Marist Presence and Perceptions in Tonga

1840 - 1900

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Translated from French
by F. Tavo

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SUMMARY

The contribution of the missionaries of the Society of Mary to the history of the Kingdom of Tonga has never been fully explored by English-speaking historians, even though Marists have left behind a great deal of material relating to the development of Tongan society and the Protestant missions, particularly Methodist, during the nineteenth century. This study, based on the Marist archives, aims to provide a complementary approach to the history of Tonga. Thanks to this work we discover a Polynesian minority to whom Catholicism has given its religious, cultural, political, and social identity. The historical perspective that results from the establishment of the Marist mission and the development of a Catholic community allows us to establish the chronological structure of this work in a few points: religious, cultural, political, social, and economic. Adding the historiographical view to the chronological study allows us to define how the Marists perceived the events in which they took part and of which they were witnesses. The study begins in 1842 when the Marist Fathers settled in Tonga, and continues until 1900 when the British protectorate was established and retreat of the Catholic mission from the limelight. This work is divided into three main parts: the first part relates the expansion of the Catholic mission in a mainly Protestant island context, and the perception of the Marist Fathers upon their arrival. In the second, the various aspects of the Marists' apostolate and development of the missions in Tongatapu are studied, as well as the political and military ramifications of the appearance of a Catholic community in a context of international competition between France, the United Kingdom, Germany, and the United States. The third part is a study of the diplomatic relations between France and Tonga since the signing of the Convention in 1855, which recognised the sovereignty of King George I. The writings of the Marists are of great interest as painstaking records of all the changes that took place in Tonga during the second half of the 19th century. The characteristics of the Catholic community in Tonga and its relationship with other communities in neighbouring Pacific islands are also broadly discussed. [*translator: this summary is given in French on the book's back cover*]

PREFACE

The religious dimension of the first contacts between European powers and Oceanian peoples during the 19th century was primordial; it often preceded the political dimension. If the French or British governments sought to rely on their respective missionaries to consolidate their colonial empire, the latter, although generally loyal to their nations of origin, had arrived first and lived a spiritual adventure in which the political aspects were initially very secondary. Convinced of the universality of their faith, they came to bring its truth to the peoples of Oceania to whom they dedicated their lives. The appreciation of the missionary enterprise remains a matter of personal choice; but it is important here not to judge people from the 19th century by one of the sensitivities and contradictions of the 20th century. Neither the era nor the cultures were the same, and the intellectual and ideological contexts were much more Manichean then than they are today.

For the European public opinions at the time, the missionaries were heroes, the unarmed spokesmen of civilization and the proclaimers of the Gospel. The dangers they incurred in the face of restless "peoples", considered "savage", even "cannibals", the fevers which undermined, the isolated conditions in which they lived, gave rise to edifying stories, read in religious schools and published in newspapers. Nineteenth-century missionaries were therefore popular. The peoples of Europe recognized in them the best of their children, those who gave their lives in the service of a great cause. From time to time doctors, educators, linguists, sometimes ethnologists, they represented the gentle and humanist side of a West that was otherwise often brutal, dominating and materialistic.

But all these missionaries were not made of the same metal. Although animated at heart by the same superior certainty, Protestants and Catholics saw each other as implacable rivals, bearers of irreconcilable messages. They continued in Oceania the deep disagreement which had set them off against each other in Europe during the fratricidal religious wars of the 16th and 17th centuries. The fact that the former were all British and the latter all French further added the rivalry of nations to the war of the churches. Never perhaps were the Protestants so Reformed and the Catholics so Roman as when they confronted each other in these same archipelagos, far from everything, and where they nevertheless were under the impression that nothing other than the fate and honour of their respective churches were at stake.

Protestants, largely Scottish or English, were often politically and financially powerful, sober and rigorous. They came with their families, preaching an austere and bare faith. The Catholics, in black cassocks, single men, their chests barred with an immense crucifix, brought "the church" with its splendour, its sacraments, its rituals, the Marian cult. Faith was no doubt of the same force, but carried by European tribes of opposite cultures and sensitivities. Facing them, the Oceanians were spoiled for choice, at least in principle. The Catholic missionaries, if they were favoured in the French territories of the Pacific, were marginalized in the British territories, where very often they appeared as a counter-power, which was often their weakness, but sometimes their strength, as in the Tongan archipelago. The French missionaries of the Mission of Mary, to whom the Pope had entrusted the evangelization of Oceania, landed in 1837 in the magnificent bay of the island of Vava'u. First contact, first failure. They found the place occupied for a decade already by their English Protestant rivals of the Wesleyan Society, who sternly advised the Tongan chiefs not to receive them. A second attempt, made in 1842

from Wallis, succeeded thanks to the welcome given to Catholic missionaries by the Tongan clans, who had remained loyal to paganism and "rebellious" to the new power. Their traditional leaders were looking for “comprehensive” foreign allies: Catholic missionaries had been described to them as envoys of the devil. This image made them quite sympathetic.

This is how, thanks to a local fracture within the traditional society, the Catholic mission, reorganizing itself around the pagan clans vanquished in the internal wars which tore the island apart, could lay its foundations. The division of roles was then fixed for each of the protagonists: to the Protestants the centre, to the Catholics the margin. To one the power, to the second “the opposition”. In the end, it seems that the Catholic mission was able to take advantage fairly quickly of this initially uncomfortable situation. The voice of the French Marist fathers today seems very distant, their language in Tonga - ours - has fallen into oblivion. However, the hundreds of letters they wrote and the diaries they left represent a remarkably rich historical and ethnographic source. These given writings, little known to European historians, were even more so to Tongans today, cut off as they are by the language barrier of one of the sources of their history.

In 1987, we received a visit at ORSTOM from Tonga’s Minister of Education, the Honourable Sir Langi Kavaliku, in the company of Professor Paul de Deckker, an ethno-historian, at that time attached to the Secretariat of State for the Pacific. Sir Langi Kavaliku asked us to carry out a historiographical analysis of the archives of the French Marist mission, in order to make Tonga aware of this forgotten side of their past, given that the only known history of the kingdom was that built by the Methodist mission. These still untapped texts on the beginnings of missionary establishment in the archipelago dealt with sensitive subjects and were of extreme interest to Tongans, anxious to better understand their own history. The French Ministry of Foreign Affairs supported the request of the Secretariat of State and offered its support thanks to the sympathetic interest shown by Mrs. Marie-Martine Carmi and her successors. We made a proposal to Caroline Duriez-Toutain, a doctoral student in History at the University of Paris VII, who accepted the challenge. The research was carried out on site in collaboration with two Tongan historians, Ms. ‘Eseta Fusitua and Sela Havea Fukofuka. Paul de Deckker took it upon himself to supervise this work and to bring to it, in addition to his support as an ethno-historian, his already long research experience on the first contacts between Europeans and Oceanians.

We present here the results of this long research. Caroline Duriez-Toutain has fully invested herself in it by literally “marrying” its subject and all the associated issues. Two stays at the archives in Tonga, a systematic examination of the archives of the Marist mission of Oceania in Rome, enabled her to achieve her objective. We learn from her work how to better understand the vision that the Marist missionaries had of Tongan society and of their Protestant rivals; we also learn about their own personalities and the image they had of their mission. This dual aim can only be satisfactory to Tongan readers. This text is presented in two volumes. The introduction to the sources of Marist historiography, written by Caroline Duriez-Toutain, has become a veritable book on the history of the Catholic mission in Tonga. We won't complain about it. The second, long awaited by our Tongan friends, is a collection of extracts and a critical bibliography of sources written in French on the history of Tonga, both missionary and diplomatic.

These large extracts from letters or reports had to be reconstituted, as far as possible, almost in their entirety. They are fascinating and revealing of a swept away era. We will see that the fight against heresy, that is to say Protestantism, is often displayed as more important than the fight against what the missionaries called "idolatry", that is to say paganism. This "war of the churches" was also physical, through interposed Tongan clans. All of these stories read well. They must be taken at face value, by placing them in their context. The lived testimony that they bring to the still pagan Tongan society is a mine of ethnographic lessons. Beyond their religious judgements, the Marist missionaries often show complicity towards their "folk", allowing themselves to be won over by them as much as they were won over to them. This is not surprising if we consider these few lines written by Father Chevron in 1843:

"What has won us the natives is the care we have taken to conform to their customs: we live like them, contenting ourselves with what they bring us... When we go to see them, we sleep like them on the ground covered with a mat or on the planks of a few boats: we attend their festivals, their kava... We neither buy nor sell anything... But what is most precious in their eyes is care for the sick... In a word, we try to do good... even to the last of these poor heathens and to the Protestants themselves... We try not to tire these poor stomachs disgusted with instructions, to whom the missionaries have become unbearable in this way as in a thousand others" (p. 154).

Both to understand these missionaries from another era, straight out of our campaigns of the last century, and to "see" the Tongans with their own eyes, editing these texts was necessary. They are of interest to our own society as they are of interest to Oceanian society and represent a common heritage for our two cultures, between which they have created a connection.

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INTRODUCTION

The study of religious missions is a fundamental element in understanding the structures of the island societies of Oceania. Nevertheless, it is clear that, until now, the contribution of the Catholic missionaries of the Society of Mary has hardly been taken into account. This more or less opaque veil, concealing the presence of the Marists in Tonga, attests to the Anglo-Saxon predominance throughout the Pacific and in this archipelago in particular. This predominance has been evident since the end of the 18th century, both politically, religiously and culturally. The establishment in 1842 of a Catholic mission in Tonga constituted, for the Methodist Protestant missionaries, an element of intrusion and a factor of destabilization. Strengthened by their anteriority which had enabled them, for the duration of a generation, to establish their religious monopoly, the Protestant missionaries experienced the arrival of their rivals as a real aggression.

With a view to converting populations linked by a duty of allegiance to their chief, and with a view to asserting their authority and their influence, the Protestant missionaries had prioritized their relations with the chiefs. They had inculcated in these elites not only the principles of doctrine by initiating them to the study of the texts of the Bible, but also moral rules whose application was aimed at the development of a virtuous and hard-working society. The threat posed by the Catholic missionaries was all the more keenly felt by their Protestant counterparts as the Marists carried a message which quickly appeared to them to be religiously subversive and politically seditious. With the eyes of God now upon their followers, the Wesleyans deployed their forces to prevent this "Catholic contamination". The term might seem excessive, but it really illustrates the nature of the relations between the Protestant missionaries and the Catholic missionaries who rubbed shoulders in Tonga in the 19th century, relations marked by a deep enmity which reflects on the relations between the members of each of the two communities.

The attitude of rejection adopted by the Protestant missionaries towards their Catholic counterparts, exacerbated by the confinement of the environment, must be considered in a more general framework of profound dogmatic differences. At the centre of the conflict was the grace of God, accepted by Catholics as a gift, accepted by Protestants as a reward. The doctrine of confession was also an important part of their feuds, with Catholics pitting a God of forgiveness against a God of penance.

Little by little, the priests of the Marist mission were joined by the most humbled who saw in them a religious and temporal alternative to the precariousness of their situation. It is in this that the Catholic religion appeared in Tonga as subversive. The church of the chiefs now opposed to that of the humbled, while the church of modernity was opposed to that of tradition.

In addition to doctrinal differences, the antagonism which divided the Protestant missionaries and the Catholic missionaries rested on a cultural and political rivalry whose stakes exceeded the Tongan insular framework. As they generally made each other the standard-bearers of their respective nations, the governments of France and the United Kingdom found in them a force likely to serve the interests of their colonial policy.

In this regard, and contrary to the Wesleyans who were driven to foreign missions by the sole concern of converting the pagans there, the Picpus Fathers and the Marists responded, in

Oceania, to the joint desire of France and the Vatican to seal their restored union in giving a new impetus to French Catholicism, undermined by the Revolution and by the negotiations relating to the establishment of the Concordat of 1801. However, this task necessarily implied that the progression of Protestantism and the influence of the United Kingdom were to be kept in check. In this context, the Catholic missionaries obtained the effective support of the French naval forces and the threat which they represented for the Protestant missionaries was thereby increased. With no hope of temporal intervention, the Wesleyan missionaries urged their followers to bow down and pray in order to ward off from their shores the "papist peril" that loomed on the horizon. Having become unconcerned about getting involved in Oceania where it was represented by its Australian settlement colonies, the United Kingdom left to its missionaries the task of spreading its greatness there, thus offering France the unexpected opportunity to assert itself there.

A reluctant British colonial policy, native Protestant elites, marginalized Catholic missionaries, and a France eager to raise its prestige constituted the elements upon which the various balances of power were established. The establishment of the French protectorate over Tahiti in 1842, on the initiative of Commander Dupetit-Thouars, upset the terms of this equation. Outraged by France's audacity, the United Kingdom came out of its reserve and sought to extend its areas of influence in Oceania. This French initiative contrasted with its policy of merely establishing ports of call. It revealed the predominant role that men in the field, naval officers, administrators and missionaries had to play in this part of the world, so far from decision-making centres. While it confirmed the progression of Catholicism in Oceania, the affair of the protectorate over Tahiti reinforced the antagonism between the principal European actors. It was in this context and at this time that the Marists landed in Tonga. They had been preceded by a reputation as conquerors craving land and power, a reputation peddled by Protestant missionaries who cited the example of the French hold on Tahiti. The nature of their relations with the native Protestant population, that is to say the elites who hold the land, was for a long time affected by this original mistrust. Thus, the political antagonisms, the religious differences and beyond the cultural rivalries which contrasted France and the United Kingdom were transposed to an island scale. However, the Catholic missionaries in Tonga gradually became aware, not without having previously used it, of the harmful consequences of French protection, whose interventions served them against the native population rather than favouring their integration. After distancing themselves from both the French authorities and the Tongan nobility, they managed to carve out a religious and cultural space specific to the Catholic community in Tonga.

The objective of this study was to examine the means by which the Marists integrated themselves, despite strong resistance from the elites and a particularly rigid social stratification, into traditional Tongan society. It made it possible to identify, from the analysis of the Marist perception, the main lines of the history of Tonga’s Catholic community, and to define the main elements of its religious, cultural, social, political and even economic identity. In this, it offers an unexplored side of Tongan history considered from the angle of a minority whose expression was affirmed through the Marist mission.

CHAPTER I

TONGA, A FIELD OF EVANGELIZATION

I. The era of the pioneers

1 - The advent of Christianity in Tonga

The first attempt to convert the population of the archipelago to Christianity was undertaken at the initiative of the London Missionary Society (LMS). Created in 1795, this predominantly Calvinist interdenominational society situated itself within the perspective of the evangelical revival which drew its intellectual and socioeconomic foundations from the Reformation of the 16th century in Europe and the industrial revolution of the 18th century in Great Britain[1]. In 1796, the Society chartered the *Duff*, commanded by Captain Wilson, for Tahiti, Tonga and the Marquesas. When they approached the shores of Tongatapu on April 12, 1797, ten of the thirty missionaries who had volunteered to evangelize these distant lands disembarked[2]. From the first days, they placed themselves under the protection of the Tu'i Kanokupolu Mumui and his son Tuku'aho, the most powerful chief of Tongatapu at that time. Despite initial friendly contact, relations between the missionaries and Tongans deteriorated rapidly. Selected for their religious zeal and their manual skills, these missionaries suffered from their ignorance of Polynesian languages. Oral communication proved laborious, if not impossible at first. However, they obtained some respite thanks to the fascination that their material goods and their technical know-how exerted on the population who considered them as the products and manifestations of a higher power. As long as they were able to satisfy the temporal demands of the Tongans, who were more interested in obtaining these goods especially metal tools and fabrics than in instructions about the elementary concepts of Christianity, the balance of relations was maintained. But as the reserves were depleted, the position of the missionaries became more precarious. Among the ten missionaries distributed in the various villages of Tongatapu, only one had received ordination and was authorized to administer the sacraments. The others were small craftsmen of modest social origin, with enough education to read and write, but whose inexperience and lack of adequate training prevented any adaptation to the Polynesian island context. For these first missionaries, evangelization passed above all through learning to work. In this logic, economic development and social well-being were to generate a spiritual and moral evolution. For these men, civilization and Christianization went hand in hand. Thus, the failure of their enterprise was due not so much to the content of the message - which was later successfully conveyed by the Wesleyan missionaries - as to their inability to adapt to the local political and social context. Moreover, these first missionaries suffered from the animosity which their presence aroused among the beachcombers[3]. The privileged status

[1] HOWE K., *Where the Waves Fall, a New South Sea islands History from First Settlement to Colonial Rule*, p.109.
[2] *idem*, p.117.
[3] The number of beachcombers, convicts who escaped from Botany Bay prison or deserted from ships in the Pacific, and sailors who survived the Tongan attacks on certain crews at the beginning of the 19th century, is difficult to assess. The precariousness of their status contributes to the instability of this group.

that the latter had acquired among the chiefs was threatened by this wave of new arrivals who had an infrastructure and means superior to their own. Moreover, these missionaries propagated the values which had been at the origin of their rejection of British society, values which the men of the Church tried to substitute for those of the Tongan society in which these beachcombers had evolved with ease. A sharp antagonism thus developed between these two groups. The beachcombers, implanted in Tonga for several years, undertook campaigns of denigration against the missionaries, taking advantage of the linguistic gaps compared to the latter. They drew the attention of Tongans to the evil influence of pious books: which were presented as enchanted collections while meetings for prayers were portrayed as occult sessions whose objective was the preparation of harmful spells. However, at that time, their arguments were reinforced by an epidemic whose consequences were attributed to the missionaries and which provoked their massive rejection. The defection of one of them, George Vason, who contracted a marriage with one of the daughters of the family of Mulikiha'amea, the last Tu'i Ha'atakalaua, and then abandoned his missionary vocation, sounded the death knell of the mission[4]. Despondency in their community was at its height when civil war broke out following the assassination of Tuku'aho in 1799. Three missionaries were killed and the remaining six left the island on January 21, 1800 aboard the *Betsey*[5]. The missionaries of the LMS could only draw up an acknowledgment of failure. However, there is no doubt that their presence, their actions and their speeches against which the beachcombers defended themselves vehemently, had an impact on the process of dislocation of traditional values at a time when these were already weakened by the decline of the Tu'i Tonga and the dismemberment of the monarchy. Indeed, the activities of the missionaries of the London Missionary Society constituted a questioning of the social and religious foundations of Tongan society, hence the rejection which manifested itself all the more violently as it expressed, in a final burst, the despair of a society adrift.

2- The establishment of the Wesleyan mission

In 1820, the archipelago of Tonga was the site of a new attempt at evangelization. It was carried out at the initiative of the Reverend Walter Lawry, a practicing Methodist pastor in Sydney[6]. Motivated by the stories of one of the members of the expedition previously organized by the LMS and who was established in New South Wales at the end of his stay in Tonga, he pleaded

[4] RUTHERFORD N., *Friendly Islands, a History of Tonga*, p.99.

[5] *idem*, p.101.

[6] Walter Lawry, pioneer of the Wesleyan mission in Tonga where he stayed for fourteen months in 1822-1823, was born in 1793 in a small village in Cornwall. He served there as a preacher before leaving his native land for New South Wales. Self-taught, he trained in theology by preaching to convicts during the nine-month crossing between London and Sydney. Shortly before his departure for Tonga, he inherited a fortune - with which he financed the establishment of the mission - from his father-in-law, a large Sydney landowner. He was accompanied by his young wife, their son a few days old, a carpenter, a blacksmith, one of his most faithful servants, a former convict in charge of maintaining the vegetable and market garden crops of the mission and a Marquesan converted by the LMS. Seven sheep, seven cows and a bull were to allow this group to meet their needs during the first months. Their adventure was closely followed in Australia thanks to the reports sent regularly by Walter Lawry to the Sydney Gazette. He obtained from the son of Mulikiha'amea land in Mu'a in exchange for a saw, a planer and five chisels. Enthusiastic and impulsive by nature, willingly quarrelsome, but ill-equipped to face the difficulties of the mission, he resented the daily intrusion of the Tongan population into his house and his method of evangelization consisted in favouring discussions with the chiefs. However, the speeches of two Tongans sent to Sydney to be educated there produced a real shock on the population who approached the missionary. On the occasion of his departure, he took along a young Tongan who returned to preach on his native island after having been trained in London.

in London with the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Committee for the opening of a mission in this archipelago. The Wesleyan Methodist Conference, which wanted to carve out its place in Oceania after the announcement of the successes achieved in Tahiti by its rival, the London Missionary Society, came out in favour of this request and granted it the means necessary for the realization of this project[7].

Walter Lawry arrived in Tonga in 1822, accompanied by his family, a carpenter, George Lilley, a blacksmith, Charles Tindall, and an interpreter from the Marquesas Islands, Macanoe. He obtained the protection of Palu, the son of Mulikiha'amea, the last Tu'i Ha'atakalaua, and settled in Mu'a. Despite the support of this leader, motivated by the prospect of acquiring some wealth rather than by the missionary's speech, his stay was short-lived. Unable to overcome the lack of resources, to satisfy the chiefs' greed for material objects, to face up to the hostility of the traditional priests, and to shake off the indifference of the majority of the population, he embarked for Australia in 1823 to report on the status of the Tonga mission, and entrusted the upkeep and administration of the mission to its two partners. Charles Tindall withstood the difficulties for only a few months, while George Lilley persevered until 1827. Meanwhile, the interpreter, Macanoe, succumbed to the consequences of an illness[8]. Although the feeling of distrust generated by the austere appearance and the rigorous morality of these men persisted after their departure - the population wondered about their real motivations - the process of evangelization of the archipelago was nevertheless initiated for the benefit of the Wesleyans.

A team composed of the Reverends John Hutchinson and John Thomas succeeded Walter Lawry on June 28, 1826[9]. Their first objective was to settle in Mu'a where their predecessors had attempted to introduce the first foundations of the Christian faith. They were dissuaded from doing so by Charles Tindall, who advised them to find a place more favourable to the development of the mission, as the attitude of Palu was not giving hope for any effective support on his part. They then contacted Ata, the chief of Hihifo. The latter, anxious to acquire the prestige conferred by the presence on his lands of these honourable guests, gave them a piece of land at Kolovai. However, the Wesleyan missionaries faced new disappointments. Ata, who limited his commitment to formal support, refused to join the new religion and forbade his people from visiting the missionaries. All appearances thus contributed to making the failure of this second attempt obvious. On the point of giving up, John Thomas took advantage of the arrival of a new assistant, I.V.M. Weiss, sent by the Wesleyan committee in Sydney, to charter a ship to repatriate the personnel and goods of the mission from Tonga. The members of this committee condemned this initiative and undertook a final attempt by ordering the dispatch of new reinforcements[10]. Indeed, the establishment of a mission in Tonga was already a strategic issue for Methodist Protestants because the archipelago of Samoa was to be

[7] LATUKEFU S., *Church and State in Tonga, the Wesleyan Methodist Missionaries and Political Development, 1822-1875*, p.27.
[8] LATUKEFU S., *Church and State in Tonga, the Wesleyan Methodist Missionaries and Political Development, 1822-1875*, p.28.
[9] John Thomas was undoubtedly the great figure of the Wesleyan mission in Tonga where he spent a little more than thirty years. He was born in 1796 in an English village in the township of Strafford where he was placed as a blacksmith's apprentice after a few brief years at the village school. A self-taught local preacher, he was drawn to the missions by a deep faith. On his journey to Sydney he studied the testimony of William Mariner to immerse himself in Tongan culture and to learn the language. In contrast, his companion John Hutchinson, with whom he soon became a rival, left few memories in Tonga, where he stayed briefly. The two men settled in Tonga with their wives, a carpenter, and Walter Lawry's former servant, who was the most experienced man in the group.
[10] RUTHERFORD N, *Friendly Islands, a History of Tonga*, p.116.

entrusted, according to a tacit agreement which was later called into question, to the London Missionary Society; the archipelago of Fiji did not seem suitable due to the savage character of its inhabitants, while the Wallis and Futuna islands did not seem to meet their ambitions due to their modest size and influence.

In 1827, Nathaniel Turner, William Cross and I.V.M. Weiss arrived in Tonga and concentrated their activities in the Nuku'alofa area, while John Thomas and John Hutchinson continued their work in Hihifo despite the lack of tangible results. In 1828 John Hutchinson was forced to leave Tonga due to poor health. In 1829, John Thomas abandoned the mission of Hihifo, whose population seemed desperately obstinate, to join forces with those of the missionaries of Nuku'alofa, where they had some chance of establishing a Protestant nucleus because of the sympathy shown them by the Tu'i Kanokupolu. In 1830, John Thomas was transferred to Ha'apai to teach the gospel to the great chief of that archipelago, who was none other than Taufa'ahau. In 1833, when Ata breathed his last before rejoining the spirits of his ancestors, the Wesleyans could draw up a positive balance sheet of their influence: they recorded a growing number of conversions and saw the gradual disappearance of the prejudices that had kept the population from hearing their preaching[11]. On the other hand, the conflictual relations previously established with the beachcombers subsided. The arguments advanced against the members of the *London Missionary Society* by the latter, who took advantage of the inexperience of the missionaries, the credulity of the population, and the benevolence of the chiefs towards them for denigrating these men of faith, were refuted by the exemplary attitude of these newcomers who also benefited from constantly renewed resources. Supplanted by the missionaries in terms of material wealth and intellectual knowledge, they gradually lost their credibility in the eyes of the chiefs who turned, in order to ensure their prestige and gain access to the possession of European goods, to their more recommendable hosts, to which the staffs of the ships at anchor in the harbour did not fail to show their consideration. However, the missionaries had to once again overcome the hostility of the crews of whalers or merchant ships and traders. Elevated as defenders of morality to fight against the consumption of alcohol and protect the virtue of women, the Methodists condemned and denounced the loose morals of sailors. Their presence also constituted an obstacle to the trades in which these traders were usually engaged. The system of exchanges based on the subjective appreciation of foodstuffs for the benefit of the most knowledgeable was in fact challenged by the missionaries who initiated the Tongans into the intricacies of trade.

The Wesleyan missionaries who wanted a change in traditional values, in the same way as the leaders excluded from power, established themselves to the detriment of the privileged classes

[11] In 1822, three Tahitian auxiliaries, members of the *London Missionary Society*, went to Vava'u to teach catechism to the chief of the archipelago. While two of them abandoned the mission and joined the clan of Finau's warriors, the third fled to Tongatapu where he obtained land to support his family. In 1826, a similar experiment was repeated at Nuku'alofa. The LMS thus gave in to the demands of the Tu'i Kanokupolu, Aleamotu'a. The two Tahitian catechists had been introduced to Tonga by Takai, a Fijian from the Lau Archipelago; Takai had followed Reverend W. Lawry's instructions some years earlier. These preachers benefited from the work done in the late eighteenth century by their predecessors in the *London Missionary Society* and by the Reverend Walter Lawry who had spent fourteen months in the islands in 1822. These early experiments can be considered a failure in that they did not result in any real settlement. Nevertheless, these missionaries, accompanied by their families, contributed to a new image of the white man. Their daily behaviour and moral rigour enabled the native population to distinguish this new type of European from the deserting sailors or beachcombers. In addition, they helped to initiate a process of Christian settlement by introducing the foundations of Protestant dogma and technical progress. Thus, in late 1827, when they arrived in Tonga, the Wesleyans discovered a community of three hundred Christians who regularly gathered in the chapel for common prayer.

of the monarchy who marked their opposition by demonstrating their attachment to the religion of their ancestors. Similarly, the priests of the traditional cult, threatened in their existence, tried to obstruct the spread of Christianity without much influence however because of their restricted domestic role[12]. But the Wesleyan mission especially took advantage of the surge of curiosity it aroused among the population, flattered and intrigued by the interest of which it was the object.

In addition, and in order to reconcile the various constraints imposed by the organization of the mission and their objectives of evangelization, the Wesleyan missionaries defined a policy of integration - permitted by the possibility they enjoyed of delegating their word - of the natives in their works and mission activities. The implementation of this strategy had the major implication of encouraging their contacts with the different strata of society. Village chief or peasant, everyone was able to access a status within the missionary structure. On January 4, 1828, as soon as they were baptized, seven young people were called to the mission where they were entrusted with the role of assistant to the missionaries: the organization of feasts, prayer meetings and Sunday schools were partially their responsibility. Now closely associated with the progress of the mission, these native auxiliaries gradually climbed the ranks of the Wesleyan hierarchy - local preachers, class leaders, catechists and then missionary assistants[13]; for these young Tongans, condemned by tradition to maintain the rank determined by their birth, the mission presented the opportunity to improve their social condition. Indeed, the progressive establishment of the Wesleyan missionaries enabled them to exert a profound influence on the social and cultural structures of the kingdom. The consequences of their establishment appeared from the first decades. When the Wesleyan missionaries arrived in 1826, the population was ready to receive their teaching. In this context, education constituted the foundation of their evangelizing and civilizing mission. Relating the content of his interview with the Wesleyan missionaries in Tonga in 1826, Dumont d'Urville showed optimism for the future of the mission; however, he expressed some reservations about the motivations of the chiefs, respectful of the Reverend Thomas, but more sensitive to technical instructions than to that of doctrine[14]. In 1840, after fourteen years of laborious and obstinate work, the effects were made manifest and could be observed in most of the islands of the archipelago. For the Wesleyans, education was a means of disseminating the teachings of the Bible and improving its understanding through reading, but also of distancing the population from their ancestral beliefs. The first attempt to set up a school in Kolovai ended in failure due to the refusal of the village chief, Ata, to accept the use of English as a working tool and participation of the wife of Reverend Thomas as teacher in charge. However, the development of schools took place in Nuku'alofa under the impulse of the Reverends Nathaniel Turner and William Cross. The first establishment was opened on March 17, 1828. In September of the same year, it had one hundred and fifty registered students. The literacy and education movement continued in Havelu, Fanga and Hofoa. In 1831, the shortage of personnel and the increase in demand necessitated the use of additional resources. The installation of a printing press resolved the issue of document distribution. On April 14, 1831, a school book of a few pages was printed at three thousand copies. The popularity of the schools engendered a

[12] RUTHERFORD N., *Friendly Islands, a History of Tonga*, p.116.

[13] *idem*, p.68.

[14] DUMONT D'URVILLE J., *Voyage de la corvette "l'Astrolabe" exécuté par ordre du Roi pendant les années 1826-1827-1828-1829*...pp.218-223.

movement of conversions. Teachers were recruited from local preachers, but many had not received adequate training. Consequently, the missionaries organized weekly meetings during which the teachers were advised and encouraged in their work. On July 13, 1841, the Reverend Francis Wilson undertook the creation in Neiafu (Vava'u) of an institute intended for their training. Taufa'ahau, who was in charge of it, gave the missionaries a portion of land so that they could provide for the culinary needs of the students. At the end of this training, the majority of the students took on the function of teacher, while some of them achieved the responsibilities of missionary assistants. In addition to education, another sector favoured the widening of contacts and the gathering around the missionaries of a large part of the population. These were the distribution of medicines and the care of the sick. Daily consultations were organized by the Wesleyan missionaries. In this way, they constituted a solid network which largely contributed to their success and limited, a few years later, any massive movement of conversions to Catholicism.

