THE CHIEFLY CLASSES IN THE KINGDOM OF TONGA

BY

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We accept this thesis as conforming
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ABSTRACT

This thesis analyses the role of the chiefly classes in the Kingdom of Tonga during three distinct decades between 1770 and 1980.

Using six variables, the roles of the chiefly classes are compared and evidence is presented in support of a contention that the power base of the chiefly classes has shifted from the local village level to the centralized national government.

Dr. C.S. Belshaw, Supervisor
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INTRODUCTION

Many recent anthropological writings on Tonga have focused on the noble or chiefly class. Irving Goldman's *Ancient Polynesian Society* is in large part a study of systems of aristocracy. Goldman contends that:

"... in the larger historical perspective, aristocracies have been the agents of the most powerful and significant cultural developments." (1)

On Tonga specifically he notes that:

"...the Tongan status structure is built around two distinct principles: one, in a sense, linear, represents the clear gradations of genealogical rank via patriliny and seniority; the other, complementary, sets off one type of status against another." (2)

He further points out that this structure can be viewed as in a state of balance which is not static but, in fact, extremely active. The structure can and does allow for shifts in power relationships.

Marshall Sahlins, in *Social Stratification in Polynesia* (3), also writes about Polynesian society from the perspective of the chiefly classes. This is evident in his conclusion that in Tonga the patrilineal ha'a system can be equated with the kinship system. This conclusion could only have been reached

(2) Ibid, p.304.
by viewing the society from the perspective of chiefs. If he had written from the commoners' point of view the ha'a system would not have been deemed important and significant enough so as to bear comparison with the kinship system. Ordinary commoners did not consider themselves a part of the ha'a system. Elizabeth Bott (1982) says the following:

"In theory, the ha'a consisted of all descendants of the kings' sons through males, but in practice it was only the title holders and certain other leading families who were considered to belong to the ha'a. Close relatives on the male side and tehina and john of the title were also included. The ha'a was thus considered to be a thing that concerned title holders ..." (4)

Numerous other anthropologists have written on Tongan nobility. (Bott 1972, 1982; Coult 1959; Gifford 1929; Marcus 1980; Kaeppler 1971). Although the noble view of Tongan society is more widely represented in anthropological literature there are anthropologists including Beaglehole (5) and Aoyagi (6) who have written from the commoners' viewpoint about commoners in Tonga.

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The study of chiefs in Polynesian societies has long been of great interest to those who seek to understand life on these remote islands. The traditional role of the chief was important to maintaining the fabric of society and supporting local ideologies connecting the social, political, economic, and religious parts of the community.

In the 1770's, when Captain Cook visited Tonga, he was greatly impressed by the chiefly classes. Cook was particularly taken by the dignified behaviour which he witnessed. One story from Cook's journals tells of how the people would greet a chief by touching his feet with the palms and backs of their hands. This gesture was called "moemoe" and served the dual purpose of a respectful greeting and an opportunity for people of lower rank to remove the "tapu" (taboo) on using their hands. They would incur this tapu by inadvertently touching a chief or any of his possessions. After performing the moemoe, they would wash their hands and the tapu would be completely removed. The moemoe could be done on any chief of equal or higher rank than the chief or his possessions which you touched. Tu'i Tonga was the sacred king and had the highest rank in the land, so was very much in demand since a touch of his feet could remove the tapu of anyone. Cook's description of what sometimes happened is quite amusing:

(7) The notion of remote is used to mean that the distance from one island to another is great enough to prohibit regular contact. Despite this fact, the development of many islands' societal infrastructure is very similar and consequently represents a subject of great interest to those wishing to understand Polynesian society.
It appeared that the king could not refuse anyone who chose to pay him this compliment, for the common people would frequently take it into their heads to do it when he was walking, and he was always obliged to stop and hold up one of his feet behind him till they had done; This, to an heavy unwieldy man like him, must be attended with trouble and pain, and I have seen make a run, Tho very unable, to get out of the way, or to a place where he could sit down. (8)

Examples, such as this one, serve to illustrate how interesting and different life must have been in these small island kingdoms compared to Captain Cook's England.

The intent of this thesis is to compare the role of Tongan chiefs during three vastly different time periods. In Chapter 2, we will look at the chiefly classes between 1770 and 1780. This was the time of Captain Cook's visits to the Tongan group. He was so impressed by the people that he named the islands the "Friendly Islands". He and his men made a valiant effort to understand the society and were much confused by the number of kings. As Englishmen, they were accustomed to a one king monarchy, thus finding it very difficult to comprehend what they called the three king system of Tonga. It was a highly stratified society which had a number of forms of social differentiation which not only overlapped, but were often contradictory. (9) The difference between authority and rank in the Tongan kinship system is a good example. Within the

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(9) The main sources used to describe the Tongan nobility during the decade of 1770 to 1780 are Bott 1982; Gifford 1929; Cook 1961; Langdon 1977; Marcus 1980; Poulsen 1977; Goldman 1970.
social order there was a political aspect and a domestic aspect. As well, there was a system of patrilineal authority and a system of ceremonial rank. Translated, this meant that fathers and elder brothers had authority and control over access to land. Within the system of rank, however, sisters had a higher rank than brothers. Sisters did not have authority over brothers but they did outrank them. Fathers and brothers had the means to land, the right to command, and the ability to give, or withhold. Sisters had the rank and, consequently, the right to ask for what the brothers produced.

Chapter 3 will deal with the Tongan chiefs and nobility one hundred years later (1870-1880). This important decade represents a period of great change for Tonga. It was in 1875 that the Tongan constitution was promulgated and Tonga took its first steps into the international world of politics. The reigning monarch at this time was King George Taufa'ahau Tupou I. He had a strong belief that Tonga's only chance to remain an independent nation was to control western influences. He felt that Tonga could take on the facade of a nation state and still maintain many of its traditional ways. The political status of rank known legally as "the nobility" was created by King George Tupou I in 1875 as a major component of a series of reforms designed to complete and stabilize the westernization of Tongan society. The political centralization and the proclamation of the national constitution in 1875 were intended to assist in the emancipation of the population from the control of regional, independent traditional leaders or chiefs and the concomitant undermining of the basis of both chiefly
prestige and authority. (10) Chapter 4 will discuss Tongan nobility another hundred years later, between 1970 and 1980. The Tonga of the twentieth century can best be described as a "Compromise Culture" where one finds a blending of traditional and modern ways.

The main issue addressed by this thesis is whether or not one of the major changes which occurred over this two hundred year period was a shift in the basis of power for the chiefly class. Is it true that the power of the chiefly class gradually shifted from the local village level to a centralized location within the capital city and the national government? This question will be answered by comparing the role of the chiefly class in Tongan society during each of the three decades in relation to the following variables: (11)


(11) The six variables used were chosen by the writer and based solely on her decision that they would provide a basis of comparison in several areas which had some significance over such vastly different time periods.
(a) chief/noble access to the natural resources. This will be primarily a discussion of the chiefs' access to land as land is the most valuable and the most limited of the resources in Tonga. (12) As well, however, we will take a brief look at access to the marine resources;

(b) location of the chiefs' residence;

(c) legal/jural status of the chiefs;

(d) education within the chiefly class;

(e) state rights in relation to the chiefs and later the nobles; and

(f) church authority in relation to the chiefly classes.

The use of these six variables provides a common basis from which to compare the role of the chiefly class in Tonga over the three vastly different time periods. There are also, of course, a number of limitations, the major of which is that prior to the promulgation of the constitution there was no strict (in the sense of legally defined) definition of a noble. In fact, prior to the constitution it may be argued that there was not a nobility but rather a system of ha'a's which provided the society with chiefs. Ha'a is a kin grouping but is not common to all people. Goldman says "only the upper ranks can be said to belong to a lineage organization at all". (13) The ha'a is based on the grouping of chiefly titles, each group of which can trace its titles to a common ancestor. (14) This

(12) See pages 24-26, 43-46, and 68-72.


will be further discussed in the main text but it is important to recognize the change before and after the constitution as it essentially provided legal definition of the nobility. In the constitution the noble was defined as a chief appointed to the position of a hereditary title/land holding noble. The role of the nobility is dealt with within the clauses of the constitution and the provisions of the Land Act. These clauses and provisions cover three main areas relevant to the nobility: the nobility as it relates to institutions and the state; the nobility as it relates to their role as hereditary landlords; and the nobility and rules of succession for hereditary estates and titles.

Categories of the nobles' relation to church, state and education are slightly problematic because each of the variables themselves underwent rather drastic changes with the introduction of the constitution. The church, for instance, became a methodist version of Western Christianity. In fact, education, church, and state all took on western forms after 1875.
CHAPTER ONE

GEOGRAPHIC AND HISTORIC BACKGROUND

Before beginning the examination of Tongan chiefly classes, a brief discussion of Tongan geography and history including a review of early European contact with the "Friendly Islands", will be useful.

Among thousands of islands scattered near the Tropic of Capricorn is a group of coral islands known as the Friendly Islands. They consist of some 136 islands which extend between latitudes 15 and 23.5 and longitudes 173W and 177W and cover a total land and sea area of 360,000 square km. (1) Of this total area, only about 750 square km represent land and major island reefs. Recent government reports (2) indicate that only 36 of these islands are actually inhabited. The Kingdom of Tonga consists of three major island groups: Tongatapu and the islands to the south; Ha'apai and the central group; and Vava'u with its surrounding northern islands. In addition to these three groups there are the outlying islands some 200 km north of Vava'u which include Nuiafo'ou, Niuatoputapu and 'Ata. (See map on page 10)

The islands are of three types: volcanic, raised marine volcanic and coral limestone. The two islands which have the largest number of inhabitants, Tongatapu and Vava'u, are of


coral limestone and have soil which is extremely rich and fertile. (3) The average rainfall is about 2 meters annually but most of this occurs during the hot season so that droughts can and do play havoc with the crops during the cool season. While the soil is very rich and fertile it is not deep, so that there is little protection from high winds and rain. This fact, and the low, flat landscape of the island are certainly contributing factors to the almost total devastation of crops during the 1982 cyclone which swept through Tonga. (4)

The principal crop, grown primarily for export, is coconut. To increase the land's productivity a system of mixed cropping and intercropping under the coconut trees is used. This is combined with an extensive program of shifting cultivation and a bush-fallow technique to maintain soil fertility. In more recent years fallow periods have become markedly reduced due to increasing population pressure. (5) More intensive cultivation is being attempted through more sophisticated farming practices including the use of fertilizer.

