

# Chapter One

## *Introduction*

*The movement of people takes many forms: people migrate as manual workers, highly qualified specialists, entrepreneurs, refugees or as family members of previous migrants. Whether the initial intention is temporary or permanent movement, many migrants become settlers. Migratory networks develop, linking areas of origin and destination, and helping to bring about major changes in both. Migrants can change demographic, economic, and social structures, and bring new cultural diversity, which often brings into question national identity (Castles and Miller, 1998:4).*

### **1.1 Aim of the Study**

This thesis examines the interaction between international migration and socio-political and economic change in the Kingdom of Tonga. It explores the effects of international migration on Tongan society, which has resulted in a gradual transformation in Tonga's socio-political, cultural, and economic landscape. The study of Tonga is important because, more than any other Asia Pacific state, its economy is dependent on migrant remittances, leading to the transformation taking place today.

The 1960s and 1970s marked an era of complex population movement and transformation worldwide (Castles and Miller, 1998), of which the situation in Tonga is just one part. There were major labor migrations, mostly of unskilled workers, to Western Europe from North Africa and Southern Europe and from former colonies of Britain, France, and the Netherlands. North America was a major destination for growing numbers of Latin American, East Asian and South East Asian immigrants. The Middle Eastern Gulf states attracted migrants from

the Arab world, South Asia and East Asia, as well as smaller numbers from other countries because of their developing oil industries (Gould and Finlay 1994).

The emerging global patterns of movement were dominated by 'temporary' labor migration, which replaced the largely 'settler' movements out of Europe to the New World that had been characteristic of international migration flows during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Political collapse and unrest combined with economic depression and restructuring have raised the potential for considerable population displacement in many parts of the world. This has resulted in the difficulty of differentiating between 'economic migrants' and 'political refugees' (Gould and Finlay, 1994).

While the above patterns describe the flow of international migrants on a worldwide scale, the island nations of Oceania have their own story. These states followed the new pattern of international migration, and the United States, Australia, and New Zealand were the major destinations (see King and Connell, 1999). These waves of international migration reached their peak levels in the 1960s, 1970s, and early 1980s (see Castles and Miller, 1998).

The motivation behind international migration comes from a combination of many factors and varies between islands due to differences in their socio-political and economic development and external influences. International migration cannot be discussed without consideration of the wider process of economic globalization, and must therefore be analyzed holistically, from an international perspective. Its social, economic and political effects must be analysed to determine their impact on the host countries. Discussions of migration have become inseparable from consideration of the issues of human

rights and the political organization and economic development of the countries of origin (see Asis, 2002).

The importance of international migration for the movement of capital and commodities in the processes of globalization can be significant (see Brah et al., 1999). As Castles (2000) has pointed out, the impact of migration will continue to mould the socio-political and economic structures of these societies. In the case of Oceania, as Connell describes, ‘the new diaspora ... [has] rapidly has come to characterize the contemporary South Pacific’ (Connell, 1987: 399).

In some instances in the Pacific, international migration has turned into an emancipating socio-political and economic force. It has not only provided new socio-economic opportunities for the migrants abroad, but has also had an impact on the social and political structure of their islands of origin through the remittances and skills that they have acquired abroad (see Lātū, 2005a). As Castles and Miller have put it; ‘international migration is part of a transnational revolution that is reshaping societies and politics around the globe’ (Castles and Miller, 1998:5). In particular, migration has had an immense effect on Tongan society, which has attracted the attention of researchers in recent years.

Throughout the second half of the 20th century, internal and overseas migration contributed to a steady transformation of the kingdom, a transformation that has redefined its economy and is now challenging its polity. Today, many of the most profound changes in Tongan society are intimately tied to migration (see Small and Dixon, 2004). International migration is the key provider of both economic and social capital for Tonga, and is seen as an economic panacea for Tonga’s many

disadvantages such as its small size, geographical isolation, lack of natural resources, and shortage of land.

The period from the mid-1960s to the present is central to this study as it heralded the beginning of the modernization era of the Kingdom of Tonga. This was marked by the accession of the present monarch, King Taufa'ahau Tupou IV, to the throne and the introduction of reforms that were revolutionary within the Tongan context. These reforms were the outcome of external forces of globalization with international migration being the key factor. However, they also highlight the differences in socio-political, economic, and cultural thinking between the older and younger generations within Tongan society.

Older more conservative Tongans regard social change as abnormal, whereas the younger generation regards them as necessary and normal. Now international migration has extended social networks across the globe, and this has brought into Tongan society a new awareness of social and cultural development. If we take, for instance, the effects of international migration on the socio-political composition of Tongan society since the arrival of missionaries and the development of institutional life in Tongan society, it is clear that external forces of change cannot be ignored.

According to Jameson (1990), 'the truth of experience no longer coincides with the place in which it takes place, but is spread-eagled across the world's space.' The expansion of Tongan society overseas, particularly to New Zealand, United States, and Australia, has undermined traditional ideas of social organization, transforming the behavior of Tongans as they increasingly depend on links to other places worldwide.

## 1.2 Research Questions

This study argues that international migration, which itself arises from powerful external factors, is the driving force of societal change in Tonga. The kingdom has the world's highest dependency on remittances, which make up 50 per cent of the Tonga's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (see Small and Dixon, 2004; Appendix A). The high level of reliance on remittances reflects the significance of international migration to Tonga and explains the need to maintain the flow. International migration and remittances have long been key factors of development in Tongan society and seemed to promise a solution for the kingdom's economic problems (see Chapter 5, 6 and 7). The most important question arising is, therefore, what effects have they had on the country's social and political development?

The significance of the question is clearly illustrated in the establishment of the new government department of 'Tongans Abroad'. In February 2006, His Majesty's Cabinet approved the establishment of this department in the Prime Minister's Office to look after the interests and concerns of Tongans overseas. In his remarks to the Cabinet in advocating the move, the Acting Prime Minister, Dr. Fred Sevele said that Tongan migrants overseas are an asset in more ways than one. Pointing to the more than 200 million Australian dollars per annum in remittances that the country receives from its people abroad, he stated that 'the overall significance of maintaining and strengthening the links between Tonga and her people overseas cannot be overemphasized' (Government of Tonga Online, 2006).

According to Sevele, the establishment of the department is the result of an initiative begun in 2004 to create better communications and public relations between Tonga and Tongans abroad. This process has now moved on to a higher level with the establishment of the new department. The setting up of the new department is in recognition of the need to foster closer and stronger relationships between Tonga and its people overseas. It is also an expression of gratitude to the many ways in which Tongan migrants overseas have contributed to the development of the country. The establishment of the new department followed consultations with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to explore ways of working together to serve Tongan migrants overseas in a more effective and efficient manner by delivering a more complete range of services.

The other main issue discussed in this thesis is the pattern of migration and its relationship with the social structure of Tongan society. The flow of Tongans to the host countries is still continuing, and the most prominent pattern is that of chain migration (see Price, 1999). Chain migration is a process by which early pioneer migrants recruit later migrants, often from their own kinship groups or communities of origin. The process of migration is therefore assisted by migrants who already live at the destination. They help their friends and relatives migrate by providing them with information, money, a place to stay, emotional support, and perhaps a job. People generally migrate to locations with which they have connections and a measure of familiarity.

In the host countries, the majority of Tongans arrive at their various destinations through chain migration. This is shown in the pattern of residence, as people from the same family or village in the home country often live near

each other in the host country. As migrants gain residential status, they continue to bring over other family members. This pattern of migration has continued since the first waves of migrants migrated to New Zealand in the late 1960s and 1970s and to Australia and the United States since the late 1970s (see Chapter 4).

Generally chain migration is important in migrant communities in which the social structure of the area of origin is strong, giving rise to tightly knit social groups. Because of the slow pace of social change in Tonga up to the 1960s, the social structure of the local residential group is still relatively strong in many of the smaller communities throughout the islands. In addition, the persistence of these social ties helps explain the extremely high level of remittances. People send money home because they still identify strongly with the community there, and have a stake in its continuity. Thus, it may be argued that the slow pace of change is in turn related to high levels of both chain migration and migrant remittances, when Tonga is compared with other island states in the Pacific.

The key questions in this research are as follows;

- Why do Tongan people migrate, and why are there such high rates of chain migration and migrant remittances?
- Does international migration assist the process of economic development in Tonga?
- To what extent has international migration affected the form and content of institutions like the village and the family?
- What effects has international migration had on Tonga's political affairs?

- What effects has migration had on the structure and organization of the church in Tonga?
- How does the situation in Tonga compare with that of other island states in the region?
- What does the future hold for migration in Tonga and what are the most likely scenarios?

### **1.3 Significance of the Study**

The thesis argues that international migration has increasingly become a matter of global concern in the last few decades due to dramatic changes in the world's political map (Gould and Finlay 1994). The pressures for increased migration intensified in the late 1970s and 1980s both because of widespread knowledge in the sending societies of the extent of opportunities in the host countries, and because of improvements in the transport and communications systems. The global explosion in mass communications and the media since the late 1980s has made many people in Tonga more aware than ever before of the affluent lifestyles in host countries, and inevitably many were attracted by the consumer cultures that seemed to be available there. Now, the relationship between Tongan migrants and the host countries is vital to the survival of the Tongan economy through the continuous flow of remittances, aid and ideas. In other words, we need to consider both the economic and social dimensions of migration. According to Siddique:

The new theory of labor migration does not see migrants simply as economic atoms, but emphasizes micro dimensions, supply strategies and family reunion. There has also been integration of economics with social capital theory, migration being seen as a social process in order to

understand why political and economic objectives are not always realized. Migration scholars have therefore been encouraged to integrate the micro and macro dimensions in order to unravel the totality of the migration process (Siddique, 2001: 2-3).

However until now, the church and government as the biggest facilitators of international migration have paid little attention to these issues. In the host countries, policy responses have varied according to the parameters set by each country's economic and political circumstances. In some cases, the numbers and types of migrants have increased faster than the capacity of national governments, regional bodies, international organizations, and international agreements to deal with them (ibid.). Host countries have therefore been slow in dealing with immigration issues affecting the migrants, so that migration policies in the past have failed in terms of achieving the desired outcomes.

As an example, Tongan migrants traveled to New Zealand in their thousands under the temporary workers scheme, and more than half of them became permanent residents in the late 1970s (see King and Connell 1999; Winkelmann, 2000). However, because the Tongan government failed to negotiate with New Zealand to regularize the status of these migrants, after staying for some years in New Zealand, migrants were required to leave the country. Some did leave, but many stayed on in New Zealand as illegal migrants (Winkelmann, 2000).

The second half of the twentieth century has been an age of migration (see Castles and Miller, 1998). Tongan people have continued to mobilize by taking part in new Pacific life-styles and forms of religious, economic and political organization (see Denoon, 1987: 439). We therefore need to discuss

issues such as: why individuals move across boundaries, how they are incorporated into host societies, why some migrants return to their country of origin, and the effects of the movement on the country of origin. International migration is a subject that cries out for an interdisciplinary approach based on both theoretical and empirical research (see Brettel and Hollifield, 2000).

The effects of the new trends have to be carefully analysed as they represent the outcomes of historical tensions between culture and history, and capitalism and feudalism, as well as aristocracy and democracy. Unravelling these transformations to identify the key elements which underpin the effects of international migration on Tongan society is the most important purpose of this study. It should shed light not merely on the pressures on peoples' lives, but also its effects on the socio-political, economic and cultural institutions.

This thesis therefore touches on issues which are central to the development of the Kingdom of Tonga. Addressing them systematically will help policy makers and researchers on international migration and social change, as well as Tongan migrants, to understand more clearly the significance of migration for the kingdom.

#### **1.4 Structure of the Thesis**

This thesis is divided into four major parts. The first part consists of two chapters. After the Introduction, Chapter Two provides a literature review and describes methods of data collection and the challenges of research. The second part deals with the national context and historical background to migration. Chapter Three describes the geography, economy, location and socio-political

formation of Tonga, and Chapter Four describes the development of international migration, both in the past and in contemporary Tonga.

The third part addresses the effects of international migration on Tonga's economy, social structure, politics and religion. Chapter Five considers the economic effects on Tongan society. Chapter Six discusses socio-cultural change, Chapter Seven addresses political change, and Chapter Eight focuses on change in the church.

The last part consists of Chapter Nine the conclusion which discusses the major findings of the thesis and the distinctive features of Tongan migration. It ends by considering possible future trends in international migration, both in Tonga and elsewhere in the region.

Map 1: Location of Tonga in Oceania



Source: GraphicMaps.com

Map 2: Kingdom of Tonga



Source: <http://www.aneiki.com>

## **Chapter Two**

### *Methodological and Theoretical Considerations*

#### **2.1 Theoretical Considerations**

This chapter discusses the theoretical framework and the research methodology employed in this study. It starts by addressing the issues of international migration and institutional change, and how they interrelate in the Kingdom of Tonga. This is followed by a discussion of research methodology and the challenges encountered in research.

##### **2.1.1 International Migration**

International migration entails crossing the boundary of a political or administrative unit for a certain period of time. It includes the movement of refugees, displaced persons, and uprooted people as well as economic migrants. International migration is a territorial relocation of people between nation-states. Two forms of relocation can be excluded from this broad definition, however: the first is territorial movement such as tourism which does not lead to any change in terms of social membership of groups and which remains largely inconsequential both for the individual and for the society at the points of origin and destination. The second is a relocation in which the individuals or the groups concerned are purely passive objects rather than active agents of the movement, as in the organized transfer of refugees from states of origins to a safe haven.

The dominant forms of migration can be distinguished according to the motives (economic, family reunion, political) or legal status (irregular migration, controlled emigration/immigration, free emigration/immigration) of those

concerned. Most countries distinguish between a number of different categories in their migration policies and statistics. The variations in these categories between countries indicate that there are no objective definitions of migration. However, the following categories are fairly standard and are found widely in the literature:

- Temporary labor migrants (also known as guest workers or overseas contract workers): people who migrate for a limited period of time in order to take up employment and send money home.
- Highly skilled migrants, including professional and business migrants: people with qualifications as managers, executives, professionals, technicians or similar, who move within the internal labor markets of trans-national corporations and international organizations, or who seek employment through international labor markets for scarce skills. Many countries welcome such migrants and have special 'skilled and business migration' programs to encourage them to come. For countries like Tonga which lose many of their most educated people, this kind of migration constitutes a 'brain drain'.
- Irregular migrants (or undocumented/illegal migrants): people who enter a country, usually in search of employment, without the necessary documents and permits.
- Forced migration: in a broader sense, this includes not only refugees and asylum seekers but also people forced to move due to external factors, such as environmental catastrophes or development projects. This form of migration has similar characteristics to displacement.
- Family members (or family reunion / family reunification migrants): people sharing family ties joining people who have already entered an immigration country under one of the above mentioned categories. Many

countries recognize in principle the right to family reunion for legal migrants. Other countries, especially those with contract labor systems, deny the right to family reunion. Family reunification is also an important element of chain migration.

- Return migrants: people who return to their countries of origin after a period in another country (see UNESCO Online)

Migration is an important factor in the erosion of traditional boundaries between languages, cultures, ethnic groups, and nation-states. Even those who do not migrate are affected by movements of people in or out of their communities, and by the resulting changes. Migration is not a single act of crossing a border, but rather a lifelong process that affects all aspects of the lives of those involved.

Pryor (1985) has described human migration as part of a more general evolutionary process of adaptive radiation. This process results in the spread people who go out and search for space, food, raw materials, or new experiences and so encounter other systems or environments they have not experienced before, and to which they must make adjustments.

The migration process can be explained in both positive and negative terms, both for places of origin and destinations. The forces which encourage people to migrate or restrain them from migrating include both structural factors, such as economic obstacles, and personal characteristics, including the perceptions and behavior of migrants (see Lafitani, 1992; Lātū, 2005b). One can also argue that ‘push’ and ‘pull’ factors are not simple causes for explaining migration, but complexes of conflicting pressures and interests which change

through time and space *vis-à-vis* the process of decision making (Lafitani, 1992). In this respect, migrants are social actors who are subject to conflicting pressures and interests, which they may interpret as a reason to move.

Many studies in the field of migration pay a great deal of attention to the distinction between the decisions of individuals and factors in society which bind the behavior of migrants. In most cases, the decisions made by individuals have a psychological or sociological character, while the determining social factors on the other hand are often strongly influenced by economics. Hence, incentives and reasons for migration are a combination of economic and non-economic factors.

These types of theories point to two vital elements in migration theory, structural context and behavioral responses. The structural context includes economic, social, political, and cultural aspects of society while behavioral responses include the actions, behavior, and perceptions of individuals and family groups that arise through interactions within the structural context of society. Significantly, the interplay of structural context and behavioral responses affects the decisions of people to migrate and the way in which they behave in their new environment (*ibid.*).

Different theories have been developed to explain the cause and sustaining of international migration. Massey and others (1998), for example, discussed extensively the strengths and weaknesses of different theories. In the case of Tonga, neo-classical economic theories focusing on individual rational decision making in order to maximize income are helpful in understanding the origin of Tongan emigration. The world system theory (see Wallerstein, 1974),

on the other hand, helps to explain Tonga's dependency on New Zealand, Australia, and the United States of America, which attract a large number of Tongan migrants.

Connell and Lea (2000) argue that international migration represents 'a geographical process -- human relocation across space -- which is less easy to pin down since it shades, often imperceptibly, into other types of mobility (tourism, visiting, commuting) which are not normally regarded as types of migration.' In Cowling's analysis;

Migration can be seen as a process in which large numbers of individuals and families begin to write a new history for themselves. The initial act of leaving one's parent, family, neighborhood, society and culture, and adopting a life – and work style is a crucial one. Only small proportion of people who enter a migration process, or who have participated in major migration movements in the past, have had a clear perception of what they were going to encounter, or the extent to which their lives were going to change. While it is very likely that a large proportion of the individual migrants are the forerunners in a migration, which will ultimately involve other members of their kin network, they are not usually able to foresee this at the time (Cowling, 2002: 99).

International migration is often referred to by many in the field as 'transnational migration' and international migrants as 'transnationals' or members of 'transnational communities' in which their activities and identities are examples of 'transnationalism' (see Al-Ali and Koser, 2002:1).

Cohen suggests that different types of migration can be approached with models constructed from pairs of asymmetrical dyads, i.e. forced versus free migration, settler versus labour migration, temporary versus permanent migration, illegal versus legal migration and planned versus flight migration. (see Cohen, 1996). These pairs are not pure categories 'imprisoning all reality, but a more akin to Weber's 'ideal types', which can be briefly defined as

archetypes used for analytical, evaluative and comparative purposes' (Cohen 1995: 6).

### **2.1.2 Institutional Change under the Impact of Migration**

The actions of individuals, organizations, and social movements impact on social life and may perhaps become the catalyst for social change. Such actions occur within the context of culture, institutions, and power structures inherited from the past. Individuals wanting to effect dramatic social change succeed only when society itself is ripe for change. In fact, broad social trends, such as international migration, urbanization, industrialization and bureaucratization, can lead to significant social change. In the past, these have been associated with modernization, the process whereby a society moves from traditional, less developed or subsistence modes of production to more technologically advanced industrial modes of production. Thus, Pryor (1985) defines 'innovative migration' as implying movement to a higher status (more industrial, more modern) while 'conservative migration' involves movement to a position of the same or lower status (less industrial, less modern). In the case of Tongans, this latter type of migration may create feelings of subordination and alienation among those who end up with low socio-economic and political status (Lafitani, 1992).

Trends like population growth and international migration have a significant impact on other aspects of society, such as its social structure, institutions, and culture. Nineteenth and early twentieth century social theorists focused extensively on modernization, but they tended to present oversimplified

‘grand narratives’ based on ideological interpretations contrasting tradition and modernization. They also attempted to propose universal ‘social laws’ arguing that they were generally valid for structurally similar societies (see Preston, 2000).

Social theorists like Giddens (1990) also view social change as the movement between pre-modern and modern societies based on our dependence upon increasingly complex and extended social relationships. For instance, he has pointed out how human beings tend to rely on 'expert systems' or advice from other experts with whom we have no face-to-face relationships. In the past, people relied on, or were dependent on, the people with whom they had the closest relationships, for example, spouses, and other family members. In modern society, we are becoming increasingly removed from traditional relationships and more dependent on people with whom we have no relationship at all. His argument is clearly based on the notions of assimilation and adaptation in international migration. New socio-economic relationships must be developed in the new environment and in most, if not all, cases without the existence of earlier social bonds.

Social continuity cannot simply be defined as the absence of social change because social change is a continual process in all societies. Within societies, there are structures which are inherently resistant to change, and in this sense, we can talk about them as being social continuity or ‘tradition’. Individuals within societies experience different sets of social continuities depending on significant factors like age, gender, education, access to power, wealth, and vested interests. Furthermore, institutions like the family, the law,

and religions are subject to change, even though they represent tradition. Even though the family structure has existed in different forms, it is still the primary social institution and the primary agent of socialization. The composition of the family, however, has changed in recent years, leading to different kinds of families and different socialization experiences for its members. The same principles can be applied to other institutions in society.

To understand the nature of contemporary Tonga and formulate policies for the future, one must develop analytical frameworks by which to enhance the understanding of the dynamics of social change under globalization. These frameworks must allow us to appreciate the social origins of our attitudes, values, and norms, by reflecting on how they change within society (see Furze and Healy, 1997).

### **2.1.3 Relationships and Conflicting Tendencies**

International migration and social change are correlated as one has influence over the other and vice-versa. One cannot isolate international migration from social change as both are associated in societal development. According to Connell, 'migration is both a catalyst and consequence of social and economic change, and no society and few individuals have been untouched by its influence' (Connell and Lea, 2002: 75). In other words, international migration results in societal change including processes of circulation or diaspora, globalization, and transnationalism, and these changes in turn influence migration at various levels, ranging from that of the individual, family or small group to the national and the global.

The interaction between international migration and societal change can be traced back to the early stages of migration when people move from place to place taking with them their cultural values and norms, resulting in the transformation of the socio-political and economic surroundings of their new dwelling places (see Wood, 1945; Hau'ofa, 1987). On the other hand, temporary migration with subsequent return brings external socio-political and cultural characteristics which may transform the socio-political and cultural landscape of the migrants' community of origin.

As Connell argues, that 'there are many cases of migration creating, or contributing to, more of an equilibrium -- albeit one where the majority of islanders, or island families, are involved in migration, often repeated in a constant cycle of departure, return and re-emigration' (King, Russell and Connell, 1999). Undoubtedly, international migration has been a major benefit to destination countries, but for the country of origin, the outcome is less positive in some cases.

In Tonga, the dependency on remittances together with the lack of economic growth, and the failure to restructure the economy coupled with the many changes encouraged by international migration, suggest minimal benefits at best (see Connell and Lea, 2002; Māhina, 2004a; Lātū, 2005b). The effects on migrants themselves, especially on their personal values and attitudes, are wide ranging. It is essential to discuss critically both the negative and positive effects. Enormous diversity restricts the possibility of reviewing more than the components of the relationship between international migration, remittances, socio-political and economic change. Societal change cannot necessarily be

distinguished from other parallel changes as it depends on the nature of the socio-political and economic landscape.

The relationships and conflicting tendencies between international migration and societal change in Tonga could be summed up in Small's (1997) definition of Tongan migration as creating a class-based global society that cross-cuts old social boundaries. Culture, race, rank, gender, ethnicity, religion, nation, and even family will no longer serve as mutually reinforcing anchors of social and self-identification. The disarticulation of family, ethnic, and national boundaries is part of a reformation of identity and culture. As it occurs, people will find increasingly that they have more in common with those of a similar economic stratum than with people from the same place but a different social class, thus beginning a process of global class formation that will play out over the next century.

## **2.2 Methodology**

This study is based on both primary and secondary sources. The secondary sources include quantitative materials such as government statistics and reports, together with the available statistics on international migration. I also consulted and reviewed the published and unpublished literature on international migration, socio-political and economic change in the Kingdom of Tonga, and other relevant literature in the field. Official documents and statistical data were collected through visits to the relevant institutions. These included government and non-governmental institutions in Tonga and host

countries. From these sources, the most recent data on international migration and socio-political and economic transformation in Tonga were assembled.

The primary data used in this study consists mainly of qualitative data, including interviews and observations through field work conducted in both the host countries of the migrants and in Tonga, the country of origin. The majority of the interviews were carried out in the Kingdom of Tonga. Informants were selected based on their experiences and understanding of the research area. Further, those who were directly involved in activities that were germane to the major focus of this study were approached for interviews. Informants were selected from a wide range of areas such as the church, the state, academia, government, and the private sector, as well as from different societal levels such as the *fāmili* (nuclear family), *fa’ahinga* (extended family), *kāinga* (i.e. the village and its people headed by a ruling titled chief), *faka-vahe* (the district level), and *faka-fonua* (the national level). Particular attention was devoted to key institutions in Tongan society such as *siasi* (church) and *fonua* (state). A list of interviews is given in the appendices, and where material is drawn from these interviews, it is noted in the text.

Determining where and from whom data was to be collected was an important part of my research. I wanted to capture and describe the central themes or principal outcomes relating to migration that were pertinent to the participants. I realized that, for small samples, a great deal of heterogeneity could pose as a problem because individual cases are so different from each other, though in the event many migrant’s narratives turned out to be broadly similar to each other. Common patterns which emerge from varied material are

of particular interest and value in capturing the core shared experiences of a social process (see Hoepfl, 1997).

Bearing in mind the complexity of the issues regarding remittances and motives for international migration and the difficulties of obtaining accurate information, and also for logistical reasons and ease of access, I selected informants based on connections through blood relations, extended family ties, intermarriage, village, district, and island group connections. As such, most of my informants were selected from my home village of Leimatu'a in the island group of Vava'u. Leimatu'a was selected not only because it is my own village but because other characteristics which it shares with the whole of Tonga are pertinent to the objective of this study.

Leimatu'a is considered to be a *kolo māfana* (village of warmth). This 'warmth' in this sense describes people in terms of their *fiefia* (happiness) and *nima foaki* ('lending hands' or generosity). Whenever there is a *kātoanga* (important occasion or festival), they give whatever they have (in monetary form or in *koloa* goods) during the occasion. This also occurs among Tongan migrants in host countries overseas. Kalafi Moala, the editor of the most famous newspaper in Tonga the Tongan Times (*Taimi 'O Tonga*) described remittances by Tongans abroad as *Leimatu'a 'o e Nofo Muli* (Leimatu'a's Abroad). He was referring to the way in which expatriate Tongans care for Tongans in the homeland. While they struggle to meet the living expenses in the host countries, they are still able to send remittances to the home country (see Taimi 'O Tonga Online, August 2005).

Prior to the interviews, I explained to informants the nature of the research, its importance for the development of the Kingdom of Tonga, the need for the Tongan government to consider migration and other related issues, and their future implications in policy formulations of government. The purpose of this explanation was to further emphasize the genuine nature of the research and the importance of their experiences in building up an accurate picture of Tongan migration.

Interviews were carried out using a three-stage process. In the host countries, I visited places where there was a concentration of people from the village of Leimatu'a such as Honolulu, Hawaii, Sacramento, San Francisco and Oakland, California, in the United States; South Auckland in New Zealand; and Sydney in Australia. In so doing, I approached families and individuals who had relatives remaining in Leimatu'a. I interviewed them in the host country, and to verify the accounts they gave me, I returned to Tonga and interviewed their family members there where possible. In the final stage, I returned to the communities abroad and followed up any final questions there. I interviewed Tongan migrants from other parts of Tonga residing in the host countries in order to make a comparison and to ensure that my findings from the Leimatu'a informants were applicable to Tonga in general. Informants from different villages in Tonga, both in Vava'u and Tongatapu groups, were therefore interviewed for comparative purposes.

I selected 30 families from the village of Leimatu'a who had relatives abroad and focused primarily on evaluating how they viewed the changing nature of their relationships since their relatives first moved out of the

archipelago. Of the 30 families studied in Leimatu'a, ten families had relatives in New Zealand, five families had relatives in Australia, five had relatives in Honolulu, and ten families had relatives in Sacramento. Additional interviews were conducted with migrants from other parts of Tonga which identified similarities with the Leimatu'a respondents.

With regards to the effects of international migration on socio-political and economic change in the Kingdom of Tonga as a whole, informants were chosen from key institutions such as the church, government, and traditional socio-political organizations like the *kāinga* and *fāmili*. I consulted leaders of the major churches in Tonga and key people in the church circles. Key figures from the government including the Prime Minister of Tonga were interviewed on the role of the Tongan government in the interaction between international migration and change in Tongan society. Key figures from the two dominant political movements in the Kingdom of Tonga, such as the Tonga Human Rights and Democracy Movement (THRDM) and representatives from the Kotoa Movement (KM), which is a conservative movement defending the current aristocratic system, were also interviewed.

At the village level, I talked to village leaders and also engaged in personal conversations and interviews with people from different socio-political units in Tonga especially the *kāinga* and *fāmili*. Information was collected through recorded face to face interviews, informal conversations, and questions

raised at traditional Tongan *kava* party (*faikava*).<sup>1</sup> This was extended to traditional and formal occasions like weddings, church functions, and birthday celebrations, amongst others.

Apart from informants in the three main host countries, I had the opportunity of interviewing several Tongan migrants in Japan, two of which are originally from my home village of Leimatu'a. One is married to a Japanese national and is permanently residing in Hiroshima with three children and the other is a professional rugby player who has lived in Tokyo for more than five years. Their views were useful in comparison to the views of my Leimatu'a informants in the main host countries.

The number of informants sampled and interviewed is fairly small in relation to the total population of approximately 210,000 Tongans, including both the homeland and overseas population. The 30 families sampled in my home village of Leimatu'a make up a more significant proportion of the population of the village, approximately 2,000 at present. I also interviewed an additional 30 families overseas. Taken together, the members of these sixty families totaled 300 people, not to mention family members from other villages interviewed for comparative purposes as well as those who responded in informal conversations and gatherings. The same applies to informants who were asked to reflect on the issue of socio-political and economic change in the sending countries.

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<sup>1</sup> *Faikava* is when a group of men gather together to talk about different issues in society and drink *kava* (*Piper methysticum*), which is a ceremonial beverage made from the kava plant. A part of the information collected during my fieldwork was through the *faikava* in both Tonga and the host countries.

Different sets of questionnaires were prepared for each category of informants. The questionnaires administered to informants from government and other socio-political and economic institutions varied depending on the role of the institution they belonged to (see Appendix B). The informants from the government sector were asked to reflect upon the role of the government in the making of policies on international migration and social change. The same approach was taken with church informants and informants from the private sector because of the crucial roles they posed in policy making. Qualitative interviews and personal observations were employed as the primary strategy for data collection. In in-depth interviewing, I utilized open-ended questions that allowed for individual variations. The three types of interviewing I used to get qualitative information were 1) informal, conversational interviews; 2) semi-structured interviews; and 3) standardized open-ended interviews (see Hoepfl, 1987).

These methods were adopted to ensure objective responses which were not predetermined. The semi-structured interviews gave freedom to probe and explore within these predetermined inquiry areas. The use of interview guides ensured a good use of the limited interview time. It also allowed me to interview multiple subjects more systematically and comprehensively. In keeping with the flexible nature of the qualitative research design, interview guides were modified over time to focus attention more on emerging areas of particular importance, or conversely to exclude questions found to be unproductive in relation to the research. Thus, different guides were used for different informants depending on their experiences and knowledge of the research topic.

Recording of data from interviews was conducted through written notes and tape recording. According to Patton (1990), the basic decision to be made when going into the interview process is how to record interview data. Whether one relies on written notes or a tape recorder appears to be largely a matter of personal preference. For instance, Patton argued that a tape recorder is 'indispensable' (Patton, 1990: 348), while Lincoln and Guba do not recommend recording except for unusual reasons (Lincoln and Guba, 1985: 241). Lincoln and Guba based their recommendations on the intrusiveness of recording devices and the possibility of technical failure. Recordings have the advantage of capturing data more faithfully than hurriedly written notes might, and can make it easier for the researcher to focus on the interview. I used both ways of recording data depending on the circumstances and preferences of my informants. There were limitations on recording conversations with chief, for reasons of protocol, as described below.

The classic form of data collection through fieldwork is observation. Observational data are used for the purpose of description -- of settings, activities, people, and the meanings of what is observed from the perspective of the participants. Observation can lead to a deeper understanding than interviews alone, because it provides knowledge of the context in which events occur, and enables the researcher to see things that participants themselves are not aware of, or that they are unwilling to discuss (see Patton, 1990). A skilled observer is one who is trained in the process of monitoring both verbal and nonverbal cues, and in the use of concrete, unambiguous, descriptive language.

There are several observation strategies available. In some cases, it may be possible and desirable for the researcher to watch from outside without being observed. Another option is to maintain a passive presence, being as unobtrusive as possible and not interacting with participants. A third strategy is to engage in limited interaction, intervening only when further clarification of actions is needed. Alternatively, the researcher may exercise more active control over the observation, as in the case of a formal interview, to elicit specific types of information. Finally, the researcher may act as a full participant in the situation, with either hidden or a known identity. Each of these strategies has specific advantages and disadvantages, which must be carefully examined by the researcher (see Hoepfl, 1997).

All of the above observational strategies were utilized in my fieldwork and proved successful, especially in the host countries. One of the major objectives of visiting host countries was to witness through participant observation the reality of adaptation and assimilation -- the relationship between migrants not only within the migrants' circles, but also with the host countries. The links of migrants to their relatives and friends in the sending country were also observed in an unobtrusive silent manner. As a result, I was able to compare their actions and behavior with what they told me, especially with regards to their connections with relatives back in Tonga.

These observational strategies were also performed during my fieldwork in Tonga. For a small village like Leimātu'a, the observational method was very effective as I was able to identify the change within the families who had relatives overseas and those who did not, those who work hard and those who do

not, radicals and conservatives, and educated and uneducated. This was reflected in my visits to villages in other parts of the archipelago.

At the national level, the small size of Tonga gave me the same observational advantages when looking at socio-political and economic change in Tongan society as a whole. By stepping out of Leimātu'a and moving to the capital Nuku'alofa, one could observe the differences in the effects of social settings on behavior and so forth. Observation was easier because I am a native researcher with solid knowledge of my home village, my country, and possess a native understanding and appreciation of its traditions and culture.

### **2.3 Research Challenges**

The limitations in official statistics, paucity of good quality publications, and the marginalization of Tonga in relation to the rest of the world was the driving force behind the decision to use mainly qualitative research methods. This went side-by-side with the fact that my research topic was new in the sense that nothing much had been done in Tonga on the effects on international migration. As mentioned earlier on, earlier studies on international migration have focused on the nature of peoples' movement, how they adapt to the new environment, changing behaviours pertaining to Tongan culture among those born overseas, and so forth.

As a result, I had a problem of trying to locate materials on the effects of international migration. In fact, there were very few materials which were directly concerned with the impacts of international migration on Tongan society. I therefore had to face the challenge of trying to relate the changing nature of

Tongan economy, politics, and social structure as found in other literature to international migration. This was supported by my own experience of what has been taken place in the past, my own observations of the present, and material gained from interviewing informants both in Tonga and the host countries.

In the Kingdom of Tonga, an official census is carried out in every ten years. The last census was in 1996, and another is taking place in 2006 at the time of writing. However, my own research began in 2003, seven years after the last census, so that the available figures were no longer entirely accurate. Statistics on the movement of Tongan in most cases seem to be based on predictions and assumptions from surveys conducted by overseas consultants and researchers who spend only few weeks in Tonga. As a result, I have had to attempt to build up a picture of migration by assembling all the available data.

Another interesting challenge that I came to face during the three years of research in Tonga is the changing nature of Tongan society. Events in Tonga from 2004 onwards suggest a society in rapid change. The period of my research included some historic events, such as: the appointment for the first time of peoples' representatives to become cabinet ministers in 2005, the first ever political demonstration (marching against the ban on the *Taimi Ó Tonga* news paper in 2004), the first ever civil servants' strike to take place in the kingdom in 2005, the resignation of the King's son as the Prime Minister of Tonga, the appointment of the first ever commoner Prime Minister, Dr. Feleti Sevele in 2005, and the establishment of the department of 'Tongans Abroad' in early 2006, among others. These events resulted in a need to update certain parts of the thesis during the process of writing.

In the context of personal interviews, cultural taboos and restrictions placed obstacles on the the scope of some of the conversations. For example, I had to follow traditional protocol when I interviewed members of the aristocracy such as the level of language addressed to them, given that in the Tonga language hierarchy<sup>2</sup> is important and a question must be presented in a respectful manner. I therefore had to lower my voice and not interrupt even when the chief departed from the subject matter of the conversation or interview. Some interviews I conducted ended up talking about different issues which were not relevant at all. However, it is disrespectful in Tongan culture to stop the chiefs while they are talking.

Foreign researchers in many ways are at an advantage in relation to these cultural taboos. As a Tongan conducting an interview with a member of the Tongan aristocracy, I could not place a tape recorder in front of my aristocratic informants and to challenge their views on a particular issue despite its significance to the objective of my research. As a result, I had to record these interview by taking notes. In some cases, I had to skip some questions which seemed to challenge their traditional prerogatives and privileges.

Another interesting challenge to my fieldwork in Tonga was the fact that the current political tensions between the ruling regime and supporters of the democracy movement (the THRMD) deterred people on both sides from expressing their objective views on international migration and socio-political

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<sup>2</sup> In Tonga, there are three different levels of language in society. There is a different language for common people (commoners or *tu'a*), members of the aristocratic class (*hou'eiki*), and the King (*Tu'i*).

and economic change in Tonga. The views of informants from both parties were biased and exaggerated, and sometimes out of context from the questions given. Responses from government representatives included some liberal views but understandably their roles require that they defend the interests of the Tongan government. Hatred and overgeneralization were obvious in some of their answers from members of the opposition.

Of the host countries, official statistics on Tongan migrants were very limited in the United States and Australia, though the situation in New Zealand was better. This made it difficult to give quantitative estimates of Tongan migrants in these two countries. The scant attention paid to the small island states of Oceania in the field of international migration can be seen as a form of marginalization. The titles of some written academic works mention the Pacific or the Asia-Pacific, but little is said about the islands in the texts. In trying to locate statistics on Tonga in works written on Pacific Islanders in Australia and the United States, Tongan migrants are often put together with 'Pacific Islanders' or 'Oceania'. This makes it difficult to figure out the approximate number of Tongan migrants. In some source, statistics on Tongan migrants were mentioned but they seemed unrelated to the objective of this study.

In carrying out interviews in the host countries, the only obvious challenge was the migrants' understanding of the situation in the home country. Most migrated to the host countries in the 1980s and 70s and even though some had visited home in recent years, they did not seem to have much knowledge of the socio-political transition in Tonga. It was therefore my role to try and bridge the gap during personal conversations or before conducting interviews. It is

understandable that most of my informants had limited education as most had migrated for economic reasons. This was not a big issue, as the questions given to them could be answered on the basis of common sense, but some informants presented a challenge because they thought that I was joking or asking them something that I already knew.

This challenge happened both in Tonga and the host countries. Most of my informants had never met any researchers before and had little idea of what research is all about. Some felt nervous answering questions as they thought they were only for people who had received formal education. This is common in Tonga as people assume that you can only talk to educated people if you are well educated. If you talk to an educated person but you are uneducated, people will look at you as being a *fiepoto* (pretending to be smart). This kind of attitude was really a challenge for me. I tried to convince them that there is nothing wrong with being an informant, and that it would be a big contribution not only to scholarship but also the socio-economic development of Tongan society. In some incidents, especially during *faikava*, I had to brief them about the reason for my presence, so that they would be serious with the issues and questions that I had to raise.

Despite the limitations of sampling and the research due to constraints of time and money, informants' accounts generally did match each other and tell a similar story, enough to give me confidence that I was tapping into at least something of the reality of migration in contemporary Tonga. Moreover, to understand more about the development of international migration and societal

change in the Kingdom of Tonga, we have to understand its history and social structure, and these are dealt with in the next chapter.

## Chapter Three

### *History and Social Structure of Tonga*

This chapter describes the history and social structure of Tonga. It begins with background information on location, geography, economy and education, followed by an overview of the traditional kinship system, constitutional development and political system, and finally religion and the introduction of Christianity. This chapter provides important background information for understanding international migration because it gives a historical account of the socio-political transition in Tonga and how it sets the stage for international migration and change. Such an account is vital in a discussion of the effects of international migration on Tonga's socio-political and cultural landscape.

#### **3.1 Tonga in Brief**

Tonga is the smallest kingdom in the world and the last remaining monarchy in the South Pacific. It is situated in the middle of the gigantic South Pacific region. The islands making up the kingdom extend between latitudes 15 and 23.5 degrees South and longitudes 173 and 177 degrees West. They lie north of the Tropic of Capricorn, and West of the International Dateline, 1700 kilometers North-East of New Zealand, and 670 kilometers South-East of Fiji (see Map 1). The total land area is 747.34 square kilometers with over 700,000 square kilometers made up of territorial water. The kingdom consists of 171 islands of which 36 are inhabited (see Government of Tonga Online).

The population of Tonga (home population) in 1996 stood at 97,784 (1996 Census), of which 98% were of Polynesian ethnic origin. It was estimated

in 2002 that the population was 106,137 (see Government Statistical Reports, 1996; 2002). This was located mainly in the main three island groups: the Tongatapu group to the South, the Ha'apai group in the center, and the Vava'u group to the North (see Map 2). Two-thirds of the total population reside in the Tongatapu group, with more than 30,000 people in the capital city of Nuku'alofa, where the central government and the commercial center of the kingdom are located. According to the 1996 census, nearly half of the citizens of Tonga were living overseas, most notably in New Zealand, Australia, and the United States of America (Government Tonga Statistical Report, 1996).

Tonga's economy is characterized by a large non-monetary sector and a heavy dependence on remittances from Tongans living abroad, chiefly in Australia, New Zealand, and the United States. Remittances contribute more than half of the country's GDP (see Chapter 1). Much of the monetary sector of the economy is dominated, if not owned, by the royal family and nobles. This is particularly true of the telecommunications and related services. Much of the small business, particularly retailing on Tongatapu, is now dominated by Chinese immigrants who arrived under a cash-for-passports scheme which ended in 1998 (see Wikipedia Online).

Manufacturing is mainly centered on handicrafts, food processing, wood products, clothing, textiles, and leather products, which contribute about 8% to the country's Gross Domestic Product (see Government of Tonga Online). Commercial business activities are also insignificant and, to a large extent, are dominated by the same large trading companies as are found throughout the rest of the South Pacific. In September 1974, the country's first commercial trading

bank, the Bank of Tonga, opened, followed in the 1990s by the opening of two other commercial banks, the Bank of Malaysia and the New Zealand Australian Banking Group (ANZ).

The Tongan economic base is agriculture, which contributes 30% of GDP. Squash, coconuts, bananas, and vanilla beans are the main crops, and agricultural exports make up two-thirds of total exports. The country imports a high proportion of its food, mainly from New Zealand. Pigs and poultry are the major types of livestock. Horses are kept for draft purposes, primarily by farmers. More cattle are being raised in view of decreasing beef imports. Crops are grown mainly for subsistence with a small but substantial portion for sale in the local market.

The tourism industry is an important contributor of hard currency. It is relatively undeveloped. However, the government recognizes that tourism can play a major role in economic development, and efforts are being made to increase this source of revenue. Another vital source of revenue for the economy comes from foreign aid; aid donors have funded most of the development projects in the country (see Lātū, 2004a). The fishing industry is currently developing, but at a very slow pace (see Ministry of Labor Commerce and Industries Annual Report, 2001).

