HOME ABROAD : EXPLORING ASPECTS OF CULTURAL MAINTENANCE WITHIN TONGAN FAMILIES IN TONGA AND NEW ZEALAND

BY

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A Thesis

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ABSTRACT

When Tongans leave their homeland, it is in search of a better life. New Zealand is viewed as the land of 'milk and honey', a land of economic and social opportunities. Many Tongans will be unprepared to face the harsh reality of living in an industrial and competitive society. This thesis explored the role of the Tongan family system in cultural maintenance in Tonga and New Zealand. The purpose of this study has been to show how Tongan people go about maintaining their Tongan culture and values within an ever changing society like New Zealand and within their own Tongan society. There are four participating families in this study: three in New Zealand, and one in Tonga. Two individual Tongan people were also involved in this study, a Church Minister and a Community leader. During the preliminary stages of this study, four Tongan values were identified as being crucial to the Tongan people in their daily lives. I called this the factor "f" concepts in cultural maintenance, and these concepts formed the basis of my thesis. I found the rationale of these concepts are still the same but the practising of these concepts have changed. The findings are then discussed in terms of its implication for Social Work theory, practice and policy. The participant observation methodology has been employed as the central technique of research, as it was the most appropriate methodology for the type of research I wanted to do and the kind of information I wanted to collect.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my parents, Sione and 'Ema Taufa, for providing me with a home which instills and promotes good Tongan family values for the preservation and maintenance of my Tongan identity.

Ko 'Ofa 'oku'ne angamokomoko mo angalelei. Ko 'Ofa 'oku 'ikai te ne meheka, 'oku 'ikai te ne fai pē ke ongoongoa, 'oku 'ikai te ne fakafuofuolahi, 'oku 'ikai te ne fai ta'etāu, 'oku 'ikai te ne kumi 'ene lelei a'ana, 'oku 'ikai te ne faka'ita, 'oku 'ikai te ne lau 'a e kovi, 'oku 'ikai te ne fiefia 'i he ta'etotonu, ka 'oku'ne kaungā-fiefia mo e Mo'oni. 'Oku'ne 'ūkuma 'i he me'a kotoa pē, 'oku'ne tui 'i he me'a kotoa pē, 'oku'ne 'amanaki 'i he me'a kotoa pē, 'oku'ne kataki 'i he me'a kotoa pē."

1 Kolinito 13:4-7
(The Tongan Bible)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Many people have contributed to the work on which my thesis is based. This makes the task of acknowledging everyone involved, an impossible chore. If I have failed to mention your name in this thesis, your support has not gone unnoticed. A special thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Firstly, to all the families who participated in this study, I am forever indebted to you for imparting and entrusting me with your personal stories. Without you this study would not be possible. A special thank you to Epeli Taungapeau for being a great sounding board during the preliminary stages of my field work.

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To my extended family in Tonga, Australia and New Zealand, especially my second parents 'Alani and Haitelenisia Talia'uli in Tonga; and Peter and Alice Gheradi in Auckland; my uncles Papila, Topiese, Fuatā, and Tatafu Lātū; my aunties 'Anamalia Lolohea, Tuitu'u Taufa, and Fatai Slender, my grandaunties Telēsia Kali and Selafine Lavelua; and my cousins Semi Leka, Aisake Leka, Anissa, Ana Feao, Robert, Clement, Claudia, 'Ekitino, Hausia and Tatafu Vaiagina, 'Ātela, Laukau and Saia Vea, Sienitina and Samuela; Kalisi, Nita, Soana, Simanono, Olioni, Finau Topiese, Vea, Paulo Mahaga, Siumeimoana, Foliano, Lotu, 'Alopino, and Sela 'Alamoti, a very special thank you for always providing me with a place to come home to, you will always have a special place in my heart.

A special thanks to Sr Malia Tu'ifua for sharing her vast knowledge of the Tongan world with me. To 'Apisake Makasini, Tai'atu 'Ata 'ata and Falekava Kupu, many thanks for sharing your experiences of the western academic world and our Tongan world with me. A deeper understanding of the relationship between the two was reached.

To Simione Moko'i Hulitanu, 'Aisea Laukau and Robert Douglas, I am indebted to you all for your help with the fieldwork for this thesis. To Sione F. Vea and Saia Vuki thank you very much for proof reading the Tongan language component of this thesis, Malo 'aupito e ma'u tokoni.

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To Imrana Ibrihaim, thank you for the helpful feedback and comments on my first draft. To Nicola Speir, a very special thank you from the bottom of my heart for proof reading the final draft of my thesis, you inspired me to finish this thesis. To Cluny Macpherson and Justin Leef of the Department of Sociology, Auckland, and David Tagoa'i thank you for allowing me to use your computers and laser printer which helped make the writing of this thesis easier.

Last but not least to my siblings, Lolesio, Paulo, Lovine, 'Etuate, Semi, Dean, George, and Joseph, words are not enough to express my deepest gratitude for your endless love and support for me through the years. "Hūmataniu".

Tu'a 'Ofa atu,
Sela

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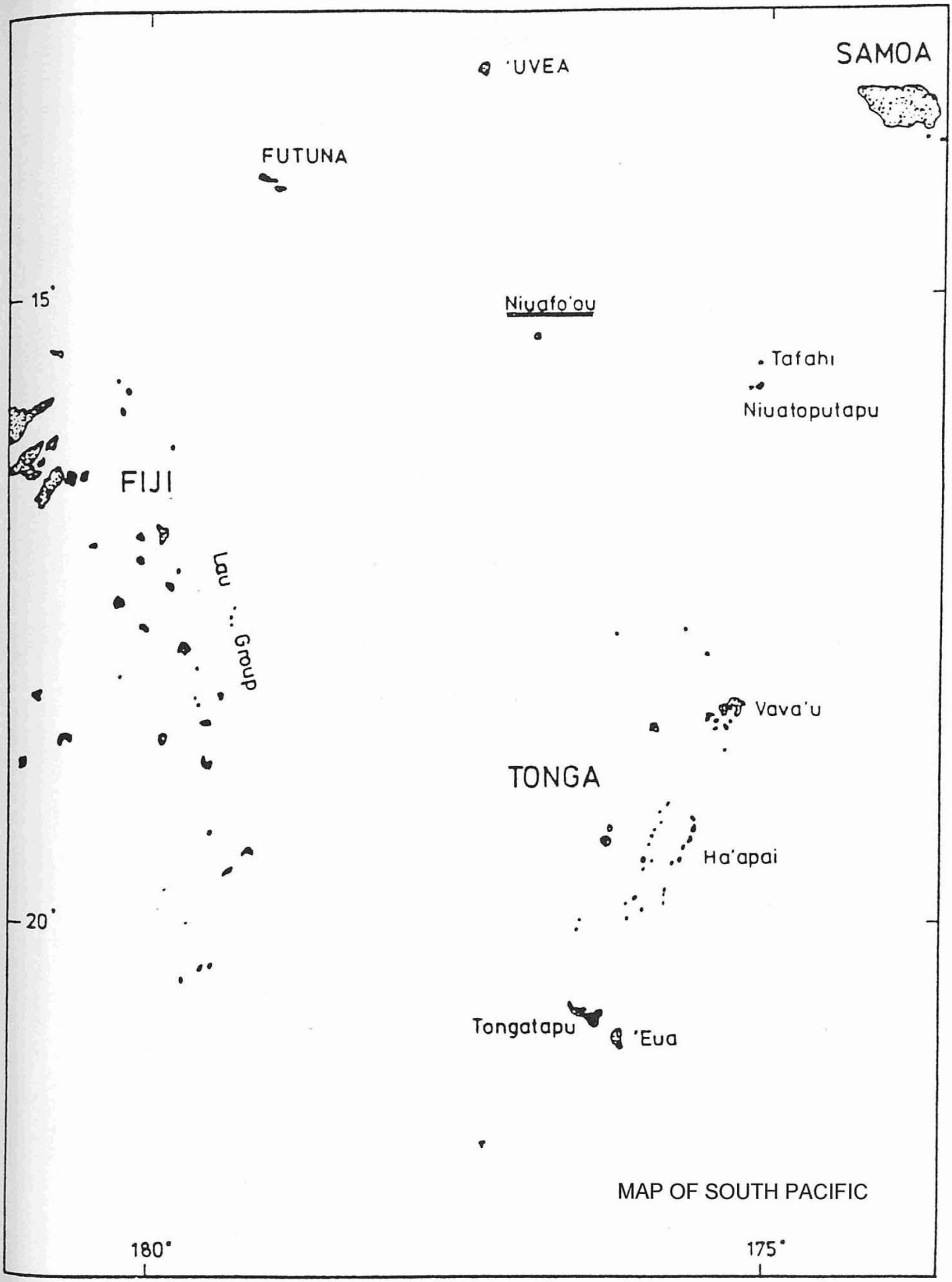

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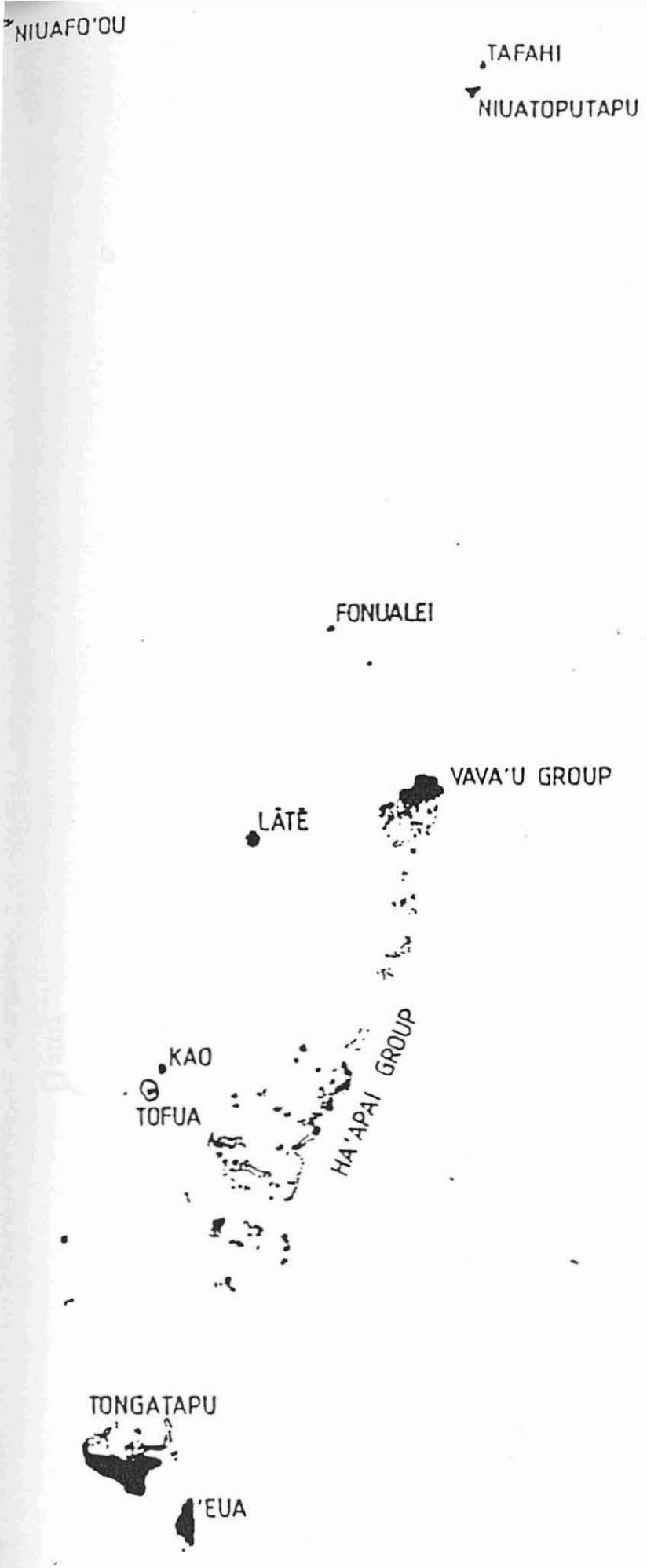
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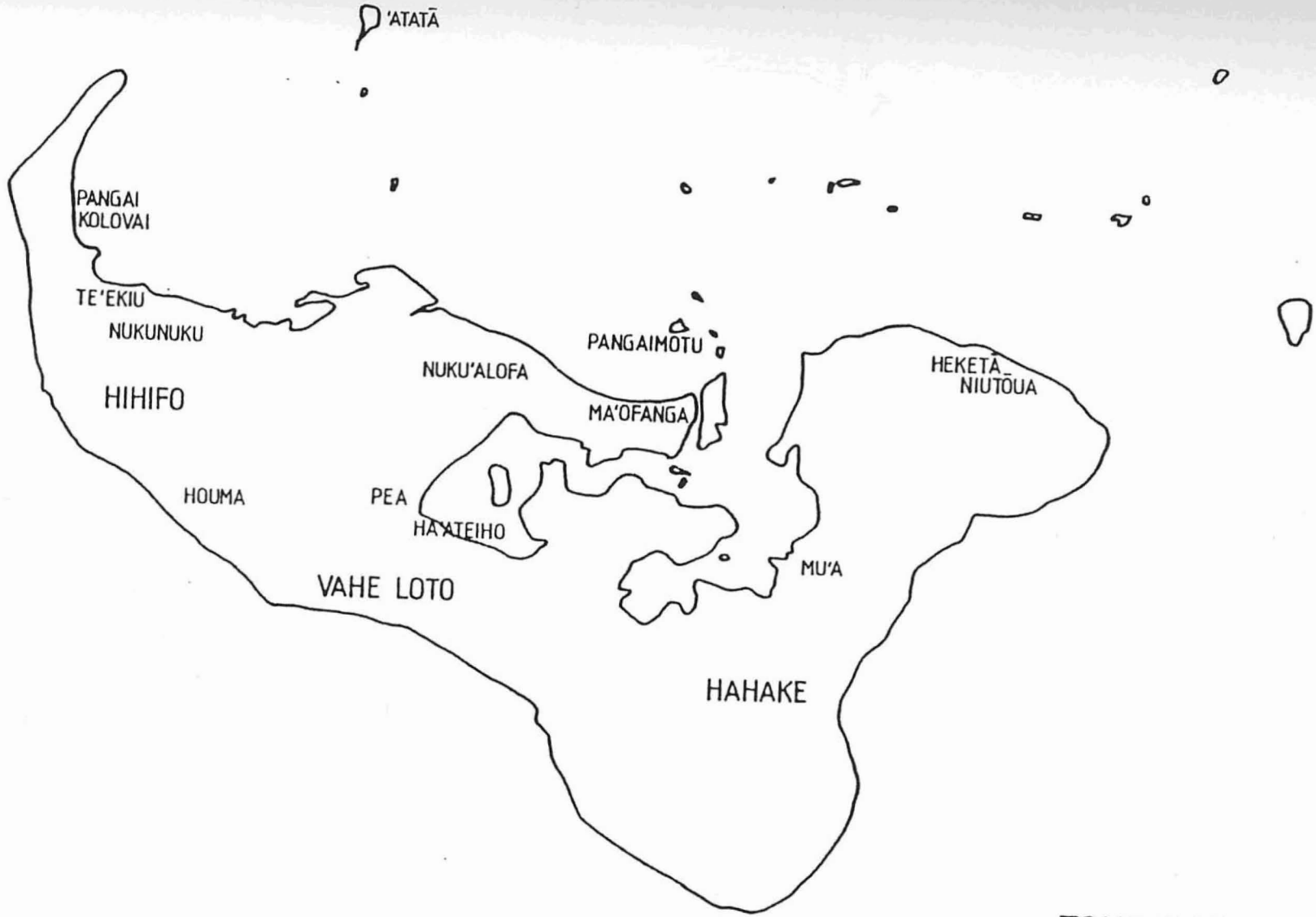
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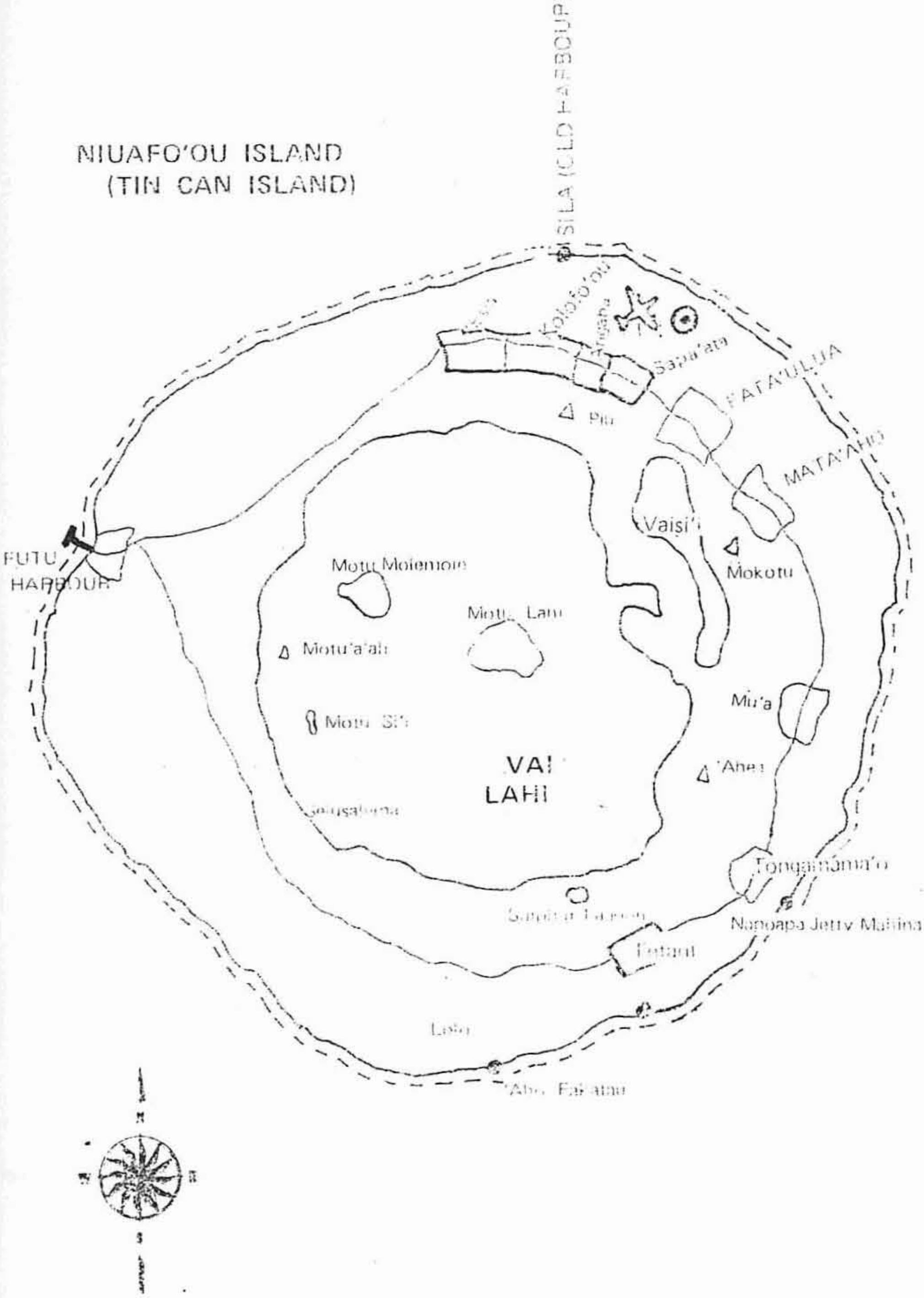

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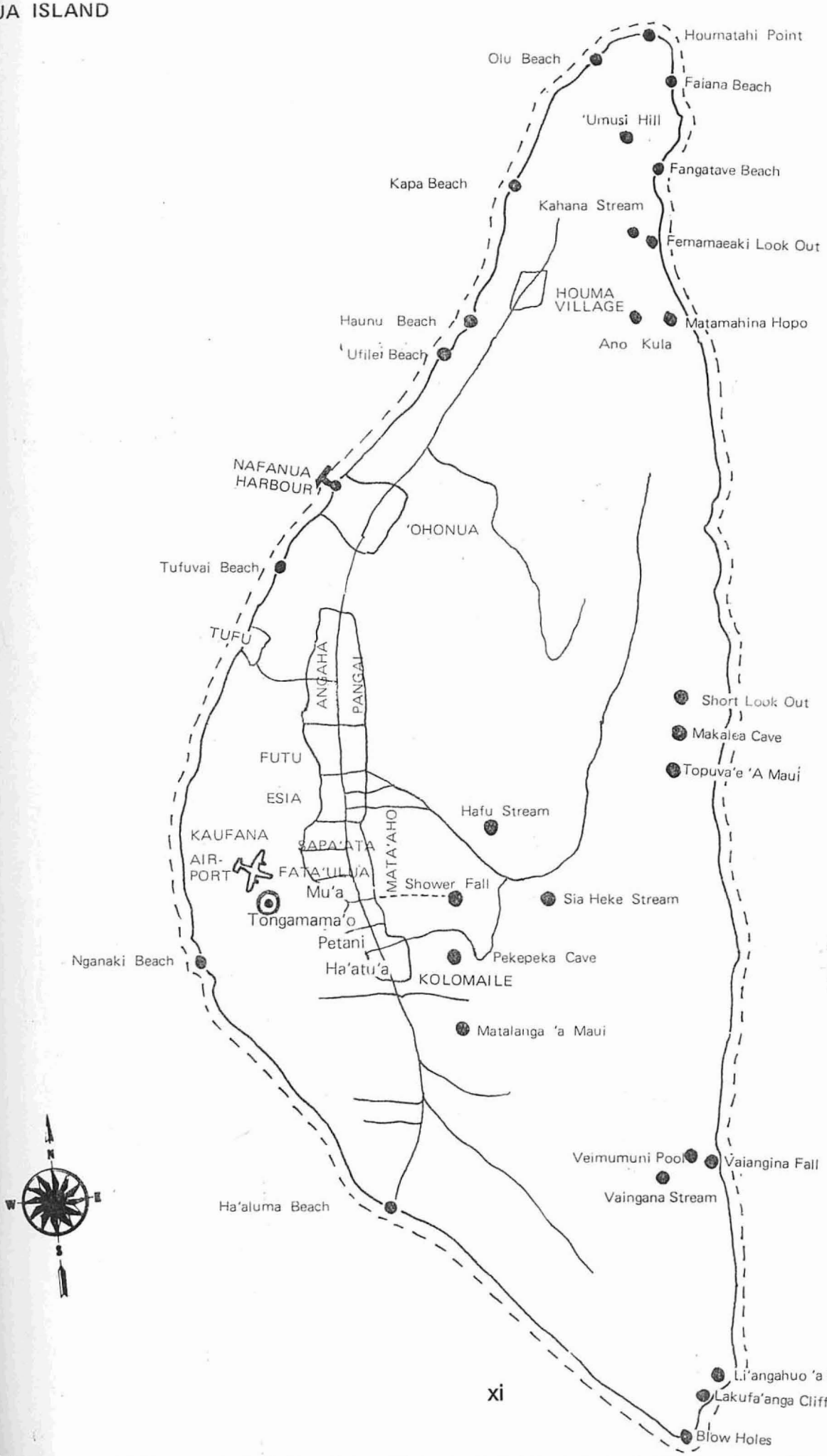
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INTRODUCTION

"Fofola e Fala

Kae fai e Alea"[1]

[1] Unroll the mat and let the discussion begin

INTRODUCTION

"It is not that the artist
is a special sort of person
but that every person is
a special sort of artist".