II - The successes of the Wesleyan mission

1- The Wesleyan Mission and the Tu'i Kanokupolu: A Timely Alliance

Without the support and implicit assent of the chiefs, the Protestant missionaries would not have managed to break through the very rigid structure of traditional society. This strategy of alliance with the chiefs, disappointed by the traditional system, served the interests of the two protagonists in the long term.

Since the beginning of the 19th century, internal struggles ravaged the archipelago, which was transformed into a vast field of civil wars[15]. The division within the aristocracy led to the emergence of the archipelagos of Vava'u, Ha'apai and the island of Tongatapu as separate political entities. The progressive elimination of rival chiefs, assassinated or killed in combat, enabled some to arrogate bits of power to themselves while all aspired to extend their authority and their prerogatives. The association with the Wesleyan missionaries constituted for the more ambitious an additional means of achieving their ends. While the Vava'u and Ha'apai archipelagos were placed under the control of chiefs whose authority was unquestioned, Tongatapu became the scene of rivalries between the Tu'i Kanokupolu Aleamotu'a on the one hand, and the most powerful families and influential people in the kingdom, the Ha'a Havea and Ha'a Ngata, guardians of traditional values and supporters of a rejection of Christianity on the other hand[16]. Supported by the missionaries who found in him a precious spokesman for the Gospel, Aleamotu' a foreseeing the various advantages that an alliance with these missionaries could bring him - who did not fail to evoke the power of their nation - summoned Finau, chief of Vava'u, and Taufa'ahau, chief of Ha'apai, in order to initiate hostilities against the pagans who threatened his sovereignty. With the Wesleyan missionaries having suggested the possibility of a British military intervention in the event that the lives of the new converts were threatened by the pagan leaders, Aleamotu'a advised Finau and Taufa'ahau to join his camp[17]. Taufa'ahau subscribed accordingly and more willingly to this project as it served his own ambitions nourished by the prospect of succeeding his uncle. Aleamotu'a was baptized on January 18, 1830, and took the name Siosaia (Josiah); Taufa'ahau received the sacrament the

[15] GIFFORD E. W., *Tongan Society*, pp.209-219.
[16] RUTHERFORD N., *Friendly Islands, a History of Tonga*, p.124.
[17] LATUKEFU S., *Church and State in Tonga, the Wesleyan Methodist Missionaries and Political Development, 1822-1875*. p.61.

following year, on August 7, 1831. The latter chose the name George, in reference to King George IV of England, of whom the missionaries had repeatedly praised[18].

The following year, Finau, who had agreed to convert without however receiving baptism, ordered the immediate destruction of the pagan temples. Those who tried to rebel were crushed by Taufa'ahau's men who came to help. When he died in 1833, Finau transmitted his title of supreme chief to Taufa'ahau who then governed under the Protestant banner the islands of Ha'apai and Vava'u whose populations, yielding to the pressure of their chiefs, converted en masse. However, Taufa'ahau was yet to accomplish the ultimate phase of unifying the kingdom by establishing himself as supreme ruler of Tongatapu. The success of his enterprise was conditioned by the achievement of two objectives: the first consisted in neutralizing the influence of the Tu'i Tonga who held, by virtue of tradition and despite the questioning of its political power, the position with the highest social status, an obstacle to the ascent of the Tu'i Kanokupolu. The second aimed to obtain the support of all the chiefs of the archipelago. The accomplishment of these goals relied heavily on the implicit collaboration established between Taufa'ahau and the Wesleyan missionaries. The latter, by disseminating a doctrine which gradually replaced the foundations of polytheistic religion, threatened the status of the Tu'i Tonga, who was its first dignitary. However, this new religion, introduced with the unconditional support of Taufa'ahau, exerted a greater attraction on the population just as the latter [Taufa'ahau] was preying on the most lively doubts with regard to traditional religious values which did not know how to preserve civil peace, ruined by several years of conflict. Moreover, the presence of the Wesleyan missionaries alongside Taufa'ahau allowed him to raise the prestige which benefited all those who surrounded themselves with European advisers.

The troubles which had shaken the foundations of royalty at the end of the 18th century had brought to light the failings of traditional power. The British conception of monarchy was beginning to spread through the voice of Wesleyan missionaries, and Taufa'ahau planned to establish a monarchy in Tonga based on the Anglo-Saxon model. With the Tu'i Ha'atakalaua dynasty extinct since the death of Mulikiha'amea in 1799, Taufa'ahau had to concentrate his efforts on the political elimination of his rival Tu'i Tonga Laufilitonga of whose sovereignty the chiefs, hostile to the supremacy of the Tu'i Kanokupolu and to Protestantism, were attempting to restore.

In 1826, the archipelago of Ha'apai was once again transformed into a battlefield. Taufa'ahau and Laufilitonga took turns attacking the enemy fortresses. The fort of Velata, where the Tu'i Tonga was entrenched, gave way under the repeated attacks of Taufa'ahau, and Laufilitonga, defeated, exiled himself to Tongatapu where he found refuge in Lapaha, his traditional stronghold. From then on, Taufa'ahau, whose determination was reinforced by his military successes, implemented a strategy which assured him absolute sovereignty. By means of intrigue, he succeeded in persuading the elderly to refuse, contrary to tradition, a marriage to be celebrated between his sister, the Moheofo, and the Tu'i Tonga. Indeed, in the opposite case, Laufilitonga could have asserted the right of superiority which his wife would have enjoyed over Taufa'ahau - the elder sister enjoying a right of primacy over all the younger members of the family - in order to keep her rank. Moreover, only a child born of the union between the Tu'i Tonga and Moheofo could claim the supreme title. Thus, by preventing this alliance, Taufa'ahau not only removed all royal descent from the Tu'i Tonga dynasty, but also ensured a

[18] RUTHERFORD N., *Friendly Islands, a History of Tonga*, p.127

monopoly of power. Until 1865, the date of his death, Laufilitonga led a life of retirement, enjoying the few honours granted to him in view of the prestigious past of his lineage. This episode reveals the depth of the upheavals that allowed Taufa'ahau to emerge as the dominant political figure; it also attests to the crisis of ancestral values flouted by their most legitimate holders, the skill of the future sovereign to take advantage of the flaws in the traditional system, and an unusual strength of character from which he will never depart. His main rival eliminated, Taufa'ahau nevertheless had to face the opposition of the chiefs of Tongatapu for whom the advent of Christianity, which advocated equality between men, constituted a threat to their privileges based on the notion of social rank. Moreover, they considered, not without reason, his inclination towards the new religion as a tool of political maneuvering aimed at establishing his supremacy over the whole kingdom.

In order to support the Protestant missionaries in Tongatapu where they were exposed to the hostility of a large part of the population, to consolidate the position of the Tu'i Kanokupolu of which he was the prospective heir, and to affirm his authority as future ruler of Tonga, Taufa'ahau took up arms again against the Ha'a Havea and Ha'a Ngata chiefs who had banished the Christians from their villages and involuntarily incited them to regroup in the fort of Nuku'alofa where they entrenched themselves and thus placed under the protection of Aleamotu'a. Thus, in 1837, a new war broke out in Tongatapu after a peaceful interlude of four years. Leaders of the Ha'a Havea branch assaulted the Nuku'alofa fort. The response was bloody. Taufa'ahau launched his warriors to attack the forts of Ngele'ia, Te'ekiu and Hule which were sacked and burned without regard for the population. Corpses were then placed on the doorstep of a Protestant pastor to whom the warriors wanted to prove their devotion[19]. The obstinate survivors retreated and took refuge in the fort of Pea. Far from condemning the killings committed by Taufa'ahau and his men, the Wesleyan missionaries viewed them instead as manifestation of divine punishment for unbelievers[20]. A witness to these warlike expeditions, Captain Peter Dillon, sent a letter to the Wesleyan missionaries in which he denounced their responsibility[21]. In response to these attacks, the Reverend Cargill invoked the legitimacy of the monarchy and the Church. However, despite the impressive victory of Taufa'ahau, pockets of opposition persisted in Pea and Mu'a. In this unstable context of political and religious demands, any act of provocation committed against one or the other of the two clans was tantamount to a new declaration of war. In 1840, the reason for the confrontation which set up Taufa'ahau against the Ha'a Havea chiefs was the violation of a pagan temple by

[19] BISHOP BLANC, *A History of Tonga or Friendly Islands*, p.38.

[20] LATUKEFU S., *Church and State in Tonga, the Wesleyan Methodist Missionaries and Political Development, 1822-1875*, p. 110.

[21] A devout Catholic, Peter Dillon was the son of a former Irish soldier who settled on the island of Martinique where he was born in 1785. As a merchant marine captain, he travelled extensively in the Pacific and established numerous friendly contacts with the chiefs of the main island groups in the region. Between 1822 and 1826, he undertook the search for the La Pérouse expedition and brought proof of the shipwreck of the ships on the island of Vanikoro in the New Hebrides archipelago. Decorated in 1828 by Charles X for his conduct, he came into contact with Bishop Henri de Solages, whose attention he drew to the need to evangelise the islands of the Great Ocean and with whom he drew up plans for a missionary settlement. He offered to serve the Church by transporting missionaries and writing letters of recommendation to local chiefs. In 1837 he witnessed the bloody events perpetrated in the name of the Protestant mission in Tonga, and publicly protested against the responsibility of the Wesleyan missionaries in these acts of violence. In February 1841 he took the initiative to inform Father Colin of these events in order to encourage him to open a mission in Tonga. He died in Paris in 1847.

the Christians[22]. In retaliation for this sacrilegious gesture, Ata besieged the fort of Fo'ui where the Protestant minority of western Tongatapu was entrenched[23]. Taufa'ahau liberated the fort of Fo'ui and seized that of Kolovai, the stronghold of the Chief Ata. The population were captured and sent as slaves to the remote islands of Ha'apai and Vava'u archipelagos where they were converted to the new religion.

Thus, Taufa'ahau gradually managed to reduce the number of his opponents. However, the rebels regrouped at Pea under the command of chiefs Fatu, Lavaka and Vaea who continued to undermine the sovereignty of Tu'i Kanokupolu Aleamotu'a, who referred the matter to the Wesleyan missionaries[24]. In 1840, Taufa'ahau besieged the fortress of Pea, but it resisted the Christian offensive and maintained its independence against all odds despite the fall of Kolovai. At the request of the Reverends Tucker and Rabone, Captain Wilkes, commanding an American exploration expedition anchored at Tongatapu, undertook an attempt at negotiation between the warring parties. At the end of these talks, he concluded that Taufa'ahau and the Protestant missionaries were jointly responsible, and deemed it prudent not to interfere further in the conflict[25]. Taufa'ahau and 'Aleamotu'a repeated this approach in favour of recourse to a foreign navy on the occasion of the passage of the British navy ship *Favorite*, commanded by Captain Croker, to whom the function of mediator was entrusted. This one did not succeed in resolving an obviously inextricable situation for those who were unaware of the stakes in the conflict. However, he offered a truce to the enemies and invited the population entrenched in the fort of Pea to join him at his foyers. To do this, he gave a thirty-minute ultimatum to the chiefs of Pea. When the time expired, he launched the assault. His recklessness proved fatal because he succumbed under the fire of muskets, while his troops sounded the retreat and the rebels seized the cannons which gave them the advantage in terms of arms[26]. As a result, Taufa'ahau gave up the fight, the Wesleyan missionaries took refuge in Vava'u , and the chiefs of Pea maintained their independence.

The antagonism between the Protestant chiefs and the chiefs of Pea - some of whom converted to Catholicism upon the arrival of the Marists in 1842 - continued until 1852 and ended on this date with the siege of the fort and the surrender of the rebels. On the other hand, the 1840 defeat of Taufa'ahau and the victory of Lavaka had the implications of increasing the rifts between the chiefs of Tongatapu and the Tu'i Kanokupolu, and of deepening the division between pagans and Christians, all quick to seize opportunities for discord. However, what he had not been able to acquire by force of arms, and in spite of the dispute with the chiefs of Pea, Taufa'ahau obtained it by kinship. By succeeding his uncle 'Aleamotu'a, Taufa'ahau, who thus inherited the title of Tu'i Kanokupolu in 1845, completed a preliminary phase to the unification of the kingdom and set himself up as an absolute monarch.

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[22] LATUKEFU S., *Church and State in Tonga, the Wesleyan Methodist Missionaries and Political Development, 1822-1875*, p.115.

[23] 'Ata [Ata] - who had agreed to receive the first missionaries but nevertheless refused to convert - was the chief of the Ha'a Ngata Motua branch whose domains extended around the village of Kolovai in Tongatapu. The title was first held by the son of the first Tu'i Kanokupolu, Ngata. GIFFORD E. W., *Tongan Society*, p.132.

[24] Lavaka, chief of Pea was a member of the Ha'a Havea lineage. The first Lavaka was the son of the first Tu'i Ha'a Takalaua, Moungatonga. Vaea, chief of Houma, was also a member of the Ha'a Havea lineage. The first Vaea was the son of the third Tu'i Kanokupolu, Mataeletuapiko.

[25] WOOD A., *History and Geography of Tonga*, p.50.

[26] *idem*, pp.49-51.

2- The emergence of a Protestant kingdom

The next step in the policy of Taufa'ahau, who became King George after his accession to the title of Tu'i Kanokupolu, was aimed at consolidating the precarious unity of the kingdom. The desire for stability and wanting to restore order were favoured in the drafting of a collection of laws. The code of laws was officially promulgated on November 20, 1839 in Neiafu, the main centre of activities in Vava'u. Entered into force the previous year in Ha'apai and Vava'u where it had been printed on a Wesleyan press, this code was then distributed throughout the kingdom. However, it was not really applied in Tongatapu until after the death of Aleamotu'a, who failed to impose it on the rebellious chiefs who challenged his authority. The 1839 code - the first step towards the establishment of a constitutional monarchy - reveals the extent of Taufa'ahau's ambitions for his country, whose sovereignty he aspires to preserve. It aimed to re-establish effective control over both the Tongan and European population and to assign to each of them duties towards morals, justice and work. However, this text, whose social orientations were still imprecise, focused essentially on a new definition of the role of the chiefs, whose powers Taufa'ahau limited in order to curb their political pretensions. Despite the tradition by virtue of which they enjoyed according to their rank unlimited prerogatives and arbitrary rights, the chiefs henceforth had to agree to submit to the laws under penalty of having to answer for their actions before the courts and could not exercise their authority beyond the geographical limits of their village or district (Articles III and IV). They were required to provide each of the peasants with a plot of land that the latter could theoretically - the uses being perpetuated in fact in defiance of the code - exploit in complete freedom. Although certain obligations such as the maintenance of the plantations of the chiefs or the construction of their canoes were maintained, the interest of the State was henceforth to take precedence over that of the chiefs.

The application of justice was subject to legislation which instituted a penal structure. According to the new texts, murder, adultery, theft, fornication and possession of alcohol, in the same way as the practice of traditional worship, the detention of slaves or attempts to leave illegally (Articles 1 and VIII), were to be judged by a magistrate who officiated in the presence of the king, who reserved the right to intervene so as to demand the death penalty. Apart from this reservation, the amount of the penalties imposed for each recognized crime was left to the subjective estimation of the judge. The assizes of the court sat once a month. However, the agreement of the chiefs was required in the case of minor offenses committed in the districts or villages placed under their authority (Article VIII).

Strongly influenced by the Wesleyans - as evidenced by the ban on the practice of traditional worship and the obligation of respect towards missionaries - these laws were not exclusively written for the indigenous population. The dissolute behaviour and morals of beachcombers or deserting sailors were also combated. In order to limit the establishment of these men henceforth deemed undesirable, a fine of eight dollars was imposed on incitement to the desertion of sailors calling at the ports of the archipelago. Alcohol was prohibited, and every owner was condemned to pay a fine of twenty-five dollars. The state of drunkenness on the public road became liable to a fine of six dollars and to a variable term of imprisonment according to the case. Fines and penalties were doubled in case of reoffending.

Despite the stubbornness of the pagans, the warlike campaigns of Taufa'ahau greatly benefited the Wesleyan missionaries whose positions were strengthened by his conversion. As early as 1828, the latter had sensed the ambition, strength and determination of Taufa'ahau, who

remained faithful to his religious commitment until his last day. Indeed, Taufa'ahau's participation in missionary work was instrumental in the advancement of Christianity in Tonga. Convinced of the benefits lavished by the knowledge of the missionaries, the attitude of Taufa'ahau with regard to doctrine was all the more favourable as he himself was in search of new values which would allow him to escape from the social and religious shackles of traditional society and to find the means to achieve his ambitions. Avid for knowledge, he enthusiastically supported the innovations brought by the missionaries. The drafting of the Vava'u Code in 1839 was a clear proof of his desire to rebuild Tongan society on Christian foundations. These innovations - the introduction of private property and the appearance of a poetic justice of the century - constituted a prelude to a new society willed by King George and shaped in the image of the teachings given by the Wesleyan missionaries. This desire to reform traditional institutions was accompanied by a new definition of the principles of royalty.

The contribution of the Protestant pastors served the interests of the new monarchy which henceforth tended towards the British constitutional model and was inspired by the texts of the Old Testament according to which the Christian God conferred on the king an authority legitimized by his divine election and by the temporal inheritance of the title[27]. The fact that King George accepted Christianity enabled him to secure the support of Protestant missionaries who considered him God's chosen one, while the Tu'i Tonga appeared to be a usurper[28]. As a result, Wesleyan missionaries encouraged the followers of Taufa'ahau to declare holy war, and the duty of allegiance to chiefs compelled many pagans to conversion[29].

Thus, the rise to power of Taufa'ahau and the establishment of Wesleyan missionaries heralded a new era for Tonga. Their rigorous attitude towards pleasures and work is part of a civilizing mission. Agricultural work was henceforth considered a dominant value and the natural abundance of the land could no longer constitute a pretext for casualness. Finally, the right to salvation was earned with the sweat of the brow, and from then on, everyone could atone for original sin and gain their rank within society.

III. Catholic establishment[30]

[27] The British constitutional model, established as early as 1815, was one in which power was exercised by a small cabinet whose authority was vested in the Prime Minister, while the King performed nominal and symbolic functions: he embodied above all the continuity of the state. This regime was indeed the model for the formation of the Tongan state. However, despite the creation of a cabinet, King George wished to maintain his executive prerogatives within the government.

[28] LATUKEFU S., *Church and State in Tonga, the Wesleyan Methodist Missionaries and Political Development, 1822-1875*, pp.100-101.

[29] HOWE K., *Where the Waves Fall, a New South Sea islands History from First Settlement to Colonial Rule*, p.188.

[30] In the Catholic tradition, the evangelical preaching in Oceania was announced even before the coming of Christ, but it was, according to the prophet Isaiah, to be spread late. LOUVET L.E., *Les missions catholiques au XIXe siècle*, pp.502-503. In fact, this long wait continued until the 19th century, after the re-establishment of relations between republican France and the Catholic, Apostolic and Roman Church. The French clergy, regular and secular, slowly recovered from the wounds caused by the Revolution: the dismantling of the old structures by the vote of the Assembly in 1790 establishing the civil constitution of the clergy, the alienation of Church property and the division between the constitutional or sworn clergy and the refractory or non-sworn clergy. The stages of reconciliation took place from 1801 to 1817 and were marked by the signing between France and Rome of a series of concordats (1801-1803-1813) which gradually defined and re-established the position of the clergy in France. While the effects of the philosophical thought of the encyclopaedists who conceived of Christianity as an element contrary to reason and nature diminished, faith was reborn, charity increased and the purse strings were loosened. This context of political openness and renewed religious fervour favoured a resumption of missionary activities.

1- The Vicariate of Central Oceania

The project of a religious congregation which took shape in 1812 around a few seminarians, Marist aspirants, developed in the region of Lyon, the cradle of Marian devotion. In 1830, Father Jean-Claude Colin was elected Superior General of the group of Marist aspirants of Lyon and Belley, diocesan missionaries exercising their ministry in rural areas. He nevertheless retained the direction of the minor seminary of Belley whose primary vocation was the training of teachers and where future missionaries came to complete their ecclesiastical studies. At that time, the liberal political opposition led by Louis-Philippe overthrew the throne of Charles X and generated a new wave of anticlericalism which led the Marists to reinforce the precepts of their apostolic conception. "*Strangers and hidden in the world, it is the only way to do good*", this motto responded on the one hand to the apostolic needs of the hour, and on the other hand to the Marian character of their new Society. Indeed, the Marist fathers were to imitate the humble and modest attitude which marked the life of the Virgin Mary during her earthly existence and to conform to her spirit. In 1836, about fifty ecclesiastics had adhered to the project of the Society of Mary, strongly inspired by the model of the Society of Jesus. From 1844, it had an average of eighteen professions of faith per year and, in 1854, the date of Father Colin's resignation, it had two hundred and fifty-eight priests. Also, when Pope Gregory XVI and the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith applied themselves to recruiting from the clergy of Catholic nations a few priests with a vocation for foreign missions, they turned to the very young Society of Mary to which they entrusted the evangelization of the Vicariate of Western Oceania[31].

The Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, which envisaged the establishment of a mission in the Pacific as the logical extension of the establishment of missions in South Africa - Cape of Good Hope - and on Bourbon Island had, from 1825, directed the activity of the Fathers of the Sacred Heart (Picpus) towards the Archipelago of Hawaii. This was because, the project of an evangelization of Southern Oceania from Bourbon Island, submitted by Bishop de Solages, Apostolic Prefect of this island, to the Propagation had received a favourable opinion. The boundaries of the new Apostolic Prefecture will henceforth be marked on the east by Easter Island, on the west by New Zealand, on the north by the Equator, and on the south by the Tropic of Capricorn. In June 1833, the Marquesas Islands, the Society Islands and the Tuamotu's were detached from this large circumscription to form the Vicariate of Eastern Oceania entrusted by the Sacred Congregation of Propagation to the Picpus Fathers who had been expelled from Hawaii. The successes achieved by the latter in the Gambier Islands committed the Propagation to continue evangelization towards the west and to create the Vicariate of Western Oceania.

On December 24, 1836, Bishop Pompallier left the port of Le Havre aboard a French merchant ship, the *Delphine*, whose final destination was Valparaiso where he hoped to find a crew leaving for Polynesia. For this journey, Bishop Pompallier had obtained from 'The Work of the Propagation of the Faith' an allowance of twenty-five thousand francs which was to cover expenses relating to provisions for the trip of the bishop and missionaries, the transport costs and the foundation of future missions[32]. He embarked in the company of seven religious - three

[31] The *Congregatio Generalis de Propaganda Fide* was created in 1622 on the initiative of Pope Gregory XV as part of a reform of the Roman curia. Its role is to organise the evangelisation of mission countries.

[32] This Catholic institution, not to be confused with the previous one, was founded in 1819 in Lyons by Pauline Jaricot who organised the collection of a penny a week in the city's many factories. This work, whose activities

coadjutor brothers and four priests: Fathers Bataillon, Bret, Chanel, and Servant. "*More would only embarrass people in these regions, the access to which will offer quite serious difficulties in terms of language*"[33]. In fact, the choice of a small team, despite the ease of organization and limitation of costs that it implied, seems to reflect the lack of means with which the Marist mission will be confronted for many years, and seems derisory in view of the importance of the expeditions undertaken by the Wesleyan conference. In the long term, this policy of a small number posed the problem of the dispersion of missionaries, isolated in hostile places where they could not receive the support of a solid infrastructure.

On the other hand, the team thus constituted was homogeneous: aged between twenty-five and thirty-five, originating from the centre of France, sons of craftsmen, farmers, or investors in the case of the bishop, vicars or teachers after their studies at the major seminaries of Brou or St. Irenaeus (Lyons), all aspired to fulfil their missionary vocation by responding to Mary's invitation[34]. The hardships and loneliness imposed on them after the departure of the ship which had dropped them off on their chosen land determined various fortunes, happy or unhappy, which tipped their respective destinies towards death, martyrdom, glory or retreat. The profile of these first missionaries of the Society of Mary mirrors that of their successors. Coming from a wave of priestly vocations that developed since 1825 to strengthen the foundation of the Concordat Church, these first missionaries and those who succeeded them belonged to this new generation of priests who supplanted the former representatives of a clergy divided by the French Revolution. As a consequence of the massive rejuvenation of the French clergy between 1820 and 1870 and of the impossibility for young priests to obtain the assurance of receiving the responsibility of being parish priest, the call for the missions resounded all the more strongly in their minds which was also favourable at the time. Contrary to the previous period, the aristocracy and the middle class (bourgeoisie) were no longer, in the 19th century, the main providers of the clergy. The birth of a vocation was essentially the result of the teaching of the village priest who directed to the minor seminaries children who showed the most diligence in prayer and catechism, as well as certain faculties for studies, an attitude which was perpetuated by the Marists of Tonga who took into their service some young boys in order to form them for the priestly life. In addition, the minor seminaries reoriented their establishments towards the reception of children of modest origin, sons of peasants, artisans, or small traders. Thus, many missionaries for Tonga came from the centre of France from where, as young children, they were directed to the Marist seminary of Belley where they received a classical education, complementing the understanding of religious texts and the Holy Scripture. The edifying writings of Father Monfat, which trace the biography of some of them, highlight this particular point of ascetic education. The formation of future missionaries then continued in the major seminary where they followed one or two years of philosophy, then four years of theology and an initiation to ecclesiastical functions. The social composition of the group of missionaries in Tonga has the disadvantage of constituting a clergy deprived of financial resources. On the other hand, it offers the advantage of a contingent of men detached from material goods,

gradually spread throughout the world, managed the annual voluntary contributions of the faithful on all five continents. Contributions for Oceania were provided by Catholics in Australia, New Caledonia, the Sandwich Islands and the Marquesas Islands. The publication and distribution of the *Annals* provided a link between all.

[33] COSTE J. and LESSARD G., *Origines maristes* (1786-1836), document 343.

[34] The first was in Bourg-en-Bresse, the second in Lyons.

accustomed to the harshness of the earth and the austerity of priestly life, endowed with a deep faith and grateful to the congregation that welcomed, nurtured, and trained them.

Shaken by a storm off the French coast, the *Delphine* was impaired and suffered damage to the rudder. The missionaries made a first two-month stopover in Santa Cruz de Tenerife to carry out repairs. The ship resumed its course on February 28, 1837, but Father Bret, stricken by a fever contracted in the Canary Islands, died shortly afterwards. Finally, six months later, the *Delphine* dropped anchor in the port of Valparaiso. As soon as he arrived, Bishop Pompallier went in search of a ship bound for the islands of his western vicariate. At the end of a month and a half of fruitless search, he gave up the idea of rejoining his mission lands by the direct route and took his place on board an American sailing vessel, the *Europa*, which was to take him with his companions to the Sandwich Islands where opportunities for westward passage seemed more frequent. However, during a stopover in Tahiti, he seized the offer of the American consul which would allow him to save time and money. "*I rent here a schooner (the Raiatea), which belongs to Mr. Moerenhout, four hundred piasters per month, for an unlimited time, with the facility of being able to take us to the islands, crossing the Archipelagos of the Friends, Navigators and Fiji*"[35].

Considering the distances that separate the islands and the few means to remedy this distance, the evangelization of a territory as vast as that of the Vicariate of Western Oceania constituted a real challenge for the Marist congregation and presupposed a concerted approach that was considered a priority which took into account geographical factors - the size, position and influence of the archipelagos - and religious factors - the establishment of Protestant missions in those lands. Bishop Pompallier's strategy consisted in undertaking the evangelization of his vicariate from two bases: New Zealand and Tonga[36]. According to the information he had gathered during the trip, he expected to find in Tonga, which occupied a central position in the vicariate, a more developed maritime activity than elsewhere. "*Vava'u had been praised to him as a well-frequented place, and the name Port of Refuge, assigned to the bay, was cited as proof*"[37]. This would allow him, he thought, to establish with New Zealand an "evangelical bridge" of which Tonga would be the hub and to launch missionary initiatives towards the other islands by taking advantage of the networks of exchanges existing between Tonga, Fiji, Samoa, and Wallis[38].

Finally, the need for a Catholic missionary intervention in Tonga seemed all the more urgent as it was a question of curbing the expansion of Protestantism linked to the presence of Wesleyan missionaries who had been established in the archipelago since 1826[39]. "*If Tonga, which is the Queen and the boulevard of Central Oceania, had fallen completely under the yoke of the Protestants, as it was on the verge of doing, there was no longer any way for us to approach it*"[40]. Consequently, the archipelagos of Western Oceania and more particularly Tonga became the field of rivalry which opposed the Marist missionaries to the Wesleyan

[35] MANGERET R.P., *Monseigneur Bataillon et les missions de l'Océanie Centrale*, p.67. Of Franco-Belgian origin, Jacques Antoine Moerenhout, who arrived in 1829 in Pape'ete, was consul of the United States from 1835 onwards, and later on consul of France. A Catholic and a great admirer of France, he showed benevolent sentiments towards the Catholic missionaries.
[36] COSTE J., S.M., *Cours d'histoire de la Société de Marie*, p.229.
[37] MONFAT P.A., *Les Tonga ou archipel des Amis et le R.P. Joseph Chevron*, p.143.
[38] *idem*.
[39] Father Grange to the parish priest of St Clair (Isère), 1st July 1843 (A.P.M., 510).
[40] *idem*.

missionaries, while the archipelagos of Eastern Oceania were already the theatre of the antagonism between the Picpus Fathers and representatives of the *London Missionary Society.*

2- The opening of a Catholic mission in Tonga

On October 24, 1837, after ten months of travel, Bishop Pompallier and his missionaries had the pleasure of discovering the rural spectacle of the bay of Vava'u. But quickly, disappointment replaced enthusiasm. Indeed, four days of negotiations resulted in a categorical refusal on the part of the chief of Vava'u, Taufa'ahau, to welcome them to his territory. For Bishop Pompallier, the responsibility for this refusal should be attributed to the Wesleyan missionaries and more particularly to the Reverend Thomas. He gave as proof of these intrigues the meetings which had convinced Taufa'ahau to reconsider his position. "He had no difficulty in making George understand that it was all over with the politico-religious edifice he had cemented with so much blood, if he allowed the Church to be established"[41]. Indeed, during a preliminary interview, organized in the absence of the Reverends Thomas and Brooks, Taufa'ahau had shown himself to be rather favourable to the proposals of the bishop who suggested establishing one of his missionaries so that he can learn the language. "*Bishop Pompallier had asked permission to leave on the island someone of his own, who could learn the language of the country, and who in return would make it an honour to teach the inhabitants the knowledge of civilized nations*"[42]. The linguistic pretext invoked for the occasion presented itself as a means of eluding the likely questions – for good reason - to offend the religious sensibility of the population to which it was nevertheless proposed, and to take advantage of the educational advantages that accompany the implementation of a mission. Appealing as it was, this proposal quickly appeared to Taufa'ahau - who could not be fooled by Bishop Pompallier's true aims, as the Wesleyan missionaries had warned him - as carrying within it the ferment of division even as his authority had not gained the unanimity of the chiefs.

This unexpected intervention by the Protestants had the effect of temporarily putting an end to Bishop Pompallier's project, which continued on its way towards the neighbouring archipelagos that had resisted the Protestant waves of evangelization. On November 1, 1837, he arrived in Wallis where he entrusted Father Bataillon and Brother Joseph to the care of the Queen. The same month, Father Chanel and Brother Marie-Nizier undertook the opening of a mission in Futuna. On January 10, Monsignor Pompallier arrived in New Zealand, having landed in the Bay of Islands where he wanted to establish his procurement centre[43].