The 2005-06 budget papers based on official GDP estimates state that real economic growth in 2003-04 was 1.6%, compared with a rate of 2.5% for 2004-05 and a projected rate of 2.9% for 2005-06. Whether this will be achievable in the light of a prolonged public service strike (22 July to 6 September 2005) remains to be seen (see Chapter 5). These GDP figures show a

marked decline from 1999-2000 when the GDP growth rate was 6.5%. The Government's budget preparations for the 2006-07 financial year (beginning 1 July 2006) anticipate a substantial deficit and accompanying pressures on government and capital works and services (Government of Australia Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Online).

Tonga's development plans emphasize a growing private sector, upgrading agricultural productivity, revitalizing the squash and vanilla bean industries, developing tourism, and improving the island's communications and transportation systems. There is a particular focus on youth unemployment and other social development issues. Substantial progress has been made, but much work remains to be done. A small but growing construction sector is developing in response to the inflow of aid monies and remittances from Tongans abroad. The copra industry however is plagued by world prices that have been depressed for many years (see Wikipedia Online).

Efforts are being made to discover ways to diversify. One hope is seen in fisheries; tests have shown that sufficient skipjack tuna pass through Tongan waters to support a fishing industry. Another potential development activity is exploitation of forests, which cover 35% of the kingdom's land area but are decreasing as land is cleared. Coconut trees past their prime nut-bearing years also provide a potential source of lumber.

More than half of Tonga's road network consists of all-weather roads, almost all of which are located on the two largest islands groups, Tongatapu and Vava'u. Tonga has no railroad. Nuku'alofa and Neiafu (Vava'u) are the major ports used for external shipping. Work is underway to introduce direct shipping

services from the Ha'apai group to New Zealand in due course, to encourage the exportation of local products and the import of goods sent privately by migrants in New Zealand (see Matangitonga Online, 2006). Regular international air services to New Zealand, Fiji, Western and American Samoa, are available from Fua'amotu International Airport on the Tongatapu group and Lupepau'u International Airport in the Vava'u group. Domestic flights are serviced by airports on 'Eua, Ha'apai, Vava'u, Niuafu'ou, and Niuatoputapu (See Map 2).

Education has been compulsory in the primary level since 1876. The 1974 Education Act requires that every child between the ages of 6 and 14 must attend school. The major objective of the Ministry of Education in Tonga is the provision of a balanced program of education for the full development of children, both as individuals and as productive members of society. This is in order to develop Tonga's human resources to meet the country's manpower needs and achieve continuous national development and growth, and to promote understanding and respect for the physical and cultural environment. Churches and other private organizations play important roles complementary to the Government's role in education (see Ministry of Education Online).

## **3.2 Traditional Socio-Political Structure and Kinship System**

### **3.2.1 Socio-Political Structure**

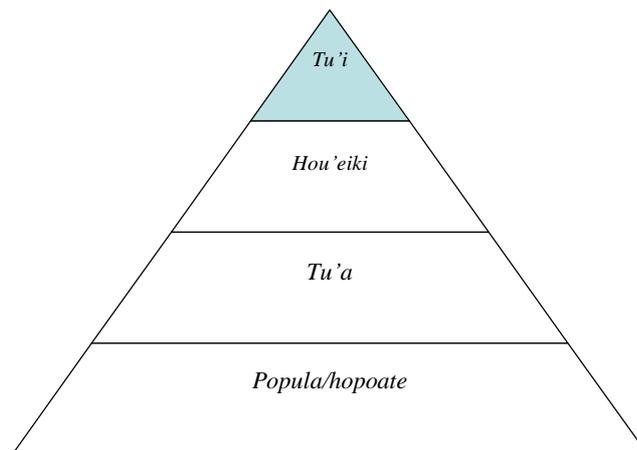
Before it encountered the West, Tonga was a highly stratified society based on a hierarchical chieftainship system under the headship of the *Tu'i Tonga* (King of Tonga). The role of the *Tu'i Tonga* developed over the years into

something similar to that of the Dalai Lama of Tibet or the ancient Mikado of Japan (Lātūkefu, 1974:1) with a mixture of ritual and political functions.

In pre-contact Tongan society, every person belonged to a particular social class and each class had certain *ngafa* (responsibilities) and *fatongia* (obligations) clearly defined, and bound by age-old customs and traditions. The *Tu'i Tonga* was at the apex of the social stratification system, followed by the *hou'eiki* (aristocratic class). The *Tu'a* (commoners), and the *popula* or *hopoate* (slaves) occupied the lower echelons (see Lātū, 2004b; Figure 3.1)

**Figure 3.1**

**Traditional Social Classes Pyramid 1**



According to Tongan traditions, the King and the *hou'eiki* were born to rule and the primary roles of their subjects were to serve and obey their wishes. It was clear in Tongan culture that the prerogative of the *Tu'i Tonga* was unquestionable. This was further reinforced by the fact that there were certain rigid rules applied to any sort of contact with him and the *hou'eiki*. For example,

there was a special language used for addressing the *Tu'i Tonga* and the *hou'eiki*. Commoners were regarded as 'people with no souls' (*laumālie*) (see Lātū, 1998; Lātūkefu, 1974; Māhina, 1992). The *Tu'i Tonga* himself had powerful religious and political standing sanctioned by the fact that he was believed to be divine (Māhina, 1992: 130).

The customary notions of *faka'apa'apa* (respect), *taliangi* (loyalties) and *fetokoni'aki* (cooperation) were central to Tongan society as they constituted the very core of Tongan culture. Williamson (1924) summarized the unlimited power of the *Tu'i Tonga* as follows;

In them [i.e. the rulers,] the civil and political power is exalted and sanctified by the divine power; wherefore their authority is boundless. They dispose of the goods, the bodies, and the consciences of their subjects, without ceremony and without rendering account to anyone. *Tu'i Tonga* appears, and all prostrate themselves and kiss his feet... The Tongans refuse him nothing, exceeding his desires. If he wishes to satisfy his anger or some cruel fancy, he sends a messenger to his victim who far from fleeing, goes to meet death. You will see fathers tie rope round necks of their children, whose death is demanded to prolong the life of this divinity; more than once you will see the child smile as it is being killed (Williamson, 1924: 24).

The increasing development in traditional politics between the 12<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries (prior to contact with the outside world) and the resultant political upheavals caused the decentralization of the *Tu'i Tonga's* socio-political power. In the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the twenty-fourth *Tu'i Tonga*, Kau'ulufonua Fekai created the new office of *Hau* (secular ruler) to take over the secular responsibilities, while he himself remained '*Eiki Toputapu* (sacred ruler). The new office was finally transformed into the new *Tu'i Ha'atakalau* (from *Ha'atakalaua* or Kingly Line) under the first *Tu'i Ha'atakalaua*, Mo'ungamotu'a (see Lātūkefu, 1974).

Another important development at the time, following the threats posed to the *Tu'i Tonga* and *Tu'i Ha'atakalaua* by a rebellion in the west of the archipelago, was the formation of a third kingly office named *Ha'a Tu'i Kanokupolu*<sup>3</sup> to look after that region of the kingdom. As a response to these political difficulties, Mo'ungatonga, the 6<sup>th</sup> *Tu'i Ha'atakalaua* in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, invested his son Ngata, as the first *Tu'i Kanokupolu*, sending him to the Western part of the main island group where opposition was concentrated (see Māhina, 1992). At first, the appointment of the *Tu'i Kanokupolu* was thought to be a temporary measure. However, the importance of the office of the *Tu'i Kanokupolu* gradually grew, and the *Tu'i Ha'atakalaua* and the *Tu'i Tonga* were slowly but ultimately completely pushed out of the political process, paving the way for the triumphant rise of the *Tu'i Kanokupolu* to political supremacy over the whole of Tonga (ibid.).

The internal division of power between the three kingly offices and the dynasties that controlled them was carefully engineered, and the power and responsibilities of each dynasty were defined according to tradition and custom. Inter-marriage between the three dynasties was common with a view to maintaining royal blood within the ruling circle and strengthening its socio-political power and status (see Lātū, 2004b). Despite the complexities of these socio-political transformations at the top, the foundation of power in Tonga remained essentially unchanged. The power of the ruling class still prevailed, while commoners were subject to immense exploitation. The core elements of

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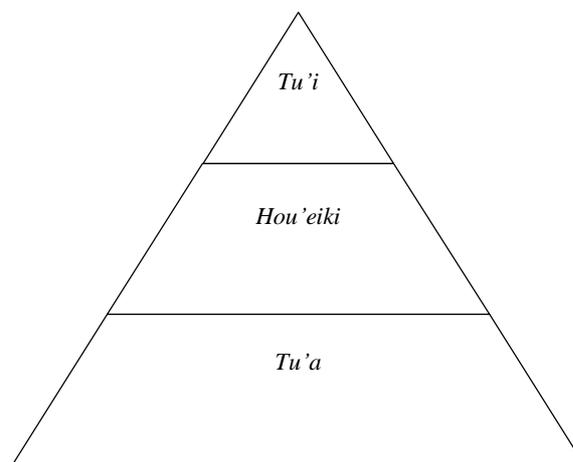
<sup>3</sup> The *Ha'a Tu'i Kanokupolu* (Kanokupolu Kingly Line) is now the ruling dynasty since its establishment in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

culture that strengthened the hegemony of traditional politics were ideals such as *faka'apa'apa* (respect), *taliangi* (loyalties) and *fetokoni'aki* (cooperation) strictly enforced by time-honored religious beliefs, which were the final guarantee of stability and security (ibid.).

After contact with missionaries and the introduction of Christianity, the *popula/hopoate* slave class was abolished. Reforms were reinforced by the Vava'u Code of 1839 and the Emancipation Edict of 1862, in which the *tu'a* (including the former *popula* and *hopoate*) were freed from the harsh rule of the *hou'eiki* (see Lātūkefu, 1975). The socio-political pyramid (Figure 3.2) was once again transformed. This time the *Tu'i Tonga* was still at the apex followed by the *hou'eiki* while the rest of the population *tu'a* occupied the lowest part of the socio-political spectrum.

**Figure 3.2**

**Traditional Socio-Political Pyramid 2**



### 3.2.2 The Kinship System

The traditional kinship system in Tonga was basically patrilineal, though with strong cognatic or bilateral elements built into it. Leadership in the patrilineage depended on several factors, including the age, ability, number of supporters, and rank of an individual. If a man died and his own eldest son was not of an age to handle the affairs of chieftainship, the chiefly title could go to the deceased's brother. Ability often depended on an individual's skill, and the supporters that a man could raise depended on the strength of his own wife's people and the people of his mother. The same principles of leadership applied to smaller kinship units, including the *fāmili* (nuclear family) and *fa'ahinga* (extended family).

Besides the broad rankings of *tu'a* and *hou'eiki*, everyone within the *fāmili* or *fa'ahinga* has a hierarchical relationship to one another based on birth order and gender. First-born children are higher in prestige than second-born children and sisters in Tonga outrank their brothers. The highest status person, then, in any family will be its eldest daughter. The spiritual superiority of sisters extends to their progeny as well. These principles of prestige and gender underlie one of the most important nexuses of women's power, the *fahu* customs of respect and avoidance (see Small, 1999).

The two most practical kin groups are *fāmili* (household based on the nuclear family) and *fa'ahinga* (extended family). A *fāmili* usually has a married couple and their children living in the same house at its core, but it often includes male and/or female collaterals and affines. A *fa'ahinga* consists of relatives living in different households in the same village or in several villages

or districts, and related by bilateral relationships of consanguinity. Membership in kin groups and households is restricted to fewer and closer relatives than it was in the past.

The parameters in establishing hierarchy at any level of society are gender and age. A female is always considered higher in rank than her brothers. Inheritance of land and titles goes through the male line, and the rule of primogeniture is usually enforced. Relationships of respect between brother and sister are strictly observed in Tongan culture. *Faka'apa'apa* (respect) and *tauhi vaha'a* or *tauhi vā* (maintaining a close relationship based on love and cooperation) between them are significant for maintaining unity in the *fāmili* and *fa'ahinga*. Certain *tapu* or *veitapui* (taboos) are observed: for instance, they are not allowed to sleep in the same house, and topics of conversation such as sex or even social activities such as watching videos together are avoided. Even though these kinds of avoidance are less strictly enforced now, they are still important in daily life.

The *fahu* customs in Tongan society are based on the superior spiritual position of the sister over the brother, and of the sister's children over her brother and his children. The superiority is expressed in both deference behavior and in a material flow of goods and services from a brother and his line to a sister and her line. When a chiefly woman marries, her children (who are now living as part of her husband's line) become *fahu* to her brother's line, and the flow of deference and wealth that follows can be an important source of political power (ibid.). Because of intermarriage patterns, this custom also serves to make higher status

chiefly lines superior in kinship to lower status chiefly lines and, thus supports traditional political power structures.

The father's eldest sister had the highest rank within the family, and was accorded *fahu* status. A *fahu* has been defined as a person (usually woman) with 'unlimited authority' (Lātūkefu, 1974:3) over others within her family of origin. 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 her mother's brothers (*fa'e tangata* or 'male mother') and other kin over whom she was *fahu* (see Chapter 5).

However, she had no other authority over them, and neither could she inherit land or titles, although on occasions her brothers and kin could choose to honor her by granting her sons either land or the succession to titles or both. Sisters, although they had no authority were often quite influential through the *fahu* system (though their power was more covert than overt), and it has been claimed that in the old days no important decision was made in any social unit without the consent of the eldest sister or the *fahu* (see Taufe'ulungaki, 1992).

Brothers inherited titles and land and could acquire both power and authority. In this sense, the Tongan kinship system has been labeled patrilineal, but in deference to the complexity of the situation and the numerous instances in history in which inherited titles and land had been acquired through women, and in recognition of the real power women wielded in various social spheres, many anthropologists have preferred to describe the Tongan kinship system as at best cognatic, with patrilineal tendencies (see Marcus, 1977; Taufe'ulungaki, 1992).

### **3.3 Constitutional Development**

The 1875 Constitution was the culmination of what missionaries and powerful chiefs had been trying to achieve since contact with Christianity began -- Western and Christian values were incorporated into the existing socio-political fabric of Tongan culture. It was a crucial exercise in political recognition and sovereignty. The constitution was pragmatic in that it brought about moderate change, balancing the need to maintain tradition with the need for change (see Hills, 1991).

The new constitution was preceded by a period of bloody civil wars and political unrest for more than half a century. Civil war started in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century between different *Ha'a* (loose confederations of genealogically related, but autonomous, chiefs and their *kāinga*) descended from the three kingly dynasties, who fought for political control over the archipelago (see Lātūkefu, 1974; Martin, 1991). The struggle for political domination ended when King George Tupou I unified the whole of Tonga and the three dynasties in mid 1850s under one kingdom with himself at the helm, assuming the role of 'Supreme Ruler' with the title *Tu'i Kanokupolu* (see Rutherford, 1977; Lātū 2004b). His conversion to Christianity can be viewed as a decisive factor in his victory as he gained political and moral support from the missionaries and indeed from the other colonial powers. With the assistance of Methodist missionaries, King George Tupou I modernized Tonga by developing the socio-political and economic structure of the nation to bring it in line with the 'civilized world' (ibid.). According to some historians, he was the maker of modern Tonga (ibid.).

The promulgation of the Constitution by His Majesty King George Tupou I on 4 November 1875 marked the culmination of the ongoing attempts

by the king to bring a modern constitution to Tonga and allow it to gain recognition in the 'civilized' world. This marked the beginning of a new era in its history. For the first time, Tonga was officially recognized by foreign colonial powers such as France, Britain, Germany, and the United States. The constitution also saved Tonga from the tide of colonialism that was spreading in the Oceania region towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. All the islands in Oceania, except Tonga, came under colonial rule.

Tonga was never formally colonized, but it did come indirectly under British rule following the Treaty of Friendship with Britain in 1900 and the Protectorate Treaty or the Supplementary Agreement of 1905. This indirect rule continued until the island gained total independence in 1970 (see Lawson, 1996). According to Denoon (1997), the Tongan political system and culture had an increasingly British flavor.

The 1875 Constitution was greatly influenced by the Wesleyan missionaries, particularly the Reverend Shirley Baker<sup>4</sup> who acted as King George Tupou I's advisor. In this capacity, Baker formulated the Tongan Constitution based on the Westminster model and the precepts of the Hawaiian constitution (see Rutherford, 1971). According to Hills;

The codes and the 1875 constitution were responses to the challenges of that time. One need was to establish national unity, for Tonga islands had been embroiled civil war among aspiring local chiefs for 30 years. To do this, the government had to balance the demands of petty chiefs and reduce the insecurity. In addition, Tonga had to protect its international independence at a time of

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<sup>4</sup> Reverend Shirley Baker for twenty years worked as a Wesleyan missionary, developing a close-cooperation with King George Tupou I and acting as his adviser in drawing up codes of laws, constitutions, and negotiating treaties with foreign powers. He became the Prime Minister of Tonga in 1880.

colonial expansion in the Pacific. Germany, Britain and France were all bent on establishing commercially based colonies. Finally, the newly established monarchy had to establish its own legitimacy in the face of potential challenges from inside and outside Tonga. The constitution, with its American, Polynesian, and European elements, effectively answered many of those needs. It was liberal and conservative, democratic and hierarchical. It comfortably encompassed both the key principles of Polynesian culture and modernity in a logical arrangement. It codified acceptable principles in a framework of Christian ethics (Hills, Rodney, 1991).

The Constitution has survived with only a few amendments to the present day and is divided into three parts. The first part entitled 'Declaration of Rights' prescribes the general principles by which the monarch, the judiciary, and government are to conduct themselves. The second part, 'Form of Government', outlines in detail the role and structure of the executive – including the Privy Council, the Cabinet, and the Legislative Assembly (Powles, 1992: 22). The Privy Council is the highest executive body chaired by the monarch although it has limited legislative functions. It consists of all ministers of the crown together with the governors of the two major island groups in the kingdom, Ha'apai and Vava'u.

The Cabinet is presided over by the Prime Minister. The only difference between the Cabinet and the Privy Council in terms of representation is that the King chairs the Privy Council while the Prime Minister chairs the Cabinet. Next in order is the Legislative Assembly, composed of all ministers, representatives of the nobles, and representatives of the people. The third and final part of the Constitution is entitled 'The Land', which deals with land matters such as the principles of inheritance pertaining to estates, general laws of succession relating to property and other issues relating to land law (see Lātūkefu, 1975).

The 1875 Constitution laid the foundation for the present system of government in modern Tonga. The type of government (a constitutional monarchy), consists of three main bodies: the Executive, Parliament and the Judiciary. The King in Privy Council and cabinet serves as the Executive. He appoints cabinet ministers as well as the governors of the two other main island groups, Ha'apai and Vava'u. The administration of the public sector of which around 20 government ministries and quasi-government bodies exist, comes under the jurisdiction of the Prime Minister (see Lātū, 1996; 1998; 2004b). The Parliament is unicameral and is composed of a speaker (appointed by the King), the members of the cabinet, nine nobles (elected by 33 hereditary nobles) and nine representatives elected by the people who make up 98 per cent of the total population. General elections are held every three years. The judiciary is made up of the Privy Council, with the addition of the Chief Justice, and acts as the Court of Appeal. Below the Court of Appeal are the Supreme Court, the Land Court, and the Magistrates Courts.

According to Lawson, the Kingdom of Tonga is a relatively homogenous country. The question of cultural identity in Tonga is interesting in the extent to which the 'traditional culture', almost homogenous in nature, is decisive in determining political forms. In fact, Tonga has one of the most conservative political systems in the Oceania region, as it is ruled by a monarch who presides over a parliament consisting largely of his own appointees and representatives of a hereditary aristocracy, while members elected by the people are in the minority (see Lawson, 1996).

Some scholars have argued that even the 1875 Constitution with its modern features was designed to promote Tongan culture and traditions and maintain the hegemony of the ruling class. Compared with the British system, in which the monarch acts only as head of state with limited power, the King of Tonga enjoyed a great deal of power and responsibility in line with the Constitution of 1875 (see Lātū, 1998). Powels (1992) summarizes the pre-eminent status and power of the monarch given by the constitution as follows;

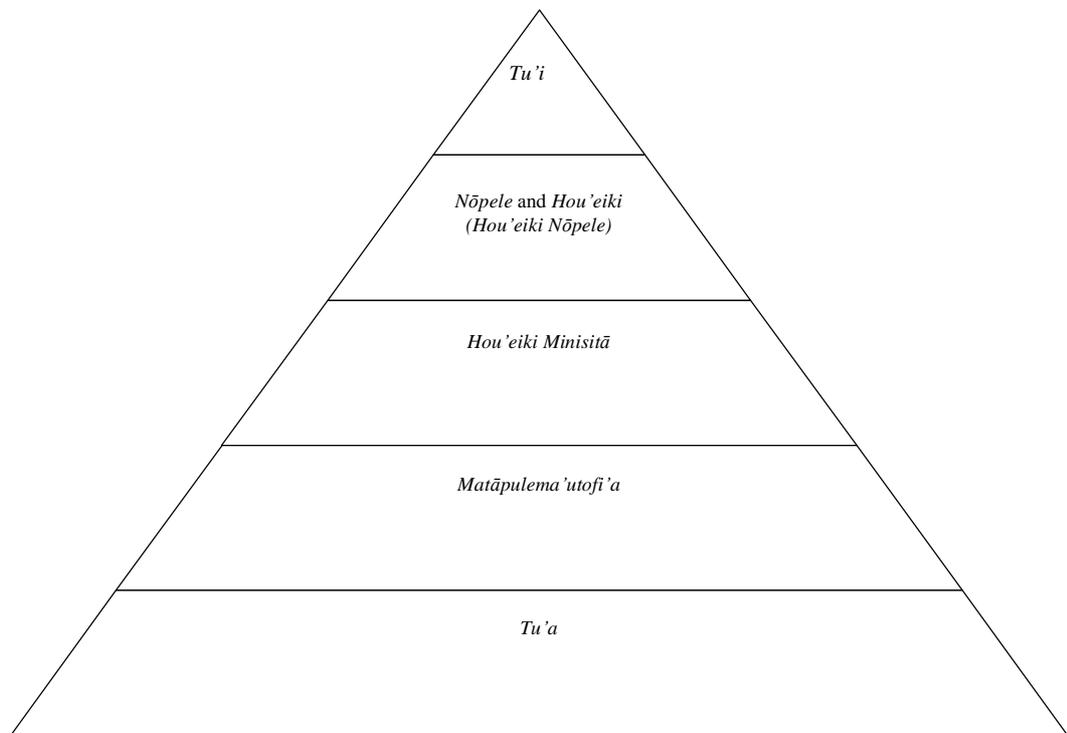
1. It was the reigning Monarch who in 1875 “granted” the Constitution to the people of Tonga.
2. The sovereignty of the Monarch is declared in terms of absolute authority (“Pule”) to govern Tonga and its people (clauses 17, 31, and 14).
3. An important aspect of this authority is the Monarch’s power over the Prime Minister and Ministers who are responsible to the Monarch for administering the government. The Monarch may dismiss and appoint them at any time (clause 51).
4. All land is the property of the Monarch (clauses 44 and 104); and such estates will revert to the Monarch in the absence of their heirs (clause 112).
5. The Constitution guarantees perpetual succession to the lineage of the Monarch (clause 32).
6. The reigning Monarch cannot be impeached (clause 53).
7. The Constitution, which protects the Monarch, cannot be changed without his consent (clauses 67 and 69) (Lātū, 1998: 7).

However, the major elements highlighted in the constitution are undoubtedly a mixture of external and internal socio-cultural and political elements. In Ferdon’s terminology, it is ‘a masterful example of the integration of modern and traditional ideas of government’ (cited in Lawson, 1996: 96). The

pre-eminent power and status of the monarch as outlined in the constitution is considered by many constitutional experts to be highly problematic as they are inconsistent with changes over time and space. This sentiment comes out best in Hau'ofa's words that, 'the people of Tonga have been freed by their King from one form of bondage to be subject of another' (see Hau'ofa, 1996).

**Figure 3.3**

**Post-Constitution Socio-Political Pyramid**



The 1875 Constitution brought a new image to the socio-political structure of Tonga. Figure 3.3 shows the emergence of new powerful social classes; nobles (*nōpele*), cabinet ministers (*minisitā*), and chiefs with estates (*matāpule ma'utofi'a*). The place of the new social classes in the socio-political

pyramid seems indistinguishable due to the overlap in responsibilities and status -- a clash in tradition and change due to the changing socio-political landscape.

The *nōpele* class in Tonga is the same as the *hou'eiki* as the nobles were appointed from the *hou'eiki* class in the 1875 Constitution (see Lātūkefu, 1975). They are also called the *hou'eiki nōpele*, a combination of the two words.

Since 1966, the domination of the *hou'eiki nōpele* in the government arena has slowly deteriorated due to the emergence of the new middle class that now controls key portfolios in the state's bureaucracy. Advanced academic credentials have allowed commoners the opportunity to hold ministerial portfolios, which affords them the rights and privileges usually reserved for the *hou'eiki nōpele*. Cabinet Ministers, according to government protocol, are entitled *hou'eiki minisitā* and they are treated in a similar manner to the *hou'eiki nōpele*. They are starting to overshadow the aristocratic class as a result.

### **3.4 Tonga's Christianization**

Before contact with missionaries, the Tongan people were polytheistic and believed in a hierarchy of gods. Among the principal gods were the *kau*<sup>5</sup> *Tangaloa*, who were believed to live in the sky, the *kau Maui* who lived in the underworld, and the deity *Hikule'o* who controlled *Pulotu* (the Tonga Paradise). The *kau Tangaloa* were referred to as the principle creator gods, though there were no temples or priests dedicated to them. The *kau Maui* were believed to have fished up most of the islands of the Tongan group. One of the *Maui*s was also believed to carry the earth upon his shoulder, and an earthquake was

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<sup>5</sup> *Kau* refers to class.

supposed to be caused either by a *Maui* moving the earth from one shoulder to another, or falling asleep and nodding his head. *Hikule'o* was believed to control the weather and the fertility of the land (Lātūkefu, 1974).

The *Tu'i Tonga* was the representative of all the gods on earth, giving him divine rights over his subjects. Apart from the principal gods, each chief and his people had their own gods, usually the spirits of their dead chiefs. It was believed that when members of the chiefly class died, their spirits went to Puluotu where *Hikule'o* resided, where they became secondary gods. They were thought to return to the earth in various forms, such as sharks and other animal species.

Politics and religion were closely interwoven in Tonga. Every chief possessed *mana* or supernatural power. However, *mana* was believed to depend on the goodwill of the gods. Chiefs made offerings to obtain the favor of gods and consulted them on important occasions, particularly before going to war or embarking on distant voyages. When any misfortune or natural disaster occurred, it was attributed to the anger of gods (ibid.). Since the chiefs, who were the political leaders, relied upon the priests and their mediators with the gods, a close alliance existed between them in order to maintain their mutual interests. The power of the priests was second only to those of the chiefs.

The historical development of Christianity in Tonga is clearly demonstrated in the intimate relationship between the church and state. The strong association between the two is traceable to the early 19<sup>th</sup> century when the first group of missionaries set foot in the archipelago (see Lātūkefu, 1974; 1975; Rutherford, 1977; 1996). Despite the difficulties they suffered in their attempts, especially during the period of civil wars between the various factions for

political control, they slowly established what is believed by most Tongans to be the substratum of Tongan society today.

The first missionaries to land were representatives of the London Missionary Society (LMS) who arrived on the main island of Tongatapu on April 10 1797. Ten male missionaries landed and some remained until 1800 (see Urbanowicz, 1975). The failure of the 1797-1800 mission did not put an end to missionary ventures. Two further attempts were made in Tongatapu in 1822 and 1826. Undoubtedly, the primary motive of the Wesleyans missionaries was Christianization and the first technique utilized was the use of material goods to attract converts. Generally speaking, their work went beyond simply teaching a new theology, because incorporated in that theology were certain principles of conduct which included 'new standards of honesty' such as 'one man one wife' among many others (see Campbell, 1992a).

As part of their strategy, the missionaries first strengthened their relationship with the *hou'eiki* before they proceeded to other activities, the most important of which was the establishment of schools. The missionaries at first had difficulties preaching Christianity to the native Tongans. However gradually, through their links with powerful chiefs and the establishment of mission schools, they were able to bear witness to the success of their work as missionaries. They received the socio-political support of some prominent chiefs who assisted and accelerated the pace of mission expansion.

The introduction of Christianity by the missionaries not only converted the Tongans, but it provided the converts with a new level of understanding, bringing about a psychological revolution in the way in which they understood

their social and political surroundings. Formal education was also introduced at the same time.<sup>6</sup> Missionary education was vital in speeding up the conversion of native Tongans. Although education in its earlier stage focused primarily on basic Christian principles, and was aimed at converting more people to the new religion, the developing educational system slowly came to include other academic disciplines such as agriculture, chemistry, physics, and astronomy (see Cummins, 2005).

According to Tongan Christian belief, the church is the foundation of the Kingdom. The Wesleyans were the most powerful and influential of the missions due to the kind of strategies they employed, which assimilated key characteristics of Tonga's social structure into their own organization.

While missionaries annihilated certain aspects of Tongan culture which were believed to represent 'heathenism', and were not seen as compatible with the development of 'civilization' as defined at that time, they also helped reinforce the existing social and political structure of Tongan society through the establishment of the church. What they succeeded in doing was to lay a strong basis for increasing the power of the church, state and aristocracy. Despite this, there were nonetheless contradictions inherent in the new religion; fusing as it did aspects of oppressive tribalism and Christian individualistic ethics (see Lawson, 1996).

Perhaps the greatest benefit from the partnership between King George and the Wesleyan missionaries was the development of written codes of law. Tonga had had its own law for centuries. It was unwritten though clearly

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<sup>6</sup> Education at its early stage was based on teaching Christian morals and principles.

understood, and it was based on a system of taboos. However, with the coming of Christianity, Tongan culture began to experience a number of significant changes. Apart from the introduction of a new set of taboos based on the Ten Commandments and the beliefs of Wesleyan Methodism, reading and writing slowly began to take effect. By 1839, it was possible to officially announce a written code of laws, the Code of Vava'u, which was limited to the King's subjects in Vava'u. It was not until 1850, when the King was acknowledged as ruler of all the islands that a Code of Laws for the whole of Tonga was brought into force (see, Lātū, 1998; Lātūkefu, 1975).

According to Helu (1997), the introduction of European religion to Tonga was not simply a one-way process of acculturation, whereby Christianity in Tonga was implanted but remained European in form and content. As has been noted, Christianity itself underwent some changes. For example, many traditional melodies were worked into the church music, together with Sunday feasts developed from pre-existing practices (see Helu, 1999; Lawson, 1996: 89). Perhaps the best example of the two-way nature of the process was the reinforcement of the power of the aristocracy within a religious context -- the power and privileges of the King and the *hou'eiki* were seen as divine in origin and granted by God (see Lātūkefu, 1974) – an idea which would have fitted well with European ideas of monarchy of the same period.

After the Wesleyan incursion, Catholic missionaries also arrived in Tonga in 1842. The two churches soon came into conflict due to differences in religious principles. However, in the case of Tonga, these tensions did not merely arise from religion, but also colonial politics. The Catholic missionaries

who allied themselves with the *Tu'i Tonga* kingly line supported French imperialism (see Rutherford, 1977). They opposed Taufa'ahau (later King George Tupou I) since he was regarded as an avowed champion of Protestant and British interests. Meanwhile, the Wesleyan missionaries allied themselves with the *Kanokupolu* kingly line, which was the most powerful at the time (see Lātūkefu, 1975; Rutherford, 1977).

Later on, the failure of the *Tu'i Tonga's* allies in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century resulted in a shift of Catholic support to the *Ha'a Havea* chiefs<sup>7</sup> (see Rutherford, 1977; Lātūkefu, 1974; 1975). The *Ha'a Havea* chiefs naturally found it difficult to accept or submit to laws which had been heavily influenced by the puritanical teachings of the Wesleyan missionaries. This led to their downfall in 1852, which ended the civil war in Tonga and victory of Wesleyanism as the dominant religious denomination.

The church emerged as the most powerful institution in Tongan society particularly the Free Wesleyan Church. The King was appointed head of the Wesleyan Church and the church was instrumental in the execution of Tongan government administrative matters prior to the promulgation of the Constitution in 1875. Church ministers, the majority of whom were missionaries, became King's George Tupou I's allies in the making of modern Tonga, as is clearly demonstrated in the political history of Tonga. In some cases, the King had no other choice but to follow their visions and initiatives (see Lātūkefu, 1974; 1975; Rutherford, 1977; 1996; Wood-Ellem, 1999). They contributed to the creation of

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<sup>7</sup> The *Ha'a Havea* is a large and powerful socio-political unit, which consists of many prominent chiefs.

Tonga's first Code of Law in 1839. Later they also drafted the 1850 and 1862 Codes with the assistance of British officials outside Tonga, which paved the way for the maintenance of Tonga's independence. They reduced the power of the chiefs, and thereby elevated to some extent, the socio-economic, religious, and political status of the commoners (Lātūkefu, 1975: 27).

Despite their initial differences, the Catholic and Wesleyan churches slowly developed peaceful relationships based on the basic principles of Christianity. Other religious groups formed such as the Anglican Church in the late 19th century, and the Seventh Day Adventists and the Mormon Church in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The enthusiasm towards the church was not only due to the notion of salvation which it preached, but also the plea for God's protection made by George Tupou I in 1862 in the Emancipation Edict.

He unified Tonga and composed the Nation's motto *Koe 'Otua Mo Tonga Ko Hoku Tofi'a* (God and Tonga are my Inheritance) (see Lātūkefu, 1975). This gave the church political as well as religious legitimacy. There is also a well known maxim in Tonga, *Pule'anga Mo e Siasi Kae Mālohi ha Fonua* (Unity of church and state fortifies a nation) which is widely regarded as the cornerstone of Tongan society (see Lātū, 1998). Church and state are frequently referred to as *Ongo 'olive*, the two olives or pillars.

The history and socio-political structure of Tonga described above are vital in this study. The brief description of Tonga and the evolution of Tonga's socio-political structure show the dynamics of change in society. The constitutional development and the introduction of Christianity to Tonga brought new ways of understanding Tongan society, even though they reinforced and

retained important elements of Tongan culture. This is important background information for understanding international migration and it sets the stage for its development which is discussed in the next chapter.

## Chapter Four

### *International Migration in the Past and Present*

This chapter discusses international migration in Tongan society by looking at its history and how it led to the present distribution of Tongan migrants. It first looks at international migration in the past such as in ancient times and the time of contact with Europeans. The period of contact with Europeans is divided in this chapter into three main phases: the pre-missionary period, the main period of contact with missionaries, and the post-missionary period. This is followed by a discussion of the movements of Tongan people overseas in contemporary Tonga and the location of Tongan migrants in the major host countries of New Zealand, Australia, and the United States of America.

#### **4.1 International Migration in the Past**

*If we look at the myths, legends, and oral traditions, and the cosmologies of the peoples of Oceania, it will become evident that.... Their universe comprised not only land surfaces, but the surrounding ocean as far as they could traverse and exploit it, the underworld with its fire-controlling and earth-shaking denizens, and the heavens above with their hierarchies of powerful gods and named stars and constellations that people could count on to guide their ways across the seas (Hau'ofa, 1987: 10).*

##### **4.1.1 Ancient Tonga**

The movement of the *Moana* (open sea) people began thousands years ago. Around 3,000 years ago, the ancestors of the *Moana* began their long eastward migration toward an 'oceanic outer space' (Kirch, 2000: 97). Based on this legacy, the *Moana* became the first travelers to traverse the world's largest

open space, the Pacific Ocean (see Ka'ili, 2005). Evidence of their explorations can be found in the fact that the *Moana* become the most widely settled people in the world. Oral traditions, mythical accounts and cultural similarities, backed by scientific evidence provided by historians and archeologists, reflect the success of the *Moana* in achieving one of the greatest spatial movements in history.

The settlement of the Tonga archipelago took place some 3000 years ago; around 1200 B.C. Radio-carbon-dated material indicates that Tonga was inhabited by 1140 B.C. Both archaeologists and historians believe that the first settlers came from the Fijian archipelago northwest of Tonga and probably took up residence initially in the largest island group, Tongatapu (Rutherford, 1977: 6; see Maps 1 and 2).

Another account based on oral traditions, particularly genealogies and ethno-history, claimed that the first settlers originally came from Samoa (Lātūkefu, 1974: 1). Recent archaeological and linguistic evidence suggests that the first settlers came from the Northwest and they belonged to a widespread but scattered southwest Pacific culture, named Lapita after a site in New Caledonia. One convincing claim based on the archaeological evidence is that the Southwest Lapita people were associated with highly decorated, dentate stamped pottery; restricted lagoon shore settlement, and shell middens resulting from heavy shellfish consumption (see Māhina, 1992).

Another well-known proposition suggests that the ancestors of the Polynesians (Austronesians) came originally from coastal and insular Southeast Asia. The so-called migration of Austronesians -- and later of their descendants the Polynesians -- was from west to east in the earliest period of settlement of

Polynesia. This lasted approximately from the beginning of the second millennium BC to about the 10<sup>th</sup> century AD when Eastern Polynesians reversed the direction of dispersal to settle the Cook Islands and Aotearoa (New Zealand) (Helu, 1999: 111).

More recent research suggests that one of the great mysteries of human migration, the origin of the Polynesian islanders of the Pacific Ocean, may finally have been solved by a study of the rats they brought with them (see *The Statesman Online*). The study, led by Ms Elizabeth Matisoo-Smith has shed important new light on how the Lapita spread through the rest of Melanesia and Polynesia, by examining the DNA of the rats they brought with them. The Lapita colonists carried the Pacific rat, *Rattus Exulans*, as food in their canoes. As these rats do not swim, the only way in which they could have dispersed through the Pacific was as part of a human migration (ibid.).

While settlement theorists undertake further investigations to prove their hypotheses, evidence from these various theories seem interrelated, especially in terms of their relation to the Lapita culture and the timing of settlement. Genetic analysis of ancient and modern rat populations throughout Southeast Asia and Polynesia indicates that the Pacific islands were colonized by the seafaring Lapita culture of the western Pacific -- but only after a slow and complex expansion. The settlement of Polynesia was a remarkable feat of human endeavor: it required intrepid colonists crossing thousands of miles of ocean in outrigger canoes to find islands just a few miles across. It has also triggered lively debate as to how, and by whom, the islands were first reached.

The region appears to have been settled in two phases. ‘Near’ Oceania, the Melanesian islands close to New Guinea that include the Solomon Islands, were reached by a wave of migration from South-East Asia that began about 40,000 years ago (see *The Statesman Online*). More recently settled was ‘remote’ Oceania -- the Melanesian islands including Fiji and Vanuatu, and the ‘Polynesian triangle’ bounded by New Zealand, Easter Islands, and Hawaii (see Map 1). These islands were reached about 3,100 years ago.

Thor Heyerdahl, the Norwegian anthropologist, proposed that the first Polynesian colonists came from South America, and in 1947 sailed a balsa-log raft, the *Kon-Tiki*, from Peru to Tuamotu Island to prove the voyage was possible. However, DNA analysis of modern Polynesians has proved Heyerdahl wrong. Linguistic, genetic, and archaeological evidence points to the Lapita culture, which emerged in Near Oceania about 3,500 years ago, as the origin of the Polynesians (see Ralling, 1990).

There is a lack of written accounts between the settlement era and the emergence of ‘Aho’*aitu* who became the first *Tu’i Tonga* in 950 A.D., although a general correspondence between archaeology and traditional history divides Tongan traditional history into three main periods. Appendix C shows the periodization of Tongan early traditional history based on mythology and traditional history, which show a high level of interconnectivity in relation to successive socio-political transitions in Tonga.

Between the reigns of the first *Tu’i Tonga*, ‘Aho’*aitu* in 950 A.D. and the tenth *Tu’i Tonga*, Momo around the 12<sup>th</sup> century, Tongan society was centralized through a period of nation building. During the 12<sup>th</sup> century, Tonga had a highly

stratified ranking system. The reign of the eleventh *Tu'i Tonga*, Tu'itātui around 1200 AD marked a new era in the history of Tonga. The socio-political and cultural developments under his administration contributed to the imperial expansion of Tonga beyond its own boundaries. The creation of the *Tu'i Tonga* Empire instigated the first wave of external migration to affect the archipelago (see Māhina, 1987; 1992). Navigation was central in the process and this may have been the first time that the people of Tonga had left the archipelago in large numbers since the commencement of the settlement era.

From a historical standpoint, external migration is not a new concept in the islands of Oceania. All people of the islands in accordance with myth and traditions have enjoyed movement from place to place owing to different socio-political, cultural and economic interests. The Pacific islands and their inhabitants were always more inter-related than the literature has at times suggested (see Nero, 1997). It has long been established by both historical and mythical accounts that the histories of the islanders are histories of movement and settlement, sailing between the islands to maintain links; marrying, trading, warring, and the like (ibid: 440). People have been moving around the Pacific Ocean for a very long time, and the Pacific diaspora is thousands of years old (see Spickard et.al, 2002; Māhina, 1992; Hau'ofa, 1987).

These factors led to the development of relatively strong chain migration. Once migrants established themselves in their new homeland, they brought relatives and friends to accompany them. In the case of the aristocratic class,

once a high chief moved to settle outside Tonga, attendants<sup>8</sup> had to follow to assist the *hou'eiki* in their new homeland in line with Tongan culture (see Lātūkefu, 1977, Māhina, 1992; Spurway, 2002; Lātū, 1996). On a number of occasions, some traveled as part of the imperial task force who moved to neighboring islands to exploit both natural and human resources in the interests of *Tu'i Tonga* imperialism (see Māhina, 1992). Obviously, external migration in its early stages laid the foundation for later expansion, due to the initial links established by the imperial forces.

Simultaneously, the movement of people within the archipelago, from the interior parts of the islands to the coastal areas, also expanded. Internal migration from inland to coastal areas was understandable, due to the centrality of navigation to the people of Tonga, and the climate of the coastal areas, which was suitable for settlement. Most significant of all was the ocean and its richness in resources as the primary source of livelihood. In later centuries, according to accounts of explorers such as Captain James Cook, Tongan people lived in dispersed settlements, spread across the countryside, close to their cultivated crops (see Bott, 1981). During the civil war period (during the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries), the settlement pattern was re-arranged, as *kolotau* (fortresses) were erected to defend people from attack by enemies (see Campbell, 1992a; Martin, 1991). The imperial expansion of the *Tu'i Tonga* Empire resulted in the

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<sup>8</sup> It was common in Tonga that when a chief moved to settle abroad, attendants had to follow. They consisted of *matāpule(s)* (orators) and commoners (*tu'a*), including cooks, *tufunga* (carpenters), and *kau toutai* (fishermen), amongst others by profession.

extension of Tonga's frontiers to include the islands of Futuna, 'Uvea, and Samoa (Māhina, 1992: 133-34; Map 1).