(Unknown)

For every migrant Tongan living in New Zealand, there is a story to be told of their experiences. Some of us get the chance to tell it orally and some of us get to write it. Whichever way we finally get to tell that story, it is with the knowledge that everyone of us "is a special sort of artist".

This story came about in a number of ways:

Firstly, as a young migrant child I was always told that if I do not lose Tongan ways while I am still young it would be detrimental to my learning abilities as an adult. I was made to feel inferior to my peers because of my cultural difference. And if I wanted to be just like my friends I had to "ape" their ways.

Secondly, in 1987 under the Labour Government Pacific Island people were able to travel into New Zealand without a visa. My family grew from an eight member household to one of twenty three members. Living in such a large household resulted in marked changes to the family dynamics. Through this experience I came to realise the importance of the Tongan family in the maintenance of Tongan values and customs.

Finally, while on placement at the Department of Social Welfare in Lower Hutt, I was often frustrated with colleagues' attitudes towards my people. They expected us to

behave in a certain way - "they never look you in the eye" or; "they are bad time keepers, it is time they realised that we haven't got time to sit around all day and wait for them". This behaviour confirms New Zealanders' stereotypical attitudes towards Pacific Islanders as being lazy and unreliable. Yet for us Tongans to look someone straight in the eye is considered rude. As we Tongans believe in spontaneity and synchronicity in action, we find it hard to conform to the rigid time structure that governs New Zealand.

In this study I am attempting to illustrate the importance of the Tongan family values to the maintenance of their culture. There are four values which I have identified as crucial to this maintenance. They are: *faka'apa'apa* (respect), *fetokoni'aki* (reciprocal co-operation), *fatongia* (moral obligation) and *fe'ofo'ofani* (reciprocal love). For reasons of brevity I call them the factor "f" concepts. These values are taught at birth, passed from generation to generation and continue to guide Tongan people through their entire lives. As Tongan people, we believe these values are part of our makeup. The role of the Church is also crucial to the maintenance of the Tongan culture especially in upholding the factor "f" concepts. However, in my study I observed that the role of the family was the common link that assisted in the maintenance of culture.

For the research I studied four Tongan families, three living in Wellington: whom I will call, the Tupou family, the Latu family and my own the Taufa family and one living in Tonga whom I will call the Finau family.

The title of this thesis came about during a discussion with my mother. I was telling her that while I was in Tonga I was overwhelmed with the feeling that I had finally reached "home" in terms of bonding with the homeland. She said that home for her is now "abroad" because when she left Tonga she knew it was for good. I felt it was befitting, therefore, to call this study "Home Abroad" because it best describes how

the families in this study endeavour to create a Tongan home environment within their adopted country.

During the course of reviewing the literature for my thesis, I found that much was written on Tongan society and about the Tongan culture by *papalangi*[2] (Europeans). I was able to find little work of Tongan scholars, such as Sione Latukefu[3], Penisimani Tupouniua[4] and Senipisi Langi Kavaliku[5]. Their work is used in this thesis. I have also cited the sound methodology Mitaera uses in her thesis.[6] The present dearth of resources, which depict problems facing migrant Tongans, I believe, fully warrants the importance of this research paper.

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[2] Beaglehole, Earnest & Pearl. (1941) Pangai, Village in Tonga. Wellington, New Zealand: Polynesian Society Memoirs No. 18;

Crane, E. (1978) The Tongan Way. Auckland: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd;

Kaeppler, A. (1971) Rank in Tonga. Ethnology 10 (2) : 174-193; and

Marcus, G. (1974) "A Hidden Dimension of Family Development in Modern Tonga" Journal of Comparative Family Studies. Vol 5 No. 1 Spring.

[3] Latukefu, S. (1974) The Church and State in Tonga: the Wesleyan Methodist Missionaries and Political Development. Canberra: ANU Press.

[4] Tupouniua, P. (1970) Persistence and Change: a study of a village in Tonga. M.A. Thesis, University of Auckland.

[5] Kavaliku, L.S. (1977) 'Ofa! The Treasure of Tonga. Pacific Perspective 6(2) : 47-67.

[6] Mitaera, J. (1991) A Comparative Study of the Cook Islands Social Organisation in the Islands and in New Zealand. M.A. (Applied) in Social Work, Victoria University of Wellington.

I hope in writing this thesis that social workers and educators alike can come to understand our world and thus in the process become more sensitive to our cultural needs instead of imposing their cultural practices and ideals when working with us.

I was privileged to be awarded the Herbert Sutcliffe Scholarship which enabled me to do a practice placement in Tonga between July and November 1992 as the practical component of a Masters degree in Social Work. I had the opportunity to observe how the Tongan culture was maintained in the country of origin and to see how far I had developed in terms of knowledge and understanding of my own culture. This trip also gave me the chance to do some fieldwork in Tonga and the data collected in Tonga provided my thesis with a firm foundation.

Chapter One presents the methodological part of the research. Participant observation was adopted after exploring other methods of research in a preliminary study. This chapter will show how the factor "f" concepts came about. Participant observation is not used as a single method but rather as a combination of techniques.

Chapter Two provides an historical look at colonisation within the Tongan society and its effects on the Tongan family structure. The idea of a "compromise culture" is introduced.

Chapter Three explores how ethnographers, sociologists, and historians have dealt with the topic of the family in Tonga. It also provides a detailed look at the Tongan family structure and how it functions within the Tongan society.

In Chapter Four the concepts of factor "f" are discussed in relation to the maintenance of the Tongan culture in 'Eua, and how these concepts are realised in modern

Tongan society. The Finau family, who participated in the Tongan component of this study, is introduced.

Chapter Five looks at the aspects of cultural maintenance in New Zealand. Three migrant Tongan families living in Wellington, including my own - the New Zealand component, are introduced. The way in which the factor "f" concepts are expressed within the families in terms of cultural maintenance in New Zealand is discussed.

Chapter Six presents all the findings from Chapter Four and Five in relation to cultural maintenance for migrant Tongans in New Zealand. Discussion includes Macpherson's and Kinloch's work which provides insight into the different aspects of cultural maintenance for migrant families in New Zealand.

Finally, in the conclusion the implication of knowledge for social work theory and practice, and policy is discussed. The conclusion discusses the relevance of the information attained in this study to the field of Social Work. A summary of the findings of this study are presented, and the recommendations based on those findings are presented.

CHAPTER ONE

Potopoto

'A niu mui [1]

[1] 'Cleverness of young coconut'. The wisdom of the old and the experience and the naivety of youth.

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The world of research is one that holds great fascination for me. It holds buried stories ready to be told and many unspoken ideas ready to be 'cultivated into knowledge'. However along with the fascination comes a feeling of confusion and being lost as to which methodology would be most appropriate to uncover that world I wish to delve into. I, like Mattar (1992), in considering each methodology, experienced its advantages, and its particular disadvantages. This dilemma highlights the importance and the difficulty of selecting the most appropriate research method. However, the greatest dilemma for me was finding a method that was culturally appropriate.

Research Design: Participant Observation

The participant observation method was adopted as the central technique of research in this study for a number of reasons. Firstly, it demands that the researcher adopt an attitude of respect and appreciation toward the social world under study. Secondly a requirement of social research according to this view, is fidelity to the phenomena under study, not to any particular set of methodological principles, however strongly supported by philosophical argument (Hammestein and Atkinson, 1983:6). Thirdly and most importantly it allows for the research worker to participate overtly in the life of those under study. This was an ideal situation for me as I had involved my own family in this study.

It is somewhat misleading to regard participant observation as a single method because it involves and combines a number of methods and techniques. It may, for instance, involve genuine social interaction with those under study within the context of real situations, direct observation of relevant events, formal but more often informal

interviews, systematic enumeration, the collection of documents and artifacts and a general open-endedness in the direction which the study takes (Macpherson 1975:6). I decided therefore to do a preliminary study to determine which combination of methods and techniques would be appropriate for me to implement in this study.

Preliminary Study

I carried out a small preliminary study with the Soane family - a young couple and their four children - who are members of my kainga (extended family). And a preliminary interview was carried out on a family friend, Tevita, who happened to be a leader within the Wellington Tongan community.

I wanted to see which type of interviews would yield valuable data and at the same time be culturally appropriate; the formal/informal interviews and structured/ unstructured interviews were tested out for this purpose. I discussed with Tevita the different types of interview that could be used in research with Tongans. He told me which method of interview would be most appropriate in terms of his knowledge of our Tongan people and he gave me a list of ideal candidates. In this way, a process of networking took place. And lastly we looked at the questions I had designed and Tevita provided feedback on the interview guide. The guide was used as a checklist in the actual field work to ensure I had the information I needed (Laing and Mitaera, 1992).

With the Soane family I wanted to see what would be the best settings in which to observe and participate with the family as a way of collecting qualitative data. This process was important in determining the success of the study overall. I wanted to see how best to work with the family. Should open or closed discussion be used? Should a video camera be use during family celebrations and crises or during

traditional festivities such as *Uike Lotu*[2] (Week of prayers) to see their action, reaction or behaviour at such events? I believe Tongan culture is a living culture and I found from my own personal experience of my family that often as Tongans we say and do things that we think people want us to say or do. This is normally out of character for us. Like Macpherson (1975:7) I was interested in what people did rather than what they said they did because often statements of behaviour do not correspond very closely with the fact of their behaviour, therefore the video camera was invaluable in this instance.

A major factor for me in working with these families using the participant observation method of research, was language. As I am a fluent speaker of the Tongan language, that is the standard everyday language, I wanted to see whether Tongan or English language would allow me to get the information I needed. I used both the English and Tongan language during the pilot interview with Tevita. Tevita was made aware of my limitation of the formal and the old language which is spoken by the older generation of Tongan. I needed access to this formal old language when studying the traditional practice and values within the Tongan culture. The old language is also important to use when the culture is being transmitted orally from generation to generation. I had to make the questions simple and easy to be understood for the benefit of myself and the participants in my study. Both Tongan and English were used during the interviews.

Outcomes of the Preliminary Study

The preliminary study highlighted the risk of using the participant observation method in one's own culture. I was made aware of my own bias when recording and presenting the data. I decided to engage a second Tongan person to do the

[2] This is a week of prayers and feasting observed by the Wesleyan church in which to celebrate the new year. It is celebrated in the first week of January.

interviews with me. Simione Hulitanu, is a primary school teacher from Tonga. During the preliminary stage of my fieldwork, he and his family were living next door to me. His knowledge of the Tongan language and culture is extensive and thus he was an ideal person to involve in the interviews where the Tongan language was used. I approached him about helping out with the interviews and he was more than happy to, so he was taken on as the second interviewer. Simione's contribution was invaluable in ensuring that quality data was collected.

Through working with the Soane family in the preliminary study, I became aware of how busy the families were during the year, so I decided to carry out my fieldwork during two holiday breaks: the Christmas break (December 1991-92) and the Easter break (April/May 1992). This worked well for me because many of the festivities celebrated by the Tongan people were on during these particular times of the year. I felt that videoing the families in action would show how the Tongan culture is being maintained and practised within New Zealand society. Robert Douglas who is married to a Tongan and who has lived and worked in Tonga for a number of years was engaged to do the visual recording for this study. He had been invited by other Tongan families to video their family celebrations, so he was familiar with these types of celebration and this type of work. I felt in using Robert's visual recording I was providing a third perspective of the Tongan families to compare with Simione's and my own.

After talking with Tevita, I came up with ten questions which formed the basis of the interview guide for the fieldwork. Six more questions were added to the interview guide as a result of the preliminary study (Appendix 1). I also decided on the unstructured interviews for the Latu, Tupou, and my own family. The unstructured interviews provide the opportunity for the researcher to probe deeply, to uncover new clues, to open up new dimensions of a problem and to secure vivid, accurate,

inclusive accounts from informants that are based on personal experience (Burgess, 1982 p.107). For me the strength of the unstructured interviews was that they involved the sort of conversation that develops through a sustained relationship between the informant and the researcher. Such interviews can yield a variety of rich material (Burgess, 1982, p.109).

A formal interview was carried out with a Tongan Church Minister, whom I will call Mosese, because firstly, I did not know him personally and secondly, as a sign of respect for his position within the Tongan community. I also did an interview with a Tongan community leader, whom I will call Paula. I knew I could apply the unstructured interview technique because I had known him as a child. Both the Tongan and English language were used in the interviews. At times the Tongan language was used unconsciously. These two people were selected from the list of names Tevita gave me during our preliminary interview.

The Factor "f" Concepts: An Introduction

During the preliminary study with the Soane family four Tongan concepts: *Faka'apa'apa* (respect); *Fetokoni'aki* (reciprocal co-operation); *Fatongia* (moral obligation); and *Fe'ofo'ofani* (reciprocal love), continued to be mentioned during the course of our discussion. The Soane parents talked about how they had difficulty maintaining these Tongan concepts when they were not being practised by the New Zealand society. I asked Tevita about these Tongan concepts during our preliminary interviews and he told me that these are essential values in the Tongan culture. Therefore I decided to use them to form the basis of my study. During the fieldwork I deliberately tried to see if the factor "f" concepts were being practised in Wellington and Tonga. The video tapes were invaluable in this instance, in confirming the participating families' behaviour.

Selecting the Participants

The Tupou and the Latu families that participated in this study have lived in Wellington for over twelve years. I have known them for the same length of time, because together with my own family (the third in the study) they formed a small Tongan community. I grew up among these families and their children became friends of mine.

I approached the two families in person to see if they would be willing to participate in the study and they were all happy to. I then sent the families letters to invite them formally to be participants in the study (Appendix 2). All interview times were arranged using the telephone. It was appropriate for me to use the participant observation method as there was already a good relationship established between the research worker and the participants.

I also sent letters to Mosese, the Church Minister, and Paula, the Community leader (Appendix 2). Mosese sent me a letter stating his willingness to participate. And Paula telephoned me that he would be more than happy for me to interview him.

The family in Tonga involved in this study, whom I call the Finau family, are members of my father's *kainga* (extended family). I used them in this study because they looked after me during my fieldwork in 'Eua. We used to live in 'Eua when I was baby. I chose to use 'Eua because I felt an immediate spiritual bonding with the land which I did not feel during my time on the main island of Tongatapu. I did not have an interview guide to use, however I did manage to recall some of the questions that I had used with the Wellington Tongan families for example: how is the Tongan culture being maintained? And, what are the values of the Tongan family system especially in terms of the factor "f" concepts?

I conducted one interview in Tonga with my practice placement supervisor. I was also able to discuss with friends and family members the changes that are taking place in Tonga and their effects on the traditional culture.

All participants involved in this study will be introduced in more detail in chapters four and five of this thesis.

Ethical Statement

There are a number of levels of confidentiality in this research. The fact that I worked with my own family means that they are identifiable as a group. Because the Wellington Tongan community is such a small community the other two families and the individual contributors, to the project can be identified by themselves and each other. Some may be recognisable to other members of the Tongan community. However all the data that was collected from the interviews and family discussions have been kept confidential following Mitaera's (1991) study[3]. The video tapes that were used during the field study were given back to the families after I had finished with them. Participants were given the right to censor and veto the use of any personal information before the writing up of this thesis. Two families did not wish to be identified therefore we agreed upon using nom de plumes for all[4].

The Fieldwork

Participant Observation: In Wellington

I carried out my fieldwork in Wellington over two different periods the first period was between December 1991 to January 1992 and the second period April to May 1992.

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[3] J. Mitaera (1991) A Comparative Study of the Cook Islands Social Organisation in the Islands and New Zealand. M.A. (Applied) in Social Work, Victoria University of Wellington, pg 6-14.

[4] ibid p.8

Because I had grown up among these two families I felt that it was not necessary for me to spend more than two months doing the fieldwork. The first period of the field study was spent with the Tupou family and I also did some observation work within my own family. I got Robert to video my family during Christmas Day 1991 and the Tupou family during their 1992 New Year celebrations. Semisi and Ana and the rest of the Tupou family had a family barbecue in January 1992, I was invited along and it gave me a chance to see how the factor "f" concepts were being practised.

In February 1992 I did four interviews, one formal interview with Moses as well as three unstructured interviews with the three individuals of the Tupou family. The formal interviews were taped and the main language used was English. The interview was recorded on tape, Simione was allowed to come with me for this interview. With the three unstructured interviews the Tongan language was used as the medium of communication. The Tupou family rarely speak English unless they come in contact with non-Tongan speakers. These interviews were recorded on tape.

The second period of field study I spent with the Latu family. I did three different unstructured interviews with the three different households within the Latu family and one open discussion interview with Paula, the community leader. Both the Tongan and English language were used as mediums of communication depending on the families. The Latu family had a family crisis, a funeral, and a video tape was made of this event to which I had access.

The Church Minister preferred to do the interviews in the Tongan language. The three different interviews were recorded on tape and the open discussion interview was recorded on paper. I used the interview guide (Appendix I) when interviewing the families and the two individual participants. In May 1992 I spent a day observing the *fakame* (White Sunday) celebration where some members of the Tupou family

participated, this was also captured on video. The *fakame* is the first Sunday in May where the children are given the opportunity to perform plays, read stories from the Bible, and sing to show what they have learnt in their Sunday school. I used this because it is one of the ways that the culture is being maintained by Tongans of the Methodist Church in and outside Tonga.

Participant Observation: In 'Eua and Tongatapu

Between July and November 1992 I was in Tonga doing a practice placement to fulfil the practical component of my MA (applied) degree. It gave me an opportunity to carry out the fieldwork for my thesis. During my four and a half months there, I worked mostly on the main island of Tongatapu. I worked mainly with poor families as part of the Dioceses Development Project team.