Of the total area of Tonga only a very small percentage (.208% or 750 sq km) is land. The greater area within Tonga's boundaries is ocean. Food harvested from the ocean has always


(4) Ibid, p.4,7,10 & 17.

been an important staple and a source of protein for the people. Traditionally the rich fishing grounds were found along the coral reefs and inshore areas. These areas are presently unable to provide sufficient harvest to satisfy the increased local requirements and this has stimulated demand for alternative sources of protein. Such sources have included importation of canned fish and attempts to develop a local artisanal fisheries capable of exploiting fishing grounds on the outer reef and deep water slopes, as well as the deep sea area. (6)

Archaeological evidence suggests that the largest of the Tongan Islands, Tongatapu, was first settled around 1200 B.C. by the Lapita people from the Fijian archipelago to the northwest. It is believed that these people settled around coastal lagoon areas and lived primarily from the resources of the sea, cultivated crops and domesticated chickens and pigs. Between 1200 B.C. and the first millenium A.D., the Lapita (named Lapita from an excavation site on New Caledonia) people inhabited Tongatapu and left a legacy of ceramic shards, stone tools, shellfish hooks, shell ornaments and assorted other artifacts which have given archaeologists hints of prehistory. (7)


Linguists have been able to assist in the reconstruction of this early period by determining that the Lapita people of Tonga spoke pre-Polynesian, an east oceanic branch of the Austronesian language family. It has been suggested by archaeologists that between 1000 B.C. and 500 B.C. this language developed locally into the ancestral language of the area, today called proto-Polynesian. The next millennium eventually produced the proto-Tongic language and modern-day Tongan derives directly from this linguistic origin. (8)

Archaeological prehistory represents just one perspective on how it all began. When considering origins one must always acknowledge ethnohistorical accounts as well. These legends are passed down through the generations as a part of the oral history and many ceremonial traditions are still said to have had their beginnings in stories such as "The Creation Myth". (9)

THE CREATION MYTH

In the beginning there was just the sea, and the spirit world, Pulotu; and between them was a rock called Touia'o Futuna. On the rock lived Biki and his twin sister, Kele, 'Atungaki and his twin sister, Maimoa'o Longona, Fonua'uta and his twin sister, Fonuavai, and Hemoana and his twin sister, Lupe. Biki lay with his own sister and she bore him two children; a son, Taufulifonua, and a daughter, Havea Lolofonua; 'Atungaki also lay with his sister, who bore him a daughter, Velelahi; and Fonua'uta lay with his sister and she bore him a daughter, Velesi'i.

When Taufulifonua grew to manhood, his sister, Havea Lolofofonua, bore him a son, Hikule'o, Veelahi bore him a son, Tangaloa, and Velesi'i bore him a son, Maui. Hikule'o, Tangaloa and Maui divided the creation between them. Hikule'o took as his portion Pulotu, Tangaloa took the sky and Maui, the underworld. Hemoana, whose form was a sea snake, and Lupe, whose form was a dove, then divided the remainder between them, Hemoana taking the sea and Lupe taking the land.

Tangaloa had several sons in the sky: Tangaloa Tamapo'uli-'Alamafoa, Tangaloa'Eitumatupu'a, Tangaloa' Atulongo-longo and Tangaloa Tufunga. Old Tangaloa grew tired of looking down from the sky and seeing nothing but sea, so he sent down Tangaloa'Atulongo-longo in the form of a plover to see if he could find land. All Tangaloa' Atulongo-longo could find was a reef below the water, where 'Ata is now. So old Tangaloa told Tangaloa Tufunga to throw down into the sea the chips from the wood carving on which he was working. Tangaloa Tufunga continued to do this for a long time, and on two occasions Tangaloa'Atulongo-longo flew down in the form of a plover to see if anything had happened, but found nothing. On the third occasion, however, he found that the chips had formed an island. This was 'Eua. Later, Tangaloa Tufunga threw down more chips to form the islands of Kao and Tofua.

Tongatapu and most of the other islands were the work of Maui. One day Maui visited Manu'a and there an old man, Tonga Fusifonua, gave him a fish-hook. Maui went fishing with this hook, but when he tried to pull in his line he found it was caught. He exerted all his strength and succeeded in hauling the line in, to find that he had dragged up Tongatapu from the bottom of the sea. Maui continued fishing with this wonderful hook and so pulled up from the deeps the rest of the islands of Tonga, and some of those of Fiji and Samoa as well.

'Ata began as a reef below the water and slowly rose out of the sea. One day Tangaloa'Atulongo-longo visited 'Ata in the form of a plover and dropped a seed from his beak upon the island. The next time he visited 'Ata he found that the seed had grown into a creeper that almost covered the island. He pecked at the root of this creeper until it split in two. Then he returned to the sky. A few days later he returned to find that the root had rotted and a fat, juicy worm was curled up in it. He pecked the worm in two. From the top section a man was formed called Kohai. The bottom section also turned into a man called Koau. Then the plover felt a morsel left on his beak; he shook it off and it turned into a man called Momo. Kohai, Koau and Momo were the first men in Tonga. Maui brought them wives from Pulotu and they became the ancestors of the Tongan people.
THE STORY DIAGRAM

Kele = Biki
Knife = Longona
Atun = Gaki
Fonuarai = Fonuauta

0

Havea
Lolofonua

1

Lupe Henoana
(T Land) (Sea)

Tlikule'o
(Spirit World)

Tangaloa
(Sky)

Maui
(Underworld)

Islands of 'Eua, Kao, Tofua, 'Ata....

VELELAHI = Velesi'i

CREEPER AND WORM

Kohai = 0
Koau = 0
Momo = 0
(Who is It) (It is I) (Fragment)

ANCESTORS OF PRESENT POPULATION
Elizabeth Bott (1982) discusses this creation myth and relates it to some of the Tongan ideas about their political system. Kohai is attributed as having been the first Tu'i Tonga and Koau the second.

One of Tangaloa's sons, Tangaloa'Eitumatupu'a used to climb down a toa tree to visit earth. On one visit he lay with an earth woman, Va'epopua and she bore a son, 'Aho'eitu. The father returned to heaven and when the son grew up and became curious about his father Va'epopua directed him to the toa tree. 'Aho'eitu climbed the tree and found his father who welcomed him. The father had other sons of heavenly women and sent 'Aho'eitu out to meet them. He became concerned when his earth son did not return and suspected his other sons had killed him. The sons denied this but Tangaloa'Eitumatupu made each vomit into a bowl. They all vomitted flesh and blood and 'Aho'eitu came back to life. The father called all the sons together and sent 'Aho'eitu back to earth to take over as Tu'i Tonga replacing the line of Kohai and Koau.

In this story the interesting feature is that 'Aho'eitu was the youngest son and yet was chosen to become Tu'i Tonga. Normally it would have been the oldest son. In this case what overrode seniority was the fact that 'Aho'eitu could rule on earth because he had the support of his mother and her people. According to Queen Salote, in her conversations with Elizabeth Bott, this situation was repeated many times in Tonga's history.
"...it was the mother's people who gave support to an aspiring chief, and if they were not strong he had little chance of success. It was difficult for a chief to get an established following on a new island unless his mother came from that island, or unless he himself married women from the island". (10)

Myths, legends and genealogies all help to reconstruct parts of Tonga's prehistory. The period which is remembered through oral history is approximately from 1000 A.D. to the first written records of the European explorers in the 17th century -- a period known as the "Classical Tongan" period. Much information has been preserved and recorded about this era through the help of a committee set up by Queen Salote. The Tonga Traditions Committee (11) is still in existence today and has done much to ensure that part of Tonga's history will never be lost.

Genealogical records have unequivocally shown that Tonga had a highly developed social system in operation long before the arrival of the Europeans. Gifford, in Tongan Society, (12) explains how this population was once stratified into three social classes consisting of the chiefs, the chief's assistants


(11) The Tonga Traditions Committee is a committee formed by the government of Tonga and maintains a file in the Palace Records Office, Nuku'alofa of documents relevant to Tonga's history. Included in their collection is assorted family genealogies, "Tohi 'o 'Ene 'Afio" (The Book of Queen Salote Tupou) and "Discussions on Tongan Custom 1958-1960." Many of these documents were based on Queen Salote's view of Tongan history.

or Matapules and commoners. There was even, within the class of chiefs, a system of hierarchy. Originally, the paramount ruler was called Tu'i Tonga. The first known Tu'i Tonga ruled around 950 A.D. and was thought to be the son of the sun god Tangaloa. From 950 A.D. until about 1450 A.D. Tu'i Tonga and his successors ruled both the spiritual and the temporal worlds of Tonga. The 24th Tu'i Tonga divided his powers and handed over control of the temporal powers to his brother, so that a new dynasty was created under the title of Tu'i Ha'atakalaua. During the early part of the 17th century, another dynasty with the title Tu'i Kanokupolu was created (13) and the duty of this new dynasty was the administration of the country. (14) The duties of the Tu'i Ha'atakalaua and his control over the temporal world gradually diminished as Tu'i Kanokupolu became more powerful. Tu'i Tonga and his power in the spiritual world, maintained its importance but was, increasingly over time, regarded as a ceremonial function. Tu'i Tonga's powers did eventually become obsolete with the introduction of Christianity. After this time, all three titles became merged into one and the Tu'i Kanokupolu became the sovereign of all Tonga. It is from this genealogical line that the


(14) The basic reason for the splitting up of the powers of the Tu'i Tonga into the sacred and secular was because a number of Tu'i Tonga were reported to have been assassinated in the fifteenth century. The twenty-fourth Tu'i Tonga split the responsibilities in an effort to avoid being singled out as the only leader.
present day H.M. King Taufa'ahau Tupou IV can trace his ancestral roots back to Tu'i Kanokupolu.

Despite these shifts in power the position of Tu'i Tonga was always acknowledged to be slightly superior to both Tu'i Kanokupolu and Tu'i Ha'atakalaua. The superiority rested in the fact that Tu'i Tonga retained his power in the spiritual world and in all ceremonial rites he was the king in whose name all tribute was made.
EARLY EUROPEAN EXPLORERS

The northern outlying islands of Tafahi and Niuatoputapu were the first of the Tongan group to be visited by European explorers when in May, 1616, a Dutch expedition led by William Cornelisz Schouten and Jacob Le Maire accidentally sighted the islands. The purpose of the expedition on board the Eendracht was to find the great land thought to exist in the Southern Pacific, having failed in its search, the expedition headed west to trade in the East Indies. En route to the East Indies, they came upon the Tongan Islands. Twenty-seven years later, Abel Janszoon Tasman approached from the south in his two ships, the Heemskerck and the Zeeham and visited the souther islands of 'Ata, 'Eua and Tongatapu. On this visit, it is believed that Tasman introduced a tree called Citrus decumane which bore fruit similar to the grapefruit.