In fact, the imperial expansion was closely associated with the socio-political and economic development of the office of the *Tu'i Tonga* under the rule of Tu'itātui. To judge from the socio-political and economic development of the *Tu'i Tonga* office during his reign, Tu'itātui appears to have been very intelligent. The major structural and functional reforms in the development of the *Tu'i Tonga* centers suggest a broad vision. He initiated the development of navigation and the construction of the *Tu'i Tonga* centers which led to imperial expansion. The reasons for the expansion are obvious when we look at the size and population of Tonga. Limited natural and human resources forced Tongan rulers at the time to consider extending Tonga's boundaries by coercion. The only way to assist the process of nation building was to extend Tonga's frontiers in the region in order to obtain both human and natural resources for such a process.

One could argue that the success of the imperial expansion was closely linked to the Tongans' fear of risking their lives if the *Tu'i Tonga's* objectives, expectations, and wishes were not met (see Lātūkefu, 1974). However, a high level of *taliangi* (loyalty) is an important part of Tongan culture, particularly service to the aristocratic class -- not to mention the divine status of the *Tu'i Tonga* according to traditional religious belief (ibid.). Accordingly, the expansion of the *Tu'i Tonga* Empire reached its peak in the 12<sup>th</sup> century (Lawson, 1996: 83; Māhina, 1992). The brutality of the imperial expansion is reflected in the extraction of surplus slave-labor from Fiji, Rotuma, Uvea and Samoa for the

construction of royal centers and other ceremonial places for the *Tu'i Tonga*, together with material goods, such as *koloa* exchange valuables (including fine mats, carvings, and sculptures), marine resources, construction stones and the like. Fundamentally, these contributed to the consolidation of the socio-political and economic links between the *Tu'i Tonga* Empire and its periphery. This was basically achieved through the process of intermarriage between women from the periphery and members of the imperialist force, trade in *koloa*, exchanges of navigational information, and the establishment of political links between the chiefly classes. These processes opened the door for external movement and circulation as Tongans enjoyed travelling back and forth to the peripheries of the empire.

Forced migration lasted for only a few centuries and declined slowly due to the deterioration in the power of the *Tu'i Tonga* empire around the 16<sup>th</sup> century, even though other socio-economic links continued (ibid.). The movement of Tongan people between the central islands and their former colonies continued. In some cases, Tongan chiefs were still influential in peripheral areas and played a major role in maintaining links between these areas and their former imperial masters. The general interpretation of the pursuit by *Kau'ulufonuafekei's* (the fifteenth *Tu'i Tonga*) of the assassins of his father *Takalaua* (the fourteenth *Tu'i Tonga*) is that it represented a major overseas conquest and expansion of Tonga dominions. As Herda (1990) describes, the suffix *fekei* (savage) vividly indicates the ruthless manner in which *Kau'ulufonua* forced those he defeated to submit. Tradition tells that he ordered the teeth of the captured assassins be pulled out and

that they were forced to chew *kava*<sup>9</sup> for him with bleeding gums (see Hunstmen, 1995).

Moreover, oral traditions from other Western Polynesian Island groups correspond fairly closely with Tongan narratives of the pursuit and conquest. They describe the main Tongan island groups (‘Eua and Tongatapu, Ha’apai and Vava’u) being brought under Tonga rule at or near *Ka’ulufonufekai’s* time, as well as the northern outliers of Niua Toputapu and Niua Fo’ou. Further incursions were made to ‘Uvea and perhaps the Lau Islands in the Western part of Fiji, Samoa, and Niue (ibid.; see Map 1). Evidence of the mass mobilization of Tongan people during the so-called period of expansion can be clearly seen in the socio-political connections between the Samoan and Fijian aristocracies, not to mention the blood relationships between Tongans and people from other neighbouring islands.

It can also be found in the similarities in languages, culture and traditions, and the commonalities in names of places and peoples both in Tonga and its former periphery. The movement of the Tongan people during the *Tu’i Tonga* Empire era is considered to be the first wave of trans-island migration to have materialized in the archipelago since the first settlers arrived and settled some 3,000 years ago.

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<sup>9</sup> *Kava* is a ceremonial beverage made from the *kava* plant. It is a traditional drink, which symbolizes Tongan culture. The roots of the *kava* plant are smashed into tiny pieces by using two stones before mixing it with water for drink.

#### **4.1.2 Contacts with Europeans**

Contact with Europeans is divided into three main phases; phase one is the pre-missionary era, phase two is the era of contact with missionaries, and phase three deals with the post-missionary era. The prime objective of this section is to establish a chronological framework for the historical and cultural development in the movement of Tongan people and the effects on Tonga's socio-political landscape.

##### ***4.1.2.1 Pre-missionary Period***

The contact with Europeans through European exploration in the South Pacific is usually believed to have extended from the early 16<sup>th</sup> century to the late 18<sup>th</sup> century or early 19<sup>th</sup> century. During this time, missionaries, beachcombers and traders took up residence in many islands in Oceania. In Tonga during the pre-missionary period, contacts with explorers were frequent but the most renowned of all were the series of visits by the famous British navigator, Captain James Cook.

Part of the archipelago was first visited by the Dutch navigators Schouten and Le Maire in 1616 and various contacts with other European navigators followed such as with Abel Tasman in 1643, Wallis in 1767, Cook in 1773, 1774, and 1777, Maurellein 1781, La Perouse in 1787, Captain Bligh in 1789, Edwards in 1791, D'Entrecasteaux and Labillardiere in 1793, and another expedition by Malaspina in 1793 (see Urbanowicz, 1973; Orchiston, 1998).

While these visits attracted the islanders' attention in terms of material goods, they had little effect on their lives. Trans-island migration<sup>10</sup> continued and the socio-political links with adjoining islands in the region were still preserved as Tonga maintained an influential role in the domestic affairs of neighbouring islands, particularly in the former periphery of the empire. Tongans traveled back and forth to other islands to fight and trade.

About 1750, some Tongans went to Lakemba in the Lau Group, western part of Fiji and took part in wars there, helping certain chiefs who rewarded them with large canoes of a kind not made in Tonga. After that, many Tongans went at different times to Fiji in order to get these coveted canoes and better weapons, spears and bows and arrows, made in Fiji (Cook had been informed by the Tongans that Fijians excelled them in war and such arts as canoes building). Tu'ihalafatai, the Tu'i Kanokupolu who met Cook in 1777, resigned his position in 1772 and went to Fiji, where he stayed until 1799; he was only one example of the many chiefs who went to fight for protracted periods in Fiji (Wood, A. H, 1945: 25).

The movement of Tongans back and forth to other islands meant that the socio-political connections between Tonga and the former periphery remained firmly intertwined. Conversely, family connections were among the major reasons why Tongans travelled. Some scholars such as Lātūkefu (1974) allege that even though Tonga claimed to be centralized and powerful compared to other neighbouring islands, external influences brought by Tongan migrants from other islands such as Fiji and Samoa to some degree contributed to major changes in the Tongan socio-political landscape. These socio-political and cultural factors were gradually incorporated to become part of Tongan society. As Wood notes:

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<sup>10</sup> External migration in this context refers to regional migration between Tonga and other islands in the region.

Unhappily, these visits had the most evil effects on Tonga. The young Tongans returned from Fiji to show off the new habits they had acquired there, not merely the blackened faces and wardress used in Fiji, but also the practice of treachery, secret murder even of relatives, rebellion, and cannibalism. It was only gradually that all the fruits appeared, but there can be no doubt that the disorder and savagery of this Dark Age—from the Civil War (1799) to the coming of Christianity – were due to the imitation of Fijian vices and the Fijian spirit of rebellion. The group was noted for its lack of unified control and for the constant fighting of its tribes. By imitating Fiji, Tonga became totally disunited, and for a time the authority of the Tu'i Kanokupolu hardly existed. Had these conditions continued, and had Christianity not arrived opportunely with the rise of Tautafa'ahau as the savior of his country and the maker of modern Tonga, Tonga would probably have suffered Fiji's fate and eventually have lost its independence (Wood, A. H, 1945: 25).

Furthermore, during the civil war period from 1800 to 1820, there were a considerable number of Europeans resident in Tonga. They consisted of beachcombers, whalers, deserters and victims of the English private ship of war the *Port au Prince* that was siezed by Tongan warriors under the command of Finau 'Ulukalala in Lifuka, Ha'apai in 1806 (see Martin, 1991). These men were in the custody of the high chiefs and were respected by the islanders due to their skills in woodwork and metalwork, and above all to the western goods they possessed. They played a vital role in key battles during the civil war years with their expertise in the use of firearms captured from the *Port au Prince* (ibid.).

#### **4.1.2.2 Contact with Missionaries**

Towards the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, when Christianity was well established, the missionaries were confident enough to undertake the training of local missionaries to send to the remaining unconverted islands in the region.

The European missionary in the Pacific in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries was usually in a supervisory role, running the training institution, translating the Bible, traveling from place to

place, stationing and supervising Pacific Islanders, establishing and overseeing industrial plantations. The Pacific Islanders who settled down in villages quickly learned local languages. Because they lived much more closely with the people, they often had more impact on indigenous way of life than the European missionaries (Davidson, 1996: 1).

The motives of the European missionaries were clear in terms of security and efficiency; to use the locals as their proxies in order to avoid European casualties and to take advantage of the cultural similarities between local preachers and other Tongans. In some cases, Tongans joined the mission in other islands because of the family networks created by earlier ties established in the pre-missionary era. According to Joel Bulu (Sioeli Pulu), one of the Tongan missionaries dispatched to Fiji, many of the Tongans employed in the mission work in Fiji did not go there for the express purpose of mission work, but belonged to the large immigrant Tongan population settled on other islands (Bulu, 1871: 3).

Furthermore, migration to the neighboring islands continued due to the respect in which Tongan migrants were still held by the peoples on the periphery of the former empire. As a result, Tongan migrants, regardless of short- or long-term migration, continued to have a powerful and influential role in the domestic affairs of the peripheral islands.

The islands forming the province of Lau in Eastern Fiji, including the Exploring Islands, centered on Vanuabalavu in the north; central Lau, which includes the chiefly island of Lakeba and extends to Ono-I-Lau in the far south; and the Moala Group, or *Yasayasa Moala*, comprising the high islands of Moala and Matuku and Totoya. The province's paramount chief ...[was] Tu'i Lau, a title created in 1869 expressly for the Tongan Chief Ma'afu, who had then been exercising the functions and prerogatives of a Fijian chief for more than a decade. (Spurway, 2002: 1).

Towards, the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, all of the peripheral islands of the former *Tu'i Tonga* Empire and other neighboring islands were seized by the colonial powers.<sup>11</sup> As a result, the circulation of Tongans back and forth to neighbouring islands declined significantly. Between the mid 19<sup>th</sup> and the early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, the people of Tonga once again began to travel, no longer as imperialists, warriors and fishermen, but mainly as missionaries. Some travelled as laborers, interpreters, and trained missionaries while the rest were the members of missionary families. Mission work therefore provided an important incentive for external migration following the collapse of the *Tu'i Tonga* Empire.

This led to the revival of chain migration as the missionaries chose the places where they preached as their new homelands, places where relatives and friends voluntarily joined them. Tongans believed that working for the heathens was something that would bring them blessings or otherwise guarantee their place in heaven in the afterlife. Such beliefs encouraged relatives and friends to accompany missionaries to their chosen destinations. Most if not all trained missionaries were sent to the New South Wales Mission headquarters for final training before being dispatched to their new mission places. The religious links between Tonga and those islands are still maintained and some of the islands in the region such as the Lau Group in Fiji and Highland Papua New Guinea still preserve strong connections with the Free Wesleyan Church of Tonga.

Apart from the movement of Tongan people outside Tonga for missionary purposes, the promulgation of the Constitution in 1875, which made

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<sup>11</sup> Britain, France, Germany and United States at the time were competing for domination in the South Seas.

Tonga an independent nation, opened the door for a new kind of migration. Becoming an independent sovereign nation with international recognition was something important for Tongans, especially the aristocratic class and a few prominent commoners who held significant portfolios in the government bureaucracy. The new elite could travel for diplomatic reasons and send their children abroad for education.

#### *4.1.2.3 The Post-missionary Era*

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, Tonga was hardly known to the outside world. Foreigners numbered only a few hundreds, though they controlled the small economy of the island (Spurway, 2002: 1). Movement within the region which had been enjoyed by Tongans in the past declined due to certain restrictions imposed by colonial powers. Opportunities for international migration slowly came to be based on socio-political and economic status. One had to be a member of the aristocracy, economically capable, and educationally qualified in order to meet the costs of travel at the time. Tongan government officials, usually recruited from the aristocratic class, were commonly regarded as the only qualified people (see Rutherford, 1977). The so-called 'push' factor at the time was still limited, as most Tongans were satisfied with the existing socio-political structure and the subsistence level of the economy. Information and communications were minimal.

The 'closed door' policies were made easy by the existing cultural and social policies at the time and later by government policies during the rule of Queen Sālote Tupou III between 1918 and 1965 (see Ellem, 1999). In the late

19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, a few aristocrats enjoyed the privileges of migrating externally for diplomatic and official purposes (see Lātūkefu, 1975; Rutherford, 1977; Wood-Ellem, 1999).

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, educational migration to Australia and New Zealand became an important reason for travel among the elite classes. As part of the government's educational scheme, children of the nobility were sent abroad to New Zealand and Australia to be educated. They included Princess Sālote Pilolevu (later crowned as Queen Sālote Tupou III after the death of her father King George Tupou II in 1918). She was sent to Auckland, New Zealand in 1909 and again in 1913 for her education (see Wood-Ellem, 1999). Her two sons, Prince Tupou To'a and Prince Tu'ipelehake, were sent to Sydney in the 1930s for the same reason. While international migration was generally restricted to members of the aristocratic class, a few commoners who were successful in the education system were given the opportunity to travel overseas, especially to New Zealand and Australia to pursue further education.

Tonga slowly developed into a semi-modern society from the early 1930s to the 1950s and the opportunities for further education abroad began to depend on high achievement in college. The swift development of education and the provision of additional scholarships by the churches, the Tongan government, and foreign aid donors encouraged open competition amongst commoners for further education. Those who performed well in school were awarded scholarships for further education abroad. Some were sent to the Fiji School of Medicine in Suva while the rest were sent to New Zealand and Australia.

During and after World War II, tremendous changes took place in Tonga, as traditional values were replaced by materialism, rampant individualism and capitalist interests. Although Tonga was neither a military staging post nor a theatre of war, both the United States and New Zealand deployed troops there between 1941 and 1945. This occupation was accompanied by an enormous quantity of goods and services – machines, ammunition, vehicles, army barracks, offices, hospitals, foodstuffs, uniforms and clothing, and all type of supplies and equipment. For the first time in their history, Tongans realised that business and commerce were alternative industries to subsistence farming (see Helu, 1999).

Tongans started to conduct businesses with individual officers, groups of soldiers or entire campus with the sale of agricultural produce, marine foodstuffs, handicrafts, or the provision of services such as laundries. Most Tongans had permanent or semi-permanent paid employment with the two armies. This had great significance for both international and internal migration during and after the War. Tongans were encouraged to travel and leave their home islands by what they believed to be easy access to *palangi* (foreign) resources abroad. The image of the inexhaustible wealth and luxury brought by the Americans during the wartime occupation made a deep impression on Tongans in every part of the archipelago.

Moreover, after the war, Tongans discovered the global economy and concluded that it was easy to relate to this. They believed that this could be achieved by migration to New Zealand, Australia, or the United States. In fact, the war-time experience transformed the perceptions of Tongans about international migration. While opportunities for migration to these countries

were limited at the time, what they experienced during the War changed their mode of thinking. Leaving Tonga to seek for the new materialism became a priority.

From the 1950s to the late 1960s, only a small number of Tongans had permanent residence in New Zealand and Australia. Most of these were women who had married Australians and New Zealanders, especially women who travelled to Australia to train as nurses and teachers, and those who had met and married Australians or other Europeans in Tonga. In Australia, there was always a small group of Tongan students of the royal, noble and elite groups attending Methodist church schools, most notably in Sydney and Melbourne (see Cowling, 2002). There were strong sentimental links between Tonga and Australia because of the Australian Methodist Church's relationship with the Free Wesleyan Church of Tonga.

When missionaries returned to Australia, contact between missionary families from Australia and Tonga were frequently maintained. The Australian Methodist Church in the 1950s sponsored the training of Tongan nurses at a church-operated hospital in Sydney where they also maintained a hostel for Tongan students. During this period, the close connection with the Australian Methodist Church resulted in a number of Tongans obtaining permanent residency in Australia (Cowling, 2002). In fact, the Methodist links were often an influential factor in choosing Australia as a place of residence. These links also established a migratory bond which later became the groundwork of further Tongan movement to Australia.

By the mid 20th century, the population of the archipelago was increasing markedly, with the aristocratic proportion of the total population in decline. According to Hau'ofa, 'numbers alone do not necessarily indicate strength; but when numbers are combined with social and economic powers, they become 'significant indeed' (Hau'ofa, 1994: 4). The decline in the proportion of the aristocratic population together with the escalation of commoners' socio-political and economic status within the Tongan socio-political spectrum indicated that Tonga's social landscape was being reformed.

In the educational arena, amongst the first graduates from overseas academic institutions was Prince Tupou To'a, the eldest son of Queen Sālote Tupou III and the heir to the throne of Tonga who became the first ever Tongan to graduate from university. He graduated with a BA and LLB from the University of Sydney in 1939 (See Wood-Ellem. 1997; Lātū, 1998). When Prince Tupou To'a (later crowned as King Taufa'ahau Tupou IV) succeeded his father Prince Tungi as the Prime Minister of Tonga under Queen Sālote's administration in 1941, he developed an open-door strategy which led to the opening of Tonga's links with the outside world (see Campbell, 1992a), unlike his mother who was strictly against modernity.

Prince Tupou To'a was devoted to the development of education, health, and other public services which contributed to a massive internal movement of Tongan people within the archipelago. As the Prime Minister of Tonga, he established the Tonga Teachers College and Tonga High School in 1947. The aim was to train Tongan teachers and able students for higher education abroad. This was in fact a major breakthrough in education in the Kingdom of

Tonga and by the early 1960s, a considerable number of Tongan students were pursuing higher education in overseas institutions.

A rural-urban drift began to take shape as people from the outer islands migrated to the main island group, Tongatapu, to educate their children. People from the rural parts of Tongatapu moved to the capital Nuku'alofa for the same reason. Employment opportunities in the urban sector were not a significant factor in migration at the time, due to limited development in the private sector. The government civil service was the major source of employment but this was strictly limited and selective due to the small size of the government bureaucracy. There was minimal contact with the outside world, basically due to inadequacies in communication and transportation. In the mid-1950s, the only physical means of contact with the outside world was a monthly call by a New Zealand banana boat.

Mass communications within Tonga were virtually absent before 1961, when a broadcasting service was established. This was followed in 1964 by the founding of a weekly newspaper owned by the Tongan government, the *Tonga Chronicle* (Lawson, 1996: 98). Although the development of communications was in its early stages, the Sālote administration remained concerned over the effects on society, culture, and the methods of government control at the time. The anti-western nature of her regime posed obstacles for the process of development, including international migration.

## 4.2 Contemporary Migration

*Migration of Tongans to the United States, Australia, and New Zealand would never have happened without the huge profits that colonial powers extracted from their colonies and the income differentials this created around the world. The promise of Western opulence penetrated Tonga, as it did almost [every] nonindustrial country, through magazines and movies, music tapes and action videos, and world news and commercial products. At the same time, the means to migrate were made more easily available through the expansion of international air routes. These global factors together with land shortages and limited earning opportunity in Tonga spurred large-scale migration to industrial nations (Small, 1997:44)*

Tongan society entered a new epoch in international migration when Prince Tupou To'a acceded to the throne as King Taufa'ahau Tupou IV in 1966. Radical development in education, health, communications and transportation under his administration opened the doors for international migration. In the 1970s, the Tongan government became actively involved in enabling Tongans to work temporarily overseas. It played a vital role in facilitating the worker contract scheme that brought hundreds of Tongans to New Zealand in 1970s (see Sudo, 1997).

To the Tongan government, international migration appeared to solve the growing problem of providing land and jobs for the growing population. The population of the archipelago continued to increase against a backdrop of land scarcity (see Table 4.1). Despite government efforts at increasing employment in the public sector, and various schemes to develop local industry, they fell short of meeting the increasing demand for jobs. Government reports showed that the number of high school leavers (Tonga's High School graduates) was increasing but that only a small percentage could find employment locally (see Small, 1997). With government support and the demonstrated promise of remittances,

migration out of Tonga primarily to New Zealand and Australia during the 1970s became substantial and significant at the national level.

The traditional link between the Wesleyan Church and the Australian Methodist Church mentioned earlier was the foundation of Tongans migration to Australia. The development in education and communications, together with the Trans-Tasman Agreement allowing free movement of citizens between New Zealand and Australia in the 1970s, opened the door for Tongans who had acquired residential status in New Zealand to seek more opportunities in Australia (see Djaji'c, 2001).

The change in the United States immigration laws in 1965 was another major step for Tongans. Before 1965, immigration law was based on country quotas that favored European nations and discriminated against the Asia-Pacific triangle. Two changes were initiated, beginning with the Immigration Act of 1965 that repositioned the United States as a major destination for Tongan migrants. First, the national quota system limiting the number of visas granted to each country was abolished. Visas would be granted on a first-come, first-served basis within a preference system that encouraged the reuniting of families. Second, included in the new laws was a visa preference category called the Fifth Preference for the reuniting of siblings. This came to become the most frequently used category of immigration applications, and it allowed early Tongan migrants to bring over their sizeable sibling networks. As a result, Asian and Pacific Islander immigration increased sixfold by the late 1970s (ibid.).

The improvement in living standards in most families receiving remittances together with the gradually changing social scenery has undermined

the traditional cultural values and norms, giving way to new forms which are influenced by international migration. In many cases, people migrated abroad for a short period of time to work and obtain money to maintain and develop a better standard of living at home.

In contemporary Tonga, such examples suggest a revolution in people's attitudes towards the way they live and behave in society. The pressure of international migration is the foremost challenge for the social and political systems of a small country with a dependent economy. The pace of contact with the outside world has increased to a stage where both 'push' and 'pull' factors towards migration operate in Tongan society. A framework for circulation developed as Tongans moved and settled overseas for a certain period of time for the purpose of education and employment, before returning to live and work in Tonga. Long-term migration on the other hand became the dominant form of migration for the vast majority.

The rapid expansion of the world economy since World War II... had a liberating effect on the lives of ordinary people...The new economic reality made nonsense of the artificial boundaries, enabling the people to shake off their confinement and they have since moved, by the tens of thousands, doing what their ancestors had done before them...[T]hey strike roots in new resource areas, securing employment and overseas family property, expanding kinship networks through which they circulate themselves, their relatives, their material goods, and their stories all across their ocean, and the ocean is theirs because it has always been their home. (Hau'ofa, 1987:1).

Internal migration has taken on a new shape as the movement of people to metropolitan centers like Nuku'alofa for the purpose of employment has become significant. The introduction of the new economic reforms has opened up development in the private sector which has given employment to a considerable

number of people. The enlargement of the government bureaucracy has increased the need for civil servants. The same has happened in the educational arena as the development in education has resulted in the establishment of higher educational institutions which have attracted more and more students from the outer islands. As such, the movement of people to the metropolitan centers, particularly the capital Nuku'alofa, has increased sharply.

In addition, the opportunities for international migration have made Nuku'alofa a center for step migration, where people from the rest of the archipelago move for a short period of time to complete overseas migratory requirements before leaving Tonga. The mass mobility of Tongans has raised significant questions as to why people migrate; whether it is because of the 'push' and 'pull' factors; whether they migrate as a demographic response to social and economic problems; or whether they just go with the flow. One writer has even described Tongan migration as a traditional transition to adulthood (see Lātū, 2005b). This migration has to be seen within a global context, in which peoples' movements are no longer grounded in the relationship of Tongans with their natural surroundings as they were in the pre-contact era.

#### **4.2.1 Tongans Overseas**

Statistics on international migration reveal its significance as a process for the development of Tonga. Generally, throughout Tonga and Samoa, approximately two or three members of each family on average reside in New Zealand, Australia or the United States of America (see Cowling, 2002; Small, 1997; Lee, 2003; Sudo, 1997; Brown and Ahlburg, 1999). Between 1980 and

1990, the population of Tongans in the US doubled, and it rose a further 58 percent in the five-year period between 1996 and 2001. New Zealand saw a 30 percent increase during the same period and the number of Tongans entering Australia each year tripled during the 1990s (see Small and Dixon, 2004).

The tables below illustrate the approximate numbers of Tongans in the major host countries. The number of Tongan migrants outside Tonga, including overstayers in the main host countries, is estimated to be almost equal to the total population of the homeland (see Table 4.1; Sudo, 1997). Although recent population estimates suggest that overseas migration may be slowing down, today half of the estimated 216,000 Tongans in the world are abroad, and almost every household has a relative resident in another country.

**Table 4.1**

**Tonga: Population 1986 to 2000**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Males</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Growth Rate (%)</b>
<b>1986</b>	47633	47059	94692	
<b>1987</b>	47911	47341	95252	1.006
<b>1988</b>	48186	47622	95808	1.006
<b>1989</b>	48472	47910	96382	1.006
<b>1990</b>	48764	48205	96969	1.006
<b>1991</b>	49059	48502	97561	1.006
<b>1992</b>	49362	48808	98170	1.006
<b>1993</b>	49672	49113	98785	1.006
<b>1994</b>	49985	49434	99419	1.006
<b>1995</b>	50304	49757	100061	1.006
<b>1996</b>	50630	50084	100714	1.007
<b>1997</b>	50955	50416	101371	1.007
<b>1998</b>	51298	50756	102054	1.007
<b>1999</b>	51639	51101	102740	1.007
<b>2000</b>	51988	51455	103443	1.007

Source: Statistics Department. 2000. *Statistical Abstract*, Government of Tonga.

About two in 10 of Tonga's expatriates are residents of Australia, while four out of every 10 overseas Tongans live in the United States, and another four out of 10 live in New Zealand. The connections between migrants and their homeland have created a new global village of Tongans, with profound implications for their homeland (Small and Dixon 2004).

Table 4.1 shows that the population of the Kingdom of Tonga (those who live in the homeland only) has been relatively unchanged for the last decade. It has an annual growth rate of around 1 per cent. Tables 4.2 on the other hand show the number of Tongans in the United States in 2000. Recent surveys and studies of the Tongan population in the United States show that the Tongan population is growing rapidly because of newborn Tongans and the continued flow of Tongans into the States through various means (see Small and Dixon, 2004).

**Table 4.2**

**Population of Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islanders in the US 2000**

<b>Country</b>	<b>Population</b>
Native Hawaiian	140,625
Samoaan	91,029
Tongan	27,713
Guamian	58,240
Fijian	9,769

Source: U.S Census Bureau. 2000.

Australia is the major host country with the smallest number of Tongan migrants when compared with New Zealand and the United States. In addition to those who migrated for further education and married Australian citizens, the Tongan population in Australia climbed tremendously in the early 1980s. By 1999, it had more than quadrupled to 10,500 from 1980 (see Price, 1999; Table 4.3). The reason behind this change was globalization, as global and regional

links gave more opportunities for people from Tonga to migrate for reasons of education, diplomacy, family reunification, and religion.

**Table 4.3**

**Pacific Islanders in Australia 1999**

Country	Population	% out of the total population of Australia
Maori	35,000	0.18
Samoan	15,000	0.08
Tongan	10,500	0.05
Other Pacific Islands	22,500	0.12

Source: Price, Charles. 1999. *People and Place*, Vol. 7, no 4: 15

The most recent statistics on the movement of Tongans to Australia clearly show the flow of Tongans in and out of Australia and suggest that the Tongan population will continue to increase despite recent restrictions on immigration. Table 4.4 shows that a considerable number of Tongan residents continued to move in and out of the country in 2002-03, with most of those moving registered as short term visitors. Many of these temporary visitors eventually gain permanent residential status through marriage. Table 4.5 shows the numbers of migrants departing from Australia permanently.

The total number of departures of Tongans from Australia, including short-term visitors and residents, is shown in Table 4.6. What these tables suggest is that there is a considerable volume of movement to and from Australia, in comparison with the small size of the resident population of Tonga. The figures for both New Zealand and the US are proportionately larger. So not only do Tongans regularly migrate to other countries, but they also regularly travel between these countries on a short term basis.

**Table 4.4****Total Movements of Tongans to and from Australia for the Financial Year 2002-03**

Country of Birth	Settler Arrival	Long Term Resident Return	Long Term Visitor Arrival	Short Term Resident Return	Short Term Visitor Arrival	Total Movements
<b>TONGA</b>	211	86	140	4,793	5,230	10,460

Source: Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs, 2005.

**Table 4.5****Permanent Departures of Tongans from Australia by Length of Stay, 2002-03**

Country of Birth	< 2 Years	2-4 Years	5-9 Years	10 Years +	Not Stated	Total
<b>TONGA</b>	14	11	31	47	-	103

Source: *ibid.*

New Zealand has the most extensive official data on Tongan migrants. The major reason for this is the fact that New Zealand is proud of its reputation as the host of the largest Polynesian population in the world. On the one hand, as a country with a relatively low population of little more than three millions, it is simple to compile adequate statistical information on the immigrant population. Table 4.7 shows that the total population of Tongans in New Zealand is nearly half the total population in the homeland. Figure 4.1 shows that the Tongan population has risen tremendously in the last couple of decades.

**Table 4.6****Total Departures of Tongans from Australia by Category for the Financial Year 2002-03**

Country of Birth	Permanent Departure	Long Term Resident Departure	Long Term Visitor Departure	Short Term Resident Departure	Short Term Visitor Departure	Total Departure
<b>TONGA</b>	103	60	301	4,753	5,649	10,866

Source: *ibid.*

**Table 4.7**

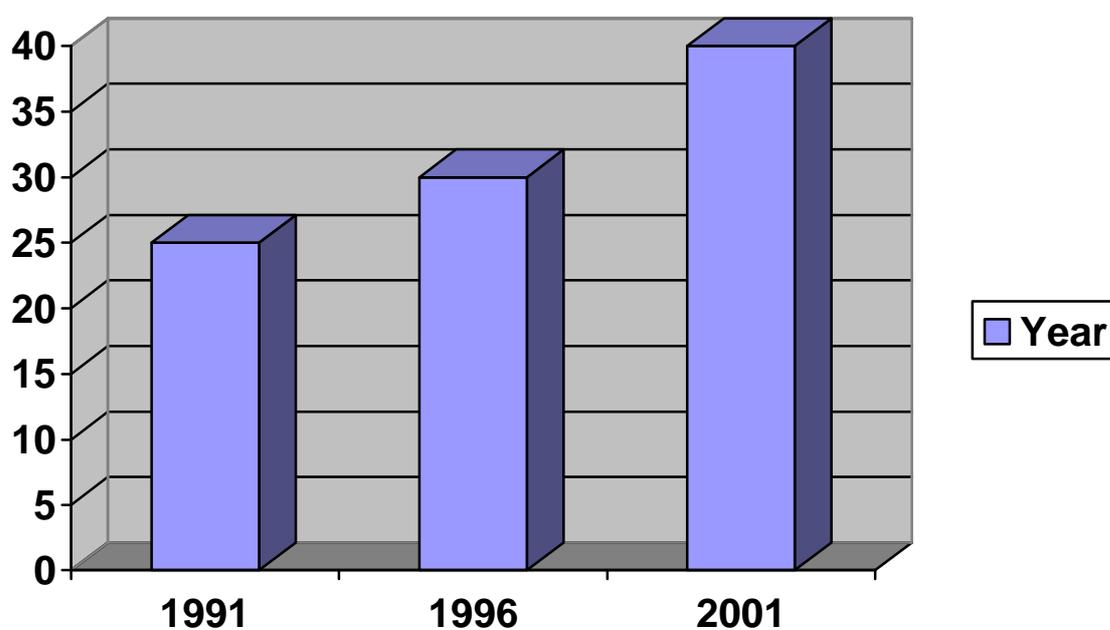
**New Zealand Census Counts by Island Population Estimate 2001**

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>New Zealand Census Count</b>	<b>Island Population Estimate</b>
Samoan	115,017	170,900
Cook Island Maori	52,569	19,300
Tongan	49,716	99,400
Niuean	20,148	1,900
Tokelauan	6,204	1,500
Tuvalu Islander	1,965	10,000

Source: Statistics New Zealand Statistics.

**Figure 4.1**

**Tonga Population in New Zealand 1991-2000**  
**Population (000)**



Source: *ibid.*

International migration has developed through the years to become a safety valve for the economy of Tonga. The historical development of international migration shows that the pattern of peoples' movement has its roots

in chain migration while other patterns such as short-term circulation also play significant roles. The movement of Tongan people overseas has had great effects on Tonga's socio-political and economic landscape. While other effects of international migration are important in the changing nature of society, the economic effects are the most determinant. Economic change is the key driving force of change in Tongan society today.

## **Chapter Five**

### ***Economic Change***

The economic factors in international migration are the key to understanding all other changes such as those in the political, social and religious spheres of Tongan society. The economy is the driving force in the movement of people outside the country, and other factors such as education, adventure, or diplomacy are generally secondary. The non-stop flow of remittances, the rising standards of living, developments in education, the push for political reforms, the emergence of the new middle class and the newly rich, and changes in societal institutions are all linked in one way or the other to the economy of migration.

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first deals with remittances, the second describes the economic effects of remittances, and the third is concerned with the changing economic behavior of Tongan people more generally.

#### **5.1 Remittances**

Remittances from Tongan people abroad play a vital role in adjusting the kingdom's balance of payments (see King, Russell and Connell, 1999; Lātū, 2004a). Balance of payments data shows that the Tongan economy in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century relied largely on net private transfers, mainly remittances, as a source of foreign exchange earnings.

**Table 5.1****Balance of Payments Current Transfers Account 2001-2002 T\$' (000)**

	2001			2002		Annual	
ITEMS	Jul-Sept	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	2001/02	2001	2001
<i>Current transfers credits</i>	<u>39,664</u>	<u>39,317</u>	<u>34,085</u>	<u>47,274</u>	<u>160,340</u>	<u>133,460</u>	
General Govt	2,586	7,943	2,110	3,009	15,648	12,106	
Other sectors	37,078	31,374	31,976	44,265	144,693	121,354	
Remittances from friends and relatives	34,479	27,771	29,503	39,706	131,459	111,871	
Other	2,599	3,602	2,473	4,559	13,233	9,482	
<i>Current transfers debits</i>	<u>10,200</u>	<u>9,845</u>	<u>7,492</u>	<u>7,609</u>	<u>35,146</u>	<u>25,281</u>	
General Govt	525	1,049	61	169	1,804	1,607	
Other sectors	9,675	8,796	7,431	7,440	33,342	23,674	
Remittances from friends and relatives	9,417	8,692	7,328	7,146	32,583	23,017	
Other	258	104	103	294	759	657	
<b>Balance on Current Transfers</b>	<b>29,464</b>	<b>29,472</b>	<b>26,593</b>	<b>39,665</b>	<b>125,194</b>	<b>108,180</b>	

Source: Statistic Department, Government of Tonga. 2004

\*1 USD = 2.06 Tongan Pa'anga (March 2003)

Tables 5.1 and 5.2 summarize the balance of payments current transfers accounts for 2002 and 2003. They demonstrate that remittances were a significant part of the overall balance of payments account for 2002 and 2003.

Remittances are money and goods sent by Tongan migrants abroad to their relatives back home. They constitute the backbone of Tonga's economy. Remittances far outweigh the total foreign export earnings derived from fisheries, tourism, agriculture, and foreign investments. If these foreign earnings were to be removed, Tonga would still remain economically afloat on the basis of remittances and foreign aid. As the National Reserve Bank of Tonga report notes:

**Table 5.2****Balance of Payments Current Transfers Account 2002-2003 (T\$'000)**

	2002		2003		Annual	
ITEMS	Jul-Sept	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	2002/03	2002
<i>Current transfers credits</i>	<u>35,831</u>	<u>46,399</u>	<u>33,109</u>	<u>34,117</u>	<u>149,456</u>	<u>163,589</u>
General Govt	1,203	580	1,844	1,749	5,376	6,902
Other sectors	34,628	45,820	31,265	32,368	144,081	156,689
Remittances from friends and relatives	31,175	35,396	26,908	25,624	119,103	135,780
Other	3,453	10,423	4,356	6,743	24,975	20,908
<i>Current transfers debits</i>	<u>12,048</u>	<u>8,249</u>	<u>4,692</u>	<u>2,941</u>	<u>27,930</u>	<u>35,398</u>
General Govt	1,148	175	201	121	1,645	1,553
Other sectors	10,901	8,074	4,491	2,820	26,286	33,846
Remittances from friends and relatives	10,793	7,650	4,311	2,686	25,440	32,917
Other	108	424	181	134	847	929
<b>Balance on Current Transfers</b>	<b>23,782</b>	<b>38,150</b>	<b>28,417</b>	<b>31,176</b>	<b>121,525</b>	<b>128,190</b>

Source: *ibid.*

Remittances in Tonga are an important pillar of the economy. The greater part of remittances originates from Tongans residing in New Zealand, Australia and the United States. Remittances can broadly be distinguished in money transfers, hand carried cash, remittances in-kind, money held overseas and unreported imports and exports. Money transfers are reports by the banking system to the National Reserve Bank of Tonga (NRBT). Hand carried cash is also for a large part incorporated in banking statistics. Largely unrecorded are remittances in-kind, money held overseas and unreported imports and exports. The significance of remittances for the economy follows, among other things, from the magnitude of these flows: in 1997 remittances are estimated to amount to TOP 70.0 million, which comprises cash remittances (TOP 61.0 million), hand carried cash (TOP 7.5 million) and remittances in-kind (TOP 2.0 million). This amount accounts for around one fifth of Tonga gross domestic products (NRBT Report. 1998: 1).

Interestingly, while remittances are seen as a lifeline for the Tongan economy, it is the export of 'people' that has given the Tongan people a larger degree of economic freedom. The benefits, however, are not as great as they might be, since Tongan people are subject to various forms of heavy taxation.

The revenues collected from these taxes are used for paying the salaried class, instead of for improving public services such as education, roads and health. Since the 1980s, because of the prevailing neo-liberal ideology, the government has been attempting to shift responsibility for these public services to the community at large (see Māhina, 2004a), so that the population is increasingly asked to pay for them itself. This makes overseas remittances even more important for many families in Tonga.

Significantly, the sustainability of remittances is a big issue given that a growing diaspora is sending remittances back home to a constant or declining non-migrant population. The most generous remitters are people who were born in Tonga and have retained close ties with people there. They send money through banks, in transactions that are recorded officially as transfers, or they hand carry cash, the amount of which can only be estimated. The flow of remittances also has to be discussed within the context of the extended household. Lee (2003) has described as the 'transnational cooperation of kin'. This raises the issue of the relationship between the emigrants and individuals and families in Tonga, and the reasons for remittances being sent home, and whether altruism, obligation, or self interest predominates.

For instance, Poirine (2004) raises the following questions from an economic standpoint: (a) Do the remittances received per recipient increased in proportion to the number of emigrants? Or (b), do emigrants remit less and less as their numbers increase in relation to the number of recipients? And in any case, (c) do emigrants take into account the number of remitters and the number of recipients when deciding the amount to remit? The answer to these questions

assumes that the motives for remittances are individual, such as self-interest or altruism. If remittances were the repayment for an informal loan or informal services of some sorts (in the form of exchange) or the result of informal agreements, there would be no reason why the remittances per emigrant would depend on the number of emigrants per recipient.

It therefore seems as if Poirine's (2004) assumptions about the remittances and the relationship between Tongan migrants overseas and their relatives back home are simplistic. He fails to recognize that there are both individualistic and organizational modes of remittances. By organizational modes, I refer to organizations such as the Tongan Kava Club (*Kalapu Kava Tonga*), village trustees (*Kulupu Faka-Kolo*), development groups (*Kulupu Fakalalakaka*), church groups, and ex-students associations, amongst many others, which remit millions of dollars to the home country. These groups make up the most powerful source of remittances in recent times.

In fact, this is the major reason why the remittance flow to Tonga has increased over the years. This fact also calls into question the validity of current projections that remittances will decline due to the changing attitudes of members of the younger generation of migrants. In effect, changes are taking place in the younger generations' attitudes towards remittances, but the nature of remittances in recent times has been transformed and they are increasingly organizational rather than individual in nature. But this is not the whole story either -- as we will see below, even though the various associations and organizations are becoming the means for sending money back to Tonga, the

purposes for which the money is used at the other end is often individual rather than communal.

**Table 5.3**

**Average annual Total Income per household, by main source and Island division 2001 (T\$)**

<i>Main source of Income</i>	<i>Tongatapu</i>	<i>Vava'u</i>	<i>Ha'apai</i>	<i>'Eua</i>	<i>Niuas</i>	<i>Total</i>
<b>Cash Income</b>	<b>14,421</b>	<b>11,267</b>	<b>8,753</b>	<b>9,063</b>	<b>8,177</b>	<b>12,871</b>
Wages and salaries	5,768	3,020	1,510	2,264	1,345	<b>4,576</b>
Remittances from overseas	3,121	1,490	1,254	1,820	1,358	<b>2,542</b>
Sales of own produce	1,452	3,506	2,762	2,978	2,954	<b>2,066</b>
Bank loan	1,410	960	567	663	578	<b>1,189</b>
Other cash sources	2,670	2,291	2,660	1,338	1,942	<b>2,498</b>
<b>Non-Cash Income</b>	<b>5,684</b>	<b>5,122</b>	<b>7,716</b>	<b>5,842</b>	<b>4,324</b>	<b>5,734</b>
Consumption of own produce	2,200	2,719	5,181	3,390	1,752	<b>2,614</b>
Imputed rent	2,720	2,168	1,763	2,187	1,282	<b>2,469</b>
Other non-cash sources	764	235	772	265	1,290	<b>651</b>
<b>Total Income (Cash and Non-cash)</b>	<b>20,105</b>	<b>16,389</b>	<b>16,469</b>	<b>14,905</b>	<b>12,501</b>	<b>18,605</b>

Source: Statistics Department, Government of Tonga

The latest survey by Tonga's Department of Statistics in 2001 of the average annual total income per household in the main island divisions in Tonga (Table 5.3) showed that remittances were the second largest major source of income next to wages and salaries in all the islands except the two Niuas.<sup>12</sup> In fact, the limited sources of employment in these outer islands result in the high reliance on remittances from relatives abroad. With the exception of Vava'u and Tongatapu, in which economic development is concentrated, remittances in Ha'apai and 'Eua are very nearly equal to those of the highest source of income, namely wages and salaries.

Poirine's (2003) argument that remittances are simply repayment for informal loans, services or agreements of some sort seems problematic in this

<sup>12</sup> Niuas refers to the two outer islands to the very north of the Vava'u group called Niuva Fo'ou and Niuva Toputapu (see Map 2).

context. In Tonga, remittances are viewed in terms of obligations whereby remitters send cash or goods as an obligation to their relatives or friends at home. It is a form of reciprocity and is based on the notions of *fetokoni'aki*, *tauhi vaha'a/vā*, *'ofa*, and *fatongia*. Giving something in return takes place in most cases, but it does not necessarily mean that it is a form of repayment. It is rather seen as an expression of *hounga'ia* (appreciation).