I decided to use 'Eua in this study because, as I stated earlier, I felt an immediate bonding with the land which I did not feel in Tongatapu. I also used 'Eua because of its importance to me and my family. This is where my father grew up as a child, so I engaged my own extended family as participants in this study, the Finau family.

I did one family group discussion with the Finau family in the Tongan language and an unstructured interview in English with one member of this family, who was educated - a teacher - and spoke English fluently.

The participant observation method was appropriate for the fieldwork in 'Eua. It enabled me to show respect for the people and the setting which is a first requirement when engaging this methodology in research. 'Eua is remote and much slower to change than the main island of Tonga. I wanted to see how the factor "f" concepts were practised in such an environment. To a lesser extent, I also did some observational work with the family I stayed with in Tongatapu.

Data Analysis

After going through all the data I had collected from the fieldwork I began to explore different ways of organising the data in endeavouring to find the best way to present all the material.

One way I was going to present the main themes was in individual chapters. Another way I thought of presenting the data was to divide the study into two main parts: the Tongan experience; and the New Zealand experience and talk about each case individually. But I felt that it would lack the flow and continuity that I wished to show between my experience of living in New Zealand and my experience of going back to Tonga. I feel that I cannot talk of one experience without talking about the other.

Because I had used participant observation, the interviews were only used in this study to confirm behavioural patterns, determined from the video tapes. However, the interviews were equally important to the participant observation work, one complemented the other. All interviews were transcribed by Simione and myself. Simione transcribed all of the interviews that were carried out in the Tongan language, because he has a better understanding of the Tongan language. There was a significant amount of information from the interview that was not included in the final thesis. The information from the interviews with the two individual participants has been integrated with the information from the families. The basis of my selection was to use only the information relevant to answering the six questions in the interview guide that came up after the preliminary study. Some participants talked about things that were of no relevance to my particular topic which is to be expected when engaging the unstructured interview technique of research. I decided to give the video tapes to the families because I felt they were too personal for me to keep.

The final presentation of the data in this thesis has resulted from looking at the theses of Kinloch (1975)[5], MacPherson (1975)[6], Mitaera (1991)[7] as well as talking and consulting with my supervisor.

The Presentation of Data

I decided to describe and discuss the participants in more depth in chapters four and five. This was done in my endeavour to assemble a full picture of the Tongan family involved in cultural maintenance both in Tonga and New Zealand. I wanted to place them in their historical and ethnographic context.

Originally I was hesitant about translating the interviews from the Tongan language to the English language. However, I decided to do so in my desire to contribute to the education of social workers, educators, and politicians concerning our Tongan world and our needs. I must make the point that the translation of the Tongan language into English is my interpretation. The interpretation depends on the person and their understanding of the language. I cannot stress enough how meanings of words are changed in the process of translation from one language to another. For this reason I must emphasize that the translation of the quotes in this study are Simione's and my understanding of what was meant.

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[5] P.J. Kinloch (1975) Samoan Children in a New Zealand Secondary School: A Semilogical Study of Social Communication. Ph.D. Thesis. Victoria University of Wellington.

[6] C. MacPherson (1975) Extended Kinship Among Urban Samoan Migrants: Towards an explanation of its persistence in Urban New Zealand. D.Phil. Thesis. University of Waikato, Hamilton.

[7] J. Mitaera (1991) A Comparative Study of the Cook Islands Social Organisation in the Islands and in New Zealand. M.A. (Applied) in Social Work, Victoria University of Wellington.

In the middle of rewriting this draft, my great-aunt was trying to teach me the old Tongan language using old Tongan proverbs. In the process I came to realise the wealth of knowledge in these proverbs and so I decided to open each chapter with a Tongan proverb which I felt expressed what I was trying to convey to the readers. I also used these old Tongan proverb in my thesis, in the hope of preserving the wealth of the knowledge in my cultural world, in my life.

Finally I wish to make one final comment about my first experience of the world of research. In my endeavour to find the best possible method of research to probe into the Tongan world of the family which I wanted to explore in more depth, I came across one important personal discovery. The research <u>is</u> my methodology[8]. I journeyed through the research design I used and it became a process of re-living, re-participating, and re-observing the only life that I have known, and will ever know.

[8] I coined this term to express how I felt that the methodology - the participant observation - I had employed in this study, was in itself sufficient to form the thesis alone.

CHAPTER TWO

Ta sino'i vai[1]

[1] 'Cutting out body of water' Digging a passage to let the water flow through it. Refers to a famous person who has left their mark.

THE HISTORY OF COLONISATION IN TONGA

Introduction

The Kingdom of Tonga is a Polynesian state which prides itself on its distinctive cultural heritage. Sione Lātūkefu, a Tongan historian[2], has said that although Tonga has never been fully colonised by one of the great imperial powers, the society has been transformed religiously and politically by European Christianity. Christianity became the foundation on which the new Tongan society was to be based.

Because the focus of this study is on Tongan culture and its maintenance, this chapter will only concentrate on the history of Tonga in terms of the colonisation process and the effect that this had on the traditional culture.

The reign of King George Tupou I will form the basis of this chapter because I believe that during his reign the mechanisms were set for the erosion of the Tongan traditional society and culture. This chapter will only discuss the other three monarchs; King George Tupou II; Queen Salote Tupou III; and King George Tupou IV, very briefly to show how much more the Tongan culture changed after the reign of King George Tupou I.

The Kingdom of Tonga

The Kingdom of Tonga is located between latitudes 15S and 23S and longitude 173W and 177W. This places Tonga just to the west of the International Dateline. Tonga is approximately 1100 miles north-east of New Zealand, and is only 420 miles south east of Fiji. Tonga consists of 170 islands 36 of which are inhabited. There are

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[2] Sione Latukefu was the first Tongan person to gain a Doctorate degree in the History discipline. His doctorate thesis formed the basis for his book Church and State published in 1974.

five main islands in Tonga: Tongatapu on which Nuku'alofa the capital is situated; Vava'u; Ha'apai; 'Eua; and the two Niuas.

In the 1986 census Tonga had a population of 94,649 people, 63,794 of them lived on the main island Tongatapu. In 1990 the total population was estimated at about 95,000. The Tongan annual population growth has been 0.5% since 1976 and it is believed to be even lower in recent years. The reasons for this low population have been attributed to the substantial emigration to Australia, New Zealand and the United States. The people of Tonga are nearly 98 percent Polynesian race, and Christian by religion.

The Kingdom of Tonga, on the whole, experiences a sub-tropical rather than a tropical climate. Tonga is warm and wet. There is a marked cool season from June to September with a mean maximum temperature of 24.5 degree celcius and a hot season from December to April with a mean maximum temperature for Tongatapu of 29 degree celcius. Rainfall varies from the South to the North: Tongatapu has an average rainfall of about 100 ins. per annum (Taufe'ulungaki, 1991:2-3). Migrant Tongan people deliberately take residence in places with similar climatic features to their country of origin. This explains why the Tongan population density is high in places such as Auckland, New Zealand; Sydney, Australia; and California, United States.

The Process of Colonisation in the History of Tonga

Before any forms of contact were made with the outside world, the lives of the Tongan people were governed by traditional customs such as *inasi* (the yearly contribution of foodstuffs and gifts to the chiefs) and the traditional religion of worshipping many gods. The power of the chiefs over the commoners was

insurmountable. The commoners were controlled by their own chiefs who had the power of life and death over them.

The idea of chieftainship is a strong feature of Tongan society and is said to have been the influence of our Lapita ancestors. In pre-contact Tongan society people were rules by chiefs who were chosen by birth. The concept of *faka'apa'apa* (respect) is believed to have come from this idea of chieftainship. Campbell explained:

> "a man cannot become a chief: he must be born a chief, this idea of social precedence based on birth and descent is central to Tongan social organisation, and therefore to Tongan political history. The respect (faka'apa'apa) that is shown to older people, the obedience of those who are lower socially, and the sense of loyalty and obligation that people feel towards their leaders, are probably all based on the same principle of hierarchy by birth, which is one of the most enduring characteristics of Tongan life" (Campbell 1992:6).

However, Lātūkefu states that the Wesleyan missionaries had the most effective influences on the traditional Tongan society:

> "The traditional Tongan society with its social, economic and political institutions had been closely integrated with the traditional religious system. When the influential chiefs and their people accepted Christianity, the equilibrium of the old system was undermined and changes and adjustments became inevitable. A deliberate effort was made to reconstruct Tongan society upon the new Christian beliefs and values. It was to be based only upon those old customs and traditions which the missionaries and their chiefly converts thought suitable for the new design, and it incorporated many new and imported elements". (Lātūkefu, 1974:119)

Through King George I the missionaries ambitions were conceptualised and implemented into the law of the Island.

King George Tupou I and Christianity "The Makers of Modern Tonga".

During the reign of King George Tupou I (1845-93) Tonga was believed to be colonised in two distinctive ways: religiously and politically. Lātūkefu argues that the traditional Tongan society with its social, economic and political institutions, had been closely integrated with the traditional religious system and it was, therefore inevitable that the society should change.

> "King George was convinced that, in general, the ways of the kau papālangi (Europeans) were superior to those of the Tongans, for he was quick to see that they possessed superior wealth, innovations and was prepared to learn all he could from Europeans and put what he had learned into practice, whether it was the field of culture, economics, religion or politics" (Lātūkefu, 1974:12).

George Tupou became King George Tupou I in 1845 when he succeeded his great-uncle Aleamotu'a to the secular headship of Tonga - the Tu'i Kanokupolu[3]. From this time onwards he was referred to as the King of Tonga[4].

George Tupou was already the King of Ha'apai and King of Vava'u. In 1820 he succeeded his father, Tupouto'a, and became King of Ha'apai, the Tu'i Kanokupolu. The reason why he became King of Vava'u is still questionable in many Tongan historians minds. At the death bed of his cousin 'Ulukalala, who was the King of Vava'u, there are different verisons of the last instructions 'Ulukalala gave George Tupou. "One version is that 'Ulukalala instructed his royal cousin to act as a guardian

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[3] The 24th Tu'i Tonga created a new dynasty, the Tu'i Ha'atakalaua, during the fifteenth century to take over some of His responsibilities. A third dynasty was created in the seventeenth century by the Tu'i Ha'atakalaua, the Tu'i Kanokupolu, for the same purpose of sharing the responsibilities.

[4] Senipisi Langi Kavaliku (1966) Education Reorganisation for National Development in Tonga, PhD thesis in Education, Victoria University, pg 14 (unpublished).

for his son, Matekitonga, until he was old enough to rule Vava'u. The other claim is that 'Ulukalala, by-passing his own son, appointed George as his heir" (Ledyard, 1982:54). The latter claim was supported by the Wesleyan Tongan people and with this support it helped George became King of Vava'u.

The first sign of change under King George's reign came in 1839 in the form of the Vava'u Code. At that time he was not yet the King of Tonga, only of Ha'apai and Vava'u. The Vava'u code was the first written law in Tonga[5].

The significance of this 1839 Code of Law is that it was the first indication of changes to the traditional Tongan structure. The missionaries believed that all men were equal in the sight of God. The 1839 Vava'u code was the first attempt by George Tupou to limit the powers of the chiefs, and the strong influence of the missionaries was obvious in the Code. For example Kavaliku (1966:14) writes:

> "A strong missionary influence ran through the Code. Work and games were forbidden on the Sabbath; new marriage regulations were enforced; the power of the chiefs were limited, and the right to dispense justice was taken from the chiefs and given to courts, set up in Vava'u, with jurisdiction over chiefs and commoners alike without exception".

Furthermore the Catholic Religion leader Bishop Blanc asserts that "it seemed to be the aim and object of the former (Wesleyan missionaries) to instill into the minds of the people the idea that all pleasures were sinful. To this end they prohibited through King George I, all the early dances and songs and many of the ancient customs.

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[5] Latukefu states that there is no documentary evidence to support the argument that the Vava'u Code of Law was based on the British system of Law, however it is fairly certain that the missionaries told King George about the system of government in England, Church and State, p.121.

Through the suppression of the ancient songs, much valuable information regarding the early history of Tonga has been for ever lost" (Lātūkefu, 1974:125).

A second Code of Law was introduced in 1850 but it turned out to be a revision and enlargement of the Vava'u Code of 1839[6]. The significance of the 1839 and 1850 Codes is that they formed the basis of the 1875 constitution of Tonga. As I stated earlier in this paper, Lātūkefu emphasises, these two codes had two very important effects. Firstly, they limited the power of the chiefs, and thereby raised, to some extent, the social, economic, religious as well as political status of the commoners. Secondly, by limiting the power of the chiefs they consolidated the new and powerful position of the hau[7]. The Code also proclaimed that the King was the root of all government and that it was for him to appoint those who should govern.

King George Tupou I, Shirley Baker, the 1862 Code and the 1875 Constitution

Shirley Baker came to Tonga in 1860 from Australia as a member of the Wesleyan missionary, and in 1869 became the chairman of the mission, Campbell attributed this success to Baker's intelligence and energy (1992:74). His close friendship with King George enabled him to become indispensable to the King and "by 1872 he was the King's close adviser in all things: chaplain, physician, and political confidante" (Campbell, 1992:75). Campbell believes that Baker's influence was felt "as early as 1861. Baker assisted the King with the preparation of the new law code, and in 1864 had designed the Tongan flag" (ibid 1992:74).

In the partnership of King George Tupou I and Shirley Baker, Latekefu explains that "perhaps the most revolutionary constitutional measure introduced in the 1862 Code

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[6] See Appendix B in Latukefu book Church and State for the whole document.

[7] Hau is defined to mean temporal ruler in S. Latukefu (1974) Church and State p. XV.

was the emancipation of the common people from serfdom" (1974:206), for which Baker took the credit.

The 1875 Constitution drafted by King George and Shirley Baker was a long document consisting of 132 articles. It contained three main sections: Declaration of Rights; Form of Government; and the Lands. The first section Declaration of Rights, "guaranteed the liberty of every individual, the equality of all men, chiefs or commoners, Tongans or foreigners" in Tonga (Lātūkefu, 1974:207).

The second section dealt with the form of government in Tonga. The King "declared that the form of government was to be a constitutional monarchy. The person of the King was declared sacred. He governed the land, and all law passed by the Legislative Assembly had to receive his signature before it became law" (Lātūkefu, 1974:208-9). The Constitution was an attempt by the King to give "Tonga the type of legal and constitutional machinery which would enable her to gain recognition from the civilised nations and maintain her own independent and stable government" (ibid, 1974:209).

Internationally, the Constitution did achieve the King's aim, it led the civilised nations of the world to recognise Tonga's independent sovereignty - in 1876 Tonga signed a treaty with Germany[8], in 1879 one with Britain[9], and in 1888 one with America[10]. And more importantly the Constitution gave rise to a feeling of security never felt before, particularly in respect of Tonga's independence and integrity as a nation[11].

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[8] Thomson, cited by Latukefu, Church and State, p.216

[9] ibid, p.216

[10] ibid p.216

[11] ibid p.217

Some writers claim that conversion of the rulers to Christianity in Tonga, in other places in the Pacific, was simply a means used by these politically ambitious individuals to serve their own economic and political ends. I must disagree with what I see as a misleading claim. This interpretation if applied to King George and the Tongan situation would be far from the truth. Lātūkefu said that:

> "King George's adherence to Christian principles throughout the later stages of his career had a positive effect on his political actions. His adherence to the missionaries' teaching went deeper than mere lip-service. They helped him to develop his remarkable gifts for leadership' which enabled him to surmount opposition and to withstand the vicissitudes of his long reign during the most critical period of Tongan history. Without the guidance and assistance of the Wesleyan missionaries he could hardly have succeeded in his ambitions, and to this extent their influence on Tongan political changes during this period was considerable" (1974:216).

King George Tupou II

When King George Tupou II came to power in 1893 he inherited a kingdom which had owed its stability to the personal dominance of his great-grandfather, King George Tupou I. However he did not have the leadership quality that his great-grand father had. In fact when he became king at the age of nineteen "his own personal qualities had not developed" and he "had not learned either the obligations or the skills of a leader" (Campbell, 1992:108).

Ledyard said "Not long after his succession, King George II contemplated putting a German national into a government position. The British consul warned him that he should make appointments of foreigners only among British citizens" (1982:71). In reply the King told the consul he would appoint whom he pleased.

The British feared the Germans interest in Tonga and so they sent Basil Thomson to make Tonga a protectorate state. In 1900, George II signed the treaty of Friendship

to become a protectorate State of Great Britain. This gave the British consul the right of veto over financial matters and major appointments were made only after they had received British approval[12]. In fact many Tongan people believe that King George's greatest accomplishment was his daughter, Queen Salote Tupou III.

Queen Salote Tupou III

In the 47 year reign of Queen Salote, Tonga went through a period of peace, unity and stability. But the Kingdom she inherited from her father was neither united nor stable.

She came to the throne when she was only 18 years old. Where her great grandfather King George I sought change in Tonga through his political innovations, Queen Salote sought change to address the social problems, providing better health and education for her people.

In relation to health, "when the Rockerfeller Foundation sent Dr S.M. Lambert to supervise a campaign against hookworm, wishing her people to submit to the required medication, Queen Salote set them an example by doing so herself" (Ledyard, 1982:76). And more importantly when Lambert expressed his dreams to set up a medical school for all the islands and did not have the funds to maintain it, Queen Salote "immediately said that Tonga would help" (ibid 1982:76). It is believed that through her support of Lambert she inspired first Samoa and then other islands to follow with contributions. The result was the Central Medical School in Fiji (Ledyard, 1982:76).

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[12] P. Ledyard, The Tongan Past, p.72

Queen Salote encouraged mothers to go to the doctor or government dispensers for supplies of baby food. This gave the medical officers a chance to check up on the condition of young children (Ledyard, 1982:76). Her influence helped to reduce infant mortality in Tonga to the lowest in the Pacific.

During Queen Salote's reign, new hospitals with modern equipment were built in Tongatapu and Vava'u. Ledyard writes "today there are few countries in the world healthier than Tonga" (1982:76).

With regard to education, Queen Salote was a dedicated and tireless worker. She had a special interest in the education of girls and women. As a result of her interest in education, three Wesleyan girls' colleges were built in Tonga during her time. The one in Nuku'alofa bears her name. But Ledyard writes "as the mother of sons, she was no less interested in boys' education" (1982:77). Both the present King and his brother received tertiary education in Australia, the King has degrees both in arts and law. Other social changes during her reign included granting women the right to vote in 1951.

Unlike her father, the Queen relied heavily on the advice and guidance of Rev Roger Page on external matters. Where King George I relied on Shirley Baker's assistance in his political innovations, Queen Salote relied on Page, a missionary in Tonga for 38 years who had been the President of the Wesleyan Church for many years. Lātūkefu attributes their friendship to "his deep understanding of, and affection for, the Tongan people. His knowledge of commerce and international relations, made him an invaluable consultant on almost every problem" (1966:160). Furthermore Ledyard writes, "aside from her family and her official duties, Queen Salote had many interests of which the two most important were the Wesleyan church and old Tonga - its history, mythology, customs, and crafts" (1982:78). Both Lātūkefu and Ledyard

have said in their studies that the Queen was a woman who seemed to have been 'ahead of her time' in terms of her extensive knowledge of the outside world as well as of her own world. But more importantly they show how Queen Salote symbolised the enduring value of basic human goodness, friendship and love for her people and anyone else who came in contact with her. "Over the years her willingness to learn from experience, and to draw upon the knowledge of men like Page, brought her an immeasurable wisdom that was peculiarly her own" (Lātūkefu, 1966:160). In fact, "because of the calm and stable atmosphere which marked the years of her reign, the Queen, although considered 'ahead of her time', remained preoccupied with meeting the needs of the present and appeared little concerned with the trend of future developments in Tonga. She believed that if the present was right, then the future would take care of itself. Although her views on some matters were unique, the warmth of her personality and her gift of oratory and easy communication gained Tonga international recognition as a nation". (ibid 1966:160).

King George Tupou Taufa'ahu IV

Queen Salote's eldest son King George IV was also said to be very much like Tupou I, in that he was a revolutionary. Both were driven by the vision of a different kind of Tonga. King Tupou I had the ability to achieve international recognition and transformation of Tonga without losing sight of Tonga's limited resources and narrow base knowledge and of the fact that most foreign technology was slightly more advanced (for example land transportation in Tonga was limited to animal strength). By the time Tupou IV became King, a new industrial revolution in the West was creating new possibilities for the resource-poor regions. The King boldly and imaginatively refused to accept that there were any limits, and reached for modernisation comparable with that of rich countries (Campbell, 1992:226-7).

