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THE CHANGING ROLES

O F

GRADUATE WOMEN IN TONGA

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts (Social Science) in Social Anthropology at Massey University.

Lesieli Ikatonga Kupu

April, 1989

To My Parents

'Ofa atu

## A B S T R A C T

This thesis examines the roles of graduate women in modern Tonga and how they differ from the women's traditional roles. A survey of a group of graduate women and how they perform at work, at home and in the community was undertaken. This was to investigate their own perceptions of the place graduate women have in their own society. Evidence from the study indicates that graduate women have changed in the ways they fulfil their roles.

At work they are no longer confined to "women's work", but they are beginning to take up prominent positions in the office. This has had an impact on their relationships with their male superiors and both their male and female colleagues. At home, graduate women have become "providers" for their family, and that has given them a say in the family as a decision-making body. In church and community functions, there is a marked decrease in active participation but an increase with financial contributions.

In conclusion, the graduate women know that their roles are changing. This change is determined by a combination of factors. While these factors liberate the graduate women from the pressure of social obligations, the same means of liberation have also isolated them from other social groups in Tongan society.

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Tu'a 'ofa atu.

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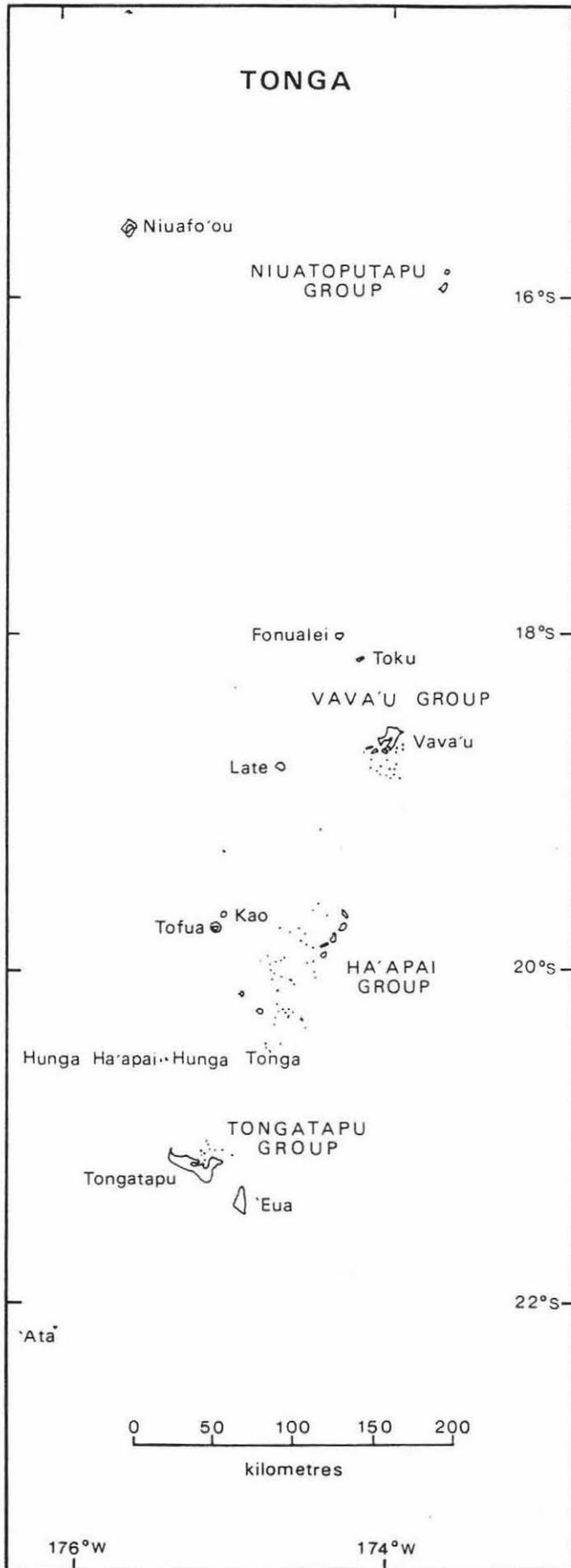
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Kingdom of Tonga - Map

P A R T

O N E

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### Tongan women in transition

*Taa'u e lei mo e tofua'a*

(A whale's tooth is fitting for a whale)

When Crown Prince Tupouto'a Tungi (later crowned in 1967 as King Taufa'ahau Tupou IV) returned after graduating with his Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Law degrees from the University of Sydney in 1941 (Latukeyu 1975:82), a new strong interest in western education was sparked off in Tonga. Songs were composed about the accomplishment of the first degree holder<sup>1</sup>, newly born babies were named after the university, the degrees or the occasion<sup>2</sup>, and changes began to accelerate. The King's return and the changes that followed marked the beginning of a new and important era in the kingdom (Plate 1.1), an era of transformation from old to new and from traditional to modern.

Education had become a magic word. A new secondary school and a teacher's college, both dominated by European staff, were formed in 1944 and 1947 respectively (Taulahi 1979). Mothers in the outer islands took up the challenge, left their husbands and relatives behind, and went to Nuku'alofa<sup>3</sup> to care for the children and their education. Mothers in urban areas left their young children under the care of the extended family and entered paid employment to pay for school fees. Mothers in rural areas joined their husbands in the cash economy to raise money to pay for their children's education.

Later, the *Langafonua 'a Fefine Tonga* (nation-building of Tongan women) Association, formed by the late Queen Salote in 1956 (Stewart 1961), encouraged women to overcome their reluctance to send their daughters to school. The Tongan society began to move as if it was shaken by a new awareness of the importance of education. As the wheel of educational change has turned, so have the roles<sup>4</sup> of women. This was the beginning of development for women and their position.

By tradition, women stayed at home and lived submissively to their husbands and in-laws. They were expected to tend the young family, weave mats, make tapa and produce *koloa* (goods) for weddings and funerals while the husband worked in the garden. They were never expected to mobilise themselves, to be outspoken or introduce new ideas without their men first leading the way (Plate 1.2). But as a result of this general movement in favour of education, women have been brought to realise their future potential in the development of the economy, the family and the community.

The changes which the King introduced were social, economic and political in nature. They were introduced at a speed almost incomprehensible to the average Tongan. In opening the 1966 Legislative Assembly, he stated,

Firstly, we must try to attain the services of experts in the field of technical education. Secondly, we must establish industries which will give employment to the people of the kingdom. Thirdly, we must try to earn money to establish these industries. Fourthly, we must aim at utilising the land to its maximum (*Tonga Chronicle* 24.6.1966).



Plate 1.1 'Esia in Sia'atoutai, one of the remaining traditional-style village in Tonga.



Plate 1.2 'Ani 'Ofa of Kolomotu'a is cooking a meal for her family.

These changes have been evident in the five-year Development Plans made and implemented in the last two decades, in the international bodies and organisations which the government has affiliated with, and in government development projects. These last include agricultural developments in coconut replanting, forestry research, rural development and women's development programmes; projects in tourism including the construction of the International Dateline hotel, improved airport facilities, the building of a deep water harbour in Nuku'alofa and setting up the Tonga Visitors Bureau in 1971; projects in shipping and civil aviation including an inter-island ferry, air fields for all main islands and new roads and a national airline; social services including the construction of new classrooms, opening of new high schools and integrating of church schools and improved hospital facilities.

Many of these development projects gave women the opportunity to learn new skills, and provided jobs for both qualified and unskilled women. As a result women began to perceive alternatives available to them, and learned the new skills to equip themselves for these alternatives. And most importantly they saw that education would create even greater opportunities.

To give Tongan people the education necessary for modernisation there were marked changes in the traditional system. The opening of the Tonga Teachers College in 1944 saw the beginning of tertiary education in Tonga. Tonga High School, opened in 1947, gave students the opportunity to experience an overseas syllabus and western method of education. But it was the opening of Tupou High School in 1963 with the availability of a Victorian Matriculation<sup>5</sup> examination

and the increased number of scholarships offered in the 1960s that really brought the reality of university education closer to many Tongan students and to the small group of female students. More students were able to go abroad. Women could join their male counterparts for the first time in overseas study. Although women were initially enrolled in teaching, nursing and secretarial training they began to see increased opportunities for a university education.

The participation of women in the development of education at this stage was vitally important to overcome the traditional belief that women were academically incapable. Up till then women, after they completed the highest qualification from local schools (Tonga Higher Leaving Certificate) left to get a job, either to support the family or their male siblings in their education. Many took great pride in becoming a *ngaue faka-Pule'anga* (Government Civil Servant). As such, a woman both contributed to the household income and represented the family in a government department. But as the years went by women started to realise the need to improve their situation by acquiring better academic qualifications. Some went back to school to sit the international examinations since women who were successful in those examinations automatically received scholarships and left for further training overseas.

Meanwhile, the local support for education remained strong and that for women became even stronger. The late Queen directed various women's and church groups to stress the importance of education for women. The speeches of the present King never failed to emphasise the benefits Tonga would gain from educating its citizens. Other members of the Royal Family also gave their support by becoming honorary members of

organisations which gave encouragement to women and education (Plate 1.3).

Local events also increased the pace of change. Since the return of the first group of overseas educated women in 1961, prominent figures in the country began to use these women as examples of what could be achieved when the opportunity of an overseas education was available. To most young girls, the fashionable dress and hair styles of these women when they returned was enough to inspire them to want to go overseas. And their new status as senior typists at the Prime Minister's office in particular, was a very appealing factor for most women. The holding of the Tenth Annual Conference of the Pan Pacific and South East Asia Women's Association (PPSEAWA) in Tonga in 1964, and the billeting of foreigners in Tongan homes with families provided the women at home with a unique experience. They observed first hand how foreigners and palangi (Europeans)<sup>6</sup> in particular, coped with living with Tongan families, and they in turn learned palangi ways of cooking, eating and hospitality. So, with the influence of palangi ways, the development in education and the changes in the economy, women's roles have changed and are still changing.

Today, Tongan women are on the move. At the grass-roots level women have joined the cash economy. Some grow cash crops and sell them in the market, others make handicrafts and sell them to tourists when cruise ships arrive. Still others have joined the work force. They work in un-skilled or semi-skilled paid employment. Those women with maximum local education are employed permanently in office jobs, nursing or teaching, while others run their own falekoloa (small shops) or have joined women's co-operatives. Such women

are clustered at the bottom of the limited occupational streams to which they have access. At the top level the women who have an overseas education and a university degree are beginning to take up prominent positions in the kingdom (Plate 1.4).

#### Rationale for the study:

This study has been prompted by the following situations. Firstly, there is a need to record the conditions of women in the Pacific and the changes they experience since the rate of change in this region has grown increasingly faster with each new generation. Secondly, with contemporary changes in Tonga (Sevele 1973, Latukefu 1976, Baker 1977, Marcus 1977) women's situation have so rapidly changed since their strong interest in western education began in the 1940s that a thorough study to update and increase the literature on the subject has been long overdue. The roles of women in modern Tonga need urgent reviewing. Thirdly, university graduates have been seen by most Tongans (Latukefu 1976, Taufa 1979, Sevele 1974) not only as an elite group but also most responsible for the changes in the kingdom, and more importantly for the direction of change Tonga is taking. Fourthly, there is a need to have women's views and perspectives conveyed in studies of this kind since much of what has been written only represents men's perceptions, ideas and values. Finally, this study was prompted by a desire to learn what roles do graduate women play in modern Tonga and how they perform in these roles.

International bodies and organisations have noted the need to collect information on Pacific women both to compile an accurate (and adequate) record of their situations and to enable aid donors to assess how they

can best help. The International Year for Women in 1975 funded a conference for Pacific women, held in Suva, Fiji.<sup>7</sup> There recommendations were made calling for a range of improvements to be made in women's conditions. But the conference noted that these improvements could not be made without first establishing an accurate data base and statistical information on women in the region. The United Nations set up a UNRISD project in 1976 to explore ways to "obtain the necessary information and changing conditions of women including the impact of social change and development programmes on different groups of women" (Palmer 1980:2, cited in Fleming 1987:1). The World Plan of Action adopted by the World Conference of International Women's Year in 1975 recommended the collection and development of statistics and indicators specifically for women (Fleming 1987). As the changes in the Pacific become more rapid and more complicated so do the needs for information and a record of women's conditions.

Within the region, the 1975 Pacific Women's Conference recommendation and later the formation of the Regional Resource Centre indicated the necessity of such a centre. Formed in 1982, in Suva, Fiji, the Centre collects and monitors all information required for development programmes for women. The South Pacific Commission's attempt to research and identify information on women in different islands has indicated the lack and incomplete nature of such data and statistics at least in some islands (*ibid.*).

In Tonga, a comprehensive study of women's conditions warrants immediate attention. Education has had a great impact on women in different socio-economic groups and on their roles. This impact needs to be reviewed so that national planners and policy makers



Plate 1.3 Her Majesty, Queen Halaevalu Mata'aho, a guest of honour at the Queen Salote Nursing School prize-giving ceremony at Tofoa in 1987.

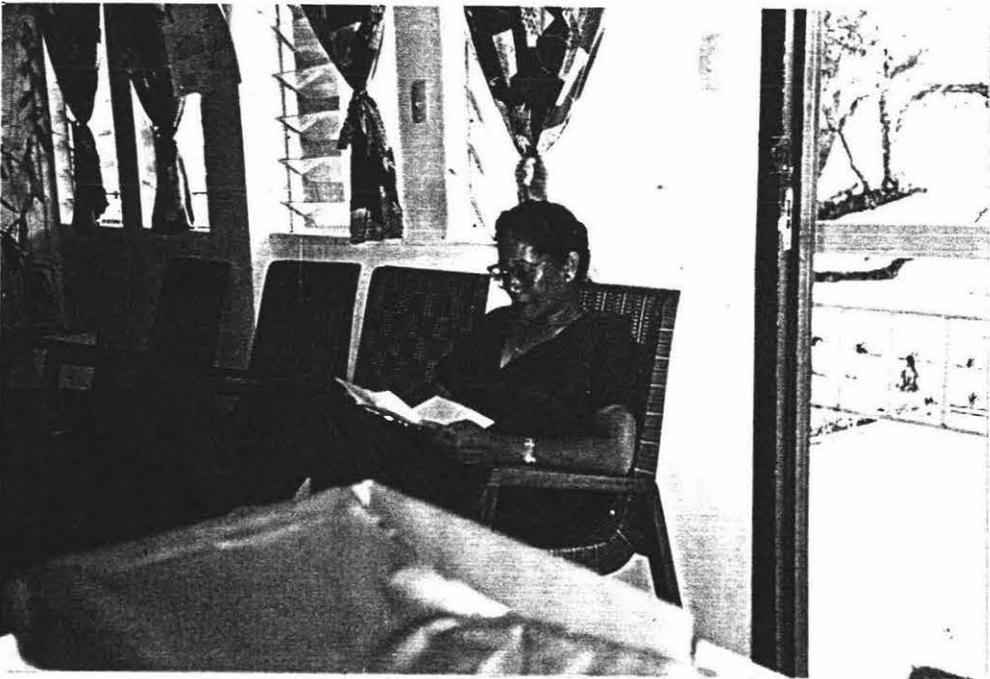


Plate 1.4 'Ana Taufe'ulungaki of Ha'ateiho - first Tongan woman with a Ph.D. to work at the government Education Department.

can formulate policies accordingly to better women's conditions.

With their overseas education male and female graduates who return home are seen as major contributors to the country's rapid change in social, economic and political matters (Tu'inukuafe 1976, Taufu 1979, Sevele 1973). What is important, however, is that graduates have expressed some awareness of Tonga's direction of change. Some have looked at the graduates' life overseas and concluded that that frustrating lifestyle plays a major part in their contribution to the change (Furneau 1979) and that if Tonga was to receive well prepared graduates ready to serve the kingdom that it should do something to help the students while they study overseas. Others have criticised the Tongan system saying that it caused frustrations and dissatisfactions to the returning graduates in Tonga (Taufu 1979, Lolohea 1984). They suggested that the traditional system should be changed to allow the young graduates to serve the kingdom and give their best in the way they were taught overseas. Others have suggested that traditional views of Tongans should be adapted to suit the process of modernisation (Latukeyu 1976), and still others have argued that the direction of change in Tonga is in the hands of the educated elites (Sevele 1974).

In order to have the women's views represented in this "symposium" on the direction of change, it needs the perceptions and opinions of women - women who are as equally educated as men who occupy the leading positions in Government, women who are graduates, who have broadened their horizons while studying overseas, and who can speak their minds. These women make technical and mechanical contributions to Tonga's

development but which are lacking any mention. Their perspectives need to be represented and their values included in any discussion of the changes in Tongan society.

This study, because of the breadth of the field, will focus upon the graduate women in particular. It will examine their new roles, how they differ from traditional roles, what consequences they have - on the women themselves, their family and the community. The study will also look at the impact these new roles have upon the graduate women's social status,<sup>8</sup> their relationships with males and how they are treated at work, at home and in the rest of the community. To explore these developments, the research is centred primarily on graduate women's views and perceptions and secondarily on Tongan women and whatever there is on record.

#### Thesis Organisation:

This thesis is divided into two parts. The first part (Chapters One to Three) covers the pre-fieldwork phase and the formulations and clarifications of research problems. The second part (Chapters Four to Nine) reports the analysis of the findings with conclusions and some recommendations. Each chapter is introduced with a Tongan proverb or saying which summarises the researcher's feeling about the content of that chapter. Tongan terms used in the text are introduced with their equivalent English translation. These translations appear in the "Glossary". For confidentiality, women's names are replaced with names of Tongan 'akau kakala (fragrant flowers and plants) indicative of the value of their contribution to Tonga's society. The terms "graduate women" and "women graduates" are used interchangeably and when it is

convenient. In order to protect the identities of the women, some of the detailed description of their spouses, their occupations or their social ranking are not always given. The relationships of these women with their husbands are only minimally mentioned as it is considered disrespectful in Tongan culture to pry into such relationships.

NOTES:

1. A song *Ta ko e sola ki Selusalema* (The new comer to Jerusalem) was composed by Afuha'amango of Vava'u to mark the occasion.
2. A boy from the village of Tatakamotonga, Tongatapu, was named *Ma'imoa ola 'a Tungi* (The good result work of Tungi) to mark the return of His Majesty after he succeeded in his study. Tungi being the King's noble title before he was crowned King of Tonga.
3. See Walsh, A.C. (1964) for a detailed account of urbanisation in Nuku'alofa; Fahina (1984) for living conditions of migrants in three areas in Nuku'alofa.
4. The term "role" will be used in the thesis to mean " a pattern of expected behaviour reinforced by a structure of rewards and penalties which induces individuals to conform to the pattern" (Banton 1965:22).
5. Victorian Matriculation was set at the final year at Tupou High School. It was equivalent to New Zealand University Examination.
6. From now on the term *palangi* will be used to mean European(s).
7. The researcher attended this conference and felt the strong need expressed by the candidates for information on Pacific women to be written and compiled.
8. The term "status" will be used in the thesis to mean "the condition of belonging to a particular class of persons" as defined by K. Allen, cited in Banton (1965:37).

## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

*'Umu po'uli 'i ai ho'ota*

(A relative attending to the 'umu in the dark can  
always get what I want)

Named by Captain Cook the "Friendly Islands", and today the only kingdom in Polynesia, Tonga is located 1770 kilometres north-east of Auckland, 690 kilometres south-east of Fiji and 820 kilometres south-west of Western Samoa. The 171 islands, of which 36 are inhabited, include three main islands, namely Vava'u in the north, Ha'apai in the centre and Tongatapu where the capital, Nuku'alofa, is located in the south. The population of 94,535 (50.3% males, 49.7% females) is predominantly Polynesian (Census 1986). Tongan social organization is made up of the Monarchy, the Nobility and the Commoners (see Gifford 1929, Rogers 1975, Marcus 1980, Bott 1981). The political structure with the King at top, followed by the Privy council, the Cabinet, the Legislative Assembly, the Judiciary and the People is an adaptation of the Westminster model (see Latukefu 1974, 1975, Bollard 1974, Marcus 1977). Tonga has an agriculturally based economy but the government in recent years has developed small industries and has attracted overseas investments to boost the economy (see Baker 1977, Sevele 1973, Lolohea 1984). Attempts are being made to develop the tourist industry "to become one of the major sectors of Tonga's economy" (Tonga Development Plan 1986: 224).

There are two flaws in the handling of Tongan women in the literature. Firstly, discussion is

scattered through the writings of missionaries (Collcott 1923a, 1923b), anthropologists (Gifford 1929, Beaglehole 1941, Rogers 1975, 1977, Kaeppler 1971, 1978a, Bott 1981), historians (Latukefu 1974, 1980, Marcus 1980, Cummins 1977) and travellers (Bain 1967, Stewart 1961). Only those aspects of women considered relevant by these writers have been covered but most of the female activities, roles, and beliefs are minimally described and often ambiguous. As a result very little has been written, and even today there is no complete work on Tongan women as such, one that covers all aspects of Tongan women as important components of the Tongan society. Secondly, the writers referred to are mostly men, and only Latukefu is of Tongan descent. Hence the views presented in their materials, with due respect to the writers' effort, are male biased and do not always convey those of Tongan women. The low, flat depiction of women are not only shadowy, but they portrayed women primarily as mothers and wives, and their mentions are in general terms but not in individual identities and names (Latukefu 1977, Cummins 1977).

In recent years a few Tongan academics have written their theses on areas such as education (Kavaliku 1964, Tu'inukuafe 1976, Taufa 1979), economic development (Sevele 1973, Halapua 1975, Lolohea 1984) and migration (Fahina 1985). Overall, little attention has been given to the part played by women in each of these fields, not because women did not play an important part but because views and attitudes of the day tended to be male biased. Therefore, in order to gather what is relevant to this research a number of selected works will be reviewed.

Rogers (1977)<sup>1</sup> wrote about the "Tongan women's

mystical power". As a participant-observer in Niuatoputapu, Tungua and Tongatapu, Rogers lived among, observed and interviewed men and women in these islands. His interest centered on the power of a *fahu* (superior figure, father's sister's daughter) and *mehekitanga* (father's sister) over the brother and his children. Rogers observed that as a *fahu* or *mehekitanga*, the woman was empowered to control her *tu'asina* (maternal uncle) and his children, as well as her own brother and his children. She could name them when they were born, *talatuki'i* (pronounce a curse) if she was upset by them or *talamonu* (express good wishes) upon them when she was pleased. She might take liberties with their belongings or bestow upon them lots of gifts, and her decision was final. This was because a person was in some ways *tu'a* (inferior) to her father's relations and *'eiki* (superior) to her mother's relations. What Rogers found, and wished to maintain, is that no matter how lowly the rank or status of a father's sister in the wider social group, she could still control her inferiors. Every woman had an equal opportunity to that power, a power unique to women and common to all *mehekitanga*. The unquestioned power is referred to in a Tongan saying as "'uli'uli a *mehekitanga*" (the father's sister is black)<sup>2</sup> (Plate 2.1).

Bott (1981) writes on stratification in Tongan society at the time of Captain Cook. Collecting information from literature written by missionaries, interviewing Tongan prominent figures in the Traditional Committee including the late Queen Salote Tupou III, and gleaning information from the archives at the Palace Office in Nuku'alofa, Bott explored the roles of high ranked women at the time of Cook's arrival. She found that besides their "mystical power"

high ranked women were the chiefs' preferred choice in marriage because these women brought the land, food and *kainga* (kinsmen) used to build up the political strength of the husband. The *Tu'i Tonga Fefine* (female King of Tonga) and the *Tamaha* (the prominent figure in this respect, often the daughter of the former) used their power to influence, manipulate and control their husband's kin group. Bott's work depicts a superior image of Tongan women. It shows that high-ranked Tongan women can acquire more power with the help of material possessions, and of their kin group.

Faletau (1983) conducted a case study of rural women in Tonga. She aimed to collect data on the economic positions of rural women, find the social and economic factors which determined their roles and provide guidelines which would enable policy makers to plan for development. Nineteen villages were surveyed where women, mostly in their forties, were interviewed. Her findings showed that most of these women, although living in rural areas, had had an elementary or secondary education, and had been exposed to the cash economy through the sale of their produce and handicrafts. They had had contact with overseas people, and had worked long hours in agriculture and at home, often taking up part-time paid employment as well. In most cases, all these jobs were done with the help of the husband. The study concluded that the women needed employment opportunities, informal education and a more efficient water supply. This study shows that even in rural areas, women had wanted to better their conditions. They worked long hours and in many jobs, often in conflicting roles. But when the returns did not pay off, there was a desire among these women to move away from the physical hardships and lack of a regular cash income to urban areas, where they began to

see education as a means to remove themselves and their children from what they considered difficult conditions in rural areas. This study pointed out how education became important to rural women, and the type of aspirations which drove these women into Nuku'alofa.

Another survey on women was conducted by a group of female students from the University of the South Pacific in 1983. Halatuituia, 'Akau'ola and Latu (1983) looked at the types of projects women were capable of initiating and implementing in *kautaha* (co-operatives). The study surveyed various *kautaha* groups in Tongatapu, Ha'apai and Vava'u. They examined their purposes, locations, types of membership, how they controlled and managed their businesses and the types of problems they encountered. The study found that *kautaha* were formed because women had hoped to develop and improve their homes, especially their material wealth and style of living. The number in each group varied (Plate 2.2). These co-operatives enabled women to meet the demands of both family and community and provided women with a feeling that they were building good homes. Women seldom sought assistance from the government or churches. Most of these groups, especially in outer islands, were not aware of the help and resources available from government departments or churches. The problems they encountered were mainly financial and administrative especially in the national organisations. But social and inter-personal problems tended to be more common in smaller groups. This study showed that women had started to get mobilised and acquired their own *naunau faka'api* (home materials) or 'glory box'/'hope chest', so that borrowing from the neighbours would no longer be necessary. Perhaps this was an infant stage of independence and self-reliance but it was also the beginning of a trend towards



Plate 2.1 A fahu helping at a first birthday celebration.



Plate 2.2 Kautaha women display their handicraft and dishes of food prepared during a workshop for women in Ha'apai.

becoming individualistic through self-sufficiency. The study pointed out there was an apparent increase of individualism particularly among people living on Tongatapu.

Each of these studies has its own limitations. Rogers's work did not take into account that the power of a *fahu* or *mehekitanga* was exercised only on certain occasions, and that when she married and moved away (to outer islands or migrate overseas) this "mystical power" was of little or no use to her. Moreover, when the *fahu* or *mehekitanga* could afford their own material possessions by marrying a well-off husband or getting herself a well-paid job, she became less interested in that role and power<sup>3</sup>. Bott's work (1981) emphasised strongly that a high ranked woman brought possessions to her husband's kin group. But what Bott lost sight of was the fact that arranged marriages like this only took place because women were helpless, dependent with no choice, and their sense of obligation to their *kainga* was strong. What happened when they became independent and felt less obligated was not taken into account. Faletau's work (1983) failed to realise that women worked as hard as they did because they were not financially independent, and that moving into urban areas was a way of looking for a means to liberate themselves from this hard labour, and getting a paid employment would guarantee a regular cash income. Halatuituia et.al. (1983) did not consider what would happen when women could afford their own home-materials. Would they still join the village *kautaha*? How much of these values are still adhered to by women in modern Tonga?

Other studies have some important thrusts relevant to this thesis, so they must be cited. Taufu (1979)

gave a descriptive analysis portraying a "typical graduate" in Tonga, starting from the aspiration to go overseas for a university career, and the decision to return, to how she/he fared in Tonga both at work and in social circles. Forty-eight candidates responded to questionnaires and were followed up by personal interviews. The study concludes that many of the graduates are so frustrated and dissatisfied with their jobs that some have migrated overseas, thereby initiating the trend of a 'brain drain'. The frustrations and dissatisfactions are said to be due to the *faka-Tonga* (Tongan way) practices at work. The study suggests that if job-oriented dissatisfactions were reduced, graduates would stay in Tonga. It further suggests the changes that should be made in government departments. This work was important in that it looked at the graduate's ability to adapt or otherwise to the *faka-Tonga*, an area which most women graduates are likely to find themselves in and which this thesis will consider.

Latukefu (1980) however, does not see the operation of most social groups in Tonga as frustrating or dissatisfying, nor does he see the mixture of *faka-Tonga* and *faka-Palangi* (European-way) as successful. What he sees is that Tongan culture has gone through radical changes, and smoothly the changes have continued. The three principal values which control the social relationships between the social classes are *faka'apa'apa* (respect), *fatongia* (obligations) and *mateaki* (loyalty) (Plate 2.3). These principles are the basic values which permeate Tongan society, and they are bound together by *'ofa* (love) and *fakamolemole* (forgiveness). They have helped to cause the radical social changes in Tonga develop smoothly. This work is important in that it showed that the ideology

expressed, provides the latent foundations on which Tongans, and women graduates are no exception, operate in the family, church and the government (Plate 2.4).

Fitzgerald (1972) studied New Zealand Maori graduates and how they attempted to socialise on two levels - one at the macro-culture, that is, the Pakeha or the national culture, and the other at the Maori micro-culture, at hui (meeting), tangi (funeral) and such Maori functions. The reality of their socialisation is one which Fitzgerald terms "cultural compartmentalization" whereby the micro-culture is manifested only in specific contexts (e.g. at hui), and Fitzgerald observed that "many Maori graduates had compartmentalized lives, shifting from one perspective to another as they participated in a succession of transactions, not of necessity even related<sup>4</sup>. In each cultural sphere they played different roles and manifested facets of their personality for different audiences" (op.cit:50). This model, he concluded, stresses the individual's flexibility and creative capacity to shuttle between two cultures rather than overemphasizes what he calls unidirectional borrowing of cultural items as the major process of cultural change. Tongan women graduates could very well fit into this model except that they have only one race as an audience, so they may not need to change facets of personality or dress.

Schoeffel (1977) studied the origins and development of women's associations in Western Samoa. Her work discussed the activities of village women and their role in that social organisation, but no mention was made of women in education or profession. Samoan women's traditional values and their relationships within their kin group are highlighted. Similarly, the



Plate 2.3 A group of church women prepare a fakaafe for an after-church feast.

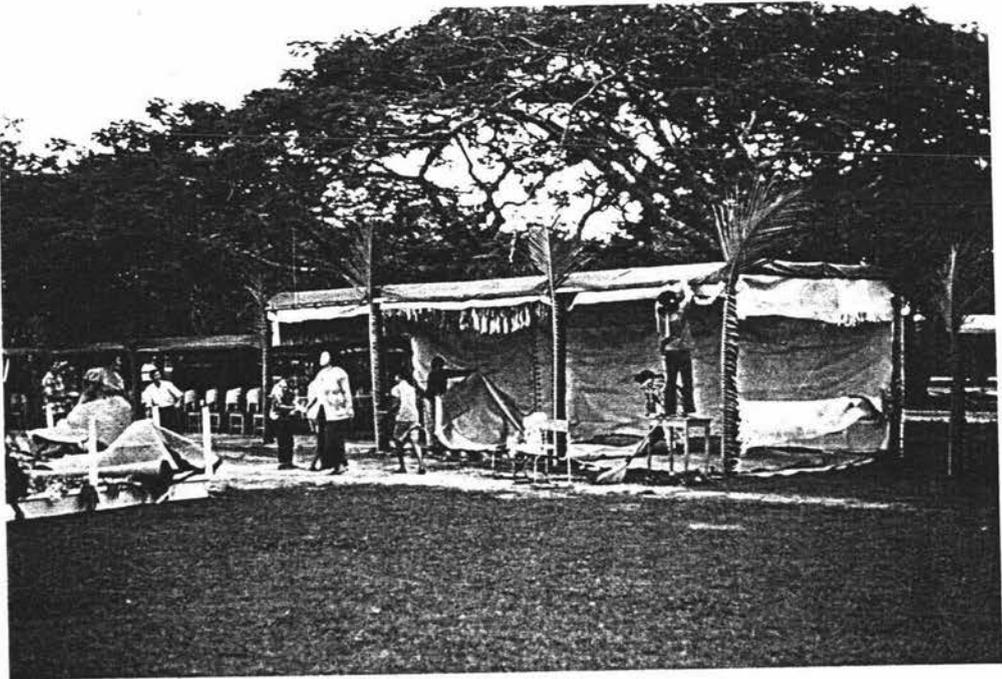


Plate 2.4 Women teachers at Tonga College decorate the shelters with koloa in preparation for the prize-giving ceremony.

work on "Women's role in Fiji" carried out by Amratlal, J. et al. (1975) highlighted the restrictions and inhibitions which both indigenous Fijian and Indian women encounter in their respective cultures and in the country's political system. Their role as wife and mother is discussed, their educational achievements and successful careers are acknowledged but no discussion of their performance at work or how they perform in their new role at work, at home and in the community. For the reasons stated, the studies on Fijian women and Western Samoan women are not worth considering because they are outside the nature of this thesis.