**Table 5.4**

**Total Annual Income per capita by main source, and by Island division 2001 (T\$)**

<i>Main source of Income</i>	<i>Tongatapu</i>	<i>Vava'u</i>	<i>Ha'apai</i>	<i>'Eua</i>	<i>Niuas</i>	<i>Total</i>
<b>Cash Income</b>	<b>2,597</b>	<b>1,913</b>	<b>1,815</b>	<b>1,692</b>	<b>1,802</b>	<b>2,335</b>
Wages and salaries	1,039	513	313	423	297	<b>830</b>
Remittances from overseas	562	253	260	340	299	<b>461</b>
Sales of own produce	261	595	573	556	651	<b>375</b>
Bank loan	254	163	118	124	127	<b>216</b>
Other cash sources	481	389	551	249	428	<b>453</b>
<b>Non-Cash Income</b>	<b>1,024</b>	<b>870</b>	<b>1,600</b>	<b>1,091</b>	<b>953</b>	<b>1,040</b>
Consumption of own produce	396	462	1,075	633	386	<b>474</b>
Imputed rent	490	368	366	408	283	<b>448</b>
Other non-cash sources	138	40	159	50	284	<b>118</b>
<b>Total Income (Cash and Non-cash)</b>	<b>3,621</b>	<b>2,783</b>	<b>3,415</b>	<b>2,783</b>	<b>2,755</b>	<b>3,375</b>

Source: *ibid.*

This remains the case according to informants from Leimatu'a. The view of 'Alipate Hingano of Leimatu'a represents the view of the majority of remittance receivers interviewed in Tonga. Hingano described the support he received occasionally from his brother Siosifa Hingano. His brother is a Methodist Church minister in the United States and he occasionally remits money to assist his family especially the education of his children and other relatives. He has done this for more than ten years according to Hingano and he has not asked for anything in return. It is more like an obligation for him,

knowing that it is his responsibility to help his relatives back home. Hingano went on to say that his wife, Ma'ata, always sends back Tongan *koloa* such as fine mats and *tapa* to the brother as a token of appreciation (interview with Hingano, 2004). The same goes for other informants, as they believe that remittances sent by their relatives abroad are part of an obligation.

The reverse flows of goods continually remind migrants of their economic and social obligations toward the home-based members of family networks. According to Ahlburg (1991), there is evidence that goods sent from Tonga are as part of a mutually understood labor 'investment' contract between relatives (see Ahlburg, 1991). They are used increasingly because of their cultural significance to forge personal, quasi-kinship relations within the migrant population. The newer relations include patronage and requests for favors, which accompany gifts. They include the relationships between migrants and those at home (friendship) with whom they do not have blood ties or those outside the *fa'ahinga* and *fāmili* networks. However, the changing nature of Tongan economy allows these newer relationships to play an important role.

Presentations of Tongan valuables to distant kin or non-kinsfolk frequently represent an attempt to bind them in webs of personal obligation that may widen the migrants' support network and employment opportunities and help to secure their financial status in the foreign country. A diverse set of social relations is required to meet migrants' needs in a highly competitive, economically insecure, and culturally alien environment. However, the reverse flows of Tongan goods have received less attention in the migration literature than remittance flows into the country, although they are an integral part of the

whole migration-remittance complex and embody the kinship relations that underpin the remittances (see James, 1997).

Sending remittances to the homeland still takes place and my fieldwork conducted in Leimātu'a suggests that the rate of remittances has increased over the years. All the families studied agreed that the level of remittances has increased in recent years compared to the past. The growth in remittances owes a lot to the revolution in technology -- the development in information and communication technologies (Internet, high-tech telecommunications infrastructure, etc.), as well as to the rising costs of services in Tonga.

The improvement in the standard of living of both remitters and recipient families compared to past years is also a major factor. Most families abroad in the host countries have been able to stabilize their living conditions. This includes the ability to obtain permanent residential status, better education, and good jobs. As a result they are able to contribute more and in different forms to family, friends, and relatives back home. The tendencies to remit home have been increased by the stabilization of their living conditions (interview with Mesui, 2005). In the homeland, the improvement in the living conditions of recipient families and their demand for services has also increased the demand for remittances (conversation with Talakai, 2005).

It is commonly found worldwide that the higher the living standards, the higher the demand for money and the necessary goods to maintain these living standards. Tonga has slowly developed into a semi-modern society in which socio-economic demands have increased to meet the necessities of the new emerging social landscape. One important issue emerging from my study is the

increasing social competition (*fakavahavaha'a* or *fesiosiofaki*) between different households resulting from comparisons of which family has the highest standard of living (*tu'umālie* or *tu'uulelei*) in the community. *Fesiosiofaki* or *Fakavahavaha'a* competition is now regarded as a normal part of modern *hafekasi* culture, related to the modern capitalist world. Competitiveness was formerly regarded in both Tongan culture and Christianity as immoral, but now it encourages people to force their way up the socio-economic ladder of society.

In recent times, Western Union branches, financial institutions, courier services, and freight companies have increased in numbers in Tonga. These developments have energized the growth of remittances to the kingdom. All informants in the home country describe how their relatives return home to visit them when they have obtained permanent residential status abroad. They return to see the standard of living back home. In doing so, they gain an understanding of the requirements to improve the living conditions of the family, which motivates them to remit money and material goods such as vehicles, building materials, food, and clothes.

While remittances ensure the survival of the Tongan economy, it seems that most Tongans fail to take notice of the current imbalance in the process. The flow of remittances to the home country is much greater than the flow in the other direction. This now extends to the remittance of goods. In many cases, migrants send clothes, footwear, toiletries, and other goods, which end up being sold in fairs and flea markets in Tonga. Recently, remittances in kind appeared to have been replacing monetary remittances.

**Table 5.5****Balance of Payments Summary 2002-2003 T\$ '000)**

	2002			2003	Annual	
ITEMS	Jul-Sept	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun(P)	2002/03	2002
<b>Tonga's Current Account Summary</b>						
<i>Current Account</i>						
Exports f.o.b	10,438	18,080	5,605	6,006	40,129	39,976
Imports f.o.b	41,021	36,845	34,155	38,962	150,983	160,900
<i>Goods Balance</i>	-30,582	-18,765	-28,551	-32,956	-110,854	-120,924
Services credit	9,417	11,763	12,997	14,061	48,238	49,617
Services debit	16,370	19,711	32,057	23,199	91,337	70,144
<i>Services Balance</i>	-6,953	-7,948	-19,061	-9,138	-43,100	-20,527
Income credit	3,524	3,836	4,680	2,996	15,036	14,499
Income debit	1,802	3,191	2,047	2,073	9,113	8,355
<i>Income Balance</i>	1,723	644	2,633	923	5,923	6,144
Transfers credit	35,831	46,399	33,109	34,117	149,456	163,589
Transfers debit	12,048	8,249	4,692	2,941	27,930	35,398
<i>Transfers Balance</i>	23,782	38,150	28,417	31,176	121,525	128,190
<b>Current Account Balance</b>	<b>-12,030</b>	<b>12,082</b>	<b>-16,562</b>	<b>-9,995</b>	<b>-26,505</b>	<b>-7,117</b>
<b>Tonga's Capital Account Summary</b>						
<i>Capital Account</i>						
Credits	7,579	7,600	6,140	7,395	28,714	30,840
Debits	634	305	1,681	551	3,171	1,456
<b>Capital Account Balance</b>	<b>6,945</b>	<b>7,295</b>	<b>4,459</b>	<b>6,844</b>	<b>25,543</b>	<b>29,384</b>
<b>Tonga's Financial Account Summary</b>						
<i>Financial Account</i>						
Other Credits	557	3,350	4,638	4,752	13,297	5,129
Official Reserves	10,678	-15,814	7,762	-10	2,616	-14,996
Debits	5,160	3,786	905	3,403	13,254	12,103
<b>Financial Account Balance</b>	<b>6,075</b>	<b>-16,250</b>	<b>11,495</b>	<b>1,312</b>	<b>2,632</b>	<b>-21,970</b>

Source: Government Department of Statistics

In fact, the benefits from remittances tend to flow back to the countries from which they came through other mechanisms, such as taxation, trade imbalances and trade deficits. The remittances received do not simply stay in the economy of the recipient countries. Table 5.5 shows the balance of payments summary for 2002-2003.

The value of total imports for the 2002 financial year was four times more than the value of total exports. The most recent table on foreign trade in Tonga for the first quarter of 2005 (Table 5.6) points to a large increase in the balance of payment deficit which is not a good sign for the Tongan economy: only 5.2 per cent of the value of imports was recovered from exports.

**Table 5.6**

**Foreign Trade for the First Quarter of 2005**

(T\$'000)

<i>Total Imports</i>	54,455
<i>Total Exports</i>	2,833
<i>Total Re-Exports</i>	32
<i>Trade Balance</i>	-51,590

Source: *ibid.*

Brown and Ahlburg studied the use of remittances in Tonga and found that despite a considerable diversity in the use of remittances, their primary use was for consumption (see Brown and Ahlburg, 1999). In fact, the consumption-oriented nature of remittances is still there but there are signs of change in recent years. The purpose of remittances has slowly shifted from collectivism to individualism as remitters dispatch money and goods as a form of investment from which, at the end of the day, they are the only one who benefit.

It has become evident in recent years that property development is a major form of investment in which migrants build houses for rent on their land in Tonga, especially the capital Nuku'alofa where the majority of the population lives. Kerry James (1993) has argued that there is a growing tendency for individuals to remit independently rather than as part of a kin group and that the concept of 'transnational corporation of kin' is becoming increasingly

inappropriate in Tonga's case. The trend to investment reflects the changing nature of economic ties with the focus shifting from the family to the individual.

Manase Mesui of Oakland, California has built a house for rent in the capital Nuku'alofa while he remains working as a concrete contractor in California. According to Mesui, this is a good investment for his family as the money from the rent is saved in his private account in the local bank in Tonga. He learned this move from his father who also has property in Tonga and who is now retiring and moving back to Tonga. His two older brothers have followed in his footsteps as they know that this is a profitable investment. The best thing about this kind of investment, according to Mesui, is that when you retire, you have something to rely on back home (interview with Mesui, 2005).

Another important factor to consider is the impact of remittances in the distribution of income. Ahlburg investigated the impact of remittances to Tonga on the distribution of income in the mid-1980s. He argued that;

Remittances were received by 90 per cent of households, and accounted for 52 per cent of cash income and 28 per cent of total (non-remittance) income. Remittances made the distribution of income, particularly of cash income, more or less equal: the Gini coefficient for total income declined from 0.37 to 0.34 with the receipt of remittances, and for cash income from 0.49 to 0.40. If other measures of inequality that give more weight to those at the bottom of the distribution are adopted, the same conclusion is reached (Ahlburg, 1999)

Ahlburg's results were once applicable but the changing nature of remittances in recent years has contributed to greater inequality in the distribution of income, especially when remittances are utilized in the business sector rather than for consumption. In fact, remittances as a form of investment have had a great impact on the distribution of income. Interestingly, remittances are seen as

welcome if they make distribution of income more equal but as unacceptable when they do not. However, even though the impact of remittances on the distribution of income appears negative from a moral standpoint, they do provide a social and political, as well as demographic safety valve (ibid.) The migration and remittance economy allows incomes in Tonga to be maintained and the pressure on land to be relieved by the movements of large numbers of people overseas. This is true, even though much of the money sent to Tonga is then spent on imports, so that the money goes straight back to the host countries of the emigrants.

## **5.2 Economic Effects of Remittances**

The overall economic development in the Kingdom of Tonga since 1966 is considered a failure. This is because the Tongan economy has not been able to stand on its own feet without the support of overseas countries. While changes in the economic sphere have taken place with far-reaching consequences, the underlying elements of Tongan society do not allow Tonga's economy to flourish. Tongan people have benefited from waves of economic development in different ways, most notably through migration and remittances, but these forces have failed to bring about more general economic growth.

Remittances have had some negative effects on the economy of the Kingdom. The increased standard of living and growth in family incomes has resulted in Tonga becoming one of the most prosperous countries in the region compared to other island states, with a per capita GDP of about 1,638 USD (see NRBT, 1998). However, remittances have caused upward pressure on wages and

prices, which negatively affects the competitiveness of the country. They have also increased the purchasing power, as a result of which the general price level has increased when compared to neighboring islands.

In Tonga, since remittances are used primarily to finance consumption, the impact on development is of minor importance. Much of the money is spent on imports so that total savings generated by remittance flows are relatively low. The impact on monetary development, the exchange rate and external reserves is modest. The conversion of remittances in foreign currency into Tongan Pa'anga causes upward pressure on the external value of the Pa'anga, but this is offset by the weakening of the exchange rate of the Pa'anga resulting from the purchase of foreign currency in connection with imports (*ibid.*). Remittances have a neutral effect on the money stock. While remittances generally increase the money stock, this is almost entirely offset by outflows of liquidity through the balance of payments together with an increase and subsequent decline in external reserves. This is due to the high level of expenditure on imports.

Even though the failure of the Tongan economy to develop rapidly may be due to the lack of natural resources and the size of the country, one also has to consider other alternatives. In fact, the Tongan government seems to overlook some of its economic strengths, such as its human resources.

However, in the case of Tonga, talking about economic change is not only to discuss the nature of economic transition but also the effects of external economic forces on the social and political behavior of the Tongan people and the development of the *hafekasi* (half-caste) culture (see Chapter 6). This is the only way to approach the reality of the transformation taking place in Tongan

society. There are some important aspects of Tongan traditions that have been changed by external forces such as international migration and remittances. The economic effects of remittances are well illustrated when we look at the changing economic behavior of people in Tongan society.

### **5.3 Changing Economic Behavior**

This section focuses on the changing nature of peoples' economic behavior in the Tongan economy as a whole. Economic change resulting from the growth of international migration in Tonga goes side by side with socio-political development (see Chapter 6). However, the economic effects of international migration in Tongan society are the driving force of change. The areas where the changes have been most intense include the Westernization of lifestyles, growing materialism, the opening up of Tonga to the outside world and vice-versa, the increase in the number of educated people and returning migrants, and the emergence of new socio-economic or religious groupings resulting in a new distribution of power. Most of these changes, have taken place because of fundamental changes occurring in the economic sphere, but all have combined to produce a new sociopolitical scene that seems to hasten the end of the old polity (see Helu, 1999).

At the village level, it is noticeable that families who have migrants overseas are economically better off than other families who have none. Successful returning migrants have become very powerful economically in some villages. The same applies to the district level and the national level. Consequently, these migrants have become well known, with power and

influence in village, district, and national activities. In Tonga, there are phrases commonly used to describe such people such as *mo'unga'i tangata*, *tangata ivilahi*, or *tangata lahi* (i.e. politically and economically powerful people) with power and influence in village and district affairs. The key economic notion of profit-making introduced by returning migrants and educated elites seemed perplexing at the dawn of the modernization era in Tongan society. Given the fact that the profit motive was opposed to traditional cultural values, it quickly became associated with the emerging *hafekasi* culture.

In the village of Leimatu'a, Muhu Kau returned in early 2000 to live in the village after spending more than fifteen years in California. He built a store in the village where he sells American-style clothes, foodstuffs, toiletries, and perfumes of different sorts, amongst other goods. Four times a year, a container of goods for his store arrives in Leimatu'a. He returns occasionally to the States to work and import goods for his store. As a result, Mr. Kau is considered a *tangata lahi* and he receives all kind of respect from the community, as well as from the chief of the village. While interviewing Mr. Kau, he gave an account of his childhood upbringing in Leimatu'a. He was considered nothing in the village when he was young because he was poor. He later migrated to America as a Mormon convert. According to Mr. Kau, he is now a different person in the village and everyone wants to be his friend (interview with Kau, 2005).

Siolo Tonga explained that he migrates occasionally to work with his brother in Sacramento because by working on the land he is no longer able to support his family. According to Mr. Tonga, other people in the village have better houses and cars because they move in and out of Leimatu'a to work

overseas. His brother in Sacramento asked him many times to come to America but he refused. However, looking at the success of others who migrated on a short-term basis encouraged him to migrate for the first time. In so doing, he could be able to build a better house and buy a used car for the first time (interview with Tonga, 2005).

Viliami Lavulavu of Leimatu'a migrated to New Zealand in the early 1970s. He returned back to Leimatu'a in 2000 becoming one of the successful farmers in the village. Lavulavu was a stonemason contractor in Auckland, New Zealand, for many years. According to Lavulavu, while he was in New Zealand, he always thought of returning home one day. He worked and saved money for more than ten years and his dream came true in 2000 when he returned and become a farmer. He is now employing local village people on his farm and he is now become a *tangata lahi*, not only in the village but for the whole of the Vava'u group (interview with Lavulavu, 2004).

The way people approach economic matters in Leimātu'a has been transformed sharply since few decades ago according to Fotu, the chief of Leimātu'a. As the leader of the village, he believes that international migration is one of the key reasons why people change their attitudes towards the traditional mode of economic activities. According to Fotu, the traditional practice of *polopolo* where his *kāinga* give the best output from the land to him has declined. People send the best from the land to their families overseas and the rest is sold at the local market. It is a common practice for people to do this every year. In return, they receive different forms of remittances from their relatives in the host countries (interview with Fotu, 2004).

This is common in all villages in the Kingdom of Tonga as returning migrants with capital and receivers of remittances are more successful than others. In some cases, Tonga migrants stay abroad while a reliable family member or a friend runs the business back home for them. This is common in many villages as migrants finance the growing of agricultural products such as root crops, *kava*, and vegetables for export or to sell in the local markets. They only come to visit especially during the winter times in the host countries. While in Tonga, they are well known for the amount of money they spend and they are considered as *kau tu'umalie* (rich people). Their business partners back home become more successful economically as they are able to elevate their economic status in society.

To end this section, let me give an example of the change in the traditional socio-economic status of *fahu*. The change in this concept seems to reflect the overall economic change in the Kingdom of Tonga since 1966. The decline in the importance of *fahu* (see Chapter 3) and the superior rank of the sister in relation to the brother are among the key changes brought about by the economic transformation (see Māhina. 1992). In Tongan society, the sister and her children were traditionally of superior social rank than the brother and his children. As such, it was the traditional responsibility of the brother to heed the economic needs of his sister, especially in relation to output from the land. The brother has to provide his sister with the *tokonaki* (best output from the land) and there is no taboo to prohibit the sister and her children from taking anything from her brother's land. Another associated traditional notion is called *fa'iteliha'anga* (freedom to do whatever you like at the expense of someone you

are related to by blood) which implies that your mother's brother is your *fa'iteliha'anga*.

Moreover, the sister-brother relationships in the context of *fahu* are part of a typical Pacific traditional mode of exchange. The brother offers the products of his hand (*ngaue*) from the land to the sister who in return, offers the products she produces in the *falehanga*, the place where women produce traditional goods and handicrafts. These take the form of *koloa* (women's exchange goods) such as *ngatu* (tapa cloth) or traditional *fala* (mats) and *fihu* (fine mats) as a token of appreciation. This is done to maintain her *pule* (authority) while the brother maintains his *mafai* (power) (ibid.). The brother thus provides economic security to his sister as a cultural obligation, expecting nothing in return except *koloa* gifts of appreciation if the sister is able to provide them.

In fact, the new economic mode allows very little room for such traditional exchange to take place. In some cases, the exchange continues to exist but in a more capitalist form. The transition from subsistence to the commercial mode of agricultural activities has put limitations on the bond within the *fahu* institution. The brother in most cases is still willing to offer produce to his sister, but in return his sister, who sympathizes with the changing economic landscape, now feels obliged to give something in return, sometimes including money.

In this manner, the social bond through '*ofa* continues as the sister appreciates the work of her brother and contributes something in return to help him on the land. In theory, the sister and children still have higher social rank but the socio-economic relationships are reflected in the monetary value of the return gift.

To conclude this chapter, remittances from Tongan migrants overseas remain a vital source of revenue for the survival of the Tongan economy. Despite the claim that remittances are going to decline in the near future due to the changing attitudes of Tongan migrants, especially the younger generations, there is no sign of such a phenomenon in recent times. Current statistics show that remittances have been increasing rapidly in the last few years and are now taking on new forms (see Tables 5.1 to 5.6).

Furthermore, the economic effects of international migration have failed to build up the kingdom's economy. This is due to the increasing reliance on remittances and foreign aid. In fact, it is important to maintain its flow as a safety valve for the survival of the Tongan economy. The effects of international migration on the economic behavior of Tongans are alarming. New economic classes are emerging in society and the way Tongan people look at the traditional economic practices such as the *fahu* custom are changing due to the transformation in the economic landscape. This is a change from a traditional mode of economic activities to a modern capitalist one. In fact the economic changes brought about by international migration are leading the way to change in other aspects of the socio-cultural make up of society, and we will consider the impact on Tongan society in the next chapter.

## Chapter Six

### *Socio-Cultural Change*

*The changes that have come over Tonga have been rapid and far-reaching. In the early period of European contact, the changes were relatively slow though still quite significant for that time. But in recent years changes have been gathering such momentum as to be quite overwhelming. The areas where the changes have been most intense have been: Westernization of life style, growing materialism, the opening up of Tonga to the outside world and vice-versa, the increase in the number of educated people, the emergence of new socio-economic or religious groupings resulting in a new distribution of power. Most of these changes, I know, take place because of fundamental changes occurring in economic sphere, but all have combined to produce a new sociopolitical scene that seems to promote the end of the old polity (Helu, 1999: 166).*

#### **6.1 Overview of Change in Tongan Society**

The social structure of any society not only shows how it is functioning, but also its socio-political arrangements. The process of evolution of the social structure varies in both time and place. Occasionally, it is driven by internal pressures but in most cases, external influences predominate. Internal pressures in the case of the Kingdom of Tonga have played minor roles, while external forces have accounted for the transformations taking place in nearly all aspects of social organization.

Here, I argue that the effect of international migration has been something of a psychological revolution brought about by economic change. This has introduced into Tongan society a substantial degree of individualism and capitalist motivation from the host countries, and this is particularly noticeable in the shift in the mode of thinking *vis-à-vis* the socio-political

environment. Returning educators and migrants have introduced radically new ways of critical thinking and open-mindedness.

In the era of globalization, the tensions between aristocracy and democracy, and between traditional culture and change, have intensified over the last few decades. They have attracted the interest of both international organizations and overseas donor countries. The eagerness of outsiders to meddle in Tonga's domestic affairs reflects the fact that the kingdom is part of the global village. Neighboring islands like Fiji and Samoa have experienced the same fate, though in a different manner. In Fiji and Samoa, Western elements were not strange to local people due to the presence of colonial administrators. The transition to modernization was assisted by colonial powers such as New Zealand, the United States and the United Kingdom (see Mara, 1997; Lātū, 2003).

Tonga took a similar route but, as a sovereign nation, its experience was rather different (see Rutherford, 1977; Lātū, 1998; Lawson 1996). The kingdom was not entirely in isolation, as missionaries maintained links with the colonial powers (see Chapters 3 and 4). Nevertheless, the independence of the islands restrained to a certain degree the ability of the colonial powers to intervene in Tonga's affairs.

Helu (1999) has put forward a model taken from social change in Italy in the 14<sup>th</sup> century to explain the socio-political situation in Tonga. The model identifies five ingredients of social change in Italy before the 14<sup>th</sup> century. They were the (a) transformation of a feudal-agricultural economy into a commercial one; (b) the emergence of a middle class; (c) the weakening of a universal

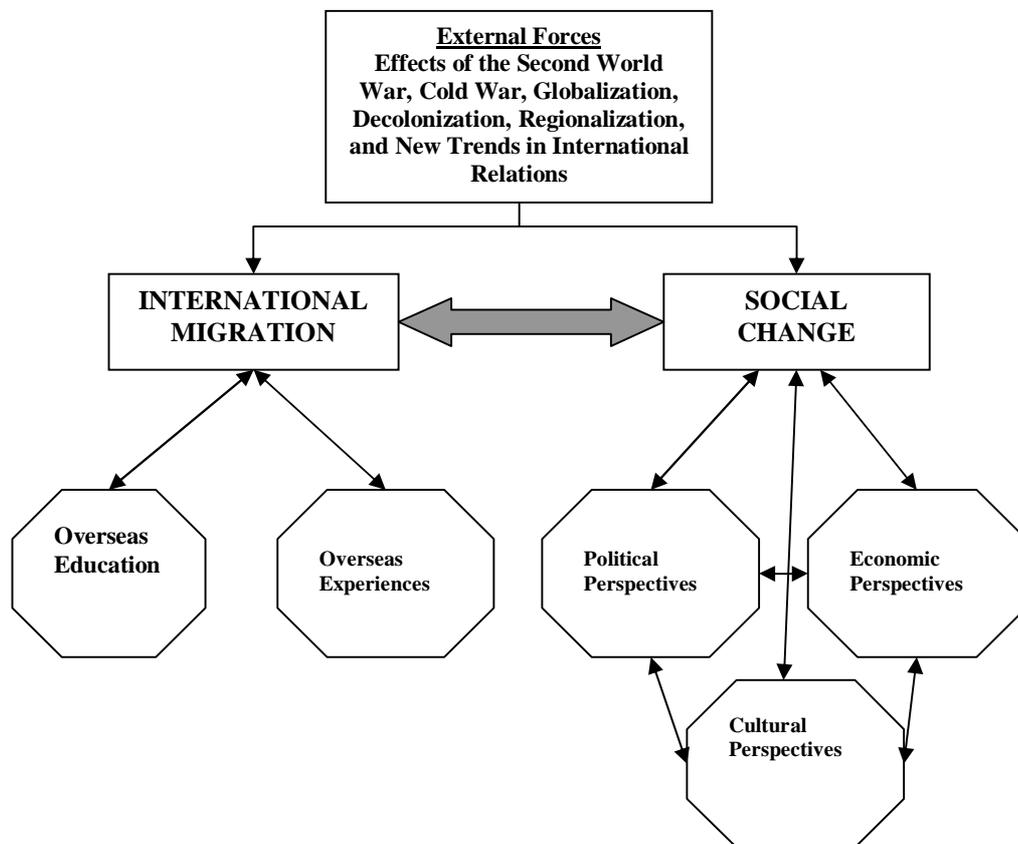
church; (d) the decline in the social and political status of the traditional aristocracy; and (e) new interest in education and the classics (Helu, 1997: 166). Even though the time-span and periods are very different, some elements of Helu's model are applicable in the case of Tonga: the agrarian subsistence economy was transformed from the late 1930s and these changes were reinforced by the economic reforms of 1966. The emergence of the middle classes and the newly rich, the weakened position of the church, and decline in the socio-political status of the aristocracy class have all helped transform the social structure. There has also been a new interest in education (though not the classics). However, to describe socio-cultural change in Tonga, models of social transition should be ideally based on the reality of what is happening in Tonga society, as is discussed in the next section.

#### **6.1.1 Tonga's New Social Landscape Model**

Here I would like to introduce a new model of socio-political and economic development in Tonga which takes into account the contradictory relationship between international migration and traditional socio-political organization. Unlike earlier models of transformation, model Figure 6.1 is not a derivative of any historical process of cultural or structural change but a representation of the reality in Tongan society. It is designed to illuminate the interactions between international migration and social change leading to overall change in Tonga's socio-political landscape.

**Figure 6.1**

**Tonga's New Social Landscape**



In this model, international migration has two distinctive components, overseas education and experiences. These two powerful forces within international migration are regarded as the driving forces of change, and will be discussed in more detail later in the chapter. In contrast, social change can be analyzed from political, cultural, and economic perspectives. Analysis from a political perspective is based on changes in the structure of power in key institutions of society. These include the rise of civil society, the push for democratization, and the economization of traditional institutions such as *fa'ahinga*, *fāmili*, *ha'a*, *siasi*, and *fonua*. Analysis from an economic perspective focuses on the transformations in the economic arena, particularly the move

from agrarian subsistence society to free market enterprise as a result of external economic forces introduced through overseas education and experiences.

The interaction between the fundamental elements that make up the model operates in two ways. Progress is a consequence of both social change and international migration. Both are multi-dimensional and influence each other. International migration contributes to socio-political, economic, and cultural change while social change leads to increased international migration. The discussion of social, political, and economic change that follows is based on this model.

## **6.2 Socio-Cultural Change**

Marcus (1977) in his study of socio-cultural change in Tongan society stated that the complex of institutions, ideas and practices which integrated earlier Tongan culture with versions of foreigners (*papālangi*) culture, could be referred to as a ‘compromise’ culture. Marcus was generally referring to the reign of the first three Monarchs (Kings George Tupou I, George Tupou II, and Queen Salote Tupou III) before King Taufa’ahau Tupou IV. Marcus’s ‘compromise’ culture, however, was taken later by scholars as a historical baseline for the changes and the increasing pace of contact with the outside world when King Taufa’ahau Tupou IV brought Tonga into the era of modernization.

Before proceeding any further, let us first examine the term ‘compromise’ culture as used in Marcus’ analysis. This term is highly problematic because it conceals the contradictions between the two sets of values

which make it up. It assumes that Western introduced values and traditional values can arrive at a point of compromise, reaching a stage of harmony in Tongan society. In other words, Marcus romanticized the coexistence of these values. In fact, the values introduced from the West and traditional values oppose each other at all levels of society. The contradictory relationship existing between them has been never-ending, as can be witnessed in many historical events.

In view of the problematic nature of Marcus's analysis, I would like to consider instead *hafekasi* (half-caste) culture, in which the conflicting relationships of traditional culture with the newly introduced complex of institutions, ideas and practices instituted since contact are made explicit. *Hafekasi* culture is the combination of traditional culture and new institutions, practices, and ideas introduced by the reforms. Some of the major features of *hafekasi* culture relate directly to the development of key cultural institutions in Tongan society. Although the tendency has been to emphasize the persistence of traditional concerns with rank and hierarchy in Tongan social relations, *hafekasi* culture in fact embodies a complex interaction between the forces of leveling and the forces of privilege that has been strongly encouraged by the new economic reforms taking place in Tongan society.

The traditional system of social stratification, which had already crumbled since contact with the outside world, has been re-integrated once again within the new context of socio-political and economic development. In relation to the traditional system of social stratification, this process involves the reduction of the status of chiefs in terms of elaborate respect protocols as well as

their prerogatives and effective authority over people and land. Second, it involves the replacement of the hierarchical, multifunctional lineage system by government and church hierarchies and by a land tenure system which has encouraged the development of nuclear family units enmeshed in loose networks of extended kinship as the kernel of social organizations (see Rutherford, 1977).

The key cultural concepts of *faka'apa'apa* (respect), *fetokoni'aki* (cooperation), *tauhi vaha'a/ tauhi vā* (maintaining a close relationship based on love and cooperation), and *'ofa fonua* (patriotism/nationalism), which made up the very core of Tongan traditional forms of stratification, have been transformed once more. The transition from a limited mixture of traditional institutions, practices, and ideas together with incorporated values and beliefs redefined within the context of globalization has been facilitated by the opening of Tonga to the outside world and above all the unavoidable effects of international migration.

The notions of *faka'apa'apa*, *'ofa fonua*, *fetokoni'aki*, and *tauhi vaha'a/tauhi vā* are still the core cultural elements but their meaning has been changed. A new era has emerged in which the underlying elements of culture and traditions which upheld Tongan society for many centuries have been slowly shaken and may be dismantled at any point in future. The core elements of Tongan culture such as *anga fakatonga* (Tongan way of life) have slowly diminished in importance in the process of development. The old social pyramids (see Figures in Chapter 3) seem inconsequential to returning migrants, and this has led to the emergence of a new hierarchical order to define how people live in society.

While the Tonga Traditions Committee, churches, and government are trying to preserve the *anga fakatonga* (Tongan Way of Life), the external pressures are unavoidable (see Wood-Ellem, 1999; Rutherford, 1977; Lātūkefu, 1974; Lawson, 1996; Lātū, 1998). In fact, it is understandable that Tonga had to face the choice of either maintaining traditions and culture and staying in isolation, or opening up to the outside world and surviving economically. The only answer to the Tongan dilemma was to open up to the outside world while concurrently engaging in limited cultural preservation.

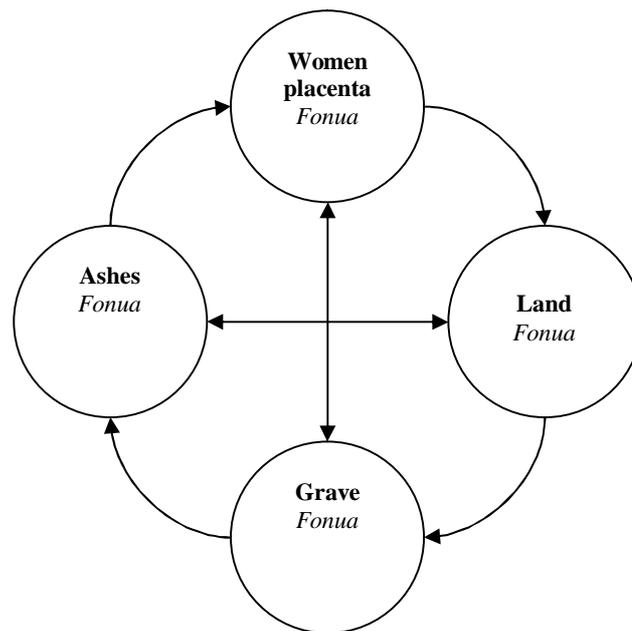
This is really a big challenge for Tongan society, as the reliance on international migration through remittances requires reducing the influence of some key aspects of the *anga fakatonga*. The key cultural concepts of Tongan culture such as *faka'apa'apa*, *'ofa fonua*, *fetokoni'aki*, and *tauhi vaha'a/tauhi vā* mentioned above remain vital in the thinking of Tongan people while at the same time allowing change to take place as a means of economic survival.

In fact, the reality is that international migration is an important factor in the erosion of traditional boundaries between languages, cultures, ethnic group, and nation-states. Even those who do not migrate are affected by movements of people in or out of their communities, and by the resulting changes. Migration is not a single act of crossing a border, but rather a lifelong process that affects all aspects of the lives of those involved (see Chapter 2; Castles and Davidson, 2000)

The best instance of change is seen in the ties to the *fonua/kelekele* (land). Land tenure as the primary source of everyday consumption in the traditional subsistence mode has been altered under the new agricultural reforms initiated as

part of the new economic reforms promoted by returning scholars. Control of land is also related to the notion of national identity for Tongans. However, the changing significance of *fonua/kelekele* away from its traditional sense has led to many changes in the relationship between various other institutions in society.

**Figure 6.2: *Fonua* Life Cycle**



In traditional Tongan culture, the bond to the *fonua* (land) was a major source of power. Land owned by the *hou'eiki* was distributed to their subjects under the land law (see Lātūkefu, 1975). However, the bond with the land is a very important value as is stated in the Tongan motto; *Koe 'Otua Mo Tonga Ko Hoku Tofi'a*) (God And Tonga Are My Inheritance). The words *tofi'a*, *kelekele* or *fonua* refer to estate or land and this is traditionally the prime source of livelihood for Tongan subjects. The concept of *fonua* is significant in Tongan culture as it reflects the strong connection between the Tongan people and the land. It is believed that someone's identity is defined by their link to the *fonua*.

The words *tangata'i fonua* (man of the land) and *fefine'i fonua* (woman of the land) represent the intimate association of Tongans and the land. Significantly, the life cycle of Tongans is rooted in the concept of *fonua*. In the Tongan language, a women's placenta is called *fonua*, the land is referred to as *fonua*, and the Tongan word for burial site is *fonua*.

The association with *fonua* in this context is highly symbolic as it is always present in Tongan life from birth through to death. In this regard, a new life is created in the *fonua* (women's placenta) and then born to the *fonua* (earth/land) and at the time of death, the body is buried in the *fonua* (grave) and the ashes return to the *fonua* (land) (see Māhina, 1992). Figure 6.2 demonstrates that the *fonua* concept is a life cycle that is continual. In fact, the significance of the concept is witnessed in all aspects of Tongan culture. Nationwide, the symbol of Tonga's independence is expressed in the offering of Tonga in 1862 to God for protection. It is said that King George Tupou I grasped a handful of *kelekele* (soil) and prayed for God's protection of the archipelago (see Lātūkefu, 1974; 1975).

The traditional concept of *polopolo* (offering the best output from land to the chiefs), despite its decline in Tongan society nowadays, is another example of the interconnectivity of Tongan people with the land. This is closely associated with traditional beliefs, later fortified by Christianity, that the *hou'eiki* were pre-ordained by the Christian God (see Chapter 3 and 8). The first fruits of the land were presented to the *hou'eiki* to ensure continued productivity of the land in the next harvest.

Moreover, the forces of international migration have transformed the connection to the *fonua* concept to the extent that spatial movement limits the way in which it is valued by Tongans. The nostalgic view of land is no longer of great significance to Tongan migrants who live in host countries. They come and go and the sense of attachment to the *fonua* has eroded (interview with Fotu, 2004). In fact, only those who stay in the homeland value the relationship with the *fonua* concept, because they have lived and worked on the land since birth.

Reverend Viliami Vailea Saulala of Leimatu'a believed that the land and being a Tongan are inseparable. He has been working as a church minister in Hawaii for Tongan congregations for more than twenty years and his observations on how Tongan migrants look at their national identity seem to prove his point. According to Saulala, they have been away from their land for many years and the bond to the *fonua* survives only in their dreams. They pretend to act as they are still attached to the *anga fakatonga* but the new environment gives them little room to do so. This is shown in the way their children are raised and how they deal with Tongan culture. They begin to incorporate western elements into Tongan culture such as easing up the notions of *faka'apa'apa* and *taliangi* to the aristocratic class.

Rev. Saulala has retired and is now staying in Leimatu'a where he was born. According to Rev. Saulala, coming back home to live and work his land had made him feel that he is reinventing his true identity. He pointed out that setting foot on the land where the ashes of your ancestors are buried makes you feel a sense of belonging and pride. When asked about his views on the recent changing nature of the bond to the *kelekele*, Saulala agreed that there is a big

difference compared to twenty years ago. He believes that his children who migrated with him when they were young might look at the issue in a more modern way (interview with Saulala, 2004), and be less concerned with their links to the land.

A majority of informants both in the homeland and host countries share similar view with Saulala on the issue. Members of the older generation who grew up in Tonga still value the *fonua* concept while the young doubt its continuation. In Tonga, most informants have accused returning migrants of trying to bring Western elements into traditional society.

Sisi Vaipulu, a local legal assistant in Neiafu Vava'u, spoke of how Tongan migrants sell their land to business people. This is ridiculous according to Vaipulu: some Tongan migrants overseas sell or lease their land to foreigners and business people, leaving their immediate relatives at home landless. The Vava'u group is the best tourist destination in the whole of Tonga and part of the metropolitan center has been leased or sold in this way (conversation with Vaipulu, 2005). According to Fatafehi Mesui of Oakland California, people have moved out of Tonga and sold their *kelekele*, not realizing that it is only the *kelekele* which makes them Tongans (interview with Mesui, 2006).

In the case of the younger generation of returning migrants, including people with education overseas and political radicals, the association with the *fonua* is totally a different phenomenon. Globalization has molded the way they think, resulting in their ignorance of the traditional value of *fonua*. From the views of my informants about *fonua*, I realized the significance of the concept in the changing nature of Tongan society. As pointed out in the *fonua* life cycle, the

transition from life to death is strongly associated with the *kelekele* and change in the socio-structural makeup of society greatly affects these concepts.

### 6.2.1 Change in the *Fāmili* and *Fa’ahinga* Institutions

The *fa’ahinga* (extended family) and *fāmili* (nuclear family) institutions are very important in Tongan society. There are other larger units such as the *ha’a* (lineage) but they are declining while the *fa’ahinga* and *fāmili* still maintain vital roles in everyday life. Their existence is crucial in discussing the changing features of Tonga’s social landscape. Specifically, the terms *fāmili* and *fa’ahinga* are amongst several terms use for social units in Tongan society but they have rarely been mentioned in earlier accounts of change in Tonga, even though they make up the most significant institutions in everyday activities.

The term *’api* (the smallest local social unit or nuclear family) and *fāmili* are similar in meaning. These social units, though in some ways bilateral in operation in the formation of social networks, derive from patrilineal descent groups. From the point of view of inheritance and land tenure, the *’api/fāmili* belongs to a *fa’ahinga* or lineage segment, and then the *fa’ahinga* belongs to a major *ha’a* or lineage. In Tonga, all of the *ha’a* are ultimately linked either through descent or cognatic ties with the *ha’a* associated with the three main royal titles (see Māhina, 1992).

This study argues that the *fa’ahinga* and *fāmili* units are key elements in understanding the overall process of change. It is useful to consider them as the main sites of change, given the fact that change in the *fāmili* leads to mutation in

the *fa'ahinga* and from there to the *kāinga* at the village level, and eventually the *ha'a*.

In Tonga, the *fāmili* and *fa'ahinga* and the way they operate play vital roles in maintaining the status quo at all levels in society. Owing to Tonga's small population, the geneological links between different *fāmili* and *fa'ahinga* can be traced back many generations. It is common in Tonga for one to recognize who is who in terms of wealth, place of origins, and geneological background. Inter-marrige between the *fa'ahinga* and *fāmili* from different corners of the archiplego contributes to the enlargement of the role of the *fa'ahinga* as additional social links are added on to the existing networks. As such, the connections between the *fāmili* and *fa'ahinga* reinforce peace and unity in Tongan society because these two important social units are the everyday basis of familial interaction.

Traditionally, in the *fāmili*, the father is the head and there are certain taboos applied to his relationship with the rest of the nuclear family members. Amongst other things, the children are not allowed to touch his hair, eat leftovers from any of his meals, sleep in his bed, or wear his clothes. He is the final decision maker in the family and there is no room for the wife and children to question his decisions. To a certain degree, his decisions are highly authoritarian in nature. He makes sure that the children conform to the instructions of culture and tradition. Obviously, the structure of the *fāmili* is a derivative of the overall structural composition of Tongan society mentioned earlier on (see Chapter 3) in which the structure of power is vertical and flows from top to bottom.

The *fa'ahinga* is headed by the '*ulumotu*'a, usually the eldest brother of the father in the *fāmili*, and all the brothers, sisters and their children are part of the *fa'ahinga*. The *fa'ahinga* in some cases extends beyond its sphere of influence to include distant relatives. Customarily, the structure of power in the *fa'ahinga* is also based on a top-to-bottom flow, in which the '*ulumotu*'a makes final decisions in the affairs of the *fa'ahinga*.

Whenever the *fa'ahinga* is engaged in traditional activities or occasions such as *putu* (funeral), *mali* (wedding), or *fai'aho* (birthday celebrations), members always gather at the place where the '*ulumotu*'a lives to receive directions (*tu'utu'uni*) regarding their role in the event and act accordingly to the instructions given by the '*ulumotu*'a. *Fa'ahinga* and *fāmili* are basically the most important everyday institutions in Tongan society. They exhibit not only the traditional modes of interaction in terms of *taliangi* and *fetokoni'aki*, but also show power distinctions on a daily basis in Tongan society.

Revolutionary changes in these two basic institutions in Tongan society have resulted in democratization and commercialisation of the structure of power both within the *fa'ahinga* and *fāmili* institutions. The same has happened in the Tongan communities in host countries, and these changes have in turn led to further changes at home. This does not imply that the whole traditional mode of interaction and the old structure of power have totally vanished but most have been transformed to suit the changing social landscape.

In the host countries, the absence of the true '*ulumotu*'a results in the appointment of younger brother, sister, nephew or anyone within the *fa'ahinga* circle to give the *tu'utu'uni* on traditional occasions and gatherings. This is not

culturally right, according to Lemani Tonga of Sacramento. Mr. Tonga believes that such practices seem to lessen the cultural significance of *fa'ahinga* by adding new elements. It is like mixing water with oil. However, in practice there is no other choice but to appoint someone closely related to the *'ulumotu'a* to represent him. On most occasions, those who are well educated and economically powerful are first on the list, regardless of their social rank in the *fa'ahinga* (interview with Tonga, 2005).