Lātūkefu states that King Tupou IV shares some of the qualities of his mother, Queen Salote, but in many respects he differs from her. "He has a brilliant mind, is a deep thinker, a graduate in Arts and Law, and extensive traveller. He reads widely, and keeps himself informed on a wide variety of subjects" (1966:161). Assisted by his intellectual ability and qualifications, King Tupou IV has great aspirations and dreams of a modernised Tonga through economic, educational and political development. Today almost all Tongans live in houses of solid materials, equipped with piped water and sanitary waste-disposal, and have ready access to modern medical and educational facilities, instant internal and international communication, and foreign travel. At the time of his coronation such advances would have been dismissed as utopian by many. (Campbell, 1992:227) However the changes he wanted fell short of his dreams due to the limited resources and heavy dependency on foreign aid and remittance money from Tongans living overseas.

For these reasons, during the reign of King George IV, Tongan society's contact with foreigners has become commonplace and almost universal. Foreign ideas about politics, foreign manners and economics are now thoroughly familiar; foreign travel has been widely experienced; and a very large proportion of the population has moved entirely out of the subsistence economy. Campbell has called this the "transitional era in which the indigenous and the foreign are unequally and unevenly blended" (1992:228). However I firmly believe that Tonga and her people will endure and preserve her cultural heritage and thus the "blending" will never be completed. The new trends, however apparent in the development of modern society, will depend on the country's economical situation, no matter who is in government. As Campbell points out "the character, direction and permanence of the transformation depends on the success of the new economy" (Campbell, 1992:228). Tongan society, therefore, is experiencing a period of what Marcus termed the "compromise culture".

The Concept of a "Compromise Culture" Discussed

In talking about the effect of colonisation on the traditional culture of Tonga the idea of a 'compromise culture' is introduced through the work of George Marcus[13] and Sione Lātūkefu[14].

The idea of a "compromise culture" was coined by Marcus (1977) to refer to the integration of the Tongan culture with a version of papālangi culture. According to Marcus (1977:211):

> "the period of compromise culture (roughly the reigns of the first three monarchs) is the historical baseline and background for the present turbulence and increase in the pace of contact as King Tupou IV brings in the era of modernisation".

A similar view is shared by Lātūkefu (1980:61):

> "it cannot be argued that culture is something fixed, static or divorced from the people of a society at a particular historical epoch. Many writers discussing the people of Oceania have tended to convey a timeless and unchanging impression but Oceanic cultures, like cultures everywhere, are constantly shaped and reshaped to meet the changing needs and aspirations of their members".

The idea of a "compromise culture" can be seen as having assisted in redefining the function of the Tongan family and culture. One avenue for redefining the Tongan family organisation was "through the codification of emancipation proclamation of 1862 in the Constitution. Chiefly customs were diffused and became the property of

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[13] G. Marcus (1977) Contemporary Tonga: The Background of Social and Cultural change

[14] S. Latukefu, The Definition of Authentic oceanic cultures with Particular reference to Tonga. Journal of Pacific History, 1980a.

the common man as well as the chief" (Marcus, 1977:214). Marcus states that the idea of a "compromise culture" is that:

> "ideally every man has functioned independently as a sort of chief within his own household with family/household units hierarchically organized internally in terms of both authority and ritual rank. On ritual occasions, such as funerals, the Tongan nuclear family-based household or *'api* operates as part of a local group which materialises for the performance of functions on such occasions, but otherwise it operates as an independent unit with ties of differing intensity and quality to other households in the same or different communities" (ibid 1977:214).

In terms of understanding the changes and transformation that the Tongan family structures underwent, the idea of a "compromise culture" can be used. As Latukefu explains:

> "the principles which governed the social relationships between the social classes, *faka'apa'apa* (respect), *fatongia* (obligation), and *mateaki* (loyalty) were strengthened by the acceptance of Christianity with its emphasis on *'ofa* (love) and *fakamolemole* (forgiveness)". More importantly in helping to strengthen family values and unity, Latukefu expressed the feeling that "although" 'ofa existed in the traditional social relationships, the coercive elements such as fear of the chiefs' *mana* and absolute power were much stronger. Christianity dispelled many of these fears and emphasized that *'ofa* should be the governing principle" (1980:75).

The emphasis put by Christianity on the family life has resulted in the growing importance of the family, which has become the focus of the principles discussed above.

In conclusion, I feel that Latukefu's explanation will be the only one close to predicting the future trends for Tongan people.

"Even though the Tongan material culture, technology and economy has changed drastically the Tongan values will endure and change rather slowly, which may be in the long run the only mechanism for maintaining and preserving Tongan cultural identity" (Latukefu, 1980:69).

CHAPTER THREE

To'ukai

Mo hono Lohu[1]

[1] 'A crop of fruit with its long picking stick' (*lohu*). The long forked stick is used for picking breadfruit from the tree and is replaced each season. Likewise, people will be found to satisfy the needs and responsibilities of a generation or time.

ETHNOGRAPHIES OF THE TONGAN FAMILIES

Introduction

The Tongan structure kinship has a long history. The study of Tongan kinship has attracted many western scholars from many different academic disciplines including anthropologists, historians and sociologists. There are but a few studies carried out by Tongan scholars to date.

The studies have ranged from topics such as "Power and Rank in the Kingdom of Tonga" (Bott, 1981); "Rank in Tonga" (Kaeppler, 1971); "Tongan kin Groups: The Noble and the Common View" (Decktor-Korn, 1976); "A Hidden Dimension of Family Development in Modern Tonga" (Marcus, 1974). Like Elizabeth Bott (1981:7) I found the Tongan system of stratification has been often described but little is understood, even in the last 20 years when an increasing number of anthropologists and historians have added their descriptions and analyses to the accounts of James Cook and William Mariner and the basic ethnography of Gifford (1929).[2]

Because the focus in this thesis is on the Tongan culture and its maintenance an outline of the family structure is given here to illustrate the various relationships, their significance, and the various roles attached to them.[3]

Before any examination of the role that the Tongan family system plays in cultural maintenance can begin, we need to look at the Tongan pre-colonial social and

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[2] E.W. Gifford (1929) Tongan Society. Hawaii: Bernice P. Bishop Museum Bulletin 61, (Publication No.16).

[3] P. Tupouniua in his Master's thesis Persistence and Change: A Study of a Village in Tonga looked at the traditional culture and the various relationships and roles attached to them, as well as the significance of these roles. 1970, p.45.

political structure in order to see changes that have taken in the family structure during the course of history. The families in my study were of *tu'a* (commoner) status, whereas the early accounts of the pre-colonial social and political structure apply only to the elites.

George Marcus maintains that "the social conditions of the lower orders or commoners are vague in the early accounts, apparently because from a chiefly perspective emancipation, "*eiki* or chiefly customs diffused and became the property of the common man as well as the chief" (1977, p.214). Furthermore Phyllis Herda explains that:

> "It is hardly surprising that the traditional Tongan construction of the past was concerned with only those things which were connected with the *hou'eiki* (aristocracy). Most of the historical myths, stories and legends told in Tonga take as their themes the activities of chiefly people and the depiction of the momentous events in which they were involved; the non-chiefly view is sparsely recorded indeed. Sahlins has labelled this kind of history as 'the heroic mode of historical production' for if historically externalizes the social encompassment of the sacred chieftainship. To represent traditional Tongan history as anything else would be to distort the Tongan conception and construction of their past. This is not to suggest that non-elite Tongans do not have their own history, just that in an indigenous framework, their history is embedded in the historical hegemony of the elite" (1988, p.13).

Pre Colonial Political and Tongan Society

Tongan traditional society was highly stratified. Both the social and political structures were based on units linked loosely together through elaborate kinship networks. It was a very complex system, made more difficult by the fact that the social and political units were sometimes synonymous or overlapped and at other times contradictory. However, it should be noted that the social and political units more or less operated under similar principles (Taufe'ulungaki, 1992:9).

Tongan society was organised in pyramidal form. At the top were the ruling monarch. Below is where the chiefly families, or *'eiki*, who were members of the aristocracy by virtue of impeccable blood lines and hereditary titles. The next level were those known as *matāpule* (similar to 'talking chiefs' in Samoa) who were functionaries of titled and hereditary chief. Below these were ranked the vast majority of Tongans, who were known as *tu'a* or commoners. The *popula* or slaves and the outcasts were the lowest level of society.

This basically describes Tongan society at the time of European contact (Taufe'ulungaki, 1992:10). The royal dynasties all resided in Tongatapu. The titled chiefs were grouped in many *ha'a* (political units) which were ranked in accordance with the seniority of their blood links and marriage affiliations with the ruling dynasties. The *ha'a* were both political and social units, but were not as entitles discretely identified with a particular geographical territory. However, a chief of a *ha'a* was head of an inherited estate, and as far as political authority was concerned, was lord and master within his own geographical parameters (ibid, 1992:10-1).

In each chiefly estate would reside the chief's *kāinga*, a kinship group related either by blood ties or marriage, all of whom would constitute his subjects. But at Bott (1981) pointed out an individual became a member of the *kāinga* not so much by blood ties but by virtue of residency within a particular territory regardless of his relationship to the chief of the state. The *kāinga* was further sub-divided into *fa'ahinga* which was more of a social than political unit. The members of the *fa'ahinga* were blood relations but did not constitute a discrete political unit, because they did not all necessarily reside in the same estate. They could be activated as a group, however, for social functions such as funerals and weddings and only very rarely for political reasons. The *fāmili* or (limited extended family) constituted the basic social unit of Tongan society. The groups consisted of a father, mother, and

their children plus possibly grandparents, uncles, aunts, and unmarried cousins from both sides of the family. These basic units resided in one chiefly estate (Taufe'ulungaki, 1992:11).

The concept of rank is pivotal to an understanding of the Tongan socio-political structure. "Rank" was the "quality commanding respect and deference, and inherited from one's parents'", it could not be "altered either by one's own achievements or by one's failures" (Bott, 1981:10). The kinship links or blood ties in pre-contact Tonga determined to a large extent the political and social rank of any individual in the society. But although blood ties were important, it was not the only element in the equation. Sex and age were also important considerations and all these were mediated through the further principles of 'power' and 'authority'. In the *fāmili* unit, the father has the highest authority. Although any one of his sisters outranked him socially, none of them, even his eldest sister, had any authority over him. Access to land was achieved only through the father and his family. All sisters outranked their brothers and older siblings of the same sex outranked the younger siblings of the same sex. Children of the father were of lower rank than the father and his family but they were of higher rank than their mother and her kin. Every individual in the *fāmili*, therefore had a different social rank (Taufe'ulungaki, 1992:12).

In the social structure then, women outranked their male relatives. The father's eldest sister had the highest rank within the family, and was accorded *fahu* status. The *fahu* has been defined as the person (usually women) with 'unlimited authority' (Lātūkefu, 1974:3) over others within her blood kin. This meant in social terms that this woman and her children had the right to ask and expect goods and services from her brothers and *fa'ē tangata* (mother's brother) and kin over whom she was *fahu*. (Taufe'ulungaki, 1992:13).

Definition of Fāmili and Kāinga

When talking about our concept of the family, it is hard to limit it to one word or terminology that will define it and have the same meaning in the Tongan language as it has in the English language. However much we endeavour to define the different concepts of the family in the two cultures, our understanding of each other's notion of family will never be the same.

The word *fāmili* is borrowed from the English language to refer to our concept of a family. Prior to this the word *kāinga* was the terms that we commonly used when talking about our idea of a family. Wendy Cowling states:

> "the word *kāinga* is now used less frequently for the kind group related to the individual through his or her maternal and paternal grandparents. *Fāmili* has come into more common use. Tongans frequently use terms such as 'nuclear family' and the 'extended family' acquired from social studies and classes in school and from the media, to differentiate between the two types of relations". (1990:193).

However Kaeppler argues that:

> "the word *famili* has been adopted from the English language to refer either to the nuclear family or to the bilocal extended family. All relatives to whom one can bilaterally trace a relationship are called *kāinga*." (1971:175).

Other studies have used the two terms interchangeably. Kavaliku writes:

> "sometimes, the Tongan linguistic version of the English term family, *famili*, is used alternately with the *kāinga*". (1961:8)

A view shared by Rogers:

> "the concepts of *kāinga* and *fāmili* are synonymous and interchangeable when both put into the same context". (1975:175)

However Marcus provides an historical reason. (1977:222) With such nineteenth-century inputs as Christian marriage and individualistic land tenure, the borrowed concept of *fāmili* has become widely employed by Tongans to describe their basic social units, whereas in the pre-contact era there apparently was no such concept.

Before describing the Tongan kinship groups I wish to note two very important points. The first point is made by Kaeppler. She states that:

> "all interpersonal relationships in the island kingdom are governed by principles of rank, and material culture and language reflect this ranking". (1971:174)

The second point is made by Marcus. He states:

> "concern with rank and status determination constitutes a major dimension of social relationships within both the class and kinship systems of Tonga. The statuses that an individual occupies in relation of his kinsmen are essentially the same as formerly in Tonga. Also, categories of kin classification cut across the class system; both noble and kin groups are organized in the same manner". (1974:89)

Categories of Kin-group Classifications

Both Decktor-Korn and Marcus in their studies state that Tongans distinguish three kinds of kin-based groups. However I will use Decktor-Korn's definition because it focuses on the 'domestic sphere'. There is the household group, the *'api*, which is defined in terms of common residence and consumption and includes also the

sharing of the land that is held locally by members of the *'api*. Members mainly and usually, but not always, are all close kin to one another. Most households are based on an elementary family or on a three-generation extended family group. In many cases a household includes attached individuals related lineally, congnatically or affinally - who have moved in for a few days, a few weeks, or even a few years.

The second kind of grouping is the *kāinga*, which is an ego-based personal kindred that does not include affines. From time to time, groups based on *kāinga* relationships are activated. The most typical of such occasions are funerals, when members of the *kāinga* of close relatives of the deceased come to pay their respects. They come because of their relationship to the deceased. A *kāinga*, then is an unrestricted grouping with an ego reference, based on a consanguineal kinship.

Finally, there is the *fāmili*, which cuts across the *kāinga*. *Kāinga* is mainly a relationship category, while *fāmili* is an action group that provides goods, labour, and personnel when they are needed, as well as access to land for subsistence purposes. Membership in the *kāinga* is simply a matter of kinship relationships; membership in the *fāmili* is defined by participation in the activities of the *fāmili* (Decktor-Korn 1974:9).

Ranking Principles

Now we have a general idea of the Tongan family structure. As I noted earlier "the most pervasive concept in Tongan culture is that of hierarchical ranking". As noted by Kaeppler, "rank in Tongan kin groups is based on three principles. From the perspective of ego, those kinsmen related through ego's mother. Female kin have higher status than male kinsmen of the same generation. Elder has higher status than younger among siblings of the same sex. The members of one's *kāinga* are ranked according to the above principles" (reference in Marcus 1974:89).

Kaeppler writes:

> "among the *kāinga* everyone knows his position with regard to everyone else present. The kin term itself reflects the appropriate roles required by the principles of status. These principles predetermine each person's course of action in any family social activity, regardless of other statuses he may hold in the society. Even the highest noble in the land must prepare the earth oven at the funeral of his father's sister, while a commoner of no material wealth may sit and drink *kava* if he is a descendant of the deceased woman". (1971:178)

This is an important element in understanding how the Tongan family works.

The Brother-Sister Relationship

In our culture we don't have a word for 'cousin' we regard them as our brother or sister but I have used the terminology that is familiar to the western culture to illustrate the kin relationship between the family members participating in this study.

A very important aspect of the Tongan society is the relationship of the brother and sister. An understanding of this link will provide great insights for people from other cultures into why Tongans behave in certain ways (such as those according to the principle of *faka'apa'apa*). Marcus observed:

> "it is the nature of the brother-sister relationship which determines the organization of rank in reciprocal role relations, especially the relationships between the maternal uncle and his sisters' children and between the father's sister and her brothers' children. Although men have authority over the wives and children, succeed to titles, and inherit land through patrileneally determined primogeniture, they are considered ritually and ceremonially inferior to their sisters". (1974:89)

> "The higher rank of sisters in terms of honour is expressed in the elaborated *tapu* (sacred) or avoidances that brothers must observe toward sisters. Extensions of this principle of rank within the sibling group are manifest in the famous *fahu* (sister's status) relationship

between sisters' children and mother's brothers. Here, individuals are free to demand goods and services from their mother's brothers. It is also manifest in the relationship between brothers' children and father's sisters where individuals display extreme deference behaviour toward their father's sisters". (Marcus 1974:89-90).

The *faka'apa'apa* or respect between brother and sister is fundamental in understanding the relationship dynamics and behaviourial patterns within a Tongan family.

In this study my understanding of family is similar to the term *kāinga* defined by Kaeppler (1971) above. Therefore in this study when I talk about the family, I am talking about the extended family as understood by the western culture.

CHAPTER FOUR

Hūmataniu[1]

[1] 'Entering the eye of a coconut'. The coconut has three eyes only one of which can be pierced. It describes a love that is confined only to one's own relatives and friends.

FACTOR "f" CONCEPTS IN TONGAN FAMILIES IN TONGA

Introduction

When I decided to journey home after eighteen years absent from my homeland (apart from a short visit in 1974). I went with great anticipation of what lay ahead. When I decided to take my supervisor to see 'Eua I did not realise that it would become the place where I would carry out the Tongan component of this study.

In this chapter I will use the Finau family to see how the factor "f" concepts are being practised. This is a very personal account of my journey home to 'Eua. I spent the first two years of my life in 'Eua, so the journey home meant much more than I have chosen to disclose here but the Tongan proverb at the beginning of this chapter reveals the feelings I have for this island and my *kainga* (extended family) who lives there.

I will introduce you to the Finau family and how we came to be in 'Eua and the practice of the factor "f" concepts within the family. I will provide my own definition of these concepts based on the illustrations I have used in this chapter. Finally, I will discuss the forces which work to change and undermine the factor "f" concepts. I will revisit the idea of a "compromise culture" in modern Tonga and discuss it in relation to the Finau family.

From Niuafo'ou to 'Eua

The families who reside in 'Eua Fo'ou came originally from the island of Niuafo'ou. Many people of this island were relocated to 'Eua after a volcanic eruption in 1946. Although some chose to remain on Niuafo'ou, others chose to migrate to the main island, Tongatapu, and some to other parts of Tonga such as Vava'u and Niuatoputapu. On 'Eua island 247 allotments were allocated to Niuafo'ou migrants.

These Niuafo'ou migrants took the names of their villages and used them in naming the new villages they occupied in 'Eua - Angaha, Futu, 'Esia, Sapa'ata, Fata'ulua, Mu'a, Tongamama'o, Petani and Mata'aho (see Maps of Niuafo'ou and 'Eua pg. ix-x). In the 1976 population census Niuafo'ou recorded 678 inhabitants whereas some 2,108 were living in Niuafo'ou villages in 'Eua (Rogers, 1986).

'Eua Island

'Eua Island is situated 40km south-east of Tongatapu. She has a total population of 4,393 people (1986 census). 'Eua Fo'ou district where the Finau family lives has a population of 1,993 people. 'Eua Fo'ou has nine villages with a total of 350 households. The village[2] where I carried out my research has a population of 370 people. There are 61 households in the village. On the island of 'Eua there is one high school - 'Eua High School. The original people of 'Eua live in 'Eua Motū'a district. They make up the majority of the population, 2,400 people (1986 Census). 'Eua Proper has fewer villages than 'Eua Fo'ou, (five in total) however they have 440 households (1986 census).

The Finau Family

The Finau family I worked with in 'Eua are members of my own *kainga* (extended family). My father's adopted sister came from the Finau family. However, when my grandmother passed away, this sister took over my grandmother's role and became the main care-giver to my father and his siblings. Her eldest daughter Malia lived with us when she was single. Malia helped look after me as a young child until I came to New Zealand for schooling. Malia was like a second mother to me.

[2] This village shall remain nameless to preserve confidentiality.