In 1840, the successes of the Wallis mission were such that he sent Father Chevron and Brother Attale to lend a hand to Father Bataillon[44]. The merchant ship which was to take them to their

[41] MONFAT P.A., *Les Tonga ou archipel des Amis et le R.P. Joseph Chevron*, p.144.
[42] MANGERET R.P., *Monseigneur Bataillon et les missions de l'Océanie Centrale*, p.73.
[43] MANGERET R.P., *Monseigneur Bataillon et les missions de l'Océanie Centrale*, pp.85-336.
[44] Father Chevron was born in 1808 in Nantua, in the diocese of Belley; he was the eighth child of one of the most fervent families of the country. After studying at the ecclesiastical college of Belley and then at the seminary of Brou, he taught successively in Belley and in Ferney under the direction of Abbé Crétin, future bishop of Saint Paul in Minnesota in America. On June 14, 1839, he left London on board the *Australasian* for Sydney and disembarked in New Zealand where he was welcomed by Bishop Pompallier. In the company of Brother Attale, he went to Wallis where he was to assist Father Bataillon. In addition to learning about missionary life on the ground, this experience enabled him to acquire the rudiments of the Tongan language and to establish lasting relationships with the members of the Tongan community of Wallis without whose support the future of the Tonga mission would have been very much in doubt. He was 34 years old when he arrived in Tonga. He died at the age of 76 in 1884, never having left the mission of which he was the founder.

new assignment made a stopover at Vava'u to dispose of part of its cargo. On this occasion, Father Chevron - probably informed by Charles Simonet and intrigued by the departure of a certain number of Tongans to the Wallis Islands where they converted to Catholicism - became aware of the political and religious situation of the archipelago and was capable of appreciating the extent of the dissensions reigning between the great Protestant families of the archipelago and the pagan chiefs[45]. "*For a long time, the Protestant part of the population, supported by the King of Vava'u and Ha'apai, pushed war to the limit against the part that remained heathen. This latter had suffered defeats, one of its towns, Houle, taken by assault, had been sacked and all the inhabitants massacred. Another, Hihifo, on the verge of experiencing the same fate, had capitulated by accepting Protestantism. An English commodore, Croker, having joined the aggressors at the instigation of their missionaries, had ended up killed with part of his people under the walls of Pea, but this success for the pagans, far from raising their courage, made them fear that they would soon have to deal with England, with whom they were constantly threatened. The population of several other towns had gathered in Pea to better defend it. However, the fall of this last fortress could not be delayed, and in this perspective, a large number of pagans had fled to the neighbouring islands, so as not to be victims of the disaster. The pagans, at their wits' end, and attributing, I don't know how, the successes of their enemies to the God they adored, conceived of paying homage to him also, but in another religion of which they had heard. It was the Catholic Church. For that, they needed missionaries and they asked for them everywhere, either on board the ships or in the islands where they had been told that they were to be found*"[46]. According to this account, the political causes of the antagonism which divided the chiefs of Tonga were evaded by the Marists, either by ignorance, or by a desire to highlight the need for a Catholic establishment, justified by the responsibility of Protestant missionaries in these bloody conflicts. Although Bishop Pompallier's room for maneuver was limited by the lack of new personnel, the reinforcement of the French maritime presence in the waters of the Pacific determined a more favourable context for the expansion of Catholic missions in the region.

When he was informed of the events which, in 1841, led to the massacre of Father Chanel in Futuna, Bishop Pompallier decided to go back to sea to recover the body of the missionary. Left by Bishop Pompallier in Futuna on November 12, 1837, Father Chanel and Brother Marie-Nizier had difficulty in forming a small community of Catholics. In April 1841, it had only fifteen catechumens, including Prince Meitala. However, this conversion provoked the anger of the king who ordered the killing of the priest whose preaching constituted a threat to his legitimacy inherited from the traditional gods. Father Chanel was assassinated on April 28, 1841. While the neophytes were burying his body, his house was destroyed by the emissaries of the sovereign who wanted to erase all traces of the Catholic religion in Futuna. At the request of Bishop Pompallier, Rear Admiral Lavaud, commander of the South Seas naval station based in New Zealand, provided him with an escort led by Count Dubouzet, commander of the corvette *Allier*. Indeed, since 1840, government directives given to the French Navy had evolved in favour of more active support for the interests of nationals and missionaries in the islands of Oceania. As early as 1839, the commanders of state vessels received special instructions ordering them to see to their protection. Missionary action, henceforth supported

[45] Copy of a report on the temporal administration of the Apostolic Vicariate of Central Oceania, addressed to the Superior of the Society of Mary by Father Calinon. Tongatapu, October 1845 (A.P.M., 272).
[46] Copy of a report on the temporal administration of the Apostolic Vicariate of Central Oceania, addressed to the Superior of the Society of Mary by Father Calinon. Tongatapu, October 1845 (A.P.M., 272).

by the navy, opened up a new domain for French expansion in Oceania. On January 5, 1842, Count Dubouzet took advantage of his visit to Wallis to sign a treaty of friendship with King Lavelua; this agreement preluded the signing of a protectorate which was to see the light of day some time later, in 1844.

Thus, on his way to Wallis and Futuna, Bishop Pompallier, bolstered by the prestige conferred on him by his escort, organized a stopover at Vava'u. There, all the chiefs of the island were gathered around Count Dubouzet, who reprimanded them for their previous attitude towards the Catholic missionaries and urged them to adopt in the future sentiments "*more in conformity with the spirit of civilized nations*". The impact of this discourse on the chiefs "*who judge power, even spiritual, in the size of a warship*" engendered a climate of fear and mistrust, skilfully maintained by the Methodists offended by this process deemed unfair in their eyes[47]. The latter urged the population to pray to keep French ships away from the Tongan coast, whose interference in Tahitian affairs they denounced. The threats made by the French officers undermined the impunity enjoyed by the Protestant leaders, who gave up opposing the establishment of the Marist mission. Moreover, they produced a timely effect on the pagan chiefs.

On June 9, 1842, the mission's schooner, the *Sancta Maria*, sailed away from the lands of Futuna and headed for Fiji. For this trip, Bishop Pompallier was accompanied by Father Chevron, Brother Attale and a community made up of about thirty Tongans converted to Catholicism in Wallis after having fled the evangelizing campaigns of Taufa'ahau, and destined to form the nucleus of the Tonga mission. In Lakemba, while the bishop was starting talks with the Fijian chief Kamisese on the conditions for setting up a Catholic mission in this archipelago, he was contacted by a Tongan delegation led by Fifita'ila, a relative of the late chief of Pea, Takai. He was supported by several chiefs from Tongatapu who had come to seek the help of Catholics to fight against King George's plan to impose Protestantism throughout the archipelago and to offer Bishop Pompallier the support of Moeaki, Takai's successor[48]. "*When it (the canoe) landed, two of the natives who were on it rushed aboard. They were led by Fifitaila, son of that Fae (Taoufa-fae) whom we saw succeeding his brother, the famous Takai who organized with so much military knowledge and firmness the lines of defence of Pea. It was a delegation of the principal chiefs of Tonga-taboo; they came to ask for missionaries who would make them hear, in their own words, 'the true word of the great God of the world'. At no price do they want to submit to George; they are strong, they are determined: they will resist his arms but he has more than them the influence of his lotou; they need that of the Catholic lotou; for the old religion of the country is discredited and falling into ruins*"[49].

Consequently, the decision was taken to place himself under the protection of Moeaki and to settle in Pea, a bastion of resistance against the Protestant chiefs. On June 30, 1842, the *Sancta Maria* dropped anchor in the bay of Nuku'alofa and on July 2, the missionaries celebrated the first Mass in the shade of the trees of Pangai Motu, an atoll located a few miles from the shores of Tongatapu, while messengers informed Moeaki of their arrival. The next day they were welcomed to Pea. Fietoa [Fieota], Moeaki's wife and three children were converted on the same day. On the other hand, the news of the opening of a Catholic mission at Pea angered the Tu'i

[47] FAIVRE J.P., *L'expansion française dans le Pacifique de 1800 à 1842*, p.404.
[48] MONFAT P.A., *Les Tonga ou archipel des Amis et le R.P. Joseph Chevron*, pp.179-180.
[49] MONFAT P.A., *Les Tonga ou archipel des Amis et le R.P. Joseph Chevron*, pp.179-180.

Kanokupolu, Aleamotu'a, who immediately summoned a *fono* that ordered Moeaki to expel Father Chevron. Refusing to submit to the authority of the Tu'i Kanokupolu and thereby marking his desire for independence, Moeaki converted to Catholicism on July 7, 1842.

From now on, the fate of the mission was placed in the hands of the chief of Pea and Father Chevron who combined their pugnacity to resist the strong pressures from Protestants, who never tired of sowing multiple pitfalls in order to prevent the development of a movement of conversion to Catholicism. The rivalry between the Protestant missionaries and the Catholic missionaries continued for several decades and aroused among the population reactions of constant and mutual provocations. In this sense, the establishment of Catholic missionaries revived previous internal dissensions - as evidenced by the political and social instability of the years preceding the arrival of the first missionaries - between the partisans of a reform of society and those of continuity who found in the Marists a religious and temporal alternative to the precariousness of their situation.

3- Marists' view of Tongan society

The first look that the Marist Fathers cast on the island of Tongatapu did not plunge them into a rapture that their new chosen land could have aroused by way of some romantic impulse. They discovered an island of reduced surface, marked by the absence of relief and sources of fresh water. Their first descriptions even contained a note of disappointment. The only remark that left a hint of emotion was suggested to them by the spectacle that extended to the horizon where a few islands seemed to perform a dance on the ocean.

This sketch is very different from the vision that the navigators had offered to Europeans of the 18th century, a vision integrated into the European collective imagination in the form of a composition of enchanting and lascivious images. The Marist missionaries dwelt far less on these geographical considerations of a descriptive order since this was not their first mission in the Pacific. Several months in Wallis for Father Chevron and a few weeks in New Zealand for Father Grange had enabled them to acclimatize to their new living environment. Moreover, with geographical elements having no decisive relationship with their objectives, these gave them interest only insofar as members of the Society of Mary and those of their family and friends wished to be informed.

On the other hand, following the example of the European navigators who had preceded them, and perhaps even more than the latter who concentrated their activities on scientific observation during a brief stopover, they took a great interest in agricultural production, and so each of the letters that related the beginnings of the mission offered a precise idea of the resources of Tongan agriculture. By their rural origins, this description was that of informed observers. "*The first missionaries were earthlings, almost 'all children of the fields*"[50]. They particularly detailed the exotic plants, coconut palms, banana trees, breadfruit trees, yams, sugar cane and kava where traditional plants are concerned, as well as orange trees, lemon trees, and pineapples from the seeds introduced by Europeans since the time of the first exchanges. The coconut tree was ranked first among these productions, and was astonishing by the diversity of its virtues. Its fruit provided part of the diet, the bark providing for the manufacture of nets, ropes, baskets and a multitude of objects conforming to domestic needs; finally, the trunk was a fundamental element of the habitat. The yam constituted the basis of the diet. As for drink,

[50] *Centenaire des Missions Maristes en Océanie*, 1836-1936, p.17.

in addition to the milk of the coconut, it was provided by kava. Throughout their correspondence written during the first years of the mission, the Marist Fathers provided few indications that would predict a difficult confrontation with the natural environment. In view of the hardships they expected to overcome when in contact with the native population, those relating to living conditions seemed to them, it seems, very minor.

In fact, priority was given to the human environment. The Marist fathers in Tonga were particularly attentive to the cultural, social and religious particularities of the traditional indigenous society. The evolution of their perception of social reality constitutes a striking example of this constant confrontation between traditional Polynesian values and the Christian European values that these missionaries embodied. At first, they attempted, with the help of their own criteria of appreciation inherited from their education and training, a perceived communal approach, at first sight through the Christian concept of hospitality, that is, of the reciprocal right to find accommodation and protection in each other's homes. "*I believe that these peoples are far from deserving the name of savages given to them. They are more civil than people in France who have had no education... They don't know how to refuse what is asked of them*"[51]. However, the progressive awareness of the complexity of social relations and their personal experience of community life in Tonga led them to revise their vision which moved further and further away from the intuitive perception they had of social relations in the first days of their establishment. At first glance, hospitality - as the Marists defined the friendliness of Tongan society - seemed to unite all the inhabitants of the island into a single family. But little by little, they realized that the enthusiastic image they had formed of this great family hardly corresponded to their Christian conception of relations between members of the same group. They identified the deep ties that united individuals to each other and recognized the advantages of such a system, the beneficial effects of which were to provide for the needs of the weakest, children, the elderly and the sick. But they gradually deplored the implications of this rigid system of social stratification in which everyone's place was defined by their birth order, which had the effect of a profoundly unequal social determinism[52]. "*According to the custom of the country, always based on hospitality, any foreigner who puts himself under the responsibility of a chief, only thereby enters into the condition of the natives, that is to say, that he puts his assets and his person at the disposal of this chief*"[53].

In these terms, the concept of hospitality, as it was conceived within traditional society, was incompatible with the Marist vision. The chief who provided housing and protection asserted his power and authority over the members of the community under his control. The subjugation of the population was manifest in every respect. The concentration of power in the hands of the chief and his absolute and arbitrary authority revealed for the missionaries the forms of an "atrocious despotism". This perception of the role of chiefs led them to a broadened understanding of the organization of society, leading them to establish a relationship between the geographical distribution of individuals and their rank in the social hierarchy. The higher the rank, the closer the individual was to the geographical centre of political, social, and religious activity. Communication between the centre and the periphery - between the king and commoners - was ensured by the networks of affiliation. It was the cohesion of this whole that

[51] Father Chevron to his family, Tongatapu, 24 June 1843 (A.P.M., 391).
[52] Copy of a report on the temporal administration of the Apostolic Vicariate of Central Oceania, addressed to the Superior of the Society of Mary by Father Calinon. Tongatapu, October 1845 (A.P.M., 272).
[53] *idem*.

had, in the first place, contributed to giving the Marist fathers the feeling of a single and large united family[54]. "*Here, there is also the capital and the province, the cities and the countryside, the nobleman, the commoner, and the countryman (I speak here of morale and moral influence). It is inconceivable to see how all these different classes are divided. Chiefs have an air of dignity and nobler manners than others, and this degree of nobility in manners follows the ratio of the degree of their rank. I think that in an assembly, one could, by examining the bearing and the manners, find the chief without knowing him. The acquaintance of the chiefs, or if it were not profaning the terms, the courtiers may be felt in these ways as well. The natives, on the contrary, who live on plantations separated or at a distance from the chiefs, have an awkward air which is especially noticeable when they find themselves in the presence of the chiefs or their acquaintance. (...) We also have the class of dandys (sic) or elegant .. these are the young chiefs and young people who have become attached to them and who usually keep them company. Their task is to take care of their hair and to cut it in the fashion of the day, the way of walking, of speaking, of tying their tapa and belt is for them an art. The same is true for girls. The girls inhabiting the main forts would think themselves humiliated to marry a young man Kaifonua, as they call them (earth eater); which would correspond to our mountain dwellers in Europe, unless it is some chief well above them*"[55].

As for the image that the Marist fathers sent back of the man or woman of Tonga, it was devoid of the attractions that European navigators liked to describe: vigorous bodies, graceful or provocative in their nudity, gentle faces, delicate and happy, filled with charm and mystery. On the contrary, in order to reveal to the pagans their quality of children of God, the missionaries had to place them in a universal perspective which erased their natural specificities. "*We have very false ideas of these archipelagos. We imagine that everything there is extraordinary. Men here only differ from Europeans in color*"[56]. For Father Chevron, the question of women 's nudity did not arise. "*The women are generally overweight which would seem a bit extraordinary in France. It seems that by it providence wanted to substitute clothing and hides what the sight of a skinny body makes naturally unpleasant*"[57].

The physical characteristics that distinguished Polynesians from Europeans, accentuated in the stories of the navigators, therefore faded, while the weaknesses inherent in the human condition, exacerbated by paganism, were put forward as the main justification for their evangelizing enterprise. The Marist fathers denounced the dispositions of these populations for carnal pleasures condemned by Christian morality. Poverty, considered a virtue when it involves a voluntary renunciation of material goods, was condemned here as being the most disastrous consequence of idleness. This idleness or "numbness of the body" was the object of blame all the more severe on the part of the Marist fathers, as they recognized Tongans' lively intelligence and the great mastery of agricultural and artisanal techniques[58]. This reproach

[54] Father Chevron to his family, Tongatapu, 2 April 1846 (A.P.M., 403).
[55] Father Chevron to his family, Tongatapu, 2 April 1846 (A.P.M., 403).
[56] Father Grange to the parish priest of St Clair (Isère), Tonga, 1st July 1843 (A.P.M., 510).
[57] Father Chevron to his family, Tongatapu, 24 June 1843 (A.P.M., 391).
[58] "*The work in which they excel is the construction of houses and dugouts*". Father Grange to the parish priest of St Clair (Isère), Tonga, 1 July 1843 (A.P.M., 510). The houses had the same shape as those on Wallis, that is to say, low, rectangular houses. The interior framework was supported by pillars covered with braids (flat string used to bind wood and in place of nails) which formed a colourful weave representing various figures of great regularity. Eventually, the sides were closed by bundles of reeds which formed the partitions. But, in general, the houses were open to all winds. The furniture of the better-off consisted of a wooden dish to make kava, a few

formulated against the Tongans by the Marists, prey to the greatest destitution despite their diligence in the task, was at the origin of a misunderstanding which persisted for many years, because the notion of voluntary renunciation was totally incompatible with the traditional way of life and with the vision that Tongans had of Europeans. However, idleness, immorality and pride appeared legitimate to the Marist fathers, since these traits reflected a state of nature and constituted proof of estrangement from God; the revelation of the dignity of a child of God being inseparable from the deliverance from sin to which the pagan is condemned by his ignorance of the divine sacrifice.

Marists' view of Tongan society and its inhabitants was gradually enriched by a better knowledge of traditional customs and ceremonies, revealed by meticulous descriptions. Thus, they understood that each celebration of an act of social life involved the preparation and distribution of cups of kava during which the guests proceeded to exchange gifts, the order of attribution of which depended on social rank. Although they did not appreciate this "divine liquor" because of its peppery taste and its method of preparation - which consisted in chewing the root to make a kind of paste which was then diluted in water -, they yielded all the more willingly to this use as it allowed them to integrate into the circle of guests distributed on each side of the chief according to the importance of their rank and thus provided them with the means of estimating the position which was theirs, allocated within the group. In addition, the kava ceremony was a privileged moment of dialogue and exchange. "*The missionary could not dispense with it without undermining the trust that his work requires. I took it up to 10 times a day*"[59].

Songs and dances that Catholic missionaries admired for their conformity to their principles were encouraged as social acts that strengthened community cohesion[60]. However, singing, a traditional expression of Tongan popular sensibility, had been condemned as early as the 1830s by Wesleyan missionaries who considered it a pagan manifestation as its practice constituted an obstacle to the elevation of the soul. Admirers of this spontaneous talent, the Marists set themselves up, by contrast, as defenders of this aptitude which they qualified as providential. Participating both in a sincere momentum and in a strategy that allowed them to define themselves advantageously in relation to their Wesleyan rivals, they nevertheless had to accept the ambiguity of their position. Indeed, this attitude aroused strong reactions from the pagan chiefs, the latter having associated the notion of civilization with rejection of the customs of their fathers. Thus, Father Chevron was the object of hostility from Moeaki, the chief of Pea, when the latter came to ask him the reason for his declaration, the object of which was to proscribe this type of practice. This mutual incomprehension was at the origin of threats which made Father Chevron fear of having to leave the island, so great was the anger of Moeaki,

empty coconuts to hold water or oil, a few mats spread out on the ground to sit or sleep on, an axe or two and a farming tool from Europe; sometimes a gun or traditional wooden weapons.

[59] Father Grange to the parish priest of St Clair (Isère), Tonga, 1st July 1843 (A.P.M., 510).

[60] *idem*. Thus, depending on the occasion, the people of Tonga composed sad or happy songs. When a convoy of pirogues was preparing for a long crossing, the villagers, several hundred in number, would gather on the shore where they would sing the stanzas of a song that would resound until the shadow of the travellers had disappeared behind the line of the horizon: *"Where are you going, young and impudent bird, where are you going? Why do you surrender to the whims of the waves and deceptive waves? You can no longer quench your thirst in the hollow of the bamboo or in the thick bark of the coconut tree. The banana tree with its broad leaves will no longer protect you from the heat of the sun or the cold of the night; and if the wind blows, you will no longer have your mother's wings for shelter. Where are you going, young and impudent bird, where are you going?"*

anxious to show his zeal and to accede to the values of the missionaries. Finally, Moeaki's wounded pride was appeased during the ensuing kava.

Generally, as Father Chevron reported, the traditional songs of Tonga had three or four voices, and this unlike most other Polynesian peoples who sang with one voice. In their testimonies, W. Mariner and J. Labillardière, the latter being one of the members of Dumont d'Urville's expedition, left fragments of notations which reflect the practice of a harmonic song. Each choir consisted of eight or ten people. When it came to recounting an epic, the historical facts were evoked in a recitative tone and only the poetic text was sung. During a stay of several weeks in the year 1858, Father Poupinel, visitor to the missions and delegated by the Superior General of the Society of Mary to draw up a report on the state of the Marist missions in Oceania, initiated the neophytes on Tongatapu to the practice of Gregorian chant. The latter, having perceived its majestic gravity and lyricism, expressed their desire to continue its practice. On the other hand, pressed by the Catholics of Mu'a, Father Chevron embarked himself in the 1860s - when King George permitted the revival of traditional tunes after having been pressed by Commander Huches de Cintré who urged him to recognize the Catholic community and its liturgical and social practices - on a far-reaching undertaking to rehabilitate traditional songs ruthlessly outlawed by Wesleyans. Thirty-four songs were thus composed from memory and printed by a publisher in Sydney.

On the other hand, not all the celebrations won the assent of the Marists. Funerals were seen as "vain and painful ceremonies" because the pain was ostentatiously displayed there and was accompanied by ritual mutilations - knuckles of the little finger cut off, cheeks, ears and nose slit - which offended their conscience to a point that they concealed the ritual meaning and denounced only the external elements, thereby depriving these acts of all their depth and leaving only the barbarity to remain. "*These women are very happy when they are delivered from such torture*". On the other hand, they observed with increased interest the care given to funeral preparations and were surprised at the closeness that the living maintained with the dead through offerings and prayers addressed to the deceased. As soon as the sick breathed his last, the neighbours were informed of his death and all the women came to cry around the body thus exposed for one or two days, the time to build a tomb near his parents' house. The sepulchral dwelling was built on a hillside and surrounded by a palisade of bamboo; the enclosure, planted with fragrant and long-lasting shrubs, was covered with an artistically worked roof. The construction of a tomb, erected in honour of a deceased member of the Tu'i Tonga dynasty, mobilized the entire male population of the island who thus fulfilled one of their most important duties towards the king to whom an imposing lithic residence was dedicated. Father Chevron was struck both by the number - about forty around the fort of Mu'a - and by the size of these monuments[61]. "*These tombs are vast earthen terraces, the top is crowned with enormous stones. I measured one that was 24 feet long, 8 high, and at least 18 inches thick. They were brought from the small islands that surround Tonga to the north and east; one of these tombs was made by the people of Wallis who brought huge blocks in immense canoes*"[62].

While evaluating the dispositions of the indigenous population in terms of religion, Father Chevron revealed the cleavage created by the first waves of Protestant conversion among the

[61] Father Chevron to his family, Tongatapu, 24 June 1843 (A.P.M., 391).
[62] *idem*.

elders, deeply attached to the practice of their traditional worship, and the younger generations, for which Christian worship constituted the means of accessing a new condition, both spiritual - that of eternity previously granted only to the chiefs - and temporal - through the opportunities for social ascent offered by the missions. However, all seemed unanimous in recognizing the gentleness of the God of the missionaries and none showed any hostility towards him; the main object of the resistances was the desire to maintain the link with the nourishing earth, stemming from the worship of the ancestral gods. "*The natives of Tonga are not idolaters; the spirits alone receive their adoration, and like the pagans of the Old World, they spout a thousand absurd tales about them. The greatest of their gods is Maui, who once and from time immemorial fished Tonga out of the ocean. We still keep, they say, the hook which was used to pull the island from the bottom of the sea. But those who have custody of it are careful to say that the first who sees it will be struck dead. The custody and sight of it is permitted only to the king alone, beloved of Maui. When we ask them about the origin of their divinities, they stammer a few words, then end up saying: we don't know anything about it, we are doing like our fathers. Still, it is certain that their deities are evil spirits that they greatly fear, but do not like. These gods come to dwell invisibly in the great chiefs and in the old women. Our islanders are also slaves to superstitions; touching a stick placed at the entrance to a plantation of banana trees or sugar cane is a crime which the gods punish with death. No one, unless he is a great chief or a friend of the gods, can eat a tortoise or any other object esteemed in the country. However, these ideas are going away, and young people especially despise them. The old men alone put up resistance. The gods that the missionaries announce to us, they say, are no doubt good, but ours are also good, since they are the ones who make yams, coconuts and above all kava grow. Let's hold on, at least half the island must remain faithful to our old gods; otherwise they will anger him for our abandonment and punish us. I can only watch with pain, said the oldest on the island, that the youth let themselves be carried away by all the novelties*"[63]. According to Bishop Blanc, the existence in Polynesia of a supreme god, creator of the earth and the sky, was indisputable and in fact constituted only a survival of the adoration of the Egyptian god Tu. During their migratory journeys from Asia Minor, considered by the bishop as the cradle of Polynesian settlement, the migrants would have gradually abandoned the practice of this cult. However, he saw in the existence of the god Tangaloa a representation of the ancestral god Tu, whose glory was perpetuated through the title of Tu'u-i-Tonga[64]. With this hypothesis, Bishop Blanc established a parallel, rich in symbols, between the forms taken by the cult of Tangaola [Tangaloa] in Tonga and the existence in Egypt, Galatia or Assyria of a supreme god. The persistence in Polynesia of the belief in a supreme being seemed fundamental to him and seemed to him to carry within itself the seeds of the success of the establishment of Christianity in this region. Through their conversion to Christianity, the Polynesians would reconnect with their ancestors - Egyptians in particular -, witnesses of the resurrection of Christ and members of the primitive Church. Thus, the advent of Christianity in Polynesia appeared as the inevitable, albeit belated, evolution of a predestination.

In 1842, the date of the establishment of the Marists, about half of the inhabitants of the island of Tongatapu had converted to Protestantism. It was also firmly established in the archipelago of Ha'apai while in Vava'u, the weight of Protestantism was mitigated by the influence of the Catholics from the island of Wallis with whom the inhabitants of Vava'u maintained regular

[63] Father Grange to the parish priest of St Clair (Isère), 1st July 1843 (A.P.M., 510).
[64] BLANC F., *A History of Tonga or Friendly Islands*, p.7.

relations. However, despite these islands being persistent in paganism, the traditional customs of a large part of the population had already been modified by the intervention of Protestant missionaries, "*followers of the last great revival of Puritan thought in the 18th century*"[65]. The most obvious manifestation of the upheavals that occurred at their instigation was the proclamation in 1839 of the Vava'u code which proscribed the practice of many ancestral customs such as the presentation of offerings to the deceased - *Tukuofo* - and established new rules of life such as the observance of the Sabbath[66]. The content of this text is particularly revealing of the inability of the Wesleyan missionaries to dissociate customs incompatible with the practice of Protestant worship from those whose main characteristic was to be contrary to the moral values in force in the British middle class[67].

In this regard, the prejudices of Dumont d'Urville, who witnessed the first developments of the Wesleyan mission in Tonga for which he showed himself to be optimistic, seem justified. Dreading to see the population "*subjugated to the practices of an outrageous devotion*", his fears were confirmed by the various bullyings and humiliations that the Wesleyan missionaries inflicted on their unruly followers until their monopoly was broken by the arrival of the Marists who vigorously denounced their excesses. Conversely and strongly against the intolerance of their rivals, the Marists made it a point of honour to participate in traditional activities and to encourage them insofar as they seemed to them to be reconcilable with the principles of doctrine. Thus, in the Tongan insular context, the points of divergence between the Wesleyan missionaries on the one hand and the Marist priests on the other hand were exacerbated and revealed two opposing conceptions of the apostolate[68]. The repercussions on the evangelization of the population of this antagonism engendered the creation of a deep division between the two communities.

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[65] WEBER M., *Protestant Ethics and the Spirit of Capitalism*, p.135.

[66] *Tukuofo*: this traditional ritual consisted of the villagers presenting their offerings: tapas, mats, food and drink, on the occasion of the funeral of one of their chief's family members. By this act, the population showed its loyalty to the chief, while the chief granted recognition and protection in exchange. This ceremony was intended to strengthen the cohesion of the community. However, the Wesleyan missionaries saw this custom as just another way for the chiefs to accumulate property at the expense of the people.

[67] And the Reverend Watkin, deploring the apathy of the population in this regard, wrote in 1868: "*Christianity has produced a thorough change in their religious and political condition and their social state also has been improved but the inert mass of Tongan society has made only small advancement in civilization. The natives still prefer to go naked. Their houses generally are not a shade better than those of their grandfathers. A few here and there sleeps on bedsheads ... (sic) by far the most of them still sleeps on the ground with only dry leaves and thin mats for a bed. They still eat with their fingers and drink from nut shells or the leaf of a banana tree. A hole in the ground is their common oven and after soiling their hands they usually make use of the nearest post or tree as a substitute for water and towel." Methodist Overseas Missions 322. Diaries and other Personal Papers. Extract from the ms-journal, 1830-1882, p.70. Methodist Church of Australasia, department of overseas missions, Wesleyan Manuscript Holdings, Mitchell Library, Sydney.*

[68] Within the general framework of Protestantism, Methodism stood out for its rejection of Calvinist predestination and of the Lutheran doctrine which invests man with the duty to cooperate in God's work through repentance. From this point of view, Methodism was considered a "*Catholicising reaction*". During his lifetime John Wesley (1703-1791) tried to keep his followers within the Anglican Church. However, he recognised the right of the Holy Spirit to establish a charismatic episcopate under whose leadership the affiliated members of his societies met. A proponent of free grace, he based his theory on the search for holiness, for the benefit of which he drew up rules of life which constituted the principles of Methodism. LEONARD E.G., *Histoire générale du protestantisme*, Quadrige/Presses Universitaires de France, Paris 1988, Volume Ill, pp.99-119. In Tonga, the features of Methodism that were most vigorously criticised by the Marists were the exaltation of religious sentiment, the preaching of catechists, the encouragement of economic production and earnings, and the rigour of the rules of life.

