that it is crucial to acknowledge the reclaiming and reimagining of the region by Pacific scholars and others, who have proposed alternative terms like Moana, Moana Nui, Vasa Loloa and One Salwara. However, to align with the terminology used in All Pacific Arise, I will refer to the region as 'the Pacific', 'Oceania' or 'Melanesia'.

5. There is a vast body of literature on the centrality of biblical books for (often puritan) ideas of nation and nation building (see, for example: Hastings 1997, 2003; Smith 2003; Bar-Yosef 2005; Kidd 2006; Mack 2008; Hammill 2012; Batalden 2020), including discussions of how nationalist longing and social reality can run tragically out of sync (for example, Havrelock 2020).

6. The book by Burt and Kwaʻioloa (2001) includes Samuel Alasaʻa's theology on Kwaraʻae shrines. Shrines were, according to Alasaʻa, the first landing places for Malaitans arriving from Asia on an ark (see Burt 1982), bringing the Ten Commandments as the basis of true, original culture of the Kwaraʻae people. The people engaged in All Pacific Arise have many connections with neighbouring Kwaraʻae, so it should come as no surprise that many of Alasaʻa's ideas resonate with the theologies of All Pacific Arise.

7. They may be seen to function similarly to Maurice Bloch's description of Merina Tombs in Madagascar. Bloch argues that these tombs are thought to 'demonstrate . . . the victory over time and also over movement' (1986: 169).

8. For an analysis of the ongoing importance of burial shrines and other pre-Christian sacred sites on Makira, Solomon Islands, see Scott (2007: 163–99).

9. For more details on All Pacific Arise, see: Timmer 2008, 2012, 2015a, 2015b, 2015c, 2022, 2024a, 2024b and forthcoming; Bond and Timmer 2017; and Timmer and Frazer 2023.

10. Hogbin began his anthropological career under the guidance of Alfred Radcliffe-Brown at the University of Sydney. He conducted fieldwork on Ontong Java in Solomon Islands. Later, when he travelled to London to work with Bronislaw Malinowski, he returned to Solomon Islands for fieldwork in Guadalcanal and Malaita (Beckett 1986; Allen and Hiatt 1989). His primary research on Malaita resulted in the publication of *Experiments in Civilization* (1939; see Mead [1940] for a review). Ian Frazer conducted his Ph.D. research at the Australian National University under the supervision of Derek Freeman and Roger Keesing. Frazer worked with Toʻabaita speakers in the village of Manakwai in north Malaita and in Honiara during three trips between 1971 and 1976. His 1981 PhD thesis, 'Man Long Taon', documents a high level of mobility for wage employment, a phenomenon initially described by Hogbin (1939: 160–65,

240–47) with respect to plantation work, and extensively studied on a larger regional basis by Clive Moore in *Kanaka: A History of Melanesian Mackay* (1985) with a focus on Malaitan manpower in the circular migration of islanders to sugarcane plantations in Queensland (see also Moore 2007; Moore 2017). Regarding the Toʻabaita language, a comprehensive linguistic study was conducted by Frantisek (Frank) Lichtenberk (1945–2015; Pawley 2015), which includes a dictionary (2008a) and a two-volume grammar (2008b). Apart from a detailed section in Hogbin's monograph, compared to neighbouring Kwaraʻae, there has not been an in-depth examination of Toʻabaita Christianity. Kwaraʻae have seen thorough research on the impact of Christianity thanks to the work of Ben Burt and Michael Kwaʻioloa. In particular, Burt's monograph *Tradition and Christianity: The Colonial Transformation of a Solomon Islands Society* (1994) and Burt and Kwaʻioloa's *A Solomon Islands Chronicle as Told by Samuel Alasaʻa* (2001) have served as sources of inspiration for the current study.

11.  Ton Otto (1991, 1998) provides further explorations of Paliau's theology.

12.  In line with Dietze's critique on Chakrabarty, the focus on interconnections between orders of time avoids the typical kind of anthropological dichotomization between dominating (chronocratic) and dominated temporalities apparent in recent studies (Bear 2016; Rifkin 2017; Taneja 2017; Kirtsoglou and Simpson 2020).

13.  This book thus contributes to an anthropology of futurity that, according to Ballard, might focus on 'the ability to project desire into the future and to organize and mobilize imaginative resources in support of that projection [and which] strongly reflects access to the spaces or opportunities necessary to engage in such activity [and] is also enhanced through practice and feeds directly into the capacity for action in the present or more immediate future' (2018: 289).

14.  For example, Hartog captures a certain regime for the European Middle Ages and Renaissance with the phrase *historia magistra vitae*, meaning that history provided examples and standards for the present. This regime was rejected in the time of the French Revolution and American independence, when the uniqueness of present changes was emphasized, leading to an orientation towards a better future as the key temporal standard in the following period of rationalism and industrialization.

15.  In *The Time that Remains*, Agamben applies a classical political theology framework to the messianic themes in Paul's *Epistle to the Romans*, uncovering what he describes as a 'caesura between constitutive and constituted power' (2005: 118). This approach enables Agamben to interpret the messianic as a 'historical process whereby the archaic link between law and religion' is disrupted (2005: 118). True to his broader intellectual project, Agamben engages with Christian texts to address contemporary crises of liberty, equality and rights. The work reflects Agamben's preoccupation with Carl Schmitt's theories of law, exception and sovereignty, presenting religion largely as a form of politics, stripped of its enigmatic or transcendent dimensions.

16.  A detailed timeline for the movement is available in the All Pacific Arise entry of the *World Religions and Spirituality Project* (Timmer 2022).