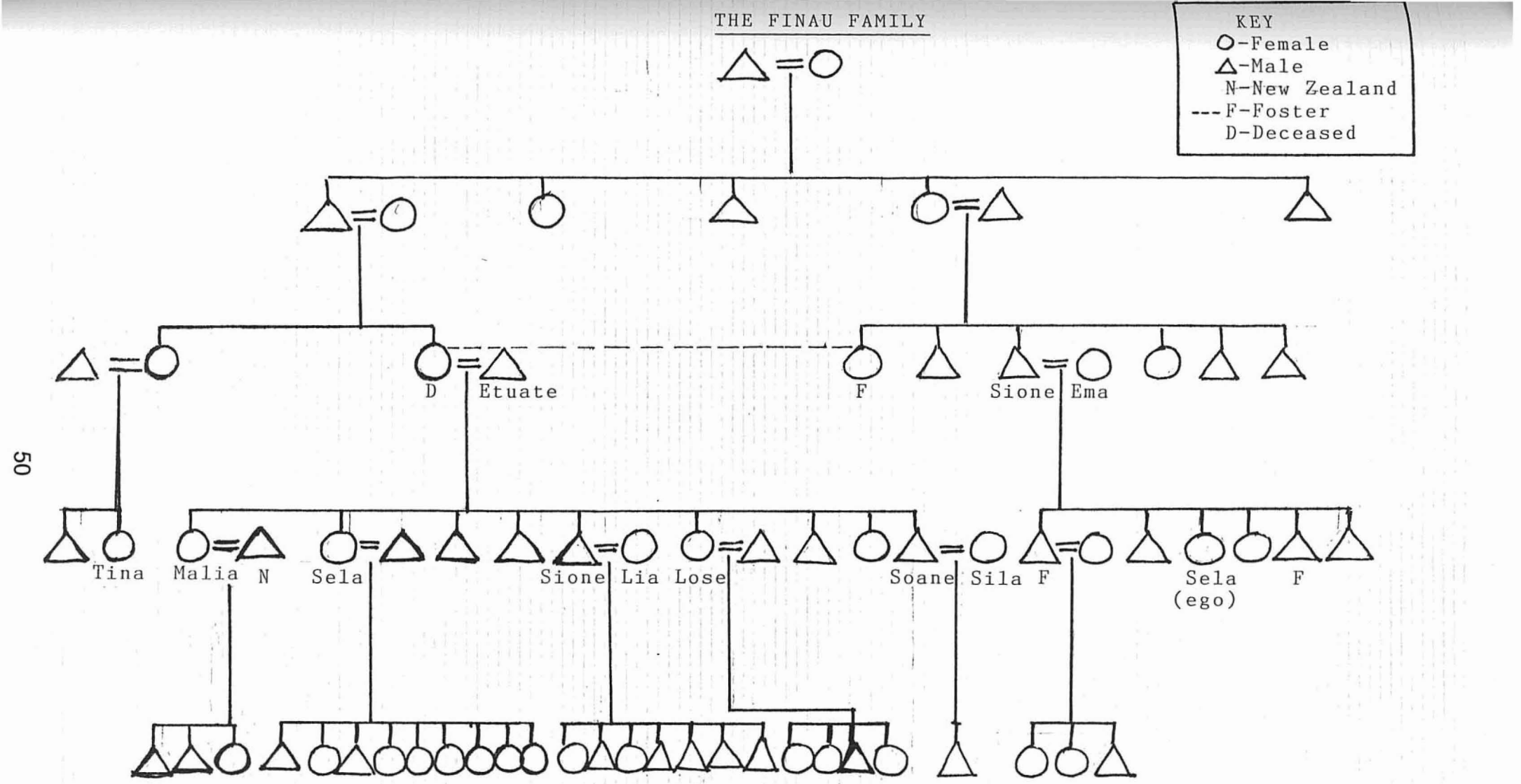
The Finau family is made up of nine children. There are five sons and four daughters, two of the sons live overseas, and one other son and one daughter live in other parts of Tonga. Only five of the children have remained in 'Eua. Their father, 'Etuate, who has been a widower for sixteen years lives with them in 'Eua. 'Etuate lives with his five remaining children and their children. He owns the family land (*'api kolo*) that his children live on and he has given all his children a share of the land. The remainder of the land, on which 'Etuate lives will go to the eldest son, his heir, who will also inherit the land and plantation (*ngoue*) when 'Etuate passes away. The eldest son does not live in 'Eua, however, he will still inherit this estate.

My father has not lived in 'Eua for the past twenty years, yet he still has his piece of land which he registered when we lived in 'Eua between 1970-72. My father plans to return home to 'Eua when he retires from work. When he dies my eldest brother will automatically inherit my father's land. Land ownership[3] is a very important issue for us because although we live outside Tonga seeking employment and further education, some of us will choose to return home in the end. The land is not only our home but also our link with our ancestoral and cultural heritage.

Members that Constitute the Finau Family

The eldest of 'Etuate's children is Malia with whom he lives, Malia has three children. Malia's husband has been in New Zealand for the past seven years, and through his migrant labour he sends money in remittances that enables the family to meet their financial needs. The second eldest daughter, Sela, has nine children and is a widower. Sione, is the oldest of 'Etuate's two sons who has remained in 'Eua and is positioned fifth in the family. Sione and his wife Lia have seven children. Lose, the

[3] My father's family are farming people and so land ownership has always been an important issue for us. In terms of Tonga itself, there have been talks in Parliament about reviewing the Constitution especially the Section pertaining to Land matters.


THE FINAU FAMILY
KEY
O-Female
△-Male
N-New Zealand
---F-Foster
D-Deceased
D
Etuate
F
Sione
Ema
Tina
Malia
N
Sela
Sione
Lia
Lose
Soane
Sila
F
Sela
(ego)
F

third daughter had just recently separated from her husband and decided to return to 'Eua with her four children. She lives with Malia and their father. The youngest son, Soane is married to Sila and they have one child. Although 'Etuate is the head of this family, any decisions pertaining to the daily running of the family, are left to Malia and Sione. The Finau children live next door to each other, with the exception of Sela, who lives down the road on her husband's family's land. Since the death of her husband, Sela has come back to her family for support.

Sione is the only member of the family that has paid work, he is a teacher. 'Etuate and Soane work in their own plantation to provide basic foods for the family. The best crops are sold at the market and the family keep the rest. Malia receives money from her husband in New Zealand on a regular basis. All the women in the family are skilled weavers and the mats they make are sold in 'Eua and other parts of Tonga. Sometimes, Tongans from overseas purchase these mats to take back with them. The family, like many families in 'Eua, are still very much dependent on the land and the sea, and have a subsistence lifestyle. Very few families leave 'Eua and so they have little contact with the western world. The contact they do have, is through letters from spouses and relatives overseas. Malia talked about how she tried to go to New Zealand because her husband wants her and the children to make use of the opportunities in New Zealand which are not available in Tonga. Malia came to New Zealand in the early 1970s with my father. She talked about how she wanted to reunite her family with their father. Malia's brother in Australia sends money whenever the family have a *kavenga* (financial expenses) for example when money is sent home to Tonga in the event of a funeral. The remittance received from Malia's husband and brother can be seen as an example of *fetokoni'aki* (reciprocal co-operation) and *fatongia* (moral obligation), two values which reaffirm my understanding of the factor "f" concepts.

Defining the Factor "f" Concepts

Faka'apa'apa

The concept of *faka'apa'apa* in the Tongan language takes on a similar meaning to the word 'respect' in the English language. In the Tongan dictionary *faka'apa'apa* is defined as "to show deference or respect or courtesy" (Churchward:1959:128). There are two levels of respect within the family realm: Respect between father and children; and respect between siblings of the opposite sex and 'cousins' of the same generation. I have also used the *faka'apa'apa* concept to mean 'honour', such as the brother honouring the sister's status by giving her eldest son a piece of land. The concept of *faka'apa'apa* governs the different social behaviours within the Tongan society. My own experience and understanding of *faka'apa'apa* is most evident in my relationship with my brothers. For example, my brother never watches television when his sisters are watching. This is out of the respect they show towards us by avoiding inappropriate situations.

Fetokoni'aki

The next factor "f" concept that is used in this study is *fetokoni'aki* which I described as 'reciprocal co-operation'. It depicts unity and co-operation between family members. C. Churchward (1959:178) defines *fetokoni'aki* to mean "to help one another, to co-operate". With the family in 'Eua I found that the concept *fetokoni'aki* encompasses the family participating as a co-operative unit to care for each other on a daily basis. At other times, like the funeral of Tina, *fetokoni'aki* is illustrated through 'reciprocal social obligation' in sharing the burden and responsibilities of a (*kavenga*) funeral.

Fatongia

This concept describes the duty Tongan people feel towards other family members. In the Tonga dictionary *fatongia* is described as "duty, obligation" (Churchward,

159:143). I have described it as moral obligation. An example of the concept of *fatongia* is illustrated by the way in which Tongan families care for the elderly. This duty is owed in recognition of the care that was provided by these older relatives to the rest of the family.

Fe'ofo'ofani

The final factor "f" concept employed in this study is the concept of *fe'ofo'ofani*. This is defined in the Tongan dictionary to mean "to be friendly with one another" (Churchward, 159:185). To me *fe'ofo'ofani* means 'reciprocal love', not in the sense that it is expected in return but simply that it is always returned. It symbolises a Tongan family who lives and works together supporting and helping each other. *Fe'ofo'ofani* encompasses the notion of *'ofa* (love) that Lātūkefu (1980) discusses in his study (mentioned later on in this chapter). My father has always taught me as a young child, that our Tongan concept of *fe'ofo'ofani* is synonymous with the word family. This has provided me a sense of security from an early age.

The Factor "f" Concepts in the Finau Family

During my fieldwork with the Finau family a member of our *kainga* (extended family) passed away. 'Etuate's children were first cousins to the deceased, Tina. My father is *faka'apa'apa* with Tina's mother. *Faka'apa'apa* takes on a different meaning than respect, it connotes tapu (sacred) rather than inferior feeling or honour. My grandmother is Tina's mother's *mehikitanga* (maternal grandfather's sister). Tina is my third cousin. Although we participate in the funeral as maternal relatives, Tina's father's side are the main participants.

I asked both 'Etuate and Sione about the concept of *fetokoni'aki* (reciprocal co-operation) in relation to Tina's funeral. 'Etuate said that the *fetokoni'aki* enables the family to share the emotional and financial burden (*kavenga*). For example Tina's

husband, children, her *kainga* and her husband's *kainga* (extended family) share the *kavenga* (financial expenses). Each family endeavours to carry out their part. Tina's mother's family brought Tongan *koloa* (goods): mats, food, money and livestock as their contribution to the funeral. Money was sent from family members overseas to assist with the financial expenses related to the funeral. This is all carried out in the spirit of *fe'ofo'ofani* (love).

Sione talked about his experience as a student in Tongatapu:

> "My fellow classmates were beginning to question these cultural practices and whether Tongans should continue to practise these. For me personally, it is not a matter of whether we should or should not continue, but something that you do rather than talk about it back home in 'Eua."

When discussing the factor "f" concepts with Malia, Sela and Lose, I found myself among a group of women who had little doubt about their roles within their family. I asked them how the factor "f" concepts can be upheld by their children who are being exposed to western cultural ideas, such as the concepts of independence and individuality. Malia said:

> "It is clearly understood that "Respect" is an important part of family life. Parents must teach their children from an early age the values of respect, the respect between child and parent, male and female. These values must be instilled at home. Courtesy is not restricted to family relationships but extends to anyone, such as church leaders and the nobility. It does not matter where you are, respect is an important facet of life for every Tongan, male or female".

I asked 'Etuate about the factor "f" concepts after the funeral. 'Etuate told me:

> "the concept of *faka'apa'apa* within the family can be seen during a funeral ceremony. The deceased woman, Tina, has one brother. Tina's brother and his children are not allowed to enter the room where the body is kept. They must stay outside with their uncle. Their *kainga*

> are accorded the *liongi*[4] role during the funeral. Malia, Sela, Lose and I are allowed to enter and sit in the room where Tina's body is kept. Sione and Soane are not allowed to enter the room because they are *faka'apa'apa* with Tina. Tina is their 'sister' according to the Tongan family standing."

The factor "f" concept of *faka'apa'apa* (respect) can also be illustrated in other ways for example the inheriting of land. Malia's eldest brother can give her eldest son a piece of land to honour her for her position in the family. She is accorded the fahu[5] status within the family.

Malia, Sela, Lose and I talked about the meaning of *fetokoni'aki* with the family. Sela and Lose spoke about how *fetokoni'aki* is essential for ensuring the well-being of the whole family unit is being met.

Lose spoke about how when she left her husband, she always knew that her family would welcome her back, this is an expression of *fe'ofo'ofani*. Sela spoke about how her family provided her with the moral and emotional support she needed when her husband died, an illustration of the factor "f" concept of *fatongia*. She talked about the importance of *fetokoni'aki* in readily meeting the needs of each individual family member.

> "To have a feeling of reciprocity and support is an important feature of Tongan family life. Even where the children have married and moved out of the family unit, it is important that they have been brought up on the values of co-operation and unity within the family".

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[4] The family members who remain outside and take on the responsibilities of a host. The people who stand by the fire, cook, and serve people who have come to pay their respect to the deceased person. The *liongi* role is reserved for the deceased person's mother's *kainga*.

[5] The *fahu* is a status held by the father's sister. "In the Tongan custom one's *fahu* may take great liberties with one's belongings" (Churchward, 1955:19)

Staying with the Finau family I found the concept of *fetokoni'aki* was an essential element in their daily life. A typical week day in the family would illustrate that the concept of *fetokoni'aki* is being practised daily. For example in the evening each family member had a chore to do to make sure that we shared a meal together and ended the day successfully. Total co-operation from each member of the family is vital. 'Etuate and Soane would bring home some food from the plantation and Sione would buy some *kiki* (meat) from the shop on his way home from work. After school the sons of Malia and Sela would chop the wood for the fire so Lia and Lose could cook the food. Malia and Sela would sweep the ground outside the house while Sila's and Lia's eldest daughters would bath the children. After everyone had cleaned up, we all would sit down and eat our meal. The women would eat at the table, while the men would have their own place to eat. Then the women would attend to cleaning up the kitchen. We would then say our evening prayers and finally everybody would start preparing for the next day. If we did not act in the spirit of *fetokoni'aki* then we would have difficulties in ensuring that every member of our family was properly cared for.

There is *fetokoni'aki* between the family and other family members and friends. On major occasions such as welcoming people home from overseas; first birthdays and first holy communions. When I went home to 'Eua for the first time since leaving in 1974, my family all came to visit me and brought food. I was given the best room in the house and was given food that the family normally reserved for big occasions - this is typical of Tongan hospitality. In my case, I felt right at home because Malia's mother was like a mother to my father, and in turn Malia was like a mother to me.

On my first Sunday in 'Eua, all the factor "f" concepts were visible to me when everyone came together and shared Sunday lunch. The boys waited until the girls were all seated, this is an expression of *faka'apa'apa*. The women prepared the food

and the men prepared the *umu* (earth oven). This is the co-operation referred to in the concept *fetokoni'aki*. During lunch we all sat down and enjoyed eating together as a family. I was formally welcomed and introduced by 'Etuate to the family, this is part of his *fatongia* (duty) as the head of the household, and then Malia shared stories of my early childhood. There was lots of laughing and happy memories shared, all in the spirit of *fe'ofo'ofani*. Our deep commitment and love for each other as a family persists even when we leave the family circle and go to other parts of the world. Places will always be left open for when we do decide to return home.

Among the young Finau grandchildren the factor "f" concepts structured their behaviour. Malia's son told me he is not allowed to swear in front of his sister this is an example of *faka'apa'apa* and "anyway Mum said we have to love and help each other" these are examples of *fe'ofo'ofani* and *fetokoni'aki*. Women are treated differently for example they are given the good things such as sleeping on the bed and eating first this is an example of *faka'apa'apa*. I asked Malia's son if he minds that his sister is treated in a special way. He said "no because Mum already told me why I have to treat my sister in that special way" these are examples of *faka'apa'apa* and *fatongia*[6]. I asked Sione's children - if they mind that Malia's children are allowed to request things of their father. They replied "it is okay anyway because grandpa and Dad said it is the Tongan way to love everyone" - "*Ofa ki he kakai kotoa pē*" (*fe'ofo'ofani*).

[6] The meaning of *fatongia* in this instance refers to the brothers moral obligation to look after his sister.

Forces Which Work to Change and Undermine the Factor "f" Concepts in Modern Tonga

Lātūkefu credits Christianity with the change in traditional social relationship, Marcus has termed this integration of earlier Tongan culture with a version of the *papalangi* culture as the 'compromise culture'.

Lātūkefu writes:

> "Although *'ofa* existed in the traditional social relationships, the coercive elements such as fear of the chiefs' *mana* and absolute power were much stronger. Christianity dispelled many of these fears and emphasized that *'ofa* should be a governing principle. As a result of the Church and State taking over most of the responsibilities for the welfare of the people, respect, obligation, and loyalty are no longer confined to relations with chiefs and the *kainga*; but they are now directed more to the immediate family, Church, and the nation." (1980:75)

Lātūkefu felt that Christianity has helped emphasize the importance of family life and as such, the practice of remittances and respect for the aged, is still being practised in the Tongan culture. However, he felt that:

> "the traditional privileges of the *fahu* and the strict taboos which were observed between brother and sister, or children and their paternal kin, have already begun to erode and will no doubt continue to do so. Respect and affection remain, helping to ensure their continuing observance as part of the Tongan identity" (1980:75).

Marcus credited the reduction of the power of the chiefs as the force that undermined the traditional system of social stratification. The change in the elaborate respect protocol that chiefs had over the people and land was the catalyst for shifts in the traditional Tongan culture. Lātūkefu attributed the forces which have undermined and changed traditional Tongan culture to the introduction of formal education, contact with the wider world through travel, tourism and intermarriage. He states: "[they]

have all widened Tongan horizon and deepened their experiences, thereby affecting their thought patterns" (1980:78).

In terms of the experience with the Finau family in 'Eua I believe that the forces Lātūkefu outlines above, will inevitably take place and change the thought patterns of many young Tongan people living in 'Eua. But I also have great faith in the younger generation of Tongans today. Through formal education, I believe they will come to realise the importance of maintaining their cultural identity, and therefore help to educate their own people in maintaining their cultural practices.

As Lātūkefu found:

> "It has become possible for many younger Tongans to become "bi-cultural"; namely to speak English and adapt to European ways while at the same time maintaining their Tongan identity and following Tongan customs when the appropriate situation arises." (1980:78)

I would like to conclude this chapter by pointing out that in some ways the process of colonisation through the acceptance of Christianity has helped give Tongan people a stronger sense of family ties and values, and insofar as this has happened, the 'compromise culture' has some advantages and benefits for Tongan people.

CHAPTER FIVE

Makafetoli'aki[1]

[1] 'A stone that is thrown to and fro'. This proverb delineate the Tongan concept of *fetokoni'aki* (reciprocal co-operation).

FACTOR "f" CONCEPTS IN TONGAN FAMILIES IN NEW ZEALAND

Introduction

When Tongan families migrate to Wellington they seek to re-establish familiar social patterns which they remember from Tonga. The Tupou family succeeded in doing this to some extent, by forming the Tongan family structure. The Tongan family is large and includes many of the immediate members of the family. When the Tongan family structure cannot be formed, new family structures are created, which are a compromise between Tongan ways and the constraints of the new society. The Latu family compromised in the structure they formed with member of their extended family. For Tongan people it is very important to have some form of family system operating wherever they choose to live. Even seventh and eighth cousins are considered immediate family in these new constructions.

The families came to Wellington for different reasons. The majority came as a result of family ties. Semisi Tupou came to Wellington through a government working scheme. In my family, my brother came through an education scheme and Malia Latu came through the church. All three families the Tupou, the Latu and my own family are from the same Tongan community group which was formed in Wellington in 1979. Some members left the group and migrated to other parts of New Zealand, mainly to Auckland, or overseas to Australia and America where there were better job opportunities. Others decided to return home to Tonga. All key members of the three families involved in this study are home owners and their homes have become the main centre for all family gathering and functions. These members have decided to make Wellington their permanent home, thus, providing their relatives with a sense of security in their first few years in New Zealand.

Over the past ten years the number of Tongans in New Zealand has increased by 158.0 percent. In the 1981 census the number was 8,982 people. By the 1986 census the Tongan population had grown to 13,611 people. In the 1991 New Zealand census, the number of Tongans was recorded at 23,175. Out of the 23,175 Tongans living in New Zealand in 1991 only 1,155 of them live in the Wellington Area, 588 male and 567 female. There are 19,161 Tongans living in the Auckland area which comprise 82.7% of the total Tongan population in New Zealand. Most Tongan people choose to live in Auckland for the following reasons: family ties, climatic similarity with Tonga, and employment opportunities. The most obvious reason, however is that Auckland is their first destination when they arrive in New Zealand.