However, the question of the origin of these divergences deserves to be posed in order to determine the correlation between the social and cultural origin of the various protagonists and their respective method of propagation of the religious discourse. All coming from the European nineteenth century and animated by the same force of religious conviction, Protestant missionaries and Marist priests were also inspired by a similar ardour to hinder the developments of their rivals. Although they were forced, in this restricted geographical space, to admit their inevitable joint ownership, they abstained as much as possible from establishing direct contacts and communicated through their respective catechists to whom they inculcated the art of rhetoric - for which Tongans showed a happy disposition - so that they could respond to the diatribes of their opponents. On the other hand, their respective correspondences echoed the numerous attacks of which they were the object and which they responded in kind. Fathers Chevron and Grange strongly denounced the authoritarian, intransigent and sectarian behaviour of the Wesleyans towards the population. They relied for this on the observation of acts of bodily violence, fasts and bullying imposed on penitents who had, moreover, to support the humiliation, considered as such by the Marists, of confession and public penance.

This contempt of the Marists towards the Wesleyan missionaries was further increased by the social demands of the latter who did not hesitate to turn away the faithful who presented themselves at their door with a yam or a pig whose size was considered insufficient - a custom traditionally reserved to the chiefs -, to be transported on a bed from one village to another, and to gather all the mats in order to improve the comfort of their bed. However, the desire of the Wesleyan missionaries to impose distinctive marks of social status was denounced by the Marists who revealed the mediocrity of their former condition. Nevertheless, this last argument had little impact on the population, which considered this state as being the most appropriate to the condition of a European and which showed with regard to the vows of humility and poverty pronounced by the Marists a deep misunderstanding. This was all the more so as the life of renunciation displayed by the Marists was opposed to the majestic and rich vision of the Catholic Church, embodied in these places by the bishop.

On the other hand, if it mattered little to the Tongans that the Wesleyan missionaries were former apprentices, self-taught and inexperienced so long as they satisfied their demand for material goods, medical care and formal education, the evangelical zeal which animated them implied that they obtain conversions at all costs, even if it meant sacrificing the ancestral customs of their followers. In this respect, the strength of the Marists was to maintain - despite not only the influence of the Wesleyans but also the opposition of many chiefs for whom the rejection of traditional customs constituted the prelude to a new society - the practice of various customs, even to integrate them into the Catholic liturgy. This attitude must be attributed in large part to the long experience from which the Catholic Church benefited in the field of the apostolate in mission countries, experience attested by the Instruction of 1659 drawn up by the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith for the use of Apostolic Vicars leaving for the kingdoms of China, Tonkin and Cochinchina [Vietnam] and cited in reference to other missionaries. The Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith considered that the slow impregnation of societies was a condition *sine qua non* for a lasting establishment of the Church[69]. Consequently, the Marist missionaries in Tonga had as their immediate objective to

[69] "*Do not use any zeal or argument to persuade these peoples to change their rites, customs and habits, unless they are obviously contrary to religion and morality. (...) Do not introduce our countries into their midst, but the faith which neither repels nor harms the rites and customs of any people, provided they are not detestable, but on*

become masters of the language - such had been the subject of Bishop Pompallier's request to King George in 1837 -, to deepen their knowledge of indigenous society, and to establish contacts with the chiefs. Among the directives imposed by the Superior of the Congregation before the departure for the South Seas is a list of objects - weapons, fabrics, shells, plants, seeds - that the Marists must take care to send to Lyons in order to enrich the collection of the museum set up by The Work for the Propagation of the Faith. Thus, this interest in indigenous productions and this desire for knowledge must be considered as an integral part of a global strategy of evangelization experienced in earlier times and in other places.

Moreover, the second element which characterizes the attitude of the Marists, heirs and messengers of the Catholic tradition on which their childhood was nourished, with regard to the native society concerns their inclination to prioritize the forms of traditions which ensure the continuation and cohesion of the community. Moreover, respect for traditions such as those linked to festivities allows the liturgical ceremonies introduced by the Marists to be integrated into a whole inherited for centuries and which confers on this novelty a dignity and stability which will later be reinforced by the division within the Wesleyan Church. It is in this perspective of convergence between Catholic tradition and Tongan tradition or of mixed heritages that the approach of the Marists can be inscribed, who endeavoured on the one hand to transcribe the genealogy of the Tu'i Tonga, and to teach on the other hand the long list of predecessors of the Tu'i Tapu (Pope). On the other hand, from this Catholic tradition, of which the Marists are the holders, a principle emerges which was - in the context of rivalry with the Protestant mission - an important obstacle to the propagation of Catholicism and which consists in the impossibility of delegating the transcendental word of the priest, while the Wesleyans took advantage of the possibility of delegating their immanent word by quickly and successfully forming a large indigenous clergy. In addition, the local position of the Wesleyans was consolidated by a regional missionary infrastructure established in Sydney, the *Australasian Wesleyan Methodism Conference* which was constituted as an autonomous branch from 1855, and by the support of the Australian Anglo-Saxon society which expressed encouragement to its missionaries through the local press. Conversely, shortly after making the decision to establish their centre of procurement in Sydney, the Marists saw the execution of their project thwarted by the imposing personality of the Benedictine Archbishop Polding of Sydney who wanted the Vicariate of Western Oceania to be incorporated into the ecclesiastical province of Australia, which implied that the Marists would place themselves at his disposal. From the difficulty of finding a compromise with Archbishop Polding, it resulted in a lack of efficiency with consequences that the Marists, dispersed in distant archipelagos, had to suffer in terms of isolation and lack of improvement in their living conditions. The conjunction of these elements makes it possible to measure the strength of the antagonism which pitted the Catholic missionaries and Protestant missionaries against each other, as well as to establish their respective strengths and weaknesses while their rivalry constituted for a long time, for the indigenous population of the archipelago, a dilemma to which they responded with contingent attitudes.

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the contrary wants them to be preserved and protected. MAURIER H., *Le Paganisme*, Desclée/Novalis, Paris, 1988, p.58. However, from 1750 onwards and on the initiative of Pope Benedict XIV, the recommendations of the Roman Curia went against this provision and encouraged greater rigour with regard to cultural adaptations in mission countries. PRUD'HOMME C, *Stratégie missionnaire du Saint-Siège sous le pontificat de Léon XIII, centralisation romaine et défis culturels*, 1031 p.

THE PHASES
IN THE RECOGNITION
OF CATHOLICISM

CHAPTER II

CATHOLICISM, A MARGINAL RELIGION

I – A harmful episcopal policy

1 – Marists sacrificed due to internal struggles

Among the obstacles that presented themselves in the development of the Marist mission in Tonga were the differences which opposed Father Colin, superior of the Marist congregation, to the two bishops, successively Bishop Pompallier and then Bishop Bataillon, who coordinated the action on the ground from 1842 to 1877. It quickly appeared that the concerns of Father Colin, above all with the fate of his missionaries for whom he felt responsible, were hardly compatible with the objectives of the two prelates who, in their respective tenure, intended to grant preeminence to their ambitions and materially favored establishments of which they were the founders. This antagonism between these authorities who were supposed to work in the same spirit for the conversion of heathen souls weighed heavily on the relations between the Marists and the Tongan chiefs who looked with suspicion on these men abandoned by all and without resources. Despite his indignation with regard to the isolation and destitution in which certain missionaries were left by their bishops, Father Colin had only an extremely reduced room for maneuvering due to the remoteness and difficulties of communication between France and Oceania. The conflict between Father Colin and Bishop Pompallier was all the more acute since the latter had been appointed by Rome and had no intention of submitting to the authority of the superior of the congregation.

The complaints addressed to Father Colin in 1840 by the missionaries in New Zealand were at the origin of this conflict. The missionaries succeeded in fact, despite the strict control established by Bishop Pompallier, in informing Father Colin of the unilateral decisions taken by the bishop in the management of the credits allocated by The Work for the Propagation of the Faith, of which a significant percentage was automatically assigned to the development of the mission at the Bay of Islands where he had established the seat of the bishopric. In addition, the missionaries suffered from the precarious situation in which they found themselves as a result of commitments made by Bishop Pompallier in order to convince the populations to welcome them, commitments which the prelate had not deigned to honour. They also complained of being systematically dispersed, despite their reluctance, in isolated places. However, this provision formally contradicted the rule of the congregation, which provided for a minimum of two missionaries for each establishment. Moreover, they deplored that the new arrivals were immediately monopolized by the bishop to develop the episcopal establishment[70]. Finally, they denounced his lack of interest in the missions of Central Oceania and in general his lack of consideration for the missionaries.

[70] Other than the bishop's see at Kororareka in the Bay of Islands, the Catholic mission in Oceania had seven establishments in August 1840, five of which were in New Zealand (at Hokianga, Wangaroa, Tauranga and Kaipara in the North Island and another on the Banks Peninsula) and two in Wallis and Futuna.

Deeply upset by the dissatisfaction of the missionaries in New Zealand, Father Colin was encouraged by the idea of removing the administration of the Polynesian archipelagos from the authority of Bishop Pompallier by a letter addressed to Father Colin in February 1841 by Peter Dillon. On this occasion, the latter informed him of the desire of the pagans in Tonga, victims of the evangelizing campaigns carried out at the instigation of Taufa'ahau and encouraged by the Wesleyan missionaries, to receive the support of Catholic missionaries[71]. In addition, Father Colin was notified a few months later of the assassination of Father Chanel in Futuna in April 1841 and of the progress recorded by Father Bataillon on the island of Wallis, whose population had massively converted to Catholicism. All these circumstances combined prompted him to propose to the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith in Rome a project for the creation of a new vicariate grouping together the archipelagos of Samoa, Wallis, Futuna, Tonga, and Fiji. This suggestion aimed on the one hand to consolidate the Marist positions in the region, and on the other hand to reduce the scope of action of Bishop Pompallier. In August 1842, the decision to create the Vicariate of Central Oceania was ratified by the Roman authorities. The responsibility was entrusted to Father Bataillon who received episcopal consecration for the occasion. In the meantime, Father Chevron, assisted by Brother Attale, had been welcomed by Chief Moeaki and had settled in Pea on the island of Tongatapu[72].

However, Bishop Pompallier was not a man who would allow himself to be stripped of his prerogatives without retaliating. On the strength of the results obtained by the New Zealand mission, he pleaded for the attachment of the Tonga archipelago to his jurisdiction. The arguments he put forward in favor of a new definition of the limits of his vicariate were essentially based on the need to benefit from a site to fall back on in the event that a possible disagreement arising between France and the United Kingdom would oblige him to leave New Zealand. Indeed, he feared being expelled by the British governor who, wishing to get rid of this cumbersome bishop on account of his stances, accused him of having incited the Maoris to revolt against the English. The archipelago of Tonga, not being placed under British control, is where he hoped to take advantage with complete impunity from the support of the French navy. In addition, he wanted to take advantage of his knowledge of the Tongan language to strengthen the mission. He won his case in 1845 after all these considerations had been examined by the cardinals of the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith and Pope Gregory XVI approved the attachment of Tonga to the Vicariate of Western Oceania.

However, the reversal by the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith and the victory of Bishop Pompallier caused consternation among the Marists in Tonga who suffered the immediate consequences of these issues to which they were strangers and who demanded the establishment of a coherent administration. Indeed, the duration of the Roman deliberations, added to the delays in conveying the decisions, engendered a period of total confusion during which the mission of Tonga nevertheless continued to progress in a state of neglect. Neither Bishop Pompallier nor Bishop Bataillon wished to visit the Catholics of Tonga, who nevertheless were impatiently awaiting the arrival of the bishop to finally receive the long-awaited presents. "*Since Bishop Bataillon's last visit, almost a year ago, our position has seemed less brilliant, although undeniably more solid. The natives, like inexperienced children,*

[71] Cf. biographical note on Peter Dillon, included in chapter II.2.1. Wesleyan Mission and Tu'i Kanokupolu: a timely alliance.

[72] WILTGEN R., *The Founding of the Roman Catholic Church in Oceania, 1825 to 1850*, pp.224-245, "*the Vicariate Apostolic of Central Oceania, 8 August 1842*".

had all grown up. Basing themselves on a few words that I would not dare to qualify, but which had been passed on to Bishop Pompallier either in Wallis or in Futuna, the natives took pleasure in imagining that the bishop was going to arrive with a squadron, perhaps a fleet of ships of war and transport, that he was going to distribute to them an abundance of clothes, spades, axes, pots, knives, etc..."[73]. Even more so, each of the two bishops refused to bear the expenses incurred by the mission as long as their prerogatives were not clearly defined, and the Marists responsible for the accounts of the missions did not know to which budget to charge the expenses which were then reduced to the strict minimum. Moreover, Bishop Pompallier, dissatisfied with the concessions made to him, took decisive action to broaden the scope of his powers by including the missions of Tonga, Wallis and Futuna within his jurisdiction. He delegated his coadjutor, Bishop Viard, to inform Bishop Bataillon of this new distribution of powers. Thus, instructions were given to The Work for the Propagation of the Faith so that the funds allocated to the missions of Central Oceania be paid to Bishop Pompallier. In 1846, Pius IX succeeded Gregory XVI and the dispute remained unresolved. The following year, Bishop Pompallier and Father Colin met in Rome to settle their dispute in the presence of the cardinals of the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith. As for Bishop Bataillon, he still refused to assume the administration of the Tonga mission. To the Roman authorities, Bishop Pompallier, wishing to free himself from the control of the Marist congregation, recommended dividing the region into dioceses and ecclesiastical provinces. This proposal was contested by Father Colin and the departure of missionaries bound for Oceania was suspended. No solution seemed likely to overcome the determination of the two men when, in an unexpected about-face, Bishop Pompallier offered his resignation as vicar to the Roman cardinals, who seized the opportunity to comply with Father Colin's options[74]. In August 1847, responsibility for the Tonga archipelago was officially and definitively entrusted to Bishop Bataillon.

However, new difficulties arose resulting from the independent spirit of Bishop Bataillon who, like his predecessor, rejected any interference on the part of the superior general of the Society of Mary. Exhausted by so many futile battles, Father Colin resigned from his duties in 1854, when the departures of missionaries for Oceania resumed. In this context, the missionaries of Tonga had no other recourse during this period than to wonder about the abandonment of which they were the object and to note the isolation with which they were confronted. Never did the chiefs of Tonga, to whom Bishop Pompallier had promised numerous presents in exchange for the welcome reserved for Father Chevron, see the prelate again. As for Bishop Bataillon, who devoted all his energy to the development of the Wallis mission, he made only rare visits, which Father Chevron could not help lamenting: "*No visit from Bishop Bataillon since June 1848 and no news for 13 months*"[75]. Moreover, the feeling of isolation which the Marists of Tonga felt was reinforced by the irregularity and slowness of communications, not only with France - Father Colin will become aware of the situation of destitution of his missionaries only two years after the beginnings of the mission - but also with the neighbouring archipelagos. Arrived in Tonga at the end of June of the year 1844, Father Calinon regretted, sixteen months later,

[73] Father Chevron to Father Colin, Tongatapu, 17 June 1845 (A.P.M., 397).
[74] WILTGEN R., *The Founding of the Roman Catholic Church in Oceania, 1825 to1850*, pp.320-329, "*Tonga is returned to Pompallier*" and pp.405-431, "*Plans for Hierarchy in Western Oceania*".
[75] Father Chevron to Father Colin in Lyon, Tongatapu, 30 October 1849 (A.P.M., 411). This letter was completed on 27 February 1850.

that he had still not received any news from his traveling companions - Fathers Bréhéret and Favier - who had established a mission in the Fijian archipelago[76].

2 - A bishop challenged by his missionaries

Alerted by a letter from Father Chevron which mentioned the difficulties he was facing due to the lack of resources, Father Colin entrusted Father Calinon, who embarked for Tonga in April 1843, with the task of writing a report on the situation of the missionaries in Tonga. The report reached him at the end of 1845 after Father Calinon had experimented for many months with the policy established by Bishop Bataillon. The criticisms that the Marist fathers of Tonga had formulated against their bishop were thus exposed without reserve in a document which makes it possible to take a measure of the daily effort that the missionaries had to carry out for their survival.

First of all, Father Calinon denounced the harmful effects caused by the maintenance of the system put in place by Bishop Bataillon who defended the idea of a daily sharing at the homes of families as a condition for the integration of missionaries within such a group without giving them the material means to carry out this sharing. "*If some food arrives from one of our neophytes or from elsewhere, the basket is usually followed by a troop of people, each of whom covets his share; the same thing if you cook at home. It must be distributed immediately, otherwise sympathy will be broken by violating the custom of the country*"[77]. Quickly, in fact, a relationship of reciprocity of services was engaged within the framework of the constraints and necessities of daily life around the distribution of food, housing and the loan of everyday objects. However, to ensure the sustainability of this system, it was not only necessary that the population agree to meet the needs of the missionaries on a regular basis, but also that the latter be able to meet their expectations, which was not the case. "*We live here on alms, as you know, I don't think for the good of the mission, it won't be able to last long*"[78]. However, the poverty that Bishop Bataillon imposed on them as a voluntary step and manifestation of "*apostolic zeal*" was inconceivable for the people of Tonga. In traditional society, there was a convergence between rank and the possession of material goods, while poverty was the destiny of the slave. In addition and in general, the contacts established by the Tongans with Europeans were based on a system of compensation and exchange of services. The beachcomber put his know-how in the handling of weapons at the disposal of the chief who granted him in return his protection. The navigator offered goods manufactured in Europe in exchange for supplies. As for the Wesleyan missionaries, who had substantial means, they had encouraged and even developed this type of relationship. "*We make a thousand offers but when it comes to putting them into effect, it is only reluctantly... They feel even more regret in giving us something than in giving it to their fellow natives.. Seeing them only in passing, we can cite them as the most hospitable and charitable people. But even if religion produces a change in the neophytes, they are still too few; moreover, it does not shed old habits. To this must be added the mercantile spirit introduced by the English; nothing for nothing, that's the principle. They don't pay much*

[76] Father Philippe Calinon was born on 12 August 1806 at La Vieille-Loye in the diocese of Saint-Claude. He was admitted to religious profession on 11 March 1843 and left for Oceania shortly afterwards. Founder of the missions of Maofaga and Ha'apai, he remained in Tonga until 1867, when ill health forced him to take a rest in Sydney. He returned to Maofaga in 1872 and died later that year [sic].

[77] Copy of a report on the temporal administration of the Apostolic Vicariate of Central Oceania, addressed to the Superior of the Society of Mary by Father Calinon. Tongatapu, October 1845 (A.P.M., 272).

[78] Father Chevron to Father Colin, Tongatapu, 2 February 1844 (A.P.M., 395).

attention to the gifts we give them, the services we render them, but they constantly remind us of the smallest things they have given us. With this, we dare not ask anything, we wait until we are in extreme need to ask them for a service, for fear of alienating them from religion...Then I believe this system less advantageous to the progress of the mission in that it makes us dependent on the natives and makes them much more demanding of us"[79]. However, the Marists were hardly prepared for this form of competition. Thus, Father Chevron bitterly regretted that the progress of the work of the mission was constantly interrupted because of the frequent absences of Brother Jean, summoned to the four corners of the island to trim the men's beards, while the neophytes complained that the tools placed at their disposal in insufficient quantity were moreover of inferior quality to those procured for the Protestants by the Wesleyan missionaries.

These differences between Bishop Bataillon - whose motivations are more easily explained in light of the conflict which opposed him to Father Colin and to Bishop Pompallier - and the Marist missionaries in Tonga resulted in a mutual incomprehension which placed the latter in an ambivalent situation. For Bishop Bataillon, the relationship of dependence which had to be established between "*the pastor and his sheep"* had the objective of bringing the missionary to a better understanding of the society in which he had to integrate in order to encourage dialogue while acting with respect for local customs. On the other hand, in the minds of the population, these *"poor wretches have come to seek in Tonga an existence which was denied to them in their native country*". Thus, the limits of Bishop Bataillon's policy quickly became apparent. Gradually, Catholics refused to take charge of the development of a mission which had become *"too heavy a burden"* and only the chiefs obtained some advantages from this vicarial policy, since the option defined by Bishop Bataillon consisted in offering them presents in exchange for the promise of an attitude of benevolence and protection, while leaving to the discretion of the population the care of feeding the missionaries. No longer able to count on the generosity of their faithful alone, the Marists saw the development of the mission seriously compromised. Moreover, they suffered from the absence of autonomy which left only a narrow margin for the exercise of their ministry. *"We think that to put an end to all these inconveniences, it would be appropriate not to receive food from the natives free of charge, but to obtain it by exchanges, which nevertheless continue to supply them with medicine free of charge and even to give them, at least to the chiefs, from time to time, small gifts. One would also have to pay for the houses to be built and the other similar services that one needs to receive from them. There are enough obstacles to the mission without adding that of appearing burdensome to them by demanding services or food from them*"[80].

Thus, subject to the good will of the most humbled and to the authority of the chiefs, they managed only with difficulty to establish a dialogue. Misunderstandings multiplied between the missionaries and the chiefs who took offence at the prerogatives that the Marists arrogated to themselves. Indeed, the support given by the latter to the Tongans who practiced certain customs proscribed by the Wesleyans, such as songs and dances, placed them in a delicate position as it disconcerted those who aspired to satisfy them by anticipating their supposed desires. Sometime in 1843 and shortly after Father Grange's arrival, while the villagers of Pea were making preparations for a traditional ceremony, the chief demanded that the dances be removed from the festivities. The intervention of Fathers Chevron and Grange in favor of their

[79] Father Chevron to Father Colin, Tongatapu, 17 June 1845 (A.P.M., 397).
[80] Father Chevron to Father Colin, Tongatapu, 17 June 1845 (A.P.M., 397).

maintenance provoked his fury and resulted in threats of expulsion[81]. *"We therefore felt obliged to tell him that his ordinance was not just. He got carried away in front of everyone and said: what have these two white people gotten into, thrown here by the waves onto my land*?"[82]

In 1845, this situation, the precarious nature of which was becoming more and more flagrant, encouraged the Marists in Tonga to undertake negotiations with Bishop Bataillon who, however, remained deaf to their appeals. The latter defended himself against the accusations brought against him by arguing the need to continue the policy of his predecessor and not to introduce any drastic change in everyone's daily habits. He justified his refusal to correct the directions of his policy by maintaining that the population conceived an inseparable link between Catholic doctrine and the missionaries' way of life. "*The natives, in their ignorance, might suppose that religion is changeable, like our way of life*". He feared that the slightest change in the missionaries' diet would cause a feeling of bewilderment among the islanders who might have interpreted it as a sign of the fragility of their doctrine. As for the ban on procuring food or everyday objects through trade, it was part of the episcopal desire to distinguish Marists from other Europeans residing in the archipelago. In this, the bishop won the support of his missionaries who refused to participate in exchanges likely to introduce a mercantile spirit into these islands. The objective was that they were in no way assimilated to merchants "*and even less to Protestant missionaries*" whose name evoked arrogant and venal attitudes[83]. Thus, Father Chevron painted, with a hint of derision, the portrait of a Protestant preacher. This man, whose reputation was already tainted in the eyes of the author of this testimony, of an Anglo-Saxon heredity, would have been a cook on board a whaling ship before joining his concubine in Tonga where the Wesleyan missionaries took charge of regularizing the union and to include the troublemaker among their ranks of preachers. Through this portrait, Father Chevron denounced the presumptuousness of the Wesleyans regarding the population which saw itself obliged to give them the same honors as the chiefs.

In order to distinguish themselves from their rivals, the Marists endeavored to give as proof of the authenticity of their religion their open-mindedness, their modesty, their disinterestedness in material goods and their availability. Certainly, the abnegation which characterized the apostolate of the Marists constituted a determining factor of their integration within Tongan society, and this in spite of the feeling of perplexity which this form of apostolate aroused among the population. On the other hand, the contradictions regarding Bishop Bataillon were rather badly perceived by the Catholics in Tonga who had difficulty understanding the situation of their missionaries when rumors propagated by Wallisians visiting Tonga reported the prosperity of the Wallis mission and extolled the generosity of the bishop. Bishop Bataillon defended himself against these new accusations brought against him by arguing the need to

[81] Father Jérôme Grange was born on 20 April 1807 at Saint-Claire-du-Rhône in the diocese of Grenoble. He was a shepherd, a farm boy and then a baker's apprentice, and in order to support his mother, who was widowed, he entered the minor seminary only at a late stage. He made his profession in Belley on 25 September 1841 and set sail for Oceania in November of the same year. He arrived in Tonga at the beginning of October 1842 and left in April 1846. Returning to France at the end of 1849, he was chaplain to the Marist Brothers at Saint-Paul-Trois-Chatenux where he died on 23 July 1852.

[82] Father Grange to a priest of the Society of Mary, Tongatapu, April 1844 (A.P.M., 515).

[83] In 1843, eight Wesleyan missionaries were established in different islands of the archipelago. They were Reverends John Tomas, Peter Turner, David Cargil, Stephen Rabane, Mattew [sic] Wilson, Francis Wilson, George Kevern and William Webb. URBANOWlCZ Charles F., *Tongan Culture: the methodology of an ethnographic reconstruction*, p.6.

maintain cohesion throughout the vicariate he administered[84]. Indeed, the structures put in place in Tonga reproduced the organizational system of the Wallis mission, considered as the reference model and, having no fear of undermining its credibility, he reaffirmed his intention of not modifying any line in this pattern because he felt that the acceptance in Tonga of certain tolerances was likely to cause confusion among Catholics in the region, entitled to question the "*reliability of Catholic doctrine*", even the legitimacy of episcopal authority.

However, in the face of pressure from the Catholics in Tonga and the multiple manifestations of discontent from the missionaries, Bishop Bataillon was forced to make compromises by authorizing the cultivation of the land and purchases aboard ships. In addition, he ordered from Valparaiso a reserve of wine, flour and biscuits in order to meet the emergency. However, these provisions did not prove to be satisfactory. The time required to transport food from the west coast of the South American continent and the irregularity of the maritime links made it impossible to envisage maintaining this solution in the long term[85]. As for the acquisition of resources resulting from local market gardening and vegetable production, it presupposed means in terms of labor and tools which the Marists in Tonga did not possess. On the other hand, they could not conceive of obtaining their purchases on board ships because many merchants were aware of the lack of monetary resources among the Catholic missionaries who furthermore refused to trade with those merchants when they did not give them spoiled foodstuffs at a lower price.

There was, according to the Marists, only one solution which consisted of an equitable distribution of the funds allocated each year by the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, with each missionary responsible for managing his viaticum [= allowance]. From then on, the council for the Propagation of the Faith, prompted by Father Colin, decided to allocate a lump sum to each mission of the vicariate, the funds to be redistributed by the vicar of the missionaries placed under his jurisdiction. Part of this viaticum was actually paid back to them in cash, while the other, managed by the procure whose headquarters was located in Sydney, was used to pay for the objects of exchange which made it possible to obtain food from the natives and to remunerate them for services rendered to the mission.

From 1846, the material conditions of the mission gradually improved, helping to reduce the dependence to which the Marists had been forced since 1842 thanks to the obtainment of objects intended for exchange. They were mainly tools for working the earth and wood, hardware, kitchen utensils, tobacco and fabrics[86]. The choice of these goods manufactured in Europe, which the Marists ordered in Lyons or Sydney, was defined according to the demand of the population which established the terms of trade. Thus, a pipe was equivalent to a supply of yams for several days; an object worth two and a half cents to a dozen eggs, a penny to a hen or a duck. In 1845, Charles Simonet confided to Father Chevron that four francs had enabled him to acquire yams throughout the year. However, the increasing frequency of

[84] This administrative division included the islands of Wallis and Futuna and the archipelagos of Samoa, Fiji and Tonga.

[85] The food shipment was delivered to its recipients more than eighteen months after the order was placed and much of the food was spoiled.

[86] The objects of exchange were mainly tools: spades, small and large axes, saws, drills, carpenter's chisels, planer irons, files, knives (large butcher's knives; small knives are given to children as a reward for some good deed), scissors, razors and wood choppers. Nails, needles, pipes, tobacco, cloth, blue glassware, slates and cast iron kettles were also very useful for obtaining small services. Father Chevron to Father Colin in Lyons, Tongatapu, 2 February 1844 (A.P.M., 395).

stopovers by ships in search of refueling points led to an increase in demand, and consequently a constant revaluation of trade. In addition to this source of supply, the Marists tended towards greater economic autonomy by developing vegetable, market gardening and horticultural crops, the seeds of which were imported from Europe, while products such as flour, rice, brown sugar, tea, coffee and wine were sent by the procure. An oven built within the confines of the mission was used to bake bread[87]. As for the barnyard, it consisted of poultry - hens, ducks and turkeys - to which were added pigs and sheep imported from Sydney.

Although the damage done to the Tonga mission by the intransigence of Bishop Pompallier and Bishop Bataillon was heavy and prevented a more organized establishment, it should be noted that the total immersion - however brutal it was - of the missionaries in their new environment nevertheless produced lasting results. The need to face without possibility of recourse the difficulties inherent in the life of the mission which are the heat of the climate, imbalance of food, inconvenience of clothing, absence of medical care, discomfort of the habitat and finally ignorance of the language encouraged a rapid adaptation which explains why Father Chevron was able to undertake the translation into Tongan of Latin hymns two years after his arrival. It is true that learning the language was facilitated by the work previously undertaken by the Wesleyans who had composed an alphabet and had some religious works printed in the vernacular. In addition, the Marists benefited from a certain experience in the handling of languages through their knowledge of French and Latin, to which was added the practice of the dialect of their region of origin and finally some rudimentary knowledge of English. Father Chevron, for his part, was helped in the approach to the peculiar structure of the Polynesian language and the practice of pronunciation by the similarities existing between the language of Tonga and that of Wallis where he had stayed for several months[88]. Father Grange put his knowledge of the Maori language to good use. However, due to the suffering caused by these living conditions the latter was in a state of weakness which forced him to leave Tonga in 1846. On the other hand, those among these pioneers who managed to free themselves from the constraints imposed by isolation and dependence on their hosts, established deep links with those around them, whose reluctance was gradually overcome by the attention they paid to their involvement in daily life. "*What has won us over to the natives is the care we have taken to conform in everything to their customs; we live like them, we are content with what they bring us, explaining to them that if we weren't quite sure of the truth of the religion that we are announcing to them, we would be the craziest of men; when we go to see them, we sleep like them on the ground covered with a mat, or on the planks of some boat; we attend their festivities, their kava, we take care to always have something to offer to those of the chiefs who come to visit us, it is rare that we do not have kava at home at least three times a day (...). We don't buy or sell anything; if they need a needle, a thread, a nail, we give them the piece we have; we lend them some tools, spades, pickaxes, axes to those who don't have any*"[89]. They gave as proof of the fruitful results of this approach the appearance of a spontaneous movement which pushed the most humbled to regroup around the mission where

[87] Vines, beans, onions, sorrel, parsley, cabbage, beetroot, lettuce and chicory, celery, wheat and corn, potatoes, peas, carrots and leeks were the main crops produced by the Marists in Tonga.

[88] In 1859, Father Bataillon completed the work on a Polynesian and Uvean grammar. A twenty-eight page handwritten document, he mentioned in his introduction the characteristics of pronunciation and then addressed in separate chapters the question of the use of the noun, the adjective and finally the pronoun. Archives of the Diocese of Tonga, file A 4, Bishop Bataillon.