The next visit was not until 1767 when Captain Samuel Wallis sailed from a northern direction and sighted the islands of Tafahi and Niuatoputapu as Schouten and Le Maire had done 151 years previous. Captain Wallis and his party of men aboard the H.M.S. Dolphin did not stay long on these islands and made no further explorations of the islands to the south. Five years later, two French ships, the "Marquis Castries" and the "Mascarin", made an even shorter visit as they simply sailed through the Tongan waters. A much more curious explorer, Captain James Cook, arrived in October, 1773, on the first of three visits to Tonga. This first visit with the two ships "Resolution" and "Adventure" approached from Tahiti to the east and made landfall on
the northwestern corner of 'Eua. From 'Eua they visited nearby Tongatapu before heading south to New Zealand. Cook returned with the ship "Resolution" and anchored at Nomuka. Communications between the islands was confirmed as natives of Nomuka knew who Cook was from his previous stop on Tongatapu. It was during this visit that Captain Cook bestowed the name the "Friendly Archipelago" on the Tongan Group.

During Cook's third voyage in search of the Northwest Passage between Asia and Europe, he again visited Tonga. This was in 1777 with the two ships "Resolution" and "Discovery". The expedition returned to the island of Nomuka and from here, Cook spent two and one half months moving from island to island. They visited Lifuka in the central Ha'apai group and returned for second visits to 'Eua and Tongatapu.

This brief outline of the early explorers who visited Tonga is by no means complete (15), but it is felt by historians that the attractions which Tonga had to offer were not so great as to attract very much more attention. Tonga was first visited in 1616 but it was not until 1898 that a complete hydrographic survey was made and all the islands in the Tongan group charted. Many of the early explorers sighted Tonga quite by accident as they were en route to other destinations.

Those who did venture ashore were in search of provisions such as wood, food, and water. Obviously, their reports back to Europe indicated that there was very limited commercial value or potential to be found in Tonga and that navigating through the central Ha'apai group could be very hazardous. These are some of the reasons why only a limited number of explorers made their way to Tonga and why their visits were short in duration. Short though they were, they were by no means insignificant as they were the first white men to see Tongans and first white men seen by Tongans. The information gathered by both groups laid the ground for future encounters and the white man revealed to the world through their logs what Tonga and its people were like. The explorers introduced many new plants and animals to Tonga and, more likely than not, a few of the New World's diseases.

The first permanent European settlers were five men who deserted the ship "Otter" en route from Sydney to Vancouver Island in 1796. (16) They were followed a year later by ten missionaries from the London Missionary Society who landed on board the "Duff" in Tongatapu. These original missionaries did not fare very well since they arrived amidst a civil war between factions supporting and opposing the current Tu'i Kanokupola. The fighting continued in Tonga for the following decade and during this time, a chief named Finau Ulukalala gained control over the major island groups. His death in

1809 put an end to most of the warring but the three royal titles fell vacant, and not until 1820 did a leader emerge. This new leader, Taufa'ahau, was the son of Tu'i Kanokupola. He initially became chief of Ha'apai but later managed to acquire all three royal titles and under his guidance, the modern kingdom of Tonga was created. During this period of political transition, another missionary group arrived under the sponsorship of the Australian Wesleyans. Unlike the London Missionary Society, these new Wesleyans realized that their success would be dependent upon support from local authorities. They very astutely backed the emerging power kingroup of Tu'i Kanokupola. He had been an early convert to Christianity and had facilitated the spread of Christianity throughout the Kingdom of Tonga. His rise to the supreme position of power in 1845 secured the Wesleyans' place in Tonga's future. (17)

(17) Ibid.
### EARLY EUROPEAN EXPLORERS (18)

<table>
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<th>Nationality</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<td>Captain Samuel Wallis</td>
<td>British</td>
<td>1767</td>
<td>Tafahi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Niutoputapu</td>
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<tr>
<td>Captain James Cook</td>
<td>British</td>
<td>1772</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Francisos</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>1781</td>
<td>Vava'u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antonio Mourelle</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Late Fonuale'</td>
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<tr>
<td>La Perouse</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>1787</td>
<td>Niutoputapu</td>
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<td>Vava'u</td>
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<tr>
<td>William Bligh</td>
<td>British</td>
<td>1791</td>
<td>Tofua</td>
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<tr>
<td>Captain Edward Edwards</td>
<td>British</td>
<td>1791</td>
<td>Vava'u</td>
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<tr>
<td>Captain d'Entrecasteaux</td>
<td></td>
<td>1793</td>
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<tr>
<td>Captain Alessandro Malaspina</td>
<td></td>
<td>1791</td>
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(18) Ibid.
Tongan society at the time of Captain Cook's visits was a highly stratified society with a chiefly political system. The Tongan people were able to gather sufficient food from the land and the sea to never require the chiefly classes to concern themselves with manual work. The mild climate, fertile soils, and rich marine resources enabled the Tongan people to live comfortably within their island ecosystem. (1) Food was grown on the land and fished from the sea, clothing was made from the bark of the mulberry tree and the skins of animals, and shelter was constructed from the trees and leaves of the forest. Tongans were able to move about between the islands by canoe and communications between islands was, in some ways, almost as effective as it is today. (2) Today, modern technological communications networks are fraught with malfunctions. (3) The tropical climate did not demand that time and effort be spent on complicated structures to shelter and house people. Consequently, the traditional housing for commoners involved

(1) The description of the general ecosystem refers to the period between 1770-1780. At this time resources were comparatively plentiful and although hurricanes and droughts did occur there was not the huge demand placed on the produce from the land and sea as there is in modern times. The population increase in recent times places new pressures on the fragile ecosystem.


only simple bush materials which could be put together by only a few people in a relatively short time. The housing for the chiefs was much more elaborate and required not only a great deal of time, but also skilled craftsmen and lots of helpers to complete. Social organization and kinship played a central role in determining production and distribution of wealth. In relation to production chiefs occupied supervisory roles while commoners were relegated to the actual physical work. This was true not just for the construction of special chiefly houses, but for production of foodstuffs, surpluses and trade goods as well. The best of everything would always be picked out for the chiefs in recognition of their social position. Occasional items which were in scarce supply were often reserved for the chiefly classes and denied to the commoners through taboo restrictions. (4)

Christine Gailey includes in her article on Tongan women and colonization a discussion of the division of labor prior to European intervention. She proposes that the division of labor was based on rank, gender and age. She says:

"Most, but not all, chiefs did not produce their own food, but were dependent on non-chiefly labor for their subsistence. Land was vested in the highest-ranking (paramount) chiefs, who assigned usufruct (use right) estates to lower-ranking chiefs in return for support in warfare, donations of food and durable products, and labor service by the "commoner" or tua people living in the area." (5)


In this chapter the position of the nobility will be shown in relation to the society as a whole. The following chart outlines the basic hierarchical structure. Each of the classifications are explained on the page following the chart.

Tu'i Tonga

Tu'i Ha'atatkalaua \[\uparrow\] Tu'i Kanokupolu

\[\uparrow\] \[\uparrow\] \[\uparrow\]

Ha'a Chiefs \[\uparrow\] Ha'a Chiefs \[\uparrow\] Ha'a Chiefs

Resident Ha'a Chiefs \[\uparrow\] Resident Ha'a Chiefs \[\uparrow\] Resident Ha'a Chiefs with land titles \[\uparrow\] with land titles \[\uparrow\] with titles

Kainga \[\uparrow\] Kainga \[\uparrow\] Kainga

'Api or Household \[\uparrow\] 'Api \[\uparrow\] 'Api

The people of (Ha'a Takalaua) \[\uparrow\] The people of (Kauhalalaua) \[\uparrow\] The people of (Kauhalalalo)
- Tui'i Ha'atakalaua, Tu'i Tonga and Tu'i Kanokupolu were the three kings.

- Ha'a is a patrilineage. A group of people descended through men from a common ancestor. There are a number of ha'as in each of the king lines.

- Each group descends from a son who did not succeed his father as king. (6)

- Resident ha'a chiefs with land titles. This group of chiefs live on their land estates and exert direct power over the commoners.

- Kainga is actually translated as "kinsmen" but also means one's own people and includes all those who reside on a particular chief's land. (7)

- 'Api or household refers to the domestic family unit.

In strictly functional terms, it was the resident chiefs with land titles who occupied a pivotal point in the distribution of goods and the flow of tribute. The people within each kainga are the only group which do the actual productive work. A successful kainga chief ensured that there was sufficient goods produced to supply his people, himself and his ha'a group. The ha'a chiefs received goods as tribute and had to supply both themselves and their king. (8)


(8) Ibid, p.65.
ACCESS TO NATURAL RESOURCES

Traditionally, no land was communally owned. Land was as scarce in ancient times as it is today and controlled by the chiefly classes as indicated below. The individuals who belonged to each chief's kainga were permitted to live on and harvest certain plots belonging to the chief. In repayment for being allowed to grow crops commoners would save the best part of the harvest for the chief. (9) This system was not simply a rental payment but was reinforced by the societal values discussed earlier. The maintenance of respect, obligation and loyalty deemed it wise for the chief to allow commoners to farm certain areas and similarly dictated that the commoners show their respect by giving the best part of the crop to the chiefs.

In order to keep a realistic perspective on the effectiveness of these interclass values it should be appreciated that the belief system also included such beliefs as that "commoners" lacked souls, precluding them from an afterlife in Tongan paradise, and that when they died they simply became vermin. The chiefs, on the other hand, did have souls and after death went directly and automatically to Pulotu, the Tongan paradise where they became secondary gods. This particular aspect of the belief system served to justify the chief's treatment of commoners.

Some commoners attached to the kaingas of cruel or unkind chiefs were subjected to even the most unreasonable whims and were powerless to rebel. There was no value placed on the lives of those who had no souls. Rebellion against a reasonable, or even an unreasonable (by Tongan standards) chief, meant instant death. The moral code supported these kinds of incidents because the commission of murder, theft or adultery was not regarded as an offence unless committed against equals or those of superior class or against sacred objects.

The duties of the kainga chief to his people were apparently not stressed except to say that the chief led his people and took care of them. If he did not fulfill his obligations such as dividing up any food he received or attending their weddings and funerals there were a number of things the kainga members could do to retaliate. One way was not to be so generous in the quality or quantity of food contributed to the chief. The chief needed a certain amount to pass along to other chiefs and eventually to the Tu'i Tonga, who himself had no kainga. If a chief were not able to contribute sufficient food to his chiefs then he would lose respect as a powerful chief. Another method the kainga member used to weaken a chief was to slip away and become a member of another kainga thereby decreasing the size and strength of his former kainga. Elizabeth Bott (1982) adds:
"One reason for the kainga putting up with cruelty was that the chief was the embodiment of themselves; if he was great, they were great; if he was a fool, they were fools. It was in their interests to see that their chief was regarded as an important man to outsiders." (10)

Access to the marine resources was much more communal than access to land. The actual rights of fishing both inshore and offshore belonged to those living on the adjacent shoreline. Most chiefs had waterfront property and, therefore, had access to fishing in the waters bordering their property. Every commoner who had land bordering the shore also had the right to fish there and even those who lived inland usually had a friend or kainga mate who would permit him fishing rights in return for a supply of taro or yams or some other inland crop. Communal fishing was practiced on a large scale and would be organized by a man called Pulepola, or one who rules the pola. He would get hundreds of people together and direct the building and eventual use of huge fences to trap the fish. Each kainga group had exclusive rights to pola grounds adjacent to its land. The pola hunt could be organized and executed without permission from the chief. The first of the catch, however, went directly to the chief. (11)

(10) Ibid.