The previous studies, nevertheless, all provide some kind of "ingredients" for this thesis. Rogers's study directs our attention to women's "mystical power" which they use to control some members (the inferiors) of their kin group. Bott's work shows that women improve their own social status and that of their *kainga*, by marrying a chief or a member of the nobility and by being supported by their *kainga* in their seeking for social promotion. Faletau's findings show that women strive to better themselves by working hard in the garden or in paid employment or, as Halatuituia et al. shows, by joining a *kautaha* and supporting one another. Taufu shows that when graduates return home they experience great frustration over the *faka-Tonga* (Tongan way) with nepotism and favouritism being the two sources of concern. Latukefu's work however, shows that Tongans (men and women) are permeated in their society by *faka'apa'apa*, *mateaki* and *fatongia* (respect, loyalty and obligation), the same principal values which bind the Tongan family, the *kainga* (kin group) and the country together. Fitzgerald's study of the New Zealand Maori graduates flashes more light into this thesis. His model of the individual's flexibility and

capacity to shuttle between two cultures by playing two different roles in two different cultural items must be more applicable to Tongan women graduates who have been overseas than to women who have not.

With regard to graduate women several questions have emerged. As they grow up, go overseas, return home and work or get married and move away from the close knit world of the family, how much interest do they maintain in their traditional values, values such as "mystical power", *faka'apa'apa* (respect), *faka-Tonga*, social obligations and the like. As they work in powerful positions with status, how much *faka'apa'apa* and social obligations do they observe towards their superiors, their male colleagues or their older female colleagues? As they become financially self-sufficient, do they give to help one another? How much do they rely on their role as a *fahu* to acquire material possessions? In return, how much do they contribute to their inferiors, their own family, and their relatives? As they become socially and financially independent, what obligations do they fulfil toward their *kainga*, their church, their community and so on. In order to answer these questions, this research attempts to use the relevant aspects of the studies reviewed and combine them with the researcher's field knowledge to draft a research strategy which will look at these questions in the context of the roles of graduate women in Tonga.<sup>5</sup> The following chapter describes the method used.

## NOTES:

1. Rogers wrote this article separately from his thesis called "Kava and Kai in Niuatoputapu: Social Relations, Ideologies and contexts in a rural Tongan community" 1976, but he did this study at the same time.
2. "'Uli'uli 'a Mehekitanga" means that although the father's sister is black and may be unattractive, she still has that unchallenged superior power over her brothers and their children.
3. Forthcoming is a preliminary paper researched and written by M. Moengangongo for the University of the South Pacific (1987), on the role of women in Tonga. The researcher holds a copy of this preliminary paper.
4. See Keesing 1976:189 for a discussion of this in relation to other means of adaptation.
5. See Colson 1982:253-262 for a discussion of the need to combine what western anthropologists have written with the views of indigenous anthropologists.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

*Papata-pe-ka-na'e-lalanga*

(Although it is rough and coarse, it was woven)

Having stated the rationale for this study and reviewed the literature on the subject, in this chapter we will discuss the objectives, the method of collecting data and the sample.

#### Objectives:

There are three main objectives embodied in this thesis. Firstly, to establish the traditional roles of women, and then to trace the social background, upbringing and past experiences of women graduates. This will not only allow the gathering of a large amount of information on women's past roles, but it will help us to identify the crucial areas of change with respect to the roles of graduate women. Secondly, the study will examine the roles of graduate women at work, at home and in the community to learn how much they have changed from the traditional ways, how these women perceived their roles and how they have responded to them. Thirdly, it is necessary to gauge the implications of these new roles in setting these women apart from or as part of the mainstream of Tongan society. The underlying approach then is to ascertain how the graduate women's roles are different, why they are different, and the consequences of these differences for the graduates themselves and for Tonga - now and in the future.

#### Data Source:

It has been mentioned that a major problem in

studying women in Tonga is the lack of source material on the subject. Historical and anthropological sources plus population censuses and government-department reports would be the major sources of available information on Tongan women but they have their limitations. The first two have been discussed in Chapter Two, and the Population Censuses did not give information specific to women, let alone their education and occupation. For example the 1976 Population Census did not give the average age in marriage of women, nor did it give the the detailed description of women's occupations if they were not in paid employment. Moreover, detailed results of the 1986 Census have not yet been released.

Government department reports were found to be informative but included incomplete and inaccurate figures (some of which did not always add up), inconsistencies of criteria for analysis, absence of recording of names by gender, and women did not always get mentioned. Departmental reports were published yearly but not at a specific time of the year, and they did not keep to the same categories each year.

The weekly *Tonga Chronicle* published in Tongan and in English often excluded sensitive issues on Tongan politics, culture and religion from the English edition. A recently published local newspaper *Kele'a*, (conch shell, often used as a trumpet) expressed current radical ideas, but only in the Tongan language<sup>1</sup>. The popular opinion was that this was done to save embarrassment in front of *palangis* who resided locally and overseas subscribers for the newspaper. Other local newspapers tended to do the same<sup>2</sup>. Local magazines include the *Faikava* (which translates as kava party), *Mana* (magic; thunder) and *Matangi Tonga*

(southerly wind; Tongan wind) were published both in English and in Tongan. They covered a wide range of issues on Tonga but translation was often a problem. These materials provided background information essential for the researcher to breathe the air of the political and intellectual climate of the Tongan society before arriving in the kingdom.

Some of the courses offered at the postgraduate level at Massey University<sup>3</sup> showed that there were aspects of studying women in western societies that were relevant to the study of women in Tonga. It was hoped that anthropological theories would help the researcher view the conditions of women in Tonga in an objective way. A third-hand source was the information gathered and verified during class discussions of theories with palangi lecturers. These lecturers had conducted research in different areas overseas and were familiar with different approaches to fieldwork. Discussions of fieldwork, particularly those of Malinowski (1923), Powdermaker (1966) Rabinow (1977), with students who had different perspectives of Pacific Island lifestyle were also valuable.

As a second-hand source, an extensive library research was undertaken. Documents, theses and articles on Tongan society, women, education and economy were explored to ensure that 'no stone was left unturned'. The time spent on course work offered this Pacific Islander a chance to practise a skill which Powdermaker (1966) recommended, that of stepping from one culture to another. During the day one was involved in intellectual discussions but after university hours, one retired home to be surrounded by one's fellow Tongans where jokes, idioms and gossip were shared, and complaints about cultural misunderstandings rarely

failed to be discussed - a cross-cultural exercise which proved most useful in the field.

The major source of data, however, was the women themselves. Thus a period of fourteen weeks was spent in Tonga itself, interviewing a sample of graduate women. In preparation for this field research, a mini-survey was conducted among Tongans in Palmerston North. A total of nine families were given a sample of the questionnaire and asked to comment. The result brought valuable suggestions particularly about interviewing rather than filling in a questionnaire, about suitable times for an interview, how to conduct an interview with a Tongan, with a woman, how to ask questions, what to take and so on.

#### Fieldwork:

Tonga was selected as a place for study because the researcher was familiar with the culture, fluent in the vernacular and knew the area. The researcher grew up and was educated in the island kingdom before leaving to study overseas. After being away for four years, she returned to work and live before leaving again six years ago. Secondly, Tonga, is a mono-cultural kingdom and not as commercialised as her other multi-cultural neighbours namely Fiji, American Samoa and Western Samoa. Thirdly, the number of degree holders in Tonga would not be many (Taufa 1979) and women graduates would be even fewer, and finally, there has not been very much published about Tongan women as compared to Fijian (Amratlal et al. 1975) or Western Samoan (Shoeffel 1977, 1980) women.

Given the nature of Nuku'alofa as an urban area where education, employment, commercial centres and government offices are located (Sevele 1973, Walsh

1964, 1982, Lolohea 1984, Fahina 1986) it was decided that the study best be concentrated on graduate women in Nuku'alofa.

The time of the fieldwork, early March to June, was considered suitable because, firstly, newly arrived graduates would have started work when the Government offices reopened after the Christmas holidays. The women would be settled in and would have passed their "culture-shock"<sup>4</sup> stage. Secondly, those with children would have had them settled at school and arrangements would have been made for pre-schoolers. Mothers would then have free time for the interviews. The occasions of Easter, *Faka-me* (May-day) for children, church conferences and Mothers' Day would bring church involvement for both mothers and children especially those who belonged to the Wesleyan Church (Plate 3.1). Finally a trip to the outer islands of Vava'u and Ha'apai to observe women in their traditional roles was planned to co-incide with the schools' May holidays when children were at home with their parents.

It was decided that accommodation at the researcher's parents' home would be convenient. This would spare the researcher the worries involved in settling-in in the field which field-workers often find problematic (Altorki 1982). Moreover parents could provide valuable information as to how old people perceive the roles of graduate women, what they expect and so on. Booking arrangements for travelling up north had to be done soon after arrival in Tonga since boats only sail once a week (Plate 3.2). That friends and relatives in the outer islands had extended invitations to stay with them was seen as opportunity for participant-observation and for the researcher to renew friendships (Plate 3.3).

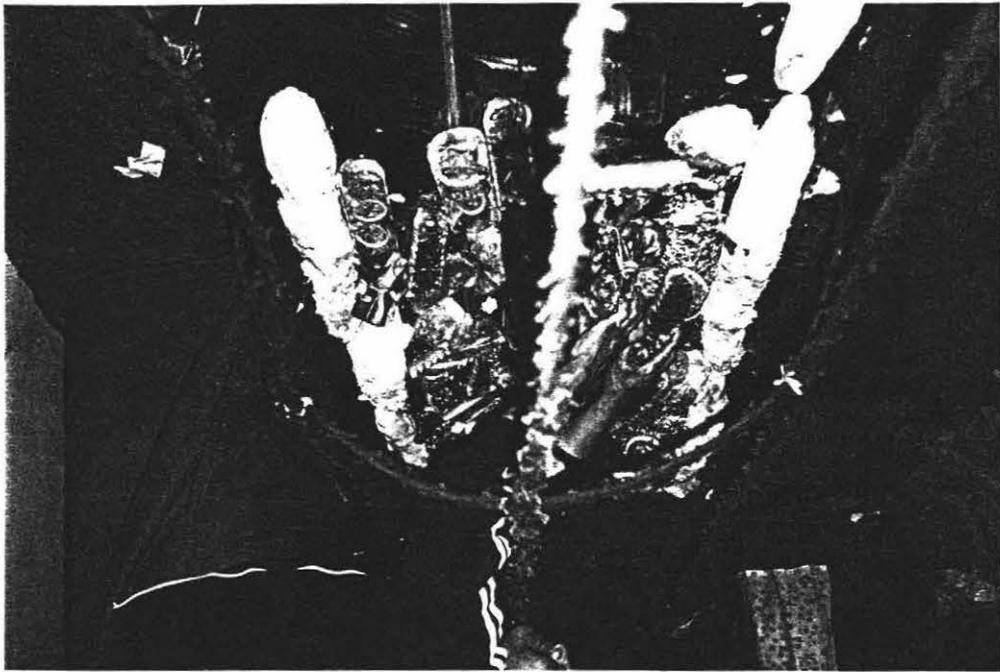


Plate 3.1 A pola is prepared for the Wesleyan Church Conference lunch-hour.



Plate 3.2 Travelling to outer islands by boat is part of normal life for Tongan children.

Sample:

Firstly, it was decided that a sample of twenty<sup>5</sup> graduate women was to be randomly selected. By graduate meant women who had a degree, bachelor or higher, from an overseas university. It was born in mind that the sample be proportionately representative of the government and the private sectors, and of the teaching profession as well as of other occupations.

Given the 32 women graduates recorded by Taufu (1979) one could speculate that by the time the fieldwork was carried out the number would have doubled or tripled, in which case, twenty would represent a significant proportion of the graduate women in the kingdom. Women graduates from the local Atenisi University, were excluded because the Tongan Government does not recognise their degree as equivalent to those from overseas universities, and therefore does not pay them the same salary scale. It was also considered that women graduates from 'Atenisi University lack cultural and academic experience overseas. Catholic nuns with degrees were excluded too because it was considered ta'ena (disrespectful) in the Tongan society to observe<sup>6</sup> or study them.

Method:

Participant-observation was considered the most suitable method for the research because the researcher had a good knowledge of the area, culture and language, the factors which most anthropologists considered important in doing fieldwork (Nakane 1982, Hau'ofa 1982). Given the suggestions made by the Tongans in Palmerston North after the pre-test exercise, it was decided that personal interviewing would prove more practical than written questionnaire, but the latter were not to be ruled out completely. A list of



Plate 3.3 Our temporary abode in the island of 'Eua.



Plate 3.4 Leaning forward, lowering her voice and shedding a few tears, Simaima Sikalu of Vava'u is telling about her genealogies.

questions was prepared (APPENDIX A) in English and in Tongan. The questions would be in great detail so that the researcher could be provided with a sound knowledge of the background of the graduate women and of the traditional roles which their mothers played. A few old women in the outer islands were to be interviewed on this (Plate 3.4). The initial contact with the would-be participants was to be made in person or by telephone. The researcher would not need to spend time getting to know the area, that time could be spent on establishing a rapport (Oakley 1981:33) with the research participants or lengthening the interviewing time if need be.

Research participants would be given a choice of whether to write their answers or give them verbally, and of where and when to hold the interview namely at work, at home or elsewhere. They would be given a choice of having the interview in English or Tongan. A tape recorder would be used to record the interviews (with participants' consent), and a camera to take photos as a record of important occasions or activities relevant to the study.

A few presents were to be taken as small tokens of appreciation for the participants. Small items such as earrings, small bottle of perfume, fancy handkerchiefs, and talc were considered as suitable for this purpose.

Visits to the participants' homes or place of work would be requested. This would enable the researcher to observe the participants in real situations. Going out with their families to church, school or community social functions or even outings to the shops, the market or the beach would be arranged (Plate 3.5). Observations of church services, *koka'anga* (tapa-



Plate 3.5 Primary Schools' sport days attract many mothers who come to watch and provide lunch for their children.



Plate 3.6 Mini-buses are the main means of transport between Nuku'alofa and the close-by villages.

making), and other women activities were planned. Public transport was considered convenient for this purpose (Plate 3.6).

A few locally-educated women and a few young males would be consulted to get their perspective of graduate women and how they performed in their new roles and/or reacted to the traditional roles. This was considered best carried out by the researcher attending local faikava (men gathering together, drink kava and talk) sessions.<sup>8</sup> But this was not an important part of the study and would be implemented only if it was convenient and the opportunity arose.

Although this research had to be conducted within a set time limit, it was hoped that the research method designed for this study, the cultural background of the researcher, and the anthropological ideas and theories to which she had been exposed would combine to provide a result, that was comprehensive to western readers yet, representative of the indigenous values. It is imperative that studies of indigenous societies done by their own people be seen as a step forward to bridge the gap which has become the subject of "confabulations" among western and indigenous anthropologists for years.<sup>9</sup>

#### NOTES:

1. During the time of the fieldwork, the Kele'a had become the centre of a "political hiccup" when it revealed financial perks Members of Parliament received. Since then the newspaper has started in 1989 to publish both in Tongan and in English.
2. The *Tohi Fanongonongo* (Notice Bulletin), run by the Free Wesleyan Church, *Taumu'a Lelei* (Right Goal), by the Catholic Church and the *Fetu'u 'Esiafi* (Falling Star) run by a private

publisher, all publish only in Tongan.

3. Post-graduate courses at Massey University in French Social Theories, Ethnography, Research Methods and Feminist Perspectives, all at 400 level.
4. Some women said they experienced "culture-shock" but they were not sure, when describing their experience, as to whether it was "culture-shock" as such or not. There was confusion.
5. This number was reduced to nineteen because one participant had to travel overseas unexpectedly after the first round of interviews.
6. When my sister was asked to approach a few nuns to be research-participants, her response was that of shock and disgust, saying, "It would be rude to be nosey about the business of the nuns". Some prominent figures in Tonga reiterated the same point.
7. This is not considered impolite in the Tongan culture. Rather, it shows a sense of wanting to 'belong' and be 'together', which is most acceptable and in fact expected of visitors to the Tongan community.
8. I could not attend a faikava or even go to fale kalapu (club-house) where men congregate to drink kava and talk. I was told that if I did men would not talk about women in front of a woman. I offered to go to my third cousin's kalapu because there would be less faka'apa'apa between us since we were not brother and sister or first cousins, but he refused to take me saying he would be laughed at.
9. See Fahim (1982) for a collection of essays devoted to this issue.

P A R T

T W O

## CHAPTER FOUR

### TRADITIONAL ROLES OF TONGAN WOMEN

*Fielau-ko e-Fefine-'o-Falehanga*

(No wonder! she is a woman of the working house)

While women's work demanded a lot of industry, time and organization, it did not require muscular strength. Women in Tonga were not expected to carry heavy loads or do hard manual work as their counterparts in Melanesia did (Latukeyu 1980:64).

The traditional roles of Tongan women involved performing in their set female tasks, in different social circles. In the wider society, a woman was expected to work and to produce *koloa* (goods) which were used in fulfilling family social obligations. She was also expected to get married and have children. Within the family, a single woman was her mother's helper. But when she was married and became a wife, she was her husband's supporter and she lived submissively to him and his relatives. On becoming a mother, she was expected to tend the young children and teach them Tongan culture. And on occasions of weddings, funerals or birthdays, she played her appropriate role as a superior figure or an inferior subject within her kin group. A woman's ability to fulfil these roles was a means by which her success, or otherwise, was measured in Tongan society. Any achievements also gave women of low status a wide recognition of their efforts and thus improved their social status.

Roles in the economic sphere:

As in any society, tasks serve as signs of differences between male and female roles. In their villages, women spent their days making *koloa*. They prepared *lou'akau* (pandanus) with which mats were woven, and *feta'aki* (unjoined tapa) which was used to make *ngatu* (tapa). *Lou'akau* was boiled, dried and dyed before it was rolled up for storage. Later, when needed, they were woven into mats by women in a *kautaha* (co-operative group). APPENDIX B shows the procedures of making tapa. *Lolo-Tonga* (fragrant Tongan oil), used as skin moisturizer and as mats and tapa polisher, was made from coconut oil and fragrant flowers at home (Gailey 1987). Other more exclusive *koloa* like *ngafi ngafi* or *kie* (fine mats) and *katoalu* (cosmetic baskets) (Plate 4.1) were made at home, often in secret. *Koloa* which were made specifically for chiefs or the royal family were made by particular women at home and behind closed doors. The privilege of being asked to make one was itself regarded as a *koloa* (Simaima Sikalu pers. comm. 1987).

Women's *koloa* were always stored away. Some rolled theirs in old mats and stored them in the loft of the Tongan *fale*. Others folded theirs into single or double bed size and piled them in layers on the floor of a locked room (Lavelua Afuha'amango pers. comm.1987). And on special occasions, when a wedding, a funeral, or a birthday celebration took place, women had the opportunity to show their pride in their *koloa*. These packets were opened up and the contents displayed. In exchanging *koloa* some were presented to the chiefs, others to the women's own affines or to their superiors, depending on the occasion. Presentations of *fatongia* (obligations) were not completed without *koloa*. The quantity and the quality

of the *koloa* displayed on such occasions reflected the productivity and often the status of a woman. These were the types of occasions which women worked to prepare themselves for.

Lavish gift giving took place when a chief married a woman of high rank and sound economic background. This was the practice before and during the era of European contact. But since then, the amount of *koloa* given to the chiefs and to bridegrooms has decreased<sup>1</sup>. Today the traditional provision of *koloa* is seldom on the scale it was in the past with the exception of the occasion of a royal wedding<sup>2</sup>. A scarcity of raw materials and the attraction of paid employment for women have accounted for the drop in *koloa* production. Equally the availability of expensive but more durable modern materials have taken the place of traditional fibres. Today the manufacturing of mats and baskets for commercial purposes has taken priority over making *koloa* for traditional functions (Plate 4.2). But still approximately fifty-seven percent of the female working population fill the traditional roles of women in Tonga and do not participate in paid employment. (Tonga Development Plan 1987:78).

Shallow reef fishing and shell-fish collecting to supplement the family's diet were also women's tasks. But at *uloa* (community fishing using coconut leaves to trap the fish) women helped the men. Yam planting, pandanus and mulberry trees growing were regarded as part of the women's responsibilities although women who were seen going to the bush were claimed to be badly treated and 'dragged to work' by their husbands.



Plate 4.1 Fa'itele of Kolomotu'a is preparing koloa (ngatu and fihu) for a funeral.



Plate 4.2 Meleseini is beating the tutu to make feta'aki, in preparation for a koka'anga.

These tasks were performed even when a woman had young children of her own or brothers and sisters to look after. Toddlers were carried on their mothers' back, supported by a piece of tapa tied round the woman's shoulder, and were breast-fed on demand when the mother took a break from work (Silivia Finau pers. comm. 1987).

Traditional economic tasks of women were based on the division of labour as shown in Figure 4.1. They were different from, yet complementary to those of men. Through observation and practice young girls learned these roles from their mothers and female relatives at a very early age.

Figure 4.1

Traditional Economic Tasks of Men and Women

<u>Men</u>	<u>Women</u>
building houses	weaving mats
growing vegetable garden	making tapa
raising animals	raising children
making kava bowls	making coconut oil
deep-sea fishing	reef fishing
plaiting kafa (ropes)	making clothes
carving	making tapa kupesi

Roles in the Family:

In the home women were responsible for the basic running of the family and carrying out the decisions made by men in their role as head of the family. When a man courted a woman he was said to be looking for a *toume* (coconut spathe)<sup>3</sup>, which symbolised the role of a woman in the family. She was expected to one day hold together a young family. Preparing the family

meals (Plate 4.3), keeping the house and the 'api clean and tidy, and making sure the family's clothes were washed, ironed and mended were the women's main tasks. They also wove mats, baskets and fans, and prepared materials for weaving and making tapa in a *kautaha* (cooperative group).

When a woman married a man, she was said to become a *takai fala* (mat roller)<sup>4</sup> for her husband. As a wife, a woman was responsible for her husband's well-being, his food, his clothes, the way he dressed, his punctuality when attending public functions and even his obligations to his own immediate family. Women were even blamed for their husbands' untidy appearance and bad manners at church or community functions. Wives were expected to do their tasks and remind their husbands of theirs. These responsibilities were often extended towards the wife's in-laws.<sup>5</sup>

As a mother, a woman was responsible for raising the children. When the first baby was born the mother was expected to breast-feed the child. This required her to stay inside away from the sun, smoke and the wind.<sup>6</sup> Her first public appearance was on her child's christening day. For the occasion, a feast was prepared and *koloa* was arranged. Mother and child both dressed in white and attended baptism. After the feast the mother saw that a basket of food and a piece of tapa was given to the minister as a token of appreciation for his part.

When the child turned one, another feast was prepared and more *koloa* was arranged (Plate 4.4) and a minister was asked to bless the child. When a girl

reached maturity (at her first menstrual period) another *koloa* was prepared. This time the mother's relatives prepared *koloa*, which was presented to the girl. The procedure was repeated as each new child was born.

As well as supervising her children's affairs, the mother taught her children Tongan cultural values and the roles of males and females. Girls were taught more strictly than boys. They were taught to sit *fai* (legs bent while sitting), to sleep on their side and stay around close to mother. They were also taught to bend their knees when speaking to a superior and the correct ways of speaking, eating and dressing.

*Faka'apa'apa* (respect), *fatongia* (obligation) and *mateaki* (loyalty) were some of the important cultural values which mothers were expected to teach their children. *Faka'apa'apa* between brothers and sisters, between father and children and between *mehekitanga* (father's sister) and *fakafotu* (brother's siblings) were very important values observed in the family.

Brothers and sisters were forbidden to listen together to talk which may include swearing, offensive words or a mention of sexual organs; neither were they allowed to watch together any scene or display of obscenity. It was taboo for a sister to enter her brother's house and vice versa, and it was forbidden for a sister to show any affectionate gestures<sup>7</sup> towards her boyfriend in front of her brother. The same applied in reverse. This respectful avoidance was extended to spouses when they each got married. By the way her children observed these taboos, a mother was

judged. Hence the saying *Tama-tu'u-he-fa'e* (the sibling's status is based on her/his mother's) indicates the importance of this expected behaviour of women.

Respectful avoidance between father and his children was slightly different. Children were forbidden to touch their father's head and face, or to use his personal possessions. It was taboo for them to walk immediately in front of him or to reach up immediately above his head and they were forbidden to eat remnants of his food or drink. Breaches of these taboos provoked severe punishments and it was the mother's job to advise and remind her children of these restrictions<sup>8</sup>. The father also gave out *akonaki* (advice) usually after a morning or evening family devotion.

The respect observed towards a father also applied towards the *mehekitanga* (father's sister) to an even greater degree. The *mehekitanga*, especially if she was the father's eldest sister, was regarded as the supreme figure in the family. Children were taught by their mothers to respect, serve and obey their *mehekitanga*. In return she would name a person who she wanted as a preferred spouse for her *fakafotu* (brother's offspring) but it was left to the *fakafotu* to do the courting. She also named her *fakafotu*'s children when they were born, made decisions on important family occasions<sup>9</sup> and offered her blessings when asked. In short, she played her role as an assailable superior figure, and the proverb '*Uli'uli 'a mehekitanga* (father's sister is black)<sup>10</sup>' reflected this unique and, what Rogers called, "mystical power" of the *mehekitanga* in the family (Rogers 1977). The *mehekitanga*'s daughter was the *fahu* (superior figure)

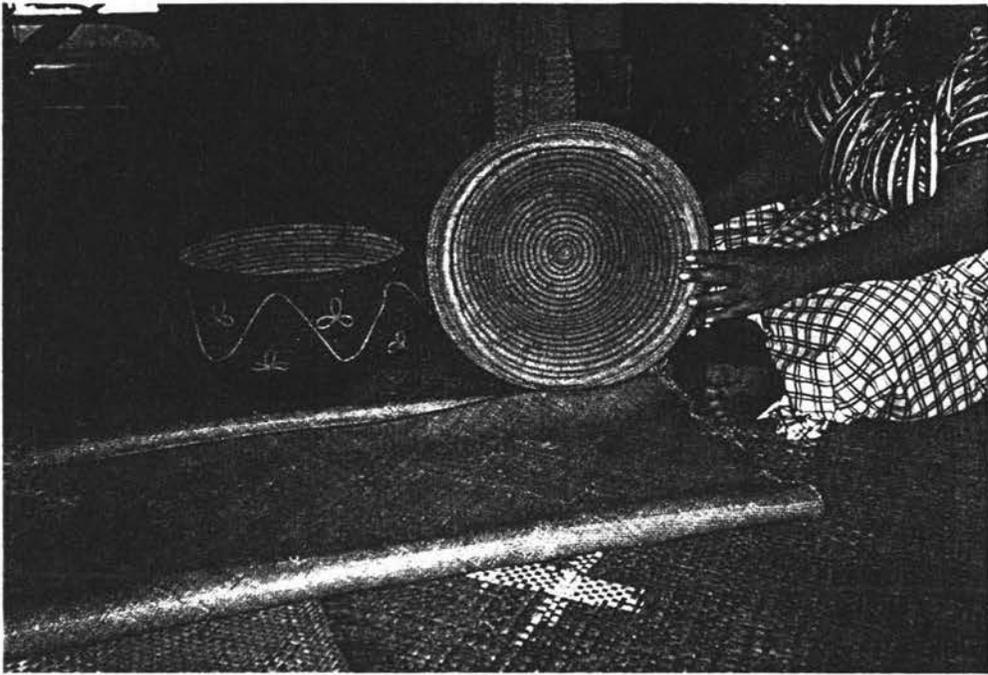


Plate 4.3 Katoalu and ngafi ngafi have become rare koloa in Tonga.

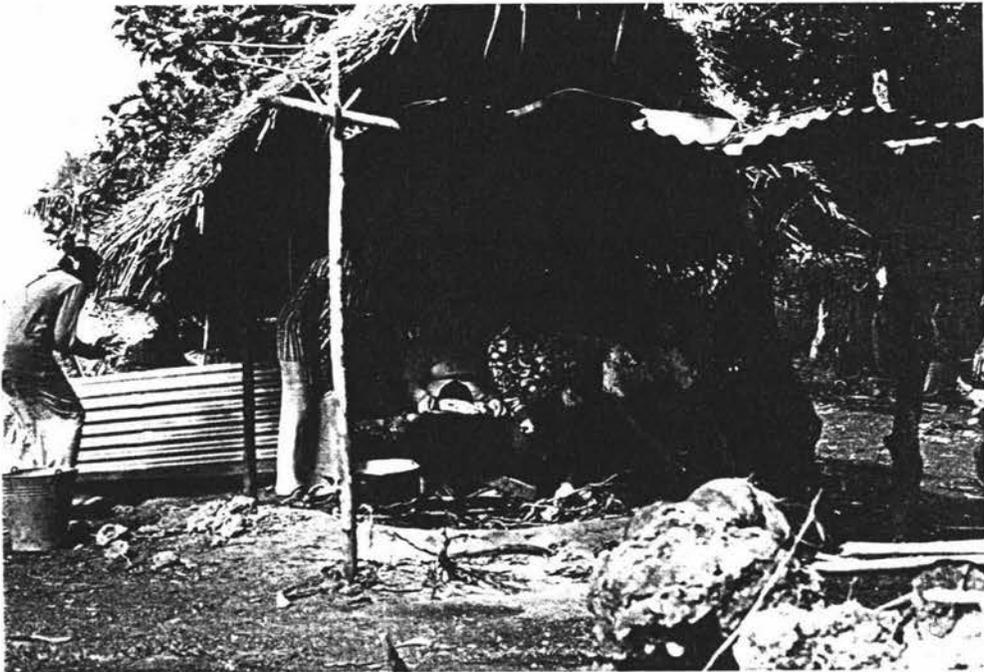


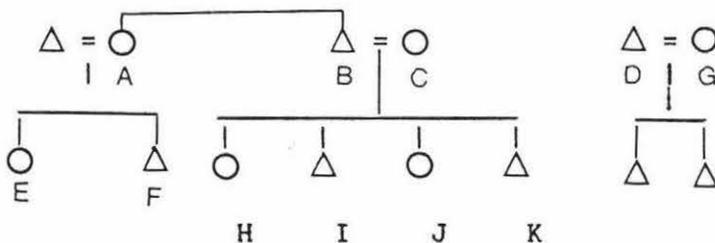
Plate 4.4 A group of women in the village of Hofoa, preparing a meal for their extended family in a traditional kitchen.

over her mother's *fakafotu* and she too had an equally powerful position over her mother's brothers and their children. Figure 4.2 shows the *mehekitanga's* relationships in the family.

*Fahu* is a role a woman inherits if she is the eldest sister. She is superior to her maternal uncles and all their children. This superiority becomes especially marked at a funeral or a wedding in her maternal uncle's family. There she is the '*eiki*' (chief) and she controls the distribution of all the *koloa* contributed on that occasion. A *fahu* has privileged access to her subjects to the extent that she may help herself to their *koloa* and other belongings. This role can bring her economic benefits. The woman's superiority may be extended to the third and the fourth generations of her brother's descendants. These rights, however, are exercised only on certain occasions.

Figure 4.2

Mehekitanga's Relationships in the Family



A is a *mehekitanga* to H,I,J,K.  
E is a *fahu* over H,I,J,K.

Teaching children about their roles was another responsibility of the mother. This was done mainly by 'watch and imitate' method. Children were allowed to observe, participate and then take responsibility to

do the job on their own. Figure 4.3 shows the tasks of boys and girls at home.