[89] Father Chevron to his family, Tongatapu, 24 June 1843 (A.P.M., 391).

they found recognition and consideration refused to them by Wesleyan missionaries, too imbued with their social superiority.

II - The development of the mission

1 - A laborious installation

Despite their desire to establish themselves in the neighbouring archipelagos of Ha'apai and Vava'u, which they despaired of abandoning unto the influence of the Wesleyan missionaries, the Marists were forced, until 1858, to limit their activities to Tongatapu Island. On this date, the geographical extension of the mission was made possible by the signing of the 1855 convention, which imposed freedom of worship upon the kingdom, and by the successive interventions of the officers of the Naval Division of the Pacific Ocean, anxious to enforce the signed agreements.

The existence in Tongatapu of a small community made up of about thirty Tongans converted to Catholicism in Wallis and the incessant visits by Catholic missionaries, who defined their routes according to the number of neophytes scattered in the various villages of the island, were essential factors in the development of the mission and the spread of Catholicism. "*The neophytes who have come from Ouvea while talking and telling with simplicity what they have seen and heard undoubtedly do more good than I can do with all my instructions, our catechumens then talk with the Protestants and the heathens. These conversations spread to the neighbouring islands of Ha'apai and Vava'u, from which natives often come here*"[90]. Repatriated to their island of origin in 1842 by Bishop Pompallier, who wanted to associate them with the development of the future mission, the Tongans converted to Catholicism in Wallis spread out among the villages of their ancestors[91]. The great majority of them gathered in the village of Holonga in the eastern part of Tongatapu, and a few families were scattered in the surrounding area. They provided valuable support for the missionaries, for whom they were both interpreters and spokespersons, and largely contributed to the acceptance of Catholicism by the village communities from which they originated. Their strength lay mainly in their ability to convey the precepts of the Gospel without being confronted with the difficulties of adaptation of the missionaries and in the evocation of the undeniable successes of Catholicism in Wallis, making it possible to attenuate the prejudices inculcated by the Wesleyan missionaries who liked to denigrate the Catholic religion and the men who served it[92]. Small nuclei of Catholics were organized around these families, most of whom, although subjected to the pressures of a hostile environment, remained faithful to their commitment.

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[90] Father Chevron to his family, Tongatapu, 24 June 1843 (A.P.M., 391).

[91] Converted to Protestantism in the 1833s [sic], the island of Niua Toputapu was then under the rule of Chief Gogo Ma'atu who undertook to bring the word of the Gospel to his cousin in Wallis. Gogo was the descendant of a Wallisian chief named Tupavaitupu and the daughter of the chief of Niua Toputapu. In August 1835, Gogo, accompanied by about fifty warriors, embarked for Wallis where he quickly made some proselytes. However, the king of Wallis, who bore the title of Lavelua, tried to resist him. Gogo's men, entrenched in a hastily built fort, were assaulted by Lavelua's numerous troops. At the end of the battle, each side collected its wounded and counted its dead. Gogo's ranks had been decimated, he himself had died, and the survivors, mostly children, were scattered to the island's villages where they were adopted by Wallisian families. In the months following these events, two other groups of Tongans came to Wallis. Some of them settled and formed small communities which converted to Catholicism following the example of the great majority of the population of the island where Father Bataillon settled in 1837. ANGLEVIEL Frédéric, - *Wallis and Futuna (1801-1888), contacts, evangelisations, inculturations*. - Volume I, pp.206-2I4.

[92] Father Chevron to his family, Tongatapu, 24 June 1843 (A.P.M., 391).

The multiplication of small Catholic communities allowed for the establishment of a network from which the missionaries worked out their itineraries. Having established a sedentary base at Pea, they radiated mainly in the eastern part of the island where the Protestant missionaries had not been able to establish themselves permanently because of the influence of the Tu'i Tonga who held under his domination a large number of loyal families whose hostility towards King George was well known. This approach to remote villages was favored by the protection accorded them by the chief of Pea, Moeaki, and by the credit which the latter enjoyed with the unconverted populations of the island, given the glorious past of his ancestor Takai, who opposed the ambitions of the Tu'i Kanokupolu[93].

Although they were a constant challenge due to the precariousness of the conditions, their itinerant walks were a determining element of the first phase of the spread of Catholicism in Tongatapu. Along the way, discussions began, aroused by the appearance and talks of these men with sunburned skin, bearded, solitary, dressed in long black cassocks, a cross as a pendant, traveling the countryside in search of lost souls in the name of the Christian faith, preaching the love of Christ for man and that of man for his neighbour[94]. "*You see that our walks are not always the funniest part of our work, but it creates a diversion from the monotonous life of our residence; encounters on the road with a few natives, with whom one strikes up a conversation under a coconut tree, small discussions with heretics and heathens, where one can have a little distraction*"[95].

Contact between the Marists and the villagers generally took place according to the same pattern. As soon as the edge of the village was reached, the chiefs were notified of their arrival and gathered to receive the homage due to them. The missionaries then made an offering of a kava root which was then prepared as part of the traditional ceremony. After having presented to the chiefs the purpose of their visit - which most often concerned the teaching of the catechism to those who were ready to receive it - they went to the bedside of the sick to whom they lavished care, advice and comfort. The frequency and duration of the visits depended not only on the distance to be traveled, but also on the number of the faithful to visit. One morning was enough to get to Houma, located "*a good two-hour walk*" southwest of Pea. In this village where the Catholic community was small, the missionaries mainly devoted their visits to discussions with the allied chiefs of Moeaki. Each week, Father Chevron prepared himself to follow the path connecting the villages of Pea and Mu'a. The first day, he reached the villages of Folaha and Vaini before joining Holonga where he stopped for the night thanks to the generosity of his neophytes. The next day he spent the day in Mu'a and the surrounding villages. This stay at Mu'a, bastion of the traditional religion, was of particular significance because it had stayed away from the Protestants' influence. The first contacts with the chiefs of this village were not as warm as Father Chevron had hoped, but with a bit of perseverance, he managed to overcome the mistrust of some and the indifference of others. Finally, on the third day, he returned to Pea. Every six or seven weeks, he headed straight for the eastern tip of the island from where he returned the next day following the coast. In general, Father Chevron was

[93] Takai was the victorious warrior in the campaigns at the beginning of the century against Tu'i Kanokupolu, Tupouto'a (father of Taufa'ahau) who sought political supremacy in the archipelago. He was, according to oral tradition, the builder of the fort at Pea. When he died in 1815 or 1816, his brother Fae succeeded him as ruler of Pea. Fae, whom Dumont d'Urville met in 1826, was the father of one of Tongatapu's most fervent Catholic neophytes: Fietoa [Fieota], Moeaki's wife.

[94] Father Chevron to his family, Tongatapu, 17 January 1844 (A.P.M., 394).

[95] *idem*.

assisted in his travels by a neophyte from Pea, given that Father Grange's precarious health did not allow him to accompany Father Chevron.

The objective pursued by the Marists in Tonga was to establish themselves in these places - Mu'a, Folaha, Vaini, or even Holonga - where they had won the sympathy of the population. But a possible multiplication of establishments in different parts of the island obviously required an increase in staff, which were blocked by the Society of Mary because of the conflict between Father Colin and Bishop Bataillon. Moreover, any attempt to increase their presence engendered new bursts of resistance on the part of the pagan population. However, in 1845 in the village of Holonga, they undertook the construction of a church and a house which they occupied a dozen days a month, alternating with their residence in Pea. During his first visit to Tongatapu in 1843, Monsignor Bataillon had conceived the idea of establishing a missionary at Mu'a, the bastion of the traditional cult, but he had been quickly dissuaded from doing so by the hostility of the chiefs towards the Christian religion. However, the village of Holonga was under the direct control of the chiefs of Mu'a, and the formation of a Catholic nucleus there was perceived as a threat to the integrity of the pagans. Also, the chiefs of Mu'a gave formal notice to the Catholic population of Holonga to leave their lands and retire to the fort of Pea or renounce Catholicism. "*This measure seemed violent even to the heathens and excited such a fermentation that they thought they had to revoke the judgment*"[96]. The church at Holonga was set on fire following an act of malice committed one night in October 1847. Investigations carried out at the request of Father Chevron and at the instigation of the chiefs of Mu'a came to no conclusion. However, the expulsion ordered by their chiefs did not succeed in undermining the faith of these neophytes who persisted in the path of Catholicism. Their loyalty was rewarded a few months later by the conversion of the Tu'i Tonga, which generated a new impetus for the development of the Catholic mission. With his support, the Marists were finally able to realize their first objective: the opening of a mission in Mu'a. This establishment offered an additional starting point for new visits which Father Chevron henceforth carried out by sea. "*Since my stay in Mua, I have been continually on sea trips, I don't think there are any trees in the bay of Pea, Vaini, Mua and the Hahake coast that I don't know. I don't go weeks without embarking on a visit at least twice. I have two boats: one European and the other in the local style, and with these I go from Mua to Pea, Hologa, Vaini, Hahake and to all the villages and dwellings that are scattered along the shore. The longest trips are with good wind of 2 hours, and with headwinds of 4 hours and more*"[97].

The arrival in 1845 of Father Calinon compensated for the departure a few months later, in March 1846, of Father Grange. The latter, exhausted by the state of deprivation in which the fathers had been kept during the first years of their establishment, was no longer able to participate actively in the development of the mission. In 1847, Father Chevron settled in Mu'a with Brother Attale while Father Calinon ensured the operation of the establishment of Pea with Brother Jean. The distance between the two villages and the diversity of their activities - Father Calinon for his part traveled the paths of the western part of the island - only allowed them to meet once every three weeks, a situation that was detrimental to the overall cohesion of the mission. This isolation was broken in 1850 by the arrival of Fathers Nivelleau and Piéplu,

[96] Copy of a report on the temporal administration of the Vicariate Apostolic of Central Oceania, addressed to the Superior of the S. M. by Father Calinon. Tongatapu, October 1845 (A.P.M., 272).
[97] Father Chevron to his family, Tongatapu, 12 October 1848 (A.P.M., 407).

bringing to four the number of Catholic missionaries established on the island of Tongatapu[98]. Father Nivelleau assisted Father Chevron at Mu'a while Father Piéplu joined Father Calinon at Pea. On the first Tuesday of each month, a theological conference brought together the four priests, who also discussed the problems and outlook of the mission.

In 1850, the progress of the mission became evident, as much in the structures that were being developed as in the acceptance - occasionally, it is true - of the presence of Catholics among Protestants. The Tongans converted to Catholicism in Wallis were gradually joined by new converts who formed communities in the villages of Houma, Holonga, Vaini, Folaha and Hahake whose chief was nevertheless Protestant. However, the villages of Mu'a and Pea, whose chief Marists feared would give in to the requests of the Wesleyan missionaries who pressed him to welcome one of their own, remained the privileged centers of the extension of Catholicism. These developments of the mission were accompanied by the construction of new places of worship: chapels or churches according to the means and the numerical importance of the community. The carrying out of construction works, in which the population participated with all the more enthusiasm as they strengthened the cohesion of the community in the sharing of the effort, also focused the pride of Catholics who thus forged, in the land of their ancestors, their new religious roots. However, these buildings, whose side walls were made of bamboo assembled with coconut palm fibers and whose vaults covered with banana leaves were supported by iron wood planks, took on a temporary character because they were left to the vagaries of the climate or demonstrations of hostility by Protestants. After the fire to the chapel of Holonga in 1847, the storm which fell on the island in 1849 overthrew that of Hahake and caused much damage to the churches of Pea and Mu'a.

2 - The apostolate of the Marists

When the Catholic missionaries landed in 1842, the animosity their settlement aroused among Protestants, who made up about half of the island's population, and the energy deployed by the Wesleyan missionaries to create an impassable barrier between their proselytes and the new arrivals, forced the Marists to give up, at least temporarily, the ambition of erecting in Tonga a bridgehead for Catholicism in the region, and to focus their attention on the unconverted population of the island[99]. The task was difficult, because not only this population was still deeply attached to traditional values, but moreover, it prided itself on having resisted the wave of Protestant conversion. If the presence of the Marists, whose arrival had been requested by the pagans themselves, seems indisputably to have presented the benefit of offering new perspectives to the partisans of a rejection of the Protestant monopoly, there was little question of religion as the Marists experienced it. Consequently, they had to moderate their ambition to

[98] Fr. Charles Nivelleau was born on 13 February 1823 in La Pomeraie-sur-Sèvres, Vendée. He was ordained a priest in 1847. Exhausted by the hardships endured during the siege of Pea, he was taken on board the *Moselle* in 1852 and died at sea on 10 December of the same year. Father Louis Piéplu was born on 18 May 1818 at Colleville in Calvados. After celebrating his profession of faith in the Society of Mary on 26 August 1847, he embarked for Tonga where he died in 1857.

[99] The announcement of a new distribution of vicarial prerogatives caused consternation among the Marists in Tonga who pointed out the inconsistency of this initiative, since Tonga represented for them the centre of Marist activities in the region: "*Tonga is by its influence the main centre of the Central Vicariate, and now this main centre is being separated from the rest of the vicariate. It is true that the Protestants are still powerful here and that it is not yet known whether one could remain master of the land; but when we cannot succeed completely, we will always hold Protestantism in check, and thus give the neighbouring Catholic missions time to gain a foothold and strengthen themselves.*" Father Chevron to Father Colin, Tongatapu, 20 February 1846 (A.P.M., 401).

inscribe on the baptismal registers the names of many new converts, and then had to worry about how to proceed in order to touch the souls of those resistant to Christianity.

With the objective of inciting them to a progressive questioning of their traditional beliefs which the Catholic missionaries came up against, it appeared necessary to dispense beforehand a knowledge which was to replace them by tending to confirm the existence of God in the creation of the world[100]. As such, the study of Genesis, but also the learning of history and geography were aimed at broadening the field of knowledge of the Tongans and to offer them a cosmogony open to universality. In the absence of educational structures, which were put in place later, these teachings were dispensed informally, on the occasion of a kava meeting, commentaries on sacred images or discussions aroused by the observation of natural phenomena. While the earthquakes that regularly shook the islands of the archipelago were attributed to movements generated by the restless sleep of the god beyond the grave, Maui, Fathers Chevron and Grange explained the main geological mechanisms that caused these phenomena. They also elucidated, not without pride in the inability of the Wesleyan missionaries to give a coherent explanation, the mystery of the comet which lit up the skies of Tongatapu in 1843. "*The captain of an English ship in the harbor of Nuku'alofa sent back to us the population still dissatisfied with the ignorance of the Protestant missionaries. Immediately a delegation came to us from all parts of the island. To interest them more, I showed them a work on uranography; everyone wanted to see the comet in Helenimo's book. The contest lasted fifteen days. Above all, the representation of these phenomena on paper completely surprised them: we have to know all this since we have made the representation! According to traditional customs, such an event was considered as the manifestation of the anger of the gods and to appease it, some would have had to lose their fingers or their lives. No matter how much I told them that all this was just ordinary and purely natural effects, they never wanted to listen to reason*". (As a result, Father Grange went to get his world map in order to point out on the globe the regions where earthquakes could occur and where the comet had appeared. Faced with the skepticism of his interlocutors, Father Grange got angry and gave this speech): "*This great God who made everything from nothing cares not about all the kingdoms of the world, all care is for Tonga, all other peoples are fools. For it is for Tonga alone that the sun rises, that the earth and all the stars move! It is in Tonga alone that there are learned men in religion, learned in making books, great ships, guns, watches, axes, knives, saws and beautiful stuffs! Tonga is everything, the rest of the world is nothing! Here I was interrupted saying: Helenimo, your tongue has moved enough to put us to shame. There was no more talk of cutting off fingers, nor of killing anyone"*[101].

Despite their perplexity and reluctance with regard to this scholarly knowledge, the first Catholics of Tonga nevertheless evoked, with a pride matching their fascination, the knowledge of their missionaries, and extolled the riches contained in the one hundred and eighty books in

[100] In a text denouncing the ancestral practices associated with the rituals of *Toomahaki* and *Akasia*, Father Liku Mo Aka Aka recalled the condemnation of these practices by the Christian churches in the 1930s. The *Toomahaki* ritual consisted of removing from the deceased the organ responsible for the disease in order to protect future generations from deaths attributed to heredity. During the *Akasia* ritual, the grave of one of the patient's ancestors was opened to ensure that no roots, suspected of being the cause of the persistent pain, grew through the body of the deceased. Tonga Diocesan Archives. Box 10. a. 2. Petelo Liku Mo Aka Aka: Press articles, sermons, poems; ms, 200 p., Niua Fo'ou 1930-1931.

[101] Father Grange to the parish priest of St Clair (Isère), 1 July 1843 (A.P.M., 510). Helenimo was the Tongan name of Father Grange, formed from his first name Jerome.

the mission's library to which they had unlimited access. They were moreover strongly encouraged by Fathers Grange and Chevron to consult them, because the voluntary step towards knowledge appeared to the Marists as being complementary to religious revelation, the creation of the world being presented as a universal reality created by God. Moreover, the scholarly reputation of the Catholic missionaries extended beyond the limits of the Catholic community, throughout the island, and was a significant factor in their integration. They thus succeeded in capturing the attention of Protestants who sometimes went to the mission in order to obtain some answers to the questions raised by the broadening of their horizons, venturing to contravene the orders given by their chiefs and their missionaries who forbade contact with the Catholic missionaries. "*I told you that today we were respected in Tongatabou. In addition to several other reasons, the beginning of an esteem that they have conceived for us which comes from the elevated idea that they have formed of our science*"[102].

The reputation of the Marists was also amplified in the field of care dispensed to the sick. The development of this activity was a particular priority insofar as the results obtained made it possible to counter the persistence of traditional beliefs which attributed the appearance of a disease to the displeasure of the gods. Moreover, it offered access to the most hostile homes, because the natives, who generally surrounded their sick with great solicitude, would not shy from any obstacle to obtain their cure[103]. However, two elements contributed to making the outcome of their interventions uncertain. They were in fact most often called upon as a last resort, when the invocations of traditional priests and the applications of ancestral remedies were no longer sufficient to extract the patient from the hold of the gods. Under these conditions, the chances of recovery were all the more reduced as their means were non-existent during the first years which followed their implantation, so that the remedies were not very adapted to the diagnosis: the wounds were treated with calomel, the worms with castor oil and colic with opium[104]. "*Only a few people come to us cured by our remedies, or rather, by taking our remedies, because we are often forced to play charlatans, for lack of medicines. With this the disease runs its course and the cure is attributed to a little water with a few drops of gasoline or eau de cologne*"[105].

Given their little supply of medicines, their popularity was essentially based on preventive action, if not curative. In fact, in addition to food imbalances and the increasing appearance of diseases caused by the intensification of contacts with Europeans, the ignorance of the basic principles of hygiene was, according to the Marists, an important factor in the transmission and aggravation of infections[106]. In this sense, they disapproved of the technique of preparing kava by mastication and encouraged chiefs to opt for grinding this root with a pounder. In December 1843, Father Chevron identified in many patients the symptoms of typhoid fever which was

[102] Father Grange to the parish priest of St. Clair (Isère), 1 July 1843 (A.P.M., 510).
[103] Father Grange to the parish priest of St. Clair (Isère), 1 July 1843 (A.P.M., 510).
[104] Father Chevron to Father Colin in Lyons, Tongatapu, 2 February 1844 (A.P.M., 395). Calomel, a purgative and intestinal antiseptic, was the most requested and used remedy; introduced by the Protestants, it was used to treat ulcers and intestinal worms, which were very common among children because of the fruits they ate. Castor oil was also prescribed to combat parasites. Rhubarb complemented the use of calomel. Opium and laudanum, soothing potions were recommended to treat pain of infectious origin. Apart from these basic products, the Marist pharmacy contained small and large syringes, lancets (small surgical instruments used for bloodletting), camphor and suction cups, which were a good substitute for leeches.
[105] Father Chevron to Father Colin in Lyon, Tongatapu, 2 February 1844 (A.P.M., 395).
[106] Ulcers, scrofula and the resulting infections, rheumatism, intestinal worms, and eye infections were the diseases most frequently diagnosed by the Marists.

spreading following the passage of a French corvette. To stem the epidemic, care was improvised on the ground with makeshift means. Father Chevron advised the Catholics of Pea to avoid drinking running water, to content themselves with an infusion of orange leaves which Brother Attale distributed twice a day or boiled coconut juice, and go on a diet. When after a few weeks all danger seemed to have passed, he lifted the instructions and regretted that the inhabitants of the neighbouring village had counted twenty-two dead while only one death was mourned at Pea.

3 - Highlighting the elements of worship

The cohesion of the community, whose ties uniting the members remained tenuous, was ensured by the missionaries who coordinated its activities; but it was also based on the existence of a building, church or chapel, the care given to the interior ornamentation of which reflected the aspirations of Catholics for whom places of worship had to be places of splendor that were not diminished in any way by the modesty of the architecture and the materials used. The construction in 1843 of the church of Holonga, where the majority of neophytes baptized in Wallis resided, was experienced as a great event by the whole village population, who prided themselves in having been chosen to raise the consecrated house to the worship of the Christian god. The participation of the majority of the inhabitants in the construction work and the energy deployed to bring the site to a successful conclusion were proof of the unanimity that this project aroused within the community[107]. Four hundred men and women, Catholics and pagans in equal proportion, took part in the various stages of construction, from the gathering of materials to the final decorative touch. A great feast organized for the blessing of the church rewarded everyone for the efforts made for the occasion during more than four months[108].

Thus, the ornamentation of churches and chapels everywhere was the object of particular attention on the part of the missionaries, who noted the fascination exerted on the population, Catholics and Protestants alike, by the richness of the materials and colors of the liturgical objects, such as paintings, statues, holy water fonts, monstrances, censers, crosses or altar candlesticks. Through this, it was a question of affirming the function of the church as the house of God, where the elements of his glory were gathered. Silk fabrics, ribbons, braid and lace, red, yellow, blue, gold or silver, bouquets of fabric flowers and colourful images from which the halo of Christ sprang attested to its sacred radiance. "*Here, more than elsewhere, we need the external elements of worship. We try to keep our church as neat and ornate as possible, we do a little greeting from time to time. We have on those days many exhibitions and we can address a few words to heathens and heretics*"[109]. Under the gaze and protective presence of Christ, a universe of symbiosis was recreated between rich and shimmering nature, God its creator and man, his creation and his adorer. All these manifestations of homage paid to God touched the heart of Tongan sensibility, still imbued with its ancestral links with the sacred with which Catholic worship made it possible to establish a greater proximity. While traditional places of worship were dedicated to the domestic adoration of those to whom a soul was recognized, the church was a place open to all, even to Protestants who, driven by curiosity, wanted to let themselves be overwhelmed by its atmosphere, and each one was invited to penetrate the intimacy of Christ through his sufferings which imposed silence and recollection.

[107] It does not appear that there were any Protestants residing in this village at that time.
[108] Father Chevron to Father Colin in Lyons, Tongatapu, 2 February 1844 (A.P.M., 395).
[109] Father Chevron to Father Colin in Lyons, Tongatapu, 2 February 1844 (A.P.M., 395).

The stark contrast between the opulence of Catholic worship on the one hand, and the austerity of Protestant temples on the other, provoked the curiosity of pagans, the pride of Catholics, and the perplexity of Protestants. The latter were all the more intrigued by so much wealth as the poverty of the Catholic priests was well-known. There followed a confrontation between the respective followers of these two opposing conceptions of the liturgy. By means of a rigorous study of the texts, the Catholic missionaries elaborated an argument likely to reinforce the convictions of their neophytes and to refute the objections of the Protestants who were indignant at the attachment of Catholics to the objects of worship[110]. "*Our new neophytes will make their first communion next Sunday. A few of them are really interesting. One of them, a father, two months after our arrival confounded an English missionary who, in the presence of the natives, made fun of a rosary he wore around his neck. I admired the grace of the Holy Spirit in his response; I didn't think he was actually capable of making such a correct riposte. Questioned by the missionary in an ironic tone, on the usefulness of this diabolical necklace which he wore, he went to sit down in the middle of the circle in the presence of the missionary and said to him: you want to know what our losalio (rosary beads) means?), I will tell you; this rosary only serves to regulate a certain number of prayers and the order in which we usually say them; here are the prayers we make, then he recites the "I believe in God". First of all, you see that there is nothing diabolical about this prayer, on the contrary, I say: "I believe in God, I do not believe, as you falsely reproach us, in one thing or another, but I believe directly in God the Father Almighty and in Jesus Christ his only Son"; he was continuing the creed when the missionary got up and went home; the catechumen began to laugh, and all the natives, even Protestants, began to laugh*"[111]. However, the Wesleyan missionaries, pressed by their faithful, disturbed by the stinginess they showed with regard to the development of their places of worship, were forced to overcome their reluctance to adapt the Protestant liturgy and had to give in to these requests by decorating their temples with coloured stained glass windows, altars and iconographic representations.

In addition to the attraction exerted both by the splendour and the intimacy of places of worship, Catholics loved to go there in order to receive the sacraments in which their participation was so enthusiastic that the Marists sometimes had to intervene to limit access. While the sacrament of baptism was granted without restriction to young children and the elderly who expressed a desire for it, they reserved the right to baptize men and women of childbearing age only with a view to the sacrament of marriage for fear of seeing them succumb in the meantime to the temptation of the flesh. The Eucharist, which established a more intimate contact between man and God through the body and blood of Christ, was warmly welcomed by the Catholics of Tonga, many of whom complained that they could not take communion more often, either because the priest's visits were rare, or because they had failed to confess. Through this solemn act, a tangible and renewable manifestation of their commitment to God's side, they also celebrated their belonging to a universal community where everyone had access to a place by virtue of baptism. "*The neophytes show an incredible fervour in approaching the sacraments, if one wanted to believe them, they would approach every 5 or 15 days, and when they were sent back day by day to 2 months or even less, they are unhappy*"[112].

[110] Father Chevron to his parents, Tongatapu, 3 October 1845 (A.P.M., 398).
[111] Father Chevron to his family, Tongatapu, 24 June 1843 (A.P.M., 391).
[112] Father Chevron to Father Colin in Lyons, Tongatapu, 30 October 1849 (A.P.M., 411).

As for confession, which allowed readmission to the sacraments to which the neophytes were so attached, it won unanimity - "*it was embraced with joy on our island*". Thus, sin was not a hindrance to the quality of being a child of God. On the other hand, the confession, granted by the sovereign word of the priest, also contributed to reinforcing the authority of the latter.

The influence of the ceremonies of baptism, confirmation, marriage or funeral extended beyond the limits of the Catholic community. "*All these ceremonies that we take care to explain to our neophytes and catechumens really strike them; they also strike the heathens very much; it would be to be hoped that we could always make them brilliant, for that is a more touching preaching for the natives than the most beautiful sermons that we cannot give them*"[113]. The festivities which followed the liturgical celebrations constituted for all the villagers the opportunity to attain a new cohesion in spite of the religious divergences which separated families whose immutable bonds between the members was attested by these occasional reunions during which preeminence was given to conviviality[114].

4 - A strategy oriented towards the conversion of chiefs

The example of the close relations established in 1826 between Aleamotu'a and his nephew Taufa'ahau and the Wesleyan missionaries, as well as the prosperity which the Protestant mission enjoyed because of their unconditional support, prompted the Marists, and encouraged in this by their bishops, to prioritize their relations with the chiefs whose influence was to determine the movements of conversion among their loyal subjects. The implementation of this principle was compromised by the growing political power of King George who had enlisted the collaboration of the majority of the chiefs of the archipelago who were unwilling to contravene their obligations[115]. Indeed, the absolute authority that these Protestant chiefs exercised over their people constituted a major obstacle to the development of Catholicism in Tonga, as their positions against the Marists determined the behaviour of the village communities with regard to the latter. However, only a few villagers proved ready to run the risk of being banished from the lands on which they lived to join the Catholic mission. "*In a small fort divided into three parts, two of which do not want to hear about religion out of deference to the chief who received us, while the other only listens to us in part. The forts are so jealous of each other that it is enough for one to do one thing for the other to do the opposite; it is the same for different chiefs within the same fort, no one wants to join his neighbour, even by sentiment, for fear of appearing dependent. Among Protestants, hatred for us makes them close. If it were only the people, we would soon have them, but the chiefs who are almost all their catechists would forbid any communications with us*"[116].

When in February 1844 Father Chevron announced to his hosts at Pea his intention of visiting Taufa'ahau, accompanied by Father Grange, rumors of war inspired by the fear that this great chief would be upset by the news immediately spread across the island. Most of the people suggested that the Catholic missionaries stay in hiding while waiting for Taufa'ahau to leave for Ha'apai, so as not to increase the religious and political tensions that underpinned the relations between the chiefs of the archipelago. "*These ones and others (heathens and heretics)*

[113] Father Chevron to his family, Tongatapu, 17 January 1844 (A.P.M., 394).
[114] *idem*.
[115] Father Chevron to Father Colin in Lyons, Tongatapu, 2 February 1844 (A.P.M., 395).
[116] Father Chevron to Father Colin in Lyons, Tongatapu, 2 February 1844 (A.P.M., 395).

close their ranks; religion becomes a party affair for them"[117]. Despite these warnings, Fathers Chevron and Grange set out and left the fort of Pea in the company of two Catholics from Nuku'alofa. When the coming of the two *Pilisite* – priests – was announced, Aleamotu'a, the chief of the fort of Nuku'alofa and his nephew, Taufa'ahau, retired to their respective residences, not without having first debated with the Wesleyan missionaries of the what to do in the presence of these inopportune visitors. In keeping with tradition, Fathers Chevron and Grange presented their hosts with a kava root which was immediately prepared for a meeting of the elders. After reassuring Aleamotu'a about the rumors of war being spread by the Wesleyan missionaries who announced the imminent arrival of French warships, they went to Taufa'ahau's house, escorted by a large crowd, both curious and worried. A few men, armed with a gun or an ax, surrounded them. Taufa'ahau sat in the middle of a circle formed by the members of his court. The people and warriors withdrew to let them pass, then a servant introduced them to the great chief. As usual, and after placing a kava root at Taufa'ahau's feet, Father Chevron showered him with various compliments. According to recommendations for which Father Chevron attributed responsibility to Reverend Thomas, Taufa'ahau's responses were brief. However, the latter, who could not hide his curiosity with regard to the practices of Catholic worship, questioned Father Chevron on the meaning of his crucifix. Satisfied with this first contact, which attested, despite its brevity, to the future king's interest in religion in general, Father Chevron saluted his guest and retired. In the following days, he was able, in view of the testimonies of friendship that poured in from all sides, to measure the positive consequences of this courtesy visit[118]. On the other hand, the relief expressed by the population as to the successful outcome of this initiative tended to confirm the real influence of Taufa'ahau and foreshadowed a less radiant tomorrow, because subject to changes in the mood of this great chief who maintained a closer control on the religious inclinations of his subjects, the catholic missionaries aroused a certain attention among the population. "*The great chief of the tribe where we live, recently converted, had formed the resolution to force the heathens and the Protestants to become Catholics or to leave his tribe; but before doing anything, he came to consult us. We strongly urged him to allow everyone full freedom of choice, refusing to use force unlike the Protestants. This fact, which was known to the whole island, caused the natives to say: Papists are not like the others; when we want a religion, it is theirs that we shall embrace*"[119].