The chief did not participate in the fishing activities. He relied on the professional fishermen to give him advice on the seasonal variations of the sea. On the basis of this advice he would create taboos on certain species at certain times of the year. Often the taboo would apply to everyone except the chief. The chief had the authority and the professional fisherman had the knowledge. Together they formed a very effective conservation team. (12) A continuous harvest from the inshore area was particularly reliant on this form of traditional conservation. Without some regulation of harvest it would not take very long before there were no more shellfish. The fishermen knew when the mating season was and could advise the chief to place a taboo on shellfish at this time. (13)


LOCATION OF CHIEF'S RESIDENCE

The smallest unit over which a chief ruled was known as the subdistrict (14) or the 'api. This consisted of a number of household units located on the land of the titled chief who had residual rights over a particular section of land. All land in Tonga belonged to someone; even the uninhabited land was assigned to a chief. In theory, all the land actually belonged to Tu'i Tonga, the sacred king, but there is no evidence to suggest that he took land away from any of his chiefs. The way in which land would be reassigned was by Tu'i Tonga appointing a new man to an estate. It was up to the new man to go to the already inhabited land and establish himself as the new leader. He may marry into families of powerful inhabitants and eventually absorb them into his kainga. The two main ways for a chief to acquire land was to either marry into it or be given a land grant. Marriage was the much more common means.

It was these resident chiefs who had the most power over the commoners. As long as the obligations to higher ha'a chiefs were fulfilled these resident chiefs were left alone and were not required to account for their treatment of their subjects. There was no court or legal system for the chief's subjects to appeal to for just treatment. There was, however, a mutual need for the chief to be good and fair to his subjects so that they would produce sufficient

(14) Ibid.
foodstuffs enabling him to fulfill his obligations to other chiefs higher and more powerful than himself.

The size and composition of the kainga was constantly changing. A chief who built his reputation as a good and just leader had a kainga group that would expand with new families.

"The rules of residence and inheritance of land were flexible. Normally a woman lived with her husband. But if she were the daughter of a man with land and a strong kainga, and if her husband had no land of his own, he might come to live with her." (15)

Similarly, a chief who became known as an unreasonable and unjust leader would only see increases through new births. Young people would try to marry into other kainga groups and those remaining would be left to endure the wrath of their leader.

The kainga as a societal unit was constant but the size and composition reflected very much the type of leader in power.

"Unlike the Samoan village where authority was vested in the village fono, at which the matais (titled heads of the families) discussed matters affecting the village before they were implemented, the powers of the village chief in Tonga were absolute and arbitrary. The Tongan fono was simply a compulsory assembly of the people to receive instructions from the chief. Offenders were not brought to public trial as was the case in Samoa. Any major offences were dealt with by the chief whose decisions were absolute, punishment frequently being meted out on the spot, either by the chief himself or by one of his powerful henchmen. This absolute power of the ruling chiefs, however, contained the seeds of the system's own destruction. As chiefly ambitions grew they fostered local autonomy, thus threatening the political unity of Tonga as a whole."


The decade of 1770-1780 represents the final days of the three king system of government. Each of the three kings was supreme among his group of followers and this created three main divisions within the society. Kauhala'uta were the people of Tu'i Tonga; Ha'a Takalaua were the people of Tu'i Ha'ataralaua and Kauhalalao were the people of Tu'i Kanokupolu. These groups were not equal in size or power. The scene which Captain Cook witnessed during his visits was that both Tu'i Ha'atarolaua and Tu'i Kanokupolu acknowledged the superior rank of Tu'i Tonga. There were attempts being made to appoint a new Tu'i Tonga during the lifetime of Tu'i Tonga. The Tu'i Ha'ataralaua line that failed twice had been taken over by an individual from the Hauhalalalo group loyal to Tu'i Kanokupolu. The people of Tu'i Kanokupolu were very strong but fighting was soon to erupt amongst them.
These three kings each had a number of subordinate chiefs who were members of a ha'a. A ha'a was a group of titles which were derived from the titles of sons of kings who did not succeed to the kingship position. Each of the kings had several ha'a and each ha'a had numerous title holding chiefs with their own kainga. The kainga were the local subjects.

The location of the chiefs' residence was extremely important during this decade. On all of the islands in the kingdom there were people of all three political groups, Kauhala'uta, Ha'a Takalaua, and Kauhalalalo. The way in which this island by island representation was obtained was that each king had sent loyalists to the various islands to rule on his behalf. Over a great number of years before the 1770's, all three groups became represented. It was Tu'i Tonga who was the original ruler and during his reign he sent out his people to rule on his behalf. (17) The title of Tu'i Tonga was later retired to become the sacred king and Tu'i Ha atakalau was appointed to administer the secular affairs of the kingdom. He then sent his ha'a chiefs out to the islands. Still later, when Tu'i Kanokupolu was in power, he sent his men and so, by 1770, all three kings had their supporters on all of the lands in the Kingdom of Tonga.

The leaders who were sent out to the islands did not assume authority by stepping into ascribed positions at the

(17) Ibid, p.158.
local level. They had to be strong leaders and earn the respect of and authority over the islanders. One of the most common methods of establishing oneself as a new leader was by marrying local women from powerful families and after a generation or two of marriages between powerful families, the original leader's sons could have a very strong line of authority.

When Captain Cook visited Tonga, the three kings had their strongholds in different locations. The people of Kauhalalalo were the most powerful in Ha'apai and Vava'u. The three kings all lived on Tongatapu but their power was directly dependent on the number and strength of their chiefs in every corner of the land. (18) The chiefs had ultimate power over their subjects as members of their kainga.

There was potential for conflict among old leaders and the new ones sent by the king but this was not often the case. The kings, located on the main island of Tongatapu, did not send out new leaders to islands where the old order was strong. When it was preferable to have a new leader from Tongatapu, the king would ensure that the new leader was of a superior rank and so takeover was sometimes eased by the acknowledgement of the superiority of the new person's line. Sometimes marriages were arranged between the new leader and the old leader's daughters and then the takeover could be accomplished through kinship instead of conflict and fighting.

(18) Ibid, p.159.
LEGAL STATUS

The system of titles used in Tongan society was very important at the time of Captain Cook's visits. It provided the major guidelines which regulated the hierarchy and established the flow of goods as tribute. As was previously outlined, there were three major kings in Tonga. One was ultimately superior in status, if not always in power. This was Tu'i Tonga, and he was the sacred king. His line of succession was the only line which was automatic in that it went to his eldest son. In other lines it was other titled members of the same ha'a who selected the successor and it was a choice based on agreement as to who was most suitable and capable. (19)

Legal status is not a particularly valid term to use in discussing Tongan society during the 1770's. There was no actual legal system in force. There was, however, a model system which can be understood by integrating three features of Tongan society: social stratification, the values which governed relationships between the strata, and a belief system which sanctioned the social order.

The Tongan society was stratified in an elaborate and complex way. At the top end was the ha'a tu'i consisting of the three royal dynasties; the Tu'i Tonga, the Tu'i Ha'atahalaua and Tu'i Kanokupolu. Next in line was the chiefly class (hou'eiki), followed by the gentry class

(mu'a), the chief's attendants (matapule), the commoner's class (tu'a or me'avale) and finally, the slave class (pupula). As well as these six main groups, there were also professional classes of priests (taula), the caretakers (ha'atufunga), the navigators (toutai) and the skilled tradesmen (tufunga). (See diagram next page).

The relationships between these various groups was quite strict and well defined. Members were taught from an early age by individuals within their respective sociopolitical groups. The smallest of these units was the 'api or household. Next, the extended family or fa'ahinga, and then, the group under the control of a particular chief called a kainga. Above this level was the ha'a which consisted of a loosely grouped number of geneologically related chiefs, and finally, the fonua, or the whole society.

In order to keep this stratified group operating smoothly there were three important values which were interwoven within the general notions of good citizenry. The values were respect (faha'apa'apa), obligation (fatongia) and loyalty (mateaki). As long as there was general adherence to these values, societal business was efficiently maintained. The belief system was reinforced by and sanctioned the social order. Any violation of the taboos was believed to anger the gods and would cause severe natural disasters.
Tu'i Tonga!

Tu'i Kanokupolu!

Tu'i Ha'atahalaua!

Chiefly classes!

Hou'eiki!

---

Professional Classes!
Priests-Taula!
Caretakers-
Ha'atu Funga!
Navigators-
Touta i
Skilled Tradesmen-
Tufunga

---

Gentry classes!
Mu'a!

Chief's Attendants
Matapule

---

Commoner's class
Tu'a or Me'avale

---

Tongan chiefs and their kaingas were involved in two major types of obligations and relationships. First was the obligation of sending tribute and foodstuffs to the ha'a chief who would be the superior titleholder. Through him, tributes would eventually reach the king, Tu'i Tonga. These relationships were formally outlined in the system of titles and ha'a and were ritually reinforced through the Kava ceremony.

The Tongan chiefs had far-reaching powers over their subjects. They were, however, held in check by a reliance on their subjects to provide them with a sufficient quantity and quality of food. This was necessitated by their obligations
to the king. Although all the produce of the land belonged to
the chief, obligations to the king had to be met in order for
the chief to retain his omnipotent position over his subjects.
As long as the chief fulfilled obligations to those higher up
he was left alone and did not have to account for his treatment
of those below him.

The second type of relationship governing the actions
of the chief and his subjects was kinship-based. Such ties
included political alliances attained through marriage,
obligations to siblings, and a complex system of personal
rank and responsibility. One of the principles of kinship
dictated that sisters had higher rank than their brothers.
(20) The inferior position of brothers to their sisters
manifested itself most often in social situations, especially
in ceremonial proceedings like marriages and funerals. On
such occasions, the chief would be inferior to certain of his
family members. He would be of inferior rank to his sisters,
and of inferior rank to his elder brothers. (21) This was
also true of the Tu'i Tonga. His sister outranked him.

The principles of rank must not be confused with the
principles of authority. Rank position is most significant
in ceremonial functions; authority position is related to
access to power.

(20) Bott, E. (1981) "Power and Rank in the Kingdom of Tonga",

(21) This overlapping of the principles of rank (sisters'
superiority) with the principles of authority is
explained more thoroughly in an article by Elizabeth
Bott called "Power and Rank in the Kingdom of Tonga",
p.8-9.
EDUCATION, CHURCH AND STATE

Unlike modern times, the spheres of education, church, and state did not occupy such separate places in society. There were no formal schools. Rather, education was a part of growing up and learning about the society, history and life skills from one's own extended family. The professional classes of fishermen, tradesmen, navigators and priests formed as much a hereditary class system as was the ha'a of the chiefs. The sons of navigators apprenticed under their fathers or uncles and learned the skills of that specific trade. Education was limited by the position one occupied on the hierarchical ladder of Tongan society. The location on that ladder predetermined what body of information and education was accessible.