The Wellington Participants

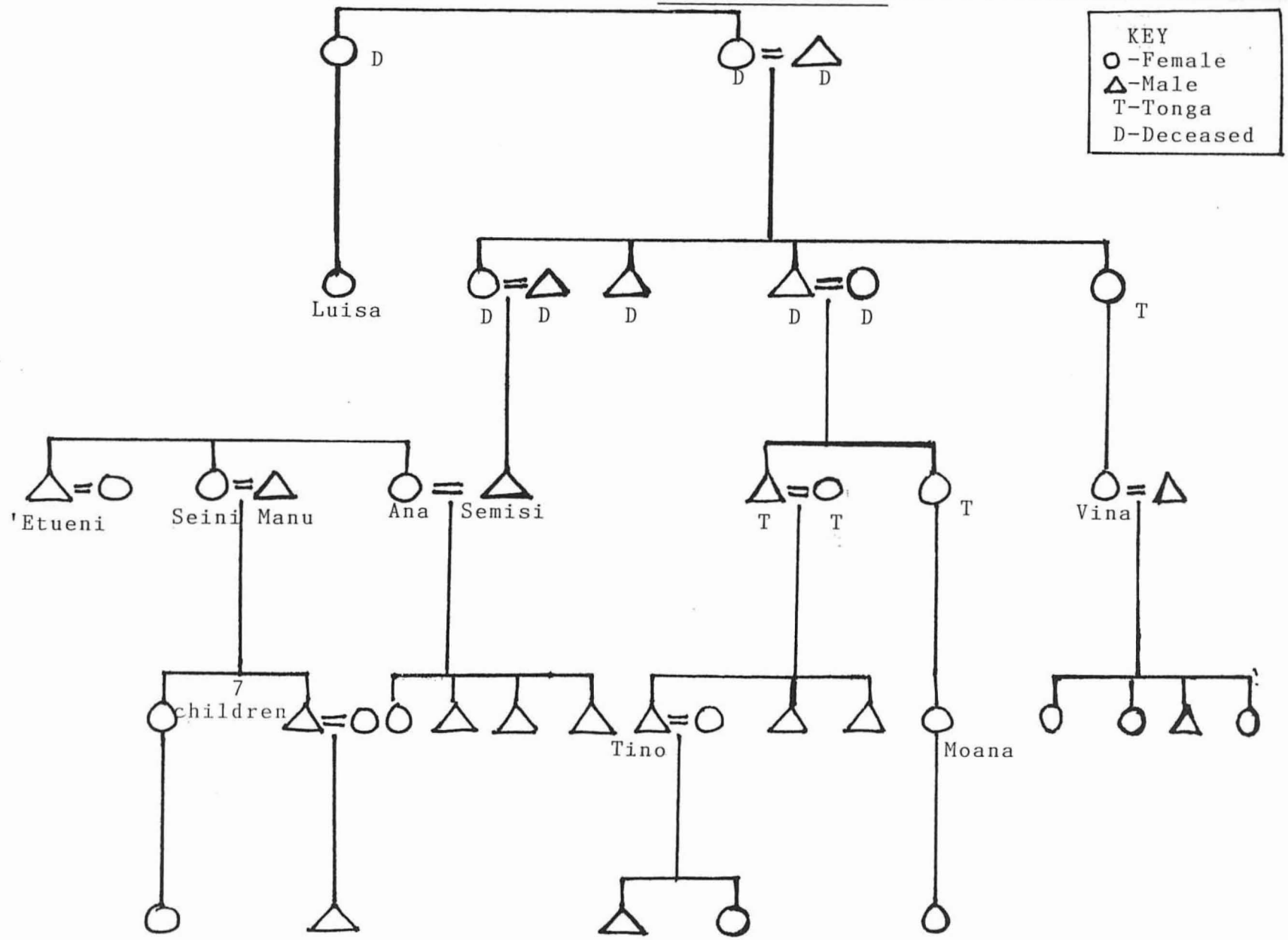
The Tupou Family

This family has replicated the *kāinga* (extended family) more closely than other families in Wellington. Semisi has been in New Zealand for eighteen years and he brought his wife Ana and their children over four years later. Semisi and Ana have grown up children. Semisi is a community leader within the Wellington Tongan community. The family is made up of seven different households. Ana has a sister Seini here too. Seini has only been here with her family for six years. They were sponsored by Ana to come to New Zealand and they lived with Ana and her family when they first arrived. Ana and Seini have other siblings who are still living in Tonga, and some in the United States. Seini and Manu have seven children and two are married and have their own children, all of whom, live together. 'Ana and Seini also have a brother, 'Etueni, who has been here for over ten years. He too has a family of his own. 'Ana and Seini's parents are still in Tonga, however, 'Ana and Seini bring them over to New Zealand once a year for a holiday. Semisi and 'Ana have educated all their children here. Seini and Manu have educated three of their children in New Zealand and the other four were educated back in Tonga. Semisi and 'Ana

are the key members of this family. Semisi's cousin Vina (mother's sisters' daughter), a niece Moana (first cousin's daughter) and a nephew Tino (first cousin's son) all living in Wellington and they have their own families. Semisi's aunty Lusia (Mother's first cousin) also lives in Wellington. All the Tupou families are very active members of the Wellington Tongan church and community.

(The Tupou family tree follows)

THE TUPOU FAMILY



The Lātū Family

The Lātū family is the type of family that is forming in place of the Tongan extended family structure. This family may seem like a series of nuclear families very much like a large *papālangi* (European) family, however it is different in that the factor "f" concepts are practised.

This family is made up of four different households. Malia has been in New Zealand for over twenty years and she is married to a non-Tongan[2], Tomasi and all her children were born here. The Lātū family are not active members of the Tongan community, however they are very supportive of the Tongan community's activities. Malia and Tomasi are the key members of this family. Malia's third cousin Lupe (Malia's father and Lupe's grandmother are first cousins) has lived here for the past twenty years. Lupe is married to a non-Tongan, John, however, two of their four children were born in Tonga. Lupe has a fourth cousin, Peta (Lupe's paternal great grandmother is a first cousin with Peta's maternal grandfather). Peta, who has been in New Zealand the same length of time as Malia, also has a non-Tongan spouse, William. Peta's three children were sent to Tonga when they were little for schooling. Only Malia has a sister here in Wellington, Lose. Lose has been in New Zealand for six years, she is married to a non-Tongan David, and they have two small children.

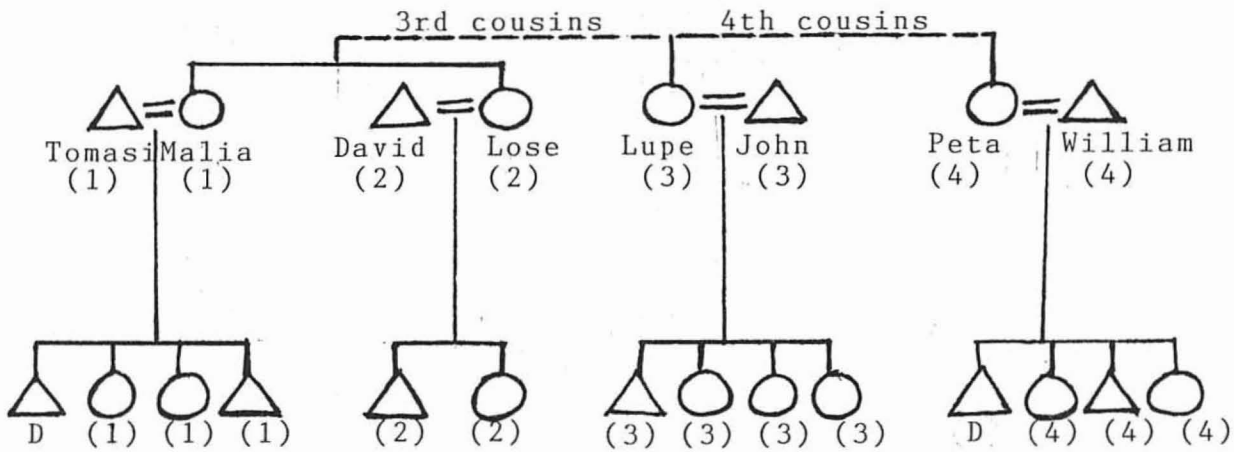
Malia, Lupe, Peta and Lose all have brothers and sisters in other parts of New Zealand but they only see them during the Christmas period or when there is a funeral, birthday or wedding. All these women come from the same village. The Latu family is depicted in this study because they illustrate how Tongan families endeavour in every way to recreate their family system through the practise of factor "f" concepts

[2] A person who is not of Tongan origin.

even when marrying outside their culture. They are a very close-knit family and their children are reared as brothers and sisters.

(The Lātū family tree follows)

THE LATU FAMILY



KEY
- ○ -Female
- △ -Male
- D-Deceased
- (1)-1st household
- (2)-2nd household
- (3)-3rd household
- (4)-4th household

My Family

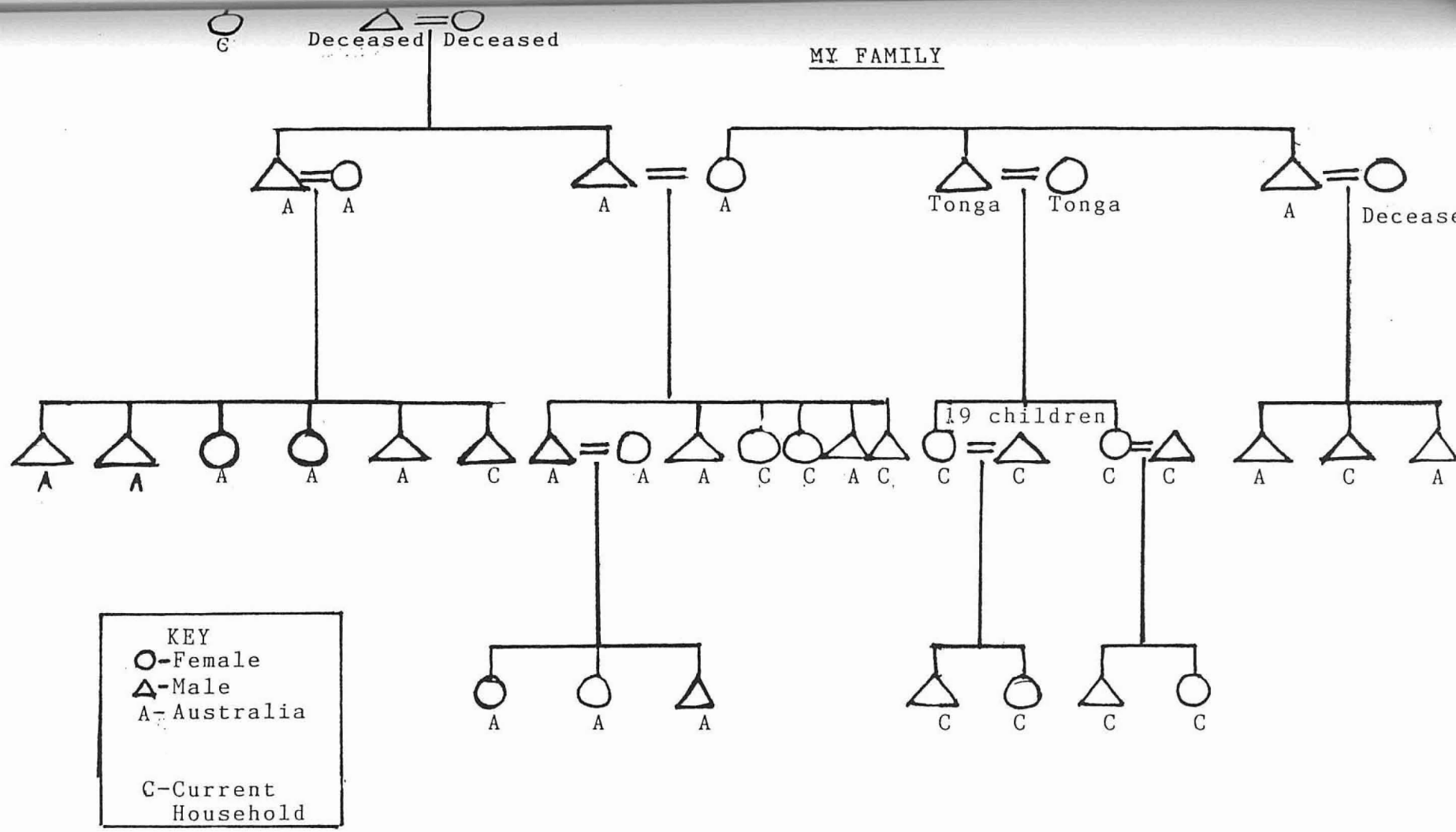
My family is made up of eight households, six in Australia and two here in New Zealand. My mother's brother (my uncle) sponsored my sister, my eldest brother and myself to come to New Zealand for schooling. We stayed with him and his wife till my parents came over two years later. My mother came from Tonga and bought a house. My father who is a teacher by profession came over from Australia, where he had been living and labouring for three years, to pay for our schooling.

I have always grown up in a household made up of many families. My father instilled in us a sense of family consciousness from an early age. Presently, my parents live in Australia because of family obligations (*fatongia*). My father's family needed him more than we did, so he and my mother migrated to Australia in 1989 together with my two younger brothers. My sister and I stayed with my mother's first cousin and her husband in our family home. My mother's first cousin, my aunt and her husband returned to Tonga last year to their children. Our household therefore is presently made up of my great-aunt (my father's *mehikitanga*), my sister, and a brother, a first-cousin from my father's side, and another first-cousin from my mother's side, all of whom have decided to come back from Australia to attend secondary school and university here in New Zealand. My other two brothers live overseas, one remained in Australia with my parents and the eldest lives and works in America.

My sister and I are the main care-givers in this household. My mothers' eldest brother has three daughters living in the Wellington area with their husbands and children. Two of them live next door to us. I have five second cousins on my fathers' side living in the Greater Wellington area. They all used to live with us in 1987 before they married and set up homes with their individual families. My parents were, and still are, the key members of the family. Even though my parents live in Australia, all

decisions concerning family matters here in New Zealand are made by them. Our family is what one would call a "trans-Tasman" household.

(My family tree follows)


MY FAMILY
C
Deceased
Deceased
A
A
A
A
Tonga
Tonga
A
Decease
19 children
A
A
A
A
A
C
A
A
A
C
C
A
C
C
C
C
C
C
A
C
A
A
A
A
C
C
C
C
KEY
O-Female
Δ-Male
A-Australia
C-Current Household

Individual Participants

Mosese and Paula came to be in this study through Tevita, who was involved in the preliminary interview. Tevita is a good friend of my father's. I told him how I wanted to interview a leader and a Church Minister of the Wellington Tongan community because they play an active role with the community and also they work with Tongan families on a daily basis. Tevita linked me up with Mosese and Paula. I strongly believe that the types of roles fulfilled by Mosese and Paula play an important part in promoting and maintaining Tongan institutions, values and practices within our adopted country.

Mosese is a "Church Leader" who has been in New Zealand for over fifteen years. He was trained as a minister in New Zealand and is married with five children. Apart from being a Minister to a large congregation of Tongan, Samoan and *Papālangi*, he takes on the roles of social worker, counsellor and interpreter. He is an influential key member of the Tongan community.

Paula is a "community leader" who has been in Wellington for over twenty years. He is very keen to encourage new migrants to join the community. He is married and has grown up children. He also has a brother living in the Wellington area. Paula is known for helping new migrants adapt more easily to their new environment. I knew Paula before interviewing him. Paula, Semisi and Ana Tupou, Malia and Tomasi, Lupe and Peta, and my parents all belonged to the same Tongan community group which was established in 1979.

The Tongan Family and Their Experiences of Wellington

In Tonga and in New Zealand the *kainga* is one of the main mechanisms that enable Tongan cultural practises and beliefs to be maintained. The Church is the other. In this study I have concentrated on the role of the *kainga* and I have not explored the

role of the Church in any depth. The role of the *kainga* was the common link in all participating families. There is a need for additional research which explores the Church and the important role it plays in cultural maintenance.

The *kainga* is important in ensuring that Tongan people have the support to cope with any family problems. This was clearly illustrated when I was carrying out my fieldwork. When Peta's son died, all the Lātū family were there to help her out with the *'kavenga'* (responsibility and financial expense of the funeral) and I observed the practise of *'fetokoni'aki* (reciprocal social "obligation"). This helped ease the burden for Peta and her husband. The support from her *kainga* enabled her to cope with her son's death. The concept of *fetokoni'aki* is very important in New Zealand when the *kainga* is left to care for themselves. Financial, emotional and spiritual assistance of the *kainga* is more important than the support of the New Zealand welfare system. The family whole heartedly accepts this responsibility, the Tupou family and my own family also helped and supported Peta and her family during those hard times. In Tonga these responsibilities are carried out by the whole *kāinga* and the village.

The Factor "f" Concepts in the New Zealand Families

When I discussed the importance of the factor "f" concepts in the lives of the Tongan families in New Zealand, Semisi Tupou said it was very important to maintain these values for the children's sake. "If it is lost then the children will be lost":

Malia Latu spoke about the importance of *"faka'apa'apa"* in her home:

> "My husband and I made a conscious choice to bring our children up the Tongan way. One of the Tongan cultural values that we treasure is respect because we believe if we practise it in our home then it will instinctively become a habitual practise for our children wherever they go. *Faka'apa'apa* nurtures good manners."

The Tongan concept of *faka'apa'apa* (respect) takes many forms within the Tongan family. Some of these forms are: respect between brothers and sisters; between father and children; respect shown by father's children to his sisters; and respect by the younger generation to the older generation. As a young child my parents always used to tell me that if I practised our concept of *faka'apa'apa* at home then it would come naturally to me. Then I would automatically show respect for my teachers, my friends and their parents, and they would, in turn, show me the same respect. As Malia pointed out, my father too, believed that the Tongan concept of *faka'apa'apa* "nurtures good manners" and it must be taught at home.

I asked them how hard it is to maintain these values when they are not being practised by the dominant culture. Seini and Manu Tupou talked about how they have no trouble maintaining the Tongan way with their older children. However, with their younger children, Seini found that:

> "We need to explain to our children why we do things in certain ways so it can establish a better understanding of the culture."

Manu talked about the difficulties in bringing up young children in a culture that is not being practised daily. This is even more so when the practises are not the "norms" of the dominant culture:

> "I was telling my ten year old son, Tevita, that he must not watch television with his sister because it is disrespectful in the Tongan way. He said 'my friend Jonathan does'. Seini and I have to make sure that Tevita understands why his home is different from his friend Jonathan."

Mosese fully supports this view,

> "The home must play an important part in the socialisation of the child if we hope to make sure that they are secure in their cultural identity. For example: The idea of respect, as Tongan parents we often find it hard when our children 'answer back' and then we learn that at school

> they are encouraged to voice their opinions, therefore the child cannot be totally blamed when most of their socialisation is carried out at school. Thus as parents we need to ensure that while at home our cultural values and beliefs are being enforced."

Peta felt that for her personally the *fetokoni'aki* aspect of the culture should continue to be practised in New Zealand especially now with the present economic situation:

> "Because my husband is not Tongan I have to compromise many of my cultural beliefs. However, I value the *fetokoni'aki* aspect of my culture. It guarantees you the support unit, that we as Tongan depend on, especially once you are away from Tonga and the main family unit. My husband has come to appreciate these cultural beliefs of mine and is keen for us to teach it to our children."

I asked them about the value of *fe'ofo'ofani* (reciprocal love).

Lusia Tupou said to me that once you have the *fe'ofo'ofani* then the *fetokoni'aki* (reciprocal co-operation) and the *faka'apa'apa* (respect) will naturally follow:

> Reciprocal love encompasses our Tongan values of reciprocal social 'obligation' and respect. In the Tongan culture, our concept of love is most obvious when we are around our family or when a friend comes to visit us. For example the respect between a brother and sister, and the respect shown to every person we meet. This shows that in this family love is commonly being practised. If we practise love, co-operation and unity and respect within our homes then love will naturally be present in our family life.

For me personally the factor "f" concepts were important in understanding the different types of relationships in terms of Tongan cultural practises that took place within my own family. I was not allowed to watch television with my brother or swear in front of him: *faka'apa'apa* (respect). My mother and father always used to send money to their family in Tonga: *fetokoni'aki* (reciprocal co-operation). Whenever my mother requested something of her brother or vice versa, it was carried out in the spirit of *fe'ofo'ofani* (reciprocal love), and it was with the knowledge that it was not a

"pay back" arrangement. I myself receive money from my eldest brother whenever he gets paid. These cultural practises are still continuing in our family.

Comparison Between the Experiences of the Three Tongan Families Living in New Zealand and How They Practise the Factor "f" Concepts

Within all the three families I noticed a definite pattern in how the factor "f" concepts are being practised. I found that the families who had been in New Zealand for over ten years practise the factor "f" concepts in their homes. The members of the families who had in recent years formed their own families do not practise the factor "f" concepts. In the latter it was felt that it was impractical to continue practising cultural values that are absent from the 'norms' of the dominant culture. Lose Latu felt that keeping up the remittance back home was impractical, especially when she and her husband could barely meet their financial expenses. Moana Tupou believes that practising cultural values that are not being practised by the dominant culture, hinders Tongan children. My cousin agreed, she felt that the Tongan way of life is best left back in Tonga because children will find it more difficult at school if we start practising and teaching our Tongan ways at home.