Kalausea Fonua of Oakland described his role as a *matāpule* for the people from his village of Leimatu'a in the Bay Area in California. According to Fonua, he was told by older people from his village to exercise the *matāpule* title *Potu'ihuo*<sup>13</sup> whenever they engage in cultural activities. His role is to lead and direct the *kāinga* from his village in what is to be done according to tradition in cultural activities. Eventhough he is not related by blood to the real *Potu'ihuo* in his home village, he has to take the responsibility in order to fulfil the tasks (interview with Fonua, 2005). Representatives of the *hou'eiki* or *matāpule* appointed to take care of the *kāinga*<sup>14</sup> in host countries are in most instances approved by the *hou'eiki* in Tonga.

This is a common practice in every Tongan community in the host countries, especially when they organize cultural activities. Important social roles in the Tongan social hierarchy at the *kāinga* levels have to be fulfilled by someone appointed by the village people or members of the *kāinga* to enable

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<sup>13</sup> *Potu'ihuo* is a *matāpule* (chief's spokesperson) title from the Village of Leimātu'a.

<sup>14</sup> *Kāinga* is also used to refer to people from one village in Tonga. A chief or *hou'eiki* of a village in Tonga used traditionally referred to his people as *kāinga*.

such practices to take place. Taniela Kaivelata of Auckland, New Zealand believes that this is not right as it causes troubles in many *kāinga* and *fa'ahinga* overseas. Competing for leading roles is common, which results in the breakdown of the system (conversation with Kaivelata, 2005).

While Tongans in host countries continue to observe the *anga fakatonga* through performing traditional cultural practices, they fail to take notice of how the new environment shapes the way they do things. They are sometimes accused by Tongans in the homeland of performing the role of *fa'ahinga* and *fāmili* in a Western style. However, since they are the source of remittances for those in the homeland, they have a great influence on the role of *fa'ahinga* and *fāmili* in the homeland as well.

In the home country, overseas experiences and education are the major reason for change. The traditional roles of *fāmili* and *fa'ahinga* are still sustained and practiced but the structural composition (in both form and content) have shifted to reflect the influence of capitalism and democracy. On the other hand, some *fāmili* and *fa'ahinga* are trying to preserve the traditional practices but it is sometimes considered to be only in form rather than substance.

The structural development of the *fāmili* has slowly loosened the many taboos relating to the father as the head of the family. The Western version of the nuclear family has been adopted, in which the children and the father develop more open modes of interaction. Some *fāmili* are still very conservative but the vast majority are more gregarious in nature. Children are allowed not only to question the authority of the father but to develop a relationship based on mutual understanding and compromise. In so doing, the father and the children open up

the door for exchanges of views and ideas regarding the wellbeing of the *fāmili* as a whole. More freedom is given to children, especially to teenage girls to engage in activities that were restricted in the past. The father remains as the head of the family even though his power has been partly devolved to the mother and the children. Still, there are some who consider change as hurting the vitality of the *fāmili* as an important social unit in society. Returning migrants adopt the *palangi* version of the nuclear family. This move is the subject of accusations from hardline conservatives in Tonga as they accuse the migrants of being *fiēpalangi* (acting the life style of white people).

In the village of Leimātu'a, change in the the structure of the *fāmili* is happening at a slower pace compared to some *fāmili* who migrate to the capital Nuku'alofa. According to Siaso Talia'uli, changes can be seen in the *fāmili* institution in the village but are more clearly shown in *fāmili* of return migrants (interview with Talia'uli, 2004). In the capital Nuku'alofa where developments in every aspect of social life are most concentrated, the structure of the *fāmili* is more democratized.

This happens especially in the *fāmili* of returning migrants and the educated elites. Fatani Tavake Lātū, an overseas trained technician, believes that it is necessary to democratise part of the *fāmili* while keeping the key elements of tradition and culture such as *faka'apa'apa* and *fetokoni'aki*. He argues that opening up the relationships between children and the parents especially the father, will help the education of children (interview with Lātū, 2004). Sione Vikilani support Fatani Tavake's view but add that it should be based on what will bring good for the *fāmili* as a whole (conversation with Vikilani, 2004).

In the *fa'ahinga*, economic factors brought about by the waves of change plays a key role in determining the decision making process. Education plays a very important role in this shift and sometimes they go side-by-side to dominate the decision making process of the *fa'ahinga*. The *'ulumotu'a* is still the head, however the decision making process is affected by economic and educational measures in which those with the economic power, *ivilahi*, and better education have influence over the decision making process. This allows in some cases younger brothers, sisters or even nephews and nieces to take over leadership. One ground-breaking change in the *fa'ahinga* is observed when meetings or gatherings are arranged to discuss issues regarding their *fatongia* and *kavenga* in society. The *'ulumotu'a* in a number of cases no longer manipulates the decision making process in the traditional way. Final decisions are being democratized and drawn from what the majority agrees upon.

Sione Lau'i of Leimatu'a describes the change in the *fa'ahinga* by referring to his own extended family. While he is the eldest in the family and entitled to give the *tu'utu'uni*, his younger brother Tevita who is a university degree holder from New Zealand and a teacher in one of the FWC college in Vava'u, overshadows him due to his educational and economic capabilities. According to Lau'i, he appreciates the fact that Tevita is clever and more capable than himself. This has forced him to delegate his traditional authority on occasions by consent to his brother (interview with Lau'i, 2004).

In the Saulala family, 'Isileli Vailea Saulala believes that no matter how successful people are in the educational, political or economic areas, they must conform to what their ancestors have practiced in the past. That is the only way

to keep the unity in both the *fa'ahinga* and *fāmili*. Modernizing the *fa'ahinga* and *fāmili* institutions seriously damages the vitality of Tongan tradition and culture (interview with Saulala, 2004).

Salesi Maketi Kauvaka of the *Kotoa Movement*<sup>15</sup> believed that unity in the *fa'ahinga* and *fāmili* contributes to the overall unity in Tongan society as a whole (interview with Kauvaka, 2004). There is an old Tongan saying *Koe me'a kotoa pe 'oku kamata mei 'api* (everything begins at home or in the *fāmili*) which simply means that when the *fāmili* is peaceful and well led, members will know how to behave in bigger institutions. Moreover, the changes in the *fa'ahinga* and *fāmili* in Tongan society reflect Giddens' view of social change as the shift from pre-modern to modern societies based on our dependence upon increasingly complex and extended social relationships (see Giddens, 1990).

### **6.2.2 The New Rich**

The term 'new rich' (*kau tu'umalie*) is being used as a general term to encapsulate the newly wealthy and educated groups that have emerged in Tonga. In fact, the common basis of their socio-political power is increasingly based on capital, credentials, expertise, and sometimes position in the state apparatus. The way in which the new rich are being classified varies from place to place and it is determined by the nature of the socio-political and economic landscape.

In advanced economies, the new rich have emerged from industrial and capitalist change -- the relationships between the bourgeoisie and the professional middle classes, between the owners of capital and the possessors of

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<sup>15</sup> The *Kotoa Movement* is a conservative movement organized by hard line conservatives in Tonga in 2001 to counter the Tonga Human Right and Democracy Movement (THRDM). The main objective of this movement is to defend the current system of aristocratic privilege.

managerial and technical skills (see Robison and Goodman, 1996). It is more complicated in the West and Asia due to the complexity in socio-political and economic structures.

Moreover, in the case of Tonga, categorizing the new rich is straightforward because of their relatively small numbers. This study argues that the emergence of the new rich is a spin-off from international migration. The existence of such a class was only publicized after the new economic reforms. Figure 6.1, shows how overseas experience and education as derivatives of international migration bring into being the new middle class (educated elites and return migrants with capital) who make up the new rich in Tonga. This group is made up of those who are economically, socially, and politically influential in social affairs.

The emergence of the new rich has influenced the cultural, social, economic, and political life of Tongan society. In Tonga where economic power has long been embodied within the bureaucratic hierarchies of the state apparatus, the emergence of individuals with private control of investment capital, and often-unprecedented amounts of disposable wealth, has had a dramatic impact. The most common development has been the emergence of private entrepreneurs. These range from new capitalist farmers and private sector traders to small-scale industrial capitalists, often entering into partnership with foreign investors.

Within the circle of the new rich, there are people who hold multiple statuses such as being members of the aristocratic class and the new rich simultaneously. A few have capitalized on merging the two orders; the new capitalist and the old feudal order, which together control the political power

base of Tongan society. In so doing, they hold powerful political and economic positions. The best example is the involvement of the present King's children in business activities. The heir to the throne, Crown Prince Tupou To'a, is the most powerful magnate in the whole kingdom. He is the owner of Shoreline Company Limited, the sole provider of electricity, and Tonfon Limited; one of the two providers of telecommunications. He also owns the only airlines company in the archipelago. He has many other business interests, such as ISPs (Internet service providers), television networks, and few other joint ventures with foreign investors. His sister, Princess Pilolevu Tuita, among other interests, is the owner of Tongasat, a satellite company, which manages Tonga's orbital slots; and the whole duty free sector.

There have been fundamental challenges to the role of the state posed by this emerging class. The explosion of an elite culture of materialism, individualism, and conspicuous consumption based on the growth of private disposable wealth is in sharp contrast with the past. A growing middle class based on educational qualifications and expertise confronts the old networks of patronage and loyalty. Unlike the West where conflicts characterized the relationships between the new rich and the state (see Robison and Goodman, 1996), the new rich in Tonga have close associations with the state. Such relationships make them the most successful class in the economic arena.

This new social class brought by the force of international migration can be characterized as global consumers whose lifestyles are more Western than Tongan. This has been shown in their lifestyles, their jobs, the clothes they wear, the food they eat, the people they associate with, the schools their children attend,

and the cars they drive. Language is a major factor that distinguishes the new rich. English is the major language used and mixing Tongan and English is common in everyday conversation. This is a good example of the effects of international migration. Most if not all members of the new rich were educated overseas and their children continue to follow the same tradition. In Tonga, their children are sent to English-speaking schools, especially the Tonga Side School at the primary level and the Tonga High School at the secondary level.

Nowadays, members of the aristocracy in Tonga no longer dominate the new rich class as in the past. They still have power and influence but this is declining. To maintain their status, they must be well off economically in order to uphold their position in the emerging social class. The educated elites hold executive positions in both private and government sectors while some engage in business activities together with returning migrants. The new rich in Tonga are composed of people from both government and private sectors. In the government civil service, white-collar professionals such as doctors, lawyers, high-level government administrators, accountants, technicians, and architects, among others, are members of the new rich.

In the private sector, the phrase, the new rich, refers to those who manage to hold high profile portfolios between level 1 and 3 in the private sector organizational structure, i.e. those who hold managerial and top executive positions. In addition to the Crown Prince and his sister, there are also private entrepreneurs who run businesses in which make up a large portion of the new rich population in Tonga.

The new global class system cannot be understood simply by looking at traditional class development in industrial societies. In Tonga, there are new dynamics at work. Tonga's emerging class system, for example will be profoundly affected by the fact that the old social relations have affected the new ones. It is noticeable nowadays that a considerable number of new investors and capitalists are overseas migrants. They collaborate with the traditional chiefly elite and they make up Tonga's top echelons of government officials and the bulk of its upper class.

**Figure 6.3**

**Modern Socio-Political Pyramid**

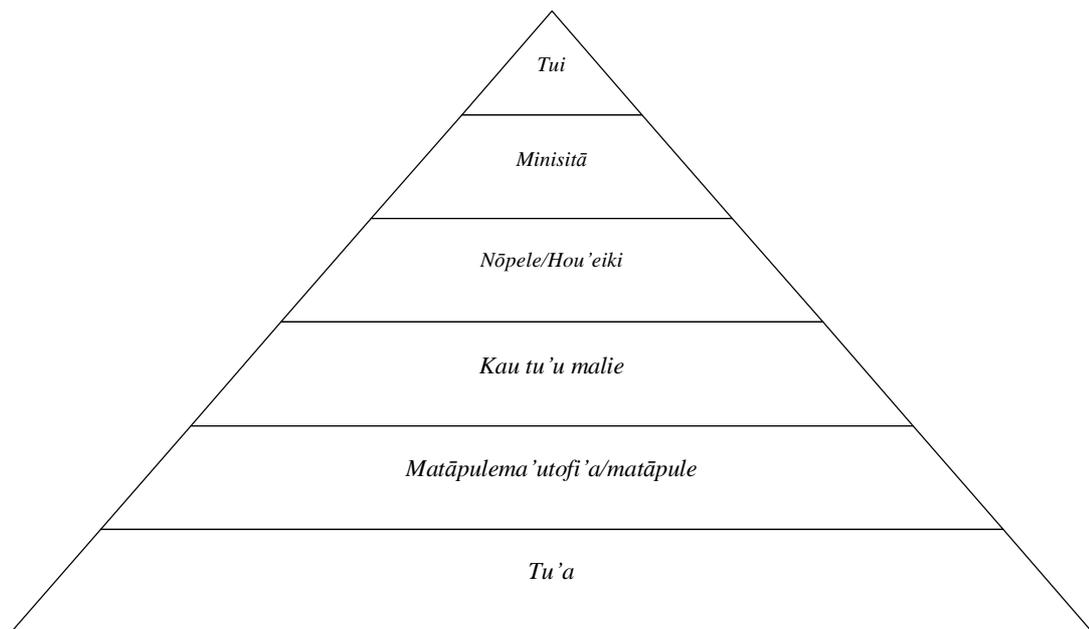


Figure 6.3 illustrates how the socio-political structure of Tonga has been transformed since 1966. In fact, this new structure shows the new mode of interaction between classes, and the changing features of the Tongan social

landscape. Interestingly, there is a growing overlap between socio-political and economic status within the new structure. Despite the fact that they only occupy the fourth level of the pyramid, the status of the newly rich is in practice as high as that of any of the elite classes except the King himself. Those with multiple statuses are simultaneously members of the new rich, cabinet ministers, and the noble class.

**Table 6.1**

**Imports of Consumption Goods for 2000-2003**

<b>Items</b>	<b>Value (T\$)</b>
Primary-Mainly for Household Consumptions	2,791,739
Processed-Mainly for Household Consumption	28,000,873
Transport-Non-industrial Equipment	820,789
Consumer Goods Not Elsewhere Specified	13,925,950
<b>Total</b>	<b>45,539,351</b>
<b>2001</b>	
Primary-Mainly for Household Consumptions	4,016,085
Processed-Mainly for Household Consumption	34,886,575
Transport-Non-industrial Equipment	730,178
Consumer Goods Not Elsewhere Specified	21,151,053
<b>Total</b>	<b>60,783,893</b>
<b>2002</b>	
Primary-Mainly for Household Consumptions	3,678,097
Processed-Mainly for Household Consumption	38,005,737
Transport-Non-industrial Equipment	343,965
Consumer Goods Not Elsewhere Specified	21,389,728
<b>Total</b>	<b>63,417,526</b>
<b>2003</b>	
Primary-Mainly for Household Consumptions	2,864,753
Processed-Mainly for Household Consumption	38,566,988
Transport-Non-industrial Equipment	582,159
Consumer Goods Not Elsewhere Specified	27,270,110
<b>Total</b>	<b>69,284,010</b>

Source: Government Department of Statistics

*\*1 USD = 2.06 Tongan Pa'anga (March 2003)*

Table 6.1 shows the total imports of consumption goods for 2000 to 2003. These figures illustrate the increase in the importation of consumption goods as the total value of imports increases every year. This is in fact a clear

indication of the growth in the standard of living and the spending capacity of the new rich. Between 2000 and 2003, there was a 65.7 percent increase in the importation of consumption goods, a very significant increase rate in just three years. In future, the membership of the new rich class will continue to rise both in numbers and wealth. This is due to the current developments in education and the rise in the standard of living of both Tongans abroad and the homeland.

To conclude this chapter, the effects of international migration on the social and cultural composition of Tongan society have resulted in the emergence of a new social landscape for Tonga (see Figure 6.1). This landscape shows the effects of international migration through overseas experiences and education on Tongan society. Overseas experiences and Western education have brought to Tongan society new ideas which help reshape the traditional way of doing things. The *hafekasi* culture emerged to become the norm in society.

The change in the traditional bond to the *fonua* and *kelekele* has played an important part in distancing Tongan migrants from their traditional roots and heritage. Transformations in key social institutions such as the *fa'ahinga* and *fāmili* have great impact on the social composition of society as a whole. The traditional relationships between members of the *fa'ahinga* and *fāmili* exercised in the past have changed to reflect in a modern context. Education and the economy might become the key aspects of power, eroding key elements in familial interactions such as *'ofa*, *taliangi*, *fe'ofa'ofani*, *tauhi vaha'a*, and *fetokoni'aki*. A new rich class has emerged which acts more Western than Tongan. Socio-cultural change brought by international migration to Tongan

society at the same time affects the political behavior of Tongan people, and in the next chapter we look more closely at the changing political system.

## Chapter Seven

### *Political Change*

This chapter discusses the effects of international migration on the political landscape of Tongan society. It starts with an overview of political development in Tonga, divided into three sections. The first section discusses King Taufa'ahau Tupou IV's reforms, the second discusses the changing political landscape, and the third discusses current political reforms and change underway in Tonga today.

#### **7.1 Political Development**

The effects of international migration on Tonga's political affairs since the massive flow of Tongans out of the country laid the foundations for the recent political discontent in the archipelago. External influences were allowed in by open door policies under the economic reforms introduced by King Taufa'ahau Tupou IV's administration in the mid 1960s.

This has led to the erosion of the values and norms inherent in the politics of tradition, which were key elements in maintaining the hegemony of the ruling regime (see Lātū, 2004b). International migration has turned into a major source of new forms of political action. Since 1966, there have been substantial changes in the political thinking of a growing number of ordinary Tongans. The emergence of the *kau tu'umalie*, the new middle class of the educated and returning migrants, challenged the government and posed a threat to the established supremacy of the aristocratic regime (Benguigui, 1989; Lawson 1996; Lātū, 1996; 1998; 2004b; Helu, 1999).

Shortly after the new economic reforms, a pro-democracy movement was established. The pro-democracy movement (PDM) took shape in the early 1970s as an informal organization composed of Tongan graduates from overseas universities, particularly the University of the South Pacific (USP) (see Lātū, 1996; Lawson, 1996). The PDM became an official organization in the late 1980s, before changing its name to the Tonga Human Rights and Democratic Movement (THRDM) in 2000 (interview with Pōhiva, 2004). The movement has assisted in bringing about a very different approach to the political prerogatives of the monarch and the nobility (Lawson, 1996).

The struggle for socio-political reforms, led by the THRDM, has been supported by the two democratic players in the region, namely Australia and New Zealand. In fact, it is obvious that New Zealand and Australia had a strong interest in the adoption and development of Western democracy in the region (Lātū, 2004b). Nevertheless, the struggle for politico-economic reforms led by the THRDM clearly illustrates the fact that change in other aspects of life have had an impact on the values and norms of Tonga's political culture. It seems that the time has arrived for changes to occur.

The movement of Tongan people to the host countries has played a vital role in shaping their political aspirations. Short-term travel to New Zealand, Australia, and the United States is very common among civil servants on vacation, relatives and friends for family reunions, and church groups on fundraising trips. All these have contributed to a transformation in the way Tongans see political matters. In addition to education, Tongan migrants have experienced the complexity of multi-party politics overseas and most, if not all,

presume that, if democracy is implemented in Tonga, it will bring about development in other aspects of life, most notably the economic sector. Both Tongans overseas and in the kingdom think that it may be possible for Tonga to achieve greater wealth if democracy is adopted (see Lātū, 1998).

Capitalism in the three major host democratic countries bestows upon Tongans the belief that if democracy is achieved, capitalism will follow. Tongan radicals use the host countries as the basis for evaluating the existing ruling regime in Tonga. As a result, the dream of adopting capitalism is mobilizing the majority of the population to support the struggle for political reforms (see James, 2000; Lātū, 2004b). The growth of civil society is undoubtedly important in all aspects of society, but it seems that some followers of the movement are unclear of the implications of capitalism and democracy.

By this, I mean that, while democracy is generally regarded as the best system of government, it has certain weaknesses that need to be addressed, especially when it is applied to Tonga. There are important aspects of Tongan culture which worth preserving due to their role in maintaining socio-political order in Tongan society. However, the actual nature of political development in the Kingdom of Tonga within the context of international migration is clearly seen when looking at the reforms introduced to the kingdom by King Taufa'ahau Tupou IV when he ascended the throne of Tonga. He stepped into an era of international migration, which resulted in the emergence of a new political landscape in the kingdom.

### 7.1.1 King Taufa'ahau Tupou IV's Reforms

*Since the death of Queen Sālote in 1965, Tonga has been struggling with the forces of modern economics; so much that change seems to be spinning out of control, and Tonga survives only because about 40 per cent of its people live overseas. The danger is that in the rush to be rich and to be "modern", Tongans will lose the very sense of identity that has protected them and enabled them to cope with challenges from the outside world. There is also a demand among commoners for political change, and for the people to have greater say in the affairs of the kingdom (Wood-Ellem, 1999:300).*

King Taufa'ahau Tupou IV's reign has been the turning point in the socio-political history of the Kingdom of Tonga. It illustrates the significant variables which have brought about the changes that have been taking place within society. His reign has marked a political and economic shift from right to left; from traditionalism to modernity. The trend to modernity has generally brought about the separation of economic from political power in Tonga's political system, though there are exceptions, such as the participation of the royal family in both.

It is often believed that the King's administration was not fully aware of the consequences of the reforms it introduced. But it is also possible that the King had foreseen the outcomes, but given the country's economic dependency and lack of development, his only option was to bring into force radical reforms and engage in the global process of development.

The opening up of Tongan society to tourism, investment, communications, transportation, international migration, urbanization, and other developments were the outcomes of this globalization. The penetration of Western ideologies occurred due to increasing contact with the *papālangi*, and Tongan customs and culture which had already been Westernized since contact

changed even further. The *hafekasi* culture, which has been continuously readjusted and restructured, became the norm in Tongan society.

The consequences of the process of modernization have escalated to a stage where the structural foundations of society and the *hafekasi* culture are no longer anchored in clear traditional values. The peace and stability rooted in tradition and culture left by Queen Sālote survive in the memories of Tongans, but their actions and behaviour, especially among the young generation, the educated elites, and the new middle class, are changing rapidly.

Interestingly, reactions to the new economy reflects the crisis in the way people think about their society. Hard-line conservatives have raised their concerns, and one writer described the King as a ‘radical modernist’ who had brought to the throne the seeds of instability and change (Campbell, 1994: 20). Another commented that the King had become isolated as he had widened the gap between himself and other members of the aristocratic class (Marcus, 1980: 51). Meanwhile, members of the aristocratic class voiced their disagreement and fear of losing their socio-political power and privileges. In the face of this opposition, radical representatives of the newly emerging social classes (the young, the educated and the middle class) were very supportive of the introduction of such reforms.

The above-mentioned forces have contributed to the overall changes in the socio-political structure of Tongan society, and international migration remains the key factor. The difference between international migration and other forces lies in the degree of change it brings about. Educated migrants and others who understood Tonga’s socio-political structure prior to their migration have

the capacity compare it with the host countries. Because of their Western education and experiences, the result has been a psychological revolution.

Here, I would like to refer to the lyrics of one of Tonga's renowned traditional dances, the *lakalaka*<sup>16</sup> (see Appendix D), lyrics which were specially composed for the King's 80<sup>th</sup> birthday in 1998. This composition, like many others in Tonga, honors the role of the King in the development of the kingdom. As is usual in Tonga's traditional performing arts, the dance itself symbolises the socio-political structure of Tonga society. The choreography of the *lakalaka* is based on chiefly status, and the highest ranking members of the aristocracy class occupy special positions (*vāhenga* and *ta'ofi vāhenga*) which are reserved for them in the dance.

The song composed for the dance also reflects the hierarchical nature of society. The lyrics of this composition (*ta'anga*) praise the King and the aristocracy in a metaphorical manner. The song was composed in response to a request by the King's only daughter, Princess Pilolevu, to tell the story of her father in a straightforward manner with the minimum use of metaphors so that it would be easier to understand (see Kaepler, 1999). This is one of the best examples of how the socio-political structure of Tonga is reflected in important aspects of culture such as the performing arts. This composition can be likened a biography of the King which speaks of his role in bringing Tonga to modernity.

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<sup>16</sup> *Lakalaka* can be described as sung by groups of people with choreographed movements. *Lakalaka* are performed by a large number of men and women who stand in two or more rows facing the audience—women on the left and men on the right, from the observer's point of view. No musical instruments are used, but a chorus of men and women stand behind the dancers to add volume to the metaphorical text (Kaepler, 1999).

Amongst other things, this includes his education, his diplomatic visits abroad, his awards and honors, and the economic projects he started.

However, the reforms introduced by the King strengthened the need for people to migrate to seek employment and education. This was the right time to make such a move, as this was an era of population movement worldwide (see Castles and Miller, 1998). Even though the King's role in the political development of Tonga was justifiable according to the Constitution, the developments in education and international migration acted more like a time bomb set to explode in some time in the future. If we look at the history of the political transition in Tonga, outside influences through overseas experience played a vital role in the process, as returning graduates and other migrants pushed for political reforms, which have led to the emergence of a new political landscape.

### **7.1.2 The Emerging Political Landscape**

Although there are many factors in peoples' awareness of the political situation in Tonga, the structure of the political system as laid down by the constitution was a major cause of concern. The process of modernization was solely in the hands of the King, and this raised many questions (see Lātū, 1996; Lawson, 1996; Campbell, 1994; Pōhiva, 1992; Māhina, 1996).

In the early stages of the modernization era, the King's position was considered legitimate due to the lack of alternative expertise available at that time. In government, there was a considerable numbers of qualified civil servants, but they were not skilled or experienced enough to apply pressure

within the decision making process. Respect for the traditional prerogatives of the King was also a factor. Things changed from the early 1970s as more qualified graduates returned from overseas, but despite the improvement in the level of education and the flow into the country of well-educated graduates in various fields of study, political power was still centralized. This led to rapid changes in political thinking.

The continuing absolute power of the King (see Chapter 3) remains a subject of much political discussion. Cabinet ministers are appointed by the King who has the sole right to dismiss them. This relationship dictates that the ministers abide by the King's wishes. Furthermore, several cabinet ministers have been accused of failing to perform their advisory roles satisfactorily, resulting in problems for the country.

In fact, one has to consider the fact that there are several factors, which complicate the relationship between the cabinet ministers and the King. The King appoints them to ministerial portfolios for life. Serving the monarch unites them under the umbrella of the aristocracy. On the other hand, they have to fulfill their pledges and follow established government procedures. It is obvious in Tonga that when an adherent of change or a radical outspoken person is appointed to the cabinet, they will be molded by the existing political structure.

The best example can be seen in the appointment of Clive Edwards as Minister of Police, Fire, and Prisons in 1996. Prior to his appointment, Mr. Edwards campaigned for the 1996 parliamentary election on the need for change in Tonga's political structure to make it more democratic. Once appointed to the ministerial portfolio, he became the toughest defender of the regime (see Taimi

‘O Tonga, Matangi Tonga, 2004). His dismissal in late 2004 drove him back to his old political beliefs. In early 2005, he was involved in the establishment of a new breakaway Peoples’ Democratic Party (PDP), which separated from the THRDM (see Matangi Tonga Online; Taimi Tonga Online; April and May 2005). He continued to be outspoken in exposing corruption within the government structure and was re-elected to Parliament as a people’s representative in a May 2005 by-election (see Matangitonga Online, 5 May 2005).

Notwithstanding the fact that the King’s economic reforms have been praised for transforming Tonga into a modern society, they have created other socio-political and economic problems, which have changed the attitudes of Tongans toward their socio-political and economic surroundings. The time has arrived for educated elites and returning migrants to step in and take advantage of the flaws in the social structure in their political campaigns, and the results have been devastating for the established socio-political and religious interests. This has contributed immeasurably to the process of democratization of Tongan society (Lawson, 1996: 101; Lātū, 2004b). The establishment of the PDM (later known as the THRDM) helped bring about new and different attitudes towards the political prerogatives of the monarch and the nobility, and the distribution of economic resources in the Kingdom.

Thus, the political system has come under attack from the THRDM, which is seeking extensive institutional changes to ensure greater accountability and responsiveness. For the members of this movement, the fact that the existing system is traditional is not accepted as an obstacle to change and reform (see

Lātū, 1998). Other critics point out that many elements of the present system were in any case introduced under British influences and were therefore inauthentic anyway. Questions of authenticity aside, the local pro-democracy movement refuses to accept that ‘Tongan culture’ as interpreted by the entrenched elites will forever determine that ordinary Tongans must remain in a position of political subordination to a hereditary class of rulers (see Lawson, 1996). As Hau’ofa wrote;

When the control of social economic forces in society shifts from one section of the community that had traditionally monopolized it, to another section, it is inevitable that the newly empowered unit begins to assert itself in demanding a share of institutional authority commensurate with its strength. Conversely, when the ruling section of a community loses control of the productive and other social forces in the society, its ability to govern effectively for the welfare of the community weakens accordingly. In such a situation the ruling section generally acts and reacts in ways that intensify the challenge to its political legitimacy (Hau’ofa, 1993: 1)

The re-alignment of forces within Tongan society today reflects closely the pattern of structural development sketched above. The power of the ruling aristocratic section of the community has declined in every aspect of social life, allowing the rise of commoners demanding a more equal share in the decision making process on matters that concern their interests and welfare, that is, the interests and welfare of the vast majority of the population.

Indisputably, the 1875 constitution was intended to maintain the hegemony of the ruling class, with only a few amendments (see Lātū, 1998). But despite these disadvantages, the 1875 constitution served Tonga reasonably well. It preserved Tonga’s national independence and provided internal stability. However, the constitution has become a target for political action because it is seen to support the power and privileges of the aristocratic minority. Some

people see it as no longer able to cope with the pace of political and social change.

In essence, the primary objective of THRDM is to reduce the power of the King accorded by the 1875 constitution to the extent that the Monarch will act only as the Head of State with limited power, like the British Monarch, while real political power is transferred to the people to decide their leaders through popular vote (interview with Pōhiva, 2004). The THRDM's visions and initiatives are not new but adopted directly from what has been exercised by political parties and advocates of political change in the history of political struggles elsewhere.

This is a clear example of how Tongan society has been drawn into the worldwide system of global norms. The enthusiasm for political change is shown in the escalation in the numbers of supporters of the democratic movement in the last few decades. The outcomes of the last two parliamentary elections were very alarming for the conservatives, with the majority of the nine peoples' representatives labeled radicals and advocates of change -- a landslide victory in favor of democracy (see James, 2002; Appendix E).

The effects of international migration can help to explain the motives behind this movement. Apart from their education, it is obvious that returning migrants influence the political beliefs and behavior of relatives and friends back home by comparing the political structures of Tonga and the host countries.

So far, the THRDM's victory in parliamentary elections seems to have achieved little, as power is still sustained in the hands of a few members of the aristocratic class (see Appendix E). The changing socio-political and economic

landscape in Tonga and its intricacies means that the members of the aristocratic minority fear the loss of their privileges. The response is the full-scale utilization of culture by the ruling elites as a means of protecting their position (Lātū, 2004b). This does not imply that the ruling regime is against change. But while they accept some forms of change, they are also trying to protect their traditional prerogatives under the constitution to defend their position. In Tonga, there are democratic elements within the current system, which deserve to be conserved, but the political discourse between the two parties (the THRDM and the Government) is polarized, leaving little room for negotiation.

Let me give examples of two recent incidents that demonstrate the nature of political participation and of the emerging political landscape in Tonga. In May 2003, the Tongan Government banned the importation of the *Taimi 'O Tonga*, an independent newspaper that is highly critical of the aristocratic government. The ban was ruled unconstitutional by the High Court in Tonga, and the newspaper was allowed back into business again. Despite the court victory of the newspaper, the government in their dissatisfaction initiated another move that resulted in an amendment to clause 7 of the constitution, allowing the government to manipulate the media in the kingdom. This amendment once again prohibited the sale of the *Taimi 'O Tonga* newspaper in Tonga (see *Taimi 'O Tonga Online*, 29 September 2003; Lātū, 2004b).

This move was strongly opposed by most people in Tonga, international media organizations, and neighboring countries. It led to a large demonstration organized by advocates of change in the kingdom. Thousands of people took to the street of Nuku'alofa, the main capital, and the capitals of the two major

island groups, Vava'u and Ha'apai to show their dismay at the amendment to the constitution, which gave the King unlimited power to manipulate the flow of information and took away the rights of the judiciary to review cabinet decisions.

The amendment to the constitution suggested that the tradition-based ruling regime appeared unable to face the reality of change. The Tongan government stood firm by defending the hegemony of the regime. However, in the latter part of 2004, after an appeal by the *Time 'O Tonga*, the High Court in Tonga ruled the decision by the Tongan government unconstitutional and allowed the *Time 'O Tonga* newspaper back into business once again. The Tongan government was asked to pay all the court expenses including those of the civil suits mounted against them by the newspaper (see Matangi Tonga Online, 2004).

In July 2005, the first ever-industrial action took place in the Kingdom of Tonga. More than 80 per cent of the kingdom's government civil servants walked out on July 22, 2005 in dissatisfaction with reforms in the civil service salary scheme (see Matangitonga, Planet-Tonga, Time 'O Tonga, Tonga Star, [All Online sources]).

According to the committee of the Public Service Association (PSA) who organized the strike, the government reform program introduced a new salary structure to take effect from July 1 2005. The new salary structure was a performance-based model that had little or no regard for a civil servant's years of service, experience, or current level of seniority. The new model was introduced without the completion of the required evaluation process, which would be critical for its success. Consequently, there were huge inconsistencies

in the transition from the old model, which resulted in immense salary increases for some while others received either no increase or even salary reductions. New recruits were awarded pay increases that were equal to, or exceeded those, of their supervisors (see Tonga Civil Servant Official Website).

Lack of consultation was also evident between the public service commission and the civil service. The vast majority of civil servants were unaware of, and unprepared for, the new salary structure. Cabinet ministers on the other hand received pay increases which averaged 57 per cent. This was announced a week before new salaries for the civil servants were to take effect. This led to an expectation of similar increases right across the civil service. Disappointed civil servants held several meetings where they agreed that it was best to 'peacefully walk home' in protest against the inconsistencies caused by the prematurely introduced model (ibid.).

On Monday 8 August 2005, Tonga witnessed the biggest ever political demonstration in the country's history. More than ten thousand people, including the majority of the country's civil servants, again took to the streets of the capital Nuku'alofa and marched to the King's palace to submit a petition regarding the PSA's dissatisfaction. The PSA demanded pay increases of 60, 70 or 80 per cent depending on the civil servants' salary levels as outlined in the government civil service structure. Subsequently, the King requested an independent arbitrator from abroad to settle the matter.

These proposed increases according to the PSA would ensure fairer distribution of the country's wealth. The lower levels of workers would be brought above the poverty line to reduce the exodus of qualified personnel. The

'brain drain' is a very serious issue in Tonga, as the most highly qualified workers often leave the country because of dissatisfaction with the structure of civil service pay.

An arbitration team from New Zealand failed in their attempts to bring about a compromise. The strike was extended for more than six weeks and signs of violence erupted in different parts of Tonga. Two government schools, government vehicles, and one of the royal residences were burnt down; together with the destruction of other government properties (see Matangitonga Online). On August 24 2005, hundreds of Tongans in New Zealand marched to the King's residence in Auckland for the first time. (The elderly King currently spends much of his time in New Zealand.) They demanded that the King should find a solution to the industrial action taking place in Tonga (see Taimi 'O Tonga Online, August 2005).

This industrial action shows the political significance of the Tongan diaspora. There was some degree of unity here as the majority of the people in the host countries showed their support for the civil service action in Tonga, not only because of the fairness and justice of the matter but, because they had family members who were involved (see Tongaonstrike Online). The move by the Tongan community in New Zealand gave an indication that there was considerable concern among Tongans abroad about political affairs in the homeland. This also raises the question of whether the Tongan government really understands the significance of the Tonga diaspora. According to Koloamatangi (2005),

‘It has shown in the past that it doesn't understand. One would hope of course that it came around to realizing that a lot of what is going on depends largely on how Tongans overseas provide support for Tonga. I mean, in just the simple matter of government expenditure. If Tongans overseas were to cut their remittances drastically, it would affect the government's ability in Tonga to stay above water, so it's that simple’ (Radio Australia Online, 2005).

Arising from this industrial action is the issue of the importance of civil servants to the country as a whole. Considerable numbers of the strikers are overseas graduates and they make up the backbone of the civil service in Tonga. While on strike, they informed the public of corruption within the government amongst many other issues, which brought them support from elsewhere, including the private sector in Tonga, overseas trade unions, and the Tongan diaspora abroad.

Support in different forms streamed in from local people and businesses and from Tongans overseas, including workers’ unions in New Zealand and Australia. Visiting civil servants on strike from Tonga visited New Zealand to seek the support of the Tongan community there. In association with the New Zealand trade union movement, they worked together to organize a march in the city of Auckland in support of the strike in Tonga.

Advocates of change took advantage of this historic event to further their own political agendas. The Tongan government accused the PSA of shifting their agenda from the pay rise to political issues, which came to include the demand for reform in the political system. When the strike began in late July 2005, the peoples’ representatives in Parliament together with the nobles’ representatives were supportive of the strike. The THRDM leader, Akilisi Pōhiva, stated that the strikers were now demanding political reforms. ‘The

demand is to change the structure of government - that is the basic demand', he said (Radio Australia, 29 August 2005). Meanwhile, the government stood firm on its position, saying that the pay rise would endanger the economy of the country.

The strike ended on September 3 2005 when a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Cabinet Negotiation Sub-Committee (on behalf of the Government of Tonga) and the Negotiation Team for the Interim Committee representing the striking civil servants. The government agreed to give the pay rise demanded by the strikers. Government Heads of Department were also directed to adjust the salary of civil servants who were disadvantaged by the former salary reform subject to consultation with the respective minister and the Public Service Commission and other staff.

An important part of the agreement was that a Royal Commission be established immediately to review the constitution in order to allow a more democratic government to be established; and for the Royal Commission to report back to government and PSA on 31 December 2005 (see Matangitonga Online, September 3 2005). This was a major victory for the civil servants in Tonga in getting the cabinet to consider the need for a Royal Commission. Despite accusations of politicizing their salary demands, the civil servants were adamant that the root cause of the salary disparity within the public service was Tonga's political system.

Such cases represent the way through which the Tongan government deals with the dynamics of political change in Tongan society. In other words, they publicize the changing nature of politics in Tongan society and the role of

international migration in the process. The use of culture and tradition to defend the hegemony of the ruling regime is slowly eroding. It mirrors the weakening position of the ruling elites who have held onto power for so long. The growth of civil society and the push for political reforms and change seem to be gaining momentum in Tonga's political sphere.

### **7.1.3 Political Reform and Change in Tonga**

The year 2005 marked a historical turning point in the Kingdom of Tonga, with many events illustrating the changing nature of Tonga's socio-political and economic landscape. After the parliamentary elections of early 2005, four elected members of Parliament were appointed for the first time to cabinet. Two new peoples' representatives and two representatives of the nobility were appointed to hold ministerial portfolios. Since the promulgation of the constitution in 1875, the King had appointed all cabinet ministers for life. According to the prerogatives given him by the constitution, the King had the sole power to dismiss them.

However, this historic change was an indication that pushes for political reforms by the THDRM and the radicals seem to have had an impact on the structure of power in the kingdom. They have been able to find a way to convince the ruling aristocracy that the changing social landscape also requires reforms in the structure of power.

It is a principle objective of the THDRM that the people of Tonga should elect all members of Parliament by popular vote, and that the King should appoints cabinet ministers from among them. Undoubtedly, the THDRM

considers this historic move a victory on their part. However, those who are loyal to the ruling regime believe that change in Tonga can only come from the top (Tonga Consulate General in San Francisco, 19 March, 2005). At the same time, international migration in the context of globalization is a key factor in the new political reform.

In a special program broadcast live on Tongan radio and television, on Monday March 21 2005, the Prime Minister, His Royal Highness Prince ‘Ulukalala Lavaka Ata, addressed the nation to announce that for the first time elected representatives to Parliament had been appointed as ministers for the 2005-2007 sessions of parliament by royal consent (See Appendix F). In addition, the Crown Prince promised that further changes towards a more democratic system were on the cards, although there were constraints within the existing constitution. ‘So the idea is, that we would make as many democratic reforms under the existing constitution and should more changes later be seen as necessary that would require change in the constitution ... then they would be made’ (Channel NEWSASIA Online, March 22, 2005). The Crown Prince’s remarks suggested that this is the beginning of a new era of political reforms. These political moves are supported by advocates of change, especially the THRDM, which had been pressing hard for reforms in the political system of Tonga for more than 20 years.

The Peoples’ Number 1 representative of the Tongatapu Group, Mr. ‘Akilisi Pōhiva, optimistically referred to the new reform as a dawn which marked the beginning of an era of change in Tonga’s socio-political structure. According to Pōhiva, there are important issues in the THRDM’s working

agenda for the 2005-07 Parliamentary sessions. These focus on the misuse of power and state resources. If they succeed in dealing with these issues, then more reforms in government will also take place (Planet Tonga Online, March 22, 2005).

Dr. Feleti Sevele, the Number 3 Peoples' representative of the Tongatapu Group, who held the new ministerial portfolio of Minister of Labor, Commerce, and Industries, and who has more recently been appointed Prime Minister of Tonga, agreed that the door is open for political change. As such, it is vital to take advantage of it and move forward, as the desire for progress on the part of the royal family is genuine (Channel NEWSASIA, March 22, 2005). Unlike the lifetime appointments of their cabinet peers, the terms of Sevele and his fellow THRDM member, Sione Peauafi Haukinima who was the newly appointed Minister for Forestry, were only scheduled to last until the next election. In fact, their appointment to the cabinet also had the effect of bringing two more people's representatives into the legislature, because by-elections were held to replace them.

The Tongan government is reported to be willing to appoint more people's representatives to the cabinet and the Crown Prince is said to believe that eventually Tonga will have a fully democratic elected government. Mr. Pōhiva, reported that the Prime Minister, Prince 'Ulukalala Lavaka Ata, had announced at a cabinet meeting that there could be other such appointments in the future. Mr. Pōhiva maintained that it was not known when this would happen but the THRDM MPs would introduce a motion or a private bill in parliament to encourage the government to commit itself to a time frame. 'We will continue to

push harder for government to speed up the process of making appointments from the people's representatives, and ... eventually Tonga would become a fully democratic elected government' (Radio New Zealand International, 22 March 2005).

Fundamentally, Tonga's newly appointed commoner ministers could find their loyalties divided if the government takes a stand at odds with the THRDM. According to Sevele, it is clear that there would be issues that may cause disagreement between them and the other members of the cabinet appointed by the King. However, it is their role to make the right decisions in a rational manner. They must make sure that they stand beside the people who elected them. What benefits the majority of Tongan people is their prime objective. Sevele stressed the importance of respecting individual views, no matter what side you belong to (Radio Australia, 23 March, 2005). The new reform in Tonga is described as an experiment in greater democracy in the Pacific's only Kingdom (ibid.). The four MPs who became ministers had to resign their seats, although as ministers they remain members of parliament.