Thus, the Marists, whose tolerance, wisdom and audacity had made them famous, gradually managed to win the sympathy of those who had most stubbornly resisted the previous waves of conversions, but also of certain Protestant chiefs. In 1843, Father Chevron had six catechumens in a Protestant village whose chief showed benevolence towards the Catholic missionaries. "*It seems to me that we have gained a great deal over the past few days (...) In a large Protestant tribe, we were greeted with stones the first time we went there; today, the great chief himself, although a Protestant, has just ordered his people to respect us, and in fact he sets an example by receiving us honourably into his home. A rumor of war had arisen between his tribe and ours, he proposed to rely on the two old men from the Pope's religion*"[120]. The consequences of the appearance of a dialogue between the Protestant chiefs and the Marists and the relaxation in certain cases of the moral constraints which usually weighed on the

[117] *idem.*
[118] Father Chevron to his family, Tongatapu, 17 January 1844 (A.P.M. 394).
[119] Father Grange to the parish priest of St Clair (Isère), 26 February 1844 (A.P.M., 514).
[120] Father Grange to the parish priest of St Clair (Isère), 3 July 1843 (A.P.M., 510).

population sometimes engendered some cases of apostasy within the Protestant community. Thus, shortly after his courtesy visit with Taufa'ahau, Father Chevron recorded the conversions of about fifteen Wesleyans. However, they were forced to admit the isolated nature of these renunciations, to recognize the weak impact of their policy with regard to the chiefs, and to accept their powerlessness to significantly influence the course of events. "*Here, providence seems to want to do everything by itself; it is enough that we undertake something for it not to succeed. The natives, especially the influential chiefs whom we have cultivated a certain rapport with the greatest care and eagerness, are the furthest removed from religion, they seem to be moving further away from it every day, while we see individuals and families coming to us that we didn't even know about*"[121].

Although they had little to fear from a massive conversion of the population to Catholicism, the Wesleyan missionaries, afraid that they could not control the whole situation because of the voluntary and spontaneous nature of certain conversions and worried about the growing popularity of Catholic missionaries, undertook a vast campaign of defamation against them. They announced to the people the imminent arrival of several thousand French warships and predicted the massacre of the population and the establishment of French colonists on their lands. They illustrated their remarks by giving as an example the occupation of the Marquesas Islands and Tahiti by France. To support their accusations, they presented the case of the Picpus fathers, whom they described as accomplices in France's colonizing maneuvers and painted an apocalyptic picture of the French intervention in Tahiti. Fasts and public prayers were organized in order to conjure God to keep the French fleet away from the Tongan coast. In addition, they intensified their preaching activities and reinforced their numbers of catechists in sensitive areas where the pagan population predominated.

The public denunciation of French policy in Oceania did considerable damage to the mission because it provoked a feeling of unanimous mistrust on the part of the Tongans[122]. To restore their credibility, the Marists had no other solution than to multiply the efforts to reassure the population and more particularly their neophytes, worried about the veracity of these allegations. "*They (the people of Moua) hate the Protestant ministers out of resentment against the men who persecuted them. They hate us for fear of being robbed of their lands, their freedom, their lives*"[123].

In this context of intense rivalry between the Wesleyan missionaries supported by the chiefs and the Marist missionaries, the conversion to Catholicism of the Tu'i Tonga took on a meaning filled with symbolisms in his desire to distance himself from the authority embodied since 1845 by King George by whom he had been stripped of his eminent office as the kingdom's highest monarch. Moreover, this conversion constituted for the Marists a new hope for the development of the mission, although it had presented various difficulties because of the traditional prerogatives of the Tu'i Tonga. In fact, despite his repeated requests and his diligence in the practice of the liturgical exercises, Father Chevron refused to grant him the sacrament of baptism until he had renounced the manifestations of allegiance by his subjects. "*No one is as diligent as the Tu'i Tonga to the prayers which are said evening and morning, to the chapel,*

[121] Father Chevron to Father Colin, Tongatapu, 11 October 1845 (A.P.M., 399).

[122] Copy of a report on the temporal administration of the Apostolic Vicariate of Central Oceania, addressed to the Superior of the S. M. by Father Calinon. Tongatapu, October 1845 (A.P.M., 272).

[123] Copy of a report on the temporal administration of the Vicariate Apostolic of Central Oceania, addressed to the Superior of the S. M. by Father Calinon. Tongatapu, October 1845 (A.P.M., 272).

then to the instructions, to the catechisms, to the study of the catechism, to the rosary which is recited every evening at the home after evening prayer; often when he cannot attend, he has it recited to him at home. The Tu'i Tonga has twice asked for baptism, but I am delaying it because: 1. there is a superstitious custom here which consists of a certain class of people touching the feet of the Tu'i Tonga when they approach him. I asked him to stop it, he answered me that he wanted it but that it was a form of idolatry and that he would forbid it, but he does not do more and that custom still continues. It's not that he cares, but he's afraid to antagonize those people who imagine that if they don't submit to this ceremony, they will infallibly be taken down with some illness. 2. If the Tu'i Tonga is baptized, it will also be necessary to baptize a certain number of what are called his muas (or aides-de-camp); among these people some only cling to religion in relation to the Tu'i Tonga and those who cling to it are still in some respects so far removed from what they should become"[124].

On the day of his baptism, a Sunday in October 1848, he was accompanied by some twenty of his most devoted servants. Three months later, about fifty people had converted at Mu'a following steps taken by the Tu'i Tonga to encourage the population of his domains to convert to Catholicism[125]. However, his enthusiasm was short-lived and a year after this conversion, the balance sheet drawn up by the Marists about his impact concluded that it was impossible to check the now inevitable progress of Protestantism. In vain, Father Chevron encouraged the Tu'i Tonga to regain some of that ardour which had prompted him a few months earlier to travel the countryside to preach in the villages. "*I'm gettng confused these days with our Tu'i Tonga. I pressed him to resume a little of that shade of zeal which had made him take steps a few months ago with his people and had brought some of them to us. For this reason, it is all frozen today. I've tried with him some of his Muas (or aides-de-camp), they didn't win more than me. It's not that he doesn't care about religion, but his custom is not to meddle in anything. This to be added to a rather shy character*"[126]. The request sent by the chiefs of Mu'a to the Reverend Thomas concerning the installation of a Protestant missionary in the village confirmed the powerlessness and even refusal by the Tu'i Tonga to set himself up as religious guide, and thereby put an end to the hopes of Marists for him to walk in the footsteps of King George[127]. In April 1850, a young chief of Mu'a on whose influence they had also placed their expectations, since he had, in concert with the Tu'i Tonga, demanded the presence of Father Chevron in Mu'a, converted to Protestantism. About a hundred people followed his example the day he entered the temple.

The disarray of the Marists deepened when they realized their powerlessness to influence the motivations of new converts, deploring the pragmatic dimension of conversions over which contingencies of all kinds seemed to preside. Indeed, it seemed obvious to them that the population, a party in spite of itself to a rivalry which opposed Protestant missionaries to their Catholic counterparts, managed to exploit this antagonism for its own ends, whether it was a question of yielding to family pressure, to feed the rivalries between the local clans, to be in search of a certain social recognition or to succumb to material interests. In this regard, the threat of Catholic neophytes converting to Protestantism, in the event they did not obtain satisfaction for their wishes, was a constant concern among Catholic missionaries whose

[124] Father Chevron to Father Colin in Lyons, Tongatapu, 30 October 1849 (A.P.M., 411).
[125] Father Chevron to Father Colin in Lyons, Tongatapu, 30 October 1849 (A.P.M., 411).
[126] *idem.*
[127] Father Calinon to Father Colin in Lyons, Fort of Pea, 20 July 1848 (A.P.M., 274).

material resources were limited[128]. Consequently, one of their main concerns was to strengthen the faith of their new neophytes and to strengthen the bonds between the members of their community by developing the activities of the group through catechism meetings, prayers and songs, while the sacredness of communion was preserved by infrequent ceremonies.

5 - Estimation of the conversion movement from 1842 to 1850

According to information provided by Wesleyan missionaries, the overall population of the archipelago was estimated in 1840 at 18,500 inhabitants, and Tongatapu, which at that time had 8,000 inhabitants, appeared to be the most populated island in the kingdom, while the archipelagos of Ha'apai and Vava'u each had 4,000 inhabitants scattered across the multiple islands that make up those groups. The population of the islands 'Eua, Niua Toputapu and Niua Fo'ou amounted respectively to 200, 1000, and 1300 inhabitants[129].

Confronted with these demographic data, the information contained in the correspondence of Catholic missionaries reveals the existence of a high proportion of Protestants in Tongatapu, approximately half of the overall population of the island. The other half remained for the most part faithful to the traditional religion since the number of Catholics in 1842 only reached the figure of two hundred - that is to say about 2.5% of the total population of Tongatapu. "*Almost half of the island of Tonga is Protestant, as to the rest, we only have a small portion and the others do not want to receive us. But the natives convert regularly, there is no Sunday where you don't receive one, two or three*"[130].

In the archipelagos of Ha'apai and Vava'u, the evangelizing campaigns carried out at the instigation of Taufa'ahau and Finau in 1833, as well as the difficulties of implanation which the Catholic missionaries were subsequently confronted with, make it possible to suppose that Protestantism was widespread and firmly established there. Although placed under the authority of Protestant chiefs, the islands of Niua Toputapu and Niua Fo'ou, whose geographical remoteness kept them away from the upheavals that occurred throughout the 19th century in the centers of political activity and of the archipelago, seem to have retained a certain religious independence. In these last two islands where Catholicism was only introduced late - from the 1880s - the Marist missionaries recorded a rapid increase in the number of baptisms.

Despite the absence of records concerning the development of the mission during the first ten years following the establishment of Catholicism in Tonga, it is possible to attempt to estimate its impact from the data provided by the correspondence of the missionaries. However, given the imprecision of the information, it is necessary to proceed by cross-checking in order to reduce the margin of error: the date, place and circumstances of the events make it possible to determine with more or less accuracy the origin of the evaluations proposed by the missionaries. Although the number of baptisms celebrated on the occasion of each of the bishop's visits was clearly indicated because of the exceptional circumstances which surrounded the prelate's visit and the abundant correspondence which greeted the event, it generally did not report the number of deaths, with baptized persons often being at that time sick people for whom appeal to the Marists was the last resort. "*Only a few days ago, I baptized a sick child, who was brought to me several times to show him to me. Seeing him in great*

[128] Father Chevron to Father Colin in Lyons, Tongatapu, 27 June 1843 (A.P.M., 392).
[129] GIFFORD Edward Winslow, *Tongan Society*, p.9.
[130] Father Chevron to Father Colin in Lyons, Tongatapu, 20 February 1846 (A.P.M., 401).

danger and having reason to fear that I would not be allowed to baptize him, I had his father, who was holding him, give him a little rubbing with eau de cologne and water, while I took care of the lotion for the head, which was the baptism. The child died a few hours later; I baptized in the same way 6 or 8 children who, as you can see, had a narrow escape. Also, I devoted myself above all to being the doctor for the children"[131]. Thus, in June 1843, Father Chevron informed the Superior of the Society of Mary of the baptism of thirty people. The information was confirmed by Father Grange in a letter dated July 1843 which reported the same figure to which it was necessary to add "*24 baptized persons in danger of death*" - at the point of death. The sum of baptisms recorded in Tongatapu between 1842 and 1850 amounts to a total of 371.

As to the exact number of catechumens, it is difficult to assess because of the unstable nature of this group which included individuals who followed, more or less regularly, the teachings dispensed by the missionaries prior to the sacrament of baptism. In January 1849, Father Chevron announced a total of eight hundred people, catechumens and neophytes alike, in Tongatapu. However, and despite their relative character, these figures unambiguously underline the balance of power established between Catholics and Protestants. As for the geographical distribution of Catholics on the island of Tongatapu, the data do not allow us to draw up a precise picture of their location as they were scattered. The villages of Pea, Mu'a and Holonga remained the main centers of development for the mission. However, the Marists made regular visits to the villages located in the eastern part of the island where the proportion of unconverted was higher than in the western part and where the Marists enjoyed greater influence: on a total of five hundred catechumens and neophytes listed for Tongatapu in 1845, more than half were gathered there. "*Since last June, we have had the baptisms of 32 people in Pea, 21 of them made their first communion a few days later. 73 people approached the Holy Table on this solemnity. On the day of the nativity, we had the baptisms of 13 people in Holonga, and they made their first communion the following Friday with 12 others. Two days later, I was going to bless a church in the eastern part of the island and I dedicated it to Saint Joseph. We have 67 disciples in these parts. The heathens in this part of the island, who have not yet forgotten their first positive impression of us, wanted to be part of it; they had helped build the church, they also wanted to be part of the celebration and prepare their share of food for the gathering. That day, the daughter of the first chief of the eastern part of the island and 5 other women were registered among the number of catechumens*"[132].

Although they were satisfied with these results, which testified to the progress of Catholicism in Tonga, the Marists showed a certain reserve with regard to quantitative data, which they justified by the fragility of those conversions. In fact, Father Grange distinguished between two types of conversions: those that stemmed from a sincere and deep attraction to Catholic worship, and those that were motivated by the prospect of an improvement in daily life - loan of various objects, distribution of medicine or tobacco - and which hardly stood the test of time. Thus, in 1843, he counted in Tongatapu "*200 true converts and 1000 false* ones"[133]. For Father Calinon, conversions proceeded obviously from these two extreme motivations, but in varying

[131] Father Chevron to his family, Tongatapu, 24 June 1843 (A.P.M., 391).
[132] Father Chevron to Father Colin in Lyons, Tongatapu, 11 October 1845 (A.P.M., 399).
[133] Father Grange to Father Colin in Lyons, Tongatapu, 3 July 1843 (A.P.M., 511).

proportions depending on the individual[134]. "*Several already take much more care of their families, work more, have consideration for us, help us to live within their means, and above all form by their conduct a striking contrast with their conduct in paganism. But religion has not yet cast deep enough roots on them and their solidity should not be measured by their fervour. A change of locality, a trip, a discussion with pagan or heretical parents and many other causes can shake their faith and weaken their piety*"[135]. Indeed, being a Catholic in Tonga throughout the 19th century, and more particularly during this first decade, did not consist exclusively of a spiritual commitment, but also involved a daily struggle to resist the pressures of a Protestant environment and the temptation of a less marginalized existence. These conditions attracted only a small number of faithful and contributed to discouraging the less fervent. If the loss of their lands and the consideration of their Protestant parents placed Catholics on the fringes of society, it enabled them on the other hand to evade the authority of the Protestant chiefs and the obligations of their kinship. In addition, it encouraged them to gather around the mission which supplemented a new organization of daily life and constituted an element of cohesion for the community. The sequence of prayers and liturgical feasts gradually replaced the traditional rhythms linked to the cycles of the sun and the earth whose main ceremony, the 'Inasi' had disappeared - as well as the fading of the intangible link resulting from the semi-divine sovereignty of the Tu'i Tonga which had united people to the land - at the beginning of the 19th century thanks to the rise in power of the Tu'i Kanokupolu[136]. The liturgical calendar succeeded the order of the seasons; worship events replaced ancestral festivals; school competitions and domestic ceremonies - births, weddings and funerals that reconciled traditional rites and religious services - offered the community as a whole and individuals in particular a structure of time whose every moment converged on the mission. From day to day, the villages resounded with the sound of bells, or Lali when the community was too poor to provide for the equipment of a bell tower. Masses were celebrated every day at sunrise and sunset. In the villages where there was no resident priest, a catechist gathered the neophytes morning and evening for the common recitation of the prayer. The obligation to respect Sunday rest gradually established a weekly rhythm. In addition, the mission constituted a new social space which brought together the men at vigil to drink kava and recite the rosary or sing hymns in the company of the women. Several hours of the week were devoted to teaching catechism. For the most devout Catholics, Father Chevron set up the Archconfraternity of the Rosary which involved a weekly meeting of its members whose bonds were strengthened by communion in prayer and which stimulated their fervour[137].

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[134] Copy of a report on the temporal administration of the Apostolic Vicariate of Central Oceania, addressed to the Superior of the S. M. by Father Calinon. Tongatapu, October 1845 (A.P.M., 272).

[135] Copy of a report on the temporal administration of the Apostolic Vicariate of Central Oceania, addressed to the Superior of the S. M. by Father Calinon. Tongatapu, October 1845 (A.P.M., 272).

[136] Prior to the coming of the missionaries, the day was essentially divided according to the cycles of the sun. *Velenga mohe*: the end of sleep; *Lele 'a e kaiha'a*: fleeing of the thieves; *Ata 'a e puaka*: the agitation of the pigs; *'U'ua 'a e moa*: the crowing of the cock; *Hopo 'a e fetu'u'aho*: *the rising of the morning star*; *'U'uafakaholo 'a e moa*: the third crow of the cock; *Mafoa 'a e ata*: the separation of the sky; *Ma'efu'efu 'a e 'aho*: the birth of the dawn; *Hengihengi*: the dawn; *Maama 'a e 'aho*: the light of day; *Hopo 'a e la'a-i-fanga-lupe*: sunrise over Dove Bay; *Ho'ata pongipongi*: mid-morning; *Ho'ata malie*: noon; *Pale 'a e la'a*: noon; *Ho'ata efiafi*: the drooping of the sun; *Fakalulunga*: mid-afternoon; *Taitai[to] 'a e la'a*: late afternoon; *To 'a e la'a*: the decline of the sun; *Efiafi po'uli*: sunset; *Fe'ife'ilongaki*: twilight; *Femauaki 'a e po'uli*: the coming of darkness; *Po'uli*: night; *Vaeuapo*: midnight. BISHOP BLANC, *A History of Tonga or Friendly Islands*, p.12.

[137] Father Chevron to his family, Tongatapu, 2 April 1846 (A.P.M., 403).

CHAPTER III

THE MARIST PRESENCE AS A CATALYST FOR REBELLION

I - The revival of antagonisms

1 - The resurgence of rivalries between the major clans

Following the establishment of the Marists, the political rivalries between the great clans of the kingdom opposed to the political monopoly of Tu'i Kanokupolu and the prerogatives of the chiefs attached to this dynastic lineage were exacerbated by the antagonism between the Protestant missionaries and their Catholic counterparts[138]. "*Both sides close ranks; religion becomes a party affair for them*"[139]. The conflicting relationships between these chiefs led to a reinforcement of the religious, political and social divisions within the population that had emerged from the first signs of unrest at the end of the eighteenth century, leading to the decline of the Tu'i Tonga and the emergence of the Tu'i Kanokupolu. According to the Wesleyan missionaries, the Marists had done much to stir up resentment, taking advantage of the interest they aroused among non-Protestant chiefs to explain that submission to King George's authority was tantamount to being under the thumb of the King of England, and attempting to restore the legitimacy of the Tu'i Tonga who was converted in 1848 and baptised by Bishop Bataillon the following year[140].

In fact, the introduction of Catholicism in 1842 on the island of Tongatapu, where the last bastion of paganism remained, and the resulting movement of conversions caused a rupture to the equilibrium established between the principal chiefs of the island after the death of Captain Croker in 1840, and offered the most resistant among them the opportunity to openly manifest their opposition to a power rallied to Protestantism. "*I think I have told you that Likuohihifo excites the jealousy of the new Nuku (Kuli Mofue) who has changed a great deal towards us. He was brought before Tugi who gave himself as Nuku's protector. The reasons were not against him, but only a few threats and bad words. Likuohihifo said to Nuku: you declared that you would only recognise Protestants as your parents; well, I am no longer yours. Then he raised a small piece of wood which he held in his hand and threw it in front of him, saying, so shall our kinship be; he left for Pea, and since then he was forbidden to enter Mua and Hahake*"[141]. As acts of sedition and provocation increased, King George, shortly after his accession to the title of Tu'i Kanokupolu in 1845, undertook to convene a council of chiefs to secure their allegiance, which he was assured would happen. The outcome of this meeting was crucial for the ruler, for the fulfilment of his ambitions to establish the unification of the kingdom and to encourage the expansion of Protestantism depended on the submission of the chiefs. In all likelihood, it was not so much the conversion of chiefs to Catholicism that

[138] This antagonism mainly concerned the branches of Ha'a Havea on the one hand and Tupou on the other.
[139] Father Chevron to Father Colin in Lyons, Tongatapu, 2 February 1844 (A.P.M., 395).
[140] LATUKEFU S., *Church and State in Tonga, the Wesleyan Methodist Missionaries and Political Development, 1822-1875*, pp.150-151.
[141] Father Chevron to Father Grange in Lyons, Tongatapu, 23 July 1852 (A.P.M., 420).

bothered him as the opportunities for sedition that an alliance with the Marists presented[142]. Usually residing in his domains of Ha'apai, King George was urged by Reverend Turner to stay in Tongatapu where, he said, Catholic missionaries were threatening his sovereignty by encouraging the Tu'i Tonga to claim kingship and presenting him to travellers as the rightful king[143]. "*(OJ January). Last night the Tu'i Kanokupolu (King George) arrived from Ha'apai. He led the chiefs of these islands to chew the kava of the Tu'i Tonga. They came down to Mua directly. He is said to have come to show that he does not share the sentiments of the missionaries and zealous Protestants who would elevate him above the Tu'i Tonga*"[144]. While protocol was observed during the meeting, as the Tu'i Kanokupolu was traditionally obliged to show some deference to the Tu'i Tonga, according to Reverend West, the meeting ended the Marists' hopes that the Tu'i Tonga would supplant the Tu'i Kanokupolu. He publicly renounced his political pretensions at that time and from then on he immersed himself in the activities of religion. On the other hand, the presence of the Marists and the support promised them by the French naval forces raised new hopes among the chiefs of Pea, Houma and Mu'a.

Before the arrival of the Marist Fathers, the Tu'i Kanokupolu was in a position to hope, in concert with the Protestant missionaries, that the latent opposition of the chiefs hostile to his sovereignty and to Protestantism would in the long term be reduced and then disappear, either by the conversion of the weakest or by the death of the most virulent. Moreover, their forthcoming capitulation seemed all the more certain as their military potential had been considerably weakened since the cannons stolen from Captain Croker had been returned to the British authorities a few months after the tragic events that had led to his death. "*Moeaki was feared, respected and loved in Tonga more than any other chief. He was very influential. So when he died, King George could not help but express his contentment: 'Moeaki is dead, well Pea is mine now. Moeakiola, Moeaki's cousin, replaces him in Pea. He and his relative Akio are pushing for war*"[145]. While the Wesleyan missionaries liked to describe the Marist fathers as emissaries of France and denounced their settlement as a prelude to a French takeover, the pagan chiefs saw it as a temporal and religious alternative to the precariousness of their situation, as the traditional gods had failed to ensure the victory of their followers. Intended to foster antipathy and rejection of Catholic priests and to sow doubt and fear among non-protestants, the argument put forward by Wesleyan missionaries hardly had the desired effect; on the contrary, these slanderous accusations demonstrated to pagans that Catholicism, which the Wesleyans were attacking, constituted a real threat to the hegemony of their opponents. The protest movement grew in the early 1850s under the impetus of the descendants of the great Ha'a Havea lineage. The latter, ardent defenders of the traditional religion or early Catholic converts, rejected the domination of the Tu'i Kanokupolu all the more strongly because their ancestors had been robbed of the title and they wished to maintain their rights

[142] "*These, in calling us to their homes, wanted only to provide for the safety of their physical body, without thinking in the least of the spiritual good of their souls*." Copy of a report on the temporal administration of the Apostolic Vicariate of Central Oceania, addressed to the Superior of the Society of Mary by Father Calinon. Tongatapu, October 1845 (A.P.M., 272).

[143] LATUKEFU S., *Church and State in Tonga, the Wesleyan Methodist Missionaries and Political Development, 1822-1875*, pp.150-151. Father Chevron to his family, Tongatapu, 12 October 1848 (A.P.M., 407). "*The Tu'i Tonga is the King of the archipelago but it is George who governs. Yet he still pays the tribute of honour to the Tu'i Tonga regardless of what the Protestant ministers do*."

[144] Father Chevron to Father Grange in Lyons, Tongatapu, 8 February 1849 (A.P.M., 408).

[145] Box S. f. 2. Father Guitta, History of Tonga, Book 111, p.125 (Tonga Diocesan Archives).

over the central part of Tongatapu where they had succeeded, through matrimonial alliances, in establishing their authority[146].

From the perspective of an armed conflict, the pagan chiefs saw the possibility of requesting, through the intermediary of the Marists, the assistance of the French naval forces based in Tahiti, a process similar to that employed by King George who had benefited, in 1840, from the assistance of the British navy. "*To providence are sometimes added those temporal means. Hence the institution of the Work of the Propagation of the Faith and the interest which our government takes in the missions, to the point where one of its warships must visit us each year. The first of these means can provide us with resources for our existence; the other gradually surrounds us with more attention, and this, together with the grace supported by the efforts of the missionaries, is enough to generate conversions*"[147].

For their part, and within a few months of each other, the Marists witnessed, not without concern for the future development of the mission, the death of two local pillars of Catholicism: the chief of Pea, Moeaki and his ally Vaea, the chief of Houma. A convert to Protestantism before the arrival of the Marists in Tonga, Moeaki nevertheless belonged to the group of chiefs most strongly opposed to the recognition of the political authority of Tu'i Kanokupolu. His refusal to submit to Aleamotu'a's injunctions to dismiss Father Chevron is indicative of the depth of the antagonism that divided the great clans of the kingdom, and the way in which the presence of the Catholic missionaries was used to fuel this antagonism. In fact, Moeaki's death was not to jeopardise the achievements of the mission, for his successor was even more vigorously opposed to King George's centralising policy, which the Marists ostensibly welcomed despite the new ruler's attachment to traditional worship. Despite his sympathy for the Catholic missionaries, he feared, he said, that conversion would condemn him to the punishment of his family's tutelary gods[148]. The heir of Vaea, chief of Houma, aligned himself with the positions of the chief of Pea, where the opposition front was gradually gathering. Other poles of opposition emerged in the villages of Folaha and Vaini, whose chiefs were also rebelling against the king's authority. "*They refused to go and see the Tu'i who asked them several times to visit him. They responded to his invitations by preparing their forts for war. The people of Moeaki have attached themselves to Akio, who is quite vigilant for the sake of religion, although he has not yet, I believe, left one of his two wives*"[149].

The successions of Moeaki and Vaea were thus ensured by impetuous young chiefs, anxious to assert their rights to political power and to preserve the privileges conferred on them by traditional society. However, not only the growing influence of the Wesleyan missionaries, but also King George's desire to legislate, which took shape in 1839 with the promulgation of the Vava'u Code, posed a serious threat to their traditional status. In this context of dormant

[146] The appointment of the fourth Tu'i Kanokupolu, Mataeleha'amea, had aroused the anger and resentment of his elder brothers, Hafoka and Vanu, and his two other brothers Longolongo'atumai and Lavaka, who were of a higher rank. In reaction, they created a new Ha'a, the Ha'a Havea, composed of Hafoka, who held the title of Ma'afutukui'aulahi, Fohe, Tu'i Vakano, Lavaka, and Vaea, whose titles were similar to their surnames, and finally Longolongo'atumai who became the first representative of the Fielakepa branch. BOTT E., *Tongan Society at the Time of Caplain Cook's Visits, Discussions with Her Majesty Queen Salote Tupou*, p.133.

[147] Copy of a report on the temporal administration of the Apostolic Vicariate of Central Oceania, addressed to the Superior of the S. M. by Father Calinon. Tongatapu, October 1845 (A.P.M., 272).

[148] Moeaki's successor, nicknamed "*second Johnny*" by the Marists, was called Nukumovaha'i. BISHOP BLANC, *A History of Tonga or Friendly Islands*, p.43.

[149] Father Chevron to Father Grange in Lyons, Tongatapu, 5 November 1851 (A.P.M., 413).

conflict, the Marists recruited their followers from within an opposition united by a repudiation of King George's authority and by the rejection of Protestantism, the instrument of the Tu'i Kanokupolu's monarchical domination. The search for a middle way between paganism and the Tu'i Tonga on the one hand, and Protestantism and the Tu'i Kanokupolu on the other, was a necessity for the religious, political and social survival of these chiefs, for whom Catholicism provided the means for their struggle.

2 - The 1850 Code: The affirmation of Wesleyan influence

The promulgation of the 1850 Code was a further factor in the increasing tensions. When King George was elevated to the Tu'i Kanokupolu in 1845, he sought to extend the application of the 1839 Vava'u code of laws to the entire archipelago. Essentially, this code of laws established a court of four magistrates whose functions were aimed at putting an end to the chiefs' expeditious justice and prohibited the use of *Hunuki*, which consisted of a chief putting his mark on a commoner's coveted property[150]. However, this was only met with the unwillingness of the chiefs, who refused both the content of the text and its centralising dimension. The aspirations of King George show that the safeguarding of the territorial unity of the kingdom was a higher purpose that he had to achieve, whatever the obstacles to be overcome. The consolidation of legislative power was probably the surest and least brutal way to achieve this. He was strongly encouraged by the Wesleyan missionaries, who used their influence to integrate into this project the principles of a moralizing society with regard to marriage, justice, respect for religious rites, work, and merriment.

Rather than revising the 1839 Code, he undertook the drafting of a set of laws inspired by the Huahine Code, promulgated in Tahiti in 1822[151]. The drafting of this code, which involved the creation of executive, legislative, and judicial structures, required resources and a method that were provided by the Wesleyan missionaries to whom King George entrusted the responsibility for the drafting process. It was New Zealand lawyers, with whom he communicated through the Wesleyan missionaries, who recommended that he draw inspiration from the Huahine Code. This new text was promulgated in 1850. Strongly influenced by the teachings of the Protestant missionaries inculcated in King George, the laws did not take into account the religious differences in the community as a whole, and Catholics, whose interests were not given much consideration, developed new grievances.

The 1850 Code had many social, legal and religious similarities with the Huahine Code, drafted at the instigation of the Protestant missionaries in Tahiti. However, while the latter established a close link between political power and the religious sphere, the 1850 Code sought to separate them. In this respect, it reflected the ambitions of King George, who was anxious not to cede any part of his sovereignty to the missionaries. This desire to break with the traditional vision of power and the Victorian conception of monarchy was in total contradiction to the Vava'u Code, which recognised a sovereignty derived from divine right. In 1850, King George proclaimed himself supreme ruler of the kingdom and head of the government by virtue of his own ability to manage the affairs of the kingdom. The fear of falling under the control of a

[150] LATUKEFU S., *Church and State in Tonga, the Wesleyan Methodist Missionaries and Political Development, 1822-1875*. pp.122-123.

[151] The Huahine Code, named after one of the nine islands that make up the Leeward Islands, served as a reference for King George in drafting the 1850 Code. The drafting of the Huahine Code was strongly influenced by the Protestant missionaries who had settled there in the early 19th century.

European nation, the reservations about the real intentions of the Wesleyan missionaries, the struggle between the latter and the Catholic priests and the possibility for each of them to call upon the naval forces of their respective governments, justified the separation of the political and the religious spheres. Accordingly, King George enacted laws concerning the inalienability of the land aimed at preventing foreign interference.