My parents, Semisi and Ana Tupou, and Malia and Tomasi Latu believe that it is crucial for them to continue practising the factor "f" concepts in their homes because the practise will not otherwise continue. The practise of factor "f" concepts will never be taught at school in New Zealand. My parents have always said to me that if I don't value and appreciate my own culture then I will not be able to value and appreciate other cultures. Malia's daughter is very successful and Malia attributes this to her speaking and understanding the Tongan language and culture as well as being competent in the papālangi world (See Kinloch model in chapter 6). I am so glad that my parents enforced the Tongan way at home, it has given me a strong Tongan identity. I have therefore been able to succeed in the academic papālangi world.

Forces Which Work to Change and Undermine the Factor "f" Concepts in New Zealand

Time and time again, the families voiced the dilemma of how to ensure that their children's home environment is not thought of as any less important than their school environment. Parents felt that their children did not value the teachings in the home environment, especially those teachings which were culturally specific.

Semisi Tupou expressed his disappointment in Tongan parents who discourage their children from speaking Tongan at home. He felt that the family is essential to bringing up good Tongan children:

> "When both parents are Tongan and the children cannot speak Tongan then there is bound to be a communication problem. It is essential for our children to understand our language so they can have a better understanding of our cultural practises, for example when it comes to disciplining our children in the Tongan way, the child will be confused between what is culturally acceptable behaviour and what is not."

Mosese talked about the fundamental value of the family in cultural maintenance. He felt that often a dilemma occurs when Tongan families try to dream 'the *pālangi* dream'. The Lātū and Tupou families expressed their eagerness to maintain their Tongan family system in New Zealand at all cost.

Ana Tupou feels:

> "The Tongan child suffers when the parent is at work and the child is being looked after by non Tongan. Then when the parent are at home they are often too tired to spend time with the child. There is therefore a great need to have our family system operating in the host country to ensure that our children are being looked after by a family member or at least a person of their own culture."

Paula spoke of:

> "The real dilemma for us is how do we maintain our Tongan cultural practises and beliefs and still be able to participate successfully in the host country, especially when our children are being exposed to the western culture more often than their own culture."

I asked Semisi Tupou how he coped with this dilemma in his home. Semisi said it wasn't easy at first, but he had to set the example for his children by encouraging them to speak Tongan at home. The children had to speak Tongan to be able to communicate with their grandmother who was also living with them at the time. Semisi said he discourages the children from watching television and this makes things "a whole lot easier".

Mosese said that:

> "the problem facing Tongan families is having the time to spare for their children when they had to work to be able to meet their financial needs."

I can relate to this problem. My mother had to go to work because she had to help support her brother and his children back in Tonga. My mother sent money fortnightly to her brother, and my father did the same. Sending remittances to Tonga is a common practise amongst Tongan families living overseas.

Semisi spoke of how his family were more fortunate than other Tongan families. His wife worked the "morning shift" and he worked the "evening shift" so his children were able to have at least one of their parents around at all times.

Paula said that for young families, the dilemma they are faced with, is not having the extended family's support readily available to them, as they do back in Tonga. These views were shared by all the families in my study.

Malia Latu said:

> "the family is the foundation of our society. It is our moral, emotional, financial, spiritual support and if this is not available for us then we do not have the means to survive within Tonga, let alone outside Tonga."

The same thing was repeatedly said to me as a young child. When Malia said it, it was like hearing my father voice echoing in my head.

Manu Tupou said:

> "it is like building a house on quick sand. There is no doubt that it will sink in eventually. The family ensures that our cultural values are maintained and practised. We as Tongans know which values and customs we wish to retain. Through our Tongan family system we are guaranteed its continuation."

It is true that the current economic situation does hinder the continual practising of the factor "f" concepts. For example the concept of *fetokoni'aki* in the form of remittance back home is limited by one's earnings. The consequences of not practising the factor "f" concept of *fetokoni'aki*, however, would be more detrimental to Tongan migrants in the long term. The concept of *fetokoni'aki* means much more than sending money back home weekly or fortnightly. This concept enables the family to ensure that the well-being of each member is being met. It also means that the family comes together to share the good as well as the bad times. For us Tongans, we need to continue practising these concepts because this will ensure that we have the support we need to cope with life in the new host country. The most wonderful thing about these Tongan values is that the expectations and implications are positive. It is not seen this way in the Western culture. Macpherson's theory 2 and Kinloch's theory 3 (which I will discuss in chapter six) clarifies what I am trying to illustrate here. There is a definite pattern to the practise of factor "f" concepts in Tongan families. There are different levels of cultural maintenance within migrant Tongan families and different factors contribute to these different levels. For example the

length of time spent in New Zealand and the support Tongans receive from their families when they first arrive into New Zealand are two very important factors in determining these levels of cultural maintenance.

A Comparison of the Practise of Factor "f" Concepts in the Finau Family in 'Eua and the Tongan Families in New Zealand

In terms of my experience in 'Eua, I found that the factor "f" concepts are being practised differently to their practise in New Zealand. The *faka'apa'apa* (respect) concept that is being practised in Wellington is more flexible than the way in which it is practised in 'Eua. For example, a brother and a sister can sit and eat together at the same table in New Zealand whereas, in 'Eua, a brother and a sister would never be seen sitting and eating together at the same table. This is considered culturally inappropriate in 'Eua because the brother and the sister are not free to speak openly about all matters.

It is easier to maintain and practise the factor "f" concepts in 'Eua because there is little contact with *papālangi* people and the only exposure that the people of 'Eua have to the Western culture is through the eyes of their own family and Tongan people from overseas.

The concept of *fetokoni'aki* is practised daily by the Finau family in 'Eua. In Wellington each household meets their own daily needs and only when there is a family celebration or crisis does the Tongan aspect of *fetokoni'aki* manifest itself. Some households, like within the Tupou and the Latu families, try to practise *fetokoni'aki* on a daily basis. For example Malia Latu always rings or tries to visit her sister Lose every day to see if she is alright. Malia also rings her cousins, Lupe and Peta, daily to see if they are alright. Semisi and Ana Tupou have family meetings every Saturday. The differences between the practising of *fetokoni'aki* in Wellington

and 'Eua is that in Wellington the Tongan families deliberately and consciously sought to maintain and practise the factor "f" concepts. In 'Eua it is practised daily because it is crucial to their living and coping on a day to day basis as a family unit.

I believe that the spirit of *fe'ofo'ofani* is experienced differently in the two countries. In 'Eua I observed the factor "f" concept of *fe'ofo'ofani* as a spiritual bonding between the land and the people which binds the family together to give us a strong sense of unity. This spiritual bonding seems to derive from the concept that the *fonua* (land of birth) and the *kakai* (people) are one. With my family in 'Eua I experienced the spiritual part of *fe'ofo'ofani* at Sunday lunch that can only be felt in one's own homeland. "*Koe mo'ui 'a Tonga koe 'ofa*," ("the life of Tonga is 'ofa") reference in Kavaliku (1977:67)

In Wellington the factor "f" concept of *fe'ofo'ofani* is just as important even though it is experienced in a different way. I saw my experience of *fe'ofo'ofani* in my family in Wellington as a practical one. It ensures that the well-being of each family member is provided for. It promises us the love and support system that we rely on to be able to cope and adjust more successfully into the new environment. *'Ofa*, the value that Tongans call "the treasure of Tonga" (Kavaliku, 1977:67).

In Clause 109 of the constitution "made it unlawful for anyone, whether he was King, chief, or commoner, 'to sell one part of a foot of the ground of the Kingdom of Tonga, but only to lease it in accordance with the Constitution'" (Lātūkefu, 1974:208-9). In light of what I experienced in 'Eua, in terms of spiritual bonding with the land, I believe the King had a deep understanding of how the land would always bring home our Tongan people. 'To sell the land is to sell oneself'.

We inherited the idea of chieftainship from our Lapita ancestors. Although we have endured the colonisation process, the structure of chieftainship is very much alive in the factor "f" concept of *faka'apa'apa*, especially between the father and children. In 'Eua many valuable lessons were learnt, for example, knowing not to question any decisions of my *mātu'a* (parent). This is an aspect of *faka'apa'apa* which must be observed by the children toward their parents. "Tongans... are governed by customs as much as by laws and they have a high regard for doing the 'right things' which, in local terms, means being respectful to one's superiors" (Ledyard, 1982:59).

I came to realise how crucial it is for us to continue with the practise and maintenance of the factor "f" concepts if we hope to succeed in New Zealand. These values are 'bare' necessities of a Tongan person in and outside Tonga.

CHAPTER SIX

Tefua ‘a

Vaka Lautala[1]

[1] ‘Gathering together of the boats of Lautala! Gathering of many skilled persons to do a big or difficult work.

CULTURAL MAINTENANCE WITHIN TONGAN FAMILIES IN NEW ZEALAND

Introduction

In looking at cultural maintenance within the migrant Tongan community, Cluny Macpherson's theory on migrant Samoan people provided a good starting point. Macpherson looked at the way in which migrant Samoans coped with their new environment,

> "That the Samoan Community in New Zealand showed little inclination to set aside Samoan values and institutions in favour of those of the host community. In fact the reverse seemed to be the case, Samoans consciously sought to retain their language, values and the social institutions which reflected them" (1984, p108)

His theory is the first to depict the migrant experience, and it sets the stage for scholars from other Pacific Island groups to explore aspects of cultural maintenance within their own cultures. I must make the point that just as all cultures in the Pacific are different, all the migrant groups in New Zealand have different concerns as well as similarities. I have used Macpherson's theory to compare the experiences of migrant Samoan people in New Zealand with migrant Tongan families. I also found that Patricia Kinloch's study[2] to be quite useful when discussing aspects of cultural competence. Her study will be compared with Macpherson's theory in determining whether language has any bearing on Tongan families in terms of cultural maintenance.

Semisi Tupou and Malia Latu spoke of how crucial it is for them to create their family system within the new environment. During my fieldwork with these two families,

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[2] P. Kinloch (1974) "Samoan Children in a New Zealand Secondary School. A Semiological Study of Social Communication." PhD Thesis, Victoria University of Wellington.

Semisi and Manu Tupou constantly reminded me of the fundamental value of their family system within the adopted country. In fact for the Tupou and Lātū families what Macpherson states about kinship would be close to their own experiences as migrant Tongan people.

Macpherson writes:

> "Kinship provides the conceptual foundation for the formation of groups which are larger than one's own immediate family or household. Kinship provides the framework for co-operation between individuals and for the exchange of goods and services between members. Kinship provides the basic formation of groups which are able to mobilise more in the way of resources than any single component unit can. In other words kinship provides a ready-made foundation for co-operation between migrants" (1978:131).

Macpherson's Theory in Terms of the Tongan Families

In Macpherson's study[3] he states that:

> "it is easy, and tempting, to overstate the family's importance in reproducing Samoan culture, it is however, a fact that the child's home environment produces a cognitive filter through which experiences and values of New Zealand society are 'strained' and that as such it deserves close attention" (1978:113).

He used 'three patterns of organization' to illustrate 'the ways cultures are represented in 3 environments'.

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[3] C. Macpherson (1984) "The Future of Samoan Ethnicity in New Zealand" in Tauiwi. P. Spoonley (eds) Dunmore Press.

In the first environment, he stated that it produces "children whose primary orientation is to the Samoan values and institutions" thus "the environment tends to be dominated by Samoan language, values, personnel and activities" (1978:114).

In terms of kin group involvement, he found that:

> "parents consider their respective extended families important and were involved with a full range of kin-sponsored activities in both extended families. These activities involve a high frequency of interaction with kin and within the home, children meet and mix with a wide range of kinsmen" (1978:115).

In terms of representation of culture, he found that:

> "the environment...provides opportunities for contact with Samoans and exposure to their values, norms and institutions... parents tend, both explicitly and implicitly, to represent Samoan culture and society as morally and socially superior to non-Samoan society. Samoan society is held to approximate the 'ideal society' of the Scriptures, while non-Samoan society is held to have deviated from that in certain important ways. For example the pursuit of material wealth at the expense of concern for community, a lack of respect of age and of love for parents" (1978:116).

In terms of the three Tongan families participating in this study, the first environment described in Macpherson's theory best illustrates the type of environment that Semisi and 'Ana, Manu and Seini Tupou, and my own parents tried to create in the adopted country.

Semisi Tupou talked about how he and Ana 'deliberately' and 'systematically' promoted the Tongan values and family structure within their home, especially after

their 'bad' experience of New Zealand society in the first six years here. Ana spoke of her sense of loss in those early years in New Zealand.

> "Semisi had to work and the children were at school and therefore I was left alone at home a lot of the time. In Tonga there was no such thing as being alone, I think the worse thing for me was there was no time for us to spend as a family. Time seems to dictate our lives in New Zealand whereas back home we dictate to time".

In the experience of my family, my parents always spoke about how being alone is a feature of western society but not of Tongan society. My parents, therefore created their Tongan home environment here in New Zealand which enabled them to feel that they were not alone. My father always used to tell me that if I did not have a good understanding of my own culture, how could I understand and appreciate other cultures. In our home we always had evening prayers in the Tongan language. Whenever our parents called us we always had to reply in our own language "*ko au eni*" ("Here I am"). Small things like this helped promote and maintain the Tongan culture in our home.

I remember how I was taught not to answer back at home and when I went to school and did not reply when the teachers asked me a question, especially when I did not know the answer, my actions were always misinterpreted or misunderstood as being rude behaviour. Often teachers do not recognise this and punish children according to what they understood the situation to be, there is a detrimental long term effect on the children which is more serious than the teacher anticipated. Children from Macpherson's first environment found this type of situation common, as I and my siblings, and the Tupou children found.

In the second environment, Macpherson found that:

> "Samoan culture exists alongside a non-Samoan culture and children move between the two often in ways which are defined by the situation in which they find themselves. These environments tend not to be dominated by Samoan language, values, activities and personnel...the commitment to Samoan values and institutions that develop does so in the presence of alternatives rather than their absence..." (1978:117).

In terms of kin group involvement, he states:

> "parents in these environments consider their kin groups important and continue to take part in a range of kin-based activities in both spouses' extended families (*'aiga*). Their involvement is frequently constrained by the fact that they do not intend to return permanently to Samoa and do not have political aspirations such as aspiring to chiefly status. They are thus able to choose to support those kin group activities which they wish to, and tend to limit the number in which they are actively involved and confine themselves to symbolic gestures." (1978:118).

When it comes to the representation of Samoan culture within this environment, Macpherson states that they are:

> "presented as mutually exclusive or competing alternatives, each is portrayed as being more or less appropriate in different situations". [For example:] "behaviour 'x' is alright for Europeans because it is part of their custom. But don't ever do that in the presence of Samoans or you will make us ashamed because it is very bad in Samoan custom. Samoans will think your family doesn't have any manners. Thus children may come to experience different cultures' relevance as being situational because they are presented as alternatives. Language use is a case in point" (1978:120).

Malia's and Lupe's family situation illustrates the second environment of Macpherson's theory. Malia and Lupe are both married to non-Tongans so it would be unusual for them to create the type of environment that Macpherson refers to as the first environment. Malia, however, told me that her husband Tomasi and she

made a conscious choice to bring up their children in the Tongan way. Lupe spoke about her earlier years in New Zealand and how she found it hard not to be around Tongan people, "you feel a sense of loss". She said that she deliberately sought out the company of Tongan people but there were only a few in Wellington in the early 1970s. Lupe also told me that because her husband who is *papālangi*, had worked in Tonga for many years. He did understand some of her cultural needs, and therefore encouraged her to help Tongan friends unlike Peta's husband.

Malia Lātū spoke about the difficulties in maintaining a culture which has characteristics which are absent from the 'norms' of the dominant culture, such as speaking Tongan all the time or keeping up with the remittances back to Tonga. She spoke about how Tomasi her Tuvaluan husband, is very supportive of her ways and how this makes things easier.

Semisi's cousin Vina's situation is also illustrated by Macpherson's second environment. She comes into the family only when she needs them for something. Semisi was telling me how he encourages Vina to bring her children to socialise with his. Vina is a single mother who feels that you do not need to bring up children in the Tongan way because they would find it hard later on. However, Semisi told me how he always gets his nephew, Tino, to pick Vina and the children up whenever they have a family gathering.

Malia Lātū spoke about how "we can only live and hope that the children will continue to keep our ways and that is all we can do, but we must give them that choice by teaching them because they can't learn it from school". Malia's daughter told me that:

> "Even though Mum and Dad brought us up the Tongan way, we also had the opportunity to learn Dad's culture through association with his family. It helps me to have a better understanding of the needs of my

own parents and therefore, it gives me a better understanding of my friends and their culture".

Macpherson's third and final environment represent an orientation "towards and domination by non-Samoan language, values, activities, and personnel" such "Samoan have tended to intermarry and often marry immigrants." Macpherson found that:

> "children brought up in this environment typically reflect this orientation and domination. This reflects parents' systematic promotion of non-Samoan culture and their deliberate attempts to limit involvement with, or commitment to, Samoan values and institutions" (1978:120).

In terms of kin-group involvement, Macpherson states that:

> "parents' commitment to kin group activity is limited in these situations, but for different reasons. Since they do not expect to settle in Samoa and have little use for services available from migrant kin-group, they argue that support for kin-group activity serves no useful purpose. Others believe that support for kin-group is the source of Samoan migrants' material 'poverty' and that 'those customs have no place here'. Because adults tend to avoid involvement in the planning and execution of these kin-group activities, their children have no opportunity to hear how and why these things are done. Children tend to see only the 'finished product': a wedding, funeral or birthday party" (1978:122).

The representation of the culture in this third environment, ensures that:

> "the non-Samoan culture is promoted as morally and socially superior to Samoan culture and parents steer their children into activities with 'non-Samoans'. Samoan culture is represented either as being simply inappropriate in New Zealand or as being morally and socially inferior to European culture. European society is promoted as one which

welcomes Samoans who 'know how to behave' and are not antipathetic or hostile towards New Zealand society" (1978:123).

Three people participating in my study come to mind when considering Macpherson's third environment. They are: Lose Lātū, Semisi Tupou's niece, Moana and Peta. Lose told me that her children are 'half-caste' and therefore, it is best that they learn their father's way, (he is *papālangi*) he is educated and she is not. Semisi's niece Moana questioned how the Tongan way can be practised by her children when they live in another culture "it would only confuse them more".

I knew Moana before she had children and she was always thought to be "*fie pālangi*" (thinking one is European) by her family. I did not expect her to change her view when she had children, her uncle, however, is not giving up on her. Semisi's daughter told me that her father believed it is his role to help Moana for the children's sake.

I also knew Lose before she married. She seemed to have a strong sense of being Tongan and did not really socialise with *pāpālangi* males. In her mid-thirties she married a man whom she believed could give her the sense of security that a Tongan man could not.

This type of thinking results in people perceiving their own culture and other cultures in different ways. Peta Lātū spoke about how it took her nineteen years to finally get her husband to realise that her Tongan way had advantages that
are not always seen. I found through working with these two families and my own Tongan family, that people have different stages of understanding their culture in terms of a new culture through time. One of my cousins came from 'Eua and it was a culture shock for her coming to New Zealand for the first time. She saw things she hadn't seen before, like lots of cars, shops, clothes and money. She saw material

wealth as a sign of success and gave up her Tongan values in the belief that she would be successful if she took on the *pālangi* way. My cousin has children of her own and she is very dependent on our family to help her out, because her husband is *pālangi* and is not close to his family.

One member of our family once said to me "within a Tongan family we can be the worst of enemies, but when it comes to meeting our family obligations (*fetokoni'aki* and *fatongia*), back in Tonga, we can be seen as best of friends". For me, in our family, this was so true.

For Tongan migrants like Lose Lātū, only time will tell whether she will reclaim her cultural identity. One thing that was very interesting during my fieldwork with the Lātū family, was how each of them saw the other in terms of cultural maintenance. Malia Lātū felt that her sister Lose was foregoing some of her Tongan cultural practises such as 'remittance back home', to please her *palāngi* husband. Lose felt that she was not losing her Tongan values and practises, it is just that:

> "it is hard to send money home especially now with the present economic situation. My husband is the only wage earner and we have two small children plus a mortgage, so we are barely making ends meet ourselves. When I start working again I will start sending money back home to my mother, I know she will understand."