Figure 4.3

The Tasks of Boys and Girls at home

<u>Boys</u>	<u>Girls</u>
preparing 'umu	preparing haka
grating coconut	peeling root crops
chopping firewood	washing dishes
cutting grass	sweeping leaves
night fishing	shell fish collecting
feeding pigs	doing housework
digging latrines	making doormats
wood carving	weaving and sewing
vegetable gardening	flower gardening
collecting horse manure	washing and ironing

Women's traditional roles in the Community:

The traditional roles of women in the community were based on their extended family responsibilities, church activities and the village functions. Extended family activities demanded the involvement of women in the preparation and distribution of food, the presentation and distribution of the *koloa* and the *tengihia* (wailing) at funerals. Whether it was a funeral, a wedding or a birthday celebration, the roles a woman played depended on her relationship with the deceased, the bride, the groom or the birthday person. Figure 4.4 shows the different roles women can play.

At funerals the *fahu* received the *koloa* of mats, *tapa*, wreaths or *feta'u* (fine mat or piece of silk used as a covering for a corpse). She later distributed them to the women who accompanied the body, as well as to the men in the *kava* party and the *liongi* (inferiors) outside. Before sunrise, the *fahu* turned off the main kerosene lamps (or electric

lights), declaring the night was ended. This is called *lolo-e-po* (extinguish the night light). Before the deceased was prepared for burial, the *koloa* to be used was shown to the *fahu* who then gave her approval. Her share in the funeral *koloa* was announced. This formally acknowledged her role as *fahu*, and it indicated her acceptance by the family.

Figure 4.4

Different Roles of women

<u>Funeral</u>	<u>Fahu</u>	<u>Liongi</u>
	make decisions receive <i>koloa</i> attend to the deceased wear small <i>ta'ovala</i> distribute <i>koloa</i> receive food	carry out decisions contribute <i>koloa</i> prepare food outside wear big <i>ta'ovala</i> let her hair down give food
<u>Wedding</u>	<u>Groom's Mehekitanga</u>	<u>Bride's Mother</u>
	receive <i>koloa</i> distribute <i>koloa</i> receive food receive cake's top tier	donate <i>koloa</i> prepare feast give food give gifts
<u>Birthday</u>	<u>Mehekitanga</u>	<u>Mother</u>
	receive <i>koloa</i> receive food receive gifts receive top tier of cake	give <i>koloa</i> prepare feast give food and gifts

After the funeral, the *fahu* received the food, usually pigs, bread, cakes or puddings, brought to the family as *feitu'ui* (food contributed as consolation for the family). These too were distributed by her. A few days later (after 5 nights) she cut the *liongi's* hair to show her superiority and the inferiority of the *liongi* in their relationships to the deceased (see Rogers 1975:286-288, 1977:166, Kaeppler 1971:176).

There was no clear difference between the roles of *fahu* and that of *mehakitanga* because the two were mother and daughter. So there was no conflict and the roles were often played interchangeably. Whoever happened to be present at the time played the role. If the family did not have a true biological *fahu*, the closest relative of the *fahu* line and a woman the family accepted played the roles. A *fahu* acquired in this way is called *lohu loa* (long stick used to pick fruits off big trees). She was allowed to extend her superiority over more than one generation.

At weddings, the role of *fahu* was the same as at funerals. She enjoyed her 'symbolic and decorative' status by receiving *koloa* and the top of the wedding cake if there was one, or whatever was considered the best on the occasion. She sat at the top of the wedding breakfast table and the speeches and dancing were directed at her. The mothers of both the bride and the groom, on the other hand, contributed food and *koloa* and they made the preparations required for the occasion. Each received very little *koloa*<sup>11</sup> if any at all.

In church activities men made the decisions and women did the work. Women played the main roles in the daily upkeep of the church and whenever a church function was held. They swept and cleaned the church building weekly and decorated it on special occasions especially when the *misinale* (annual collection), *fakame* (children's anniversary day) or the women's annual meeting called *faka-Sepitema* were held (Plate 4.5). They contributed *koloa* and flowers on these occasions. At church feasts women prepared the food, laid out the table or *pola* while men said grace, made most of the speeches and ate first. In presenting

their *fatongia* (obligation) to the chiefs or the missionaries, women gave *tapa* and mats for the presentation while men contributed root crops, meat or fish.

Because most of the church activities seemed to involve eating, women were always needed to help with the preparations. But in church, it was the men who preached, said prayers for all, and women took part in singing and not much else. Only recently (1975) have women in the Wesleyan Church been allowed to become lay preachers. But they are required to wear uniforms when preaching: they must wear white, and a *ta'ovala lokeha* (white fine mat) round their waist and a blue cape over their shoulder. It is believed that the simple outfit was ordered to restrict any competition in fashionable clothes.

In the wider community it was again the women who contributed food and *koloa*, participated in the dancing and singing which gave community functions the glamour and gaiety which characterise such occasions. Men were quiet and reserved but women were active. For example, in a village *koniseti* (concert) to raise fund for community projects, women danced like clowns not just to raise fund, but to entertain the crowd as well. Even in a church *misinale* they did the same to encourage competition.<sup>12</sup> They also worked together in groups. In a *toulalanga* (cooperative weaving group) for example, they contributed pandanus and made one mat for each member until all members had one. The same was done in *koka'anga* (making *tapa*) when they contributed *feta'aki* (mulberry tree bark) with which to make *tapa* (Plate 4.6). The spirit of contribution and participation was carried through to other *kautaha* they formed. *Kautaha tuitui* (sewing group),



Plate 4.5

A mother and  
her baby  
after the  
christening.

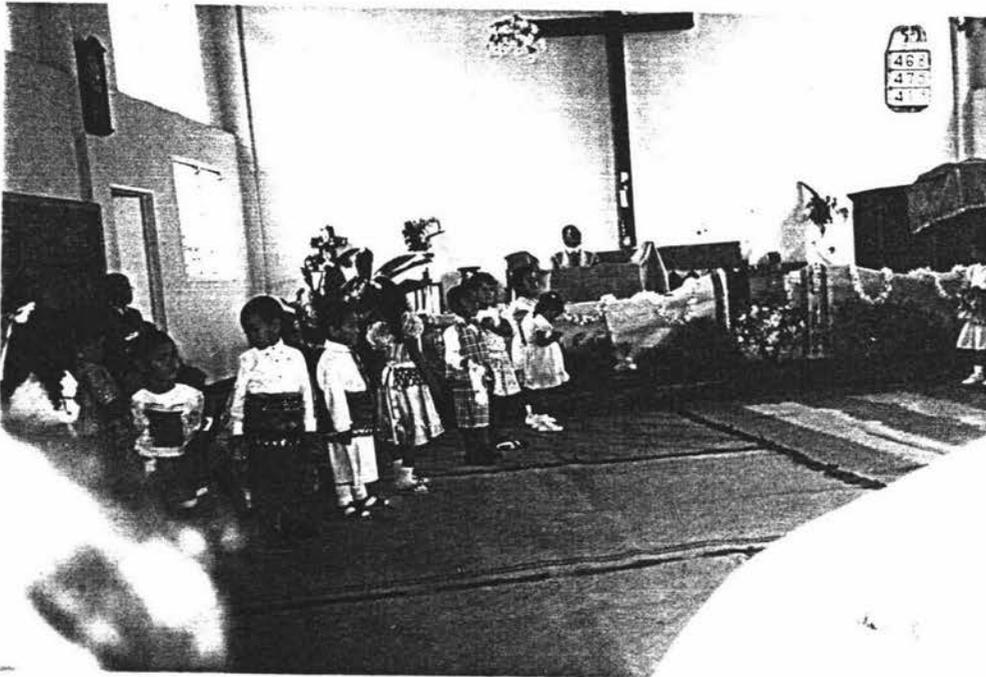


Plate 4.6 A group of Sunday School children perform in church.

Komiti Mo'ui (health committee), Komiti Faka-kolo (village development committee) are further examples.

The traditional roles of women in the economy, the family, the church and the community are performed by women in rural areas particularly in the outer islands. The approximately fifty seven percent of the female population (1984 Census) categorised by the Central Planning Department as 'economically inactive' or 'unemployed' is assumed to be performing in their traditional roles. The other forty three percent consists mainly of women in Tongatapu who work in paid employments ranging from domestics to associate director and mainly in Nuku'alofa. Within this group are the women graduates. The roles they perform will be discussed in the next chapters.

#### NOTES:

1. The amount of koloa a chief received on any ceremonial occasion depended on how important he was among his *kainga* (people; relatives; subjects). As for bridegrooms, their relatives received koloa from brides' relatives in return for food such as pigs and *pola*.
2. Marriage of members of the royal family still involves lots of mats, tapa and other koloa - all of high quality. Ala Latiume explains how the royal family uses its koloa (*Tonga Chronicle* 24.6.88).
3. *Toume* (coconut spathe) is the part that holds the coconut flowers together. When it is dried women use it for kindling fire.
4. This saying refers to women's task of rolling up the beds each morning. Consisting of a few mats, tapa and a kapok pillow the traditional bed had to be rolled up and be put away each day. This allowed the family enough space in the house for eating and receiving people during the day.
5. Because the wife lived with her in-laws, she

was often pressured to obey them, sometimes against her will (Lavelua Afuha'amango pers. comm. 1987).

6. Most Tongan mothers believed that these harsh conditions would decrease their milk production. In serious cases, they believed it would lead to a mother's losing her hair, and eventual death (*ibid.*).
7. Affectionate gestures such as kissing, holding hands or stroking were forbidden.
8. Going grey or bald at an early age or developing *fula* (goitre) later in life were believed to be some of the consequences.
9. This was perhaps the only time women made major decisions in the family. But they varied between families. Some *mehakitanga* rubber stamped what the children's father had already decided.
10. See Chapter Two, Notes.2.
11. After the wedding night, if the bride was proved a virgin, the groom's relatives sent the bride's mother a whole cooked pig called a *'umu-tu-vai* as a token of appreciation.
12. See Huntsman and Hooper 1975 for a description of a similar role of women in church in the Tokelau Islands.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE WOMAN GRADUATE - A Profile

*Si'i-'a'-ma'anga-ika-maka*

(A small mouthful but of tasty, matured fish)

This chapter discusses the characteristics of women graduates in Tongan society. Firstly, it will examine the social background of the women graduates, their church affiliation, age group and their family's social standing in Tongan society. Secondly, it will explore their educational background, and the educational system through which they went before they left the country. Finally, it will discuss the situations which women faced overseas and some of the practical problems and learning difficulties they met while studying at university, and the anticipation they had before returning to Tonga.

#### Social background:

Tongan society is divided into three main social classes, namely, the Royal Family, the nobility and the commoners. The Royal Family includes the King, his brother, their families and their grandchildren. But there is not a clear cut off point to mark the rightful members. Some of the members have married into the nobility. The nobility includes both those who are *toto'i 'eiki* (aristocratic blood) and those *toto'i tu'a* (commoner blood). A noble must have a *hingoa fakanofu* (appointed name, title) given by the King. All other people are commoners. Each of the three classes has its own distinctive language namely, *lea faka-Tu'i* (kingly language), *lea fakahouhou'eiki* (chiefly language) and *lea me'avale* (commoner language). But again, except for the King and the commoners, there is

no cut-off point as to who can or can not use the chiefly language. For example, nobles who hold *hingoa fakanofu* may enjoy the honour of being addressed in the chiefly language, but if they are of *toto'i tu'a* (commoner blood) their children do not have this honour, and they can only be addressed in commoner language.

All but one of the women interviewed came from a commoner background. The exception is a noble's daughter - a new image within that circle (Plate 5.1). The commoner background was indicated by the graduate women's father's occupation as illustrated in Figure 5.1.

Figure 5.1

Fathers' Occupation

Minister of religion	5
Clerk	4
School Teacher	3
Doctor	1
Businessman	1
Policeman	1
Small Farmers	4

Source: Fieldwork 1987.

Each of these occupations occupied a special status. For example ministers of religion have always been highly regarded in the community because they represented Christianity and the dedicated life for which the missionaries were admired. Clerks, school teachers, doctors and policemen as *ngaue faka-Pule'anga* (Government civil servants) were respected

because they represented political authority, and had special skills. They were often referred to as *ha'a poto* (clever group). Businessmen were held in the same high regard because they provided services to the community and were well known in their villages. These jobs (except that of a businessman or a small farmer) required moving from one island to another after every three to five years which gave these families an opportunity to experience a rural life-style, build wide social networks and thereby become more well known. Moreover, government civil servants were paid a high salary which enabled them to afford things that local people could not. Consequently they were regarded as being better off than the average.

Small farmers, although tied to their land, also had wide social networks. Through extended families, social *kava* parties, church connections and community involvement they expanded their social links, often through the distribution of their crops during harvest time. They received community respect and were referred to as *tangata'i fonua* (men of the land).

Nobles enjoyed their social prestige and privileges, had wider social network relationships and functioned at a superior level. They led their *kainga* (relatives, corporate group) in community projects and participated actively in cultural activities. They perceived their duties as providing a service for their people<sup>1</sup>. In traditional terms social status was based on one's family, one's father's occupation and how well known one was in the community. Women graduates grew up in families which had status or properly termed social respect, but were still commoners by Tongan social standards.

Religious affiliation:

Women graduates all had a strong religious background. Of the nineteen women interviewed, all but one belonged to a church. The majority were Wesleyans and the rest were from a variety of faiths (Figure 5.2). The figures were comparable to those of the total population.

Figure 5.2

Religious Affiliation

<u>Denomination</u>	<u>Women Graduates</u>	<u>Tongans</u>
Wesleyan	12 (64%)	42,687 (47%)
Roman Catholic	2 (11%)	14,514 (16%)
Free Church of Tonga	1 (5%)	12,326 (14%)
Church of Tonga	0 0	8,031 (9%)
Latter Day Saints	1 (5%)	8,350 (9%)
Seventh Day Adventist	1 (5%)	1,919 (2%)
Other	2 (10%)	2,250 (3%)

Source: Census 1976, Fieldwork 1987.

Besides the 26 percent of the sample whose fathers were ministers, a further 52 percent had a father or a grandfather who was a lay preacher and all had mothers who played active roles in their respective churches. This indicated a strong religious affiliation among women graduates. From a young age they would spend much of their time in various church activities. Many (especially ministers' children) attended church services three times on Sundays and again during the weekdays. They participated in Sunday school, where some eventually became teachers, and they were involved in Potungau Talavou (Youth department) activities and Christian education programmes. Some said they joined

the church choir while others organised camps for young people. That the majority of women graduates are Wesleyans is due to the fact that early missionaries (Methodists who later called their church Wesleyan) were the initiators of education in Tonga (see Farmer 1855, Latukefu 1977). The first group of educated men and women in Tonga went to mission schools and were taught by missionaries (*ibid.*). The Free Wesleyan Church is also the state religion, the faith of the King, the Royal Family and most of the nobles.

The age of the Women graduates in the sample ranged from twenty-three to forty-seven years. Figure 5.3 depicts the age groups of the sample. This is comparable to the age structure of women graduates on the Government Civil list 1985.<sup>2</sup>

Figure 5.3

<u>Age Group of Graduate Women</u>		
<u>Age Groups</u>	<u>Sample</u>	<u>Women graduates Civil Servants</u>
Up to 30	2 (11%)	10 (17%)
31-35	5 (26%)	12 (21%)
36-40	7 (36%)	18 (32%)
41-45	3 (16%)	11 (19%)
46-50	2 (11%)	6 (11%)
Total	19 (100%)	57 (100%)

Source: Government Civil Servants List 1985, Fieldwork 1987.

Of the women interviewed 78 percent belonged to the age group thirty-one to forty-five compared to 72 percent of graduate women Civil Servants in the same

age group. Only 11 percent of the sample were under thirty years old and another 11 percent were older than forty-five years. The average number of years they had worked was eight. These figures, plus the deficit in the age group twenty to thirty, indicated that most graduate women did not complete their first degree until their late twenties or early thirties. The majority of women started university immediately after they left secondary school in their early twenties.<sup>3</sup> Some started later after a few years working and doing extramural studies and not all completed their degrees within four years of entering university. Of the sample, eight (42%) did do so. Taufa (1979) stated that only 35 percent of the forty-eight graduates she interviewed completed their degrees within four years. Furneaux (1973) found that Pacific Island students took longer (than their New Zealand counterparts) to complete their degrees owing to loneliness, language difficulties and a lack of financial assistance.

Graduate women in the sample who had been back in the country for five years or more said they had a mature attitude to work, they were more traditional and more inclined towards the *faka-Tonga* ways than perhaps their younger counterparts who had just arrived from overseas. Of those interviewed, 68 percent claimed not to be fashion conscious and said they wore whatever was comfortable. Twenty-one percent wondered about the fashions only when they needed to attend a state function, and only two (or 11%) admitted that they liked keeping up with fashions in clothes, make-up, jewellery and things women. All the women in the sample wore Tongan traditional costume to work (Plate 5.2).

Although they did well in education, were mature



Plate 5.1 Kaimana Aleamotu'a, first woman of noble origin with a university degree.

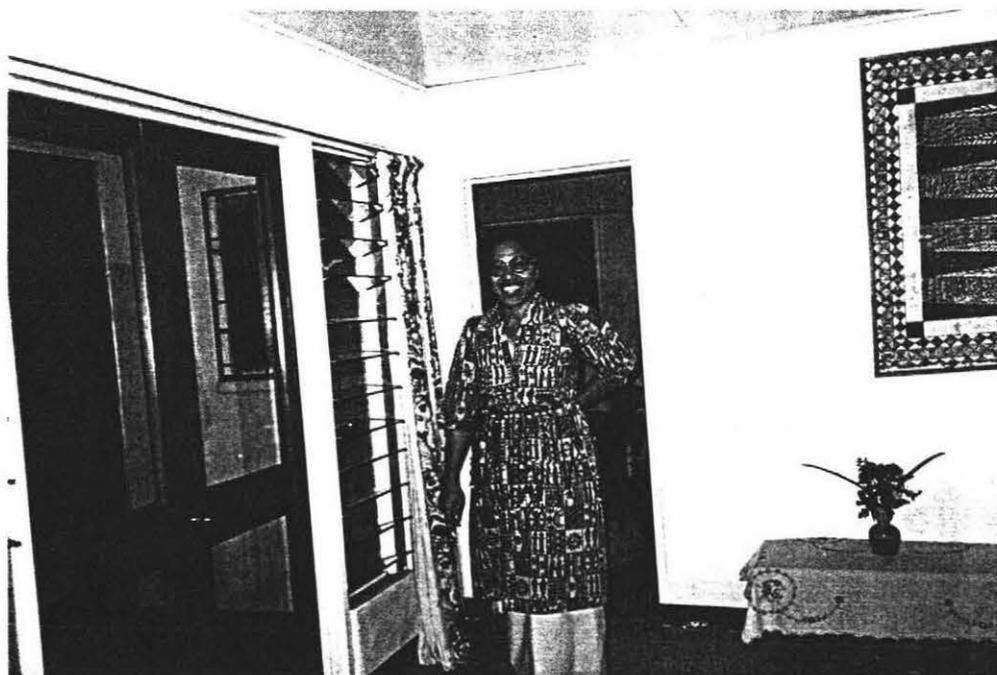


Plate 5.2 Mele'ana Puloka in her national costume - a dress, a tupenu and a kiekie round her waist as a sign of respect.

in age, attitudes and ways, single women (42%) said they were not regarded by society as *fakapotopoto* (wise, sensible, thrifty, tactful, discreet) because they had not acquired a husband. They were seen as unmarried with no support and therefore to be pitied<sup>4</sup> rather than envied. This, they said, was typical of Tongan society's values. A woman was expected to acquire a husband and have children, and these were the achievements expected of her if she was to fulfil her role as a woman.

Why have they remained single? Single women graduates (42 percent) pointed out that firstly, their studies had taken up much of their time and they could not socialise; secondly, that their jobs had kept them busy and they could not go out much, and finally that it was hard to find a suitable partner in Tonga. Male chauvinism and low academic qualifications were given as criteria for a man's unsuitability. Eighty percent of the total number of women interviewed stressed the importance of financial independence as a factor influencing graduate women in their choice to remain single. They (especially married women graduates) also pointed out that the expectations most graduate women had of a husband were very idealistic and hard to meet<sup>5</sup>. When asked what qualities they considered as ideal for a husband, the women interviewed indicated that males who held the same qualifications and who were not male chauvinists were high priority. Being easy to communicate with, owning a piece of land, financially independent and helpful in the house, kind, physically attractive and being the only child were also named as preferences. Twenty-three percent said it was hard to find a partner because they did not go to places like night clubs where eligible men could be found, and ten percent said they were still too young

to be married but were trying.

Married women graduates made up 58 percent of the sample. These women married at the average age of twenty-eight, compared to the average age of twenty-four among Tongan women (Census 1976). The reasons for marrying late in life were similar to those stated by single women for staying single. Married women were content with their spouses. Of the eleven married women interviewed, seven (64%) married degree or diploma holders, two married members of nobility, one married a European and only one married a small farmer. All married women said that their husbands were not male chauvinists, that they were helpful in the house and were very kind. The number of children these women had ranged from zero to five, and three was the average.

#### Education:

An outline of the Education system in Tonga is given in APPENDIX C. It is based on the New Zealand education system except for the Mormon mission school which follows an American education model, and 'Atenisi Institute which followed an Australian model. The Wesleyan and Catholic churches have female single-sex secondary schools but the rest of the church and the government schools are co-educational high schools.

#### Primary schooling

Graduate women in the sample went to primary school in Tonga. Of the nineteen women interviewed, eight (42%) went to primary schools in the outer islands, nine (47%) went to school in Nuku'alofa and two (11%) went to school in villages in Tongatapu. The schools were within walking distance of the girls' homes. All the women interviewed stayed with their parents during their primary school years and all

learned their traditional roles by observing and participating in cultural activities within their kin group. Domestic tasks such as housework, cooking and weaving were learned at home and some at school. All the women did reasonably well at this level. Twenty percent remembered always being within the top five positions in each class. Their friends were from school and the neighbourhood. They learned games such as skipping, playing knuckle bones, threading flowers (Plate 5.3), playing hide and seek and juggling from each other. Fun activities like shell-collecting, shallow reef-fishing, picnicking, picking wild fruits, trading<sup>6</sup> or *fananga* (story-telling) were part of the childhood activities at this stage. All the women found their grandparents or parents, with whom they lived during this early stage of their lives, to be most influential in their acquiring knowledge of Tongan traditions.

#### Secondary schooling:

The majority of graduate women completed much of their secondary education in Tonga. Of those interviewed, ten (53%) went to Tonga High School, four (21%) to Queen Salote College, three (16%) to St. Joseph's College, and one each to St. Andrew's and a secondary school overseas. Six women had to complete Forms Six and Seven overseas because there were none available in Tonga at the time. The rest did not need this as they did a preliminary year at the University of the South Pacific.

The fact that the majority (53%) went to Tonga High School was due to the school's being the most sought-after high school at the time. It was a school for the Royal Family, bright Tongan students<sup>7</sup> and the children of missionaries and expatriates (Plate 5.4). Operating

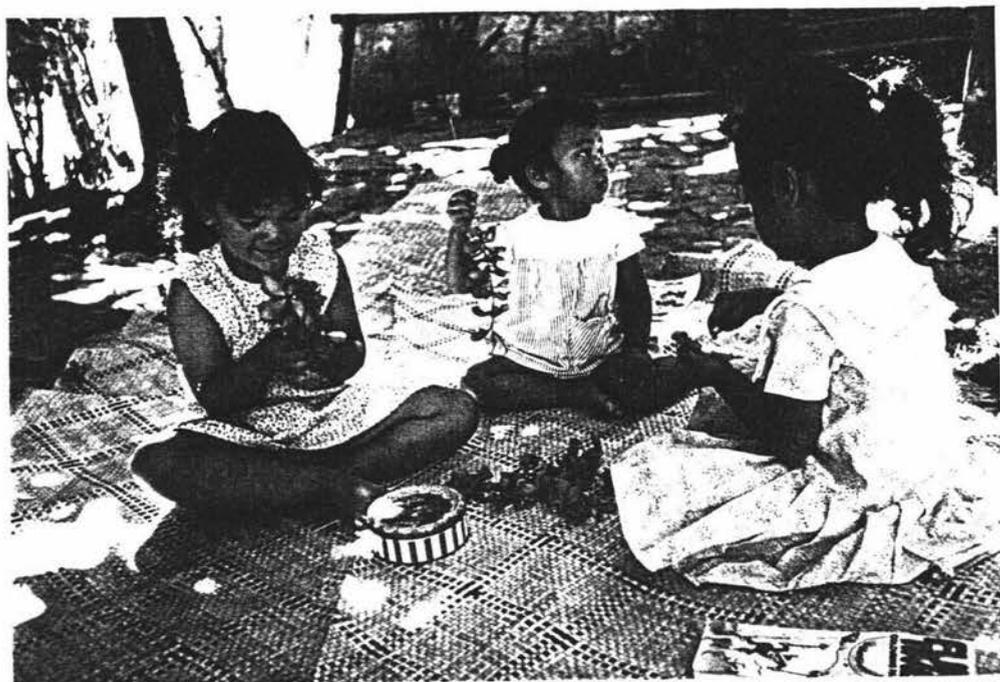


Plate 5.3 Children playing (threading frangipani) at home with very little man-made toys.

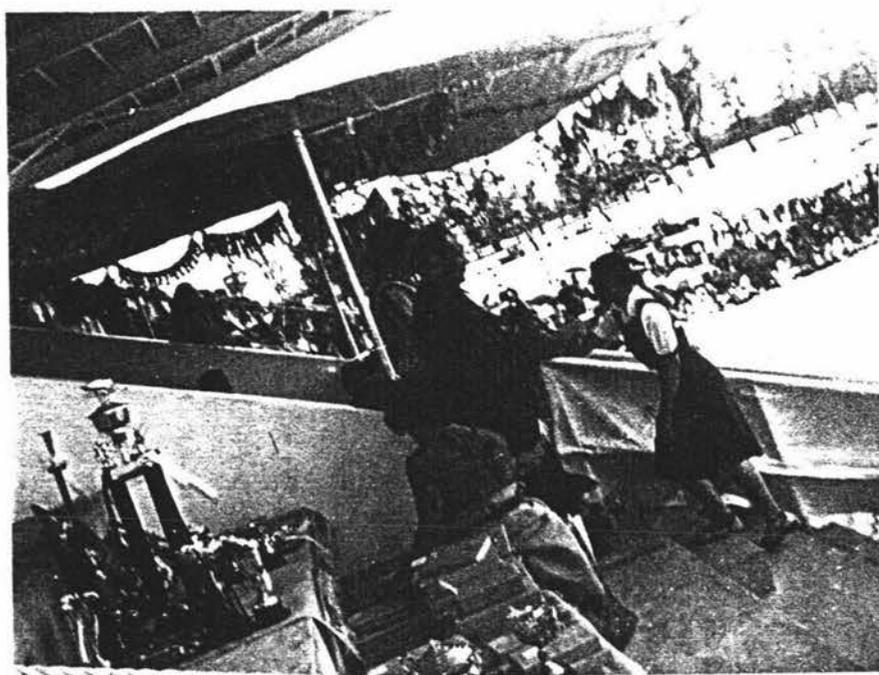


Plate 5.4 Giving out the prizes at the Tonga High School prize-giving ceremony is Princess Siulikutapu and assisting the principal, is a woman deputy principal, Lasale Halatuituia.

under the New Zealand Education syllabus and taught mainly by New Zealand teachers, this co-ed school in Nuku'alofa offered arts and science subjects, similar to those which other schools offered. What was different was that firstly, the teaching was done in English; secondly, students wore a European style uniform with shoes; thirdly, their study rooms at home were inspected fortnightly (for lights, tables and chairs); and fourthly, the emphasis was placed on doing things in *palangi* ways. A few of the sample said that no handicrafts skills were taught except for a few sessions of embroidery and button holes each week under the instructions of a *palangi* voluntary worker. Huni said that no cultural activities were taught and students were forbidden to speak Tongan during school hours. Four ex-students in the sample said they were angry that the government allowed the school to follow what they regarded as a purely New Zealand curriculum. However, Kalonikakala pointed out that she remembered that whatever was taught at school was considered very important and anything outside it was left to the individual students or their parents.

Women who went to Queen Salote College had their learning focussed on arts subjects. This single-sex school placed a great emphasis on teaching domestic science, homecrafts, commercial practice and typing - subjects which allowed women to work at home or in an office doing "women's work". Tongan teachers taught weaving, tapa making and Tongan-style cooking and housekeeping while European teachers and missionaries' wives instructed the girls in crocheting, knitting, embroidery and European type cooking. A lot of practice was achieved while preparing for the school's annual bazaar which raised funds for the school. Another significant part of this school curriculum included the

teaching of principal cultural values such as *faka'apa'apa* (respect), *fatongia* (obligation), *mateaki* (loyalty) and *fakatokilalo* (being humble). Cultural activities such as singing and dancing competitions were held each year (Plate 5.5). A distinctive feature of Wesleyan schools was the incorporation of religious instruction into their teaching programmes. Girls attended church services, Sunday school was held on campus and devotions were conducted every morning before school started.

Women who attended Catholic schools received a similar choice of subjects to those offered at Queen Salote College. They were taught arts, commercial subjects and home science but because the nuns were predominantly Europeans, the emphasis on domestic science was more *palangi*-oriented than Tongan. The women were taught more embroidery, crochet, knitting, tapestry and European-type cooking, and less weaving, tapa making and Tongan-style cooking or Tongan dancing.

Women who attended St. Andrew's or other similar co-ed schools (e.g. Beulah College, Liahona High School, Taululu College) learned the same subjects as those already discussed. But Pipitongi said they were "unfortunate" in that they followed a balanced curriculum, suitable for both boys and girls, so the emphasis on female tasks and skills which the Wesleyan and Catholic girls colleges had was absent.

The women who went overseas for part or all of their secondary education found a wide range of subjects with home science and other technical subjects competing equally with each other. But, they said, despite the wide choice of subjects they were offered, they pursued academic subjects.

During their secondary education, many women did not like and did not participate in sport. Of those interviewed, only three (15%) played netball for their schools, but the majority joined the library or debating clubs. All the women interviewed developed strong friendships at secondary school. Many did not consider a career at this stage. But passing the national examinations was the ultimate goal for most students.

#### Scholarships:

The majority of women graduates went overseas on a scholarship of one form or another. Of those interviewed, all but two had scholarships at some stage of their study period overseas. The two women who did not have scholarships had migrated overseas with their parents - a move which many Tongan families saw as an option especially in the 1970s and 1980s. Eleven (58%) of those interviewed went on government scholarships, six (32%) on church scholarships and two (11%) as private students. Nine (47%) received their first degree from Fiji, four (21%) from New Zealand, four (21%) from Australia and two (11%) from the United States of America. Asked why they wanted a scholarship to go overseas, sixteen (84%) said that it was the done thing at the time (to pass one's exams then apply for a scholarship), so they did that, three (16%) said that they really wanted to go overseas to study. All those who had scholarships had their course of study chosen for them and all felt that they had an obligation to repay the government or church who offered the scholarship.<sup>8</sup>

#### Overseas Experience:

Formal preparation to go overseas was nil. No cross-cultural briefing, academic or counselling of any

sort was offered. Some women received an informal means of orientation before they left the kingdom, and so felt that what they had seen on movies or been told by European teachers in Tonga was adequate preparation to live in another culture. Others read magazines and newspapers to get some idea of what overseas life was like. Still others asked questions and gathered information from overseas returnees who were willing to help. But many women pointed out that the great excitement, usually involved in going overseas, did not allow them to ask many questions and one admitted that she relied on her relatives overseas for help when she arrived.