The victory of the civil servants strike in September 3 2005 is another indication of reforms in the political structure of Tonga. Despite the long deadlock between the government and strikers that went for more than six weeks, the government realized that it was time to consider political reforms seriously. This was a very difficult step for the government to take but the fact was that a point of compromise had to be reached and it had to consider the political and economic impact of the strike on Tongan society.

Political reforms and change in Tongan society will continue to take place due to the changing nature of external forces that demand reforms and change. The push from political reforms from the educated elites and the Tongan diaspora abroad, and the involvement of human rights watchdogs, donor countries and host countries in Tonga's politics has had a very powerful impact on the government's political decisions. The most recent example of the impact of external forces was the resignation of the King's son, Prince Lavaka Ata 'Ulukālala as the Prime Minister of Tonga, and the appointment of Dr. Feleti Sevele as the first ever commoner Prime Minister in early 2006 (Government of Tonga Online, 2006). Dr Feleti Sevele was a member of the THRDM and is an active advocate of change.

To conclude this chapter, changes in the political landscape of Tonga have been propelled by international migration and overseas experiences. This is shown in the reforms introduced by King Taufa'ahau Tupou IV and the emergence of the educated elites able to question the structure of power in society. This has resulted in the formation of the THRDM and lately the establishment of other political movements. Tongan migrants in host countries are now willing more than before to become involved in the political affairs of the homeland. The push for political reform is now gaining momentum and change is slowly taking place.

The church continues to play a significant role in all changes which are taking place in Tongan society. As the most powerful institution apart from the state in Tonga, the effects of international migration on religion are vital when

talking about change in Tonga as a whole, and the changing position of the church will be discussed in the next chapter.

## Chapter Eight

### *Change in Religion*

The Kingdom of Tonga is described by its very own people as *fonua lotu* (a religious country) which is in fact a reflection of how Christianity has patterned the Tongan way of life (See Chapter 3). The church is the most powerful institution in Tongan society, second only to the state. ‘The church’ in this case refers to all the Christian churches in Tonga (see Table 8.1), despite differences in origins, rituals, and practices. They share many things in common, and above all the belief that the church is God’s representative on earth. As well as its spiritual role, the church wields powerful socio-political, economic, and cultural influence in the everyday affairs of Tongan society and the socio-political, economic and cultural relations of the kingdom as a whole.

In the literature on Tonga, the question of whether religion has any significant influence on politics, economics, or other important areas of secular society has been asked repeatedly, but most scholars in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early twentieth centuries often ignored religion, thinking that it was irrelevant to these other institutions. In fact, an answer to this question is vital in understanding the role of religious institutions in the Kingdom of Tonga. However, fewer systematic studies have been devoted to religion than to other major institutions in society (see Lenski, 1963). The debate between positivism and economic determinism has led to a more rigorous study of the relationships between religion and other institutions in society.

For economic determinists, the economic institutions of society are the ultimate source of all social change. Changes in all other social institutions represent nothing more than adjustments to changes in the economic institutions on which they are dependent for their very existence. Modernists claimed that religion is merely a survival from man's primitive past and doomed to disappear in an era of science and general enlightenment (ibid.). Despite the differences in the two schools of thought, both modernists and economic determinists provided a framework for understanding the place of religion and its relationship with other socio-political, economic, and cultural institutions in society. Moreover, these two systems of thought were challenged in the great works of the German sociologist Max Weber and his French contemporary Emile Durkheim in the early 20th century.

Weber and Durkheim's accounts of religion and society provide a framework for analyzing the relationship between people and religious institutions. Significantly, both thinkers base their assessment on the modern nature of religion and other socio-political, economic and cultural institutions in society, which are central to the overall scope of this study. Durkheim criticized the positivists by saying that the roots of religious belief and practice lie in the very fabric of society itself and in the nature of human interrelations. As such, religion is a symbolic expression of human awareness of the social system on which people depend not only for the material necessities of life, but for psychic necessities as well (ibid.). Weber, on the other hand, argued that the Protestant reformation was the driving force behind the development of Western capitalism. He moved on to contend that the spirit of capitalism was distinguished by three

main characteristics: a conviction that work is a worthwhile activity in its own right, and not merely as the means to material comfort or wealth; a belief that economic judgments should be made on purely rational grounds, without regard to traditional criteria; and distaste for personal indulgence (Lenski, 1963: 4; Bendix, 1977).

Although these theories were concerned with larger and more modern societies like the United States and Europe, these also lend themselves to providing explanations in the case of the Kingdom of Tonga. Durkheim's argument is pertinent to traditional Tongan society before the introduction of Christianity while Weber's thesis is relevant to the development of religious institutions since the Christian incursion, the waves of change brought to Tongan society by external forces, and the shift in peoples' attitudes towards religious institutions, the church, and the state. Significantly, all these perspectives, from the positivists and economic determinists to Weber and Durkheim, can be juxtaposed to explain the changing nature of religious institutions in the context of international migration since 1966 in the Kingdom of Tonga.

This chapter focuses on international migration and its effects on religious institutions in Tonga. The relationship between international migration and religious institutions in Tonga is vital in this study given the fact that the church is the most powerful institution, second only to the state. The forces of modernization has brought into force a process of secularization by which whole sectors of society and culture have been removed from the domination of religious institutions and symbols. Of course, secularization manifests itself in the withdrawal by the Christian churches from areas previously under their

control or influence -- as in the separation of church and state, the expropriation of church lands or the emancipation of education from ecclesiastical authority (see Berger, 1969: 107).

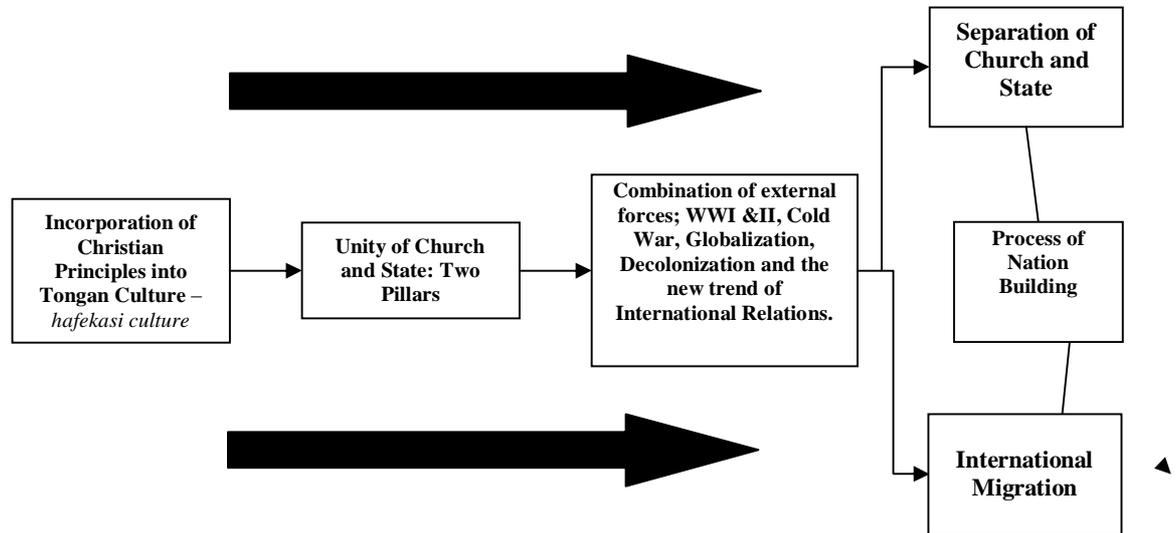
These events paved the way to a process of nation building in which the church slowly let go of the many socio-political responsibilities that it held for many decades. The strong connection between the church and state was weakened through this practice while at the same time new doors were opened for the development of both religious and secular institutions. In the context of international migration, the church assisted the movement of people outside Tonga's boundaries. This led to international migration strengthening the economic power base of the church while at the same time affecting its form.

In other words, international migration not only restructured the nature of the interactions between church and state but also diminished the traditional roles of the church in guiding Tongan society. The year 1966 marked one and a half centuries since the introduction of Christianity into Tongan society. Transformations in the traditional roles of the church since 1966 were part of the whole process of development. The church remains the most powerful institution in Tonga apart from the state but it is further declining as other agencies of the state increasingly take over the non-religious aspects of the church's services to the wider society.

Here I suggest transition models that can be used to analyze the effects of international migration on the church. These models hold important implications for the overall scope of this chapter. Figure 8.1 shows that changes in the

relationship between church and state tend to be in a horizontal one-way direction.

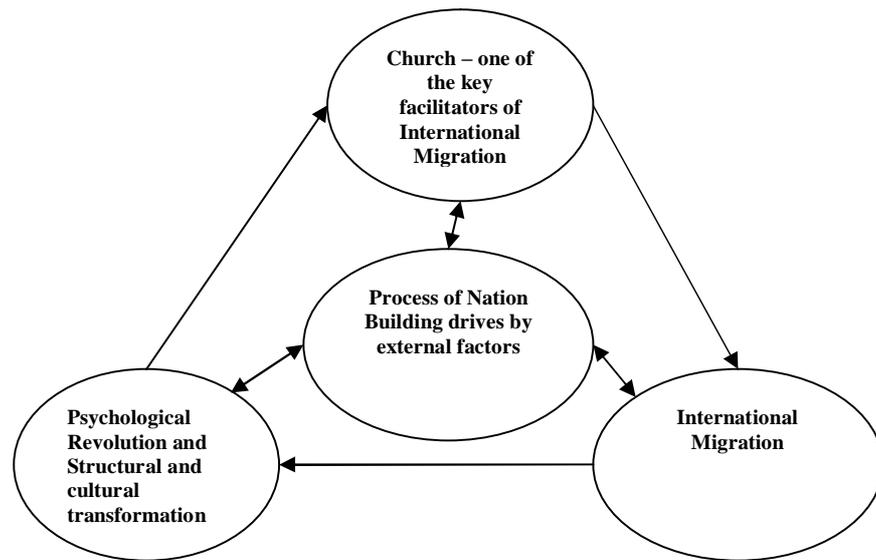
**Figure 8.1: Transition Model 1**



The shift from one point in time to another reflects the changing nature of society. The incorporation of Christian values into Tongan society unites church and state (see Chapter 3). These have in turn led to emergence of a new framework for international migration and a subsequent disintegration in the alliance of the church and state.

Both institutions went with the historical flow, failing to recognize that barriers were arising between them. Both encouraged the growth of international migration, which contributed to the degeneration of the socio-political ties between them. Figure 8.1 suggests that the gap between the two institutions in the light of the current trends is likely to grow wider and wider.

**Figure 8.2: Transition Model 2**



The transition model in Figure 8.2 on the other hand focuses on the changing nature of the church as an institution. As a key facilitator of international migration, the church accelerates the movement of people out of the country. It opens the door for incoming changes, which result in the transformation of the church itself. Such a transformation has led both to a psychological revolution and a structural shift in the church's socio-political composition. It is probable that the process specified by Figure 8.2 will continue to influence and change the landscape of the church in Tonga for a while, pending further transformations. Taking into account the current strength of the religious institutions in Tonga, there is a possibility that church dominance will continue for a while, albeit in the face of inexorable change, until it reaches a point where change can no longer be resisted.

These models are proposed as a guide for the following discussion. They are useful in the analysis of the relationship between the church and international

migration, the role of the church in facilitating international migration, remittances to the church, changes within the church (both its structural and cultural composition and the changing attitudes of church members towards religion), and finally the separation of church and state.

### **8.1 Transformation in the Church**

Before proceeding any further, let us look at the most recent religious statistics in Tonga. Tables 8.1 and Figure 8.3 present figures on Tongan population by religion in which 99 per cent or more are Christians. Comparing the 1986 and 1996 census, there was an increase in membership of the major churches except the Free Wesleyan (FWC) and Tokaikolo Churches. A recent census carried out by the FWC in 1997 shows that the Free Wesleyan Church of Tonga is worried about their declining membership. The census shows that the number of members dropped from about 38,000 in 1997 to just over 34,000 in 1998, while the minor churches gained.

The General Secretary of the Free Wesleyan Church, Rev. Penisimani Fonua, contended that some of its members have gone overseas but that the new religious sects attract many others. His comments on Australian radio were as follows:

‘We do not call them churches. We call them sects. Coming in and with their false impressions of attracting young people to their churches. I think they have been attracted by the new religious groups by their own way of conducting their services. They use instruments and they use songs and so on. Sort of emotional involvement with young people.’ (Australia Broadcasting Corporation, 1999).

**Table 8.1****Tonga's Population by Religion 1986 and 1996**

Religion	1986		1996		
	Persons	%	Persons	%	% of Change 86/96
Free Wesleyan Church	40,371	43.4	39,703	41.3	-1.7
Roman Catholic	14,921	16.0	15,309	15.9	2.6
Mormon (LDS)	11,270	12.1	13,255	13.8	17.3
Free Church of Tonga	10,413	11.2	11,226	11.7	7.8
Church of Tonga	6,882	7.4	7,010	7.3	1.9
Tokaikolo Church	3,047	3.3	2,919	3.0	-4.2
Seven Day Adventist	2,143	2.3	2,381	2.5	11.1
Assembly of God	565	0.6	1,082	1.1	91.5
Anglican Church	563	0.6	720	0.8	27.9
Others	2,874	3.1	2,368	2.5	-17.6
No Religion	n/a		61	0.1	n/a
Refused to Answer	n/a		10	0.0	n/a
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>93,049</b>	<b>100.0</b>		<b>100.0</b>	<b>3.2</b>

Source: Tongan Government Statistics Department. 1999.

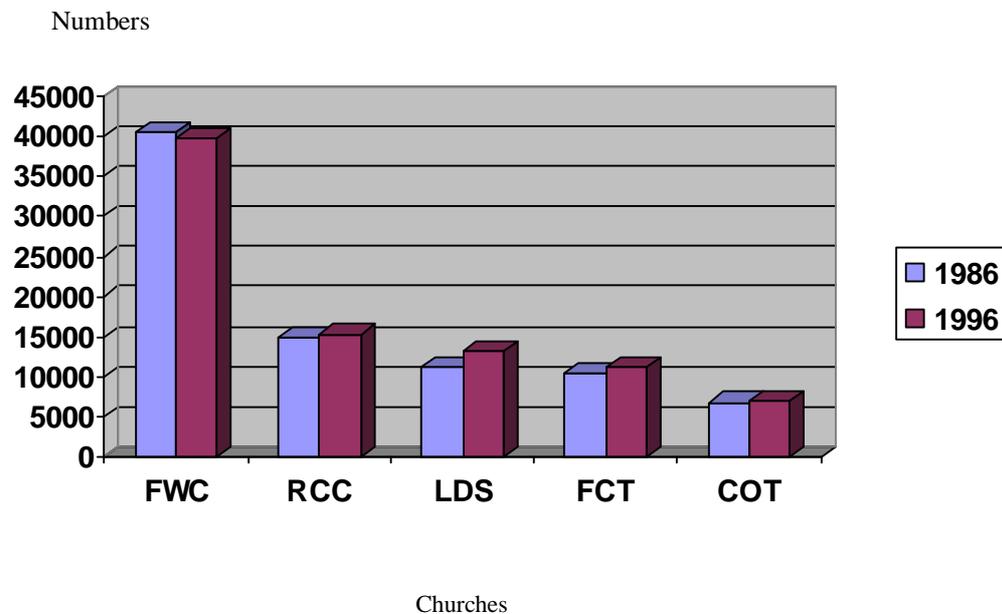
Rev. Fonua represents the typical reaction of the religious establishment to the changing nature of religion and the external influences brought by international migration to religious institutions in Tonga. Such changes are witnessed in all churches in Tonga where new ways of conducting services have been introduced by returning migrants.

The introduction of electrical musical instruments and action songs to churches in Tonga is part of the wave of change brought by international migration in recent years. It received strong criticism from religious hardliners but there has been a slow turnaround in many churches in Tonga, most notably the FWC. Religious conservatives fail, or otherwise refuse, to recognize the wide scope of structural and cultural change in the church itself. We can observe that there is a perceptible misconception on the part of religious conservatives in

Tonga, and that they overlook other forces which contribute to the deteriorating position of the church.

**Figure 8.3**

**Number of Tongans and Part-Tongans in the five major Christian Churches**



Source: (ibid.).

Dr Feke Mafi of the Church of Tonga (*Siasi 'O Tonga*) believed that change in the church is inescapable. Church members should recognize that change is taking place in all levels of the church. It is the role of the church to make members aware of how to deal with the effects of change. According to Mafi, there has been a slight increase in the population of the Church of Tonga but only due to natural increase (interview with Mafi, 2004). Dr. Foliaki of the Roman Catholic Church shares the same views as Mafi on the issue of change within the form of the church, especially in Tongan society where it is highly vulnerable to external influences. In relation to church population, he believed

that there has been a small gain in the population of the Roman Catholic Church due to both natural increase and new converts (interview with Foliaki, 2004).

The actual subject matter of this chapter is divided into three sections. Firstly, I will discuss the church and international migration and the role of the church in assisting the migratory requirements of its subjects both in Tonga and abroad. Next, I will look at the church and remittances, seeing that the church is the biggest recipient of remittances in Tonga. Thirdly, I examine the changes within the church as an institution, the change in peoples' attitudes toward the church, and the structural and cultural transformation.

#### **8.1.1 Church: A Facilitator of International Migration**

As a highly religious country, the contemplation of the afterlife is a major reason for the long lasting influence of the church despite the decline in some other major aspects of Tongan culture. It still plays a key role in strengthening Tonga's socio-political foundation. The religious networks discussed in Chapter 4 were the foundational basis for international migration after 1966. The church, especially the Free Wesleyan Church, continued to send students to Australian Methodist Church schools in both Melbourne and Sydney. Since the 1960s, the church has continued to play its role as a facilitator of educational opportunities for Tongans. The Methodist link was often an influential factor in choosing Australia as a place of residence, whether temporary or permanent. The scale of Tongan migration increased from 1970 (*ibid.*). Migration to New Zealand was mainly for employment purposes. It was made possible on many occasions by

the Roman Catholic Church while migration to the United States was mainly through the Mormon Church.

In the early 1970s, small communities of Pacific Islanders began regular combined Methodist church services in all host countries, particularly in major cities such as Auckland, Sydney, Melbourne, San Francisco, and Honolulu. For the Pacific Islanders, gathering together not only symbolized their strong upbringing in Christianity, but also represented a response to loneliness and marginalization. In Sydney in 1974, the Methodist Board of Missions in Australia and the Pacific Island Methodist community, comprised mainly of Tongans, Samoans, and Fijians, sent a request to the Pacific Island Churches back home for Pacific Island ministers (see Spickard et.al, 2002).

This request for Pacific island ministers was due to cultural differences. The congregation continued to function as a united body until 1986. The Tongan congregation consisted solely of Tongans with Tongan ministers. It slowly spread to other parts of the continent and the same process took place in New Zealand and the United States. Morton Lee wrote;

Like kinship, church membership is crucial in Tongan notions of community, and the majority of overseas Tongans devote a great deal of time, energy, and resources to their churches. During the 1960s and 1970s, when the first significant waves of migration occurred and when many migrants had no kin in their new locations, Tongan populations overseas established a sense of community primarily through their membership in religious groups, such as Bible study and prayer groups. This was commonly followed by the establishment of Tongan church congregations and the fragmentation of the initial community into smaller church groups of different denominations (Morton Lee, 2003: 41-42).

The establishment of Tongan congregations abroad created a close network between mainstream churches in Tonga and their counterparts in the

host countries. This was true not only for the Free Wesleyan Church, but also for the Assemblies of God, the Mormons, the Roman Catholics, and the Seventh Day Adventists, to name but a few. The cessation of the worker contract scheme between New Zealand and the Pacific Islands in the 1970s shifted the focus of Tongan migrants from New Zealand to Australia and the United States (see Djaji’c, 2001; Sudo, 1997).

Moreover, the interaction between the mainstream churches in Tonga and their counterparts in the host countries brought people to Sydney, Melbourne, Auckland, Wellington, Honolulu, and Salt Lake City. A majority of Tongan churches overseas maintained links with the mother churches<sup>17</sup> in Tonga. As Morton Lee continued;

The “Tongan churches” overseas (congregations with predominantly Tongan membership) differ in their involvement with the wider communities in which they are located. Their affiliations vary, with some attached to churches based in Tonga, such as the Free Church of Tonga, and other existing within the structures of overseas churches. Some of the Tongan churches are closely tied to their mainstream counterparts; for example, a large proportion of Tongans in Australia belongs to the Uniting Church, which has been active including Tongans in its overall organization. Most Tongan churches have Tongan ministers, either sent from Tonga or locally trained. (ibid: 42)

As a result, the network expanded and it created different kinds of movement between Tonga and the host countries; short-term visits for church activities such as conferences, long-term migration through chain migration, and circulation through church-led activities such as fund raising tours.

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<sup>17</sup> These apply only to the Church of Tonga, FWC, Free Church of Tonga while other churches like the Catholics, Mormons, and Seventh Day Adventists, to name a few, have branches in the host countries.

It became obvious in Tonga that Tongan churches abroad are a major financial source for development within both church and community. Accordingly, the church is used as an umbrella for international migration, particularly for fundraising purposes. Occasionally, church members, church schools tour groups, government schools and officials travel overseas on a short-term basis to raise funds for different projects back home. Church projects included new church buildings and youth halls, amongst others. Community activities focus on development projects such as sports facilities and community centers. Individuals also travel on fundraising tours for personal reasons while the state is represented particularly by government secondary schools, and the Police and Tonga Defense Services Brass Bands.

As the closest guardian of Tongan migrants overseas, the church is the key player in facilitating fundraising tours in terms of organization and other logistic support. Tongans travel overseas in groups such as church choirs, school brass bands, sport teams, community groups, and government groups. The short-term migration occasionally affects migrants' decisions, as some choose to stay abroad permanently by breaching immigration agreements, some marry citizens of host countries, while the rest return. Information gathered during fieldwork showed that one of the major channels for international migration is through short-term tours in relation to church activities, particularly fundraising tours.

Church-led long-term migration is clearly seen in the case of the Mormon Church. The Mormon Church in Tonga was instrumental in the early stages of Tongan migration to the United States in the 1960s. The church began the migration of hundreds of Tongans to Mormon centers in Hawaii and Salt Lake

City. According to Small ‘without a village context for viewing migration, one might interpret Tongan migration to the United States as a religious phenomenon, motivated by a commitment to the American-based Mormon Church’ (Small, 1997: 51). In fact, it is understandable that Tongan commitment to the church was partly motivated by the opportunities it provided for overseas migration.

The fact that the Mormon Church assisted the movement of Tongans to the United States was one of the major reasons why Mormonism was the fastest growing religion in Tonga during the 1960s (*ibid.*). Most, if not all migrants through the Mormon Church became citizens of the United States and they continue to create social networks between Tonga and the United States. The church continues to send students to Mormon institutions in the United States especially Brigham Young University (BYU) in Hawaii and Utah, and assists members’ applications to enter the United States despite the many restrictions imposed by United States immigration policy.

Interviews conducted in host countries suggest that most migrants end up staying because of church-led migration. Mr. Po’ese Vatikani of Honolulu came to Hawaii from Tonga on a theological school fundraising tour through which he was fortunate to continue with his studies at the Hawaii Pacific University, operated by the Methodist Church. He is now married and resides in Hawaii (interview with Vatikani, 2003). ‘Ofa Tonga of Sacramento migrated to California as a Mormon convert. He married a Tongan migrant and has remained in California (interview with Tonga, 2003). Viliami Lavulavu initially came to Auckland, New Zealand, through a church choir group tour and he found Auckland suitable for his health. He returned to Tonga and then migrated back to

New Zealand to stay in the late 1970s (interview with Lavulavu, 2003). Siaso Malū Palā of Wellington came to New Zealand as a member of a Wesleyan College brass band, married a local girl and has remained in Wellington (interview with Palā, 2003). In Sydney Australia, Viliami Telefoni Lātū entered the country as a church youth representative for a youth conference in Brisbane. He moved to Sydney, stayed there for several years, married a fellow Tongan migrant with Australian citizenship and has resided there ever since (interview with Lātū, 2003).

The people interviewed are representative of hundreds or even thousands of Tongans in the host countries who migrated because of church-sponsored and church-related activities. Church-led migration is still instrumental and has intensified recently. This is due to well-established networks of Tongan churches both in the host and home countries. Apart from individual migration and government-led migration, it is well known that the church is the biggest facilitator of international migration in the Kingdom of Tonga.

### **8.1.2 Church and Remittances**

In contrast to the usual reasons that persuade migrants to send remittances such as everyday consumption, improving their standard of living, productive investments and school expenses, this part focuses primarily on church-oriented remittances. Despite the various explanations for the motives behind remittances, from my study it appears that church-oriented activities and church projects are among the major reasons for migrants' remittances to Tonga.

In Tonga, there is a lack of statistical data on unofficial remittances in forms such as goods or cash remittances carried in by hand. However, church-related remittances are visible in many forms. These are invested in the many church projects in Tonga such as church buildings, church schools, vehicles, office equipment, and much more. The costly and well-funded church projects everywhere in the archipelago are representative of church-oriented remittances.

The practice of *misinale*<sup>18</sup> (church donations) is a determining factor, which compels migrants to remit due to the importance of religious obligations. As mentioned earlier on, in view of ideas of salvation and the afterlife, offering money to God's cause is undoubtedly a key spiritual obligation. Reverend Peni Fale, Maama Vaomotou, Mesui Palā, and Reverend 'Unaloto Mafile'o of Leimatu'a believed that giving money to the church is the will of God. In so doing, blessings are conferred on those who make offerings through the *misinale* (interview with Fale, Vaomotou, Palā and Mafile'o, 2004).

Historically, missionaries first initiated money donations as a form of commitment to the church in the Tonga Mission in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. The Tongan Mission was able to collect more money than any other Methodist missions in the region. In 1869 for instance, the Tongan mission received sums in excess of local expenses, equaling the combined missionary collections of all the Methodists in Australia.

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<sup>18</sup> The *misinale* (annual church donation) is common in Tongan churches but different churches called it by different names. The Catholic Church called it *Kātoanga'ofa* while the Mormon Church called it *Vahehongofulu*. Despite the differences in name, they still have the same features. Only the Mormon Church is different because the church requires 10 per cent of each member's total income every Sunday (see Mesui, 2004).

Unexpectedly, money donated from Tonga through their annual *misinale* helped in financing other missions, including one in Britain (see Rutherford, 1996). Despite the fact that the *misinale* suited the self-interests of missionaries at the time, its essentials were incorporated into Tongan religious culture, and are still practiced today. The concept of remittances in this respect is not new in Tongan society. Tongans remitted money through the church in the past, even to economically powerful countries like Australia (ibid.). The annual *misinale* in Tonga is still a major event and it is a very important occasion for every church member. More than half of the money donated to the *misinale* comes from remittances.

It appears that business people and the salaried middle class (new rich/*kau tu'umalie*, see Chapter 6) are the only people who can afford to donate money from their own pockets while the rest of the church members rely heavily on remittances. The fieldwork conducted in Leimātu'a shows that money for the *misinale* generally comes from relatives and friends overseas. Selected informants stated that all their annual *misinale* donations were remitted from their relatives overseas. Sione Lau'i explained that his brother in California almost forgot to send his *misinale* for the year (2003) until he called and reminded him (interview with Lau'i, 2003). 'Atelaite Moimoi Lātū said that her children abroad are well informed that the church *misinale* is on the Christmas day of every year. As such, they always send money both for the *misinale* and *kilisimasi* (interview with Lātū, 2003).

In addition, there are special days<sup>19</sup> and important church events, which are marked in almost every church's calendar that also requires remittances. These include *fakamē*,<sup>20</sup> *fakasepitema*,<sup>21</sup> *fakaafe* (church feast), *sāpate fa'ē* (mothers' day), *sāpate tamai* (fathers' day) *ngaahi pola* and *lukuluku* (preparation for church feasts), and *konifelenisi* (Church annual conference<sup>22</sup>). These special days and *kavenga* (obligations) require recipients to seek additional remittances. Sometimes remittances come in kind and sometimes in cash. However, it is usual for goods for the *ngaahi pola* and the *fakaafe* to come from overseas.

In Tonga, annual church conferences always take place around the same time, between March and June every year. These are big religious occasions and it is common for every family to be involved in *ngaahi pola* (food preparation). Tongan migrants always prepare remittances for such events. The peak time for the *fakaafe* is December and January especially the *kilisimasi* (Christmas day), *pōle'o* (New Years' eve), *uikelotu* (prayer week, usually the first week of the year) and *sāpate ako* (Students' Sunday).

Shortly before these special days, you can see people at Western Union branches, banks, wharfs, and customs offices in Tonga, collecting cash remittances and goods sent in kind, not to mention migrants showing up in

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<sup>19</sup> Special days are common for every church in Tonga. The names of these special days vary but they are practiced in the same way.

<sup>20</sup> *Fakamē* refers to the first Sunday of May, which is specially marked as the day of children. Children are engaged in different kind of activities to commemorate the day. They are specially treated on this particular Sunday with new clothes, fancy food, and so forth.

<sup>21</sup> *Fakasepitema* is of the same nature as *fakamē* but this particular day in the month of September is dedicated specifically to women.

<sup>22</sup> Every Christian church in Tonga hosts an annual conference (the highest decision-making body in the church) and feasting is pretty much part of the occasion.

person to give their donations and to join in these events. The annual church conferences bring to Tonga a vast number of Tongan migrants, especially from Tongan congregations abroad who come to attend. They spend millions of Tongan *pa'anga* in Tonga in a very short time. This particular time of the year is extremely important for the economy of the country.

Additionally, the views of selected people interviewed on the subject of church-led remittances were similar. Most shared similar views that remittances to the church through church activities are the principle reason for their relatives abroad sending back money. They all agreed that their relatives and siblings in the host countries always keep in mind the special church days. As such, it is part of their obligations to send remittances.

'Atelaite Moimoi Lātū disclosed that she has one son in California and another in Sydney. When special church events come, they always send money. She explained that the Free Wesleyan Church annual conference was held in Vava'u in June (2004) and she received both money and goods for the *ngaahi pola*, and her son in California joined them for the event (interview with Lātū, 2004). Kalolaine Tu'a talked about her two daughters and three sons in New Zealand and her son and daughter in California who always remit for church events (interview with Tu'a, 2004). Siaosi Talia'uli who has a brother in Sydney, one in Auckland, and a sister in San Francisco, talked enthusiastically about how they always provided money and material goods to support his *kavenga* in the church (interview with Talia'uli, 2004).

Moreover, huge amounts of remittances also flow into church projects. While money collected from the annual *misninale* goes to church projects such

as new church buildings, church renovation, and youth halls, remittances in kind are a major channel through which construction materials and equipment of different kinds enter the country through the church. In some instances, the money from fundraising tours in the host countries is used to buy materials and equipment from these countries. This is a common practice in Tongan communities overseas. Church schools are major receivers of such remittances and most church schools' projects benefit a lot from remittances in kind, particularly for the construction of new schools, classrooms, computer centers, sports facilities and school libraries.

As the church is a major ally of the state in facilitating education in Tonga, remittances play a vital role in the development of church schools. The church is responsible for giving education to about 80 per cent of Tongan youth at the secondary level and it also provides education at the tertiary level (see Maka, 2003). Church schools often engage in overseas tours in groups to conduct fundraising activities for school development. There are also other forms of remittances to the church from Rotary Club, charity organizations and other international organizations such as the Red Cross, which target disabled people, hospitals, and the poor. These remittances are worth thousands or even millions of Tongan *pa'anga*. They sometimes come in cash, but more often in material goods.

According to Dr. Feke Mafi, President of the Church of Tonga (*Siasi 'O Tonga*), the Church of Tonga relies heavily on the *misinale* (annual church donations) for its continuing existence and most of the church revenue is collected locally through the *misinale*. However, loans from banks and other

financial institutions are a major source of capital in addition to remittances. Therefore, there is great reliance on church members abroad for repayment of loans from banks for the *misinale* and the actual *misinale* itself. Projects such as church construction also rely on overseas migrants through fundraising tours (interview with Mafi, 2004).

Dr Soane Lilo Foliaki of the Roman Catholic Church also said that financial assistance from church members overseas is possible, but only to the extent allowed by the head of the church in Tonga. If a parish church is planning a new church building, the bishop will request approval for fundraising activities abroad, which will be organized and planned by church members overseas. This is common in the Roman Catholic Church. The financial contribution of church members overseas is vital in church development in Tonga.

However, Dr. Foliaki expressed his sympathy for church members overseas due to the difficulties they experience because of their contributions to the development of the church in Tonga. Each parish church has a target amount to collect, and this has been increasing in recent years due to the increasing demands of the church, improvements in the standard of living of church members, and a sharp increase in prices due to inflation (see Chapter 5). Meanwhile, the Vatican still offers financial support to churches, especially in poor and underdeveloped countries like Tonga (interview with Foliaki, 2004).

Mrs. Langilangi Fonua secretary of the Free Church of Tonga's Youth (*Siasi 'O Tonga Tau'ataina*) agreed with other church leaders, while she stressed that the Free Church of Tonga does not force its counterparts overseas to give remittances, depending instead on how they feel for the church in Tonga.

Accordingly, she believes that church members abroad feel obliged to the church in Tonga, in addition to the *kavenga* of the relatives at home (interview with Fonua, 2004). The same applies to the biggest church in Tonga, the Free Wesleyan Church (see FWC Annual Financial Reports, 2004).

**Table 8.2**

**Total Amount Received from FWC Misinale: 1996 – 2003**

<i>Year</i>	<i>Total Amount Received T\$ (Tongan Pa'anga)</i>
<b>1996</b>	3, 009,758
<b>1997</b>	3, 330, 473
<b>1998</b>	3, 410,229
<b>1999</b>	4, 265,947
<b>2000</b>	4, 255,185
<b>2001</b>	5, 073,299
<b>2002</b>	5, 276, 192
<b>2003</b>	5, 825, 011

Source: FWC Annual Financial Report. 2004.

In fact, most of the church revenue comes from remittances. In relation to the issue of church donations, all the major church leaders in Tonga believed that the total amount of the *misinale* has increased in recent years and it will continue to do so in the future. Table 8.2 illustrates the growth rate for the *misinale* donated to the biggest Church in Tonga, the FWC. The same is taking place in other major churches in Tonga.

Viliani Polota, the Chief Accountant of the Free Church of Tonga says that the Church of Tonga's total *misinale* has increased annually in the last five years and it will continue to do so in the future according to the current projection, as there is an increase in the material needs of the church. There are many development projects that the church is currently engaged in, especially at

the village level (conversation with Polota, 2004). The same applies to the Free Church of Tonga according to Mrs. Fonua (interview with Fonua, 2004).

### **8.1.3 Change within the Church: Structure and Members' Perceptions**

While international migration assists the church's economic state through remittances, its effects extend beyond the cultural and structural composition of the church to the way in which Tongans comprehend religion. The church hierarchy has been slowly transformed so that the economic competence and academic credentials of church members determine their status in the church. While academic credentials are considered vital in church circles, economic means have become dominant in some cases depending on the nature of the church's environment.

In most cases, economic capabilities and academic credentials go side by side, but there has also been a shift in which the spiritual orientation of the church has gradually declined, giving instead more emphasis to practices such as *misinale*, *fakaafe*, and *konifelenisi*. These are used to measure the social status of church members. In other words, there is a shift from religious authenticity to what I refer to as *lotu fakamamata* ('pretending to be religious') or *faka fatongia* ('religion as an obligation') in which *fakahāhā ivi* ('showing off socio-economic and political status in church activities') surfaces to become the norm.

Such a shift transforms the structural and cultural purpose of the church from religion to status orientation. To avoid over-generalization, Christian theology is still observed and practiced of course, but within the limits of the changing structure of the church as discussed below. The economic requirements

of the church increased after 1966 and international migration became the major conduit for income.

It is reasonable to argue that *kavenga* in the church during the missionary era were carried out with genuine spiritual meaning. This is due to the very fact that religious conversion was at its height. Every *kavenga* in the church was construed in terms of Christian theology. This was associated with the fact that external influences were minimal at the time.

The economic orientation of church functions is obvious nowadays in Tonga. In line with the economic determinists' approach, international migration through the church has resulted in major changes not merely in the church itself but in other economic institutions in society. This element has been there since the arrival of the missions, but it has been reinforced since 1966 and international migration was the key driving force. However, I would like to discuss the socio-political hierarchy of the church in Tonga in order to compare and identify the changes that have been taking place since 1966.

**Figure 8.4 The Traditional Hierarchy of Religious Institutions [the church] in Tonga**

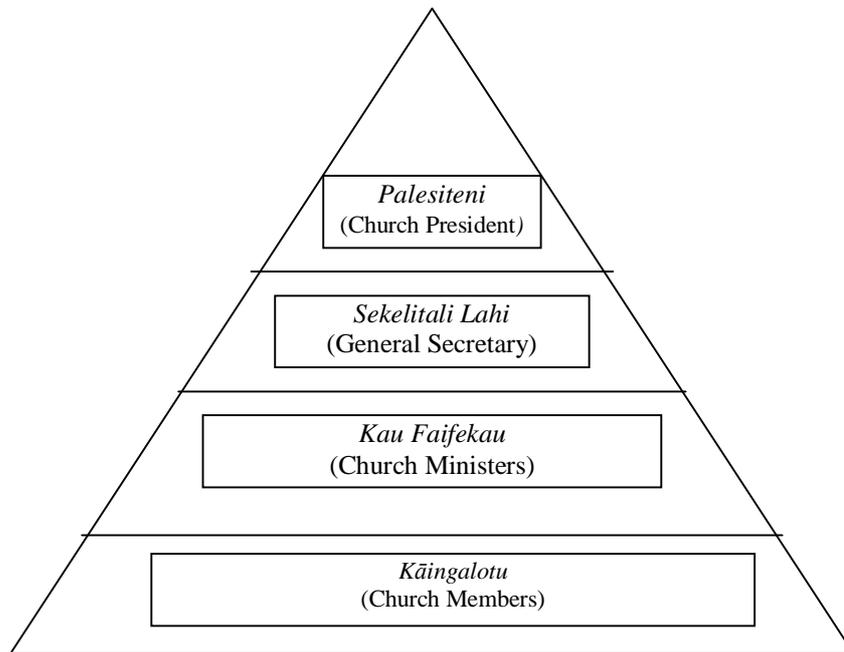


Figure 8.4 shows the traditional hierarchy of the church in Tonga,<sup>23</sup> which lasted for a long period despite transformations at the congregational (village) level. Figure 8.5 shows the social structure of the church at the village level while Figure 8.6 shows the modern structure of the church.

These figures do not show the place of the *hou'eiki* in the pyramid but they have power and influence. The King of Tonga for instance is the head of the FWC with powerful standing in church circles. At the village level, chiefs or nobles still are still respected in the church. It is a common traditional practice in Tonga that every church must have a *hou'eiki* to preside over ceremonies. In the

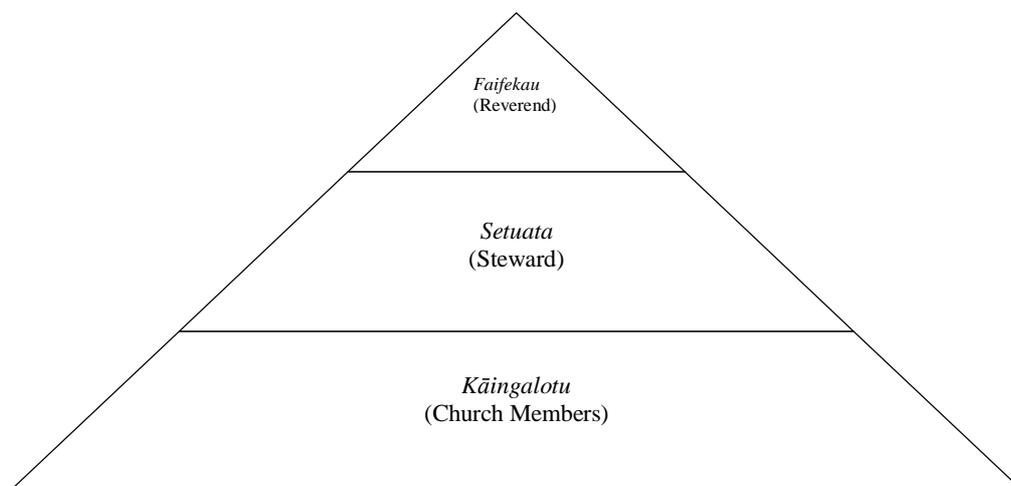
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<sup>23</sup> Figure 8.4 is common for every church in Tonga. The Catholic Church and other overseas-based churches such as Anglican, Seven Days Adventists and Mormons follow the structure of the mother church abroad.

absence of someone with chiefly blood, an equally qualified person must be appointed to act in place of the *hou'eiki*.

The power of the *hou'eiki* in the church is still strong in some congregations, especially in villages where the *hou'eiki* live together with commoners. In most villages especially in the outer islands, nobles and chiefs have moved overseas or to metropolitan areas, especially to the capital Nuku'alofa, leaving their own churches unattended. This has resulted in the decline of their influence in church circles. The status and power of the person appointed as *hou'eiki* is determined by politico-economic means.

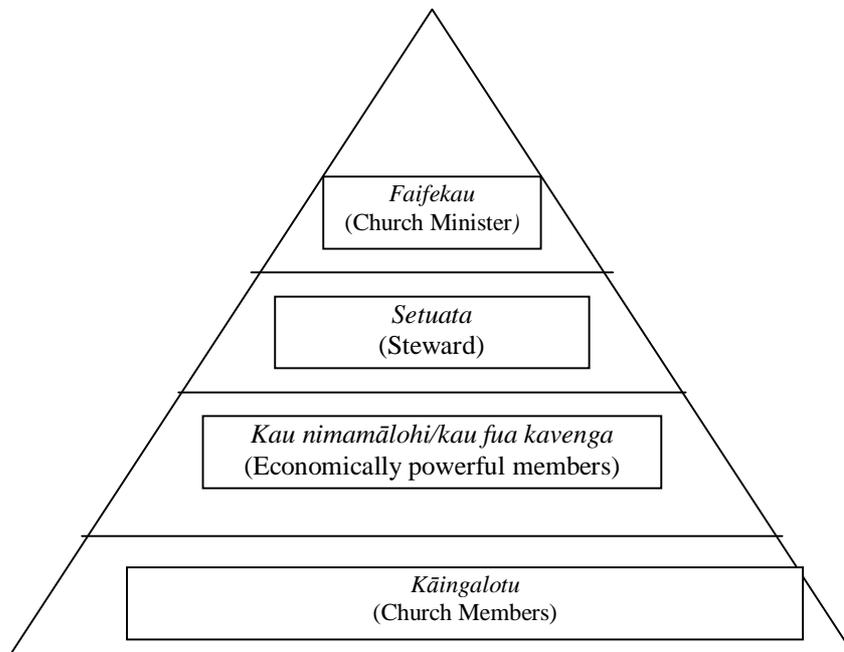
**Figure 8.5: Local Church's Structure**



In the light of the above, I would like to confine the discussion to the change at the village level, as is reflected in the overall transformation of religion as an institution. The changing features of the church at the village level reflect what is taking place in the church as a whole. While this study focuses on the dominant church, the Free Wesleyan Church, the other major churches (see

Table 8.1) share common features in relation to most, if not all, of these issues, with the exceptions of the Catholics and Mormons.