The Factor 'f' Concepts and the Tongan Family

Manu and Seini have only been in New Zealand for six years. They spoke of the importance of having a family member familiar with New Zealand society, to help when new immigrants arrive in the country. "Without Semisi and Ana we don't know if we would have been able to cope with the new environment". Seini said "if we don't maintain our cultural values and family system in this country, then we will never be sure that our children's children will be brought up in the same Tongan way, in the

future". Semisi and 'Ana endeavour in every way to expose their children to their Tongan values and customs. The practise of *faka'apa'apa* in their home is one way of deliberately promoting their Tongan values within the New Zealand society. Semisi's daughter told me that her socialisation as a child was predominantely Tongan.

> "Dad made us speak Tongan at home all the time, so we were discouraged from speaking English around the house. As a child it seemed weird, but as an adult a deeper understanding of the culture is reached and thus one becomes very appreciative of ones cultural difference".

Peta spoke about her family situation: "even though the children were educated in Tonga when they were young, when they came back to New Zealand their father did not want them to continue speaking Tongan at home". Peta also spoke about how her husband did not like her to be too dependent on her family because:

> "it encourages them to expect things of you. However since the unexpected death of our child two years ago, he saw how my family was always there for us. He has 'changed his tune' after nineteen years of married life, he wants to learn more about my culture and to teach it to our three children".

Malia spoke about her younger sister Lose:

> "Lose is young and feels the Tongan way is best left back in Tonga, however, whenever she needs someone to look after her young children instead of paying for a babysitter , she brings them around and tells me it is the Tongan way".

But Malia loves her sister and will always help her. This depicts the factor "f" concepts of *fetokoni'aki* (reciprocal co-operation) and *fe'ofo'ofani* (reciprocal love) and

fatongia (moral obligation). It is never a payment type of arrangement and it is common practise amongst Tongan people back in Tonga and in New Zealand.

Lupe told me that it is up to the Tongan mother to make sure that the children understand their culture, especially if the husband is non-Tongan:

> "We spend so much time with the children when they are young, and so it is our only chance to teach them our Tongan values and customs. Once they go to school, they will learn the pālangi way. Only at home can we practise our Tongan way".

Macpherson's and Kinloch's Theories

Both Macpherson's and Kinloch's work illustrate the different ways Samoan go about maintaining their culture within the dominant culture.

In terms of Kinloch's work, she identified four categories of cultural competence in her study of "Samoan Children in a New Zealand Secondary School". The first category is 'the loss of competence in any culture'. This is when a child rejects the original culture and loses the ability to act competently within it. Kinloch states that if the child also fails to acquire competence in the culture of adoption and rejects that too, the child is no longer competent in any culture. Cultural competence is then replaced by dependence on one's self.

A comparison can be made between Macpherson's theory of the third environment and Kinloch's theory of the first category. The Samoan person's experience in the third environment runs parallel with the Samoan child's experience in the first category, in terms of loss of ability to act competently in their culture of origin. This comparison does not hold up in terms of a lack of competence in any culture, referred to by Kinloch. Macpherson's theory depicts a child who is a product of the third

environment, as totally immersed in the culture of the dominant society, rather than being incompetent in both cultures. Kinloch states that: "often trouble arises for the migrant child, not through intent, but because their behaviour is inappropriate in relation to his (sic) parents, who represent the original culture or in relation to the adoptive culture" (1975:215).

My experience of a problem child in my family qualifies Kinloch's theory, of the first category. When his family migrated to Australia he did not get the home support he needed, so he sought it in other ways. However, he has changed with the support and love we gave him as a family and has become culturally competent in his own culture. Many Tongan teenage children who get into trouble with the law give further support to Kinloch's theory. Sometimes children in these types of situations do not get the help they need until it is too late.

In terms of category two, Kinloch found that the loss of competence in culture of origin is associated with acceptance of the culture of adoption. Kinloch found that the child's "loss of competence in the culture of origin occurs when there is wholesale acceptance of a new culture at the expense of tradition". She states that if the child in this category has any competence in the adopted culture, it is through imitation rather than any real understanding. Acceptance of the adopted culture seems to imply rejection of the original culture (1975:217). What Macpherson discusses in the third environment parallels the experience for Samoan children that Kinloch is talking about in category two. Lose Lātū's situation illustrates Kinloch's theory of category two and most probably her children will be typical of what Kinloch's identifies as a category two child.

Kinloch's third category is the "retention of competence in culture of origin". She states that:

> "competence in the culture of origin is retained where innovations, based on continuing daily experience of the adopted culture, are made within the traditional meaning system. The reiteration of traditional meaning seems to be associated with an awareness that to reject the culture of origin is to lose all, and to accept the culture of adoption would mean rejecting the original culture" (1975:219-20).

In terms of Macpherson's theory, the Samoan person's experience in the first environment parallels the Samoan child's experience in Kinloch's category three. In terms of the three families participating in my study, I believe that Manu and Seini's older children would identify with category three. It is too early to observe this in the younger children.

The fourth and final category Kinloch observed is that of "Bicultural competence". This is the ability to express and interpret the ideas of both the original culture and the adopted culture appropriately. "The receptiveness to the adopted culture is based on curiosity and does not necessitate the rejection of the original culture. Instead, the ideas of the two cultures are juxtaposed, their similarity and difference, noted and more or less understood" (1975:220). Kinloch states that the child of category four "is prepared to commit improprieties to discover the consequence and he (sic) can be heard praising and criticising both Samoan language and custom, as well as the English language and New Zealand society." Thus, Kinloch states that "Bicultural competence seems to coincide with bi-lingual competence" (1975:220).

In terms of Macpherson's theory, the Samoan person's experience in the first and second environment would be similar to the Samoan child's experience in category four. In terms of the three families in my study, Semisi and Ana's children, Malia and Tomasi's children, and my brothers and sister would identify with Kinloch's category four.

Comparison of Macpherson's and Kinloch's theories are not without problems. I felt that Macpherson's theory discussed the Samoan parents and their perception of cultural maintenance, whereas Kinloch discussed the Samoan child. However, I do believe that Kinloch's study would be useful in discussing the Tongan language in terms of cultural competence for the Tongan child. This is, however, beyond the parameter of this study.

If we are to use Macpherson's theory in discussing the factor "f" concepts and cultural maintenance, the first and second environment allow the factor "f" concepts to be observed. However, only in the first environment would these factors be practised and maintained. The Tupou family will definitely continue to promote these values, however, in the Lātū family it could be seen as one of a range of options. For Lose Lātū, the absence of factor "f" concepts from the 'norms' of the dominant culture meant that these values were not important enough for her to persist practising them in her home.

If we are to use Kinloch's theory I would definitely like to explore category 2-4 in terms of the Tongan child. One can say that the Samoan child's experience would be similar to the Tongan child's because of the mere fact that they both come from migrant families. This would not be a confirmed statement until further explored. As I said earlier in this chapter, although we may share some cultural similarities Pacific cultures are unique unto themselves and so are their experiences of New Zealand life.

The Factor "f" Concepts and Cultural Maintenance

Manu and Seini talked about how important it is to belong to the Wellington Tongan community because it enforces the practises of the Tongan culture in the adopted country. Paula talked about how the Tongan community serves as a place for

promoting the Tongan values, norms and family system. Although a study in itself, Mosese said, the Church sometimes served as the family when migrant Tongan people first arrive in New Zealand. The Church would welcome Tongan migrants who had no relatives in New Zealand and take a particularly supportive role.

Peta talked about how important it is for her to maintain the concept of *fetokoni'aki* (reciprocal co-operation) especially, during these hard economic times. She talked about how it has taken her nineteen years to realize the importance of maintaining her culture. Lupe spoke about how hard it is for her to deal with the children when they 'answer her back' because:

> "we never 'back chat' to our parents and automatically we think our children would not do it to us, but we tend to forget that we practise *faka'apa'apa* (respect) on a daily basis back home, whereas here it is not being practised. It is therefore our role as Tongan parents to encourage them to practise these values at home".

For Malia her biggest fear is having their children forgo their cultural values and family system when they grow up especially when it is absent from the New Zealand culture.

In chapter five, Mosese spoke about the problems of young couple keeping up with the 'remittance' practise, especially when they can barely make ends meet. This highlights the problems of being inexperienced in a new culture, a view that is also shared by Dr Foliaki in a interview he did for the Tonga Chronicle[4].

> "New immigrants to New Zealand, particularly young married couples, sometimes run into difficulties trying to adapt to the New Zealand lifestyle. This can cause resentment in more tradition-minded families,

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[4] Tonga Chronicle October 1, 1992 Issue, Medical adviser probes problems faced by Tongans emigrating to New Zealand. Interview with Dr L. Folaki p5.

> and often the young married couples dispute with each other because they do not have their parents or other members of the extended family around to assist and guide them. For such people. Foliaki added, "inexperience is, in itself, a problem" (1992:5).

This study has highlighted the dilemmas that migrant Tongans are faced with in New Zealand in trying to maintain their cultural values and family system especially, when they are not being practised by the dominant culture, and when they have been away from Tonga for so long. For the Tupou family, the fear of having another 'bad experience' is too much to bear and they are determined to ensure that their Tongan family system and values are maintained and practised within their adopted country.

For the Lātū family, only time will tell. Malia, and Lupe have been able to continue with practising some of their cultural norms and values. "Remittance", Malia said, "was hard to continue when other members of the family stop practising it and especially since we are no longer involved in the Tongan community and feel no pressure to continue with the practise".

There is little doubt about the difficulties in maintaining Tongan values, family system and language when one is away from Tonga and even more so, when one does not have the support of the Tongan family. The Tongan community and the Church are available to us as realms within which these Tongan values and customs are being promoted and practised.

As far as this study goes I feel a follow up study will prove very interesting, especially in terms of these intriguing insights from Macpherson:

> "The emotional attachment of the New Zealand-born to their parents and their parents' attachment to kinsmen link them with the kin group in ways which their parents will define. But the satisfaction and benefits

> which their parents derive from participation cannot escape the attention of the New Zealand-born who must compare their parents with the rather more calculative and impersonal bonds which characterise the alternative form of organisation. If the New Zealand-born do not become upwardly mobile and are left vulnerable at the edge of the national economy they may find that the extended kin group can serve them in the same way that it serves their parents in the same economic niche. If this is the case then its persistence as a form will be assured until such time as mobility makes it unnecessary" (1978:135).

In terms of the migrant Tongan experience I think only time will tell. As we are relatively new to the world of migration compared with the Samoan migration experience, the impact of the new culture on us has not been fully realised yet. Not until then, will we be able to talk more knowledgeably about cultural competence and maintenance. For the time being, each Tongan family will determine how much of the Tongan culture will be promoted and maintained within their home. However, I can draw on the knowledge and experience of those early migrants participating in my study and know that valuing and using our own family system and cultural values is crucial to our success in New Zealand society.

As the saying goes "nothing is ever truly finished". For me this is so true for my thesis. I feel this is only the starting point for me in exploring the changes that are taking place within the Tongan family system, values and culture in Tonga and New Zealand.

In Tonga I learnt that the traditional Tongan culture has been changed, transformed, and adjusted through history. Marcus[5] has termed this the 'compromise culture'.

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[5] G. Marcus (1977) Contemporary Tonga - The Background of Social and Cultural Change. In Friendly Islands: A History of Tonga. Edited by N. Rutherford. Melbourne: Oxford University Press.

The different forces that have undermined and changed the traditional culture have been strong and effective. Through Christianity the traditional Tongan society was undermined and changed and thus the traditional culture was transformed and adapted to suit the missionaries ambitions. Christianity became the foundation on which the new structure was built. Formal education and exposure to the Western world through travel have also been contributing factors to the erosion of the traditional Tongan culture by changing the Tongan peoples' thinking patterns. Maintenance of Tongan values, norms, and family systems should be a priority in the minds of Tongan scholars, policy makers, and educators, if the Tongan culture is to continue at all. Cultural maintenance is important in New Zealand, if not more so than it is in Tonga, where the culture is being practised on a daily basis.

In New Zealand I realised that Tongan families were practising and maintaining their culture at the time of departure from Tonga. For example, my parents left Tonga in 1972 and so the Tongan cultural practises and values that they instilled in us were practised at that time - 1972. The forces of formal education and travel, that have undermined and changed the traditional Tongan culture instilled in me by my parents have had the opposite effect in New Zealand. Formal education has enabled me to see how crucial it is to practise and maintain our Tongan values, customs and family systems. This arises out of a desire to be culturally competent.

CONCLUSION

'Alu 'alu 'i mala

pea tau ki monū'[1]

[1] 'Go through misfortune and reach good fortune'. Through my long journey I have come to realise the value of my Tongan heritage.

IMPLICATIONS OF KNOWLEDGE FOR SOCIAL WORK THEORY, PRACTICE AND POLICY

The findings of this research establish that migrant Tongan people persistently employ their own family systems to deal with the day to day crises they face in New Zealand society. This only highlights the need for the New Zealand Government to recognise the specific cultural practises of Tongan people (the focus of my study) in the development of policy. These policies need to reflect an understanding of Tongan cultural needs and the implications of these policies for Tongan people. Particularly, policies need to be designed to encourage Tongan people to use their own family systems and cultural practises. Tongan groups must be consulted in the policy formation process as they are one of the groups most affected by the consequences of this process.

> "If people or government agencies were to force assimilation, that is, to introduce measures that would undermine either the role of the Church or the family and other institutions, the consequences would be more serious than have been imagined" (Macpherson 1978:13).

This research has explored one of these institutions, the Tongan family and reaches the conclusion that the Tongan family system serves as a mechanism for meeting Tongan peoples' needs in the ever-changing New Zealand society. Munoz[2] found that:

> "in a setting of rapid social change, problems outnumber solutions. The family is the bottleneck through which all troubles pass, and it reflects the strains and stresses of life. The family's sympathy, understanding, and support rehabilitates personalities bruised by competitive living. Family adaptability, family integration, and affectionate relationships among family members are all important factors enabling people to adjust to crises..." (1978:156).

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[2] F.U. Munoz (1978) Pacific Islanders: Life Patterns in a New Land in New Neighbours: Islanders in Adaptation. California: Centre for South Pacific Studies.

Implications of Knowledge in Terms of the Children, Young Persons, and Their Families Act, 1989

In terms of social work theory and practise, this study is useful in many ways. From personal experience as a student social worker with the Department of Social Welfare, I found that the Children, Young Persons, and Their Families Act 1989 did not really meet the needs of the Tongan young person, or indeed understand the world from which the Tongan child had come. In particular Part 1, Section 20-26, of the CYP&TF Act (one of the few sections which truly attempts to acknowledge other cultures) is quite vague. These sections of the Act look at the Family Group Conference process. Social workers and families involved in family group conferences (FGCs) have different understandings of these sections.

Section 21 reads as follows:

> Every Care and Protection Co-ordinator shall, before convening any family group conference...
> - make all reasonable, endeavours to consult with the child's or young person's family, whanau, or family group in relation to -
> (i) the date on which, and the time and place at which, the conference is to held; and
> (ii) the persons who should attend the conference; and
> (iii) the procedure to be adopted at the conference, -
> and, subject to Section 22 of this Act, shall, so far as it is practicable and consistent with the principles of this Act, shall, give effect to the wishes of the child's or young person's family, whanau, or family group in relation to those matters.

As I have stated in the Introduction, Tongan people believe in spontaneity and synchronicity of action. When organising a family group conference for a Tongan family it would be more appropriate to consult with family members as to their availability.

This research has shown how the Tongan family consciously and deliberately seeks to use its own family systems and cultural practises in meeting the needs of its members. This study can be used by the Care and Protection Co-ordinator referred to in the Act,

and social workers alike. It can be used as a resource when dealing with a Tongan child, especially in terms of empowering the family to use its their own processes. There is still a power imbalance between the social worker and the family in terms of the interpretation of the Act in favour of the social worker rather than the family who is affected by it. In Section 22 (1)b of the Act the Care and Protection Co-ordinator convening the conference makes the decisions relating to who attends these conferences. Thus, the underlying principle of family empowerment which the Act was supposed to be founded on can be undermined.

In terms of Part VIII, Section 396-402 of the Act, provisions relating to Iwi Authorities, Cultural Authorities, Child and Family Support Services, and Community Services, did not include Pacific Islands groups. During my placement as a student social worker with the Department of Social Welfare, I observed problems with social workers' understanding of the provision in the Act relating to Cultural Authorities. I feel that this part of the Act needs to be looked at in more detail because of its importance in recognising cultural difference.

There is a great need for us as social work practitioners and policy makers to encourage and support the families to participate in the formation and implementation of policies which affect them. Only they are able to determine a policy's appropriateness in 'real life' situations. Each family is different within Tongan culture and the dynamics between family members is different. We need to create therefore forums for all the different cultures to have their say because it will ensure that they have a starting point from which to be heard and understood. Social workers have played the "God" role for too long, let us be realistic and let the family show us how to best deal with their own people. As Macpherson said "the consequences will be more serious than imagined".[3]

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[3] C. Macpherson (1978) "The Polynesian Migrant Family: A Samoan Case Study" in P. Koopman Boyden (edit). The Social Structure of New Zealand.

Recommendations

There are a number of interesting topics I have discovered in the writing of this thesis that requires further research and would enhance my work and the work of others like Kinloch, Macpherson, Marcus, Latukefu and Mitaera.

1. The role of the church in the maintenance of the Tongan culture. In this study I purposely did not talk about the role of the church because the younger families participating in this study did not feel the church played an important role in their lives in New Zealand. I feel, however, that a study of the Churches role in cultural maintenance is important because for some Tongan people it caters for their spiritual well-being.

2. A study looking at the effect of the present economic situation on the factor "f" concepts identified in my thesis. For example the younger families who participated in this study felt the concept of *fetokoni'aki* (reciprocal co-operation) was impractical because they were barely making ends meet, financially. Most young Tongan families in this study felt that the Tongan values are maintained, however, their practical application has changed due to the present economic situation.

3. Identification of a more culturally appropriate methodology is needed that truly allows for the research worker to work within a framework that is culturally appropriate to those under study. The participant observation is a good starting point for developing a culturally appropriate methodology when one is researching within one's own culture. This, however, could be improved upon by using the culture's values in the development of the methodology.

Personal Learning

On a personal level, in writing this thesis, I reached a better understanding of where my academic life fits into my cultural world. My academic world has only allowed me to 'acquire knowledge' but the 'inherited knowledge' of my cultural world will never be available to me in written form no matter how learned I become in the Western world. Inherited knowledge can only be imparted through the spoken words. 'One quenches the thirst for knowledge for one's mind and the other quenches the thirst for knowledge for oneself'. I feel there can be no more fitting epitaph to conclude this thesis than the words my father used when I told him I wish to become an academic:

> "No knowledge is better than any knowledge when it is not within your own cultural world".

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INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. Name of the participant (Most of the time you can tell what part of Tonga the family originated from, through the persons family name).

2. How long have you been in New Zealand?

3. Why did you leave Tonga in the first place? And why New Zealand as a destination?

4. Were you well prepared for the new life in the new country? Did these preparation assist or hinder your ability to adjust to the host country?

5. What made you finally decide to make New Zealand your permanent home?

6. What role does Tongan institutions such as family play in helping migrant Tongan people cope with their new environment? Can you talk about the importance of this role in your daily life in the new country?

7. Can this role be fulfilled by the adopted country's own institutions?

8. What role does the Tongan family system that the institutions of the adopted country cannot meet?

9. Does the Tongan family system play a role in cultural maintenance?

10. How important is maintaining your culture in the adopted country?

QUESTIONS WHICH CAME UP IN THE PRELIMINARY STUDY

1. How important is the factor "f" concept to your life in New Zealand?

2. How hard is it to maintain factor "f" when they are not being practised by the dominant culture?

3. Through maintaining the Tongan values, norms and institutions in the new country, do they contribute to your success in adapting into the new culture.

4. What are the consequences if loss of cultural competence in the country of origin?

5. What is the connection between the Tongan family system and cultural maintenance?

6. What are the connection between the Tongan family system, cultural maintenance and bi-cultural competence?

Dear

I am writing to see if you would be willing to participate and be interviewed for a study I am doing on migrant Tongan in Wellington.

My name is Sela Taufa. I am doing a Masters (Applied) in Social work at Victoria University of Wellington. As part of my degree I have to do a research. I have chosen to do a research on migrant Tongan family in Wellington. My focus is on how can the Tongan culture be maintained and practised when it is absence from the 'norm' of New Zealand culture. I would be very interested to share your thoughts and ideas on this topic. I would very grateful if you can share stories of your experiences as migrant Tongan in this country.

If you are willing to participate in this study, I can be contacted at the above address or at my home phone number.

Malo aupito.

Yours sincerely

Sela Taufa