When women students arrived overseas they faced many problems (see Furneaux 1972). A large majority of the sample said they did not have many friends or relatives nearby to give them the social support they needed. "Culture-shock" hit some harder than others, and the difficulty they said they had with English language did not help (*ibid.*). Of those interviewed, the women who went to New Zealand and lived at the Tongan hostel in Auckland said they faced the problems of poor living conditions, lack of privacy, the constraints of Tongan culture over them as females and commoners (*ibid.* 51), poor relationships with the staff<sup>9</sup> and a breakdown of communication among female students. The situation drove Kukuvalu for example to spend more time at the university library, which ultimately accounted for her success. But, she said, the other females were not so fortunate. The need for a hostel manager who had gone through university life, and who had an understanding of the routines and pressures students went through was what one respondent asserted. Those who went to Australia faced loneliness and isolation but it was the discrimination against

them by *palangi* students at hostels that was the hardest to take. Women who boarded with families did not have serious problems except for the cultural shock and poor communication at the initial stage of their settling in. Women in Fiji did not face the same problems. Instead, as Tongan women they found other ethnic groups respected them and held them in high regard.<sup>10</sup>

The lack of counselling on university subjects, unfamiliarity with the physical environment, worsened by their difficulty with the English language made life difficult for many women at university. Consequently some enrolled in subjects they knew little about, while others enrolled for courses not directly relevant to their field of study. The women who went to Fiji found the presence of a large number of Tongan students at the university helpful in their planning, course selection, book buying and in familiarising themselves with the campus.

While at university overseas, women graduates made many friends mainly of Pacific Island origin. A few made *palangi* friends through churches they attended or clubs to which they belonged. Many learned new skills, interests and the values of other cultures. During this time, a majority was exposed to women's issues at the university. Of the sample, 74 percent felt that women's issues were over emphasised; that the interpretation of Women's Liberation to which they were exposed contradicted the image of women they knew existed in Tonga. Many did not like the way women's issues were presented and discussed, believing the personalities who delivered speeches on the issues were anti-men. Twenty-six percent did not have time for women's issues. A general feeling expressed was that it was no

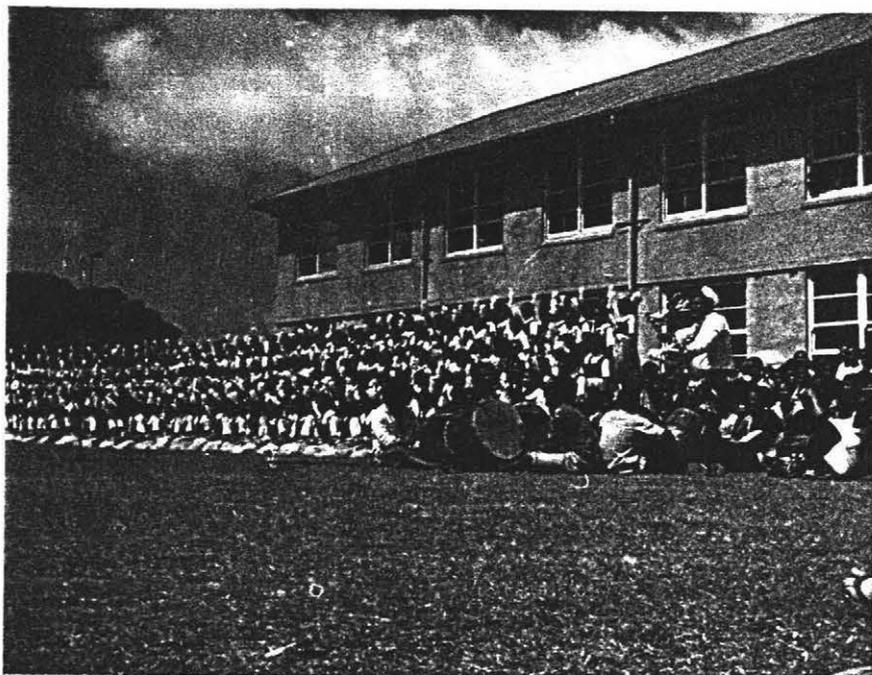


Plate 5.5 A ma'ulu'ulu (sitting dance) performed by Queen Salote College students.



Plate 5.6 Returned graduates after presenting in 1975, a play (in English) of the arrival of the early missionaries in Tonga.

use talking about women's issues. Instead many made a very real effort not to mar the image of Tongan women overseas.

Overall, despite their struggles many women did not change their course of study or drop-out of university, although three had to extend their time in order to complete their degree. Figure 5.4. shows the degrees earned by the women in the sample.

Figure 5.4

<u>Degrees Gained</u>	
B.A	16 (84%)
B.Sc.	2 (11%)
B.Ed.	1 ( 5%)
M.A.	4 (21%)
M.Ed.	3 (16%)
Total	26*

\*Some women had more than one degree.

Source: Fieldwork 1987.

To learn how they felt about their achievements, the women were asked what were the advantages and disadvantages of being a woman with a degree in Tonga. As advantages, a majority (84%) said that it gave them status, a good salary and respect; forty percent said that it gave women independence, choice, and a chance for promotion. It allowed women to have a more analytical mind in order to cope with men, to see things in different perspectives, to get invited to a lot of functions. Being a graduate raised one's dignity and people often sought one's advice. One respondent said that it did not give her any special status. This woman had gone overseas at a very young age. Under disadvantages, many women said that everybody expected women graduates to comply with the typical status of a good woman.<sup>11</sup> Society expected them to know everything, and that people tended to isolate them and forget that

they were humans. Other disadvantages mentioned were that it isolated them from other women, it scared off men, and it brought more social obligations. One respondent pointed out that a degree is a disadvantage for women who abused it- those who did not know their limit but went beyond their social ranking.

With this general profile of women graduates complete, the following chapters will discuss how these women have played their roles at work, in the family and in the community.

#### NOTES:

1. Marcus (1980) portrays a different image of the nobility. But one respondent who was of nobility origin claimed that her family functioned like any ordinary family. For instance both her parents earned their living by working, one as a clerk and the other as an administrator.
2. Date of birth was given, so the women's ages were calculated to 1987 and not 1985.
3. Most women in the sample, who are now in their late thirties or early forties, went to school under the old Educationa System. They entered primary school at the age of five and spent seven years there. Another seven years at secondary school before Higher Leaving Certificate, and then another three years at Senior Level High School before they sat for Victorian Matriculation or University Entrance Examinations. The Education System has since changed.
4. Unmarried women were pitied because women could not own land, but through marriage they had access to their husband's land and were able of make a living. They were also pitied because they did not have children to look after them in their old age.
5. This point was further reiterated by some of the young males who were consulted.
6. Children traded food (such as bread and fruits) for skills (e.g. speaking English, playing the

guitar or ukulele, learning to weave) at school. This is still common in some schools in Tonga.

7. A national Entrance Examination was conducted every year to select the students suitable to go to Tonga High School. Other schools had the same Entrance Examinations but theirs were not as competitive.
8. Many women admitted that before they left the country their parents had "drummed" into them that they must return and pay back for their scholarships by serving the government, the church and their families.
9. Furneaux (1972) listed the same problems she found in her study of Polynesian students in Auckland.
10. Women who went to Fiji found that other Pacific Islands women perceived Tongan women as being respected by Tongan men more than other women were by their menfolk.
11. Many women admitted that they did not comply to society's expectations.

## CHAPTER SIX

### WOMEN AT WORK

*Ngulungulu-fei'umu*

(Complaining about the work but doing it all the same)

For most Tongans having a degree guarantees work. But to engage after acquiring a university degree, in an occupation which involves great responsibilities, is everyone's ultimate dream. Success, in this sense, is not necessarily making money, but in holding a responsible position where the degree holder represents her family, her *ha'a* (patrilineal lineage)<sup>1</sup> and her place of origin, with great pride; and the salary which comes from it helps fulfil family obligations. This chapter looks at women graduates at work, how they perform in a male-dominated professional world, the significant effect their gender may have on their work relationships with both their superiors and subordinates, and the type of treatment they receive.

#### Work Motivation:

Women graduates' reasons for returning home<sup>2</sup> seemed to depend heavily on their close ties to their families. The majority of those interviewed said that they returned to help their family, to fulfil their family's obligations to the government and the church, that it was the requirement of their scholarship, and that they were dissatisfied with the life overseas. No one said she did not want to return home. A few women revealed that before they had left the kingdom, their parents had 'drummed into them' the need to return and show their appreciation to the government or the church from which their scholarship had originated. They admitted that it was a sense of *mateaki* and *fatongia* to the *Pule'anga*,

*Siasi mo e Fonua*<sup>3</sup>, instilled in them by their parents. This sense of obligation motivated them to study, succeed, and return home to work, and to do so devotedly.

#### Women's Occupation:

To get a job after graduating from university is not a problem. This is because most degree holders studied overseas on a scholarship, and when they returned they went straight to the government department or the church from which their scholarship was granted and were given a job. Most admitted they did not know what they would be offered but knew all along that they would be given a chance, as Huni put it, "to pay back the taxpayers' money or the church people's *misinale* which had helped them achieve their degree...".

The majority of women graduates were teachers, but a few worked in administration, a handful in health and planning departments, and the others included legal assistants, a lecturer in theology and a consultant. Figure 6.1 depicts the areas where women graduates were employed. Of those who taught (all in secondary schools), half served the government schools and the other half the church colleges.

Figure 6.1

#### Professions of Graduate Women

Teaching (Govt. & Church)	54 %
Administration	30 %
Health	8 %
Planning	6 %
Other	2 %

Source: Government Civil List 1986, Wesleyan Conference Minutes 1987, Fieldwork 1987.

The large proportion of women graduates engaged in teaching was explained by the fact that traditionally, women's roles were at home (Chapter Four). Teaching has always been seen as a female job because it deals with children, and with instructing them on a daily basis. Secondly, the type of scholarships which were offered to women in the fifties were mainly for teaching, nursing or secretarial training. The closest women could get to university study was teachers college training where they trained full time and took university courses part time. Secretarial and nurse trainings were done in business colleges and hospitals respectively, and both were regarded by most Tongan education officials as below university level. All the female scholarship holders who resided in the Auckland Tongan hostel ('Atalanga) in 1959 and 1960 were undergoing one of the three occupational trainings mentioned above, while the male scholarship holders either studied at university or did courses at polytechnic institutes. The females who left for Australia on Wesleyan Church scholarships went there to train as teachers of home economics or commercial subjects and girls who went on private sponsorship were trained as nurses. In later years, female students who did not succeed at university, took up teacher training, and after they completed the course, returned and taught for a while in Tonga before they were given another chance to complete their degree. Another programme started in recent years has been that women (and men) graduates from the local teachers' college, who have completed most of a degree extramurally, are sent to the University of the South Pacific to complete their degree.

Those in administration (educational administrators, superintendents or school principals), have been teachers, but with promotion, have left

teaching (Plate 6.1). Others who hold positions as assistant secretaries, work as economists, accountants or planners in government departments or regional organisations. Some were specifically trained in their fields while others graduated with a general Arts degree. Most of the latter had studied as private students, and after completing their studies, returned home to serve their country. The small number who left teaching to become assistant secretaries did so after three to five years in the profession. These women said they found teaching too demanding and depressing, and they saw better opportunities for promotion outside teaching. Sialetafa stated that marking school work outside school hours, took up a lot of her time which she could have been spending with her family.

The small number who were engaged in health department occupations include doctors, nurses, laboratory technicians, and a dietician (Plate 6.2). These were new areas being entered by educated women. Although some of these women doctors were more highly qualified than their male counterparts, they felt they were not promoted because they were women. The small number of women in law and in religion indicated that women's roles in these areas are insignificant.<sup>4</sup>

#### Work Place:

The majority of degreed women work in government departments. Of the twenty-six government departments in the kingdom, only twelve employed graduate women, with the Education Department employing twenty-four, Health ten, Central Planning six, Foreign Affairs four and the rest employ one or two in each (Tonga Civil Servant List 1986). Figure 6.2 shows the typical structure of a government department.

Figure 6.2

Government Department Structure

Minister

Secretary / Director

Assistant Secretaries / Senior Education Officer

Senior Executive Officers / Education Officers

Accounting Officer

Chief Clerk

First Class Clerk

Second Class Clerk

Junior Clerk / Typist Grade 1

Typist Grade 2

Typist Grade 3

Drivers and Cleaners

These departments are characterised by the following. Firstly, they are hierarchically structured. The senior positions carry a lot of power and authority. Often, they are held by older men and women who do not have academic qualifications or professional training, but who have had a lot of practical experience. The graduate women are expected to show respect to these senior colleagues, and refer to them for advice. They use chiefly language (for Ministers<sup>5</sup> for instance) which is normally reserved for nobles when addressing them. Women graduates, like the others, are 'expected' to follow their superiors' instructions, carry out their commands and be obedient. In other words, they are expected to conform, and show *faka'apa'apa* (respect) and be *fakato-ki-lalo* (humble) in every sense of the word, the same way junior workers are expected to relate to graduates. In return, senior workers are expected to give guidance and training to newcomers. Although some women graduates admitted to having been taken under the wings of their seniors and



Plate 6.1 'Emeli Moala finds working at the administration level enjoyable.



Plate 6.2 Siosiane Bloomfield, one of the few nurses with a post graduate degree.

have been given advice most senior colleagues did not always meet this set of expectations. They would rather wait to be approached and 'asked', they were reserved and *faka'ei'eiki* (act as a chief) and they kept their distance. Some, as Puatonga put it, "are downright cold". But because they were older senior members, and must be respected, most young women graduates could not do anything. They found them set in their ways, far removed and unapproachable. "Some are frightening", said Mapa. Obviously, women are not free to express themselves. This frustrates young women graduates (and men too) who, while waiting to take over from their superiors when they retire or move on to the 'next life', often find themselves dissatisfied. A few have left the country before they have had a chance to experiment or innovate at work (Taufa 1979:58). Lolohea (1984:30) claimed that "the status of the ministers has become even more powerful, acting in a way considered to be autonomous, somewhat totalitarian or authoritative" and with educated Tongans, "dissatisfaction with the structure and level of administration has grown". It must be pointed out, though, that the concept of *molumalu* (reverence) is highly regarded by Tongans as part of the image of a chief or leader. Such prominent figures are not expected to mingle with the rest, and they must keep their distance.

Secondly, according to the sample, most government departments still operate very strongly under the customary division of labour. The general rule is for each sex to specialise in a particular type of service and to have as helpers junior workers of the same sex. Within each department, women graduates are expected to perform their jobs and oversee junior female clerks and typists, plus keep an eye on those who prepare the staff

tea. Males with the same responsibilities oversee junior male clerks and the drivers, the cleanliness of vehicles and such chores. This practice removes junior males from the control of a graduate woman, leaving her no chance to exercise authority over males, even in a working situation. So relationships of respectful avoidance which normally exist between brothers and sisters, male and female cousins, or between young and old, are observed at work though to a lesser degree. This practice hinders the graduate woman's chance to exercise her authority, and also perpetuates what are seen as arrogant male attitudes towards females, especially when the two parties are unrelated. So even when a graduate woman is the obvious choice to head a department, preference for males may still prevail.

Finally, government departments, like church organisations, were found to be dominated by males. And because these males are likely to be older (than most graduate women), well established at work and well known among their colleagues, their attitudes and opinions may be ignored but never openly challenged by the rest. Each department has one or two of this type of character. Their *fo'ifo'i lea'i* (ill-feeling remarks) may go unchecked, and unheeded by their colleagues but to a newcomer, the scenario created by such remarks could be uncomfortable and painful, causing a lot of suspicion and discomfort for a young woman with a degree. Mapa recalled when she first started in a male-dominated government department. "Some treated me as a little kid, others with outright hatred and bitterness, and others treated me as an inferior. Very often, I was verbally abused". Kalonikakala remembered, "when I first started teaching, both *palangi* and Tongan male graduates looked at me in disbelief."

Tongan men were described as finding amusement in doing one or all of the following to a female newcomer. They would enjoy it especially if she does not have any male relatives within the department. They may *fakapangopango*'i (tease) her by making up embarrassing stories about her. They may have one young man pretend to be, 'eva'i (courting) her. They may remark about the way she looks or dresses, and some may even ask her for a date. They may conduct their *talanoa kapekape* (men's dirty talk)<sup>6</sup> when she is around which may embarrass her. I was told that these are group techniques used by some Tongan men to cause a woman to respond and thereby give men a chance to learn about her personality. The duration of this probing may vary from one week to a few months until they 'suss' out the young female. It is always done in a group so that no particular young man can get too serious. If the woman responds she can get into trouble. But if she ignores them, the exercise becomes pointless and is terminated. Then they start treating the young woman with the respect she deserve (Plate 6.3).

This treatment, participants felt, can tarnish a woman's reputation and so decrease her professional dignity with wider ramifications. For instance, when asked in Parliament why there had not been anyone appointed to the position of Director of Central Planning Department, the then Acting Prime Minister replied that,

there were two women to choose from. [He later] said that those who work at the Central Planning are Tongans but they behave like foreigners. They have returned with university degrees from overseas and the only thing that is Tongan is the colour of their skin, the rest is Papalangi (Parliament Bulletin 1985:vol.2:382).



Plate 6.3 'Ana Fusipala 'Ata'ata, one of the youngest women civil servants, gained her degree from Melbourne, Australia.



Plate 6.4 Male teachers at Tonga College help themselves first while female teachers work in the kitchen.

The implication of this comment was that stories about graduate women in this office being *fie palangi* (pretending to be Europeans) had travelled, even to the Prime Minister's office, and been taken seriously by the Acting Prime Minister.

In church schools where women graduates were employed, the levels of hierarchy were fewer. But women came face to face with systems which even were more traditional (Plate 6.4), and more male dominated than those operating in government departments. Figure 6.3 shows the structure of a typical Church organisation.

Figure 6.3

Structure of Wesleyan Education System

President  
and  
C o n f e r e n c e  
(made up of President, Secretary and *Faifekaus*)  
Komiti Ako  
(Education Committee) \*  
Palesiteni Ako  
(President of Education)  
Tokoni Palesiteni  
(Deputy President of Education)  
School Inspectors / School Principals  
Chaplain  
Deputy Principal  
Teachers  
Prefects and Students

Source: Cook 1980.

\*This consists of the President and Secretary of the Conference, President and Deputy President of Education, Principals and Head Tutors of all Wesleyan secondary schools, School Inspectors, Head Faifekau of Tongatapu, Representatives of Primary, Middle and Secondary Schools teachers, and four laymen - altogether 29 members (Free Wesleyan Church of Tonga - Education Policies 1980).

Although women graduates working for the church found the working conditions pleasant, they faced stumbling blocks with the rigidity of the system. The President, being the head of church, has great influence in decision-making. This has led to a belief that nothing would be changed unless the domineering power of old faifekau (ministers) was adapted to modern Tonga, and the supreme power of the head of the church, which often led to nepotism and malpractice, was replaced by the leadership of a younger minister with more vigour and a less traditional approach. Perhaps Tongan women are suppressed by their own culture, but many do not allow themselves to see it that way.

Communication is an important element in building up and maintaining social and professional networks. Graduate women teachers share a common staff room. There they spend morning tea and lunch time together, in discussion, at staff meetings or having casual conversation, during their free periods. But women in government departments are in separate offices (Plate 6.5) and their tea is served to them, but they can move around and converse with others in the office. Most of the women find the level of communication at work satisfying because, they said, they deal with people of equal academic ability. Each office is equipped with a telephone or an inter-com machine.

Work Performance:

It appears that the performance at work of women graduates is governed by *faka'apa'apa* (respect) to superiors, *fatongia* (obligation) to the government or church from which their scholarships derived, and to which their family belongs, and by *mateaki* and *'ofa fonua* (love for one's country), with which they grew up. The hierarchical structure of both government departments and church organisations guarantees the continued observance of these principles, where seniority is given power and respect. This is based on cultural practices to which graduate women have no choice but to conform. Mapa stated that there were unwritten rules to be explored, staff differences to be tolerated and skills to be learned which were all part of the job and professional astuteness.

All those interviewed knew their responsibilities well. To the question, "What do you actually do?", all outlined their routines and responsibilities clearly. Those who teach took up extra-curricular activities in their free time (Plate 6.6). Some ran Christian Fellowships, others remedial programmes, and a few tutored students at the University Extension Centre. All marked school work outside school hours. All admitted that there was always more than enough to do since their department or their school lacked the qualified people to share the work load.

Does the fact that they are women affect their job? Mapa said she could turn a situation to her advantage and cause her officers to feel sorry for her. This often happened when she was unreasonably reprimanded by her superiors. Her officers would come to her for sympathy when they had problems. Puafisi said she could scream at some male principals and could get away with it because



Plate 6.5 Leipua Palu, a secretary, in her well-equipped office at the Education Department.



Plate 6.6 Mele Suipi, a teacher, waiting to run a remedial class after school.

she was a woman. Falahola too, could persuade her professional associates because she was a woman and because of her husband's social connections.

Does having a degree improve their performance at work? Kalosipani said that a university trained person has skills in correspondence, communication and research which an ordinary Tongan clerk lacks. Women with a degree, Kukuvalu said, are trained to use tactics and strategy to achieve their goals, they have an analytical mind and systematic ways of doing things. Mapa thought graduates picked up things faster and used them much quicker than an ordinary person would; they had a wider use of resources and would take a shorter time to train. "They pick up little things which makes administration efficient, and their analytical mind helps them to be more objective, quicker in decision-making and directives than an ordinary person," she said. Kalonikakala believed that women graduates coped better with co-ordinating details than graduate men, saying, "a man who does that will soon go round the bend." Kukuvalu said graduate women could see things in a wider perspective, they were very thorough with details and had minds which record, analyse and store information better than other women in Tonga. These qualities enabled them to enjoy their job, hence the long hours they spent at it.

All the women graduates in the kingdom worked full-time. Many worked long hours, as on the occasion of school anniversaries, the King's birthday celebrations, or the South Pacific Forum Meeting. Sixty-eight percent of those interviewed worked during the weekends as well (Plate 6.7). Most who did were single. Most of those

employed in offices worked through their morning tea time, lunch hour and for a couple of hours after work. Three women said they came to work on Sundays (a practice which is un-Tongan and illegal but they get away with it), and only two mothers said they tried not to take work home.

Women who worked in government departments admitted they were paid a high salary (Figure 6.4). As senior staff members, they were paid more than men and women of their own age who did not have the same qualifications. (Males and females are paid equally in Tonga). They also received privileges such as invitations to cocktails and government functions, attending short overseas training courses, and a paid overseas holiday given every three years. Prospects for future promotion, they said, were strong motivations. Those who worked for churches (other than the Mormon Church) simply agreed that the church could not afford to give them more than they received. Their motivation to work, they said, was not money but rather to serve the people. After all, they felt, it was a church scholarship which had helped them achieve their degree. But the very small number who worked for overseas companies or non-government organisations admitted they were paid handsomely. They were prepared to work overtime whenever it was needed.

Another significant aspect of the graduate women's performance was that they thrived in higher responsible positions which they had not expected to be able to cope with. All but three had had either a promotion, a start in a new job, or had had new responsibilities within the last twelve months. To the question, "How well do you perform in your job?", all but two felt they performed very well. The majority said they performed well because they knew what they were supposed to be doing, they had

had professional training, they were confident in themselves, and that they spent hours preparing, researching and completing a job on time. A few went on to explain how thoroughly they did their job. Huni said she was effective in her job because she did not have many ties with Tongans. Her job required her to show no favouritism.

Figure 6.4

Sample of Graduate Women's Income  
(in Tongan Pa'anga)

Up to \$4000	2*
\$4000 - \$5999	7
\$6000 - \$7999	5
\$8000 - \$9999	0
\$10,000 - \$15,000	3
\$16,000 and above	2*

(\$1 Tongan Pa'anga = \$1.38 N.Z. Dollar)

\*Those earning less than \$4000 work for either the Wesleyan Church or the Church of Tonga, while those who make more than \$16,000 are employed by the Mormon Church or non-government organisations or overseas companies.

(Source: Field work; Civil Service List 1985 adapted)

Another said she did well because she could communicate with her officers, and two said they performed well because God helped them. The two women who felt they did not do well, pointed to their domineering male superiors as the stumbling blocks in their work performance. They would not attempt to change this because it would seem disrespectful to do so.

Most of the women liked their job, the power they had, and the challenges they faced. In Laukaupo'uli's

words, "This is a promotion, and I'm coping well, learning new things and facing new challenges. I am involved in planning and decision-making and I enjoy it all. "Kukuvalu was content, saying that now that she had reached her position, she did not think anyone would challenge her.

Some women referred to other factors which had helped them in their job. These were that they listened to the advice of older colleagues; they had gained self-confidence and the respect of their colleagues; they had conformed to the norms at work; they had Christian convictions; they had the same principles as their leaders; they ignored chauvinistic male attitudes at work; they worked long hours; they were straightforward and firm, and that they had relatives as colleagues.

The positive reinforcement which women graduates had received from most of their colleagues, had caused them to form their social networks around work, but left them less time to form social networks outside work. For example, some went to church but only for an hour per week, so they did not have time with congregation members during the week. Kalonikakala stated, "the only places I go to in this country are work, church and home." Others stayed at home in the week ends.

Most young graduate women admitted that their age counted against them at work (Plate 6.3). Those between the ages of twenty-three and thirty-five said that often when they were serious, their older male colleagues laughed and made fun of them, while their female counterparts convolutedly questioned any instructions they gave to junior workers. In the past, older locally-educated women oversaw many aspects of office routine. But now that graduate women who had taken over,

were expected to *fakalai* (curry favour) with older non-graduate female workers in order to get their typing or errands done. In Kalosipani's words, "They make me feel inferior, and because I'm young, I do not say anymore or it may sound too pushy." So despite their promotion and their holding of responsible positions some graduate women were not able, for various reasons, to perform to their full capacity.

#### Work Relationships:

Work relationships are very important particularly in a small society since it pays to be well thought of. It can often determine one's success, or otherwise. Graduate women claimed their work relationships were generally good.

Sixty percent of the women interviewed regarded their superiors as good leaders, good decision makers and considerate figure heads. They praised their superiors for running their departments as a family where workers cooperated, contributed and felt relaxed. However thirty percent of those interviewed doubted the abilities of their immediate superiors. Three teachers, all in government schools, said that their superiors were disorganised, incompetent, often dictatorial, and sometimes had a personal vendetta against some women. The professional women resented such treatment. "They just come to the staff meeting to tell us what to do, and they do not worry about how we feel," said Langakali. Two women who had Europeans as superiors felt they were victims of favouritism and jealousy. Most women would never confront their superiors. They said it is most *anga ta'e faka'apa'apa* (disrespectful) to do so, and besides, their family's reputation had to be protected from public rumour and community gossip.

Graduate women felt they had good relationships with their male and female counterparts. They understood and respected each other and encountered no competition or discrimination at work. Most felt they were well treated and respected because they were women, because they had had an education and they came from well-known families. Two women felt they were well treated at work because their husbands had connections.

Kukuvalu put it, "In Tonga the traditional forms of assessment and evaluation of people are much more forceful than any other factor." Those who said that family did not influence the way they were treated at work, tended to be from villages or outer islands. But more than fifty percent felt that the good treatment they received at work was due to their own personality and position.

Women generally felt that they were not being treated as equals with males who had the same qualifications. Mohokoi, for example, thought she did not get the job as a Tourist Officer because, as she put it, "at the time of the interview, I was bulging." Katinia said that sometimes she was not allowed to meet dignitaries because their flights arrived late at night, so male officers were sent in her place. Mapa was told when she applied for a superintendent's position, that the job was not suitable for her as a woman. Kalonikakala said women have to be more qualified in order to be equal to their male counterparts. She went on to tell how her male counterparts could not accept her because it was a "new thing to have a woman graduate in secondary teaching".

Graduate women did not view this discrimination with animosity or bitterness. Instead they accepted that

being a woman, meant there were certain things they could not do. They placed a great deal of emphasis on the respect and courteous treatment they received as women (for example being given first choice, having the door opened for them etc.). Laukaupo'uli stressed the *faka'apa'apa* a woman should have, towards men, towards both men and women of high social position and towards others because, she said, "these are the qualities which make a woman, a woman." Most women said they were content with their positions. Kukuvalu said that often women who screamed 'Sex Discrimination!' were young and inexperienced, and the scream often happened at a stage when they were struggling to establish themselves at work.

Male colleagues were preferred for casual conversation and professional consultation, to female colleagues. This was because most graduate women said they felt that graduate men understood them better, could communicate professionally on the same level and with a degree of seriousness. At cocktail parties, for example, male company was preferred to female because, most women said, they talked seriously about work, did not indulge in idle pleasantries, yet were good listeners. Mohokoi found conversation with male colleagues less strenuous, and they did not talk about personalities. The absence of conversational banalities made her feel comfortable. The women whom they most preferred not to have conversation with were the wives<sup>7</sup> of graduate men, although some did not mind talking with them as long as it was not their total conversational diet for the evening.

Most graduate women claimed to have good working relationships with their subordinates. All agreed that as long as their junior workers did their job

competently and efficiently, they got on well with them. Twenty-six percent spent morning tea or lunch time together with their juniors, and fifteen percent went out with them to functions outside working hours. Those who spent morning tea and lunch time with their subordinates enjoyed being *fakalangilangi'i* (honoured) by the junior workers. For example, Laukaupo'uli observed that at lunch, she was always served first, and on a separate plate from the others. The rest would eat together from the same plate. They always showed respectful avoidance toward her in the office. Mapa went out with her female subordinates to night clubs, and had parties with them at the beach on hot nights. She found they were relaxed with her. This, she said, helped her understand them better (Plate 6.8).

However, a small number of women did not claim good relationships with their subordinates. They felt that typists (who were locally educated women) expected them to grovel to get their typing done. Kalosipani put it, "they are power hungry and claim that because they have been in office longer than anyone else, newcomers should be ordered around by them." Junior workers from 'town' felt that graduate women from the villages whom they referred to as 'bush-women' could be too authoritative, dictatorial and *fie-pule* (desire to appear powerful). An experienced officer observed that graduate women who treated their subordinates badly tended to come from a poor socio-economic background. But, she said, the worst were graduate women who had been teachers. "They treat us like kids, they order everyone around, yet when it comes to explaining tasks, they are the best".

Graduate women valued their job. To some, it was their life, hence their long working hours. They built their social networks around their colleagues and their



Plate 6.7 Melenaita, spends most of her weekends at work.



Plate 6.8 The staff and students and friends of Tupou High School during a school picnic.

neglect of other interests outside work had become a problem for some (see chapter 7). To others, especially married women, their job was as important to them as their family. They tried to divide their time equally between work and family, not taking work home and attending their important school functions during working hours if possible. However, to a small number the job came before their family. At times of crisis, they often opted to arrange for someone else to take care of the family, and they went to work.

Fifty-two percent of the sample claimed job satisfaction.<sup>8</sup> Thirty-one percent said they were not satisfied, and seventeen percent had mixed feelings. Those who were satisfied occupied the top third of positions in their department, were aged thirty-seven or older, and enjoyed good relationships with their superiors and a good working rapport with the rest of their colleagues. In other words, they have reached a high position and have professional status, and are now settled.

Those who did not have job satisfaction were mainly teachers. Their main complaint was that their immediate superiors were incompetent and there was a lack of qualified staff. They therefore had to do extra work but were not treated with respect in that they were not consulted in many things.

Some young officers pointed out that one of the things which made graduate women uncomfortable and dissatisfied in Tonga were the social expectations placed on them on their return. Despite their having been away from the Tongan culture for many years they were expected to merge back into the culture as if they had never been away. Moreover, they were expected to be

experts in all fields - local and international news, moral issues, educational matters, social etiquette and professional developments. These expectations put a lot of pressure on women who, on the one hand wanted to implement what they had learned overseas, and on the other, had to conform to society's expectations in order to be accepted and to protect their family's reputation.

In summary, graduate women were highly motivated when they first arrived to start work in Tonga. Their occupation was already been determined by the nature of their scholarships. However, once they started work, the principles of *faka'apa'apa*, *fatongia*, *mateaki* and *'ofa fonua* took over. Their work performance, work relationships and work-related social functions were controlled by these principles, and the structure of organisations or departments for which they worked reinforced them. Graduate women were generally satisfied with their work, were proud that their families were represented and their obligations were fulfilled. They felt honoured that they served, as the saying goes, the *Pule'anga 'o Tupou mo Hou'eiki* (Government of Tupou and the chiefs). This patriotic attitude and performance also took its toll. As single women, graduate women could dedicate all their time to work. When they became wives and mothers, they often had to make a choice between work and family. Generally, they liked their job, and when society's expectations got too much for them, they avoided joining other groups for fear of making mistakes or being criticised and gossiped about. They put all their efforts into work. Consequently their family and community roles are affected, as discussed in the next chapter.