Within the professional classes there was a hierarchy of status depending on exactly what skill was required. The class with the least status included such occupational categories as tattooers, club carvers and barbers. Hereditary rules were not as strictly enforced in these groups as in the upper classes. The following table shows some of the professional groups, the restrictions on participants, and whether or not the trade was hereditary. The matapules were the chief's advisors, the muas were warriors, and the tuas worked the land and were servants of the chief.
The group of skills listed at the top represent skills which had the most status in Tonga. This social respect was largely due to the knowledge and talent required to be good at the jobs. They were hereditary by choice for three reasons. 1.) They each required long periods of training, 2.) the training was generally done by fathers with their sons and 3.) these professions were highly prized and desired occupations for sons. Tattooers, club carvers and barbers were generally inherited posts because they did not have such a high a status or require the same degree of skill as those which were hereditary by choice. Few outsiders sought such skills. Cooks and peasants were hereditary by the demand of the chief. These persons served a chief and trained their sons and daughters to also serve that chief.

(22) Coult, p.63.
In the 1770's, there was no formal church, nor was Christianity present. Tu'i Tonga was the ruler of the spiritual and sacred and was himself regarded as a deity. The belief system reinforced the power of the chiefly class and as stated on page 29 specified that after death, the souls of the chiefs would go automatically to Pulotu, the Tongan paradise, where they would become secondary gods.

The state, as we have already discussed, was a three-king political system with Tu'i Tonga as the ultimate supreme ruler. The society was a highly stratified system comprised of a hierarchy of authority, principles of kinship and a system of obligations and relationships. The state did not have a legal system or a constitution. It had instead, certain traditional rules and regulations adhered to very strictly at ceremonial functions and less strictly in the day-to-day activities of the kingdom.
Summary

In this 18th century decade the role of the chiefly classes was fairly well specified through a hierarchy of power relationships between the chiefs. There were no legal procedures, no elections and no courts. Warfare and alliances were the main methods of increasing the kainga size and subsequently the importance of the local chief. Each chief belonged to a ha'a group and was expected to make offerings and gifts to the ha'a group who would in turn make offerings to their leader (Kauhala'uta, Ha'a Takalaua or Kauhalalalo). At this time Kauhala'uta was the Tu'i Tonga and so the other two chiefs would make offerings to him, the sacred ruler of Tonga.

Succession was not automatic but based on the individual's ability. Other chiefs of the ha'a group would ultimately decide on who would assume a vacant title. This was eventually changed by the constitution of 1875 which decreed that the eldest son must succeed.
CHAPTER THREE

TONGAN CHIEFS AND NOBLES 1870-1880

After a relatively short, albeit intense, period of conflict, Christianity was adopted in the three major island groups of Ha'apai, Vava'u and Tongatapu. Along with this struggle to convert the Tongan people to Christianity was the political struggle of Taufa'ahau (later Tupou I) to unite all Tonga under his leadership. In 1845, he was elected to the title Tu'i Kanokupolu under the name Siaosi (George) Tupou. Although elected to this position in 1845, he was not accepted by all the chiefs on Tongatapu and further fighting occurred until 1852 when Tupou finally emerged the victor.

During the next several decades, Tupou I issued numerous proclamations all designed to bring a new Tonga into the civilized world. (1) He attempted to rewrite the internal traditional laws and emancipate the people from the previously powerful chiefs. In 1862 he instituted a code of law for the whole of Tonga in which it was stated that henceforth all Tongans, be they chiefs or commoners, were to be treated equally before the law. He also appropriated a great deal of direct power that the chiefs wielded over the commoners and this freed the commoners from forced labour, and compulsory contributions to their chiefs. In fact, he removed the single most significant power which gave the chiefs the position of dominance --

he gave commoners control over their own property. These changes were included in the new constitution which came into effect on November 4, 1875. It guaranteed rights to life, property and worship; it defined a new form of government and it declared that all land belonged to the king and that he could grant land areas to the nobles who, in turn, could lease portions to the people. (2) He restructured the social system in such a way as to make the nobles dependent on him as king instead of being supported by their own political kainga.

Essentially, what he did was to make 30 of the chiefs into "nobles" and assign a hereditary estate to each. These nobles were then responsible for granting hereditary leases of 8-1/4 acres to each adult male over the age of 16 years. He could then collect an annual rent from the lessee.

(2) Constitution of Tonga, 1875.

Part I Declaration of Rights

"Seeing it appears to be the Will of God for man to be free, as He has made of one blood all nations of men, therefore shall the people of Tonga be for ever free, and all people who reside or may reside in this kingdom. And the lives and bodies and time of all people shall be free to possess and acquire property, all doing as they like with the fruits of their hands, and using their own property as they may seem fit.

Part II Form of Government

44. The person of the King is sacred. He governs the land, but his Ministers are responsible. All laws that have passed the Legislative Assembly must have His Majesty's signature before they become law.  

60. It is with the King and Legislative Assembly to enact all laws; and the Nobles and Representatives of the people shall sit in one House.
The 30 noble titles and the 6 matapule titles who were granted estates were to be inherited according to fixed British rules of succession (3) instead of by the flexible rules of the traditional Tongan system. This system of titles became, in fact, inflexible. An inevitable period of conflict erupted as certain of the other chiefs and title holders, who had not been made nobles, realized that they would soon lose all their traditional power and social position. This particular period of conflict did eventually resolve itself during the 1880's. Consequently the chiefs who were not made into nobles gradually lost their power and their titles; and from commanding "some respect" went to commanding "not much respect". The 30 chiefs who became nobles and the 6 matapule who were given land, all prospered. These 30 men were no longer dependent on their kainga for support; but their kaingas were still dependent on them at least, for land. The land allotted to all males of 16 years and over was ensured by the constitution but it was not until 1915 that the specific allotments were registered.

The legislature was also defined by the constitution and within the definition was a provision for an assembly heavily weighted with nobles. It consisted of a cabinet and an assembly with seven nobles' representatives and seven peoples' representatives elected by the population at large. The cabinet, too, was largely composed of nobles.

(3) See quote p.51 explaining the adaptation of the British rules of succession.
At the village level, there was no longer an autonomous village government but rather elected Town and District officers who interpreted and enforced the law at the local level. Chiefs no longer had any formal power in the village politics. In the traditional system it was the control that the chiefs wielded at the local village level that was the basis of their power. Now authority had shifted to the central government. The fact that the central government was composed largely of nobles is, furthermore, very important to understanding this system. Although their local roots of power had weakened, the nobles' actual domination within the new power structure had not. The basis of their power had changed from village politics to national politics. Along with this shift in power base came a shift in the areas in which this power was exerted and the ends to which it was used. In the next section I will discuss the development of modern Tonga and attempt to discern factors which, independent of government intervention, have come to be controlled by the modern noble class.

Although this formal system of government was instituted in 1875 it was many years before the transition from traditional to modern was complete.
ACCESS TO NATURAL RESOURCES

The decade from 1870-1880 was a time of great political upheaval, conflict and general confusion for the people of Tonga but, most especially, to those belonging to the privileged nobility. The constitution was passed in 1875 and outlined profound changes within the traditional skeleton of the society. Some changes were put into legal effect immediately but in reality many years passed before a new blend of traditional and modern occurred. The major change for the nobility was the reassignment of all the lands of Tonga to 36 people selected by King George Taufa'ahau Tupou I. Thirty important chiefs were made into "nobles" and given hereditary estates to manage. Six matapule (chiefs' attendants) were chosen to also manage estates but were not inducted into the nobility. The ramifications of this restructuring of land control was multifaced. In this section, I will outline only the direct effects on the nobility's access to natural resources.

The constitution effectively wiped out the traditional system of chiefs and kaingas as political units. In theory, it wiped them out all together but, in reality, it was a long and slow process to build loyalty to a new noble class. In some cases, the land granted the noble was the same land he had controlled as a kainga chief. Changes in these areas were not so great. Trouble occurred in areas where powerful chiefs were replaced and the deep loyalties of the kainga members were called upon to right these injustices.
The new nobility, as hereditary estate managers, were now essentially occupying an ascribed position as opposed to their formally achieved position as kainga head. The land had formerly been always under the control of the chief and now the chief (noble) was supposed to grant hereditary leases of 8-1/4 acres to each adult male over the age of 16 years. He was also supposed to receive from the lessee an annual rent. The government would pay the estate holder for each section of land granted to an adult male. The lines of power had dramatically shifted from the chiefs supported by their kainga, to nobles supported by the state. The intent of the law was to make all Tongans equal under the law and to free the common people from a traditional feudal bondage. The changes were great but power still rested with the nobles in relation to commoners. The nobles' position was no longer dependent on a local kainga, yet he still retained a large degree of control over its members. Because his position was basically ascribed, he was no longer judged on how well he managed or mismanaged his holdings. He kept his position, authority, income and voice in the new legislative assembly, irrespective of merit. (3) The years between 1870 and 1880 saw a negligible change in land ownership by commoners. The traditional system of land usage continued and it was actually not until 1915 (4) that the new allotments were actually registered with the government. Although the immediate changes were small, the eventual impact on Tongan culture was profound. The new land tenure laws became a catalyst for cultural transformation. The new constitutionally appointed nobles became estate holders and old chiefs were
relegated to a position of legal obscurity. In fact, although they were not legally abolished, they were quite simply ignored by the state. These chiefs retained their titles and continued to pass them on to their sons, but their status as chiefs gradually diminished to ceremonial functions such as sitting at the head of their own kava ceremonies. Ceremonially, they had status but economically, they were no different than a commoner who operated a small scale farm.

The description just given is what eventually transpired for that circle of chiefs not granted hereditary status. During the decade we are concerned with in this section, little change actually occurred to affect the status of the chiefs within their kaingas. The constitution was passed halfway through the decade and the following five years were spent beginning the long process of sorting out what this new system meant to individuals in their day-to-day lives. In essence the power and influence slowly became consolidated in the hands of fewer chiefs. The untitled traditional chiefs maintained a degree of status, even power, in their local kainga groups. But the new nobility held the power in the new central government. The king retained ultimate control. The king's power was supported by the terms of the constitution.


LOCATION OF NOBLE'S RESIDENCE

The location of the noble's residence became decreasingly important after the new nobility were issued their individually assigned hereditary estates. A noble was responsible for the administration of his lands, but he was no longer dependent on his subjects for their support. It was now possible for a noble to reside anywhere outside his former kainga and to have his affairs administered by an agent. The appointed nobility had new responsibilities as members of the legislative assembly in the capital of Nuku'alofa and could be expected to maintain dual residences, if not simply move to the capital altogether.