On the domestic front, the 1850 Code sought to limit the prerogatives of the chiefs. By legislating on the distribution of land and by assuming a right to control the way it was used, King George prevented it from being left to the absolute control of the chiefs, who thereby maintained their political and military supremacy, a source of internal divisions. In this way, he sought to preserve the territorial integrity of the kingdom. Henceforth, only those chiefs designated by the king to sit on the council of chiefs were granted land. No interference was allowed from any of them outside the boundaries of land assigned to them. All of them were obliged to respect the law, which they had to disseminate in the villages under their administration. During their stays on the various islands of the archipelago, the visiting chiefs had to request the approval of the local authority before obtaining the assistance of the population for any task. Until 1839, when the Vava'u Code was promulgated, they were able to benefit without restriction from the services of the people for the construction of canoes and the cultivation or maintenance of their plantations. From 1839 to 1850, these practices continued despite the law. From 1850 onwards, the chiefs' privilege to exploit people's labour for their own purposes was made conditional on the fulfilment of their duties to the king. Failure by any chiefs to comply with these laws was considered an obstruction to the administration of the kingdom and a breach of allegiance, which was punishable by criminal penalties. The laws also marked King George's desire to end the centuries-old subjugation of commoners in favour of restricted political units aimed at limiting the risks of emergence of strong political personalities: the Tu'i Tonga was forced to give up his political rights while the chiefs who were allowed to participate in the government were appointed by King George.

The principles of egalitarianism advocated by the Wesleyan missionaries were put into practice through the implementation of judicial structures and the definition of legal procedures. A body of officers appointed by the king ensured that the law was respected. For minor offences committed on their lands, the chiefs still had the privilege of exercising justice, but any serious offence had to be brought before one of four judges appointed by the king who also retained his function as supreme magistrate. The list of offences recognised and punished by the 1850 Code was extended from the 1839 Code: murder with or without premeditation, arson, disrespect for private property, polygamy, abortion, pagan dances and ceremonies were added to theft, adultery, fornication, non-observance of the Sabbath, and refusal to cultivate the land. Any irreverent act against the king, chiefs or missionaries was punishable by severe penalties. Premeditated murder was punishable by hanging, abortion by one year of hard labour, fornication by two months' collective labour, and theft by a fine of a few dollars, doubled in the case of a repeat offence. On the other hand, the consumption and possession of alcohol was removed from the list of offences. This removal can be seen as a concession to Catholic missionaries, for whom the wine of the Mass is an element of the liturgy.

The protection of people and their property, irrespective of their rank, was one of the main innovative principles of this text: by recognising commoners' right of ownership over productive assets, the 1850 Code brought about drastic changes within Tongan society. On the social level, it led to a tightening of the family unit. The sacrament of marriage was henceforth

the exclusive affair of the future spouses, the Protestant missionary and God, with parents no longer able to interfere in any way. The role of each of the spouses was defined by law: the father had to provide for the well-being of his family by ensuring that they had a roof over their heads, while the mother was responsible for the upkeep of the household. Protestant pastors were the only ones empowered to pronounce divorces on the grounds of adultery. Polygamy was strictly forbidden. The modification of the family unit acted as a factor in the evolution of mentalities by upsetting the principles which allowed traditional society to perpetuate itself. By moving closer to the Christian conception of the family, it also led to a weakening of the importance of kinship.

These articles, which condemned all pagan vestiges, were a manifestation of British Puritanism for some and a means of progress for others, and reflected the influence of Protestant missionaries. The population was required to dress and observe a strict Sabbath rest, while traditional social and cultural activities such as singing, dancing and mock fighting were outlawed. The social and economic status of the common people gradually improved as the power of chiefs was curtailed and kinship constraints were reduced. The ability of each individual to produce for his or her own well-being led to a redistribution of economic resources in favour of commoners. The abuses perpetrated by chiefs who wanted to assert their ancestral privileges were condemned by law. In addition, the creation of positions such as government officer, schoolmaster and preacher offered Tongans of modest means real opportunities for social advancement.

At heart, the 1850 Code foreshadowed the future directions of a changing society. However, it was strongly resisted by the chiefs who hindered its implementation for many years.

3 - The reaction against Protestant domination

Imbued with the teachings of the Wesleyan missionaries and marked by the political aspirations of King George, the 1850 Code widened the gap between the Protestant community and the rest of the population. "*The Protestants, supported by the Tu'i, formerly Taufa'ahau, would like to rule everything. Pea and Houma are resisting and I think that if the Tu'i did not believe that his party would be divided by war, he would have done so already*"[152]. The advantage he implicitly gave to the Protestants had the effect of reinforcing their arrogance towards the pagans and Catholics and the prestige of their chiefs, while the resentment of the disenfranchised grew.

Favoured by the 1850 Code which attracted opposition, the rapprochement between the pagan chiefs and the Catholic missionaries was reinforced by the law of prohibition introduced by King George. The king aimed to halt the progress of Catholicism by banishing the Catholic population from villages under his control. "*The neophytes who are with us are people who have come from the various parts of the archipelago to gather around their Catholic chiefs; for until now, it has been possible for each person to remain with the chief who pleases him and to abandon him when he pleases*"[153]. Sovea, one of the main chiefs of Nuku'alofa, who had converted to Catholicism in Fiji, was thus expelled after being ordered by King George to convert to Protestantism. Under the terms of the 1850 Code, which provided for a new distribution of the land among the chiefs, Ma'afu and Tupouleva were dispossessed of their

[152] Father Chevron to Father Grange in Lyons, Tongatapu, 5 November 1851 (A.P.M., 413).
[153] Father Chevron to Father Colin in Lyons, Tongatapu, 2 August 1852 (A.P.M., 422).

agricultural domains - which were returned to them in the following years - in favour of Tungi, King George's main ally (fig. 4). Tungi was also given a land right over the properties of the Tu'i Tonga, who nevertheless refused to submit to this decision which was contrary to all traditional customs. Finally, King George's pardoning of the murderers of two Catholics from Pea and Mu'a helped to foster a sense of persecution that strengthened Catholic ties. In fact, these measures had the opposite effect of what was intended: it led to Catholics strongly regrouping themselves around their priests in villages whose chiefs opposed King George and thereby cemented the community in its marginalization.

The villagers who were loyal to the pagan religion, badly affected by these untimely turmoils, took refuge in Pea and Houma. Mu'a, Folaha, Vaini and Hahake also became centres of opposition. "*The great chief of the Protestants, who has hitherto been our persecutor, has, like his predecessor, put the real king of these islands, the Tu'i Tonga, under his feet, and wishes to claim sovereign authority for himself. The islands of Ha'apai and Vava'u have already been subjugated with parts of Tonga, two forts alone remained independent: Houma and Pea; Pea was the mainstay of the Catholics. The chief of the Protestants demanded their submission and ordered them to destroy their fortifications. The forts clearly refused and then war was declared*"[154]. In these places, the Catholic missionaries noticed an increase in the number of conversions and a consolidation of the faith of their neophytes. Surprised by the ability of his followers to withstand the constant calumnies and bullying of the Protestants, Father Chevron attributed this steadfastness to the teaching he had given them by means of the martyrdom of Christ. "*There are no abuses, no injustices that are not done to our neophytes. We began to announce to them the persecutions predicted by Our Lord to his disciples... Today, they are no longer scandalized by the cross, they even seem to glory in it... The Good Lord has put in their hearts a patience to suffer persecutions of which I would not have believed these poor natives capable, their hearts being naturally so full of pride and violence, there are exceptions however ... this is quite extraordinary for anyone who knows the spirit and prejudices of these peoples whose servile and blind submission to their chiefs never allows them to contradict them, no matter how absurd their words may be*"[155]. The arrival in April 1850 of Fathers Piéplu and Nivelleau enabled him and Father Calinon to be better prepared to face this sudden influx.

The Wesleyan missionaries were concerned about the general situation, which was not conducive to their expansion and alerted King George who moved from his residence at Ha'apai to Tongatapu. Despite the injunctions addressed to them, the chiefs of Pea and Houma, Lavaka and Vaea, refused to pay him a customary visit and to participate, according to tradition, in the annual ceremony of presentation of the harvest[156]. They thus demonstrated their refusal to recognise the Tu'i Kanokupolu as the supreme chief of the archipelago. These symbolic acts were interpreted by King George as a declaration of war. For fear of reprisals, the two rebel chiefs rehabilitated the fortifications of their villages. Supported by Tungi, who wished to extend his prerogatives at the expense of his rivals, King George prepared to initiate hostilities against the rebellious chiefs and to weaken the influence of the Catholic missionaries, whom he suspected of being at the origin of the sedition.

II – The War at Pea

[154] Father Nivelleau to Fathers Lagniet and Eynard in Lyons, Tongatapu, 17 April 1852 (A.P.M., 812).
[155] Father Chevron to Father Colin in Lyons, Tongatapu, 10 November 1851 (A.P.M., 415).
[156] Father Chevron to Father Grange in Lyons, Tongatapu, 5 November 1851 (A.P.M., 413).

1 - Controversy over the causes of the war

Various pretexts were invoked by the opposing parties to explain the outbreak of the war. According to the Protestants, the cause was to be attributed to the many provocative actions of the chiefs of Pea and Houma, the last of which was Lavaka's granting of sanctuary to a man convicted of adultery and liable, under the 1850 Code, to a sentence of forced labour. According to the Catholics, it was the consequence of the supposedly upcoming conversion to Catholicism of Pea's chief, Lavaka[157]. For the Marist Fathers, it was the result of King George's hatred for '*the religion of the Papists*' and his antipathy for France. The latter feeling was shared by three French merchant ship commanders, Captains Morvan, Mauruc and Desclos, who had various opportunities to experience the effects of the sovereign's ostracism[158]. "*On February 19, 1851, the arrival of a fishing vessel from Le Havre was announced at Nuku'alofa: George having recognised it off shore as French refused to send a pilot despite its repeated signals. A Catholic dispatched by Father Calinon made it enter the pass of Pangai Motu. But in the face of the strong hostility of the Tongans, Captain Desclos left the missionaries a letter of protest which he addressed to the king and a copy of which was to be given by the missionary to the next warship*"[159]. As for the chiefs, whether Protestant or Catholic, they denied the religious dimension of the conflict and attributed the causes of the war to an exclusively political antagonism whose stake was the unity of the kingdom and the supremacy of King George. "*As the chiefs were careful at the beginning of the war to declare that it was not a religious war, I thought I should follow the proverb that one should not put all one's eggs in one basket. I did not advise anyone to go to Pea*"[160].

2 - Military confrontation

Several phases preceded the declaration of war: military preparations and attempts at negotiations between the two parties alternated in a climate of growing tension. While King George began to gather his first troops, the population hostile to the new laws gathered in the forts of Pea and Houma. The rebels completed the restoration of the fortifications knocked down by Captain Croker's cannon fire in 1840. However, King George ordered the chiefs of Pea to suspend the work. They complied, and he used these days of respite to organise his troops. Faced with this manoeuvre, Pea's men resumed their activities with zeal and prepared enough food to sustain a siege of several months[161].

On March 20, 1852, the day war was declared, the Pea chiefs offered protection to Tupouleva of Holonga and Ma'afu of Vaini. Conflict broke out the next day: the beating of the *Lali* resounded throughout the island, announcing the imminent assault by King George's warriors. On the pretext of taking the Vaini Protestants to Mu'a, Tungi took the fort and had it ravaged

[157] The baptism of Lavaka was celebrated on 15 April 1852.

[158] After the war at Pea and in response to accusations by King George that the Marists were involved in the conflict, the three captains gave evidence to the French authorities to attest to the good faith of the Catholic missionaries. Captain Morvan, commander of the merchant ship *Adolphe*, had several opportunities to serve the Catholic mission of the Vicariate of Central Oceania. In 1844, he led Father Calinon to Tonga and accompanied Bishop Bataillon on his first mission tour.

[159] MONFAT P.A., *Les Tonga ou archipel des Amis et le R.P. Joseph Chevron, de la Société de Marie, étude historique et religieuse*, p.333.

[160] Father Chevron to Father Grange, Tongatapu, 23 July 1852 (A.P.M., 420).

[161] Father Nivelleau to Fathers Lagniet and Eynard in Lyons, Tongatapu, 17 April 1852 (A.P.M., 812).

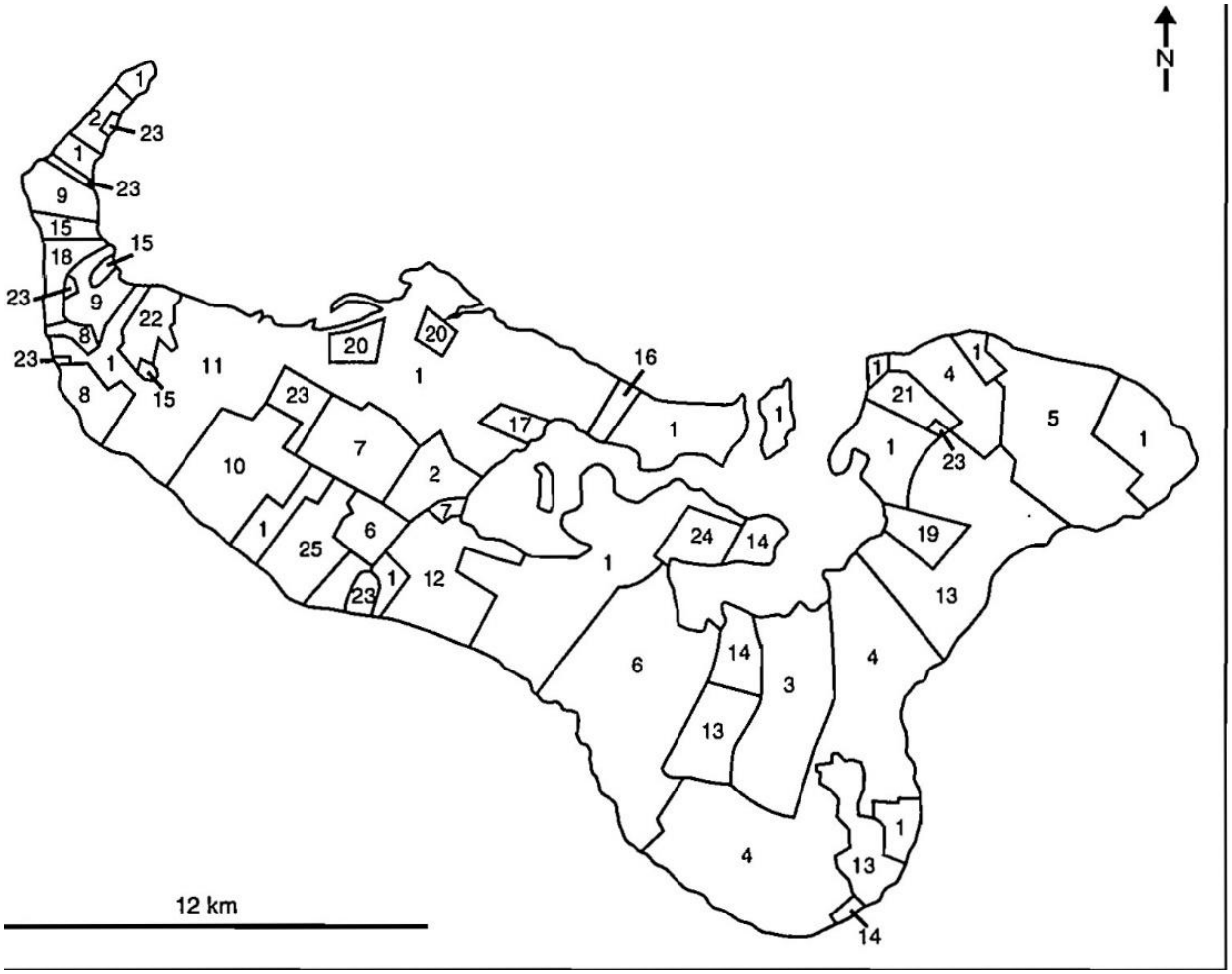

Fig. 4 – The distribution of hereditary estates in Tongatapu

Created in 1875

1. Estate of the Government
2. Estate of the Royal Family
3. Estate of Tu'i Pelehake
4. Estate of Tungi
5. Estate of Nuku
6. Estate of Ma'afu
7. Estate of Lavaka
8. Estate of Ve'ehala
9. Estate of 'Ata [Ata]
10. Estate of Vaea
11. Estate of Tu'i Vakano
12. Estate of Tu'i Ha'a Teiho
13. Estate of Kalaniuvalu
14. Estate of Luani

Created in 1880

15. Estate of 'Ahomee
16. Estate of Fakafanua
17. Estate of Fielakepa
18. Estate of Vaha'i
19. Estate of Tu'i Lakepa
20. Estate of Fohe
21. Estate of Lauaki
22. Estate of Motu'a Puaka

Created in 1894

23. Estate of Lasike
24. Estate of Veikune

Created in 1924

25. Estate of Tupoutoa

by his men. As a reward for these feats of arms, King George gave him the lands of Ma'afu and Tupouleva. Then he distributed his troops from Ha'apai, Vava'u, Niua Toputapu and Niua Fo'ou in four forts: Tufamahina, Pea Uta, Mu'a and Tufana. Pea and Houma were thus surrounded. "*Our enemies had built five forts around ours to starve it out and they were so close to us that we could talk from one fort to the other. And there was not a night when we did not hear the fattest lies and most disgusting insults spoken against us...It was we who were the authors of the war, its support and nourishment, we were like the firebrand of discord placed in the midst of the fort, and we never ceased to excite the spirits to rebellion and revolt*"[162]. King George fought using the warriors of Ha'apai and Vava'u, Tungi with those of Hahake, and Ata with those of Hihifo and Nuku'alofa. For their part, the people of Hahake and Holonga went to Pea to support the besieged. As for Tungi's troops, they were composed indiscriminately of Catholics, Protestants, and pagans[163]. "*This neutrality of Vaini and the presence of Catholics among Tugi's troops could lead one to believe that the war was purely political. But no one was mistaken then, despite the protests of King George and the Wesleyan chiefs and ministers, the people then claimed that it was a religious war, that the king was after the pagan party, which he called the party of the devils, and the Catholics, who were even worse in his eyes*"[164]. Although the balance of power was clearly in King George's favour - three or four thousand men against six hundred entrenched in Pea - the first assaults resulted in the deaths of some twenty Vava'u and Ha'apai chiefs and warriors. Thus, the reputation of the invincibility of the fort of Pea, which was based on the use of an elaborate fortification technique, was confirmed. *"I think I have told you that there are four main forts here, the inhabitants of which, in time of peace, live in various hamlets in the vicinity. The one where we are, whose name is Pea, is the best fortified, and is reputed here to be impregnable; it is surrounded by earthen ramparts or earthworks 4 to 7 or 8 feet high, surmounted by a very pretty hedge of reeds interlaced in a double pattern; this fortification is itself defended by a ditch 15 to 20 and sometimes 30 feet wide, always full of water. In some places, small, very sharp iron posts have been planted, hidden by the water and tight enough to make it impossible for a man to place his foot in them. The gates are quite ingeniously worked: after an inner gate which is closed by a strong barricade, comes a sort of long corridor well covered on two sides by earthworks and the outer ditch, and then at the end a round place about thirty feet in diameter (more or less) also protected. This is where the outer gates are, the corridor and the small round square are quite outside the ramparts and thus serve to defend the approach. There are at least fifteen such gates. All these ramparts are pierced with loopholes formed with hollowed-out coconut trunks. Our fort may be nearly a kilometre long, and there are two other larger ones. Some Europeans told us that in wartime there were 5000 people in this fort. The number is exaggerated. I think there may be 2 to 3 thousand. The whole island might be 12 to 15 thousand. The forts are divided into compartments formed by very pretty reed hedges. These compartments, where the houses are located, form paths that cross in all directions and give these forts the appearance of a small town. Our fort is placed at the end of a lagoon or part of the sea that runs into the centre of the island*"[165]. The failure of frontal attacks prompted King George to change his tactics: he laid siege to his enemies while alternating between intimidating fire and attempted talks. Communication was facilitated by the proximity of the forts within earshot of each other.

[162] Father Nivelleau to Father Lagniet in Lyons, Tongatapu, 29 August 1852 (A.P.M., 813).
[163] Box 5. f. 2. Father Guitta, History of Tonga, Book III, p.125. (Tonga Diocesan Archives).
[164] *idem*, pp.56-114.
[165] Letter from Father Chevron to his family, Tongatapu, 24 June 1843 (A.P.M., 391).

In mid-July, the fort at Houma, which was suffering from internal divisions, capitulated. The two chiefs who had taken refuge in this fort, Vaea and Fohe, as well as a large number of heathens, immediately converted to Protestantism. "*On 12 July, pressed especially by the lack of water, Vaea and his people surrendered. With their necks wrapped in ifi leaves, Vaea and Fohe went to King George and surrendered to his discretion. The king granted them their lives on condition that they abandon paganism and embrace Protestantism, which they did*"[166]. To the chiefs of Pea, King George offered them the possibility to surrender without further reprisal. All he got was an angry reply telling him to leave the island with his warriors.

On July 23, the toll inside the fort was one child killed and four wounded by bullets that passed through the houses despite the fortifications protecting them. On August 7, Father Piéplu was also wounded by a bullet in the stomach. King George invited the families to urge their beleaguered relatives to surrender. Many women and children responded to this appeal and took refuge in Maofaga. Finally, the chiefs resigned themselves and accepted the peace that was offered to them on August 16. King George's men took over the place on August 17. The fort was looted and burned, and the mission destroyed. "*He (King George) sent to propose peace, begging the chiefs to come to him and promising that the war would be over. The overconfident chiefs surrendered to his supplication. It was a terrible and distressing sight to see thousands of men rushing upon the properties of the mission with more fury and greed than ferocious beasts upon their prey. I had hardly consumed the holy species when I saw the tabernacle and the decoration of the altar being carried away; I had taken care to take the sacred stone which I put in the box with ornaments. Then I stood in front of this box to save it, fearing profanation, and I managed to keep it thanks to the resistance I made to all those who wanted to steal it. In the end, a chief came and pretended to protect me*"[167].

The Marist Fathers blamed the Protestants for the conflict which lasted five months. They sided with all those, Catholics and pagans, whom they saw as victims of Wesleyan scheming, whose aim was none other than to drive Catholics out of the kingdom. When war was declared, King George offered the two missionaries at Pea to leave the entrenched fort and take refuge elsewhere. But the latter categorically refused, invoking their responsibility to assist their faithful in their hour of distress. The intervention of Nallier, commander of the French corvette *Henri* which arrived in Tongatapu on April 13 and on which Bishop Bataillon was also travelling did not alter their resolve in any way. However, Nallier and Bishop Bataillon enquired about the fate King George had in store for them. Faced with the king's protests who denied wanting to harm their persons and the mission, they left, leaving to the priests the responsibility for their actions[168].

Inside the fort, the resistance was organised around the Pea chiefs with the support of the Catholic priests. Fathers Calinon and Piéplu observed a renewed fervour among their neophytes who gathered daily in church or in their homes for the recitation of the rosary and attended the meeting of the Archconfraternity of the Rosary every Saturday evening. "*When the prayer was sounded, the hail of bullets was redoubled in the hope of wounding those who went there*"[169]. Regularly, they held public singing practices. On April 15, 1852, Lavaka converted to

[166] Box 5. f. 2. Father Guitta, History of Tonga, Book II, pp.56-114 (Tonga Diocesan Archives).
[167] Father Nivelleau to Father Lagniet in Lyon, Tongatapu, 29 August 1852 (A.P.M., 813).
[168] LATUKEFU S., *Church and State in Tonga, the Wesleyan Methodist Missionaries and Political Development, 1822-1875*, p.153.
[169] Father Chevron to Father Grange, Tongatapu, 23 July 1852, (A.P.M., 420).

Catholicism. In the beleaguered fort, religious activities were the lifeblood of the resistance. "*Catholicism in Pea has already gained much. One of the most influential chiefs of the fort has become Catholic and the number of other conversions has risen to over 100. The fervour has also been revived in the hearts of former Catholics and all is well. Those in our district who have not been to Pea are also quite fervent, in striking contrast to the Protestants who have almost abandoned their religion to occupy themselves only with war*"[170].

As a result, King George once again ordered the Catholic missionaries to withdraw from the fort. Faced with their stubbornness, he forbade them to communicate with their confreres in Mu'a. In this context, Father Calinon embarked on June 27 for Tahiti in order to request the help of the Governor of the French Establishment. He was replaced in Pea by Father Nivelleau, to whom Father Chevron regularly brought supplies. But the latter was ordered to stop his visits, during which he was suspected of encouraging the chiefs to resist while awaiting the arrival of French warships. This prospect filled the rebels with hope, and the arrival of a corvette at Nuku'alofa caused a wave of elation among them. "*To encourage our people, we promised help from France, but it was only a deception on our part. Could we bring ships of war, we who were poor people of the lowest extraction of men, without confession, miserable castaways*"[171]. The population of Mu'a hastened to warn the Catholic priests who immediately went to the port but were disappointed to find that it was an American ship. Nevertheless, the commander of the *Calliope*, Everard Home, received them on board and interceded on their behalf with King George, whom he had met on a previous voyage shortly before Captain Croker's death. The American officer reproached the king for his attitude towards the heathens and Catholics and threatened to hold him accountable to the French government. After the meeting, King George explicitly recommended to the population not to harm the Catholic missionaries. However, the neophytes of Mu'a and Hahake were prepared to suffer the consequences of their obstinacy while the missionaries themselves were expecting to be banished from the archipelago. The Tu'i Tonga, a traditional opponent of King George and the Wesleyan missionaries, sided with the besieged. He was later suspected of having supplied gunpowder and weapons to Pea's men and of having ordered the destruction of the plantations in Mu'a in order to rout the army of the besiegers by starvation[172].

3 - Defeat as the cement of the Catholic community

During the final assault, the pagans and Catholics who tried to escape were immediately taken prisoner by King George's troops surrounding the fort. Under the 1850 Code that condemned any act of sedition, the Pea chiefs were deported to Vava'u and Ha'apai. The neophytes, who had come from the four corners of the archipelago to place themselves under the protection of the Catholic chiefs and the Marist missionaries, were ordered to return to their home villages. Dispersed among the Protestants, many of them were forced to apostatise and to attend Wesleyan worship. "*For this is the diabolical tactic used by our clever persecutors to make them change their religion. They are first placed in the midst of the Protestants and there they use deceptions, threats and all the means in their power to make them renounce Catholicism. If they are unwavering, they expatriate them and take them to a distant land where they*

[170] Father Nivelleau to Fathers Lagniet and Eynard in Lyons, Tongatapu, 17 April 1852 (A.P.M., 812).
[171] Father Nivelleau to Father Lagniet in Lyons, Tongatapu, 29 August 1852 (A.P.M., 813).
[172] Short observations by Father Calinon, Catholic missionary in Tongatapu (Central Oceania), concerning the investigation conducted on the affairs of the mission on this island by Mr. Belland, Lieutenant, commander of the state corvette *Moselle*, November 1852 (A.P.M., 282).

condemn them to hard labour. Having been separated from us, they are without strength and see themselves as obliged to become Protestants"[173]. However, in Tongatapu, a small group resisted and secretly recited the prayers and the rosary in the privacy of the family home. The Pea refugees who had left the fort during the siege had taken refuge in Maofaga, a traditional shrine where they had found sanctuary without fear of being hunted. From this core group of Catholics, the priests formed a new community[174]. Although they were not personally affected by the wave of reprisals, the Catholic missionaries nevertheless expected to suffer the consequences. King George forced them to comply with two orders that were intended to hinder the development of their mission: the prohibition to meet for prayer and the prohibition to found new establishments. With these two measures, King George aimed on the one hand to limit the geographical development of the mission, but also to prevent prayer meetings from becoming a breeding ground for sedition. His intention was to counter the influence of the Marists by isolating them from their followers. However, contrary to his expectations, these orders did not sound the death knell of the mission. "*By destroying the fort at Pea, the heretics cried out loudly: 'There goes papism in Tonga. They did not know, those poor misguided people, that they were working to spread it throughout the archipelago. No doubt, under the impression of fear and violence, there were defections; but also and soon, there were returns, and even new conversions, especially in Mu'a. And wherever there were exiles, the Catholic religion became better known*"[175]. Indeed, the exile to which the chiefs and commoners who remained faithful to Catholicism after the fall of Pea were subjected had the implication of propagating the Catholic faith in places where it was unknown. On the other hand, the prayer meetings were kept clandestine, which reinforced the religious conviction of the community members[176]. Moreover, this practice in secrecy also allowed Catholics to escape the control of the king. In his approach towards Commandant Nallier and Bishop Bataillon, King George demonstrated his diplomatic skill and ability by telling them that he had no intention of eliminating Catholicism through this war and that he had in fact proposed to the Catholic missionaries that they withdraw from the fort and take refuge in his domains. Obviously, both of them would have been angry at such an incident involving the lives of the Catholic missionaries. During his stopover at the beginning of the siege of Pea, the commander of the American ship *Calliope*, Sir Everard Home, had warned the king of the risk of reprisals that France was likely to perpetrate in the event of such an incident. Accordingly, King George took care to instruct his allies and warriors to do the Catholic missionaries no harm. These precautions worked in his favour when, at the instigation of Father Calinon, an enquiry was held by order of the Governor of the French Establishments in Oceania into the responsibility of the Catholic missionaries during the events of the war at Pea. The intervention of the French authorities introduced a new element in the balance of power between the Marist missionaries and King George and gave a new impetus to the development of Catholicism in the archipelago. Nevertheless, the recognition of the Catholic community was only achieved after several phases of negotiation between King George and the French authorities who alternated between tolerance, firmness and intimidation.

[173] Father Nivelleau to Father Lagniet in Lyons, Tongatapu, 29 August 1852 (A.P.M., 813).
[174] Father Chevron to Father Colin in Lyons, Tongatapu, 2 August 1852 (A.P.M., 422).
[175] Circular letter of Bishop Lamaze on the occasion of the jubilee of the mission in the Friendly Archipelago (Tonga), Apia, R.T. Printing and Publishing House, 1892, 20 p. (Tonga Diocesan Archives). Chatfield, 1892, 20 p. (Tonga Diocesan Archives).
[176] Father Chevron to Father Colin in Lyons, Tongatapu, 8 April 1853 (A.P.M., 425).

CHAPTER IV

THE CATHOLIC MISSION: A MODERATE CHALLENGE FOR FRENCH DIPLOMACY

I - The impact of the French intervention

1 - Assistance requested by the Marists

In June 1852, when the fort had been under siege for three months, Father Calinon embarked for Tahiti in order to meet Vice-Admiral Page, Governor of the French Establishments in Oceania, and to explain to him the situation of the Catholic mission in Tonga. He did not succeed in meeting this high official because the latter showed a total lack of interest in him, of which anti-clericalism seems to have been the cause. Nevertheless, through his tenacity and with the support of the Bishop of Tahiti, Father Calinon obtained a mission that was entrusted to Captain Belland, commander of *La Moselle*, who was instructed to investigate the origin of the war at Pea, the responsibility of the monarch in the destruction of the Catholic mission, and that of the Catholic missionaries who had refused to leave the fort. Even before the ship arrived in Tonga, Father Chevron was warned by a letter from Father Calinon of the officer's unfavourable attitude towards the mission. "*The prelate (of Tahiti) tells us what we should expect in terms of protection from the French governor in these islands. I would say to you today that the French corvette La Moselle, dispatched by the latter to Tonga to examine the facts recounted in my report and of which I have sent you a copy, that this corvette, I say, commanded by a Protestant, did us less harm than it would have liked, and this is due to the difficulty, not to say the impossibility, in which our enemies find themselves of believing in the antipathy of the governor of Taïti towards us*"[177].