#### NOTES:

1. Tribe, clan. Gifford defined it as a patrilineal

lineage. The term is normally used in Tonga as patrilineal descent group.

2. See Taufa 1979 for a detailed analysis of what motivates graduates upon their return to Tonga.
3. In songs, poems and speeches, references are often made to *Pule'anga, Siasi mo e Fonua*, (Government, Church and the Land or Nation) as symbolised by the leaves held by the dove, in the Tongan National Coat of Arms. References are often made to *Pule'anga mo e Siasi, ka e malohi ha Fonua* (Government and Church are the strength of a Nation) in the Tongan Wesleyan Hymn Book No. 394:5.
4. Failing their university courses was another reason for women's small number in law occupation. Female law students who were on scholarships have been unsuccessful at university in the past five years. Some changed their courses, others had their scholarships terminated altogether. This caused the Justice department to request male candidates to study law in the future (field notes 1987).
5. The Ministers of Education, Health, and Finance are all commoners.
6. This is the equivalent of sexual harassment in a New Zealand context.
7. It is estimated that more than fifty percent of male graduates in the kingdom are married to locally educated women, some of whom did not complete their secondary education.
8. The researcher found that although the majority of the sample said they were satisfied, as they went on to explain their jobs, there was a lot of dissatisfaction expressed. The graduate women outside the sample also expressed some dissatisfaction with their jobs.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### WOMEN AT HOME

*Fielau-ko-e-fefine-fita*

(No wonder! she is a woman of all trades)

Home or 'api is where children are brought up to learn the values, behaviour and attributes which make them cultured 'Tongans'. Here, *faka'apa'apa* (respect), *fatongia* (obligation), *mateaki* (loyalty), *'ofa* (love) and *feveitokai'aki* (regard for one another) are practised. Children learn by imitating their parents, and when they misbehave in public places or among strangers, the mother is blamed with the saying, *na'e 'ikai moheofi* (the child did not sleep close to its mother), and the 'api is condemned for not fulfilling its obligation. Mothers are primarily responsible for giving *akonaki*<sup>1</sup> (advice) on these matters, although the father, extended family and relatives are also assumed to have responsibilities in bringing up children.

This chapter looks at graduate women at home, and what they do with and for their family. A brief examination will be made of how these women spend their leisure, what type of friends they have, and the social groups with which they affiliate. This will help us explain how graduate women fare domestically.

The traditional belief that a woman's place is in the home (see Chapter Four) is no longer shared by most Tongan graduate women. At the time of the research,

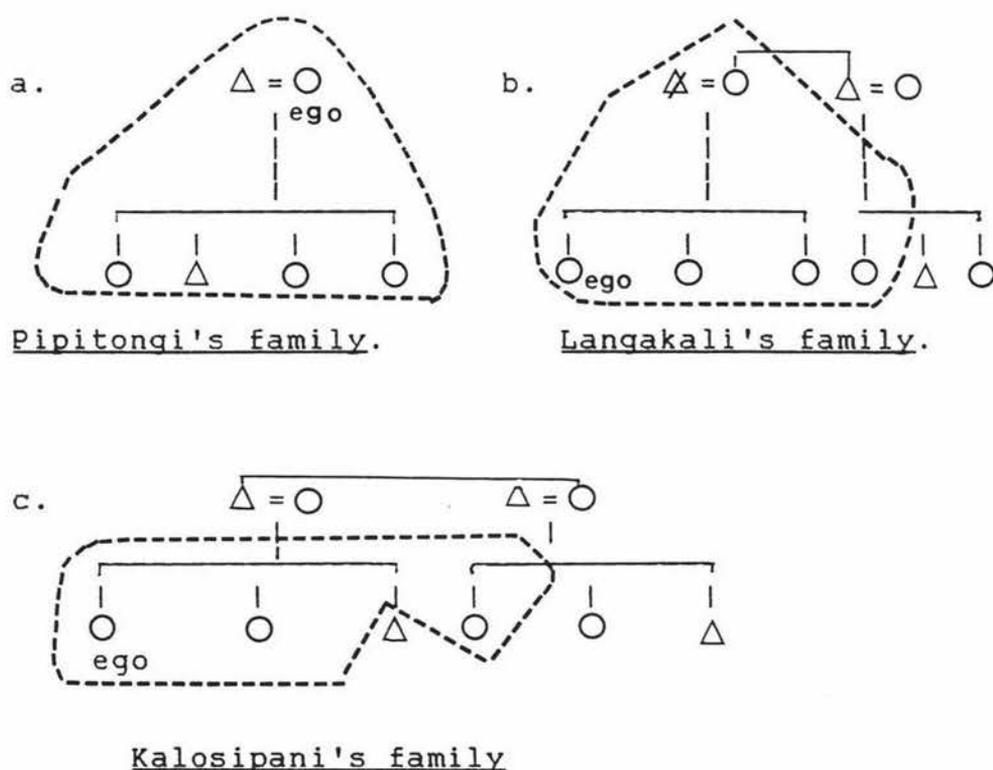
every graduate woman in the kingdom worked fulltime. Of the women interviewed, nine (47 percent) had paid housegirls and ten (53 percent) had relatives who stayed with the family to help. That every graduate woman worked had consequences for her and her family relationships. Family needs had to be met in new ways, and husbands had to change some of their male roles to accommodate the demanding nature of their wives' jobs as well as their family's. How then do they fare at home?

#### Family:

Graduate women perceived the English term 'family'<sup>2</sup> in different ways depending on their situation. Number seemed to be an important factor in their perception of their household as a nuclear or extended family. Of the sample, ten women (53 percent) said they lived in a nuclear family (Plate 7.1), and nine (47 percent) lived in an extended family. The average number per household in Tongatapu was 6.5. in 1986 (Statistics Dept. 1987).

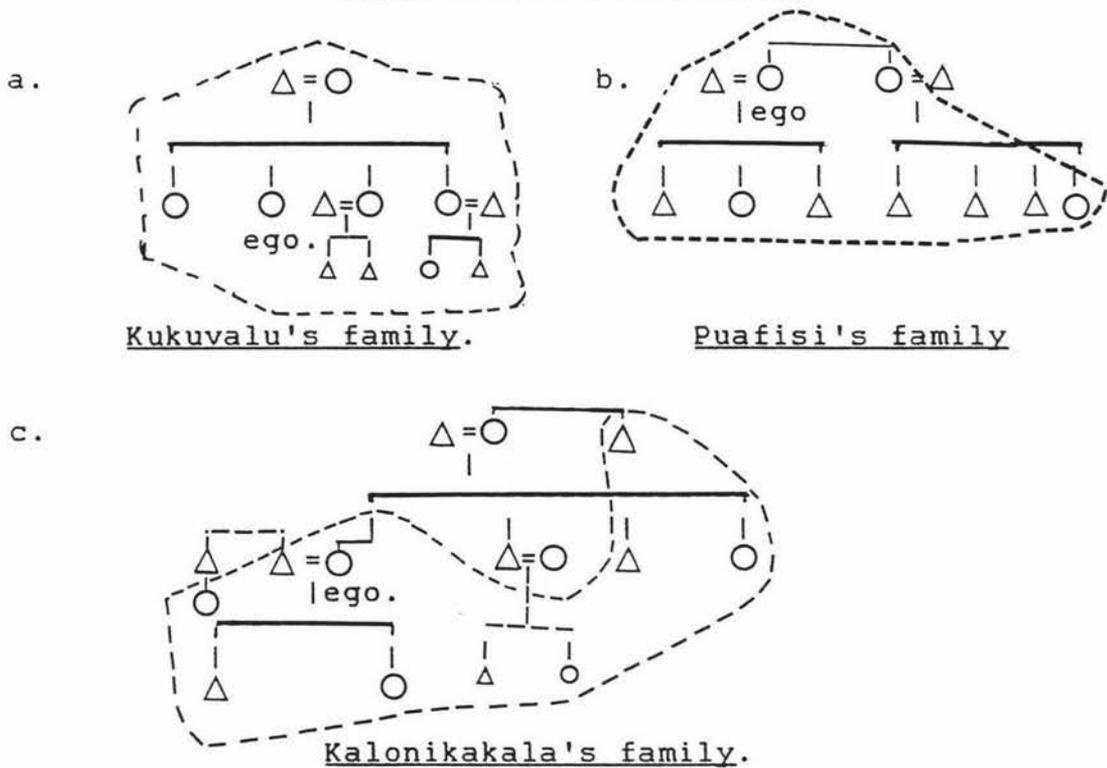
The women who lived in a nuclear family tended to be married with children. They lived on their husband's land or in rental accomodation and they had a paid housegirl who came daily to help. Relatives visited only irregularly. Single women who lived in a nuclear family did so with their parents and siblings at their parents' home. One woman lived in her parents' home with her female cousins because their parents had migrated overseas. No single woman lived in rental accomodation by herself since it was regarded as socially unacceptable. Figure 7.1 depicts different types of nuclear family among graduate women.

Figure 7.1.

Types of Nuclear Family

Women who lived in an extended family (Plate 7.2) tended to be single. They lived with their parents, brothers and sisters and nieces and nephews. Very often their relatives from outer islands, whom they referred to as brothers and sisters, had come to Nuku'alofa to attend school and lived there too. The rest who lived in an extended family were married women. They lived with their own immediate family plus their parents and siblings. They lived on their husband's land. One woman lived on her own parents' land with her husband and her in-laws. Figure 7.2 illustrates different types of extended family among graduate women.

Figure 7.2

Types of Extended Family

To a graduate woman, family was the *koloa* or 'commodity' she valued most. All those interviewed said that their family gave them identity, social status and the support they needed. They felt that their relationship with their family was reciprocal and as they tried to be efficient at work, so they endeavoured to ensure things ran smoothly at home.

Financial Contribution:

Graduate women were major financial contributors to the general running of their respective families. Although a small number had husbands who earned more, all the women interviewed spent a large proportion of their fortnightly earnings on their family. Of the sample, fourteen (73 percent) spent the largest proportion of their wages on food such as bread, imported dairy products, canned food, locally grown fruits and vegetables and root crops<sup>3</sup>; three (16



Plate 7.1 Standing at the back is a nuclear family at Fanga, Nuku'alofa, during the first wedding Sunday of the son.



Plate 7.2 An extended family having an evening meal. (Photo: F.Mafile'o)

percent) spent the largest proportion of their income on the family's church *misinale* and school fees for offspring, siblings and relatives. Two women (11 percent) spent the largest proportion of their salary on repayments of bank loans which they had taken out to build a house for their family. All the women spent on family *kavenga* (obligations) such as funerals, weddings and on unexpected demands. Neighbours' and relatives' *kole* (borrowing) were examples. Only a small proportion of their salary was spent on household items such as furniture and family clothes, only a very small number of women had savings, and most did not budget at all. Pipitongi admitted, "I tend to buy impulsively," while Kukuvalu explained "...You cannot budget when you have so many relatives and so many funerals."

The majority of the sample said they did not buy groceries in bulk unless they were preparing for a feast. Instead, they bought in small quantities when necessary. For example, a child was sent to the *falekoloa* (shop) each morning to purchase enough bread and butter, sugar and tea for breakfast; and father or mother would pick up a *kapapulu* (tin of corned beef) or a piece of mutton flaps from the shop on their way home from work. On Saturdays they bought fruit and vegetables from the market, and more were bought during the week (Plate 7.3). Some women said they bought on credit from the *falekoloa* where the owner kept an account of the daily supply and the women would pay for them fortnightly, monthly or whenever they got paid. Langakali, a single woman, operated in this way so that her mother could get what the family needed without waiting for her to provide cash. Puatonga just paid the account without asking who purchased what.

School fees and *misinale* were paid for when they

were due, and if the woman had not saved enough, she would negotiate with the *fale koloa's* owner to have the payment of her account deferred till the next pay day so she could pay the *misinale*.

Graduate women said they shared their earnings with the rest of their family, both nuclear and extended. Because of their important financial contribution, some single women in the extended family were then consulted by their elders when family decisions were made. For instance, before her family contributed food to take to a funeral, Mohokoi was asked what she thought the others should contribute. But, Mohokoi said, she did not delegate who should contribute what, that was for the elders to do. Instead, she just made her contribution. Laukaupo'uli said that often when funerals occurred and her family needed to fulfil their obligations, she provided the money to buy what was needed and the others took them to the deceased family.

Some women felt that while this was a recognition of their contribution, it was also a move that had increased women's power in the family especially if the matters concerned were economically related. Puafisi, for example, was asked what school she wanted her nephew to attend since she was paying for his school fees. Mohokoi, the youngest in her family, said she was informed whenever there was a funeral in the extended family. Single women in the nuclear family made the decisions and paid the bills, especially if they were the main breadwinners.

In some cases, women were prepared to go without personal things to meet their family's needs and fulfil their social obligations. Langakali could not holiday overseas as often as she would like, because she had

saved her money for the family kavenga (obligations). Mapa said she did not acquire very many material things, but she got a lot of satisfaction in knowing that her parents' obligations were fulfilled. Loumaile, who gives more than seventy percent of her salary to her parents, who in turn contributed it towards their church misinale, felt she was useful to her parents by providing what they wanted, because, as she put it, "... when they go, I can do whatever I want with my salary, but it will be of no use to them anymore..."

#### Social Contribution:

The graduate women's degree and their being in responsible positions at work brought social status to the women themselves and to their families, and their ability to afford a housegirl increased their family's prestige to a level equal to that of chiefs, and that enjoyed by missionaries in the early days and by expatriates in recent years.<sup>4</sup>

The privileges these women enjoyed at work often extended to their home life. For example, a graduate woman who received invitations to important functions, would always take her husband too, even if he were a commoner, and not a degree holder. At such a function, the husband would be treated with respect. Being regarded as a *fefine poto* (clever woman) at work, her parents might also be invited to functions to which they normally would not be asked, especially if they were commoners. And when a graduate woman was unable to attend an important function, she could always send a family member as a representative. Being in a responsible position also allowed some graduate women to meet prominent people. In Heilala's case, when she welcomed the Royal Family on one occasion at work, people in the audience remarked *Ko e 'au'ata e tama 'a*

Sela (Well done! Sela's daughter!). The mother was praised for having produced a fine, educated woman who was now in a position to welcome the Royal Family, although she was a commoner.

The husband's family was proud too, because the woman carried the family name, and its chance to be mentioned publicly was increased. Puafisi's mother-in-law, for example, always boasted about having a clever daughter-in-law, and she bragged, in their *kautaha* (women's group) meetings, about her uneducated son having won himself a learned wife. She was envied by other mothers.

Finally, the ability of some graduate women to afford a housegirl, improved that family's status. The family was seen as somewhat "chiefly" because they had others to do their work - a practice which, by tradition, was unique to chiefs because they had *kainga* (Bott 1966) who lived on the 'api and worked. The "chiefly-status" lie in the fact that there were always people on the chiefs' 'api to carry out their commands. Missionaries had deaconesses to help in their household (Farmer 1855, Latukefu 1977) and in recent years, *palangi* expatriates hired housegirls to do their housework. Both these groups shared the "chiefly-status" but not on the scale it was in the past. Nowadays, graduate women can afford to hire housegirls, and although the girls only came during the day, it still meant that they had someone to do their work, so the family members were seen as "being like chiefs". Graduate women were spoken of as *fakapelepele'i* (spoilt), and the family became independent and free from obligations to relatives who would have been helping in the house. The practices of *fakapelepele'i* and *faka'ei'eiki* were no longer confined to chiefs,

missionaries and expatriates. But women who were well educated but commoners could now enjoy these privileges by hiring a housegirl.

Family's dwelling place:

All the graduate women present in the kingdom at the time of the fieldwork lived in European-style houses. Unlike Anderson's description of "...houses dotted among the plantations..." (Cummins 1977:83), and from Cummins's report of houses of lower classes where "... nothing but poor huts scarcely sufficient to defend them from the weather and very small... but houses of chiefs were larger and more comfortable..." (ibid.), graduate women now lived in houses similar to those of the chiefs. Some were made of concrete, others were of wood, and a couple were like small mansions. Each was furnished with modern conveniences such as a fridge, stove and washing machine. Most of these houses were located in Nuku'alofa, but a few were out of town, and were on the owner's land in their villages. Those who lived in government flats or other rental accomodation enjoyed their palangi-style abodes but had to pay high rents (Plate 7.4).

More than thirty percent of the women interviewed actually financed or partially financed<sup>5</sup> the construction of the house in which they lived. The other part of the finance came from their relatives overseas who sent money weekly to help the family. Some replaced their parents' old house, while others built new ones for their immigrant (from outer islands) relatives.

Some extended families lived on the same 'api. They had separate houses but shared facilities. They ate separately during the week, but shared a main meal on Sunday. They borrowed from one another items such as



Plate 7.3 Saturday morning at Talamahu Market. Village farmers sell their products in Nuku'alofa.



Plate 7.4 Tupou Finau, a graduate woman, relaxing in her well furnished house in Ma'ufanga, Nuku'alofa.

soap, salt, sugar, flour and root crops and shared the use of a vehicle. To women who lived in families like this, they claimed it was a big responsibility to provide most of the items required.

#### Daily routines:

Most graduate women said they did very little at home. In Tongan society single women were considered free (without husband and family responsibilities), they had not become "toume"<sup>6</sup> (coconut spathe) to a male, or acquired the responsibility of takai fala<sup>7</sup> (rolling a mat) for a husband (Collocott 1923:221) or responsibilities for children. Their extended family and relatives helped, and today housegirls worked for them. They were not regarded as fakapotopoto (mature, responsible) until they were married. Their life-style was simple. Figure 7.3. shows a typical daily routine of a single graduate woman.

Figure 7.3.

#### Daily routine of a Single Graduate Woman

7 a.m - 8.15	Get up, eat breakfast and leave for work.
Lunch time	Either go home and eat lunch or stay and work, or have lunch with others in the office.
4.30 p.m and after	Stay on in offices and work.
Evening	Either go home and eat dinner or tutor classes before going home.
Late evening	Home, watch video <sup>8</sup> , listen to radio or read.

Married women with children said they bore a heavier load. They were faced with society's unreal expectation that because they were educated women, they would have a well-run 'api and well-behaved children.

They said they were expected to have better houses than their uneducated neighbours, have more appliances, own a vehicle or two, and play an active role in fulfilling family obligations. Hingano said these expectations were very strong in pressuring women to conform. But, she said, graduate women saw it as social competition (keeping up with the Jones), and they did not conform. Of the sample, all the mothers said they had no problems, all had home helpers, nearly all had appliances, and all, but two, had access to a private vehicle and all said they helped some members of their extended family. Figure 7.4. shows a married graduate woman's usual daily routine. This woman lived in a nuclear family.

Figure 7.4.

Mapa's Daily Routine

7. a.m	Iron everyone's clothes (while husband prepares breakfast). Get the children dressed and ready for school. Breakfast.
About 8.20	Take the children to school on way the to work.
Lunch time	Go home (or to school and lunch with children. Or collect children from school and take them home for lunch, or stay in the office.
After 4.30	Work in the office.
About 5.30	Arrive home (and sometimes cook) or take family out to a restaurant for evening meal.
Evening	Read to children before bed-time.
Late evening	Watch video, read or complete unfinished work.

Women who lived with their extended family had jobs such as ironing, getting the children ready for school done for them. Preparing the family's lunch, cooking

the evening meal (Plate 7.5) and sometimes reading to the children before their bed-time were often done by relatives. But those who lived in a *famili faka-Palangi* (nuclear family) did the work themselves with their husband's and housegirl's help. They said it was easy to manage, involved fewer responsibilities and was more economical. The help of a housegirl gave these women greater independence. Mapa, for example, admitted that she was totally dependent on her housegirl for her housework and sometimes to look after the children. A housegirl in Tonga is often expected to do a range of tasks, like house cleaning, washing, ironing, cooking, shopping and baby-sitting.

#### Husband's Help:

Husbands, especially those who had had overseas experience and/or who themselves are degree holders, helped a lot in the house. Kalonikakala's husband, for example, had lived overseas for many years and now helped his wife by preparing his own kava party, taking the children to school and doing the shopping for the family despite his high social rank. His daily chores included supervising the children and the extended family at home. This, said Kalonikakala, enabled her to work long hours and make business trips to outer islands or travel overseas regularly without worrying about home and the family. Pipitongi's husband, a degree holder, prepared breakfast and lunch and took the children to school as part of his daily routine. This enabled Pipitongi to complete unfinished work at home or plan for the next day's work.

But women who were married to uneducated men said they did not receive the same kind of help from their spouses, and neither did they expect nor complain about it. Instead, they said, division of labour by gender was

very strong in their family. Men did their work in the garden or the office and women attended to the children and the house when they were not working. A large majority of graduate men married less educated women, and they too tended to follow the same sexual division of labour within their family. These women were sometimes physically abused by their husbands but none of the sample was physically abused by theirs. A husband's help, Mohokoi said, not only released graduate women from their domestic roles, but also enabled them to improve their work performance and therefore their chance of professional promotion.

Most of the sample said another advantage of a husbands' help in the house was that it ended the necessity for in-laws to live with them to help bring up the young children<sup>9</sup>. This, they said, eliminated any pressure in their relationships. Strathern said of a Hagen woman, "... she is in between all the time... between her love for her own family and her obligations to her husband's family" (cited in Van Baal 1975:98). Puafisi put it, "It is not that I do not get on with my in-laws, but I would rather be in my own home where my brothers and sisters can visit me freely."

Most married women only visited their in-laws at Easter, Christmas or New Year, but those who lived close by, visited theirs more regularly. It seemed that the traditional idea of a daughter-in-law slaving for her husband's family is a dying value in the Friendly Islands. Most of the women interviewed said they wanted to live with their own nuclear family, where they liked and with whom they liked. Married women said their husbands supported this non-conformist approach, and single women stated this as a criterior when looking for a husband.

We may conclude that among married graduate women there is a struggle for independence - from housework, from in-laws, and from many social expectations of society, and that this striving is understood by educated husbands. To release themselves from these, they hired housegirls, made use of their relatives' help and had husbands who shared domestic roles - a move which appalled some of the traditional women interviewed in Vava'u.

Meanwhile more than seventy percent of the single women interviewed preferred to maintain their independence and stay unmarried. The reasons expressed were that they valued their independence, they did not need the support of males, or they simply could not find a suitable partner - one who was sober, gentleman-like, considerate and kind. Some women expressed different opinions. Puatonga said that Tongan men were chauvinists and they treated their women as inferiors. Kukuvalu, however, thought that she operated better mentally than she did emotionally, and it would be unfair for a husband to be treated likewise. However, fear of obligations to in-laws, not wanting to marry an uneducated male and inability to meet and mix with eligible males were stated by the sample as possible reasons for these women's single status.

#### Domestic Skills:

It was evident that in the weekend, most single women worked in the office and did little if anything at home. Most married women said they did a bit of cleaning, washing and ironing and shopping with the family, or just caught up on what needed to be done at home. Most mothers said that they made a point of spending some time with their young children. Puafisi did some tapa-making on Saturdays, or took her children

to the bush to help her husband in the garden. Pipitongi took her family shopping. Hingano took hers to the beach or to visit their grandparents. But Kalonikakala's husband and the children did the shopping while she rested at home. In other words, the majority of the mothers in the sample wanted to spend time with the family but not necessarily at home.

Most of the women interviewed did not cook and did not like cooking and most of their main meals prepared for them. Some mothers said they only did the Tongan cooking such as *haka* (boiling root crops), making *supo* (soup), *lo'i lu* (taro tops with coconut cream), *vaisiaine* (ripe bananas with coconut cream) and so on, if they had to, but found them time consuming so they were prepared or sent by their parents. A few said they ate out regularly at restaurants or take-away bars, and a small number of single women said they cooked Chinese, French or Mexican dishes very often (Plate 7.6). This perhaps accounted for their desire to remain independent. Most of the women in the sample admitted they were neither skilful cooks nor seriously concerned about food preparation. Cooking was not an interest to keep them at home. None of those interviewed belonged to any cooking or hospitality club of any sort.

More than fifty percent of those interviewed said they could not sew. The small number who could, admitted they did not have time to practise the skill. Laukaupo'uli and Hehea said they used to make their children's clothes, but now had to buy them because they were busy. But Langakali made her clothes because she liked sewing and it was less expensive.

More than seventy percent of the sample said they could not do *koka'anga* (tapa making) or *lalanga*



Plate 7.5 A grandmother in Vava'u, is preparing a meal for her extended family.



Plate 7.6 Sitting down for a Mexican meal she prepared, is Tupou and her husband and a friend.

(weaving), their reason being that they did not learn the skill at school and had no time to learn at home, and if they did, they had lost it while overseas, or in Tonga where they worked long hours. A few, who had the skill, participated in *koka'anga* only once or twice a year. The rest said they would like to learn the art, but admitted that they did not have time. Two of the sample grew up overseas and said they saw no value in learning the skill. So when graduate women needed *ngatu* (tapa) and *fala* (mats) for occasions like weddings or funerals, they said they bought them, but these *koloa* were not always readily available. To purchase these *koloa* is considered *fakama* (shameful) among traditional women but it was increasingly acceptable among graduate women (Plate 7.7).

As far as training children in Tongan etiquette was concerned most mothers admitted they were doing their best and that children learned from their relatives, especially grandmothers at home, or the housegirl who looked after them. Most mothers admitted not having time to teach children eating manners every meal time, or to have family devotions to give them *akonaki* (advice). Pipitongi expressed her concerns, "I like living in nuclear family, but when it comes to looking after children's etiquette, I send them, with the housegirl, to grandma who teaches and instructs them on these matters until I get home." Commercial child-care services do not exist in Tonga.

Most graduate women said they would like their children to be brought up in the Tongan way. For example, teaching them etiquette, *faka'apa'apa*, protecting young girls' skin and complexions by using candlenuts<sup>10</sup>, telling children legends and genealogies, having evening devotions and so on, but they said this

could not all be done. Soap would have to do for girls, reading before bed time would have to do also as it helped the children's English learning, and listening to the radio also helped. Some watched videos at night. As long as the children were clean, healthy, did well at school and well behaved - that was what mattered, according to some mothers.

Most of the mothers interviewed said that their children attended Sunday schools. Here at least they learned *faka'apa'apa* within the hierarchy, since the religious pecking order has taken over the structure and function of the old chiefly hierarchy (Marcus 1977:212).

Most of the children of graduate women travelled around in cars, but a few (who did not have cars) said their children enjoyed walking with schoolmates or neighbours to school. Some pre-school children were kept inside (especially those living in government quarters) because it was convenient for the housegirl to watch them while doing her housework. Older children often helped look after young ones but most of these children did not do much housework.<sup>11</sup> At weekends they watched videos, played with friends, visited relatives or read at home. On weekdays they attended school and some bought their lunch, while others met their parents for meals at home or at a restaurant. It appeared that children of graduate women received more material things than the average Tongan child and spent limited but constructive time with their mothers. This time was spent on planned activities, perhaps a more effective use of time than that spent by uneducated mothers with their children.

Friends:

More than seventy percent of the women interviewed said they did not have many friends in the country. Fifty percent said their friends were those with whom they went to secondary school or university together but now that they worked in different places, some in different countries, they did not get together as often as they wished. Only thirty percent said they had many friends. Most women said their friends were like themselves - quiet, enjoyed reading, mostly reserved and introverted. But, they said, they could not always find the same type at work. The majority of married women said their best friends were their husbands, and because of this they had little social contact outside home.

More than eighty percent of the women interviewed said that their major problem was that they could not find many people with whom they could communicate at all levels - abstract, theoretical and academic.

Kalonikakala said,

"There is always the intellectual part of me that is never satisfied. I want to look at Tongan society and discuss the impact of many influences on it, but I am afraid it might offend others, and I might be condemned as *fie poto* (imagining oneself to be clever) or *fie palangi* (to copy Europeans) and showing off. So there's a part of me that could not socialise, so I tend to read in my leisure..."

Many women said that for conversation and consultation, they often preferred male company to female because men would challenge them intellectually, they would talk about serious matters, and would lead the conversation to important issues, such as those usually discussed in a kava party. Hence some women preferred to listen than to participate. In a *faikava*

they would listen. A small number said they had mainly palangi friends (see Plate 7.6). Kalosipani said, "at least with palangi friends you can talk about the weather, or about anything, and you can freely express your ideas and opinions with less fear of being criticised..."

A large proportion of the women interviewed did not belong to many social groups, and they said they did not share their deeper thoughts with those at home but only with a few at work. The majority of the women said they did not entertain at home as much as they would like, and they did not go out to social clubs nor exchange ideas on domestic matters with many other women. Puafisi put it, "...we have enough contacts with other women at work anyway, so we do not need to go out for social purposes."

All the women interviewed expressed some concerns about society's expectations of them to conform to the "faka-Tonga way". A few of the women elaborated on this, saying that graduate women are expected to mingle freely with other women and to participate in group activities outside working hours was one of these expectations. That they should talk with the local women about issues which interest them at the local women's level was another. That they should maintain the image of a "good woman" and not be seen with others of "not-so-good" type of women was still another. Puatonga said, "there are expectations of an educated woman in Tonga which are most unfair."

Less than fifty percent of the women interviewed participated in organised recreation of one form or another. Seven women held executive positions in their

respective ex-student associations, five of them ran or organised groups in their churches and four did both. Three women were members of a *kautaha* (co-operative group) and only one woman held an executive position in a sporting association. That the majority of women interviewed did not participate in activities outside the home was due mainly to the fact that they did not have much free time. As far as non-organised recreation was concerned, three women gardened. They went to the bush and worked with their family. Some liked dancing and partying, but only when wanting a release from the pressure of work. None of the women interviewed liked *faikava* but joined in sometimes as listeners (and occasionally in the discussion) as long as they did not have to mix the drink. The role of women in a *faikava* (kava party) was regarded by most graduate women as 'trashy' because women were treated as inferiors, they had to serve the men, they must do as they were told and they were often talked about but could not join in to defend themselves. APPENDIX D gives a description of a *faikava 'eva* (courting kava party) in Niuatoputapu where men could conduct their men's talk even in the presence of the woman who is the *tou'a* (person who prepares the drink)<sup>12</sup> (Plate 7.8).

Socially, most of the graduate women interviewed said they went only to cocktail parties, but they were also selective about which ones to attend. Married women said they only went to cocktail parties where most of the people from their department went, or with their husbands. Single women said they went to cocktail parties if they were invited, but did not specify how selective they would be. Married women visited their relatives with the children, while single women did not go out very often except to the movies. Some said this was because they did not have boyfriends<sup>13</sup>, others said



Plate 7.7 A grandmother from Kolomotu'a, looking after her grandchildren while their mothers go to work.



Plate 7.8 A tou'a is preparing a bowl of kava drink.

because there were not many places in Tonga, apart from the Dateline Hotel, where one could go for a quiet drink and talk. Others were scared that if they were seen at night clubs, they would be thought of as drinkers and therefore be gossiped about. A few who were highly sociable, said they went out to a disco dance, night club or for a drink with their female subordinates or *palangi* friends. More than half of the women interviewed drank socially, but a very small percentage said they drank in order to find release from work pressures.

For leisure, all the women interviewed said they liked reading. Light novels and magazines were some of the favourites; two read mainly religious materials and the rest would read anything - all in English. There was an increasing number of women who watched videos at night with their family, but a few, mainly single, who did not possess a machine still enjoyed going to movies.

In summary, the graduate women interviewed did not have much time to spend at home with their family, and their long working hours routine did not allow them to do a lot of things together. The help provided by their housegirls, husbands and/or relatives relieved them from their domestic tasks. However, the limited time mothers had with their children were spent on planned activities such as visiting, shopping or reading stories at night, helping with the children's homework or watching videos which, mothers said, help the children learn and better their performance at school.