The chiefs who were not made into nobles by the granting of hereditary estates were still bound to their kainga for support and prestige. There were no new avenues immediately open to them except for affiliation through marriage to the new nobles. The new land tenure system encouraged a strengthening of the family as a primary social unit. The more adult males entitled to land allotments in a kainga, the larger the consolidated land allotment would be and the more potential for the family to attain economic independence and even wealth. This fact created a situation which was quite different from the actual intent of the land reform laws. The system was created as an equalizing strategy, so that individuals would have access to small land holdings within a semi-feudal hereditary estate controlled by the central government. Instead, the consolidation of plots by kinsmen allowed for the continuation of a traditional kainga system where the kingroup head remained the chief or leader of the group.
The status of sisters within the kinship system did not change nor did it particularly influence some of the new trends brought about by the constitutionally granted allotments. The sisters had rank over the brothers but they did not have authority. They were able to ask things of their brothers and were likely to receive gifts, but they could not exert any direct power over them. It was the adult males who received the land allotments.
LEGAL STATUS

The legal status of the new nobility created by the constitution was where the center of Tongan strength, power and prestige lay. It did not immediately enhance a man's position in relation to the traditional system; but, in relation to the modern state which was being organized, it eminently strengthened the influence of a select group. The new noble class was in origin and essence a legal phenomenon.

Under the terms of the constitution it was stated:

"There shall be but one law in Tonga for chiefs and commoners for Europeans and Tongans. No law shall be enacted for one class and not for another class but the law shall be the same for all the people of this land. (5)

Despite this law, the nobility did have special legally granted rights to sit in the bicameral legislative assembly. The appointed hereditary nobles could participate by right while those serving as Peoples' Representatives had to be elected by the general population. In the beginning, persons of chiefly status not appointed as hereditary nobles comprised the bulk of the Peoples' Representative seats. The state's democratic assembly was, furthermore, made up of the old chiefs and the new nobles. The king held tremendous power since there

were no political parties in Tonga. Elected commoners and nobles had access to an equal number of seats as the appointed nobles but the two facts which prohibited them from having any real power were that old chiefs were often elected as Peoples' Representatives and that only the legislative assembly (the nobles) were able to discuss or vote on bills relating to the king or the Royal Family. (6)

There was a general aura of confusion during the decade of 1870 to 1880. This was not alleviated by the king's appointment of noble titles and estates, since this was done without accompanying specifications as to the rights and responsibilities of the nobles to the estate dwellers, nor did it help that the boundaries of each estate were not legally defined. This was not clarified until 1882 when a formal division of hereditary land estates was completed. During the intervening seven year period the titleholders were in competition with each other in an attempt to enlarge traditionally held lands. They hoped the changes would become recognized and be incorporated into the formal system.

At this time, hereditary landholders were prohibited by law from selling any of their land. They could lease up to 5% of their allotment to other Tongans or to foreigners, and more than that if it were leased to a church or government organization. The land holders did not have to seek approval from the noble estate holders in question, but only required approval from the Minister of Lands. The Minister of Lands

(6) Ibid, p.75.
could consult with the estate holder if he wished, however, and then overrule the wishes of the land holder. The Minister of Lands was the final authority in land dispute matters and was in a position to go against the desires of the titled estate holder too.

The legal position of the land holders with regard to succession to their hereditary lands and titles was now as follows:

"The heir must have been born in wedlock (i.e., of a formal Christian marriage). He should be the eldest male child; failing him, then any other male child (and his descendants) by seniority of age; failing him, then any female child (and her descendants) by seniority of age. Failing an heir in the direct line of succession, the title and lands revert to the line of the mothers of the previous holder and their descendants in order of seniority. Failing a male heir in the lines of mothers, succession proceeds through the line of sisters." (7)

If there were no legitimate heirs to the estate then the land and title reverted back to the king who could reassign them to whomever he chose. Persons who had been convicted of a felony since the constitution or who were deemed insane could not inherit either land or a title. It was also not possible for someone who was not a Tongan national to hold land or a title in Tonga.

(7) Ibid, p.80.
The formal legal method of guiding inheritance of land and title had a number of ramifications within the kinship group. Traditionally there was a system of patrilineal inheritance combined with a selection process whereby the kingroup had a voice in judging the leadership qualities of eligible kin members. Because there was room within the system to ascertain individual qualities, the status attached to the title was once much higher. Under the new system the eldest son inherited the title whether he was considered to be suitable by the kingroup or not. Legal status remained the same for all title holders, but now the local social status of a person's title was diminished through the lack of local involvement in his selection.
EDUCATION, CHURCH AND STATE

The establishment of schools was considered of primary importance by the early missionaries. The first school was started in the 1820's by a Wesleyan missionary, John Thomas. It was located in Kolovai on the main island of Tongatapu and classes were conducted in English. The Wesleyan missionaries placed a great deal of importance on education because it enabled the new converts to read the Bible. The teachings of the Bible and the new concepts of Christianity helped Tongans combat their traditional "superstitious" beliefs.

Among the early converts to Christianity was King George Taufa'ahau Tupou I. However, he had some initial trouble reconciling himself to the notion that the lord's preacher had more status than himself while he was inside a chapel. George was not pleased to discover that the pulpit was the highest point in the church. He considered this a violation of Tongan protocol which stated that no one should sit or stand above the king. To remedy the oversight on the part of the Wesleyans he had a platform built at the opposite end of the chapel which was higher than the pulpit. (8) Several years later when he had become a more devout convert he righted his wrongs and had the platform dismantled. He became very involved as a church leader and was instrumental in spreading Christianity throughout his kingdom. Many of the chiefs

followed the example of Tu'i Tonga and assisted in developing the spiritual lives of their kainga members.

For the commoners, conversion to Christianity had many positive side effects and did not involve giving up anything. They gained self respect through learning about the Christian belief that all men and women had souls and all men and women had the right to life after death.

King George was as enthusiastic about education as he was about spreading Christianity. This fact was evidenced when he said:

See what knowledge has done for the White man!
See what ignorance has done for the men of this land!
Is it that white men are born more wise?
Is it that they are naturally more capable than others?
No: but they have obtained knowledge . . .
This is the principle cause of the difference. (9)

The educational system was well under way by 1870 and included by this time a teachers' training institute opened on Vava'u in 1841 and Tupou College in Nuku'alofa, Tongatapu in 1866. By 1880 women were being admitted to Tupou College, making it the first co-educational institution of post secondary learning in the Pacific.

Concurrent with the adoption of Christianity and the implementation of an educational system was the establishment of a central government for the kingdom of Tonga. The missionaries did not initially advocate unification of the state but when it became obvious that it would happen they gave their support to King George Taufa'ahau Tupou. Their support took the form of an advisory role to the king and not only helped with specific advice but also made known their support for the king's political stance. A Wesleyan missionary named Rev. Shirley Baker became a confidant of the king and it was he who actually drew up the constitution of Tonga which was promulgated in 1875.

King George Taufu'ahau Tupou I believed that in order for Tonga to remain for Tongans in a world which was quickly changing, they had to adopt some western styled institutions. The constitution was just such a concession. King Tupou's political acuity was borne out shortly after the national acceptance of the constitution when within a month a German man-of-war called at Tonga. The purpose for the Germans was to draw up a Treaty of Friendship. In return for Germany's recognition of the kingdom of Tonga they were permitted to build naval coaling stations in the port of Vava'u. This treaty was signed in November 1876, a year after the enactment of the constitution. By 1879 a similar treaty was negotiated with the British and Tonga's independence and security was assured.
The transformation of Tonga from the traditional chiefly system to that of a western-derived system is rooted in the introduction of both the constitution and Christianity as well as the increased involvement of Tonga in international politics. During the decade of 1870 to 1880 Tupou successfully brought about reforms which eventually destroyed the basis of traditional authority and chiefly status. Those who helped Tupou rise to power as a single monarch were the very ones who lost their privileged positions. The decade witnessed great confusion as to what all the changes would really mean in day to day life but there was no evidence of uprising or organized resistance. There is a simple reason for such a lack of outcry from those who stood to lose so much. The reason was that most of the changes outlined in the constitution were purely academic. King Tupou I made little effort to actually implement the changes. (10) He merely set the stage for change, for a new government bureaucracy, a centralization of power and a new noble elite.

Summary

The decade of 1870-1880 provides the framework for the development of the modern Kingdom of Tonga. The changes which were outlined in the constitution were radical departures from the traditional ways of Tonga. The new noble hereditary land holders replaced the ha'a system of land administration. A legal system was put in place to adjudicate disputes replacing open warfare and complex family allegiances through marriages designed to enhance power positions and land holdings.

The new nobility now operated on a hereditary system where titles and responsibilities were passed down through the eldest son. The position of land administrator became an ascribed title rather than an achieved one as it had been within the ha'a system.

Although the outline of change was dramatic the actual length of time before many were implemented was not. In reality, the change was an extremely slow and laborious process. The principles were introduced and the details of implementation worked out over the ensuing years.
CHAPTER FOUR

TONGAN NOBILITY 1970-1980

The period 1870 to 1970 was one of a great many changes worldwide. For the Kingdom of Tonga this was no different. Tonga did not make great internally-initiated technological discoveries but as each year passed Tonga's access to the world's innovations increased. The effect of the twentieth century was no less profound on this tiny South Pacific kingdom than it was on the rest of the world.

In this chapter I shall examine the society of Tonga during the decade of 1970-1980 and outline the role played by nobility in the contemporary kingdom of Tonga.

The present monarch is His Majesty King Taufa'ahau Tupou IV and the following genealogical chart shows how the modern day Tupou dynasty originated from Tonga's traditional kingly lines.
LAND AND AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

The most noteworthy feature in a discussion of land and agriculture in Tonga is that there is an overriding dependency on agriculture and related primary export commodities. For Tonga, as well as for other South Pacific countries, the product of single importance to the economy is copra. Some countries have managed to slip out from under this dependency with the discovery and exploitation of minerals. This is the case with phosphate in Nauru and the Gilbert and Ellice Islands, gold and other minerals in Fiji and nickel in New Caledonia. Tonga does not, as yet, have mineral resources to rely on and, therefore, continues to place an unrealistically high expectation on profits generated in the agricultural sector. (2)

It is arguable that the shift from agricultural dependency to mineral dependency is not particularly developmental. If a country merely shifts from reliance on one resource to another single resource then the problems incurred through single resource dependency shift to other equally numerous problems. A true developmental strategy for any of these countries would

(2) Unrealistically high expectations of profits refers to the fact that there are a number of uncontrollable factors involved in the agricultural sector. For instance, in 1982 Hurricane Isaac swept through the Tongan Islands and caused almost total devastation of the crops. Since the GNP is comprised of almost 80% of the revenues generated from agricultural production it is clear just how disastrous a crop failure can be for the whole country.
attempt to diversify their economy, not substitute one resource for another.