**Figure 8.6: Modern Socio-Political Structure of the Church**



All major churches except the Mormons are members of the Tonga National Council of Churches<sup>24</sup> (TNCC) in which Wesleyanism is the dominant doctrine. Apart from the Roman Catholic and Mormon churches, all the other major churches such as the Free Church of Tonga, the Church of Tonga, and the Tokaikolo Fellowship were formerly parts of the Free Wesleyan Church, and therefore still have much in common (see Forman, 1992).

At the village or congregational level, the social structure of the church is clear and simple. The church minister is the head of the congregation and his *setuata* (Steward) is his executive officer standing between the *faifekau* and the

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<sup>24</sup> Tonga National Council of Churches is an organization joined by most churches in Tonga (90 percent of the religious population), which aim at creating a healthy working environment amongst Christian churches in Tonga.

*kāingalotu*. There are other important spiritual and executive positions in the church at this level but they play minor roles compared to the *setuata* and *faifekau*. In such a simple social structure, the effects of international migration are easily identifiable.

The move from a spiritual to an economic orientation has been a major blow to the social hierarchy of the church. In the church nowadays, those who are *nima mālohi* (economically well off) are able to elevate their social status in the church hierarchy. Becoming a *setuata* is a big accomplishment, both in Tongan congregations overseas and in Tonga. The *setuata* holds a powerful socio-political position in the church, secondary only to the *faifekau*. He is the person who gives instructions to members of the church amidst many other key responsibilities. One point I would like to make clear here is the significance of the church's social status in Tongan society.

Holding such a position in church is very important, not merely because it differentiates one from the rest of church members but it reflects how trustworthy someone is held to be in a religious context. The position of *setuata* is very competitive in the Tongan church and in most cases reserved for those who are economically well off in the church as a whole. The traditional role of the *setuata* as a spiritual assistant to the *faifekau* is no longer an important criteria in terms of election<sup>25</sup> due to the new politico-economic measures. Unlike education, civil service, *hou'eiki*, and other spheres of the societal socio-political

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<sup>25</sup> The first Sunday of every year is reserved for the election of church staff. Positions in church range from *setuata* to *tauhi'api* (caretaker) and it is common that a position in the church has significant social status.

structure, status in the church is open to everyone and the chance for elevation of one's socio-political status is open to competition through church elections.

Coming back to the commercialization of church practices, remittances for the church's *kavenga*, notably the *misinale*, help to elevate one's status in the church. It is common in Tongan churches that the more people contribute to church activities, the higher their status will become. As such, there is a great chance for everyone to obtain key positions in the church like *setuata* in this way. If we take for instance the village of Leimātu'a, the *setuata*, Sini Nafe Kuila has occupied the post for more than 30 years. He is a successful farmer in the Vava'u Group and has donated the highest amount of money to the church's *misinale* since he became *setuata*. His reputation extends beyond the village and district levels to the national level. In the Free Wesleyan Church as a whole, he is one of several members of the *Talāsiti Lahi* (FWC Trust), which is the highest position for a church member to acquire in the church (interview with Fotu, 2004; conversation with Kuila, 2005).

Besides obtaining key positions in the church, the amount one contributes to the church *kavenga* represents one's status in the church. Since the church is the most powerful institution apart from the state, one's socio-political status in the church extends to the community at large. Seeking remittances for the church *kavenga* from relatives and friends overseas is one strategy in the competition to maintain one's status in both church and society. The traditional practice of *misinale* is still carried on today, and the amount donated by a family is announced during the event.

Such practices create competition among church members for who can donate the highest amount. As a result, the demands for increased remittances reflect competition between church members rather than the will of God. Evidently, status competition appears to play a prominent role in church activities in Tonga. I do not wish to stereotype church actions, as they often have merits of their own but it is important in a small society like Tonga to identify this shift from spiritual to economic concerns.

In some cases, church members engage in short-term migration to host countries for a few months to work and obtain money for the church *kavenga*. This contributes to change in the socio-political structure of the church at the village level to include the *kau nima mālohi* (economically powerful) or *kau fuakavenga* (those who are committed to the church's *kavenga*). Interestingly, church ministers encourage the spirit of devotion to church activities by preaching the religious notion of *tāpuaki* (blessings), which a person is believed to receive by doing work for the church (the will of God), especially *kavenga*. But in reality, church members' religious concerns have moved from aspiring to blessings and grace to the quest for socio-political status.

The establishment of new churches in Tonga, although it is often believed to be politically driven, is a result of a combination of many factors, from status seeking to diversity in religious belief. In some cases, those who lost their position or status in a particular church decided to move to other churches, notably newly established churches, while some have started their very own. Breakaway and newly introduced churches attract members mainly for the same reason. The chance for one to obtain a *lakanga* (key position) in a newly

established church is greater due to the smaller size. This attracts many people to new churches.

The result is that individuals have a better chance of being recognized in small churches than in bigger congregations. It gives them acceptable social status not only in church circles but also in the society at large. On many occasions, people switch to newly established churches because of their increased dissatisfaction with church *kavenga*. This was clearly demonstrated in the breakaway of the Free Church of Tonga (*Siasi Tonga Tau'atāina*) from the mainstream church in 1885 and the Church of Tonga (*Siasi 'O Tonga*) from the Free Church of Tonga in 1929. Undoubtedly, both cases were politically motivated (see Rutherford, 1977).

The last major breakaway in the history of the church in Tonga was the separation of the Tokaikolo Fellowship in 1980. This is a perfect example of the changing features of religion in Tongan society and the effects of international migration. The leader of the breakaway group, Senituli Koloï, was a former FWC minister who became critical of how the church operated in Tonga. He criticized the church organization for continuing the practice of traditional customs and obligations to the chiefs. He believed that the church was a prison for its members (see Finau, 1992). The way he interpreted the scriptures seemed strange in a society where religious norms are still practiced and highly respected by people, despite their changing characteristics. According to Koloï, the church had failed to bring people to a true knowledge of God and the reason for the failure of the church to do this was the demand that traditional customs be practiced within the church. Furthermore, the church was more interested in its

cultural heritage rather than seeking to listen to the will of the head of the church, Christ himself (ibid: 171).

Koloi strongly opposed the practice of the old traditions in the church, most of which were not written rules of the church but have been practiced since the time of the missionaries. As an example, he took the *fakaafe*, a practice of the Free Wesleyan Church in which a feast is prepared for the preacher and the *misinale*. He believed that church members must be born again in Christ before their giving becomes worthwhile, and they should not prioritize the *misinale* and the *fakaafe* before Christ. He criticized other aspects of Tongan culture like *putu* (funerals) and *mali* (weddings), which he believed imposed more burdens on the shoulders of people (ibid.). Koloi spent most of his time with his Tongan colleagues in New Zealand where they established a bible college and a business company called the *Maamafo'ou* to assist it (ibid.). He traveled frequently to Australia and the United States to preach his beliefs and to gain followers from the Tongan diaspora.

Another outspoken follower of the breakaway church was Rev. Sione Taufu a former Wesleyan missionary to Papua New Guinea who returned to Tonga in 1976. Subsequently, he was posted to Kolovai village in the Western part of the main island of Tongatapu. In his new ministry, Rev. Taufu found out that the church in Tonga was still practicing some old traditions that he thought were no longer applicable such as *fakaafe* and *misinale*. He encouraged the people to put money in envelopes and not to announce the amount during the *misinale* ceremony. People were encouraged to give only to the church what they could afford. He advised his church and other churches under his authority in the

Western part of the Tongatapu Group to follow the same practice. This created conflicts between Bishop Taufa and leaders of the church, which led to his decision to resign and joined the breakaway church. The early death of Kolo'i in 1980 resulted in the return of the new church to old practices. In recent times, the Tokaikolo Fellowship has become the most energetic church, using *misinale* for fund-raising activities in both Tonga and abroad.

The changes in the church at the village level have extended to the entire church. The traditional socio-political structure (Figure 8.4) represents the structural make up of the church as an institution and the arrangement of power in the church as approved by the church annual conference while the contemporary structure (Figure 8.6) mirrors the current reality. In recent years, the effects of change have resulted in a gradual involvement of the church in commercial activities. For instance, in Tonga, the Free Wesleyan Church owns the country's biggest Arcade, and the biggest bookshop in Tonga (Friendly Islands Book Shop) among many other commercial projects. Other Churches<sup>26</sup> such as the Tokaikolo Church, Free Church of Tonga and Church of Tonga, operate businesses such as supermarkets, inter-islands ferry lines, and rental business complexes.

To sum up this section, the local congregations are the driving force of the church. The members include those who engage in international migration and are recipients of remittances that facilitate the cultural and structural transformation in the church as an institution.

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<sup>26</sup> Only churches which originated in Tonga seem to be commercialized, while others like the Catholics, Mormons, Seventh Day Adventists and Anglicans who came later rely heavily on their mainstream counterparts abroad.

### 8.3 Separation of Church and State

The removal of some important key roles from the church such as political advisory and consultative roles on socio-cultural issues and a dominant role in education,<sup>27</sup> are symptomatic of a gradual separation between church and state. The association with international migration contributes to this separation as do other traits of globalization, such as economic integration and the revolution in information and communications technology.

As a result of international migration, Tongan graduates returned to Tonga to occupy key portfolios in the government. With their Western education, they slowly moved in to take over the former advisory roles of church officials. These are the same people who have emerged as liberals in church circles. They have questioned the way in which the church operates and advocated the need for structural change in the church. Returning migrants are seen as people endowed with cultural capital and knowledge as well as economic capital (see Connell and Conway, 2000).

Paradoxically, while the church facilitated international migration, it also promoted an anti-Western campaign against external influences from the beginning of the modernization era. All the churches in Tonga, led by the TNCC, consider Western influences as the source of problems for the spiritual well-being of church members. A strong call for a return to the *anga faka-tonga* (Tongan way) was common in every church in Tonga. This led to considerable confusion among church hardliners, as international migration became a major

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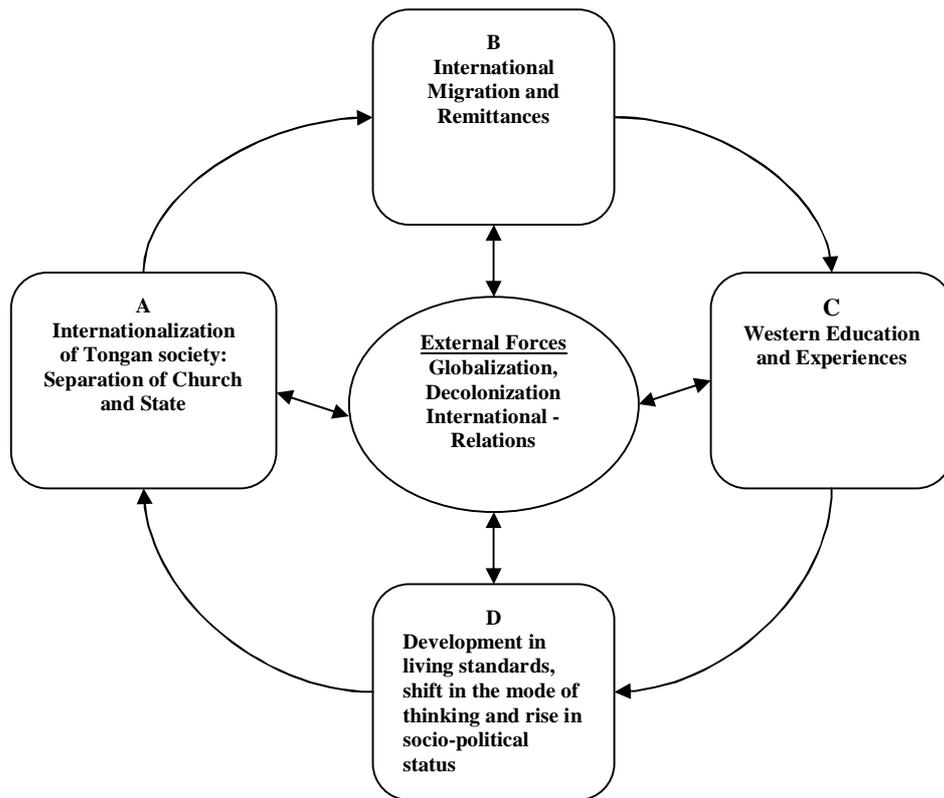
<sup>27</sup> The church was the prime source of education in Tonga until the state moved in to take control of education from the primary to the tertiary level. In 1966, the state became the key player in education in Tonga.

channel of income for all church activities. This is reminiscent of the economic determinist insight, that economic institutions in society are the major source of social change, and changes in other institutions are nothing more than an adjustment to earlier changes in economic institutions (see Lenski, 1963).

This was the case in Tonga as international migration brought into Tongan society capitalist elements, which resulted in the commercialization of important institutions in society. Such transformations forced the church to modify its opposition to change for economic reasons. While an anti-Western policy is still promoted at times, the church has had to adapt itself to the changing landscape of society. Travel for church purposes and remittances in the form of material goods and money have increasingly led to improved standards of livings, shifts in ways of thinking, and the elevation of the socio-economic and political status of commoners. All the informants I interviewed on this issue agreed that change is taking place at all levels, in both church and society.

Dr Feke Mafi for example states that church leaders and members should be reminded of the fact that change is taking place at a fast pace and is irreversible. It is the role of church leaders to prepare their members to understand the consequences of change and withstand them in their spiritual lives. They should be able to adapt to the introduction of new values, and to take what is necessary and reject what they consider evil. This is not an overnight exercise according to Dr. Mafi: it could be achieved if church leaders and members work together to tackle the issue without thinking about how it will benefit them (interview with Mafi, 2004).

**Figure 8.7: Transition Model 3**



The transition model (Figure 8.7) is cyclical in nature and flows like a life cycle. International migration and remittances lead to Western education and external experience. This results in the improvement of standard of living, shifts in the way of thinking (Westernization), and elevation of commoners' socio-political and economic status in the social strata. All are symptomatic of external forces, which also lead to the separation of church and state. Significantly, the cyclical dimensional of the transitional model in Figure 8.7 implies that such transformations constitute a cycle that continues repeatedly. Tongan society will become more complex and the tensions between church and state will intensify.

Earlier modernists argued that the church is doomed to disappear in an era of science and general enlightenment (see Lenski, 1963). In the context of

Tongan culture and symbols, secularization is more than a social structural process. It affects the totality of cultural life and ideas, and may be observed in the decline of religious content in the arts, philosophy, literature, and most important of all in the rise of science as an autonomous, thoroughly secular perspective on the world (see Berger, 1969). The church strictly enforced the preservation of traditional values and norms and it is understandable that traditional culture is the most important factor that guarantees the continued existence of the church as the most powerful institution in Tonga.

The notion of 'two pillars' (*pule'anga moe siasi*) is still mentioned in sermons, but the reality of this long lasting alliance nowadays rests only in the memory of church members. In relation to education, the departure from a Christian-oriented syllabus was a major blow to institutionalized Christianity. The shift to a more scientific and critical kind of education played a vital role in this trend as educated elites began to question the traditional roles of the church. They define Christianity in a more scientific manner leading to the condemnation of some religious activities such as *misinale* and *fakaafe* (see Finau, 1992). As a result, people have become more aware of certain weaknesses of the church, which they were strictly forbidden to challenge in the past. The loosening of the unity of church and state has also signaled that people are more aware of the many flaws within both institutions, flaws which they were less anxious to uncover in the past due to religious and cultural propaganda.

Interestingly, the condemnation of the church's role does not come only from academia but also from within the church itself, particularly from people who were educated in theological and religious institutions. For instance, the

biggest theological institution in the Tongan archipelago is the Sia'atoutai Theological College run by the Free Wesleyan Church, which is open to students from other churches. Graduates of this institution are known in Tonga for their opposition to the current organization of the church. They are known as *kau heuheu* or *kau fakaanga* (critics) because they act in opposition to church ministers in their own villages (interview with Fotu, 2005).

I do not wish to over generalize, as Sia'atoutai has produced some good leaders and prominent people in society, but as an institution it epitomizes the changing nature of the church and the open mindedness of its graduates. The emergence of the educated class to question the power and doctrines of the church is taken by church officials as an offence against God's will, especially by hard-line conservatives from the older generations. They also accuse the Western system of education for brainwashing Tongan youth, as they blame Tongan migrants for introducing evil aspects of Western civilization to Tonga.

Ironically, the introduction of science and critical education came through missionaries in Tonga. Christianity played an important role in the development of science (see Stark, 2003), and science is the driving force of development in church, state, and society, even if some people seem to misunderstand its role. The fact that science and critical thinking are at the center of demands for structural change in the church, changing attitudes of church members and the process of the separation of church and state makes the role of science and education even more controversial.

Hitherto, conservatives, especially from the older generations, have been critical of changes taking place. Everywhere in Tonga, you can hear the saying

*kuo kehe 'eni ia kuonga* (the times are strange) which symbolizes the attitudes of conservatives towards change in society (see Chapter 1). They evaluate every aspect of change negatively, using religious and cultural justifications. While the church conservatives benefit economically from the process of development through international migration, remittances and aid, they still complain about change on most occasions.

External forces are the major cause of much discussion regarding the church. In the political arena, church leaders and other prominent figures in church circles came forward to question the validity of the structure of government and the absolute power of the King. We can see here that the internal contradictions within the underlying structure of the relationship between church and state have been made public for the first time. The creation of the PDM in the early 1970s as a loose association was strongly supported by the church. This was shown in the vigorous involvement of the leaders of the two most powerful churches in Tonga in the movement, the late Bishop Pātelesio Fīnau, the leader of Roman Catholic Church, and the late Dr. 'Amanaki Havea, the leader of the Free Wesleyans (see Lātū, 1996). They were outspoken and actively participated in the movement's political activities. Their participation attracted many followers to the movement. In the late 1980s, the PDM slowly developed to become a very powerful organization and a strong rival of the government.

In response, the state decided to make a move and tried to reinforce the relationship between church and state once again. Shortly before the first ever convention of the PDM on Tongan Constitution and Democracy in 1992, the

Prime Minister of Tonga at the time, Baron Vaea, called a meeting of cabinet ministers and leaders of Christian churches. The main purpose of the meeting was to reflect upon the unity of the ‘two pillars’ *Pule’anga Mo e Siasi Kae Mālohi Ha Fonua* and the possibility of establishing a new political party to be called the ‘Christian Democratic Party’ (see Lawson, 1996; Lātū, 1996; 1998).

Regrettably, despite the government’s assertion that the alliance of Church and State was still the best method for Tonga, most church leaders were unhappy with the meeting. They believed that the government was simply trying to use the church to further its own agenda. The leader of the Catholic Church, Bishop Fīnau, criticized the government’s plan to form a political party using the churches as devious and manipulative (ibid.).

Recently, church involvement in politics has shown some unity when the major churches came together to form a united front on issues which affect church members. The TNCC organizes religious events, that involve all the major churches in Tonga coming together to pray for peace (interview with Foliaki, 2004; Mafi, 2004; Tuku’aho, 2004). Dr. Mafi of the Church of Tonga believed that the church should be involved in politics. If the church is aware of what affects the lives of members, then it should step in and engage, but it must be in relation to clear issues which are directly relevant to the interests of the church (interview with Mafi, 2004).

Dr. Foliaki of the Roman Catholic Church stressed that a Catholic priest has no right to be involved in politics, and that political activism is therefore not allowed in the Roman Catholic Church. Moreover, it is their responsibility to preach the truth and if political situations affect the lives of church members,

then the church should examine them carefully before taking further action. Despite this, Dr. Foliaki is active in the church leaders' council. The council meets frequently to discuss the political situation in Tonga and what might affect the lives of church members. The participation of the Roman Catholic Church in politics is part of their role in taking care of the church members. He has pointed out that the Roman Catholic Church's involvement in Tongan politics is to ensure that church members are well taken care of by the government in terms of health, education, and the like (interview with Foliaki, 2004).

Mrs. Fonua of the Free Church of Tonga believed that politics and the church are separable. Nevertheless, as a Tongan, it is an individual choice whether to be involved in politics, as the Free Church of Tonga does not impose restrictions on members' involvement. Furthermore, the Free Church of Tonga is more than willing to join other churches in discussing issues like human rights abuses, which are central to the lives of church members (interview with Fonua, 2004).

The Free Wesleyan Church seems to be moderate in its views of the political situation in Tonga, but, in many ways it remains the most active of all the churches in political matters. Most of the leading advocates of democracy and change are FWC lay preachers and some FWC ministers are active in the movement. The Chairman of the THRDM, Reverend Simote Ve'a, is a Wesleyan church minister as well as the secretary of the TNCC (Tonga National Council of Churches). He plays an influential role through the TNCC's involvement of major churches in Tonga in the political affairs of the kingdom.

But despite this involvement, the church now seems to have little effect on the government's decision making processes. This is a clear sign that the gap between the two institutions is growing wider and wider. Recently, the Legislative Assembly passed a bill that would allow commercial flights, work in the Marine Department, and other related activities on Sunday. Tonga's seven major church leaders presented a petition opposing the bill and this was tabled in the Tongan Parliament (see Taimi 'O Tonga, 2004; Tonga Star, 2004; Matangi Tonga, 2004, All online sources).

The issue provoked great concern amongst the Tongan people. This was due to the fact that since the promulgation of the Constitution in 1875, Sunday Sabbath laws had been strictly observed and had become a unique feature of Tongan society. On the other hand, the bill also points out that Tongan people still observe the values promoted by the church, despite the changing landscape of Tongan society. Moreover, both church and state were divided on the issue. Some of the church leaders and key government officials were dissatisfied with this move, seeing that it would harm the traditional reputation of the kingdom as a *fonua lotu* apart from the fact that it seemed to go against the Holy Scriptures.

The whole purpose of the government initiative was an attempt to bring economic reforms to the country. The Prime Minister, HRH Prince 'Ulukalala Lavaka Ata, believed that passing the bill would contribute to the growth of the Tongan economy (interview with 'Ulukalala, 2004). The pro-democracy MP, Akilisi Pohiva, says that while the government claims that the measure is only to allow emergency services to function on Sunday, the People's Representatives have a different view (Taimi 'O Tonga Online, 2004). The petition from church

leaders was rejected and the bill was passed and is now in effect. Such examples illustrate the changing nature of the historical and traditional relationship between church and state, which holds important implications for the future. It is likely that the separation between the church and the state will continue to grow.

In conclusion, it might be noted that the four theoretical perspectives on religion touched on at the start of the chapter have some relevance to the Tongan case. The Durkheimian perspective, that there is a congruence between the church and wider society, used to describe Tonga well, in the days when the aristocracy were important in both church and state, but this position is changing. The ideas of modernization and secularization seem to have some validity as Tongans are becoming more secular, pushed by the forces of globalization, as in the Sabbath issue. One interesting point here is that the North American Tongans generally seem to be more overtly religious than those who have stayed in Australia and New Zealand, which would fit with the general level of church attendance in these societies. The Weberian perspective, that religion is rationalized along with education in the modern world, also seems to be supported by the Tongan case -- the return of the educated migrants is leading to changes not only in the political system but also in the churches seems to be happening. Finally, the materialist viewpoint is also supported, as the changes in the church do seem to be following trends in the broader economy.

## Chapter Nine

### *Conclusion*

*The way in which we looked at both migration and development has shifted considerably over the years. The approaches espoused in the literature have changed, with some methods falling out of favor as new techniques and theories have been introduced. It would be satisfying to think that these shifts were purely the result of rigorous scientific investigation but they are as often likely to reflect changing ideologies, and what are considered acceptable views at any particular time, as they do any real advance in knowledge. However, such a view may be too disparaging as the shifts have made important contributions to development studies in particular, as well as to work in migration (Skeldon, 1997:17)*

This chapter sums up the main trends in international migration and societal change in the Kingdom of Tonga based on the major findings of the thesis and the implications they hold for the future. I begin by addressing the major findings of the thesis, followed by a discussion of the major trends in international migration in the Pacific region, and finally trends and future prospects within Tonga.

### **9.1 Major Findings**

At the outset of this thesis, we started off with the following list of questions. In this section I use them as a starting point for a discussion of the main findings of the thesis.

- Why do Tongan people migrate, and why are there such high rates of chain migration and migrant remittances?
- Does international migration assist the process of economic development in Tonga?

- To what extent has international migration affected the form and content of institutions like the village and the family?
- What effects has international migration had on Tonga's political affairs?
- What effects has migration had on the structure and organization of the church in Tonga?
- How does the situation in Tonga compare with that of other island states in the region?
- What does the future hold for migration in Tonga and what are the implications?

*9.1.1. Why do Tongan people migrate, and why are there such high rates of chain migration and migrant remittances?*

The reasons for the mass movement of Tongan people out of the country depend on individual and group preferences. Some scholars have argued that the major influences in international migration are economic even when social forces are also significant. In the case of Tonga and other Pacific islands such as Fiji and Samoa, they are a combination of social, political, and economic forces composed of complementary and contradictory tendencies (see Brown and Ahlburg, 1999).

A useful distinction here is that between the percentage of the population that migrates -- which in the case of Tonga is very high, and the *pattern* of who migrates which is determined by socio-structural factors. In the case of Tonga, the pattern is the result of a very strong tradition of chain migration, due to the nature of the underlying social organization.

Chain migration is the key pattern of migration while short-term circulation has also played significant role shaping the movements of Tongans throughout the region. The reason for the high rates of chain migration is due to the strong bond within the *fa'ahinga* and *fāmili* institutions. Whenever a family member migrates, it is his or her obligation to bring other family members and siblings to join him or her. This has led to the development of a continual chain migration network. The same applies to migrant remittances. It is an obligation for Tongan migrants to send remittances to support their relatives back home (see Chapters 2, 3 and 5). Chain migration in Tonga has also been reinforced by the presence of the church, and the international network that has arisen from that (as described in Chapters 4 and 8).

*9.1.2. Does international migration assist the process of economic development in Tonga?*

International migration has failed to assist the process of economic development in Tonga. The heavy reliance on remittances is a real problem for the Tongan people because it destroys their sense of initiative. While some people in Tonga work hard, the high dependence on remittances dims their visions and plans. In so doing, it discourages the abilities of Tongans to work hard (see Chapter 5). This, coupled with the high rate of education in Tonga, thanks to the activities of the Church, has led to an enormous brain drain, and the return migration has contributed to the social and political changes described in this thesis.

*9.1.3. To what extent has international migration affected the form and content of institutions like the village and the family?*

International migration has revolutionized both the form and content of key institutions in Tongan society such as the *kāinga*, *fa'ahinga*, and *fāmili*, as well as the *siasi* and *fonua*. The erosion of important aspects of tradition and culture unique to Tonga is also linked to international migration. This is reflected in the wearing away of Tongan ideals such as *faka'apa'apa*, *taliangi*, *'ofa fonua*, *tauhi vaha'a/tauhi vā*, and *fetokoni'aki*. It is also seen in the changing relationships of members of the *fāmili* and *fa'ahinga*. The concepts of *fonua*, the *fahu* custom, and relations between the *hou'eiki* and *tu'a* have all been transformed over the years. All these changes reflect the incorporation into the modern capitalist world economy (see Chapters 5,6,7 and 8).

*9.1.4. What effects has international migration had on Tonga's political affairs?*

The current political discontent (aristocracy vs democracy) reflected in the push for political reforms is a clear indication of the pressures imposed by the forces of international migration. This is the outcome of overseas education and experiences brought into Tonga by returning migrants (see Chapter 7). In recent times, Tongan migrants are more willing to involve in the political affairs of the home country than ever before, and political activism has even spread to the migrants abroad, as illustrated in the demonstrations by Tongans in New Zealand outside the King's residence in Auckland.

*9.1.5. What effects has migration had on the structure and organization of the church in Tonga?*

Changes have taken place in church structure and revolutionary transformations in how church members look at religious doctrines. The

nostalgic image of Tonga as a *fonua lotu* is still mentioned in sermons, even while the changing social landscape has gradually weakened some of the key roles of the church in Tonga's affairs. The breakdown of the historical alliance between church and state and the involvement of the church in the push for political reforms show such a transformation. This is clearly a shift from belief in the 'divine right' of the King to desire for a constitutional democracy. Ironically however, one of the effects of these reforms is that the church has increasingly lost its historic role as advisor to the government on political affairs to the newly educated elites -- who have emerged partly as a result of the church's pioneering role in Tongan education.

*9.1.6. How does the situation in Tonga compare with that of other island states in the region?*

Tonga shares many similarities with other island states in the region as migration sending societies. The high level of dependency on migrants remittances, high rates of chain migration, brain drain, and the effects of international migration on the socio-political, economic, and cultural landscapes of these societies are common in Pacific Island states (see Macpherson, 1997). However, the Tongan case is an extreme instance, as is reflected in the extreme importance of migrant remittances in the country's economy. This is probably a result of the very high rates of chain migration, coupled with high rates of education. And these in turn are the result of the comparative stability in Tonga's social structure in the 19th century, and the historic strength of the church in the Tongan political system. The fact that Tonga was never formally colonized meant that its economic, social and political structures avoided the

transformation that took place in many other areas of the Pacific. Even the church failed to transform Tongan society, but was rather coopted as a means of maintaining the aristocratic political system.

*9.1.7. What does the future hold for migration in Tonga and what are the implications?*

This study maintains that international migration will continue to be the driving force of change in Tongan society and remittances from Tongan migrants will remain as the safety valve of the Tongan economy in the future, given the lack of alternative forms of development. This is supported by statistics showing the continual rise of remittances sent home by Tongan migrants abroad. Some scholars are more pessimistic about how long the level of remittances could be maintained. They argued that as the second and third generations of Tongans grow so their ties to Tonga would be diluted (see Small, 1997; Lee, 2003).

The Tongan government has realized the significance of Tongan migrants to the Tongan society and it has made a very smart move in establishing the new government department, 'Tongans Abroad'. Taking good care of the Tongan diaspora abroad helps to maintain the flow of remittances. While international migration has brought about different kinds of transformation in Tongan society, it is the role of the Tongan government, scholars, policy makers, migrants and Tongan people to look at the issue carefully and try and plan what is best for Tonga as a whole. However, this has to be done within the context of the changes taking place in Asia Pacific

migration, and in particular the changes of immigration policy in the host countries. These are considered in detail in the next section.

## **9.2 Trends in International Migration**

The impact of significant changes in the political and economic systems on the issues relating to international migration, especially in the last few decades in Tonga, sheds light on the complexities of socio-political change in Tongan society. It stresses the need to look at new explanations of international migration and for new ways of conceptualizing and understanding it (see Siddique, 2001). In fact, the changing nature of international migration means that no migratory theory can be static, as the reality changes repeatedly. Interpretations and discussion of international migration over time need to be understood in relation to global linkages.

The changing nature of the host countries' immigration policies has played a dominant role in Tonga's changing social landscape. It is very important to look at the factors that affect policy decisions. This is because the immigration policies of host countries are partly determinant in explaining the trends in relation to the Tongan people and the ongoing process of change in Tongan society. If policy restrictions are imposed on the movement of Tongans, then it will affect socio-political and economic development in Tonga itself.

The evolution of national immigration policies has occurred in response to global economic migration, new communications and transportation networks, and the availability of rights and benefits for migrants. Human rights issues promoted by many international organizations led by the United Nations and

NGOs in the West play a dominant role in shaping immigration policies. The push for democratic reforms in Tonga and the changing attitudes of Tongan people towards the traditional socio-political structure may perhaps play a role in policy formulation in host countries.

It is well known in the region that both New Zealand and Australia stress the need to implement democracy in the Pacific. This is reflected in their policies. Their involvement in the push for democratization is well expressed in the current political dislocations in Tonga. While Tonga is still not a major priority in policy formulation in Canberra or Wellington, the increasing tensions between aristocracy and democracy in Tonga mean that it would not surprise one if the two countries were to move to prioritize political issues in immigration policy formulation.

The demographic change in most Western and several non-Western countries due to declining fertility and consequent ageing has led to proposals for increased immigration. However, it is clear that the current immigration policies of the host countries are very selective as to which people with which skills and experience are given first priority. In Australia's current population debate, those who fight for higher level of immigration must base their arguments on the benefits of a larger population in terms of skills and economic potential, not upon the supposed 'youngling power' of high immigration (see Siddique, 2001: 2) to revitalize the demographic profile of an ageing society.

The current immigration policies of New Zealand and Australia are similar in many aspects. The New Zealand government focuses on allowing entry to those migrants who would make the highest contribution to employment

and income growth. Another aim is to maximize the gain in productive human capital while maintaining provisions for migrants to enter New Zealand for social and humanitarian reasons (ibid: 8). A similar approach has been taken by Australia with priority placed on broad-based skills with the capacity to contribute to Australia's economy (see DIMA, 2000).

Unlike the past, both New Zealand and Australia regarded immigration as an instrument of labor market policy, to be applied to alleviate skill shortages in particular sectors, rather than a force for broader economic growth. The mechanism used to control entry on this basis is an 'Occupational Priority List'. Employers wanting to recruit persons for occupations not on the list have to demonstrate that no suitable local resident is available or can be readily trained (see Winkelmann, 2000). Moreover, the move away from 'younging power' implies that migration policies in the past have failed in terms of the outcomes, with goals not being met.

This is a big blow for international migration in Tonga. The end to the traditional form of migration to New Zealand has resulted in the emergence of a 'brain drain' in Tonga, as Tongans who are well trained and educated overseas, particularly in the major host countries, leave Tonga in vast numbers to settle and work in the host countries. Some who studied abroad on government and foreign aid scholarships have returned only to serve the minimum number of years required by the government and donor countries before leaving Tonga permanently.

In the case of New Zealand, the ‘one-way street’ result of the Trans-Tasman Travel Agreement<sup>28</sup> between New Zealand and Australia resulted in hundreds of thousands of New Zealanders leaving the country to settle in Australia (ibid.). As a result, the shortage of skilled and qualified people has contributed to the shift in New Zealand immigration policies from the traditional mode to put more emphasis on skills and economic growth. This move affects small island states of the South Pacific including the Kingdom of Tonga. The same is happening in Samoa and the Cook Islands (see Macpherson, 1997).

The shift in immigration policies has resulted in the introduction of the point system in New Zealand and Australia. Points are awarded in a way that is thought to promote the selection of ‘the most productive’ applicants. From the perspective of human capital theory, the task is to determine the value of the transferable human capital a person possesses. In fact, the point system is more emphasized in the case of New Zealand (see Appendix G). It once again shows the many limitations imposed on the immigration policies of the two big players in the region.

The point system not only encourages the ‘brain drain’ in Pacific island nations but it gives an advantage to migrants from other regions that are better off financially and educationally. We can see this if we take, for instance, the Asian diaspora, whose members are very successful in most migrant-receiving countries such as Canada, Australia, the United States, and New Zealand. Even though migrants from Oceania in New Zealand exceed those from other regions

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<sup>28</sup> The Trans-Tasman Travel Agreement gives full freedom of movement, i.e. nationals can live and work anywhere in the two countries without a requirement of residence and work permits.

such as Asia and North America in number, it is probable that they will be surpassed in the very near future.

In Tonga, only a few benefit from these policies, namely the educated elites, while the rest have to find their own ways of entering the host countries. Recently, the application process for visitors' visas to both Australia and New Zealand has become more complicated than ever before. There is a bond fee of several thousands Tongan *Pa'anga* (Approximately; 2000 AUD and NZD) levied on an application for a visitor's visa about which immigration officials are not certain. In some cases, it depends on the mood of immigration officials. As such, migrants' relatives overseas and locally in Tonga struggle to raise the bond fees.

In most cases, migrants on visitors' visas never return and therefore sacrifice the bond money. Most Tongans are willing to take all kind of risks in order to migrate. Interestingly, only a few suffer the costs and are deported from the host countries. Most end up settling in the host countries and obtain legal residential status later on (see Chapter 4). The most common way of obtaining residential status (*pepa*)<sup>29</sup> is through marriage to other Tongan migrants who already have it or have acquired *sitiseni* (citizenship) status.

One cannot blame the host countries for tightening up their immigration policies for reasons such as security, protection of their own citizens, and economic growth. Nevertheless, the changing nature of the global landscape

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<sup>29</sup> *Pepa* is a common word used by Tongan migrants in host countries. Those with residential status in host countries are referred to as people with *pepa* and those whom were born in either host countries or being naturalized are called *sitiseni*.

not only has a great impact on immigration policy formulation, but it also has a great effect on the socio-political and economic future of small island economies that are highly dependent on international migration.

### **9.3 Trends for Tonga**

Since 1966, the Tongan government has played a vital role in meeting the needs of Tongan migrants. It was involved in the negotiation of the temporary workers' scheme to New Zealand in the 1970s, and at present it continues to inquire about different kinds of opportunities for Tongan migrants abroad. In the last few years, the Tongan government officials together with few prominent members of the Tokaikolo Fellowship Church<sup>30</sup> based in Australia submitted a proposal to the Australian government for short-term labor migrants from Tonga to work on Australian farms. Unfortunately, the proposal was rejected due to changes in Australia's immigration policy (see Tonga Stars Online, 2002). Another move by the government was the leasing of hundreds of acres of land in Hawaii in May 2000 for the cultivation of Tongan agricultural products. This project aimed at employing Tongan migrants in Hawaii (Government of Tonga Online, 2000).

The Tongan government in association with the church and other non-government organizations has played a crucial role in meeting the migratory requirements of Tongan migrants. It has done its best through negotiations but it does very little to convince policy makers in host countries. The Tongan

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<sup>30</sup> Tokaikolo Church is a Christian church, which was broke away from the Wesleyan Church two decades ago. It has few branches in Australia (Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne, and Canberra).

government's support for Tongans wishing to leave the Kingdom has been continual.

However, there are still weaknesses in parts of the government. According to Pōhiva, the Tongan government is slack in dealing with the issue of international migration given its importance to the survival of the Tongan economy. He stressed the need to keep a close relationship between Tongan migrants abroad and the home country, to make them feel that the home country still cares for them and appreciates their contributions to the country's economy. He emphasized this by citing a petition submitted by advocates of change to Parliament to approve dual citizenship in early 2000.

The petition was rejected by the house, which is dominated by members of the ruling regime. Therefore, he and other supporters of change in Parliament lobbied the government for amendments in the law in order for their proposal to take effect. In the meanwhile, they are putting forward public and private bills for discussion in Parliament concerning the rights of Tongan migrants abroad. He cited the example of migrants from mainland China who would be able to obtain both Tongan and Chinese citizenship (interview with Pōhiva, 2004).

Pōhiva believes that it is essential to include Tongan representatives from host countries in the discussion of political matters in Tonga if amendments are made to the Constitution. He notes that the THRDM has formulated a proposed model with two options for Tongan migrants abroad. The first option is to bring in one representative each from New Zealand, Australia, and the United States into the Tongan Parliament. The second option is to allow those who wish to run for Parliament in Parliamentary election to come to Tonga. He believes that it is

possible to conduct balloting in the host countries, but it needs much work and money.

Dr. Feleti Sevele, the Peoples' Representative of the Tongatapu before he was appointed Prime Minister, blamed the Tongan government for not making amendments to the law allowing Tongan subjects who were born overseas and who have acquired overseas citizenship to obtain a Tongan passport (dual citizenship). The issue was raised again in December 2004 in the media when two Tongans who are citizens of Australia were refused Tongan passports by the Immigration Department of Tonga. He criticized the government for the unconstitutional sale of Tongan passports to Asians in the 1980s, which resulted in the amendment of the constitution to legalize such a move. According to Sevele, the government should carry out the same measure in order to allow dual citizenship for Tongan subjects overseas. It seems unfair for the Tongan government to give special treatment to foreigners while treating its own subjects in the opposite manner (see Taimi 'O Tonga Online, December 2004).

On the side of the Government, the Prime Minister at the time, HRH Prince 'Ulukālala at Lavaka Ata, pointed out that the Tongan Government is currently working on a policy aimed at allowing the exercise of dual citizenship which could enable Tongan holders of foreign citizenship to have full rights as Tongans. He acknowledged the contributions of Tongan migrants to the Tongan economy and the need for the Tongan government to work hard by all means to keep its relationship with Tongan migrants abroad vigorous. That is why the Tongan government has established consulates overseas to assist the immigration needs of Tongan migrants (interview with 'Ulukālala, 2004).

HRH ‘Ulukālala Lavaka Ata also alluded to the fact that Pacific leaders have considered waiving the restrictions on issues of visas to enable the free movement of people in the region, though the Tongan government respects the right of host countries to set their own immigration policies, as does Tonga. He argued that, whereas other countries with large migrant diasporas channel remittances through the government, Tongan migrants are free to send money in whatever way they like without any interference from the government. As such, it is not necessary to include representatives from Tonga migrants abroad in the political process unless they work directly with the government on matters regarding remittances. He believes that the issue is open for further discussion (ibid.).

The Hon. Tungi Mailefihi Tuku’aho, a nephew of the King, argues that interaction between Tongan migrants abroad and the home country is taking place on a large scale and church conferences and remittances are clear signs of the healthy relationship between Tongans overseas and those at home. Regarding the issue of political representation, he disagrees with the notion of sending representatives from host countries to be involved in the political process in Tonga. He claims that no country in the world has a system which allows its overseas population to take part in the political affairs of the home country. He also claims that Tongan migrants are unique compared to other migrant groups in terms of their identity. Tongans who left Tonga in the 1960s and 1970s migrated with a strong Tongan identity at the time they left. They still think of Tonga in the same way, but fail to consider that Tonga has changed. This is one of the main reasons why the level of interaction is so high.

In relation to changes in the system, Tuku'aho has proposed the idea that if Tongan migrants abroad want to be involved in the political process in the home country then Tongan diplomatic missions in host countries should be used as voting centers for Tongan migrants who want to vote. On the subject of dual citizenship, he believes that being Tongan is more than having a Tongan passport (interview with Tuku'aho, 2004).

As for the views of Tongan migrants in the host countries, a Tongan community representative in Australia said there is great interest in today's election process even though Tongan citizens overseas cannot vote in it. A spokesperson for the Tongan Uniting Parish in New South Wales, Savinata Mahe, says people are praying for the survival of Tonga as a nation. He maintains that there is a measure of apathy amongst Tongans living in Australia. 'The tensions within the movements themselves have made it so complicated and there are people who just wouldn't bother, they just lay back and concentrate on living overseas, but the sadness in them is that they are sending enormous funds to Tonga almost every year' (Radio New Zealand International, 16 March 2005). Savinata believes that many of the Tongans in Australia support the pro-democracy movement, but he says there is also support for keeping the present political system in Tonga.

In the United States, the National Tongan American Society is looking at how to convince the government of Tonga to grant the vote to Tongan citizens living in America. The society's executive director, Fahina Tavake-Pasi, says that they are requesting the Tongan government to give the vote to citizens who have been living in the US for less than five years. Ms Tavake-Pasi believes that

there is widespread support amongst Tongans in the US for the pro-democracy movement in Tonga. 'Many of the Tongans in the States are very much in agreement with the democracy views, and of course may be perhaps that has something to do with living out here in the States; I have no idea. The view where the government gives voice to the people of Tonga to determine how they would like to be governed' (ibid.).

The same views are heard from the Tongan migrants in New Zealand who believe that Tongans in New Zealand should have a voice in the decision making process in Tonga (conversation with Liava'a, 2006). The Tongan communities in New Zealand are the most active in matters relating to political activities in the home country. They run radio programs on political issues and push the New Zealand government to take the necessary actions to challenge the Tongan Government on political reforms.