Socially and financially, these women raised their family's social status and contributed to their keep. Consequently they took part in some of the decision making in the family. But due to a lack of skill and

time, graduate women did not cook, sew or clean as much as the average woman did. Neither did they fully conform to some of society's expectations such as producing koloa, bringing up children in the traditional way or living the life of a "good woman" committed to many social obligations. Instead these women received prepared meals from their parents or took their family out for meals. They bought their koloa and purchased ready-made clothes for their children who were being brought up in a more palangi way than Tongan. Family and relatives had always helped and shared food.

What was found new in the role of the graduate women in the home was that they had become major providers for the family. They provided the family's daily food supply, they provided what was needed to fulfil the family's social obligations, they paid school fees and even provided the means (a housegirl, that is) which released the family members from their household tasks and improved the family's social status at the same time. These roles had always been considered men's. But since the graduate women started to fulfil these roles they participated in decision-making in the family but have become more committed to work than to anything else, and thereby slowly disengaging themselves from outside activities and confined to a small group of friends - a move, perhaps, towards a lifestyle that is perceived as foreign to Tongan culture.

NOTES:

1. *akonaki* - homely advice; lecture given to children by parents or adult members of an extended family when a child misbehaves. It is usually done immediately after the misconduct occurs, or in a general discussion given after family morning or evening devotion.
2. Some graduate women perceived 'family' as nuclear family, others as extended family. The nuclear

family, in Tongan is known as *famili faka-Palangi*. The extended family was also referred to as household, paternal extended family, paternal or maternal kin group.

3. There was a small number of graduate men who owned and supervised the growing of crops. They hire unemployed friends to do the heavy manual work.
4. This information was gathered from women in the *kautaha*. Tongan women talked readily about other women's good work but felt humble about their own, hence the difficulty of obtaining these information from graduate women themselves.
5. Most women had relatives overseas who sent home money to help built their family's house or community buildings in their villages like churches or halls.
6. *Toume* - coconut spathe; often used for kindling fire; the term is used when male reaches the stage to start looking for a wife. It implies that a wife could start kindling a fire on which to cook a meal for her husband.
7. *Takai fala* - act of rolling up mat. The phrase is used when a woman marries a man, to explain the role of the woman, that is to roll up her husband's bed in the morning; housekeeping.
8. There was (and still is) no television channel in Tonga but many families owned a video recording machine sent by a relative from overseas. They hired video tapes from the many video shops in Nuku'alofa.
9. The father's sister of a graduate man wanted to honour the man by spoiling his offspring. She felt that if she would one day become *fahu*, she should help bring up the children. So she moved in with her brother's family. But the graduate woman (wife) told me that she felt she should still treat her sister-in-law as her children's *fahu*.
10. This is a process called *mama-tuitui*. The candlenuts are chewed together with fragrant flowers or leaves and when soft is used as soap. It makes the skin soft and supple.
11. Some of the women interviewed said they learned to cook and do housework at the age of nine or ten. In 'Eua, the researcher watched a group of children (eight, ten and eleven) prepare a meal

for the family.

12. Some women said they have shown their resentment of this practice by listening to the discussion and interjecting from outside the kava ring. Men who treat the *tou'a* as an inferior are asked to leave but this can only happen in an informal *faikava* or *faikava 'eva*.
13. Most single women did not have male friends (boyfriends) because (some married women and young men said), their expectation of a man was so high that most eligible young males did not match up. I was told that young males were scared of graduate women and would not dare approach such women because of the indignant rejection; they would think twice about the abusive responses they might receive from the relatives of these superior women.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### WOMEN IN COMMUNITY

*Potopoto-'a-niu-mui*

(The immature cleverness of a young novice or tyro)

The busy schedule of graduate women both at work and at home plus the difficulty they had in finding people they can communicate with had resulted in their social networks being limited, their acquaintances confined and their community involvement restricted. This chapter looks at graduate women in the community, what groups they joined, how they performed and what impact they have had on the community as a whole.

#### Church Involvement:

All but one of the graduate women interviewed belonged to a church. This was in line with the practice of the general population. Of the sample, thirty percent declared themselves ardent church goers, twenty six percent said they went to church regularly, twenty percent attended occasionally and the rest rarely went while one said she did not belong to any church.<sup>1</sup>

The ardent church members were likely to be daughters of church ministers. They either worked for their church or married a man who worked for the church and had a strong religious family background. The more involved their family was with the church, the more likely it was for graduate women to engage in church activities (Plate 8.1). The ardent church members attended Sunday services weekly, conducted a Bible study group, a women's discussion club or a youth group during week nights and they taught Sunday School. Others were

choir members. They contributed to the *misinale* (annual collection) and supported the church as a whole. These women said they often had to hurry things at home in order to take the family to church or to attend church meetings themselves.

Of the sample, more than half did not attend church services as often as they had at a younger age. The following were given as reasons. First, they had a busy weekly routine and Sunday was their only day to rest and recover. Second, most graduate women (and men) said they found sermons preached by some lay preachers and *faifekau* (ministers) irrational, tedious and at times irritating. Kukuvalu put it "... whatever little grace I have to begin with is entirely eliminated by the time I come out of church..." Third, they believed one did not have to attend church to be a Christian. Christianity, most of the sample argued, and believing in God were entirely separate from attending church on Sunday. Some had stopped attending which had upset their parents.

Some women said the church, Wesleyan in particular, was a male dominated institution where women had no say. Church affairs, they said, had been regarded as *me'a fakafakata'ane* (crossed-leg way) because they involved preaching, meetings and discussions. The missionaries and chiefs occupied the top echelons while women clustered in groups which "operated distantly" from the main body of the church Conference.

But those who said they were ardent members joined different groups such as the following in the Wesleyan Church - *Kaluseti* (for prayers and sharing), *Ako-Tapu* (for prayer meetings) and *Kalasi 'Aho* (for Bible studies) which were predominantly women under men's leadership. With men some joined the *Kautaha Akolotu*

(for members' confirmation), *Potungaue Talavou* (youth department) and *Potungaue Ako faka-Kalisitiane* (for Christian education). A new Women's Affairs department in the Wesleyan Church had been set up to look after women's needs for scripture reading materials.<sup>2</sup> Of the sample thirty percent belonged to at least one of these groups. Other churches had women's groups. These were *Fefine 'Ofa*, *Kau Ma'ata* (Anglican), *Toakase* (Seventh Day Adventist) and *Lataki* (Catholic).

A few of the women pointed out that the Methodist church had lasted in Tonga for over a century, yet only in the nineteen-seventies were women allowed to participate as full members in the church conference and in 1981 to become lay preachers. Moreover, the highest a woman could get in the church hierarchy was as a church school principal. In the past, it was only when a woman got older that she was allowed to become an honorary group leader. Perhaps this accounted for a few women's not being active participants in church.

Other women's groups attached to the Catholic and the Wesleyan churches were the *Kulupu Fakalalakaka 'a e Kakai Fefine* (Women's Development Groups). These groups, set up by the Council of Churches, and scattered through out the villages, encouraged women to improve their families' living conditions, especially after Cyclone Isaac's destruction of many homes in Tongatapu in 1982. Two women belonged to this group whose projects aimed at renovating kitchens, building toilets and a community soft water supply. Recently they have expanded to vegetable growing, pig and poultry farming and pandanus replanting schemes. These are run in conjunction with the Agricultural Department Women's development programmes. The women who joined said that locally educated members expected them to be leaders, to know a

lot about the projects, and to show the rest how to implement the programmes' objectives. But, they said, they joined for the same reason as everybody else did, to encourage other women, to improve the village's living conditions and to learn themselves.

It appeared that graduate women who joined church organisations and other women's groups did so with sincerity. But unlike some locally educated women who gave unsparingly of their time and money to the church, most graduate women adopted an attitude of an "adequate involvement". Although the majority would pay *misinale*, were prepared to contribute to church feasts and entertainment (Plate 8.2), and attended church, there was a "sense of hesitation" in the way most women expressed their church involvement. Some women said they no longer valued such expensive exercises as *misinale* which only led to social competition. Others, who worked for the church, did not see themselves as cornerstones in their church. Instead, they worked in a subdued manner and felt less obligated than their predecessors. Referring to her job in the church, Hehea put it, "I am only trying to change the girls... from inside...with moral education,... and I think it can be done..." Furthermore, Hehea pointed to greater women martyrs in the church before her, but she said she was "not trying to do anything big". Why have women lessened their church participation after graduation?

The lack of recognition afforded women in church in the past has perhaps discouraged women after they graduated. Women today are reluctant to dedicate their lives entirely to the church preferring to retain some independence. Mohokoi said she desired "a life of my own where I can do what I'm interested in".



Plate 8.1 After the *Faka-me* service at the Wesleyan Church of Fanga.



Plate 8.2 A *tau'olunga* is performed by the Youth Group of Fasi, to entertain the Wesleyan Church Conference delegates at Sia'atoutai.

The late 'Etina Havea, a Methodist Minister's daughter, well educated by local standards, married to a prominent church figure, expressed how she saw her roles in the church...

I am only a 'grass-root' housewife. I am a husband follower. I just follow my husband to places where he is appointed. For twenty-five years the housewife of a teacher. For nearly three years as a baby-sitter while my husband was away in a seminary in the United States. Then I became a Bible translator's wife for a few years. Then a church leader's wife for six years, now a 'housekeeper' at the Pacific Theological College... I am only a simple woman who has tried to live together with her husband under the 'umbrella' of the Church. (Havea 1979:11).

Although this example of martyrdom was hailed as a triumph by church men and women in Tonga and the Pacific, Tonga's graduate women, most of whom are Wesleyans, do not see themselves going through, as Havea put it, "... experiences gained through tears, sweat and blood, at most times behind the scene, and at home" (*ibid.*).

One graduate woman married to a *faifekau*, but she neither stayed at home, nor did she work for the church. Instead, she held a government post. Two others who used to work for the church were now government employees. Most of the other graduate women who worked for the Wesleyan Church moved out soon after they married and had children. In fact the tendency for women to leave the church for a government department and not vice versa, except for the Mormons, was due to financial needs. Most of those who still worked for the Wesleyan Church were single.

One woman pointed out that the reason why most graduate women had a blasé attitude towards these church

programmes was the competition involved. Kalosipani remarked that these programmes only encouraged women in church to compete against each other, and wives of ministers to exercise their power over women.

However, two recently established women's groups which are church affiliated, The Youth Leaders for Women and the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) (*Tonga Chronicle* 1988) promised to attract Tongan women graduates, especially the single ones. Both groups are inter-denominational. The former aimed to lead women in their community projects while the latter attempted to train young women in domestic skills, help those with broken marriages or from broken homes, prepare those about to migrate overseas, train those with inadequate education but who had become wives of government and church leaders, and help young women who have become social problems in Tonga's urban areas. The objectives of these organisations seem to touch the real problems women in the future will face in Tonga. This may be why they have attracted graduate women. Already, most of the top positions in these groups are held by Tongan graduate women.

Other church functions for which women are responsible for their preparations are *misinale* (annual church collection), *Faka-me* (children's May Day), *faka-Sepitema* (September Day for women) and the church conference. *Misinale* involved not just the actual collection, but the decoration of the church building, the preparation for the day, and the making of *pola* (tray filled with cooked food) for the feast. Rogers described it as "...the gayest church festival in the year" (Rogers 1975:348). Most graduate women said they did not prepare a whole *pola* themselves but contributed towards one. Taufu (1979:45) recorded that fifty-one

percent of the graduates she interviewed contributed less than a hundred Pa'anga to their annual *misinale*. Puafisi said she contributed less than one percent of her salary to her *misinale* per year. Pipitongi gave "only a very small proportion" of hers, and Kalosipani said she gave nothing. However, through their parents, some graduate women gave substantial amounts. Loumaile gave more than seventy-five percent of her salary to her parents who in turn gave it to their church in *misinale*, Langakali and Heilala both paid a good amount of *misinale* for their parents. Huni paid her parent's *peleti* (plate) which was always the largest in their group each year. Another important aspect of *minisale* was that although graduate women contributed large amounts, they were not necessarily present in church for the occasion.

*Faka-Sepitema* was another occasion for Wesleyan and Church of Tonga women. Here women dressed up in their best and attended the regional *tali ui* (roll call) meeting while men stayed home and cooked for them. But most graduate women were at work during this time and normally did not attend. *Faka-Me* for children was always well attended by parents. Graduate women who sent their children to Sunday School made a special effort to attend even though they themselves do not attend church regularly (Plate 8.3). New clothes and good food (sometimes *pola*) were specially prepared for their children. From ages two to about fifteen, children who participated in recitals of hymns, Bible verses and dramas performed in front of a large audience in church.

Other church-related functions included preparation for Conferences, *fakaafe lotu* (after church feast) or *lukuluku* (food contribution). These did not attract the participation of most graduate women. At the time of

this fieldwork, the Wesleyan annual conference was held in Nuku'alofa and none of those interviewed had a billet at home, though a few had contributed to the *pola* making in their neighbourhood groups.

General Community Groups:

Other community groups in which graduate women showed an interest included ex-students' associations, parent and teachers associations, health committees and a sports association.

Of the sample, more than fifty percent were members or current executive members of at least one of the above-named groups. Laukaupo'uli was currently the secretary of an ex-students' association. With other fellow ex-students they planned and organised fund-raising projects like holding dances, concerts or selling raffle tickets to raise scholarship funds for students currently at school. These were traditional means of raising funds but less traditional ones were being held too. Wine and cheese nights, for example, or barbecue with "bring your own" were also held for members who enjoyed them. Mohokoi was currently secretary of her association sub-committee. She and other members organised a weekly "bring and buy" stall to raise funds for a new school dormitory and a school hall (Plate 8.4). They could not hold public dances or sell raffle tickets because such functions were against the principles under which their church school operated. The ex-students executive committee suggested a *kalapu kava Tonga* (Tongan kava club) or *koniseti tau'olunga* (Tongan dances concert), (see Rogers 1975). Mohokoi's association was dominated by locally educated women which made decision making harder than in Laukaupo'uli's association. There the majority who made up the executive committee were graduates. More than sixty



Plate 8.3 Mothers, grandmothers and friends fill up the church on Fakame to watch the children's drama.

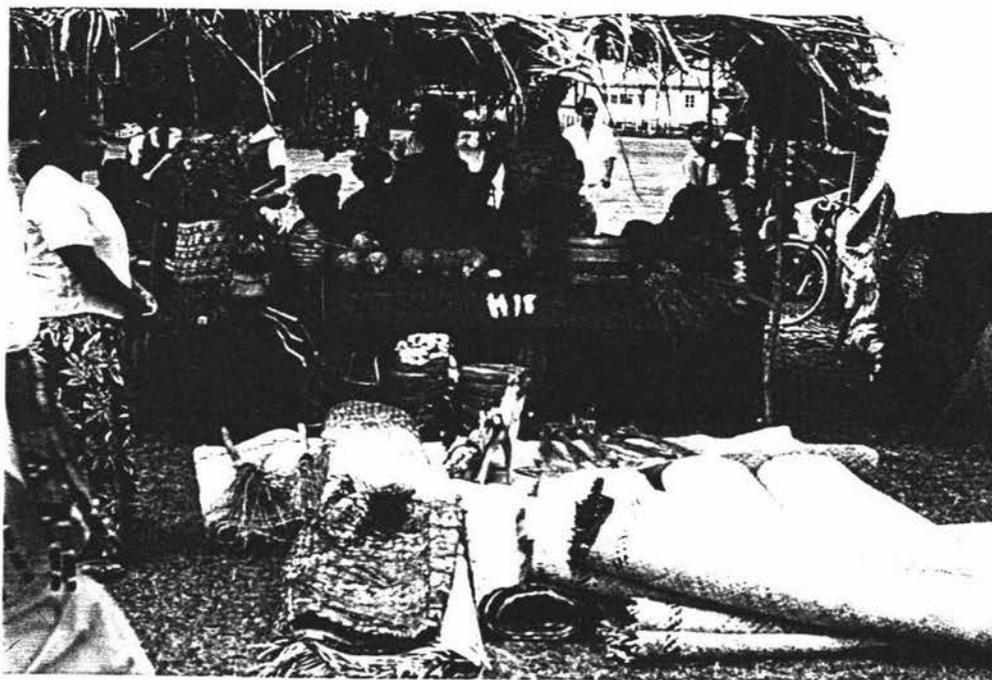


Plate 8.4 Ex-students of Queen Salote College run a 'bring-and-buy' stall during the school's annual bazaar.

percent of the women interviewed said they liked their ex-students' association because it gave them, their friends and schoolmates a chance to get together.

Parents and Teachers Association:

P.T.A. as they are known, were organisations which worked to bring teachers and parents closer together, to support the children and the school. They received great support from parents and from graduates, both men and women. One school principal pointed out that the support from the latter was particularly valued by both the teachers, who were mainly locally trained, and the rest of the parents who were not necessarily well educated. Most parents, she said, had expressed wishes that parents with overseas training and especially with degrees would join the organisation and take part at the executive level. These parents, said the principal, "are crying out for graduates to come to meetings and share with them, ... or even tell them what they could do at home to help their children to be successful academically."

P.T.A. gained the support of graduate women interviewed because they were educational organisations and because most women had children at primary and junior high school levels. P.T.A. had a meeting once a term which both parents were expected to attend. However, because the meetings were held at irregular times and they involved both men and women, most graduate women only attended if their husbands did not. Of the sample all the mothers said they did attend P.T.A. meetings but only forty-five percent said they always attended together with their husbands. At a P.T.A. meeting at Tonga Side School in May 1987, the majority of those who attended were women, but eighty

percent of those who spoke were men, most of whom were degree holders. The rest were men who had just returned from overseas. A few *palangi* and a small proportion of graduate women who attended did not speak but agreed with the decisions made. The large proportion of women who made up the meeting did not speak either, but they too agreed with the decisions made. Although the discussion was dominated by the men, the fact that most women did not speak remained unknown. Nevertheless, women did not contribute very much, and perhaps this showed why some graduate women did not attend some P.T.A. meetings.

In making *pola*, for school functions graduate women who were mothers were likely to send over a big contribution for their children and someone was sent to help if they themselves could not go. Despite their busy schedule all but two of the mothers in the sample stressed the importance for their children that mothers attended to these things (Plate 8.5). But the difficulty in communication with others was a latent problem which concerned some women. Puafisi said, "the purpose is to make a *pola* and not go there to gossip". So when she sent the items for the *pola* she felt that that should serve the purpose. She would not go especially if she expected to meet a group of women who would "...work a little, laugh a little and gossip a lot." With her limited skills in cooking, she feared she might have to do a lot of listening and might eventually join in.

#### Komiti Mo'ui (Health Committee)

Forty percent of the sample belonged to this group. The committee was a community group run by women under the supervision of the Health Department. Its main purpose was to encourage women to keep their house and

yard clean, toilets disinfected, rubbish burnt or buried and, in the villages, animals fenced in. The committee conducted a home inspection once every four months, and a display of prescribed home essentials once a year. There was at least one committee in each village (Plate 8.6).

Graduate women who joined said they wanted to encourage women in their village to work together and to work with them. Sialetafa was a strong member. Her husband was the chief in the village. She said the women helped one another and she had noticed a change in the village's living conditions. Previously she had felt far-removed, but joining this group, plus her involvement in the church, had brought her closer to other village women. They looked to her for leadership, help with correspondence, advice and translation of information. It was often hard, she admitted, to "shuttle" from one level of thinking to another level of thinking in a matter of a few hours. But she said she had learned to cope. Mapa said she liked the simplicity with which their committee operated. Hingano said she enjoyed hers because she shared common problems she had with her children with other women.

#### Sports Groups:

Most graduate women did not play any sport. At secondary school and university most spent their time studying and reading and thus had no time for recreation. Two women however were sport representatives at their respective schools. But now they do not play, saying they felt "out of place with the young ones". One was a national netball coach. She said she did it because she felt she had skills to contribute to the community and to young people in particular. She did not

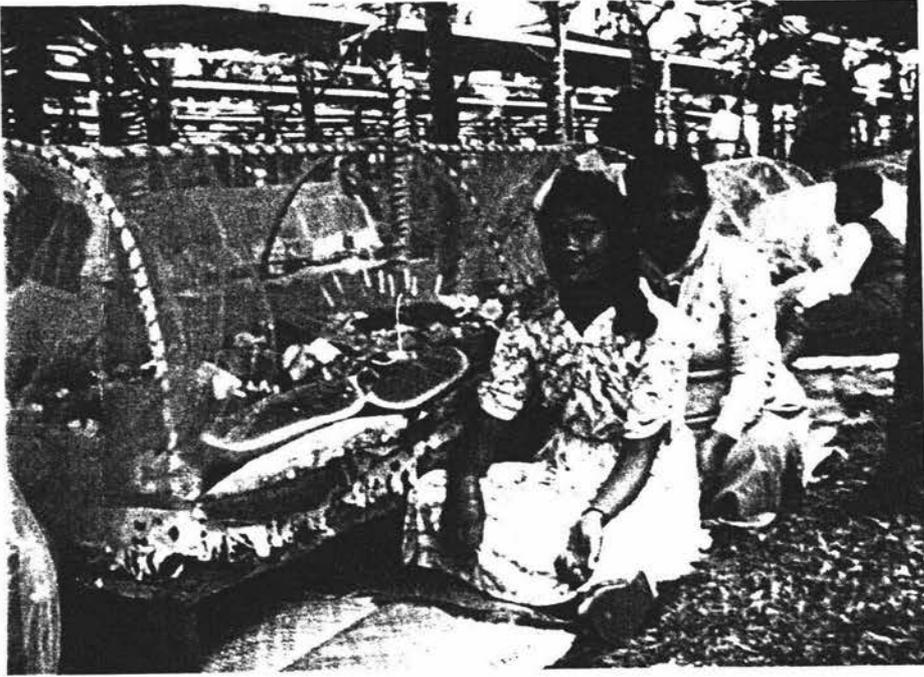


Plate 8.5 A mother and daughter, waiting with their pola prepared for the Tonga High School 40th anniversary celebration in 1987.



Plate 8.6 Members of this kautaha meet once a month for a li-pa'anga, at the chairperson's residence.

socialise with the players or the members of the organisation very much, but when they needed to hold public dances to raise funds for overseas trips she played a major part in organising this.

#### Women's Co-operative Groups:

Community women's groups were formed to practise a skill, to collect money, to make things to be used in the house or to manufacture *koloa* of *tapa* and mats. These items were displayed at the end of the year with a feast held and guests invited. These *kautaha* attracted the interest of some graduate women because they said it gave them an opportunity to make their own *tapa* or mats if they joined a *toulanganga* or *toulalanga* (Plate 8.7), to save money if they joined a *kautaha li-pa'anga*, or to make their own linen, embroidered or crocheted when they joined a *kautaha tuitui*. That it was less expensive to make one's own, and that it was an opportunity to be with other women were also given as reasons for joining. Two women joined to learn the art of making *tapa*. Thirty-one percent of the sample belonged to one of the abovenamed groups. Some women, because they were busy, hired other women to prepare the *feta'aki* and make the *ngatu* for them. But Puafisi and Mapa joined a *kautaha koka'anga* and enjoyed the group intermingling (Plate 8.8). The following is a description of what went on in a *koka'anga* in Kolomotu'a, Nuku'alofa in May, 1987.

#### A Koka'anga Day:

As women started arriving after 7.15 am, they started pairing the *feta'aki* into *laulalo* (under layers) and *lau'olunga* (top layer) and cutting off the excess parts. When everyone was present, they stopped their task to have a morning devotion. So they chanted the Lord's Prayer in Tongan:

Ko 'emau tamai 'oku 'i Hevani ke tapuha ho Huafa ke hoko mai ho'o pule ke fai Ho Finangalo 'i mamani 'o hange ko ia 'i he langi. Ke foaki mai he 'aho ni ha'amaui kai, pea ke fakamolemole 'emau angahala 'o hange ko 'emau fakamolemole 'akinautolu 'oku angahala mai. Pea 'oua na'a ke tuku kimautilu ki he fili ka ke fakahaofi kimautilu mei he kovi, he 'oku 'o'ou 'a e pule mo e naunau 'o lauikuonga, 'Emeni.

The chairperson took a roll call, then the main task began. They sat up on both sides of the papa koka'anga (a half-cylinder shape board) where the kupesi was already fastened and covered with feta'aki and started to apply the tou (glue) to join the pieces. Two women on each end of the board watched carefully to make sure the joints were straight, feta'aki were glued and pasted properly before the top layer was placed and pasted on. The women on both ends painted the edging lines and numbers. When each langanga was ready they all called out "Tau teka!" (Let's roll!) and the prepared part was rolled over to one side while the new layers were laid down, ready to be glued and pasted on. While some called out "Let's roll!" others replied, "Yes, let's roll under the bed; over him! with him!" and so on; and the rest roared with laughter. While they pasted the dye on (koka) the group on one end lowered their voices and started whispering. One woman said they were sharing local gossip, about a neighbour's new car, the little corner shop which went bankrupt; the match-making that did not work, the broken marriage next door, the deported overstayer from New Zealand, and so on. While this went on, someone called out for feta'aki laulalo or lau'olunga, wide or narrow, and so on, while the others laughed - for whatever interpretation they made of the instruction. Another dished out firstly individual cigarettes, then packets, and then chewing gum, lollies and potato-chips. When she reached the group of women who whispered she threw a handful of lollies to them, ordering, "eat this and remember you die from your own sins. Stop gossiping and get on with it." The others roared with laughter as the women looked up with surprise. Those who sat on the floor cutting small pieces off the feta'aki also patched up holes on the unpainted tapa. They started a song - first it was solo, ...Lou lose, lose hina...(the white rose leaf) then every one joined. Those who finished their side started lighting up their cigarettes while waiting for

the others to roll over theirs. Everyone seemed to be calling out unsystematically "Teka!", "Tata!", "Tou!" "Pull to straighten" and so on. The person on one end of the board instructing the rest, started performing like a clown. Someone arrived and dished out guavas from her handbag, someone else complained that the others did not sing, and not in tune... Those sitting at the board started a different song, as one woman read out the words. From the sides, they called out "Malie! (Well done!), Malo e hiva! (Thanks for singing!) Malo e koka! Malo e tou! (Thanks for pasting!), Malo e kai! (Thanks for eating!). When everyone was ready, the instructor called out "Teka!" The others replied, "Teka mai!". As guava skins came flying out through the windows, more lollies were dished out, laughs got louder and babies cried, the instructor went round with a jandal and hit the others to sing. In the middle of it all, a high pitched voice yelled out in English..."Smoko time!" and so it went on...

Asked why she thought graduate women did not join many kautaha, a member in the kautaha observed said this kind of activity perhaps did not always appeal to graduate women. The level of communication was perhaps too ordinary for a graduate woman. The jokes she might find too intimate, the remarks too personal and language a bit inferior. Kautaha women talked about others openly and their own business freely, yet one of the things graduate women did not like about conversation with ordinary women (at cocktails) was its deep personal nature. Most graduate women said they found it strenuous and often embarrassing. On the other hand when kautaha women made special allowance for graduate women, or reserved their remarks and jokes because of the presence of educated women, it only made them feel excluded. One woman said another reason why graduate women might not feel at home in a koka'anga was that terms of instruction were technical and women who were not familiar with koka'anga would be lost. Moreover, the repetitive nature of the jokes and remarks about certain



Plate 8.7 Women making tapa during a koka'anga in Kolomotu'a.



Plate 8.8 Tohi-ngatu. Members of a kautaha in Nukunuku are helped by their daughters in outlining the pattern on the tapa with koka. (Photo: M.Lawrensen).

issues and people may easily become boring to a graduate woman. The kautaha member said she understood that graduate women are orderly, clever in many ways and are extraordinary because they have a degree.

The other types of kautaha to which some graduate women belonged were Kautaha Tuitui (sewing group) and li-pa'anga (savings). They met about once a month to sew, collect their cash to be banked or to make loans and to socialise with supper afterwards. This was usually held at night. Graduate women who belonged to these kautaha, often sent their cash over with a representative while they themselves rested at home. Or if it was a sewing group they sent their apology and said that they would sew at home. Katinia on the other hand, took her contribution herself because she liked to go and joke with the ladies although she could not sew. She said she did this weekly to support the local women.

The Langafonua Association was the only national women's group in the kingdom (discussed in Chapter One) but only one graduate woman belonged to it. It used to have a branch in every village, but the organisation had in recent years changed its objectives and specialised in marketing handicrafts, both retailing and exporting (Plate 8.9). Figure 8.1 lists some of the important women's organisations in the kingdom.

These women's groups varied in membership from about half a dozen to twenty. They had a common objective to raise the standard of living of the family. Individual organisations were responsible for the training of their own groups in relation to their own needs. Some did not have any formal training at all. Those who did were financed by international agencies such as the International Labour Organisation, the

South Pacific Commission or the Foundation for the People of the South Pacific (FSP). The major constraints in conducting training for women included lack of funds, lack of co-ordination, lack of expertise, lack of resource materials, lack of support from local people and organisations, and finally, the transport problem.

Figure 8.1

Women's Organisations

<u>Name</u>	<u>Purpose</u>
Rural Development Unit.....	to improve home facilities especially kitchens, fences and community water supply.
M.A.F.F (women's programme)	to give advice on domestic skills.
Tonga Family Planning Assoc.	to advise on the use of contraceptives.
Free Wesleyan Church development programmes.....	to encourage renovations of houses and kitchens and growing of vegetables and gardens.
A.C.W.W.....	to supervise small projects, farms, vegetable gardens, construction of community buildings.
Kautaha (tapa or mat making, sewing or saving)...	to encourage the practice of skills and manufacturing koloa.
Langafonua 'a Fefine Tonga..	to encourage and market Tongan handicrafts for village women.
Soroptimist Association.....	to encourage working women, to help keep Nuku'alofa clean.

(Source: Women's Training and Self-Employment Promotion:65-66, Fieldwork 1987).

The graduate women's lack of time to participate in these development groups has not helped the progress of these groups.

Community Functions and Obligations:

Women's obligations in the community included funerals, weddings, *katoanga* (birthdays, farewells, anniversaries, etc.) and *tauhi hou'eiki* (obligations to chiefs). These were *fatongia*<sup>3</sup> which both men and women were expected to fulfil. The part women played when a funeral was announced was to gather with their contributions (bread, wreaths, or *feta'u*) with the group leader and go to the deceased's place. Graduate men and women were often expected to contribute more and it was considered an honour for the group or family if they joined them. Most graduate women said they did not like attending funerals but contributed generously on the family's behalf. Langakali said that apart from taking the contributions and going to the service, there was not much to be done. Mapa said she did not know how to handle the *koloa* and Kalosipani felt that "to hang around doing nothing was impractical", and that funerals were sad occasions especially if the they themselves were *liongi* (Plate 8.10). Those who said they liked attending funerals did so because it was expected of them, they felt they did the right thing. Of the sample, more than eighty percent admitted they would not know their technical responsibilities (such as polishing, folding, making speeches in exchanging *koloa*) if they had a funeral in the family the following day.

At weddings and *fakaafe* (feasts) most graduate women said they would send a contribution and would attend because such functions were not only enjoyable and entertaining, but were likely to attract people they knew and with whom they could identify and communicate.

Another reason they would attend was because now, most formal wedding, *fakaafe* and feast organisers issued formal invitations to guests - a *palangi* custom which was becoming very common. This practice tended to identify people with status and exclude others.

Another type of obligation which some graduate women had to face in the community was their *fatongia* to the chiefs and the nobles. Some had chiefly relatives, but the majority of the graduate women interviewed had none and only had to participate at some stage in fulfilling their obligation to their village nobles. The custom of taking *polopolo* (first fruits) to the chiefs and nobles was dying, but the respect for nobles was still maintained, in church, at extended family functions and in community activities. Graduate women during community functions showed courtesy to chiefly individuals, by serving them first, by walking behind them and by making little gestures which showed that they *fakahikihiki*'i (honour) them even if the chiefs and nobles were less educated. This ability to adapt to Tongan culture was to Heilala, what makes an educated woman a real educated Tongan. Older graduate women were believed to be doing this more than their younger counterparts, according to one junior officer. Puafisi said she always walked behind her chiefly subordinates when they, as a group of workers from the office were welcomed in a village. On the opening of a new building or at a reception for village chiefs, Puafisi said she knew her place and kept to the rear, despite her position in the department.