Land distribution is still based on the principles outlined in the constitution of 1875 which entitles every male 16 years of age and over to a small portion of land in a rural area (3.34 hectares) and a town allotment of 0.16 hectares. Since the population has grown and the total amount of land available has remained small, there are significant difficulties in implementing these constitutional rights. It is estimated that only about one third of all those entitled to land allotments actually have them. The land shortage has serious ramifications for successful and efficient farmers who would like to increase their production. There is no land on which they can expand their operations. Consequently, the only way for them to expand production is to further improve their farming methods or perhaps to switch to more lucrative cash crops and steer away from producing subsistence food for local use.

The government of Tonga is presently attempting to improve and diversify production in the agricultural sector. There is, however, a recognition that an optimal level of agricultural production exists and that it is becoming increasingly important to find alternative resources which will generate an increased export trade. Modern day Tonga can no longer be content with a subsistence economy as it becomes increasingly desirous of imported goods related to all areas of life. Often times, on the local level, Tongan
social goods are seen as being synonymous with access to, and the subsequent enjoyment of, all of the things available to the developed world.

Awareness of what is current in the United States or New Zealand or Australia is gained through exposure to radio, television and magazines. First hand knowledge is gained by many of the people who have spent time working abroad.

While agricultural pursuits remain tremendously important to the current Tongan economy it is equally true that the agricultural sector is no longer where the real growth potential of Tonga lies. This is the result of a population increase over the years and a resultant chronic land shortage. There are increasing numbers of families who are without land and, consequently, the government has been forced to look for employment potential in other sectors of the economy.

According to T.F. Kennedy, in an article written for the journal Economic Geographer, prospects of land production increasing to support a larger population are quite limited. He suggests that if all available land were to be farmed in 8-1/4 acre plots then a maximum of 18,000 farms would support 117,000 people if the average family size were 6.5 people. (3) The population census, conducted in November 1976, reported a total population of 90,085 and estimated population for mid

1980 at 94,760. (4) If the population continues to increase at a rate of 1.41% a year then within 20 years there will be no more land plots to distribute. This distribution of farm plots reflects the ideal system of only 8-1/4 acre per family. In reality some people have much larger farms and some people have no farm land.

The modern nobility must rely more and more on a western model of status and improve its education, wealth and employment status. Descendants of the old nobility, however, still rely on kinship with the Royal Family and/or their ancestry traceable back to one of the thirty hereditary landed nobles appointed during the reign of Tupou I. It is perhaps inevitable, (5) that these descendants will eventually become government agents and their chiefly role relegated to that of a ceremonial function. Land holding may continue to be used as a minor measure of social status in contemporary Tonga but there is an ongoing search for replacement markers that better indicate contemporary social status, respectability and privilege.


(5) As a result of these severe land shortages, and the land allotments it is no longer possible to use control of land as a measure of noble status. Education and high governmental positions are, in part, replacing access to land as a measure of social status.
Agriculture in Tonga is still controlled, to a large degree, by the noble class. The land holdings have now been divided and sub-divided to an extent sufficient to diminish the traditional value placed upon agriculture and land holdings generally. The change is directly due to government intervention since it was because of the constitution that the land was carved up into so many portions. The modern noble class recognizes this and seeks a suitable power substitute from which it can more effectively influence Tonga's future economic direction.

I have broken down in these discussions the social status of the chiefly class into two elements. One is its social standing in relation to traditional ceremonial rites such as funerals, weddings and the kava ceremony. Within this sphere its standing has not changed. There is a possibility that the entire ceremonial rites may be abandoned all together in the modern kingdom, but at the present time this does not seem likely. The other sphere lies within the social, political and economic sectors of contemporary Tonga. The infra-structure of the social, political and economic sectors has been redesigned by the constitution. The role of the original hereditary titled nobles was clearly defined but those of the chiefs' descendants was not. Consequently the role is not clearly defined or understood and there is much shifting and vying for increased status. (6)

(6) See discussion of ha'a groupings on page 72.
LOCATION OF NOBLE'S RESIDENCE

The group of hereditary titled nobles has grown somewhat since the original twenty nobles were appointed in 1875. In listing the current titles, it is of interest to note that they are now grouped according to island location, rather than by ha'a position. According to Elizabeth Bott, ha'a originally meant "people of such-and-such a place" -- more concerned with locality than descent. (7) Later, the term came to mean a group descended from a king's (secular kingships) sons who did not succeed to kingship themselves. Ha'a groupings were once very important in the organization of nobility. Hence it represented a big change when, in 1875, the newly appointed nobles were listed by island. These nobles appointed in 1875 were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tongatapu</th>
<th>Ha'apai</th>
<th>Vava'u</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Tungi</td>
<td>1. Tu'i Pelehaue</td>
<td>1. Kalaniuvalu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Lavaka</td>
<td>4. Havea</td>
<td>4. Tu'i'afitu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Ve'ehala</td>
<td>Tu'iha'angana</td>
<td>5. Tu'iha'angana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Ata</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Vaea</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Tu'ivakano</td>
<td>Niua</td>
<td>Niuatoputapu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The reason that this list of newly appointed nobles was given by island group instead of the traditionally important ha'a grouping was that King Tupou I felt that territorial power and influence would be the more significant measure for the future. This has, in fact, turned out to be the case. The affiliation of nobles to the ha'a groups has now become secondary to the nobles' ability to acquire education and wealth in the modern world. This, in turn, is strongly correlated with where in the island chain one resides. Ha'a groups retain a degree of relevance in Tonga but their importance is now limited to certain ritual occasions concerning the kingship, particularly the royal and chiefly kava ceremonies. (9)


(9) Ibid, p.52.
In 1880, King Tupou I added ten more titles to the list of hereditary nobles. During the reign of Tupou II (1893-1918), two more noble titles were established and Queen Salote (1918-1965) appointed another. Accordingly, the total number of titled nobles in the Kingdom of Tonga today number thirty-three. All of these nobles, however, do have ha'a affiliations which can be traced back to the secular kingships of Tu'i Tonga, Tu'i Ha'a Takalaua and Tu'i Kanokupolu.

(9) Ibid, p.52.
The following list gives the residences of present nobles. These persons are all descendants of the original appointed nobles. (10)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A) Permanently Residing</th>
<th>Locations of Major Estate Holdings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nuku'Alofa-Capital City Tonga</td>
<td>Tongatapu, Vava'u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Ahome'e</td>
<td>Tongatapu, Ha'apai, Vava'u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fakafanua</td>
<td>Tongatapu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fielakepa</td>
<td>Tongatapu, Niuafo'ou,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kalaniuvalu-Fotofili</td>
<td>Tongatapu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ma'afu</td>
<td>Tongatapu, Niuafo'ou, Ha'apai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lasike-Tu'uhetoka</td>
<td>Tongatapu, Vava'u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luani</td>
<td>Ha'apai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malupo</td>
<td>Ha'apai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tu'i Ha'angana</td>
<td>Tongatapu, Ha'apai, Vava'u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tupouto'a</td>
<td>Tongatapu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tungi</td>
<td>Tongatapu, Ha'apai, Vava'u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tu'i Pele Haue</td>
<td>Vava'u, Niuafo'ou</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuita</td>
<td>Tongatapu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tu'i Vakano</td>
<td>Tongatapu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vaea</td>
<td>Tongatapu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ve'ehala</td>
<td>Tongatapu, 'Eua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Aka'u'ola</td>
<td>Vava'u</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(10) Ibid, p.119.
B) **Residing in Nuku'alofa and Their Estates**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Estate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fakatulolo</td>
<td>Vava'u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fulivai</td>
<td>Vava'u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tangipa</td>
<td>Niuatoputapu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Va Ha'i</td>
<td>Tongatapu, Vava'u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veikune</td>
<td>Tongatapu, Vava'u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afu Ha'alaufili</td>
<td>Vava'u</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

C) **Residing on Estates Near Nuku'Alofa**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Estate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fohe</td>
<td>Puke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nuku</td>
<td>Kolonga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tu'i Ha'ateiho</td>
<td>Ha'ateiho</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lauaki</td>
<td>Talafo'ou</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motu'Apuaka</td>
<td>Te'ekiu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

D) **Residing on Estates Not on Tongatapu**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Estate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Niukapu</td>
<td>Makave, Vava'u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tu'i'Afitu</td>
<td>Makave, Vava'u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tu'i Lakepa</td>
<td>'Ofu Island, Vava'u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fotu</td>
<td>Leimatu'a, Vava'u</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Currently Vacant Titles**

- **Ata** - last holder was 'Ulukalala
- 'Ulukalala - last holder had major residence in Nuku'alofa
- **Fusitu'a** - last holder lived on Niuafo'ou estate
- **Lavaka** - last holder lived on Pea estate, near Nuku'alofa
- **Ma'atu** - last holder lived alternatively on Niuatoputapu estate and in Nuku'alofa.
From this list of nobles and their residences, we can see that 51% reside in Nuku'alofa, the capital of Tonga; 19% maintain dual residences in both Nuku'alofa and on their estate, 16% live on their estate near Nuku'alofa and 14% live on their estates outside the main island of Tongatapu. Another way to look at this is that 86% of the hereditary titled nobles live in or have easy access to the capital city of Nuku'alofa.

These residence patterns make it clear that the present day power base is located in Nuku'alofa and not within the estates of each noble. These title-holders can be further divided into two groups, a more powerful ruling elite of high ranking nobles (Groups A, B and C) and a low ranking set of nobles living on their estates without easy access to Nuku'alofa (Group D). The higher ranking nobles have attempted to change with the times. They have identified the arena of power and are prepared to give up their local village prestige for a place in the government elite. The nobles who have remained on their estates command a certain amount of respect and privilege with their villagers. They have some power over those villagers wanting land allotments. The noble has a seat at royal kava ceremonies and the villagers will still donate generous quantities of food and gifts so as to bring honour to the noble and, hence, the village. The nobles at the village level are not really unlike the common people. They have the same opportunities to compete in the agricultural sphere of business and some have done well economically. Some commoners have been able to compete successfully with the nobles in the commercial
sector. Quoting from Marcus (1980) he says:

"The nobles reflect the intersection of the historical forces of levelling and privilege by their roles within the major institutions of the compromise culture. The forces of levelling have had a thorough impact on traditional stratification so that all Tongans share a virtually homogeneous social world. Privilege has really only served to restrict or limit the full participation of nobles in this social world. Commoners develop their family estates, actively take advantage of opportunities in state, church, and education, and informally manoeuver within the land tenure system. Nobles have held back from enterprise and mobility in these same institutions. Rather, they have been spectators and occasional benefactors of the more active manipulations of statuses and positions by commoners in social situations that commoners share with the nobles. The nobles mediate the competition among commoners for land, act with restraint in the cooperative economic arrangements of family estates, are involved in the state and education indifferently and by special royal favour and encouragement, and are wary of the churches as the strongest challenge to their traditional privilege and status." (11)

The two main choices that an ambitious Tongan citizen has is to be successful in working his land and through that to participate in the commercial sectors of the society, or to get on education work in the government. These options parallel the choices of lifestyle open to the titled nobles. They can either remain on their estates or they can go to the city and work within the government structure. In a quickly changing modern Tonga, the overwhelming preference of the nobility has been to adopt a largely western lifestyle and with the aid of a good education abroad, rise to positions of power within the government or church hierarchy.