The reaction of Tongan people to the strict immigration policies enforced by Australia, New Zealand, and the United States seem to be moderate. No popular movements have been organized to challenge the moves by the host countries. It seems to be a waste of time and energy as it will have no effect on the policy-making processes of host countries. However, the Tongan government cannot do much to convince host countries either because of Tonga's position as a dependent country. Interestingly, while the host countries have tightened up their immigration policies in recent years, Tongans still travel in considerable numbers and these numbers have been increasing (conversation with Lolohea, 2004).

The reasons for irregularities among immigration officials in the Kingdom of Tonga are numerous. Australia and New Zealand have established their own High Commissions in the capital Nuku'alofa. As such, local officials under the supervision of New Zealand and Australian officials conduct the issuance of visas. In such a process, it is reasonable to claim that nepotism is involved. Immigration officials in some circumstances are able to waive immigration requirements in favor of friends and relatives. Bribery in different forms may also be a factor. This is not only the case in Tonga, as it happens everywhere in the world (see Castles and Miller, 1998).

Another explanation is that the number of Tongans acquiring permanent residence and citizenship status in the host countries has increased tremendously. The system allows them to file applications for relatives back home under the host countries permanent residence policies. Parents can file for their children back home and children can also file for their parents. In some case, parents first migrate for a number of years before the children join them. Children in some cases migrate first before their parents.

Reunification is an important element in the host countries immigration policies. This kind of chain migration, even though it takes time, has resulted in the continuation of the flow of Tongans overseas. Migrating for educational purposes is still one of the key reasons. Educational visas are always easy to obtain through scholarships. Private students can also get visas after completing immigration requirements and some are able to study overseas through financial assistance from relatives abroad.

Other than the better standard of living and higher salaries offered by the host countries, the socio-political structure of Tonga seems to be the major cause of migration for the educated elites. The educated elites in many cases choose migration as the best alternative in response to the conservatism of the ruling aristocratic regime. Some are not satisfied with the way the government is operating and the way power is centralized in the hands of the aristocratic class. Practically speaking, however, the 'brain drain' affects the Tongan government's work force. People traveling on government scholarships emigrate together with those who were sent on foreign aid scholarships.

Unfortunately, the Tongan government seems unable to prevent the flow of Tongan educated elites out of the country. There is no sign of any move on the part of the government to deal with this. The result of the unending 'brain drain' is devastating for the country as the government loses a huge amount of money in educating the migrants. It also reflects the reality of 'boomerang aid', by which the donor countries at the end of the day are the sole beneficiaries. This is a great loss to Tonga and if the Tongan government continues to pay no attention to the issue, it will continue to become worse in the future. The issue of the brain drain is common to many of the Pacific islands due to their existing political structures. The Tongan government's inability to provide employment for its qualified and skilled workers is also a factor.

However, the 'brain drain' does have some positive effects on Tongan society. Money sent by skilled personnel helps the economy, and if they return, they come back with additional expertise and experience which could facilitate technology transfer (see Castle and Miller, 1998). However, the Tongan

government should also try to find a way to keep more qualified and skilled people at home. This is not an easy task but the government has to make use of its human resources by placing the right people in suitable positions. One suggestion is that a research institute of some sort should be set up to employ Tongan scholars, especially holders of post-graduate degrees with research experience to act as a 'think tank' for the government.

Eventually, the educated elites should take into consideration the political and economic weaknesses of the Tongan government. They should be persuaded to engage in the struggle, rather than escape being part of it. In this respect, encouraging nationalism (*'ofa fonua* or *mateaki fonua*) is very important in the process of nation building, as a way of strengthening the vitality of Tongan culture in development and nation building.

#### **9.4 Concluding Remarks**

The issues of international migration and socio-political and economic change in the Kingdom of Tonga should be further studied at all levels. This study suggests that the Tongan government should bring to the very top of its agenda the issue of international migration, and should engage in research and dialogue regarding its role and what it holds for the future of Tonga. In so doing, the establishment of a center for migration studies to focus on the movement of Tongan migrants and their effects on Tongan society is important.

Tongan experts in the field and related disciplines have to come together to exchange ideas and investigate the significance of the whole process. The move by the new commoner Prime Minister, Dr Feleti Sevele, to establish the

new department of 'Tongans Abroad' is an excellent step towards maintaining the relationships between the kingdom and its migrants in the host countries. Hopefully, this move will help to assure the continuous flow of remittances into the Tonga economy.

The church should also work together with the government on this issue since it is the second most powerful institution in Tonga and one of the biggest facilitators of international migration. Understanding the Tongan diaspora and its role in Tongan society will strengthen the social bonds between the migrants and their place of origin. The role of Tongan culture and tradition is fundamental as they help strengthen the social ties between Tongan migrants abroad and the homeland. Tongan concepts such as *'ofa fonua, taliangi, faka'apa'apa, manatu ki he tupu'anga, 'ofa, mateaki* are still rooted in the lives of Tongans, even if their importance is declining.

Socio-political and economic change is a continuous process but in the case of Tonga where choices are limited, the government must take every measure in its power to enable the continuation of the strong bonds between the Tongan diaspora and the homeland. While some scholars have predicted that the social ties will fade away due to the changing attitudes of the younger generations, it is still important to look at the issue from other perspectives.

Remittances in recent years have increased tremendously. New forms of remittances are now emerging to take over from the older ones. The shift from individualism to communalism has been shown in the millions of Tonga *pa'anga* flowing to Tonga through church development groups, youth groups, Kava-Clubs, government fundraising tours, and lately the emergence of civil

society in movements like the THRDM and PSA. While individual remittances are still taking place, they are slowly changing from consumption to investment (see Chapter 5).

Throughout this thesis, I have repeatedly spoken of international migration as the major driving force of socio-political and economic change in Tongan society. There are important aspects of culture that Tongans should preserve while other elements of change are not applicable to the development of Tongan society. A point of compromise has to be reached where the positive elements both from inside and outside the country can be utilized in the development of Tonga.

## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A

#### *Indicators of Dependency*

**Table 1**

**Foreign Aid to Tonga 2001-2003 (Tongan Pa'anga T\$)**

Code	Donor	2003/04	2002/03	2001/02
910	Australia Bilateral Assistance	34483.15	488320.5	762272
911	Australia Defense Cooperation	572784.5	0	0
915	France	0	195917.5	0
916	Germany	0	0	212.29
917	Japan - JICA	12372.51	9349.72	20927.46
922	New Zealand Bilateral	94762.84	449779.6	140733
925	New Zealand -Non Government	0	27609.36	10000
928	USA - Other	0	0	52187.07
929	Republic of China	0	0	107735.4
930	United Kingdom	0	10000	34100
950	ADB Grants	26000	50183	191978.5
952	World Bank/IDF	42759.78	695739.9	0
961	CFTC	113914.8	0	0
963	EU	440206.8	648338.2	127062.9
964	Forum Secretariat	0	0	18585
966	SPC	11504.17	0	9557.04
967	SPREP	31672.24	184812.8	58026.03
968	UNDP	329729.7	391313.6	8944.74
969	UNESCO	0	0	0
970	UNFPA	3994.65	57188	104283.7
971	UNICEF	0	0	10000
972	FAO	0	0	5292.86
974	WHO	29179	162440	205071.1
975	SPGC	0	84995.84	37940.35
976	UNEP	62434.96	0	0
977	FFA	682986.9	130015	99411.72
992	Receipt from Revolving Fund	2334265	0	0
993	Local Community Contribution	0	20055	0
999	Receipt from Unidentified Donor	2533.06	30067.44	139478.1
		4740065	3636125	2638689
592	Receipt from Revolving Fund	3513038	4274066	
			<b>7149163</b>	<b>6912756</b>

Source: Ministry of Finance, 2004.

**Table 2**

**Tonga: Disbursement of Official Loans and Grants, 1997/98-2001/02**  
(In millions of U.S. dollars)

	1997/98	1998/99	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02
Total external loans disbursement 1/	4.3	3.6	3.8	3.2	7.6
<i>of which:</i>					
<b><i>Multilateral</i></b>					
ADB	4.3	3.3	1.9	0.9	5.5
EIB	0	0	0	0	0
IDA	0	0	0	0	0
IFAD	0	0.3	0	0	0
Total grants 2/	19.8	16.3	1.7	0.8	1.4
Aid in kind 2/	17.9	15.5	1.1	0	0.1
Aid in cash	1.9	0.8	0.6	0.8	1.3
<i>of which:</i>					
<b><i>Bilateral grants</i></b>	1.9	0.7	0.4	0.7	0.9
Australia	1.2	0.6	0.2	0.5	0.6
Canada	0	0	0	0	0
France	0	0	0	0	0
Japan	0.1	0	0	0	0
New Zealand	0.6	0.1	0.1	0	0.2
United Kingdom	0	0	0	0	0
<b><i>Multilateral grants</i></b>	0	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.5
CFTC	0	0	0	0	0
EU	0	0	0	0	0.1
SPC	0	0	0	0	0
UN agencies	0	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2
Others	0	0	0	0	0.1
<b>Total foreign assistance</b>	24.1	19.9	5.5	4.1	9.0

Source: Ministry of Finance, 2004.

**Table 3****Tonga: Key Economic and Financial Indicators**

<b>Economic Activity Indicators</b>		<b>2002 Qtr 3</b>	<b>2002 Qtr 4</b>	<b>2003 Qtr 1</b>	<b>2003 Qtr 2</b>	<b>2003 Qtr 3</b>
Talamahu Market value 1/	\$m	1.3	0.6	0.2	0.6	0.6
Sales of Construction materials 2/	\$m	6.3	7	8.6	5.9	
Fish Exports 3/	\$m	1.4	0.8	0.7	0.9	
Import payments 4/	\$m	41.8	40.9	37.8	42.5	40.8
Air arrivals 5/	thousands	10.2	10	6.9	9.9	9.9
<b>CPI (year-on-year change)</b>						
Headline	% p/a	8.5	12	11.7	12.3	13.9
Imported	% p/a	10.5	12	15.3	17.9	15.3
Domestic	% p/a	6	13.5	7.5	5.2	11.3
<b>Money and Credit</b>						
Narrow Money	\$m	40.8	55.1	41.8	51.6	52.9
Quasi Money	\$m	95.2	96.1	92.4	98.9	101.3
Domestic Credit	\$m	179.7	185.9	179.6	195.2	202.7
<b>Interest Rates</b>						
Lending Rate	% p/a	11.4	11.3	11.3	11.3	11.3
Saving Deposit Rate	% p/a	3.1	3.14	3.17	3.2	3.2
Time Deposit Rate	% p/a	5.8	5.6	5.8	6	6
<b>External Sector</b>						
Trade Balance	\$m	-36.7	-20.4	-32.3	-34.6	-31.5
Current Account Balance	\$m	-14.7	18.6	-11.3	-3	9.2
Overall Balance	\$m	-10.7	15.8	-7.7	0	-0.3
<b>Foreign Exchange Reserves</b>						
Gross Official Foreign Reserves (end)	\$m	28.9	44.7	36.9	36.9	36.7
Import Coverage (end)	months	1.8	2.7	2.3	2.4	2.4
Exchange Rate (end)	USD/TOP	0.4466	0.449	0.4577	0.4664	0.469

Source: NRBT Quarterly Bulletin, September 2003.

**Table 4**

**Government Revenue & Expenditure**  
(Millions of Pa'anga)

	Domestic direct taxes	Domestic indirect taxes	Foreign Trade taxes	Government services revenue	Interest and rent
1990/91	4.6	4.1	25.1	7.4	5.1
1991/92	4.5	4.3	22.4	8.7	5.4
1992/93	5.8	5.8	25.3	10.2	3.8
1993/94	5.9	5.9	28	9.4	4.8
1994/95	6.7	6.4	28.5	3.9	11.5
1995/96	9.2	6.5	27.8	9.4	9.3
199/97	9.9	6.2	30.5	10.7	1.5
1997/98	9	6.6	28.8	14.2	1
1998/99	10.7	6.5	30.2	11.6	1
1999/00	10.5	7.5	34.1	12.3	2.1
2000/01	10	8.3	36	17.7	1.1
2001/02 1/	11	9.1	46.4	12	1.4
2002/03 1/	12	9.8	50.6	17.4	0.8
	Total recurrent revenue	Other revenue: Repayment of loan	Total revenue	Recurrent expenditure	Recurrent budget (surplus/deficit)
1990/91	46.3	1.1	47.7	47.7	0
1991/92	45.2	1	46.2	51.1	-4.8
1992/93	50.9	1.4	52.3	49.9	2.4
1993/94	54.1	0.7	54.7	50.4	4.4
1994/95	57	1.2	58.2	55.5	2.7
1995/96	62.1	2.5	64.6	62.8	1.9
199/97	58.9	2.6	61.5	62.3	-0.8
1997/98	59.8	2.9	62.7	62.3	0.4
1998/99	60	7.7	67.7	71.7	-4.1
1999/00	66.5	5.9	72.5	71.5	1
2000/01	73.1	10.9	84.1	83.7	0.4
2001/02 1/	79.9	8.6	88.5	90.1	-1.6
2002/03 1/	90.5	5.6	96.2	98.6	-2.5

Source: NRBT Quarterly Bulletin, September 2003.

**Table 5**

**Development Assistance Coordinated by the Central Planning Department 2001**

Donor/Grants (TOP \$ Millions)	In-kind	Cash	TOTAL
<b>Bilateral</b>	11.32	4.30	15.62
Australia	7.01	3.00	10.01
New Zealand	3.24	1.30	4.54
Japan	1.07	0.00	1.07
<b>Multilateral</b>	0.19	0.10	0.29
UNDP	0.19	0.10	0.29
<b>TOTAL</b>	11.51	4.40	15.91
<i>% of total</i>	72%	28%	100%

Source: Central Planning Department Annual Report, 2002

**Table 6**

**Direction of Trade: Imports, C.I.F**  
(Millions of Pa'anga [T\$])

<b>During</b>	<b>Total imports (c.i.f)</b>	<b>From Australia</b>	<b>From Fiji</b>	<b>From Japan</b>	<b>From New Zealand</b>	<b>From U.S.A</b>	<b>From Other Countries</b>
<b>1997/98</b>	100.7	27.2	7.9	5	35.2	18.1	6.8
<b>1998/99</b>	104.9	30	9	5.1	36.7	13.7	10.3
<b>1999/00</b>	116	27.2	15.7	6.9	42	14.3	10
<b>2000/01</b>	136	34	20.1	10.8	52	11.7	7.4
<b>2001/02</b>	190.3	44.4	17.3	9.1	71.5	23.2	24.8
<b>2002/03</b>	187.9	33.8	38.1	5.9	79.1	15.8	15.2

Source: NRBT Quarterly Bulletin, September 2003.

**Table 7**

**VALUE (T\$) OF IMPORTS, EXPORTS, RE-EXPORTS AND VISIBLE  
BALANCE OF TRADE 1991-2001**

<i>Year</i>	<i>Imports Balance of Trade 1</i>	<i>Exports 2</i>	<i>Re-Exports 3</i>	<i>4=2+3-1</i>
<b>1991</b>	76,817,269	20,610,860	854,263	-55,352,146
<b>1992</b>	84,270,508	16,575,589	833,011	-66,861,908
<b>1993</b>	85,235,677	21,973,297	1,502,579	-61,759,801
<b>1994</b>	90,964,700	17,747,645	501,879	-72,715,176
<b>1995</b>	98,046,675	18,022,417	598,038	-79,426,220
<b>1996</b>	91,806,675	12,812,397	817,887	-78,176,391
<b>1997</b>	92,094,861	13,358,381	396,874	78,339,606
<b>1998</b>	102,390,225	11,036,689	521,087	-90,832,449
<b>1999</b>	116,466,444	17,312,142	819,742	-98,334,560
<b>2000</b>	123,144,484	15,714,571	350,242	-107,079,671
<b>2001</b>	155,092,254	14,375,695	296,379	-140,420,179
<b>2002</b>	195,130,436	30,432,554	152,111	-164,545,770
<b>2003</b>	199,214,348	34,789,912	343,347	-164,081,089

Source: Government Department of Statistics, 2003.

## APPENDIX B

### *Research Questionnaires*

#### **Standardized Questionnaire 1** (For selected informants in Tonga)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Female/Male: \_\_\_\_\_

Village: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_Day\_\_\_\_Month\_\_\_\_Year

1. Do you have friends and relatives overseas?
2. How many?
3. How are you related to them?
4. Do you still keep in touch with them?
5. In what way?
6. Do they send remittances of any form?
7. Could you give the approximate amount of remittances they send?
8. How often do they send remittances?
9. What are the major purposes for remittances?
10. Do you often ask them for remittances?
11. If yes, how do they react?
12. Do you think that they will continue to send remittances in the future?
13. What are the impacts of remittances on your individual/family life?
14. Are you thinking of migrating overseas?
15. Do you recognize any change resulting from international migration?

**Standardized Questionnaire 1 A** (For selected informants in Tonga)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Female/Male: \_\_\_\_\_

Country: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_ Day \_\_\_\_ Month \_\_\_\_ Year

1. Do you have any idea of the effects of international migration on Tonga's socio-political and economic landscape?
2. Can you explain the effects on the *kāinga*, *fāmili*, and the village?
3. What about the effects on a National level?
4. Do you think that the effects of international migration disadvantages to Tongan society?
5. If yes/ in what way?
6. If no/ explain
7. Do you like to leave Tonga?
8. Explain the reason for your answer.
9. What do you think about the future of international migration and change in Tonga?

**Standardized Questionnaire 1 B** (For selected informants in Tonga)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Female/Male: \_\_\_\_\_

Country: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_ Day \_\_\_\_ Month \_\_\_\_ Year

1. Are you aware of the effects international migration has on Tonga's society?
2. Can you explain the role of the Tongan Government in international migration?
3. How does the Government deal with change?
4. How does the government formulate policies to deal with international migration and what are their effects on Tongan society?
5. Could you explain the role of remittances in the Tongan Economy?
6. Please explain the future prospects of remittances in Tonga
7. Do you think that Tongan Migrants abroad should be given the right to vote in parliamentary elections in Tonga?
8. What do you think about the struggle for change in the political system?
9. Do you think that the effects of international migration disadvantages Tongan society?
10. If yes/ in what way?
11. If no/ explain
12. What do you think about the future of international migration and change in Tonga?

**Standardized Questionnaire 1 C** (For selected informants in Tonga)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Female/Male: \_\_\_\_\_

Country: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_ Day \_\_\_\_ Month \_\_\_\_ Year

1. Are you aware of the effects of international migration on Tonga's society?
2. Can you explain the role of the Church in international migration?
3. How does the Church deal with change?
4. How does the Church formulate policies to deal with international migration and what effects does it have on Tongan society?
5. Can you explain the role of remittances in the church?
6. Please explain the future prospects of remittances in the church.
7. Do you think that Tongan Migrants abroad should be given the right to vote in parliamentary elections in Tonga?
8. What do you think about the struggle for change in the political system?
9. Do you think that the church should be involved in politics?
10. Does the church encourage international migration?
11. In what way?
12. Do you think that the effects of international migration disadvantages Tongan society?
13. If yes/ in what way?
14. If no/ explain
15. What do you think about the future of international migration and change in Tonga?

**Standardized Questionnaire 2** (For selected migrant informants in host countries)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Female/Male: \_\_\_\_\_

Country: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_ Day \_\_\_\_ Month \_\_\_\_ Year

1. How long have you lived here?
2. Who/what, brought you here?
3. What made you leave Tonga?
4. Are you better off here?
5. Do you have relatives here?
6. Are there many Tongans here?
7. Do you always keep in touch with them?
8. Are you involved in Tongan community activities here?
9. Do you have relatives back in Tonga?
10. Do you still maintain contact with them?
11. How do you contact them?
12. Do you send them remittances of some sort?
13. How often do you send them remittances?
14. Do they ask for remittances?
15. Why do you send them remittances?
16. Will you continue to send remittances in the future?
17. Do you have any comments on the future prospects of international migration and remittances?
18. To what extent has the new landscape changed your life?
19. Are you planning to return to Tonga?
20. Do you have any idea of the changes which are taking place in Tonga because of international migration?

**Standardized Questionnaire 2 A** (For selected informants in Host Countries)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Female/Male: \_\_\_\_\_

Country: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_ Day \_\_\_\_ Month \_\_\_\_ Year

1. Are you aware of the effects international migration has on Tonga's society?
2. Can you explain the effects on the *kāinga*, *fāmili*, in the host countries?
3. What about the effects on Tonga as a whole?
4. Do you think that the effects of international migration disadvantages Tongan society?
5. If yes/ in what way?
6. If no/ explain
7. Would you like to go back to Tonga?
8. Explain the reason for your answer
9. Do you play a role in the changing nature of Tonga's landscape?
10. Do you think that future generations will continue to send remittances to Tonga?
11. What do you think about the future of remittances?
12. How has the landscape changed your life?
13. What do you think about the future of international migration and change in Tonga?

## APPENDIX C

### *Three Periods of Tongan Early or Traditional History*

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>The Lapita Period (Early, Middle and Late): 1500 BC – AD 200</b></p> <p>The initial settlement of Tonga through Fiji, by the southwest Pacific Lapita People, associated with highly decorated, dentate stamped pottery; restricted lagoon shore settlement, the shell madden era, characterized by heavy shellfish consumption and the use of pottery. Less use pottery, now plainer, towards the close of the pottery period, marking an antagonism in the marine-based mode of the social organization of production.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>The Early Period (Traditional-Mythological): Pulotu – Touia-‘o-Futuna – Tongamama’o</b></p> <p>The original northwest Pulotu colonizers, out of Pulotu-Vahanoa tensions, settled on Touia-‘o-Futuna; early human organization, via incestuous procreation and human environment unity, is suggestive of early co-operative lagoon-shore settlement and later constrained sea-land movement. Conflicts between deities transformed Touia-‘o-Futuna to Tongamama’o, divided amongst them into Pulotu, Langi and Maama</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>The Dark Age or Formative Period: AD 200 – AD 1200</b></p> <p>Shell maddens continued to be present; but virtual abandonment of pottery making and use led to land based mode of social organization of production; continuing exploitations of both land and marine resources; more systematic cultivation of plants and domestication of animals; dearth of art factual information regarding this period, hence the reference to it as the Dark Age Period.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>The Middle Period: (Traditional-Theological) Tongamama’o-Tonga (AD 950)</b></p> <p>The three deities and their offspring engaged in different forms of activity; tensions generated power transfers between related but competing deities; bitter conflicts saw the rise of ‘Aho’aitu, the first Tu’i Tonga, to political hegemony, thus changing Tongamama’o to Tonga; less known but peaceful period between ‘Aho’aitu and Momo characterized perhaps by local nation building.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>The Classical Period: (Pre-classical and Classical). AD 1200 – AD 1770.</b></p> <p>Characteristics shift in settlement patterns from earlier habitation along the lagoon-shore areas to dispersed settlement inland; marked distribution of mound, stonework and site complexes of great human significance throughout the Tongan landscape; ordered and altered human landscape manifesting highly stratified complex society, sustained by authoritative centralized government.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>The Later Period: (Traditional Classical) AD 1200- AD 1845</b></p> <p>The antagonistic landscape movement of people developed through different stages; rise of the Tu’i Tonga dynasty, then consolidated locally; Tu’i Tonga empire, with major reforms, emerged; regional imperial expansion through conquest, then alliance formation; imperial decline countered by emerging social institutions of economic and political benefits; antithesis collateral dynastic formation.</p>

Source: Māhina, ‘Okusitino 1992. *The Tonga Traditional Tala-e-Fonua: A Vernacular Ecology-Centred Historio-Cultural Concept*. Unpublished PhD Thesis: Australian National University.

## APPENDIX D

### *Lakalaka by the Vava'u Group in Honors of His Majesty's 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday 1998*

<p><b>Fakatapu</b>  Fakatapu mo Ha'a Moheofo  Ha'a Talafale mo Ha'a Ma'afu  Latuhiho keu fakatapu  Pea tapu ange mo Ha'a Vaea  Mo Ha'a Havea mo Ha'a Havea  Kauhala'uta ne faifio  Pea Tapu mo Ha'a Ngata Motu'a  Ha'a Ngata Tupu ke fakatapu  Falefisi pea mo Fokololo  'A Molofaha mo Maliepo  Kano Loto'a he lotoloto  Pea tapu moe tou'a ato</p> <p><b>Lave</b>  Ka ai ha lea 'e tala kitu'a  Kuo u hufanga 'i he tala e fonua  Pea ka 'i ai ha lea 'e hē  Kuo u hufanga 'i he malu e lupe</p> <p>1. Ne lau ne ha'u ha Papalangi  Ke fie malu'i e 'otu Tonga ni  Pea tali 'e Tupou 'Uluaki  Ko e malu'i kuo 'osi fai  Koe fonua ne tuku ki langi  Ke malu'i pe mei he Tamai  He koe fonua 'oku vaivai  Masiva mahafu masiva kakai</p>	<p><b>Fakatapu</b>  My respects to Ha'a Moheofo  Ha'a Talafale and Ha'a Ma'afu  My respects also to Latuhiho  And to the Ha'a Havea  I pay respects also to the Two Havea  And all who constitute the Kauhala'uta  I beg the indulgence of Ha'a Ngata Motu'a  With respects to Ha'a Ngata Tupu  Falefisi and Fokololo  Not forgetting Molofaha and Maliepo  And the inner circle of Royalty  And, of course, the tou'a</p> <p><b>Lave</b>  Should I appear to be outspoken  May I take refuge in our tradition  And if I seem to be lost  I seek sanctuary under the wings of the dove</p> <p>1. It was said that the coming of the Europeans  Was to offer protection for Tonga  Tupou I responded  Protection of Tonga has been accomplished  The county has been ceded to God  For protection by the Almighty  This is a poor country  In resources and armaments</p>
<p>2. Ko e koloa ni tu'uholoaki  Ha'a Moheofo 'a hono fataki  Ko Tupou Ua Ne hokotaki  Ko Tupou Tolu patoloaki  Koe Tangane Ne ne muiaki  Faa'i kuonga e tāpuaki  He fakakoloa fai mei langi  Kei malu 'a Tonga mo hono kakai</p>	<p>2. These values have been handed down  The House of Moheofo to uphold and  maintain  Tupou II continued  Tupou III enhanced  Tupou IV to fulfill  Blessings on the Fourth Dynasty  Such enrichment received from God  Confirming security for Tonga and its people</p>
<p>3. Ne hoko 1918  Pa e tala mei lotu tatau  'Alo hoko kuo fakateunga 'a Fangatapu  Fotu 'eni 'umata ma'a Tonga mo e kaha'u  'Isa he pani ne polo'i kuo molumalu  Tu'i Tonga Takalaua mo Kanokupolu  Ha'a Tainasiti hisitolia ne fanaafotu  Kuo Ne kato'i afo koula 'eni 'e tolu</p>	<p>3. 1918 came  A cry is heard from the Palace  A Crown Prince is born to grace Fangatapu  A rainbow for Tonga and the future  The future sovereign so majestic  The Tu'i Tonga, Ha'atalalaua and  Kanokupolu  Historical lineage temporal and absolute  Three separate golden threads now joined as  one.</p>
<p>4. Ne tō ta'u pea fai e langa</p>	<p>4. Preparation began for upbringing</p>

<p>Lotu moe ako maa'imoa  Nafualu e Fehuhu kamata  Lō tolu fala na'e lalanga  Fotu he sino loto 'ulungaanga  Hā he maamaloa matematika  Ko e Tama 'atelita fakaholomamata  Polu volu e lēkooti 14</p>	<p>Academia and religion hand in hand  Nafualu the foster parent  The traditional mat woven in three layers  Physical, mental and spiritual prowess so early manifested  Appeared in the matriculation honors board  Also athlete so outstanding  Gained record in pole vault at 14.</p>
<p>5. Niuingitoni ne lele'i ama  Toutai hoko koe kumi maama  'Univesiti koe fakalaka  Polopolo ko e 'uluaki Tonga  BA he 1939  LLB ma'u he 41  Ne kei hilio pe 'a e 'atelita  Soti puti lekooti maaka</p>	<p>5. And then on to Newington  To continue pursuit of education excellence  University was inevitable  The first Tongan to be so gifted  BA in 1939  LLB in 1941  Athletic prowess still maintained  Setting a record in shot put.</p>
<p>6. Ne liu Siutamafua ki he 'Otu Anga'ofa  To'ofohē he huafa ngafa Tupouto'a  Tolulohama ki he La'a-kuo-Unga Fonua  Ha'ao ma'a si'i Tonga masiva  Langi mama'o fai e sika pea moe siutaka  Langa ako fai ki ngatai mo tokanga  'Omi e ngaahi vaka langa kautaha mataka  Si'i Pilinisi Hoko ne tonunga</p>	<p>6. Returned to Friendly Islands  With academic achievements completed  Assumed duties with the title Tupouto'a  An able support to the late Queen  Seeking assistance for Tonga so poor  Traveled widely with a vision  To develop training in agriculture and fisheries  Shipping and copra to develop  A Crown Prince conscientious and loving</p>
<p>7. Minisitā mo'ui ako ngaue mo Muli na  Hoko koe Palemia ke fetongi 'a Ata  Toki fana ki he kaniva 'a e fakalalaka  Siokalafi, Nota mo e Musika  Tau malu'i hotele mo e fakamafolalea  Uafu Kuini Sālote mo e 'uluaki nusipepa  Kolisi faiako ako ma'olunga 'o Tonga  Konga 'eni 'ene ngaahi maa'imoa</p>	<p>7. Became the Minister of Health,  Education, Works and Foreign Affairs  Became Premier to succeed Ata  Boost development to the pinnacle  Geography, tonic solfa in music  Defence, the Hotel and Broadcasting  Queen Sālote Wharf and the first newspaper  Teacher training school and Tonga High  School  Are but some of his achievements.</p>
<p>8. Kotofa e taimi fonofono ha Hama  Ko Halaevalu hono kakala  Hisitolia matelau ta'ane mahanga  Tapuaki he faa'i tofi'a  67 e taimi ta hono houa  Ke hilifaki kalauni koula  Fai 'ene tukupā ki hona 'Otua  Fū hona kava ki he fonua</p>	<p>8. Time came for a partner to be sought  Halaevalu was her name  The twin wedding made history  A blessing yielding four estates  67 came to be his finest hour  A golden crown installed  Enacting pledge of allegiance to God  By the traditional acceptance of the Kava</p>
<p>9. Ko ha'aku 'eni talanoa atu  Ke malua ki lalo katoa 'a Vava'u  Feka'ehi'ehi mei he fiefetau  Mo ke 'apasia telia e Hau  He 'oku 'afio ka koe maau  He 'ikai ha taha 'e uku 'o a'u  He 'oku loloto pea 'oku 'au  'Ise'isa e hoto 'ofa atu</p>	<p>9. This is my tale to you  All of Vava'u to be seated  Refrain from any provocation  For he is present and is orderly  No one can fathom its depth  It is deep and current is strong  You have my compassion  Come join me seek and pursue</p>

Ha'u ta hehenga pea ta kakau Lau pe 'a e me'a teta lava 'o lau	And take only what you can grasp
10. Hanga 'o fesili muiaki toil 'o tui CBE 'o 'Ingilani foaki 'e Kingi Siaosi KBE 'o 'Ingilani foaki 'e Kuini 'Iisapesi KCMG 'o Sangato Siaosi GCVO tuku 'e 'Iisapesi GCMG Maikolo mo Siaosi 'Isa maa'imoa fonu langilangi 'Uluaki Sanisela 'o e Pasifiki Tonga 'Uluaki 'Onalali Toketa 'o e Pasifiki Tonga 'Onalali Tokela lao Telihi 'Initia Toketa Filosefa 'univesiti 'Ianga 'Iloa 'i Taiwan Toketa 'ekonomika Hoko foki 'i Tokio Toketa Filosofia Tonga ki'i pilote kuo fonu monu'ia	10. Let pursue, comprehend and treasure CBE of England awarded by King George KBE of England awarded by Queen Elizabeth KCMG of St George GCVO awarded by Queen Elizabeth GCMG of St Michael and St. George Crowning achievements with honor. The first Chancellor of the South Pacific The first honorary doctorate of the South Pacific Honorary law doctorate of New Delhi, India Ph.D. of Brigham Young University Awarded in Taiwan with Economics Doctorate Bestowed in Tokyo with PhD Tonga only a dot et full of accolade.
11. Ka koe Tonga fe kei fifili 'Uuni lelei 'ene mataliki 'Isa he kuonga kuo ala viki Teketi tolu 'Ene pule fakatu'i 66-76 kuonga mohu 'ekitivi Hokohoko seini mo mamani Kau ai si'i Tonga Kominiueli Fakatuputupurangi 'a e Fetu'utaki	11. But which Tongan is still puzzled With available opportunities abound This generation is so fortunate Enjoying three decades of his reign 66-67 abundant and active Continuous link with outside world Tonga became a member of the Commonwealth And communications quite modern
12. 77-87 'o e kuonga Talite mo Siapani koe kaume'a 'Ikai 'eni ha mafi ta'ofi'ene 'ofa Na'a mo Katafi hau 'o Lipia 88-98 'eni kuolaka Kei 'i Fohe'uli kisu ki Taulanga Toe tuku fonua ke malu mei 'olunga Tama teu salute atu 'aki 'a 'eku 'ofa	12. 77-78 such a generation Treaty of Friendship with Japan No power to curb such compassion Not Even Kadaffi of Libya 88-98 is about to be passed He is still steering towards a haven Cession to God once again renewed I therefore salute Your majesty and once again pledge my loyalty
13. Leveleva e malanga kau tuku a Tama kuo lava si'oto fatongia Teu tatau atu kau kalo ange a Ki Funga Pouono Fatafata Mafana Ki Hikutamole ko hoku 'ofa'anga Ko e talifekau si'oto ta'ovala Ka huni e lolo teki pea u lata Tu'a 'ofa atu pea mou me'a a.	13. My speech has been long but now I must bid adieu I have duly performed my duty I will now say farewell and depart For "Funga Pouono" and "Fatafata Mafana" To Hikutamole my precious To await your further command Amid the calm water on my refuge I will say Pledging my love and loyalty to you.

Source: Kaeppler, Adrienne L. 1999. *Tonga Art and Society on the Eve of the Millennium from Stone Age to the Space Age in 200 Years*. Nuku'alofa: Tonga National Museum.

\* **Fakatapu** is paying respects and **Lave** is an old Tongan musical form which is more like and introduction.

## APPENDIX E

### *Parliamentary Elections in Tonga*

#### RESULTS FOR TONGA - 2005 - 2007 GENERAL ELECTION

##### *Tongatapu District*

1. Akilisi Pohiva THDRM
2. 'Isileli Pulu THDRM
3. Feleti Sevele THDRM

##### *Vava'u District*

1. Samiu Kiuta Vaipulu Independent
2. Viliami Kaufusi Helu THDRM

##### *Ha'apai District*

1. 'Uliti Uata THDRM
2. Fineasi Funaki THDRM

##### *'Eua District*

1. Sunia Fili THDRM

##### *Niuas District*

1. Sione Peauafi Haukinima THDRM

#### RESULTS OF THE LAST FIVE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS IN TONGA FOR THE MAIN ISLAND GROUP TONGATAPU\*

##### **1990**

Pohiva	THRDM
Niu	THRDM
Fukofuka	THRDM

##### **1993**

Pohiva	THDRM
Fukofuka	THRDM
Liava'a	THRDM

##### **1996**

Pohiva	THRDM
Tupouniua	Independent
Fukofuka	THRDM

##### **1999**

Pohiva	THRDM
Sevele	THRDM
Namoa	Independent

##### **2002**

Pohiva	THRDM
Sevele	THRDM
Pulu	THRDM

##### **2005**

Pohiva	THRDM
Pulu	THRDM
Sevele	THRDM

Source: Prime Minister's Office, Government of Tonga, 2004.

\*In the last five parliamentary elections, majority of peoples' representatives were members of Tonga Human Rights and Democracy Movement (THRDM).

## APPENDIX F

### *HRH The Prime Minister's Address of the Nation regarding the new Political Reform*

Ladies and Gentlemen

It is with the utmost respect that I address you tonight on a subject of great importance and joy to our country. As you all know, on the 8<sup>th</sup> of September, 2004, I conveyed to you the wish of his majesty King Taufa'ahau Tupou IV, for Tonga to enter a new epoch, by appointing from this year's elected parliamentary representatives, four new ministers of the crown, two from the noble's representatives, and two from the representatives of the people.

Our elections have just been concluded last week, and we now have to move forward with the development of our country. Today, four of the elected parliamentary representatives were invited for consultations with cabinet, and they have all accepted the invitation to be appointed to the very responsible position of being a Minister of the Crown.

This is a day of great expectations, a day of solidarity, and a time for us to further strengthen our co-operation as a nation. This day marks a new chapter in our history, for it celebrates and recognizes the first appointment of new ministers from those elected by the people and the nobles. It therefore gives me the greatest pleasure as Prime Minister, to carry out the task we set ourselves prior to the recent elections.

Let it therefore be proclaimed that with his Majesty's consent, the new Honorable Ministers appointed for the 2005-2007 parliamentary sessions are as follows:

- Hon. Tu'ivakano, nobles' representative for Tongatapu Minister of Works
- Hon. Nuku, nobles' representative for 'Eua Minister of Police, Prisons and Fire Services
- Dr. Feleti Sevele, people's representative for Tongatapu Minister of Labor, Commerce and Industries
- Sione Peauafi Haukinima, people's representative for Niuafu'ou and Niuatoputapu Minister for Forestry

It is my hope that together we wish the newly appointed ministers all the best as they take up their new responsibilities for the people and our nation. We ask that the blessings of the almighty god be upon them, so we can work together for the advancement of the kingdom of Tonga, in the spirit of peace and unity.

Malo

Source: Government of Tonga Official Website, March 21, 2005.

## APPENDIX G

### *Summary of current Points Score in General skills/skill in independent category for New Zealand and Australia*

	<i>New Zealand</i>	<i>Australia</i>
<b>Qualifications</b>	10 points for base qualifications; 11 points for advanced qualification; 12 points for Master Degree or higher (compulsory registration for certain occupations)	42 points for occupation which require diploma or advanced diploma level qualifications; 50 points for 'generalist' occupations which require degree level qualifications; 60 points for occupations that require degree (or higher) or trade level qualifications where entry to the occupation requires training which is specific to the occupation.
<b>Host country qualification</b>	2 points for a New Zealand qualification that is recognized for points.	Five points will be awarded where applicant obtained a diploma, trade qualification or degree (this was introduced on July 1, 1998); or 10 points if the applicant holds an Australian PhD (doctorate degree) (introduced on November 1, 1999) from an Australian educational institution.
<b>Work experience</b>	1 point for each completed two years of experience, up to a maximum of 10 points	5 points for applicants who have been employed in an occupation on the skilled occupation list for three out of the four years before applying; 10 points for applicants nominating an occupation which attracts 60 points under the skill factor, and who have worked in their nominated, or a closely related, occupation for three of the four years before applying.
<b>Offer of employment/occupational targeting</b>	5 points for offer of ongoing full-time employment; no occupational targeting.	5 points for applicants whose skills are in short supply in Australia. These occupations will be included on a Migration Occupations in Demand List (MODL). A further 5 points will be awarded to applicants who have a genuine job offer in an occupation included on the MODL. (Note that Australia also operates a separate Employer Nomination Scheme.)
<b>Age</b>	8 points if 18-24 years; 10 points if 25-29 years; 8 points if 30-34 years; 6 points if 35-39 years; 4 points if 40-44 years; 2 points if 45-49 years.  Migrants must be younger than 55	30 points if 18-24 years; 30 points if 25-29 years; 25 points if 30-34 years; 20 points if 35-39 years; 15 points if 40-44 years.  Migrants must be younger than 45

<b>English Language</b>	All principal applicants and any accompanying family members aged 16 years and over must meet band score of 5 each component of the IELTS test or having an English-speaking background. Principal applicants must meet the English language standard. Accompanying family members can instead pre-purchase language training. The cost depends on the applicant's current level of English (NZ\$1,700-NZ\$6,500).	15 points for applicants who achieve a score of at least 5 on each component of the IELTS; 20 points for applicants who obtain an IELTS score of 6 or more for each of the four components.
<b>Settlements funds</b>	1 point for \$100,000 2 points for &200,000	5 bonus points possible for \$100,000
<b>Spouse skills</b>	1 point for base qualification 2 points for advance qualification	5 points will be awarded where the applicant's spouse also meets the minimum requirements for skills (including work experience), age and English language ability.
<b>Host country work experience</b>	1 point per year up to 2 points	5 bonus points possible
<b>Family Sponsorship</b>	3 points	Not Available
<b>Pass mark</b>	25 points	110 points
<b>Fees</b>	NZ\$700 and a settlement fee of NZ\$720 maximum per family) payable upon arrival in New Zealand.	AUS\$ 1075, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Installment of AUS\$2275 for insufficient language.

Source: Djaji'c, Slobodan. 2001. *International Migration Trends, policies and Economic impact*. (London: Routledge), 10.

## APPENDIX H

### *Summary of Tongan Statistics in New Zealand According to 1996 Statistics*

In 1996 there were 31,389 Tongan people living in New Zealand, representing 15 percent of the total Pacific Islands population resident in New Zealand. Just over half of all Tongan people living in New Zealand were New Zealand born.

The Tongan population is youthful, with nearly one-third aged under 10 compared with 16 percent of the total New Zealand population.

More than nine out of ten Tongan (93 percent) people lived in urban centres with populations of 30,000 or more in 1996. Almost 80 percent of the Tongan community lived in Auckland.

Overseas-born Tongan people were more than twice as likely as those born in New Zealand to be able to speak the Tongan language. Overall, 63 percent of all Tongan people over the age of 5 could hold a conversation about everyday things in the Tongan language.

Ninety-four percent of all Tongan people belonged to a religious group compared with 72 percent of the total New Zealand population.

A total of 97 percent of all Tongan people lived in a family household in 1996. In comparison, 87 percent of all New Zealanders were living in family households. Nearly four out of every ten Tongan people were living in an extended family.

Just over half of all Tongan adults in New Zealand in 1996 had an educational qualification compared with two-thirds of all New Zealanders aged 15 years and over. New Zealand-born Tongan people were more likely to have an educational qualification than those born overseas.

A total of 61 percent of all Tongan people aged 15 years and over were in the labor force, either working or actively seeking employment. Tongan men were more likely to be in the labor force than Tongan women.

Just over half of all Tongan adults worked in one of three main industries: manufacturing, retail trade or property and business services.

At the time of the 1996 Census 18 percent of the Tongan labor force were unemployed. Overseas-born Tongan people had a lower unemployment rate than those born in New Zealand.

Around half of all Tongan adults aged 15 years and over had participated in unpaid work outside the home in the four weeks prior to the 1996 Census. Tongan women were more likely to have done voluntary work than Tongan men.

Fifty percent of all Tongan adults had an annual income above \$9,900 and 50 percent had incomes below this level. In comparison, the median income of all New Zealanders aged 15 years and over was \$15,600.

Around one out of every three Tongan adults received some form of income support in 1996. Tongan women were more likely to have received income support than Tongan men.

Three out of every five Tongan people lived in rented accommodation. Those born in New Zealand were less likely to live in rented accommodation than overseas-born Tongan people. At the time of the 1996 Census, a total of 29 percent of all Tongan people were regular smokers compared with 24 percent of the total New Zealand population. Tongan men were more than twice as likely to smoke as women.

Source: New Zealand Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs.

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