Katinia observed that graduate men and women who pushed for their acquired status to be recognised often received unfavourable reactions from the nobility. When this happened the chiefs and nobles were said to be

fie'eiki (to imagine oneself to be a chief) and would give such men and women no social recognition and therefore no status or honour when community functions were held. This, she said would mean such men and women could be regarded as *vale fie poto* (fools pretending to be clever). Of those interviewed, women who grew up in town tended to think that their degree gave them status and respect at work and wherever they went, whereas those from the villages and outer islands believed that their degrees only gave them status and respect at work, and when they went out to the community, they were looked upon as members of their kin-group or socio-economic group and received no special treatment. Kukuvalu put it, "we never get mixed up with chiefs and nobles, we all know our place." Most graduate women said they did not want to be treated as chiefs because they did not know the protocol and they did not perceive any gains from it.<sup>4</sup> Young graduate women who were commoners in particular challenged the validity of *tauhi 'eiki* (keeping the chiefs' status) in today's Tongan society.

In summary the graduate women's roles in the community varied. The society's conflicting expectations of graduate women to become leaders on the one hand and to be led by community leaders in the traditional ways on the other, has caused these women to adopt a "sit on the fence" attitude towards their roles in the community. Some attended some church services but not church activities. Others did not themselves pay *misinale* but paid some on their parents' behalf. Yet the image of a so-called "good woman" is that of one who attends most services, contributes to church functions and attends church activities. She would get an even better grading if she and her family attend church and community functions and take a leading role in them. To show respect for traditional ways, one has to take a

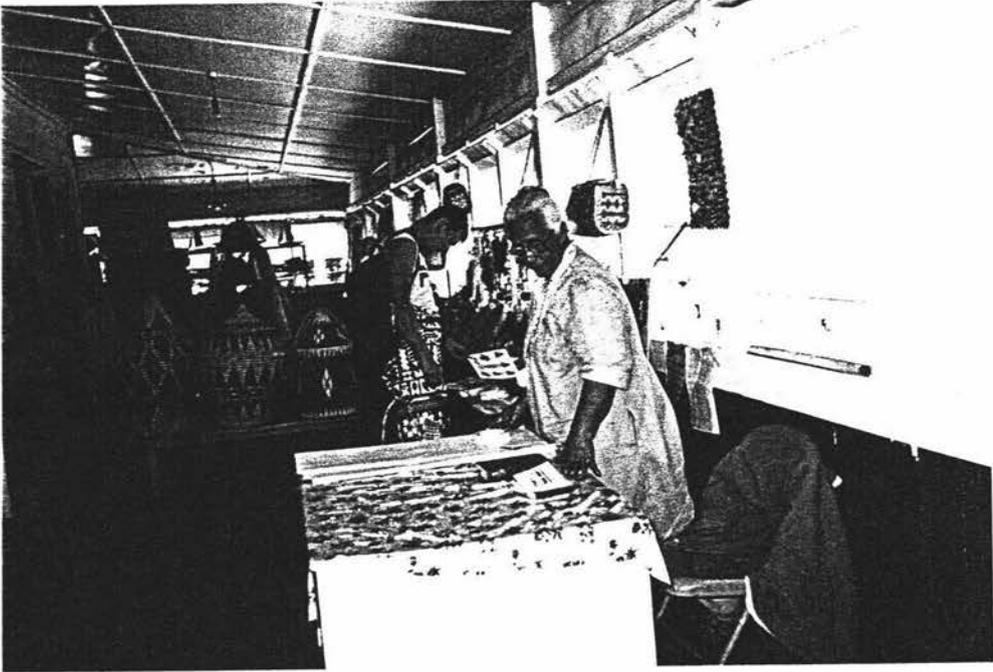


Plate 8.9 Handicrafts made by village women are sold at the Langafonua Centre.



Plate 8.10 A liongi at the funeral wears a big mat and lets her hair down.

"low-key" role and let the chiefs, the nobles and the superiors take the "high power" role. By tradition, they make the decisions, delegate the authority and assign the responsibilities to the rest who are expected to comply. It appeared that the graduate women (and men) found this hard to accept.

In effect, graduate women said that it was their limited time, lack of skills and their lack of interest in "things traditional" that dictated their degree of participation in church and their involvement in community functions.<sup>5</sup> But in most cases, they have also shown that when they needed to be accepted they could conform quite easily and when they wanted to be left alone they withdrew, without hesitation, from all other social groups.

NOTES:

1. See Fanua 1976:17, Havea 1979:11, Thaman 1976:25-27, for comments on what religion means to some Tongan women.
2. This new *Potungau'e 'a e Kakai Fefine* looks after Bible Studies for women, materials for the World Day of Prayer, the World Methodist Women branch in Tonga, the Women's bazaar for Queen Salote College; *Ho'a 'o e Kau Faifekau mo e Setuata* (Ministers and stewards' wives) who visit hospitals, conduct prayer meetings and inspect domestic appliances, *Kaluseti* and Women in Development programs run by the Council of Churches. (Ko e Siasi Uesiliana Tau'ataina 'o Tonga: 1987).
3. *Fatongia* is different from *kavenga*. The former means duty, obligation, responsibility and it connotes a feeling of one's duty and one's willingness to do that duty. The latter means burden; load and it connotes a feeling of obligation to another without the willingness to perform one's duty. To some people in Tonga today, some of the traditional *fatongia* have become *kavenga*.
4. To most graduate women commoners, the status and

the recognition they received with their degrees and their jobs was enough. But, they said, there were others who did not know their limit and went overboard and thereby often intruded in chiefs' and the nobles' domain. When this happened these graduates were regarded as *fiematamu'a* or *fieme'a* (to imagine oneself to be somebody important) by both the commoners and chiefs.

5. There is a need for further investigation as to why graduate women do not take part in women's activities as much as graduate men do in Rugby, Rotary, Yacht or kava-drinking clubs.

## CHAPTER NINE

### THE FUTURE: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

*Mata-ika-fai-ki-he-Pupu'a*

(Fishes in a blowhole can only be watched but can never be fished)

This thesis has investigated the changing roles of graduate women in Tonga. The issues investigated have been centred around the women's roles, why and how they have changed, what forms have they taken, and what impact these changes have had on graduate women and on the community.

The study showed that while graduate women enjoyed a good salary, better social status and a leading role in the office, their personal relationships with their male superiors, their locally educated female colleagues and subordinates were gloomy. But there was no evidence to suggest they were anti-men or pro-feminist. At home, graduate women were no longer physically in charge of domestic chores and child care. But as income earners, they have become more independent, autonomous and active participants in family decision making. With relatives' assistance, housegirls' help and husbands' domestic contributions, graduate women have had free time which they put into improving their work performance or spent it with their children. Their lack of skills in some domestic tasks were noted. Concerning their roles in the community, it was found that graduate women's participation in church and its activities have decreased, and they were very selective about the type of groups they joined or community functions they attended.

Overall, graduate women were found to be neither aggressive nor passive but rather victims. In the process of attempting to adjust to their new roles, they faced two types of constraints. One caused them to slowly disengage themselves from most social groups and women's group activities, and the other constraint was a feeling among them of being excluded from positions of power and authority at work. These two constraints are very much likely to continue until their new roles are well established and accepted by Tongan society.

Tonga was going through a process of modernisation with very fast economic changes<sup>1</sup>, of which education for women was a part. These changes had had an impact upon graduated women and their roles. They enjoyed their privileged positions but the undercurrents of dissatisfaction (discussed in Chapter Six) were not apparent.

Modernisation is defined by Latukefu (1976:19) as "that process of adjusting one's self or one's society to new social economic, political and intellectual challenges, needs and aspirations". He went on to say that "the keynote to this process of modernisation is change. Those aspects of tradition which no longer serve any useful purpose, become redundant and should be discarded" (*op. cit.*:20). To modernise, he said, a less developed society must inevitably borrow a lot from the so-called Western World. If the process is successful, he continued, "the end result will be a more modern and richer culture" (*ibid*). A few individuals who have been courageous enough to resist the pressure of tradition and became unpopular at least for a while, have been as a result, successful. Crocombe (1975) averred that this is happening in the Pacific islands, and Mydral (1956:152) said the same of women at work in the modern

world. There is little doubt that the graduate women in Tonga are going through the same process. They are a new generation of Tongan women.

At work:

The graduate women enjoy a good salary, better status and a leading role at work. Each fortnight the graduate women are paid an average of T\$230. As the workers line up on pay days to receive their earnings, the amount is counted and slammed on the table in front of them while others who receive much less look on. The graduate woman is no longer embarrassed by this practice. Instead she and her colleagues talk openly about how much each receives and how they will spend it. A person with a high income has always been associated with high status and greater power.

Graduate women played a leading role at work and that was acknowledged by friends, relatives and the public in general (Plate 9.1). For example, graduate women, acting in responsible positions, were in charge of the office in their superiors' absence and attended executive meetings on their (superior's) behalf. These were seen as being powerful and envious by non-graduate women. Graduate women of commoner origin who have come face to face with the Royal Family at school or work related function because of their job, was seen as a great honour. For a woman deputy or a principal to be seen in her academic gown in front of thousands of parents was a source of great pride. Graduate women in government admitted that they enjoyed being treated with respect by their subordinates in and out of the office (Plate 9.2).

There seems to be a struggle among graduate women to elevate themselves from the inferior status of women

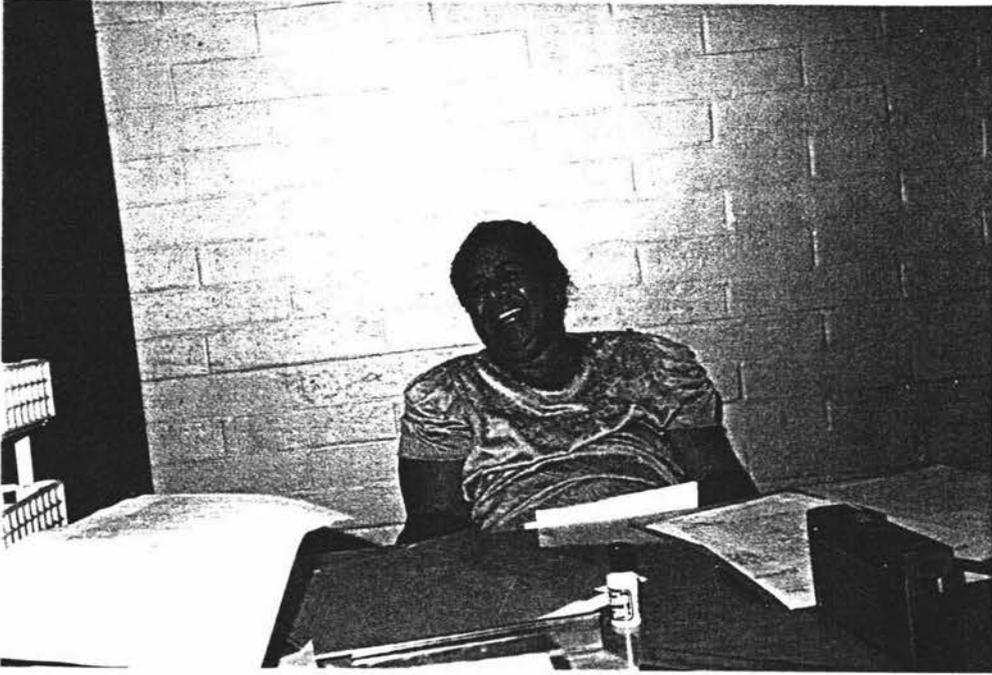


Plate 9.1 'Akilisi Tupou gained her M.Ed. from the United States, is the curriculum development officer for the Mormon Church schools.

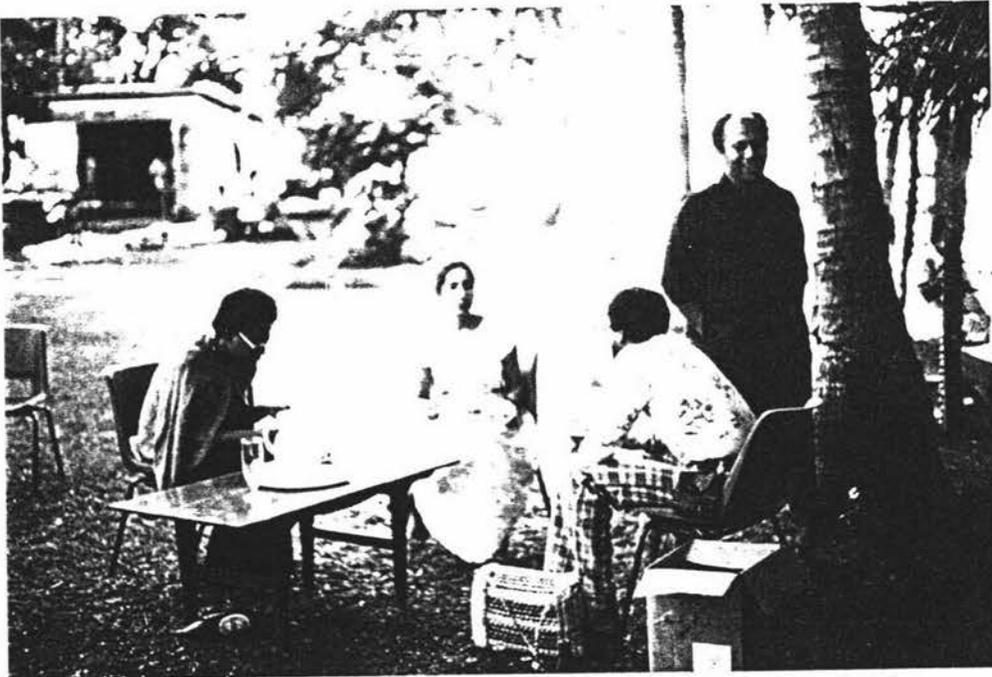


Plate 9.2 The Principal and Deputy Principal of Tonga College enjoy a casual meal to welcome the American Peace Corps Volunteers who will serve the school for two years.

which they had had to accept for years simply because they were not as educated and qualified as their male counterparts. But there was also a feeling among them that they are being excluded from positions of responsibility, power and authority. Graduate women admitted that their relationships with male superiors and with some colleagues and subordinates were not always affable, but the problem was not widespread.

It would appear however that the privileged position enjoyed by graduate women in Tonga had inspired other Tongan graduate women overseas to return. Already, some local newspapers (*Matangi Tonga* July, 1988; *Tonga Chronicle* 17.7.1988) have reported that some women who have lived and studied abroad for many years are now back working at home. This, plus the expected return of present female scholarship holders will make up a distinguished group of women in the nineties - women who grew up in Tonga during the social and economic changes of the sixties and seventies and of the political turmoil of the eighties, or women who were born and raised under the dominant guidance of *palangi* principles but without the influence of Tongan values. Fresh from university with little practical experience, they are likely to be Europeanised in their values,<sup>2</sup> more individualistic in their ways, and much younger than their counterparts currently working in the country. As a result, one can speculate on possible future developments.

The undercurrents of dissatisfaction between some graduate women and their male superiors, female colleagues and subordinates could become more apparent. The lack of delegation of authority and the poor communication between the workers and their superiors plus the demands of a male-dominated and hierarchical

system may no longer be tolerated by graduate women in the future. The Europeanised values of the newcomers may not allow them to easily comprehend the *faka-Tonga* ways. They may neither accept the dictatorial ways of some male superiors nor ignore the challenges to their positions by subordinates. This may alienate them from their colleagues. Their limited practical experience in Tonga could isolate them from the conservative Tongan workers who think mostly in practical terms.

At home:

Graduate women have become high income earners who are no longer vulnerable or financially insecure if their husband is injured or unemployed. With their high income, they provide for their families, help their relatives, buy household appliances, pay school fees or *misinale* and can still afford a housegirl. To most Tongans, such a woman plays a man's role as well as that of a woman's in the house. They are held in high regard by both the nuclear and the extended family.

A housegirl to do the work is a priority for most graduate women. This, they said, freed them from the domestic chores and relying on family and the relatives to do these task (Plate 9.3). It alleviates the physical responsibilities of child care and gives an indication of the woman's being chiefly (I was told) and thereby enhances her reputation.

Purchasing household appliances was another important priority. A stove, fridge, washing machine, vacuum cleaner and even a microwave helped the housegirl, the husband when he did the chores and the graduate woman when it was her turn. A vehicle is convenient for family transport while a video gives the family home entertainment. These mod-cons saved the

graduate woman from borrowing although some graduate women allowed their possessions to be borrowed. Possession of these appliances gave an indication of the family being tu'umalie (well off) and consequently the relatives and neighbours looked up to them.

It would appear that because graduate women have become financially independent and can meet family responsibilities and fulfil social obligations, they make every effort to maintain that independence even to the extent of disengaging themselves from other social groups.

#### In the Community

Despite society's expectations of graduate women to take a leading role in every aspect of the community, it seems that graduate women are modifying these expectations to suit themselves. They seem to want to maintain their link with their chosen groups in the community through a financial means but not the personal commitments involved (Plate 9.4).

Firstly, they have decreased their participation in church, women groups and community activities. This is due to their time being taken up with work and work-related activities and functions. Secondly, they can now fulfil their obligations by making contributions without attending personally and thirdly, they can afford to buy the *koloa* they needed to fulfil their obligations (Plate 9.5).

The church is no longer the centre of their community involvement as it used to. Except for a few ministers' daughters, most women only attended church once a week. Some attended occasionally when their "conscience moved" them<sup>3</sup> and a few rarely went at all.



Plate 9.3 Mothers and babysitters, waiting at Talamahu Bus Depot to take their children to the hospital for vaccination.



Plate 9.4 Lecturing at U.S.P. Extension Centre, is Salote who runs Oral English courses for village women.

That sermons preached by lay preachers and ministers were boring and irritating were some of the claims made by graduate women. Sunday sermons in Tonga can cover a variety of issues ranging from directly rebuking the congregation members for wrong-doings<sup>4</sup> to criticising certain newspapers for "speaking out" against government policies, to campaigning for an increased annual misinale<sup>5</sup>. These, some women felt, had no direct relevance to the Bible, at least in the way they were presented. Another reason some women did not attend church was that Sunday was the only day they had to rest before the next week's work. Some went to the beach for a Sunday picnic (although this is illegal) while others spent the day watching videos at home. These women argued that one does not have to attend church to be a Christian.

Despite their absence from church most graduate women contributed to misinale by paying a "reasonable amount" instead of "all you have" which the church used to ask<sup>6</sup>. Others contributed a considerable amount on behalf of their parents'. Graduate women contributed to church feasts although they did not attend personally. Most mothers played an important role on *Faka-me* day when their children in Sunday School performed.

The fact that some graduate women participated in ex-students' associations was due to such meetings providing an opportunity for the members to meet and socialise with their male and female schoolmates. The women went without their husbands (if they did not attend the same school). These activities also raised money to help the school. All the mothers interviewed joined the Parent and Teachers' Associations in their areas and took an active part in fund-raising or preparing feasts for the school. But at meetings, they

tended to withdraw and restrain their opinions especially if the meeting was dominated by men.

Most graduate women did not join a *kautaha*. The few who participated did so to learn a skill, to be with the "grass-roots level", and to support the women's development programmes in their village. The jokes, gossip and the singing and merry making of a *kautaha* activity were some of the reasons stated by women for joining. Despite their lack of skills in the purpose of the *kautaha*, a small number of graduate women attended, listened, laughed and sang with other *kautaha* women. To keep their place in such *kautaha* the women sent a representative to participate in the actual weaving, *tapa*-making or sewing on their behalf. They always paid their monetary share, and sometimes paid more to make up for those who could not afford the monetary contribution.

As far as attending functions like weddings or funerals, women seemed to be cautious and selective about which ones to attend. As for taking part in a *faikava* the majority of graduate women interviewed expressed their preference not to mix the drink in a *faikava* (kava party)<sup>7</sup>. But, they said, they were keen to listen to or participate in the discussion carried out in a kava party. When these social activities were likely to affect their work performance, the graduate women chose not to take part. For example, when staying up late at a funeral made her late to work the following day, the graduate woman did not spend the night at the funeral but attended it after work for a few hours. When her obligation to her relative needed to be fulfilled by sending money without her personally attending, she sent the money. In other words, the traditional feeling of a sense of personal obligation and physical presence are

being slowly replaced by a practical approach, an approach where money has conveniently served the purpose.

It would appear that as graduate women feel free from the pressures of society's expectations - expectations to attend church, to participate in community activities, to join women's groups and play a leading role or to attend certain social functions, they will continue to change. One can speculate that in the future, if church ministers and lay preachers continue to preach their sermons in the same style, covering the same types of issues, graduate women will continue to spend their Sundays at the beach or at home rather than in church. Some have in fact started to go indiscreetly to the office and work on Sundays. If church functions, funerals and similar cultural activities continue to place a great emphasis on food contributions and koloa distribution graduate women may continue to withdraw themselves and perhaps replace their personal participation with monetary or other forms of contribution.<sup>8</sup>

The pace of modernisation in Tonga accelerated four decades ago. Those aspects of tradition which have appeared no longer to serve any useful purpose have slowly become redundant. A few practices have been modified and new ways have been added to the Tongan way of life. To adapt to the new situations which arise as a consequence of the changes and of these women being "graduates" themselves, the female degree holders try to adapt by compromising their ways with that of society's expectations and of the traditions. For example, by hiring a housegirl this becomes an economic spin-off. The graduate woman earns a salary and can pay wages, she spends on purchases of mod-cons and fulfils her

obligations. However, better services provided, no doubt, will enhance the women's performance in their new roles after they return to live and work in Tonga.

#### Recommendations:

If Tonga's women were to succeed in their studies overseas, return home and adjust to both the expectations of Tongan society and the demands of their job, they need academic counselling, cross-cultural training and further researches to be carried out in order to find better ways for them.

#### Academic Counselling:

There is a great need for career advice and counselling services in the final years of secondary school level. This would enable those who do not have academic ability to take technical subjects<sup>9</sup> and succeed in a less academic career than facing difficulties at university. Equally important is the need to make students aware of courses available at universities and of the subjects required for such courses. Women (because they were more sheltered in Tonga) should be made aware of such services available at campuses. Such knowledge would lessen the cultural-shock which most students encounter when they arrive in a new country to study.

It is also important that while they are overseas, students should be helped with their language problem and other difficulties. Pacific Island students at Auckland University were found to have language difficulties which affected their studies greatly (Furneau 1973). There should also be some kind of co-ordination between their training overseas and employment opportunities in Tonga. Lakshmana Rao (1976), cited in Taufa (1979), called this a "lack of fit" and

argued that the problems Asian students faced when they returned from Australia were due to a lack of co-ordination between their overseas study and employment opportunities at home. Perhaps the same could be applied to graduate women when they return to Tonga (see Taufa 1979).

It is recommended too that an officer (careers advisor, counsellor or scholarship officer) visits the women (and men) overseas on a regular basis, perhaps once or twice a year. This will keep track of their courses of studies and will give them the moral support which most Polynesians need in order to maintain a "sense of togetherness" and keep them in touch with the social, economic and political realities at home. Regular correspondence or a bulletin from the scholarship sponsors would keep the students informed of Tongan current events, and would allow them to check the relevance of their studies to their future employment in Tonga. By doing these, the women (and men) are constantly kept informed and therefore prepared for adjustment to Tongan environment when they complete their studies.

#### Cross Cultural Training:

There is a need for cross-cultural training for men and women before they leave Tonga to study in another country, and after they complete their overseas study before they return to Tonga. This training could include a familiarisation programme to prepare themselves for what they will encounter overseas. Some students will never have left home before or been on an aeroplane. These people need to have the means to adapt to a new culture either by learning a new set of skills or by adapting what they already have to the new culture. They need to be briefed on how the host country welcomes

visitors, conducts interpersonal communications (written, verbal and non-verbal), dresses, dines and so on. To lessen the culture shock, Tongan students must become aware of the value system in their new but temporary home. They will need some insights on race relations, male and female relationships and free speech which may differ significantly from prevailing norms in Tonga. In short they need to know how their host country practise their culture. Girls in particular, need to know how to date a person from and in a different culture, since they come from a sheltered background in Tonga.

The longer they live, learn and participate in the host country culture, Tongan women students find it easy to understand and many enjoy themselves. But before they leave to return home after four or more years, re-training in their Tongan culture needs to be done to remind these people of the values and practices expected of them at home. For instance, in Tonga, single women are expected to go out with a chaperon at night; educated women are not expected to be seen at certain places<sup>11</sup>, and they are expected to comply with a lot of faka'apa'apa (respect) when return to live in Tonga.

During this two directional cross-cultural training, all personnel with whom women are involved in women's training and employment at any stage can be "educated" also. For example the staff at the Tongan hostel in Auckland could benefit from such training. Male superiors, locally educated female colleagues and church ministers and perhaps nobles and district officers could have some input into the training. They could exchange experiences with graduate women and listen to each other in order to establish a means of communication which may help in their re-adaptation to

Tongan society.

Moreover, training of this kind will help bridge the gap between the women newcomers with their Europeanised values and the male superiors with their *faka-Tonga* ways. These graduate women may, as a result, be better understood at work by their male superiors and may be allowed to share power with superiors as much as male graduates do when they first start at work.

Alternatively, women could have professional counselling services available to them through their employment. At the moment this kind of service is not available in Tonga, but a few of the sample have expressed a need for this. During their settling-in stage, graduate women need a counsellor to help them sort out their problems of re-adjustment to Tongan culture. Secondly, when they are frustrated at work, these women need counselling at a professional level so that work-related problems are not taken home.<sup>12</sup>

#### Future Research:

Finally, there is a need for some form of research into different areas of women's performances. Perhaps in the process of counselling and training, a study of women's performance at secondary school level could identify the suitable courses for them to take and thereby solve the much criticised policy of scholarship selection which presently exists. It could both help women to select their career based on what they have studied and the education curriculum in Tonga to expand in order to include those areas which women want to study but are not in the curriculum. A study of how Tongan women fare in a different culture would perhaps help explain why some women go overseas to study, marry and stay there and never return to Tonga. A study of the



Plate 9.5

A kautaha member, showing a visitor how kiefau, which has become a rare koloa, is made.



Plate 9.6 Queen Salote College teachers and students. The old, experienced women and the young female graduates are deciding how and where to lead the future generation of women in Tonga.

roles of women in the market and cash economy is needed as is a study of the role of elderly women in the family.

There is also a need to have a further investigation about whether the family and socio-economic changes noticed among graduate women are not in fact found in urban Nuku'alofa, or among working women of all echelons in the town, in 1988 anyway simply because social change is inevitable in any society but at different rate.

If Tonga's future development, the so-called "modernisation" depends to some extent on the contribution of graduate women then an effort should be made to take notice of them, to understand their conditions, to be prepared to make changes to accommodate and meet their needs and for those in authority to listen to them (Plate 9.6). Graduate women need more autonomy at work, more recognition at home and more encouragement in the community, otherwise they will continue to disengage themselves from all other social entities and indulgently enjoy their individual prestige.

#### NOTES:

1. See the Fifth Development Plan 1986-1990, for the Government's aims and for the substantial economic growth during the Fourth Development Plan 1980-1985. These were indeed speedy changes for a small developing country with limited resources and dependent to a large extent on overseas remittances and foreign aid.
2. "Europeanised values" was explained to me by one participant as being *anga faka-Palangi* (behave in a European way) which means some of the following characteristics - being individualistic, often materialistic, seeing material possessions, services and social obligations in their monetary

value, formal, being cautious, etc.

3. This was how two research participants explained their reasons for going to church.
4. Living in de facto relationships was considered a 'wrong doing', and gossiping, changing faiths and the like were usually attacked in sermons.
5. Misinale often became a basis for competition between churches. Sometimes church bulletins publish the amount contributed so groups would endeavour to outdo one another in this sphere.
6. Hau'ofa once expressed an opinion that fear of damnation was the motive behind many people contributing large amount of money to their misinale (Hau'ofa: Unpublished speech to Peace Corps Training 1981).
7. See Rogers 1975:399 for a detailed comment on the concept of faikava and and the discussion of ideology of poto (clever) usually carried out in a kava party.
8. It has become increasingly acceptable to use money in place of koloa and food in some cultural activities.
9. On a survey of the educational needs of Tongan students, Konai Thaman (1976-77) identified a similar need for counselling of secondary students (Unpublished survey 1976-77)
10. The United States Peace Corps Program conducts a cross-culture training for its volunteers before they leave for the field and another one at the closing of their service in the field. These are found to be very successful (Peace Corps Training Evaluation 1981-1985, Peace Corps Office, Tonga). The New Zealand Voluntary Service Abroad gives the same training for its members.
11. Places like the pub or a night club where liquor was readily consumed were considered unsuitable for educated women. When they were seen there, they were perceived to be drinkers and were gossiped about.
12. There was also some concerns that the graduate women's problems be protected from becoming a community's affair. One woman suggested a palangi would be suitable for the job.

## APPENDIX A

The Changing Roles of Graduate Women in TongaInterview Questions

1. Personal details, background and educational history. Where did you go to primary school? Why did you go to that particular school? What skills did you learn there? What skills did you learn at home and from whom? What were your friends like? How well did you do at primary school? What did you think of your teacher? What type of things did you do together with your friends then? What games did you learn or play at this stage?

Which secondary school did you go to? Why? How many schools did you go to and why? Who did you stay with during school terms? What skills did you learn from them? Where did you spend your school holidays? If you stayed away from home for secondary school, how often did you see your parents? Did you visit other relatives and how often? What skills did you learn at secondary school level? Was it part of the curriculum? How was it taught? What sport did you participate in? Where? What were your teachers like? What was important to you about education then? Those skills you learned at secondary level, how do you use them now? How often? Who were your friends at secondary level? What were they like? Are you still friends now? Why? How often do you see them? What do you talk about when you get together?

Looking back now, how influential were your grandparents, parents, friends, relatives and teachers in your early days? Why?

2. Going Overseas:  
Let us talk about your preparation to go overseas. Why did you decide to go overseas; what enabled you to? Scholarship or family effort? Did you choose your course to study? What did you choose? Why? When did you first start to think about a career? How did you prepare yourself to go overseas to a different culture to stay for a long time to study? Did you get any help (cross-

culture) and how to study at university prior to your departure? From who? With what? How?

3. University and life overseas:

When you arrived, how did you feel? Who helped you settle in? How? Did you receive any briefing course (or similar) on how to live in another culture? From who? Did you get any help on how to study at university? From whom? How?

Where did you stay? How was it? What problems did you face? How did you fare? What type of people surrounded you? What did you think of them? What did you learn from them? New skills? interests? values? Who were your friends? What were they like? How much time did you spend with them? doing what? Are they still you friends now? Why? How often do you contact them and vice-versa? When you were overseas, what and how much did you learn about women from other cultures? Women's issues? Feminist groups? What did you think of these ideas, issues then? Now?

Did you change your course while you studied? Why? To what? Did you study all the time you were overseas, or were there interruptions? Why? Whoever financed your study, do you feel you have to pay it back? Why? How? If you did choose your field of study, what would you have chosen? Why? What else can you tell me about your experience overseas? What degree(s) did you get?

4. Returning to Tonga after your study:

Before you returned, how did you feel? What did you expect? at home? at work? your friends? the society? Your village etc.? Tell me about. Is this the job you had expected to return to? Why? How did you get this? Are you satisfied with it? Why? if not how could it be improved? What do you actually do? Have you changed your job since your return? Why? Do you plan to change your job in the future? Why?

As a woman, how well do you think you fare in this job? Why? Who accepts you well here and who does not? Why? Where do you think you fit into the hierarchy of this department? Why? How do the others - males and females colleagues respond or react or view you? in your job? Have you experienced any sex discrimination or

discrimination or any kind? What context? How do you feel about it? How will it affect your job in the future?

Are you punctual? Who reprimands you if you are not? What do you think of it? Do you work longer than normal working hours? How often? Why? Would you rather not?

Do you play other roles apart from what is stated in your job description? What are they? How often do you do it? Would you rather not? During tea breaks, who do you have tea with? What do you talk about? How often do you have tea with your superiors? Do you talk with him or her? about what? During working hours? about what? Who else do you talk with during hours? about what? Is there anybody here you avoid talking to? Why?