(11) Ibid, p.117.
EDUCATION, CHURCH AND STATE

Education has been enthusiastically promoted since the mission schools were started in the 1800's. All young Tongans can now attend school and can compete for Tongan lower and higher learning certificates. A large number of students go on to institutions of higher education in New Zealand or Australia. Both the government and churches are involved in running schools in Tonga. There is, furthermore, a special program to educate the heirs of title holders which tries to develop their leadership potential, and hence their chances of securing important government positions. The nobles' education fund comes from a small sum deducted monthly from members' salaries (the member's salary is an emolument paid by the government to each noble titleholder) and pooled for the payment of overseas schooling for noble heirs. A good education is extremely important to the nobles since it represents an arena to which commoners also have access.

Similar to the way in which a political kianga was built in the traditional system, the education system has now come to provide an individual with the beginnings of political power. (12) Marcus (1978) puts forward an interesting observation about the modern Tongan view of education. He says that it has long been a Tongan value to identify "the clever man". Traditionally this was done in areas where a person could demonstrate his skills in such activities as fishing, warfare, agriculture and leadership. The concept of the clever man was

called poto. This concept is now thought of specifically within the sphere of education and subsequent success in securing high positions in the Church or government. Even without actually getting the job the individual was still recognized through his/her success in school. Nowadays there are many more educated Tongans than there are church and government positions to fill.

The noble class has suffered somewhat over the years as a result of education being open to all Tongans. For the commoner education has been revered and sought after by those who were capable. The noble class, on the other hand, has been rather cavalier in its attitude and appreciation of education. Indeed, the nobles rank high as a group notable for the number of drop-outs and early school leavers. Although some have done very well in gaining higher educational qualifications there have been many who do not feel that they need a superior education in order to obtain important government offices. This was particularly true in the past, but now education is gradually becoming the only acceptable qualification for high status jobs. The present monarch places great emphasis on training and competence for those who hold influential positions in the current Tongan bureaucracy.

As of 1973 (13) the following titleholders and heirs worked within the government bureaucracy. The category of heir represents the eldest son of titleholder.

### Titleholders and Heirs in Government Service

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Holder</th>
<th>Heir</th>
<th>Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>'Ahome'e</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Police inspector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farafanua</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Survey trainee, Ministry of Lands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fakatulolo</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Agricultural Asst., Dept. of Agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fielakepa</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Clerk in Palace office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kalaniuvalu-Foto Fili</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Aide-de-Camp to King</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fulivai</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Member of Commodities Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ma'afu</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Speaker of Legislative Assembly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Akauola</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Minister of Police</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tupouto'a (Crown Prince)</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Assistant Secretary for Foreign Affairs (also Colonel-in-Chief of Defense Forces)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tu'i'aifitu</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Senior Airport Control Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tu'i Pelehare</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Prime Minister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tui Ha'Angana</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Auditor Clerk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tui Ha'ateiho</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Officer in Department of Agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuita</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Minister of Lands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vaea</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Minister of Labour, Industries &amp; Commerce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vaha'i</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Clerk in Customs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ve'ehala</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Governor of Ha'apai, plus a number of rotating Ministerial Posts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the thirty-three titled nobles currently with land holdings, twelve hold high government positions. From the list of nobles within easy access to Nuku'alofa (page 75) we can compare the percentage of nobles with high government positions to the percentage of nobles within easy access of the capital. Eighty-six percent had easy access to the city and home; 27.5% held high governmental positions.
Of these seventeen people only eight can be classified as occupying routine bureaucratic posts. The remainder hold positions of power and high status within the government. Holding a routine post and working one's way up the ladder is one method of obtaining a high government position. Another method is by a political appointment made by the king.

The majority of government service posts have been occupied in the past by commoners who intend to make these jobs long term careers. It is extremely frustrating for the well qualified individual to now be passed over for promotion in favour of those from the elite commoner or noble groups who have influential contacts within the government. The elite commoners are those from well-to-do families who are without title but not without influence. According to Marcus,

"Some titleholders in the past have made careers in routine bureaucratic posts, but most nobles have preferred to stay out of the bureaucracy unless they could hope to be, or were assured of being eventually placed in high positions." (14)

Another way for commoners to advance to high government posts is to marry into titled families. It is essential that they have exceptional educational qualifications as well if they subsequently wish to be granted these high positions. One example of this was (until 1982) the Minister of Finance, Mahe Tupouniua. (15) As well as association through marriage with the royal family, Mahe also holds a PH.D in economics.

(14) Ibid, p.100.

(15) Prince Maha Tupouniua married the present Queen of Tonga's sister.
The church also plays an extremely important role in the modern Tongan society. The old traditional values are, in general, maintained by the church. This is done, in part, by the church assuming many of the functions of village chief. Like the kainga chief the church accepts gifts of tribute from the congregation. The hereditary estate noble now has land holders on his estate from a number of different church groups. There may be some from the Catholic Church, the Free Church of Tonga, the Church of Tonga, the Mormons, and the Wesleyans. Any disputes between these religious factions more often than not require church intervention. The noble must have formal ties with all the churches represented on his estate. It is increasingly the case that individuals on the estate have a greater identity with their church than their kainga group. Hence, the churches have now become the mediator and definer of the traditional relationship between the noble and his subjects.

The most notable change in Tongan society in the decade of 1970-1980 is the continued development of the new middle class. This class contains both members of the nobility and commoners. It is based partly on income but more on occupation and education. Included in the middle class are persons holding jobs that require a high level of education such as doctors, lawyers, church ministers, high technical tradesmen, and specialized government servants. Members of the middle class continue to pay homage to traditional Tongan values by participating on ceremonial occasions, and through respect for their kinship ties. (17)

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

During the period 1770 to 1980 much change has occurred within the political, economic and social sectors of Tongan society. Many traditional institutions such as the ha'a and kainga have lost much of their social importance. In particular, the ha'a or descent based organization of chiefs has been replaced by a strong centralized government. Perhaps the only major social characteristic which has not changed is the power of the monarch. He is still, as always, at the center and in virtual control. It is still imperative for nobles who want to have influence to curry favour with the monarch.

The major change which has taken place has been the drastic reduction in the number of chiefs with access to land resources. In the 1770's there were as many chiefs as there were kainga groups to manage. The number fluctuated depending on the strength of kainga leadership and the merging and separating of kainga units. When the constitution was introduced in 1875 the role of the kainga chief was virtually abolished. It was not legally recognized and a new nobility was appointed to manage hereditary estates throughout the kingdom. The system of kaingas and kainga chiefs took many years to dissolve and the new parliament did not initially hasten the transition. However, many of the newly appointed titled hereditary nobles were also powerful kainga chiefs of the time. Hence the decade
of 1870-1880 saw very little actual change. Rather, the
decade set the stage for profound changes in the future. By
1970 these changes were complete. The Tu'i Tonga equivalent
in the 1970's is H.M. King Taufa'ahau Tupou IV. All land is
still officially owned by the king and administered by his
appointed agents, the titled nobility. The major change lies
in the reduction of the number of chiefs administering the
kingdom's land on behalf of the king. The nobles are now
responsible for apportioning the land allotment to all Tongan
males over the age of 16.

A major objective of these new land laws was to eman-
cipate the Tongan people and to force a levelling of the old
stratification system. But to do this a new elite was first
created and given new privileges within the central government.
This has become rather difficult since the population has
increased to the point where land shortage has denied many
individuals access to their constitutional right to a land
allotment. Still, the hereditary land holding commoners now
share with the nobility a common interest in one of Tonga's
most important resources -- land. Although land is becoming
more scarce and the population larger, its possession remains
an important male social marker.

The new nobles are entitled to collect a nominal annual
rent from land holders within the boundaries of their heredi-
tary estates. Yet this is rarely done. Instead, as it was
with the traditional tributes made to the kainga chief, each
land holder is asked to supply food and goods to the central
king on ritual occasions. For instance, when the king makes
his yearly visits to the hereditary estates the noble has
certain duties to the king. These duties are fulfilled by
the land holders who prepare huge feast tables and gifts for
him to give the king. The more generous the display of homage
the more honour is brought to the noble and his local village.

The location of the noble's residence has retained its
importance over the years. But now a location within the
capital city of Nuku'alofa is all-important. Power tradi-
tionally lay within the kainga so that it was important for
the chiefs to live within the kainga. The power base has now
shifted to the centralized government. By the 1970's, nobles
seeking power had all begun to locate themselves within easy
access to the city.

The legal status of the nobility has remained unchanged
since it was outlined in the 1875 constitution. Since this
time the noble titled families have had a chance to adapt to
the new order. What has resulted has been two distinct groups
of nobles. Those which can be called the gentry nobles have
remained on their estate and been content with a conservative
lifestyle more closely linked to that of their predecessor,
the kainga chief. This group has had only a limited desire to
enhance its education and opportunities within the government
bureaucracy. Some 45% of the titled hereditary nobility (1)

(1) Bott, E. (1981) "Power and Rank in the Kingdom of Tonga",
have chosen this way of life. The other group has opted for higher education and careers in various occupations including the civil service.

Tongan society of the 1970's has changed a great deal from that of the "Friendly Islands" visited by Captain Cook some two hundred years earlier. The path of development followed by the modern kingdom of Tonga is rooted in the guidelines introduced by the 1875 constitution. There has been a conscious effort made to advance into the 20th century while simultaneously maintaining some of the traditional ways of life. The new nobility represents one such link with tradition as do the ceremonial occasions and the protocol associated with these rites.

One of the major changes which has occurred within the nobility is a shift in the basis of power from the village level to the national government centralized in the kingdom's capital city of Nuku'alofa. Those nobles who sought a position within the contemporary power structure had to realign themselves with the central government and away from their villages.

John Baker in his article "Contemporary Tonga" states:

"Under a prosperous and growing economy one can well see the basic features of contemporary Tongan life remaining largely unchallenged, and subject to gradual rather than sudden change." (2)

Baker suggests that given a stable economic situation, Tongans could continue to live more or less as they are for many years to come. The converse of this prognosis is that if the economy does not improve and provide the basic requirements of employment for a growing population perhaps more radical changes can be expected.
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