Do you go out with other colleagues to social functions? How often? What kind of functions? What about lunch, who do you have lunch with? What do you talk about? What else do you do during your lunch hour? Is there a group or individual here you prefer not to have or spend lunch or tea break with? Why? How do you feel if they decide to join you for tea or lunch break one day? What is your working relationships with those under you? How do you treat them? males? females? Have you made any interesting observations since you started working here? Would you like to share them with me?

What are the good things about being a woman with a degree in Tonga? What are the unfortunate things? Why? What do you think of these things? How do you handle them? How do other women of your type (with degree) handle it? Why?

If a girl came to you and said she was thinking of going overseas to study for a degree, what would your advice be? If she was to come and work here what would your advice be? If you were to work here for another 5 years, what would you be looking forward to? Why?

Whatever kind of treatment you get here, why? because you are a women? because you are educated? or because of the family you belong to? What would you like to see done for women graduates in Tonga in the future? Why? Is there anything you would like to share with me about your education, your time overseas, your job and work performance now? What do you think the future holds for you at work?

What do other women graduates think?

5. Leisure, activities and other interest (Community Involvements):

Before you went overseas, what type of involvement did you have in your village? evenings? weekends? Who did you do these things with? How much work did you do in the house (home)? How many church activities did you get involved in? What church did your family belong to? Have they changed? why? and you?

How do you spend your free time now? Who do you spend it with? doing what? evening? weekend? Do you go out to hotels, movies? cocktails? with who? Did you learn anything new while overseas about how you spend your leisure? what? Do you do it in Tonga? How often? Have you changed your interests? to what? why? Has this change affected your life style in anyway? your family and friends relationships? how? why?

Have modern appliances affected your life style? how? What mod cons do you use? Who does what in your household? Who cooks? cleans? shops? Who gets the children off to school? What part do you play there?

Do you have relatives staying with you? how many? How much do they do? Do you pay them? do you have a paid housegirl? How often does she come? How much do you pay her per week? Do you help her in other ways? How? Do you help your relatives? your spouse's relatives? Do you like helping them or is it out of obligation? Who else do you help? How? Who often do you visit your in-laws? How often do they visit you? When you get together what do you talk about? Why? How well are you received by them? Why? Do you get on well with them? why?

What clubs, women's group or associations do you belong? Why? How often? What is the purpose of this group? Where did you learn the skill required for this group? How important it is to you to belong to this group? Do you plan to continue with this group for long? Why? What would you be looking for in this group in the future? Is there anything you do or do not do because you feel it is not woman-like or feminine? What? Why?

6. Social Networks:

Who are the people you regard as your friends? Why? Who are the people you regard as your family, apart from what you have told me already? Why? How important are they to you? Are there any particular type of people you do or do not affiliate with for any particular reason? What type? Why? Who do you feel best understands you at work? at home? or at the club or group you belong to? Why?

If you are married, what do you expect of your husband? Does he meet these expectations? How? If you are not married, what is an ideal man (husband) to you? How much time do you spend with your boyfriend? What do you expect of him? What type of entertainment do you go to? How much time do you spend with your children? Doing what? at what time? Who baby-sits when you go out?

7. Current skills.

What type of cooking can you do? normally do everyday? What of magazines do you read? Do you buy them? Are you fashion conscious? What type do you prefer? Do you use cosmetics? What type? How many hours do you spend doing housework per week? Do you budget? What do you spend most of your salary on? Do you worry about finance? What do you normally worry about?

What are the things you think you can't do as well as your mother can? Are you involved in any continuing education? What? Why? Do you have any desire to have further training? What on? Where? What for? What holds you up?

Can you do the tapa making (koka'anga)? Can you do mat weaving (lalanga)? Do you like faikava? Can you make kava? What Tongan domestic skills do you have now? If a relative of yours died tomorrow, would you know the proper cultural role to play? the arrangements? fulfilling your social obligations?

Opinions

What is your opinion of family planning?

Why do most degree women marry later in life or not marry at all?

What do you consider to be the obstacles in your career development? Why?  
Is there anything else you want to share with me?

I appreciate your time and your participation. Malo 'aupito.

#### TONGAN VERSION OF THE QUESTIONS

Ko e Lakanga fo'ou i he Fatongia 'o e Fefine Tonga.

1. Ko ho hisitolia mo ho'o ako. Fakamatala mai ki ho'o ako, moe feitu'u na'ake tupu hake ai, ho'o ongo matu'a pe tauhi 'i ho'o kei si'i? Na'a ke ako 'i fe? ko e ha hono 'uhinga? Koe ha e ngaahi me'a na'a ke ako ai? Na'e fefe ho'o kau faiako? Fefe ho ngaahi kaungame'a? ko e ha e ngaahi va'inga na'a mou fa'a va'inga ai? Fefe 'i 'api, ko e ha e fanga ki'i ngaue mo e ngaahi me'a na'ake ako 'i ai?

Ko fe kolisi na'ake ako ai? uHINGA? Ko e kolisi 'e fiha ne ke hiki 'o ako ai? Kapau na'ake mama'o mei 'api, ko hai na'ake nofo mo ia he lolotonga ho'o ako? Ko e ha e me'a na'ake ako mei ai? Na'ake tutuku ki fe? Tu'olahi ho'o 'alu 'o sio ki ho'o ongo matu'a? Fefe ho ngaahi kainga kehe? Ko e ha e me'a na'ake ako mei ho kainga? fefe 'apiako? Fefe ngaahi ngaue fakamea'a, na'e ako'i eni he ako? Fefe ho'o kau faiako he kolisi? Na'ake mahu'inga he ako he taimi koia? Ko e ngaahi me'a ko e na'ake ako he kolisi, 'oku 'aonga ia kia koe he taimi ni? Fefe? Ko hai ho ngaahi kaungame'a he kolisi? na'a nau fefe? 'Oku mou kei kaungame'a he taimi ni? Oku mou fa'a fakataha? 'o ha? talanoa ki he ha? Ko ho'o vakai ki he taimi ni, ko hai 'oku ke manatu'i lahi taha 'ene ngaahi fale'i kia koe, mo e ngaahi me'a na'a ne fai? Ko e ha hono 'uhinga?

2. Folau ki Muli.

Ko e ha e 'uhinga na'ake folau ai? Sikolasipi pe famili? pe ha toe founa kehe? Ko hai na'a ne fili ho'o taumu'a? Na'a ke alu ki fe? anefe? ako ha? foki mai anefe? Na'e fakamaheni'i fefe koe ki he to'onga mo'ui 'i muli ki mu'a pea ke toki folau? Ko e ha e founa na'e tokoni lahi taha kia koe 'i ho'o

teu folau?

3. Mo'ui 'i muli, mo e ako he 'Univesiti

Na'ake ongo'i fefe 'i ho'o tau atu? Ko hai na'e tokoni atu, 'i he ha, pea na'e fefe? Na'e fale'i koe 'e taha he to'onga mo'ui fo'ou? Fefe he ako faka-'univesiti, ko hai na'e tokoni atu, pea na'e fefe? Fakamatala mai pe na'ake nofo 'i fe pea na'e fefe? Ko e ha e ngaahi palopalema ne ke fetaulaki mo ia? Ko e kakai na'a mou nofo, na'a nau tokoni atu? fefe? Ko e ha fua e ngaahi 'ilo fo'ou ne ke ako ai? hange ko e ha? Fefe ho ngaahi kaume'a, ne nau tokoni atu, he ha? Ne fefe ho'o vakai ki he tu'unga 'o e kakai fefine 'i ho'o 'i muli?

Na'ake liliu ho'o lesoni he lolotonga ho'o 'i he 'univesiti? 'uhinga? Na'ake ako he taimi kotoa na'a ke 'i he 'univesiti pe na'ake malolo ha ngaahi ta'u? Ko hai pe ko e na'a ne fakapa'anga ho'o ako, 'oku ke ongo'i mo'ua ki ai? Kapau na'ake faingamalie 'o ke fili ho'o taumu'a, ko e ha e me'a na'ake mei fili ki ai? 'Oku toe 'i ai mo ha me'a kehe teke fie fakamatala ki ai?

4. Foki mai ki Tonga.

Fefe ho'o ongo'i kimu'a pea ke foki mai? Ko e ha e me'a na'ake 'unaloto mai ki ai, 'i 'api, he ngaue, ho ngaahi kaungame'a, mo ho kolo? Ko e ngaue eni na'ake ako mo 'amanaki mai ki ai? Sai'ia ai? Ko e ha e ngaahi me'a 'oku ke pehe 'oku totonu ke fakalelei'i? Ko e ha ho'o ngaue? kuo ke fetongi ho'o ngaue talu ho'o foki mai? 'Oku ke fakakaukau pehe? 'UHINGA?

'Oku fefe ho'o ongo'i heni (ngaue) ko e fefine koe? Ko hai 'oku ke ngaue vaofi mo lelei mo ia, ko hai 'oku 'ikai? 'Oku fefe ho va mo hono toe 'o e kau ngaue? 'Oku 'i ai ha lau fakamakehekehe heni - tangata pe fefine? Kuo ke fetaulaki mo ha me'a pehe? ha ho'o ongo'i? 'Oku ne uesia ho'o ngaue? 'Oku ke vave ma'u mai ki he ngaue? Kapau 'oku 'ikai, ko hai 'oku ne tautea koe? ha ho'o fakakaukau ki ai? 'Oku ke ngaue houa loloa? 'Oku ke sai'ia ai pe 'ikai? Ko e ha hono 'uhinga? 'Oku ke fai mo ha ngaue kehe mei he me'a 'i ho'o tohi fakamatala ngaue? Ko hai 'oku ke talanoa mo ia he taimi ti? kai ho'ata? 'Oku ke fa'a talanoa mo ho pule? tu'o fiha he 'aho? kau ki he ha? mo hai fua 'oku ke talanoa mo ia? Ko hai 'oku 'ikai teke fie

talanoa mo ia, ko e ha hono 'uhinga?

Ko hai 'oku ke 'alu mo ia ki he ngaahi fakasosiale? kaunga ngaue, kaume'a kehe? ki fe? fefe taimi kai ho'ata? ha ho'o fakakaukau kia nautolu? Fefe ho va fakangaue mo nautolu? ko e ha e me'a 'oku ke fakatokanga'i, ta'e fiemalie ki ai? ko e ha e 'uhinga?

Ko e ha e ngaahi lelei 'o ha fefine ma'u mata'itohi 'oku ngaue 'i Tonga ni? Ko e ha hono ngaahi matu'utamaki? ko e ha ha'o lau ki ai? fefe kakai fefine kehe? Ko e ha ha'o fale'i ki ha fefine teu folau ki muli 'o ako mata'itohi? fefe ka ha'u 'o ngaue heni? Koe ha e ngaahi me'a 'oku ke faka'amu ki ai he ta'u 'e 5 kaha'u 'i he ngaue koeni? 'Oku fefe hono toka'i koe 'i heni? ko e ha hono 'uhinga? famili, ho'o ako, pe ko koe pe? Koe ha e me'a 'oku ke faka'amu ke fai 'ehe kakai fefine ma'u mata'i tohi he kaha'u? Toe 'i ai ha me'a kehe?

5. Ko ho'o ngaue fakakolo, taimi ata mo e ha fua.

Ko e ha e ngaahi me'a fakakolo, siasi na'ake kau ai kimu'a pea ke folau ki muli? Ko hai na'a ke kaungangaue mo ia? Ko e ha e ngaue na'ake fai 'i 'api? Fefe ho'o foki mai, kuo liliu e ngaahi me'a koeni? Ko e ha ho'o ngaue 'oku fai ho taimi 'ata? faka-siasi? kuo liliu mo ia? fefe efiafi, faka'osi 'o e uike? Ko hai 'oku ke fakataha mo ia 'i ho taimi 'ata? ko e ha e ngaahi me'a 'oku ke manako ai? Oku ke pehe kuo liliu ho'o to'onga mo'ui hili ho'o foki mai? mo ho famili, kaume'a? 'uhinga? Ko e ha e ngaahi me'a ngaue faka'api 'oku tokoni atu kia koe? Ko hai 'oku ne fai ho'o ngaue faka'api? 'oku totongi? 'oku ha'u tu'o fiha? Fakamatala mai kau ki he'ene ngaue. Fefe ngaue 'a hono toe homou 'api? 'Oku fefe ho va mo e famili ho mali? Oku ke fa'a 'a'ahi ki ai? tu'o fiha? Mou talanoa ki he ha? Ko e ha e kalapu 'oku ke kau ki ai? 'o fai e ha? Fefe ngaahi me'a fakakolo, 'oku ke kau ki ai? Ko e ha e kaha'u 'o e ngaahi kulupu koeni? 'Oku 'i ai ha ngaahi me'a 'oku ke fai, pe faka'ehi'ehi mei ai ko e 'uhi ko e fefine koe?

6. Ngaahi va faka-sosiale.

Ko hai ho ngaahi kaungame'a, famili, koe ha hono 'uhinga? 'Oku 'i ai ha fa'ahinga 'oku ke faka'ehi'ehi mei ai? 'uhinga? Ko hai 'oku mo femahino'aki? 'i 'api, 'i he ngaue, kautaha pe kalapu 'oku ke kau ki ai? Kapau 'oku ke mali, ko e

ha e ngaahi me'a 'oku ke 'amanaki mei ho hoa? Kapau 'oku 'ikai, ko e ha e me'a 'oku ke ui ko e huosepaniti lelei taha? Ko fe feitu'u faka-sosiale 'oku ke 'eva ki ai mo ho kaume'a tangata (so)? Kapau ko e fa'e koe ko e ha ho'o me'a 'oku fai ma'ae famili mo ho'o fanau 'i ho taimi 'ata? Ko hai 'oku fa'a to'otama? Ko hai 'oku tokoni atu 'i hono akonekina kinautolu?

7. Ngaahi me'a 'oku ke poto ai he taimi ni.

Ko e ha e ngaahi kai 'oku ke poto ai? Ko e ha e makasini pe tohi 'oku ke manako hono lau? 'Oku ke fakatau ia? Oku ke manako he ngaahi sipinga fo'ou 'oku ha'u? 'Oku ke ngaue faka'api? fakafuofua ho'o fakamole? fakamole ho'o vahe he ha? 'oku ke hoha'a ki he pa'anga? Ko e ha e ngaahi me'a 'oku ne hoha'asi koe? Ko e ha e ngaahi me'a 'oku 'ikai teke lava ka 'oku poto ai ho'o fa'e? 'Oku ke kau ha fa'ahinga ako? 'Oku ke toe fie hoko atu ho'o ako? ko e ha e me'a 'oku ne ta'ofi koe? 'Oku ke poto he koka'anga? lalanga? faikava, sai'ia he faikava? Ka malolo hao famili 'apongipongi, teke 'ilo e ngaahi me'a ke fai mo ho fatongia?

8. Ko e ha ha'o lau.

Ko e ha ha'o lau ki he fakakaukau'i e famili? fefe kakai fefine, ma'u mata'itohi, ta'e mali? 'Oku 'i ai ha'o faka'anaua kia nautolu? Ko e ha e me'a 'oku ne ta'ofi ho'o fakalakalaka 'i ho'o ngaue? To e 'i ai ha me'a kehe 'oku ke fie talanoa ki ai? Fakamalo lahi atu 'aupito ki ho taimi, mo ho'o fie tokoni mai.

## APPENDIX B

TAPA-MAKING PROCESS

The *ngatu* (is the Tongan term for bark cloth) or *tapa* cloth as it is known in other Polynesian islands, is made from the inner bark of the paper mulberry tree. When the plant is mature from eighteen to twenty-four months it is cut at the base (*amusi*), and left to dry in the shade for five to six days. During this time the bark separates lightly from the stalk, so it can easily be stripped off. The outer bark is then peeled from the long strip and discarded. The smooth inner bark that is left is from two to three inches in width and from twelve to fifteen feet long. It is this inner bark that is soaked for a few hours and then beaten (*fakapa*) with the striped carved a side a wooden mallet or *ike* until it is soft, then again with the flat side of the *ike*. This second process is called '*opo'opo*', and the beating is continued until the *tutu* (bark) becomes a thin sheet of two to three feet wide. At this stage, the finished product is called *feta'aki*.

As in weaving, the women often work in groups to beat the *tapa*, sitting on the ground behind a long smooth log (*tutua*) on which the narrow strips are placed. The sound of beating (*tutu*) can be heard especially in the early hour of the day, unless there is a funeral, in which case a *tapu* is placed in the village and no one is allowed to make noise. The large sheets of *feta'aki* are joined together by rubbing a sticky tuber called *manioke* or *mahoa'a* on the edges of the two pieces then joined.

The designs are sews using coconut mid-ribs on a backing (usually of *pandanus*) or carved in relief on boards. These plaques are known as *kupesi*. The white unpainted *tapa* is then placed over the *kupesi* and rubbed with a light brown dye (*koka*) until the outline of the design becomes visible. The joining together of *feta'aki* and pasting on the dye are done in a *koka'anga*.

The dye is made by squeezing the juice from the bark of *koka* or *tongo* (mangrove) trees. In a separate

procedure the design is outlined in dark brown koka. The original dye is made thick and dark by allowing it to sit for a few weeks underground or by boiling it with pieces of rusty iron. The process of outlining the design is called *tohi-ngatu*.

After it is painted, the large joined piece (approximately fifty yards) is then spread out (*tataki*) on a dewy morning to dry later in the sun. The *koloa* is then folded to store.

## APPENDIX C

EDUCATION STRUCTURE IN TONGA BY AUTHORITY

## GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

----->----->----->  
 97 P/schools                   5 Secondary Schools- Forms 1-6  
                                   H.L. (F4), S.C. (F5), U.E.(F6)  
                                   1 Teachers' College

## WESLEYAN CHURCH

----->----->----->  
 10 Primary Sch.   9 Middle Sch.   10 Secondary Sch.  
   H.L (F4), S.C.(F5), U.E(F6)  
   Univ.Foundation level (F7)  
   at 1 school.

## ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

----->----->----->  
 No Primary Sch.   5 Secondary Sch. H.L.(F4),S.C.(F5)  
   U.E. (F6) (2 schools with F6)

## CHURCH OF LATER DAY SAINTS

----->----->----->  
 No Primary Sch.   10 Middle Sch.   3 Secondary Sch. H.L (F4),  
   (1 school with F5 and F6.)

## ANGLICAN CHURCH

----->----->----->  
 No Primary Sch.   1 Secondary Sch. H.L.(F4),  
   S.C (F5)

## SEVEN DAY ADVENTISTS

----->----->----->  
 3 Primary Sch.   1 Secondary Sch.  
   H.L (F4), S.C.(F5)

## FREE CHURCH OF TONGA

----->----->----->  
 No Primary Sch.   3 Secondary Sch. H.L. (F5)

## TOKAIKOLO CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

----->----->----->  
 No Primary Sch.   1 Secondary School.  
   H.L.(F4), S.C.(F5).

## ATENISI INSTITUTE

----->----->----->  
 No Primary Sch.   1 Secondary Sch.   University offers  
   Associate of Arts,  
   Associate of Science

H.L= Higher Leaving Certificate

S.C.= N.Z School Cert.

U.E.= University Entrance

Source: Ministry of Education Report 1981.

## APPENDIX D

FAIKAVA 'EVA: Courting faikava

(as observed by G. Rogers in Niuatoputapu)

Not all courting is done within the context of kava parties nor are all informal kava parties made the occasion of courting behaviour, but the practice of courting eligible damsels through the medium of kava is so common in Niuatoputapu that it is warranted to call the practice "courting kava" and to regard it an important institution.

There are several well-kept rules and some desirable but not obligatory customs to follow when arranging a kava party in order to court a girl. The initiator of the faikava is expected to provide at least enough dry kava-root for the initial mixing; the girl's home provides the utensils (tokonaki kava). Other prescriptions are that the initiator ought to ask the girl's parent's permission for kava to be prepared in their house, and that providing the young men are dressed decently, and it is not too late at night, the parents ought not to refuse. If however the girl is menstruating at the time, she will defer the faikava by saying "I cannot touch anything wet" ('Ikai te u ala ki he viviku').

It is usual for the boys to have bathed, anointed themselves with fragrant coconut oil, perhaps placed a flower in the hair, and to be wearing clean linen. Long trousers are preferred to vala thus avoiding the need to wear a ta'ovala (formal mat girdle). If a boy is seriously courting a girl it is the custom to keep his intentions hidden, even from his age mates; it is usual therefore for such a boy to collect one or two friends together before approaching the home of the girl and even make it appear accidental that her particular house is being chosen.

Rarely are the procedures at 'courting kava' formal or stiff; the boys usually decide when to begin each new round; the girl knows her job and keeps up the supply without formal orders from a matapule. The seats of honour at such kava gatherings are opposite the bowl at the head of the circle but the younger participants regard it as desirable and a privilege to sit next to

the girl, so they take on the lowly roles of beating the kava and ladling the water, for it is from these vantage points that a boy can pass a few well chosen words to the girl during periods of loud laughter or prolonged noise. A favourite ruse in Falehau faikava was to usurp the position of the water-bearer by seizing the almost empty bucket, returning with it full and pushing in between the previous water-bearer and the girl. If however, either the water-bearer or kava-beater slipped outside for a few minutes they would invariably return to find someone else in their place passing the cups from bowl to drinkers or helping to prepare more kava.

Conversation at young men's kava is a mixture of sexual ribaldry, ridicule, and personal rivalry with considerable emphasis on the sex act. Words referring to male, female, animal-genitals, copulation, sexual desire, are freely and directly used in a general way. Sexual punning, allegorical and allusive comments are directed at particular individuals. The girl is often the object of much of this "horse-play" but she rarely responds with more than a half-smile. Guests or visitors are often "tested" to ascertain their margin of embarrassment and great enjoyment is exhibited if these probes are successful. Even the actions of pounding the kava, pouring in the water over the girl's hands, passing round the full or spinning back the empty cups are sometimes made the subject of sexual humour and allusion. Often there are two conversations going on at once, the one mundane and pedestrian, the other full of sexual allusions and meanings. Or the one conversation may contain two different levels; one referring to everyday activities such as gardening, fishing, house-building, the other punning on things sexual. No male should tolerate such freedom in front of his sister or close female cousin (tuofefine). On only a few occasions were unmarried full brothers observed to share kava in the faikava and never for prolonged periods. In one of these cases the older brother's close friend (kaungame'a or kave), coaxed the younger brother into leaving whilst his older brother was "fishing" (taumata'u) for the girl's attention. "Go and find another faikava", he was told, "and don't sit here with your older brother (ta'okete)". The young boy left soon afterwards.

G L O S S A R Y

akonaki	to advise; to teach, to give instruction or counsel
anga faka-Tonga	Tongan culture; proper Tongan manners
anga ta'e faka'apa'apa	- disrespectful behaviour; unacceptable ways
'api	home; land where one stays or live; family or kingroup; background
'apikolo	town allotment; land in town
'eiki	chief, of chiefly origin,
'eva'i	to court, courting; (of an unmarried girl) to be visited from time to time
fahu	father's sister's daughter; superior,
faifekau	minister of religion; clergyman, missionary, messenger
faikava	to prepare and drink kava together with due form and ceremony; to drink liquor together
faite	to sit on the floor or the ground with the legs bent but not crossed
fakaafe	to invite; to hold a feast for celebration
faka'apa'apa	to do homage or obeisance; to show deference or respect or courtesy, to be courteous
faka'ei'eiki	like or pertaining to a chief, chiefly, in a chiefly or grandiose or formal manner (of words) horrific, chiefly
fakafotu	niece or nephew; properly a female's brother's child
fakalai	to grovel, to curry favour with, to truckle
fakalangilangi'i	to honour, to give splendour to, to grace, to glorify

<i>fakama</i>	causing shame, shameful, disgraceful
<i>faka-Me</i>	May-Day for children when dramas and recitals are made by Sunday School members
<i>fakamolemole</i>	forgiveness
<i>fakanofu hingoa</i>	to entitle a noble
<i>fakapangopango'i</i>	to tease, to sling off in a good-natured way
<i>fakapelepele'i</i>	to make a pet of, to treat with indulgence or favouritism
<i>fakapotopoto</i>	to be matured, to be sensible, to be discreet
<i>fakata'ane</i>	to sit on the floor with the legs crossed
<i>fakato-ki-lalo</i>	to be humble, self-abasing, self-derogatory
<i>fala</i>	mat (of different kinds)
<i>falahola</i>	pandanus' small fruits
<i>fale</i>	house, shelter
<i>falehanga</i>	working house for women; the task of making mats and tapas which is done by women
<i>falekoloa</i>	shop; house for storage of goods
<i>fatongia</i>	duty, obligation; task of men in presenting pigs and kava in a formal kava party
<i>feitu'ui</i>	to visit a bereaved person with a present of food
<i>feta'aki</i> stained	tapa cloth (ngatu) before it is
<i>fetokoni'aki</i>	to help one another
<i>feveitokai'aki</i>	to respect or honour one another, to respect one another's feelings or scruples
<i>fie'eiki</i>	to imagine oneself to be a chief
<i>fiehua</i>	to joke or to tease jokingly

Fielau ko e fefine 'o falehanga - (Proverb)	No wonder, she is a woman of the working house, meaning, that on occasions like funerals or weddings her quality koloa are on display
fiemalie	content, peaceful
fiematamu'a	to be impertinent or disrespectful
fieme'a	to imagine oneself to be something, to be self important or snobbish
fiepalangi	to imitate a palangi, to copy European ways
fiepule	to be bossy, to show authority
fo'ifo'ilea'i	to make ill feeling remarks
fono	a village meeting
fuefue	to swish flies
fula	goitre which believed to be caused by eating a chief's or a superior's food remanents; mucus
ha'a	people, race, tribe, kingroup, group. Defined by Gifford as a patrilineal lineage
hehea	tree with odoriferous fruit which cuts and smells like an over-ripe apple (Eugenia species)
heilala	flowering tree which bears small sweet smelling flowers
hingano	pandanus with white sweet smelling flowers, (male flowers)
hou'eiki	chiefs, a collective of chiefs
huni	flowering bush
kalonikakala	creeper with small sweet smelling flowers, presumed introduced by the missionaries
kalosipani	frangipani, (Plumiera species)
kafa	rope made of coconut fibre
kalapu kava-Tonga	a Tongan kava drinking club (now used to raise fund)

kapapulu	tinned corned beef
katoalu	cosmetics basket
kautaha	co-operative group
kautaha lalanga	weaving group
kautaha lipa'anga	savings group
kautaha tuitui	sewing group
kavenga	burden, load; obligation
kele'a	conch shell
kie	very fine mat
kiekie	ornamental waist band, or grass skirt worn by women
koka'anga	tapa making; gossiping
kole	to make request, to borrow, to ask or beg
koloa	durable property, mainly mats and tapa cloth
koniseti	concert; humorous actions; entertainment
kukuvalu	pandanus' female flowers
kupesi	stencil for making patterns on tapa clothe. It is placed under the feta'aki and the colouring matter is rubbed or dabbed on
Langafonua	to build a nation; a name of a national women's group
langakali	tree bearing clusters of very small brown odoriferous flowers (aglaia edulis species)
langanga	unit of measurement of tapa cloth
laukaupo'uli	night-blooming jasmine
laulalo	base, bottom layer
lau'olunga	upper, top layer
lehilehi'i	to take particular or meticulous care of

liongi	people at a funeral of lower rank than the deceased; inferior relatives of the deceased.
li-pa'anga	to collect money
lohu loa	a long stick used to harvest fruits on tall trees; a superior who practises her fahu right for many generations
lo'i lu	a dish of taro tops cooked with coconut cream (often with meat, fish, or poultry)
lokeha	a specially treated (with coral dust and sea water) fine mat worn by men and women on special occasion
lolo-e-po	the act of turning off the main lights after the watch night in a funeral by the fahu or superior
lolo-Tonga	fragrant Tongan coconut oil
lou'akau	pandanus
lukuluku	to contribute cooked food to make up a feast
malo e hiva	thank you for singing (sometimes used as greetings)
malo e kai	thank you for eating (sometimes used as greetings)
malo e koka	thank you for pasting the tapa
mana	magic; thunder
mapa	tree bearing fruits similar to hehea, (Diospyros species)
mateaki	loyalty
Maumau e 'elili moe loka	- (Proverb) a shell-fish in a hole is just a waste. This means that valuable things left where no one can reach are just a waste
me'a fakafaite	female issues
me'a fakafakata'ane	male issues
me'avale	commoner, person without any chiefly rank

mehekitanga	father's eldest sister
misinale missionary	church's annual collection;
moheofi	to sleep close to one's mother; to receive advice from one's family and kinsmen
molumalu	solemn, impressive, majestic, imposing, stately, dignified, magnificent.
mohokoi	tree bearing small narrow petals flowers (cananga odorata species)
naunau faka'api	home equipment, utensils, domestic materials
ngafingafi	very fine mat; (kie)
ngatu	tapa
ngaue faka-Pule'anga	- government civil servant
ngeia	honour, privilege, prestige
ngulungulu 'a fei'umu	- (Proverb) grumbling but getting on with the job all the same. This means that despite an inferior's complaints the job would still get done.
nopele	noble
pale	wreaths
papata	rough, coarse
papata pe ka na'e lalanga-	(Proverb) Although it is rough, it was woven. This means that despite perhaps the low quality of a thing, there was an effort put into it.
peleti	plate; one's share in the church collection
pipi	tree bearing inedible fruit whose kernel is used for scenting oil
pola	a tray of coconut leaf woven and filled with cooked food for a feast.
polopolo	harvest
poto	clever, being smart, intelligent;

frog	
poto-poto-'a-niu-mui	(Proverb) the cleverness of a young novice or tyro
poupou	to support, being a supporter
puafisi	(Lonicera species) flowers
siale tafa	flowering bush which grows on rocks (Gardenia species)
Si'i-'a-ma'anga-ika-maka	- (Proverb) a small but tasty mouthful of matured fish. This means that despite the smallness of something, the quality is good
sola	foreigner, stranger
supo	soup, stew
Taa-e-lei-moe-tofua'a	- (Proverb) A ivory of a whale is fitting for a whale. This means that a good leading role taken by a chief is fitting for such a person
ta'ena	disrespectful
takai fala	to roll a mat; to become a wife
talamonu	to bless, to wish well
talatuki'i	to place a curse on, to wish ill feeling
tamaha	the daughter of the Female Tu'i Tonga, the highest figure in Tongan social hierarchy
ta'ovala	a piece of mat worn round the waist by both men and women as part of formal national dress
tapu	forbidden, taboo, sacred
tata	the dye used to paste on the pattern to the tapa
tauhi fanau	child keeper; the art of raising children
tau'olunga	dance; chief's eyes,
teka	to roll, to spin
tengihia	to weep, to mourn, to wail at a funeral

tofi'a	hereditary estate
tokonaki-kava	materials used for preparing kava drink, which include a bowl, a square small mat siever, a big and a small stone for beating kava and coconut cups
toto'i 'eiki	of chiefly blood
tou	glue; reciprocal practice
tou'a	female kava maker
toulalanga	to take turn in weaving a mat for each member in a group until all the members have one each
toulanganga	to take turn in making tapa cloth for each member until all the members have one
toume	coconut spathe; to light a fire for one's husband
tu'a	commoner; back; outside
tu'asina	mother's brother
tui kakala	fragrant flowers strung together, worn round the neck or the waist
tuitui	candlenuts; sewing
tupenu	a square piece of material worn round the waist by men, and by women under their dress
'Uli'uli'a mehekitangaga-	(Proverb) Father's sister is black. This means that despite the sister being black and possibly unattractive, she is still a superior to some groups
uloa	fishing, using coconut leaves to trap the fish
'ulumotu'a	elder
'umu	underground oven
'umu-po'uli-'iai-ho'ota-	(Proverb) A relative, that is present when the food from the 'umu is taken out in the dark, will always get for me what I want

'umu-tuvai	a cooked pig sent to the bride's family after she is proved a virgin
vai-siaine	ripe bananas cooked in coconut cream (often served as dessert)
vala	clothes; square piece of cloth worn round the waist by males (same as tupenu)
veihalo	crushed raw coconut meat cooked in fresh coconut milk

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