In his meeting with Captain Belland in October 1852, King George refrained from refuting the allegations made against him by Father Calinon, who denounced the various injustices suffered by Catholics and Marist missionaries during the war at Pea. The king did not contest the fact that he had forbidden them to communicate with their faithful and their confreres located outside the fort, that he had encouraged the firing of muskets during religious services, that he had ordered the exclusion of Catholics belonging to his army, that he had incited his chiefs to the destruction of the buildings of worship and the plantations of the mission, and finally that he had ordered the deportations and various persecutions which had followed the fall of Pea. "*The enquiry in question consisted of presenting to King George the facts related in my report. There was also a letter of complaint against him from Mister Desclos, a whaling captain from Le Havre. The aforementioned George, assisted by the Protestant ministers, has denied nothing that I know*"[178]. On the other hand, since attack is the best defence, the king defended himself against these accusations by giving as a token of his goodwill the offers made to the Catholic missionaries to leave the fort at the beginning of the conflict and declared to Captain Belland

[177] Father Calinon to Father Colin in Lyons, Tahiti, 26 March 1853 (A.P.M., 284).
[178] Father Calinon to Father Colin in Lyons, Tahiti, 26 March 1853 (A.P.M., 284).

that he had always been willing to receive them on his land. Although he claimed to be peaceful towards them, he admitted that he had been a victim of the rivalry between the Protestant and Catholic missionaries. Moreover, he blamed the Marist fathers for his misfortune, for supplying the rebels with arms, ammunition and food, for supporting the war with their rhetoric, and for dissuading the chiefs of Pea from accepting peace. However, the mission at Pea was in possession of a hunting rifle and some ammunition which Father Calinon had had to remove from the hands of the chief of Pea so as not to make the mission responsible for its use[179].

On his return to Tahiti, Captain Belland reported to the governor the nature of his discussions. The latter approved of King George's recriminations against the Catholic missionaries and concluded that they were interfering in the internal affairs of the kingdom. However, Father Calinon questioned the conduct of the enquiry and denounced the partisan attitude of Captain Belland, who had, in his opinion, shown great leniency towards the king during the enquiry. Everyone - King George, the Wesleyan missionaries and the Protestant chiefs - had been consulted, except the Catholics. Moreover, no official conclusion had been reached at the end of the investigation. "*It seems that if Mr. Belland was in charge of gathering information, he could have seen with his own eyes the ruin of Pea and the disappearance of the chapels and the missionaries' huts. Unfortunately again, he invited George to his table and gave him presents. The chief and his supporters will have concluded that the French were happy with them and that they could continue to wage war against Catholicism. If one considers, on the other hand, the conduct of Mr Page with regard to Father Calinon, whom he covered with less than honourable epithets after his departure and to whom he now gives the nickname of warrior, one cannot help suspecting that Mr Belland was merely following instructions or insinuations that were not very favourable to Catholicism*"[180]. Captain Belland's open sympathy for King George and the disdain in which the Marists were held diminished their credit with the members of the Catholic community which only encouraged Father Calinon to persevere in the search for a compromise. He took advantage of the return journey of *La Moselle* to make a second approach to the authorities in Tahiti. He left Tonga in November 1852 in the company of Father Nivelleau, who was to be transported to Sydney as a result of his ordeal during the war at Pea. The latter died on December 10, 1852 on board *La Moselle*.

In view of the failure of his previous attempt, Father Calinon changed his course of action, refraining from raising the question of responsibility and emphasising the consequences instead. His aim was to obtain reparations for the damage caused to the mission during the sacking of Pea. In addition, he had information that could be of great interest to the French authorities. It concerned a project of campaign by King George who planned to subjugate the islands of Wallis and Futuna, Fiji and Samoa to Protestantism. In this, the king was to be supported by the Wallisian chief Pooi, who had risen up against Catholic rule in his archipelago and had taken refuge in Tonga with several hundred of his companions. "*We're going to take a month or two to do the plantations which are behind schedule, then we'll go on the Wallisian expedition. The Protestant chief wants to bring back the Protestants who escaped from Wallis last year; he claims that as chief of the Tongan archipelago, he has authority over Wallis. Everyone tells us that his aim is the same as that of the war against Pea, which is to destroy*

[179] Short observations by Father Calinon, Catholic missionary in Tongatapu (Central Oceania), concerning the enquiry into the affairs of the mission on that island by Mr Belland, Lieutenant of the Navy, commander of the state corvette the *Moselle*, November 1852 (A.P.M., 282).
[180] 1853, anonymous document. Calinon file. (A.P.M.).

Catholicism; in this case, Wallis will not be able to hold out. It is said that he wants to go from there to Fiji to unite with the Protestants there and to subdue the archipelago to Wesleyanism; he has a great chance of success if he undertakes this. It is also said that his project is to end with the Navigators"[181]. In Tahiti, Father Calinon, faced with the repeated hostility of Governor Page, met Dubouzet, commander of the Naval Division, to whom he handed over the documents in his file - a report on the events of the war at Pea and various letters of recommendation on behalf of the Catholic mission in Tonga - and then informed Dubouzet of King George's expansionist ambitions. More sympathetic to Father Calinon's arguments than Governor Page, the officer ordered a new expedition to be organised, the commander of which was to make a counter-inquiry and to ascertain the truth of the Catholic missionary's allegations about King George's plans.

2 - The 1855 Convention

The responsibility for this process was entrusted to Commander Dubouzet who succeeded Governor Page as head of the French Establishments in Oceania. He arrived in Tonga on January 3, 1855 and carried out new interrogations. At the end of his investigations, he concluded that King George was responsible for the outbreak of hostilities[182]. As a result, in order to obtain reparation for the damage caused to the Catholic mission during the siege of Pea, he offered the parties involved - King George on the one hand and the Marists on the other - two possibilities to resolve their dispute. The first was for the king to pay a sum equivalent to the amount of the damage, while the second was to sign an agreement granting freedom of worship to Catholics. This last option was suggested to Commander Dubouzet by the Marists who believed that only this solution could guarantee the continuation of their mission. It was also favoured by King George. "*I finally got him, after two conferences, by simple persuasion, to sign this convention. Since then he has spoken to me with an open heart, and I have recognised more than ever that he was only the instrument of the petty passions of the Wesleyan missionaries. They have lost much in his opinion since a trip he made to Sydney where, it seems, the Governor of New South Wales proposed that he accept the protectorate of England over his islands to prevent them from being taken by France, who had just seized New Caledonia. I had no difficulty in reassuring him of France's intentions, telling him that our only desire was to live in peace with him and to find here for our ships and our nationals the protection which is due to them*"[183]. The convention was signed on January 9, 1855 between King George and the Governor of the French Establishments in Oceania and contained eight articles that defined the nature of the relationship between France and Tonga. Based on mutual friendship, these ties were to ensure in general the reciprocity of advantages granted to French citizens residing in Tonga and to Tongans who might visit the French establishments. Articles II and III were of direct concern to the mission as they granted freedom of worship and equal privileges to Catholics and Protestants, as well as amnesty for the neophytes of Pea. Articles V and VI responded to complaints made on various occasions by merchant navy officers who had not been able to obtain the assistance and pilotage they were entitled to expect under the advantages

[181] Father Chevron to Father Colin in Lyons, Tongatapu, 2 August 1852 (A.P.M., 422).

[182] Mister Dubouzet, Governor of the French Establishments of Oceania to the Minister of the Navy, 9 January 1855, on board the *Aventure*, Tonga Tabou. (Memoirs and documents Oceania. Various islands. 1836-1883. Volume 5. Tonga Islands. 1855-1862). (Diplomatic archives of the Quai d'Orsay).

[183] Mister Dubouzet, Governor of the French Establishments of Oceania to the Minister of the Navy, 9 January 1855, on board the *Aventure*, Tonga Tabou. (Memoirs and documents Oceania. Various islands. 1836-1883. Volume 5. Tonga Islands. 1855-1862). (Diplomatic archives of the Quai d'Orsay).

granted to foreign nations. In contrast to the previous articles, only the last one, which stipulated that the convention should be officially recognised, caused some reluctance on the part of King George, who was thus forced to publicly submit to the will of the French government and to suffer the humiliation inflicted on his sovereignty[184].

However, although this text suffered from numerous difficulties of implementation by the Tongan government and recognition by successive French governments, it was a diplomatic act that assured the King of Tonga of the recognition of his sovereignty. In subsequent negotiations with the various European governments interested in Tonga's fate - first the United Kingdom, then Germany and later the United States - the treaties signed were henceforth inspired by this model[185].

3 - The forced recognition of the Catholic mission

The surrender of the rebels of Pea had repercussions at the religious level by the gradual disappearance of paganism: as a result of the reprisals against them, the pagans converted in large numbers to Protestantism. "*Paganism has yielded to the power of King George; everything that is not for heresy in this island today is for the Catholic and Roman religion: we do not yet have a third of the population; our faithful are scattered among the Protestant populations: which makes the ministry more painful... The Catholic religion must have all the privileges of the Protestant religion: these are the words of the treaty made between King George and France. But a way has been found to eliminate all Catholics of their dignity... The Catholic religion must be treated like the other: but with the law of the land having a retroactive effect, a Protestant cannot convert to the true faith without that the Protestants reveal the faults he once committed in the past so as to see him condemned to the galleys; if he does not come to us, his crime remains forgotten... It is true that Tongans are much better than many other islanders today. The newcomer is even surprised at the sympathy he meets everywhere: King George himself will give him every sign of benevolence, the catechists of Wesley will shake his hand; but the welcome and sympathy of Catholics are more genuine and lasting*"[186]. The conversion of pagans to Christianity was also strongly encouraged by the laws introduced by King George in 1850 concerning the prohibition of customs deemed to be inconsistent with the spirit of Protestant doctrine. Thus, those who had taken refuge in Pea during the siege were forced after the war to enter into religious marriages and to separate from their illegitimate wives. Protestant and Catholic missionaries thus carried out a large number of matrimonial regularisations.

Unlike their Protestant counterparts, the Marists, who were generally open to traditional customs and integrated them into the life of the mission as far as possible - every Catholic religious ceremony had a traditional aspect in the organisation of processions, banquets and festivities - attracted to their ranks those who were most resistant to the disruptions to the traditional society. The Marists took pride in the fact that Maofaga and Mu'a, the sacred places of the archipelago, had preserved their religious function through Catholicism. Indeed, at the behest of the Tu'i Tonga, the frame of the church at Pea was moved to the square formerly used for the kingdom's great ritualistic celebrations - the *Malae*. "*The Tu'i Tonga had the church of Pea, which had escaped the fire, dismantled and moved here. The Tu'i Tonga wanted to build*

[184] Father Chevron to Father Colin in Lyons, Tongatapu, 11 January 1855 (A.P.M., 429).
[185] The original document is kept in the archives of the Bishop's Residence in Tonga (A. 3. a).
[186] Father Monnier to Father Berger in Lyons, Tongatapu, 4 June 1857 (A.P.M., 777).

this church in a place that was once considered sacred; it was the place where the archipelago gathered every year for their sacred contests and religious festivals. It is said to be the most beautiful square in the archipelago. It is outside the fort where we live; we had to resolve to follow our neophytes who are going to gather near this church. We are moving our settlement there"[187]. Spontaneously, after the fall of the fort of Pea had led to a break-up of the community, the Catholics gathered around the Tu'i Tonga in the upper part of the village of Mu'a - Lapaha - the lower part having been allocated to Tungi. Thus, a degree of continuity between traditional society and the Christian religion, visibly desired by the Catholic community, was provided by the Marists.

Furthermore, the signing of the 1855 convention encouraged the development of the Catholic mission in Tonga which entered a phase of growth thanks to the climate of tolerance which was established, at least momentarily, with regard to the Marists. "*I must do justice, however, to the principal chief; at present there is no open vexation to reproach him with, but what can be reproached is that he does not prevent the vexations of the inferior chiefs, of which he is aware. He fears, it is said, to compromise himself in the eyes of France after the protestations of tolerance which he made to the commander of La Moselle*"[188]. All the prisoners condemned to forced labour because of their religious convictions were freed, the families dispersed in the Protestant villages were reconstituted, and the Catholics who had been forced to celebrate their worship in secret were able to reveal their attachment to doctrine in broad daylight. The Marist missionaries were pleased that their position was becoming more stable and that their neophytes were proclaiming their faith. When he landed in Tonga in 1856, Father Monnier was surprised by the warm welcome he received from the population at large and by the praise for Father Chevron[189]. "*The Catholics of Tonga say that he is the best of all the old men that France can give them; the Protestants themselves also render him the same homage*". The Wesleyan missionaries themselves, who held him in high esteem, made several unsuccessful attempts to integrate him into their ranks[190].

The improved relationship between King George and the Tu'i Tonga - "*He leaves men to the Tu'i Tonga, but government and authority belong to him*" - who had permanently relinquished his political prerogatives following the promulgation of the 1850 Code, was also a factor in the spread of Catholicism. During a grand tour he undertook for the first time in many years to the many islands of the archipelago, the Tu'i Tonga was accompanied by most of the Catholics of Mu'a who took advantage of his presence to spread the Catholic faith in these islands where it had only been introduced occasionally by the warriors of Pea deported after the fall of the fort. This event paved the way for the opening of a Catholic mission in the two archipelagos of Ha'apai and Vava'u.

The year 1858 was marked by the end of the conflict between the superior of the Society of Mary and Bishop Bataillon which had resulted in interruption to missionary shipments to the Vicariate of Central Oceania. Immediately, the strength of the Tonga mission was reinforced

[187] Father Chevron to Father Colin in Lyons, Tongatapu, 8 April 1853 (A.P.M., 425).
[188] *idem.*
[189] Fr Monnier was born on 15 March 1825 at Amathay-Vésinieux in the Jura. He was ordained a priest on 18 February 1849. He carried out his apostolate for eight years in Tonga before being attached to the Marist mission in Sydney where he died on 15 September 1874.
[190] Father Monnier to Father Berger in Lyons, Tongatapu, 4 June 1857 (A.P.M., 777).

by the arrival of Fathers Castagnier, Guitta, and Breton[191]. Breton, whose task was to set up a settlement in Hihifo, learned the language from Father Chevron. Father Castagnier, for his part, was entrusted with the responsibility for the community of Houma. Less reserved than Father Breton, Father Castagnier overcame the language barrier more quickly than Father Breton. As for Father Guitta, he assisted Father Calinon who in 1857 had seven hundred neophytes - four hundred baptised and three hundred catechumens - spread over twenty-two villages around Maofaga. During his pastoral tour in September 1859, Bishop Bataillon gave confirmation to eight hundred Catholics in Tongatapu. Thereafter, Father Chevron retained responsibility for the mission of Mu'a, while that of Vava'u was entrusted to Father Castagnier and that of Ha'apai to Fathers Calinon and Guitta. While the latter were faced with the greatest of difficulties in Ha'apai, Father Castagnier was joyfully received in Vava'u by a hundred Wallisians, forced to apostatise during the events of the war at Pea and desperate for priests to support them during this ordeal. "*A small nucleus of Catholics we have in Ha'apai and Vava'u are crying out for missionaries to support them; they say they are rapidly increasing in number. A few hundred neophytes from Wallis who came to Vava'u in the past have been forced to apostatise. We see some of them here from time to time, we feel sorry for them. They tell us that they would not want to die in heresy; that they know well the misfortune into which they have fallen through weakness and fear of their chiefs; but that they do not dare to declare themselves openly Catholic, not feeling strong enough to resist the intimidations, as long as they are not supported by the presence of a missionary. I also think that the further we go, the more opposition we will find from the Protestant chiefs, who at first were frightened of the treaty, but who are coming to see that we may not be very much attached to it*"[192].

But the truce between the Protestant and Catholic communities, and between the Marist and Wesleyan missionaries, was short-lived. Gradually, tensions grew over the increasing number of conversions to Catholicism, as the Wesleyans became concerned that this movement was hindering their expansion into the pagan community. In addition, the hostility of the Protestant chiefs towards the Catholic priests was reawakened as the latter sought to establish themselves in the other groups of the archipelago by taking advantage of the benefits granted by the king under the convention. "*The conversions were less numerous than the previous year because Father Calinon, listening too much to his zeal and desire to make the mission work, and relying too much on human means, wanted to claim too thoroughly for the Catholics the promises made therein. He irritated the chief of the Protestant party to the point of being called an impostor, not in front of him but in the presence of all the subordinate chiefs gathered together. The chief being feared,...,those who felt attracted to Catholicism became frightened and retreated*"[193]. At the end of 1859, in Tongatapu, Catholics were confronted with a new wave

[191] Father Castagnier was born on 14 December 1830 in Beaucaire in the Gard. He was ordained a priest in Belley in 1854 and arrived in Tonga with Fathers Breton and Guitta on 20 June 1858. After a year spent with Father Chevron, he was asked to found the mission of Vava'u where he was joined the following year by Father Guitta. When Father Breton succeeded him in 1863, he had succeeded in building up a community of about 100 members. He then went to Mu'a where he officiated with Father Chevron. During his stay in Hihifo - from 1870 onwards - he translated the biblical accounts and started a work on the history of the Church. In 1881, he succeeded Father Breton in Vava'u where he was assisted by Father Reiter and where he died on 3 July 1910. Father Guitta was born on 11 March 1829 at Rillieux in the diocese of Belley; he was ordained a priest on 17 June 1855. He died in Mu'a a few years after his fellow traveller [Castagnier] on 28 July 1914. Father Breton, nicknamed "*the hermit of Vava'u*", was born in Belley on 15 October 1815. He was ordained a priest in 1839 and died in Vava'u on 4 May 1881.

[192] Father Chevron to Father Favre in Lyons, Tongatapu, 9 January 1857 (A.P.M., 437).

[193] *idem.*

of persecution inflicted mainly by the Hahake and Hihifo chiefs. Despite an intervention by King George who ordered the return of a plantation to its rightful owner, a neophyte, who had been driven out of his village for practising Catholicism, the Hahake chief decreed the exclusion of all Catholics from his district. Similarly, a Protestant wishing to convert to Catholicism was sentenced to hard labour for an offence committed before the convention was signed[194]. Settled in Hihifo since April 1859, Father Breton was forced into extreme solitude because the villagers fled from his presence. The village chief, a Wesleyan preacher, had nevertheless agreed to provide him with a house, mainly for fear of French intervention; but the Protestant preachers, a dozen in number, harassed the population daily and incited them to avoid the presence of the Marist priest, thereby preventing any conversion to Catholicism. "*At Hihifo, where Father Breton lives, there is an old chief named Ota [Ata], who, while appearing to love and respect the missionaries, trembles at the mere mention of the king. Two young men, one of his sons and a small chief wanted to become Catholics; Ota [Ata] told them: "I know that it is the good lotu; but I am old, I fear Tupou George, wait until I am dead to change. After my death, you may do whatever you want. It seems that the king threatened the poor old man harshly; it is even said that he made him cry by threatening to take away his chieftainship, as well as that of his children. It is fear that keeps the Tongans away from the Catholic religion; out of 14,000 or 15,000 souls we have only 2,000 Catholics*"[195].

In response to the protests of the Catholic missionaries, who again objected to these acts of ostracism, King George referred to the 1850 Code and invoked the freedom granted to chiefs in their villages. However, he could not justify the fact that all Catholics in the archipelago were excluded from administrative positions to which only the Wesleyan college students were entitled, and that members of the ruling family and the most influential chiefs were forbidden to marry Catholics. The arrival in Tongatapu in early April 1860 of the corvette *Thisbé*, commanded by Hughes [Huchet] de Cintré, gave Father Chevron the opportunity to make his grievances known to King George through his representative in Tongatapu, Saleliki Mamui [Setaleki Mumui], who complied with the officer's injunctions by signing an agreement that restored Catholic rights[196]. A further demand was made to the King through his representative in Tongatapu. A new formal demand was reiterated by Captain Lévêque, commander of the *Cornélie* the following year, and the threat of Saleliki Mamui's [Setaleki Mumui's] dismissal, or even his deportation to New Caledonia, was issued[197]. On September 17, 1861, Captain Lévêque signed a convention with the Governor of Tonga, William Tungi, in the presence of

[194] Father Chevron to Father Colin in Lyons, Tongatapu, 5 May 1857 (A.P.M., 438).

[195] Father Monnier to Father Favre in Lyons, Tongatapu, 15 April 1859 (A.P.M., 786).

[196] "*Article 2 of the convention concluded on 9 January 1855 between Tupou, King of Tonga, and Governor Dubouzet, representative of His Majesty the Emperor Napoleon Ill, Emperor of the French, states that Catholics shall enjoy the same privileges as Protestants. However, contrary to this convention, not a chief, not a judge, not an officer, was taken from among the Catholics. Moreover, at national meetings to take decisions concerning the population, Catholics were never called upon. Tupou undertakes to put an end to this state of affairs and to ensure that in the future, the chiefs, judges and representative officers are taken from both religions in equal proportion to the population. He also undertakes to publish the present convention and to have it published by those entitled to it*." *For his Majesty Napoleon Ill, Emperor of the French, the Captain of the corvette Thisbe, signed: De Cintré; Signed: Saleliki Mamui [Setaleki Mumui]*. Copy of the convention signed by De Cintré and Saleliki Mamui [Setaleki Mumui], Nuku'alofa, 19 March 1860. (Memoirs and documents. Oceania. Various islands. 1836-1883. Volume 5. Tonga Islands. 1855-1862) (Diplomatic archives of the Quai d'Orsay).

[197] Tonga Islands, verbal note, 24 July 1860. Translation of a letter written in English by Earl Cowley, Ambassador of the United Kingdom, to the French Minister of Foreign Affairs. (Memoirs and documents. Oceania. Various islands. 1836-1883. Volume 5. Tonga Islands. 1855-1862). (Diplomatic archives of the Quai d'Orsay).

Tevita Ahome [Ahomee], Sunia Mafileo, Joeli Fakafanua, all Tongatapu chiefs, regulating the number of public officials - chiefs, officers, judges or representatives in the assemblies - chosen from among members of the Catholic community. On behalf of King George, the Governor of Tonga undertook to grant the Catholic community one quarter of the available positions. "*It was in September of this year that Mister Lévêque, commander of a French government ship, at the instigation of Father Chevron and Father Monnier, obtained from the King a commitment to a compromise whereby he would, in order to comply with the 1855 treaty, select from among the Catholics a number of government employees proportionate to the number of Catholics, that is to say, to about one quarter of the population of Tonga, which was done for Tonga and even later for Vava'u, but always fell short of the desired number*"[198].

However, this pressure from officers of the Naval Division of the Pacific Ocean followed a previous case which had greatly contributed to rekindling tensions between Catholic missionaries and Protestant chiefs who had, it seems, relied too much on the tolerance of the French authorities. "*Father Calinon and Father Guitta will try to establish a settlement in Ha'apai but they will probably encounter difficulties because too much kindness from the Governor General has emboldened the chiefs*"[199]. Armed with the rights granted to them by the 1855 convention, Fathers Calinon and Guitta, accompanied by the visitor Father Poupinel, left Tongatapu in 1858 to establish a mission in Ha'apai. Lausi [Lausi'i], governor of the island and a relative of King George, refused to receive them. On their return to Tonga, the news of the breach of the convention caused consternation among the Catholic neophytes and fear among the Protestant chiefs of possible French reprisals. A secret meeting of all the Protestant chiefs on the island was held and it was decided that the fortifications at Ha'apai and Vava'u should be rehabilitated to counter a possible French military expedition. King George resumed his evangelistic campaigns in the villages of central Tongatapu where the influence of the Marists tended to increase while that of the Wesleyans stagnated. At the end of June 1858, Captain Lebris, commander of the *Bayonnaise,* approached the shores of Tongatapu. As soon as he was informed by Father Chevron of the situation, he went with him to Mumui, Governor of Tonga, in order to fetch his sovereign residing in Vava'u. For four days, the emissaries' pirogue was held up on land by the bad weather which frequently prevailed at this time of the year. Finally, at dawn on the fifth day, Mumui's men set sail for Vava'u. At the end of a six-day journey, they were back in royal company. The arrival of the ships at two o'clock in the morning of July 30 was greeted by the *Lali*, whose beats echoed throughout the island. The warriors, eagerly awaiting the arrival of King George, launched their canoes into the sea to escort their sovereign to the shore. In the days that followed, the tension between Catholics and Protestants increased. The presence of the *Bayonnaise* and the reasons for her visit were the main causes. King George was requested to come on board the day after his arrival, but he avoided the meeting for fear of being held prisoner if he could not reach an agreement with his interlocutor. Instead, he proposed to Commander Lebris that they meet in the fort of Nuku'alofa. At the end of this meeting, Commander Lebris obtained from the king, despite his lack of enthusiasm, that he would bring Fathers Calinon and Guitta back to Lifuka before the end of September and that a land concession would be granted to the mission. Under the terms of this agreement, two residences of equivalent size to the Wesleyan mission were to be built on the initiative of the Governor of Ha'apai and reserved for the use of the Catholic

[198] Box 3. b. 1. Father Castagnier, Histoire de la mission de Vava'u: 1859-1861, handwritten notes, n. p. (Tonga Diocesan Archives).
[199] Father Chevron to Father Favre in Lyons, Tongatapu, 9 July 1858 (A.P.M., 441).

missionaries. King George also agreed to abide by the treaty and no longer oppose the plans of the Marist missionaries to settle in Hihifo and Vava'u[200].

Following a request from Father Chevron, who tended generally to favour negotiated solutions and compromises, Commander Lebris suspended his request for Lausi's deportation on condition that the demands be carried out. Doubly threatened with intervention by the French authorities in Tahiti and the detention of his schooner and fleet of pirogues, and ordered to sign the agreement with Commander Lebris before sunset, King George resolved, despite his reluctance to cede any part of his sovereignty, to accept the terms of the French. "*The chiefs do not sufficiently understand the manner in which they are bound by the treaties they sign with us, and it has always required collateral agreements to recall them to their implementation. From this point of view, it would be good if the archipelagos were visited more often. Our flag is respected there and the natives are attracted to us by the convenience of our relations... The action of the reverend Catholic Fathers is almost non-existent in the political sphere. They know little of the intrigues that are going on around them*"[201]. However, this apparent compliance by the king was no guarantee of success for the Catholic mission. In August 1858, Father Calinon, accompanied by Father Guitta and three neophytes from Tongatapu, arrived in Lifuka. They worked tirelessly but, isolated and destitute, were unable to achieve any results. Moreover, the Protestant missionary urged the population not to give them any help. As for the governor of Ha'apai to whom they appealed, he remained adamantly silent.

Catholic missionaries took advantage of the impetus given by the 1855 convention to try to establish themselves in the predominantly Protestant areas of Tongatapu and in the neighbouring archipelagos of Ha'apai and Vava'u. The resulting surge of conversions benefited mainly the mission at Mu'a. However, it allowed the foundation of settlements in Maofaga in 1855, in Hihifo in 1858, and in Ha'apai and Vava'u in 1859. In Ha'apai, a stronghold of the Tupou dynasty where the Protestant population was in a strong majority and where only a few pockets of paganism remained in the scattered islets of the group, the Catholic missionaries were unanimously rejected and the mission was abandoned after repeated but always unsuccessful attempts. On the other hand, they obtained rapid results in Vava'u where their presence was requested by a hundred Wallisians converted by Bishop Bataillon and by some neophytes established in various points of the archipelago after the sack of Pea. In 1859, the governor of Vava'u, Salomone Halapiapi [Solomone Hala'api'api], was removed from his post and replaced by Uga, the son of King George, to the great regret of the Marists who had established relations of mutual esteem with the former. The conversion to Catholicism of Lua, one of the Vava'u chiefs who had once fought Finau Ulukalala when the latter was trying to impose Protestantism on the population of this archipelago, was a matter of concern to Uga who hastened to warn the king, who did not, however, consider it necessary to intervene. In Tongatapu, Masima, the brother of Ata, the great chief of Hihifo, also converted to Catholicism, but this conversion had little impact on the population[202]. However, relations between the Catholic missionaries and the Protestant chiefs gradually calmed down. New factors came into play that influenced the slow integration of the Catholic population into Tongan society, which

[200] Father Monnier to Father Guitta, Tongatapu, 10 September 1858 (A.P.M., 783).

[201] Extracts from a report by Captain Lévêque to the Minister of the Navy, on board the *Cornélie*, in Sydney harbour, 21 November 1861 (Memoirs and documents. Oceania. Various islands. 1836-1883. Volume 5. Tonga Islands. 1855-1862). Diplomatic Archives of the Quai d'Orsay.

[202] Box 3. c.: Father Castagnier, "*Les principaux événements à Tonga depuis 1858 jusqu'à nos jours (10.04.1882)*", ms, 180 p. (Tonga Diocesan Archives).

was itself undergoing profound changes that made the rivalries between Protestants and Catholics secondary.

In the next twenty years, King George gave priority to the international recognition of his sovereignty, which he feared would be threatened by the expansionist activities of the great European powers. To counter this threat, he undertook to impose himself on the diplomatic front. From then on, Catholic missionaries became critical observers of the negotiations, and on rare occasions protagonists in the diplomatic game, while closer ties were established between the Tongan government and the French authorities.

II - Tonga, a dilemma for French diplomacy

While from the 1860s onwards King George, with the help of his Prime Minister Shirley Baker, was consolidating his sovereignty in order to ensure the political independence of the kingdom, the European states were embarking on a new phase in their colonial adventure. Before 1870, the main European states - Germany, the United Kingdom, and France - paid little attention to the isolated archipelagos of the Pacific Ocean, where their interests were represented locally with varying degrees of effectiveness by their nationals - missionaries, planters or merchants. Thus, the German presence in Samoa was asserted through the commercial enterprises of the *Godeffroy* house, whose activities were extended to many islands of Polynesia - several trading posts were opened from the 1860s onwards in the main groups of the Tonga archipelago - but also in Melanesia. Following the bankruptcy of this company due to the blocking of the port of Hamburg by the French during the 1870 war, and the failure, again for the same reason, of vast plantation projects, the German brand was taken up in the region by the firm *HD&HD* which, relying on the infrastructure established by its predecessors, accumulated profits. These settlements later served as the basis for the German Empire's colonial claims[203]. In Fiji, where English predominance was exercised through Protestant missionaries, planters and traders, the conflicts that divided the indigenous authorities led to the annexation of the archipelago into the British colonial empire in 1874[204]. As for the French government, its prestige already shone through in the islands of Wallis and Futuna, Society and the Marquesas in Polynesia, New Caledonia and the Loyalty in Melanesia.

From the 1870s, a new era of colonial expansion began. The United Kingdom, Germany and France, soon joined by the United States of America, gradually took over the destiny of the Oceanian archipelagos. Until the beginning of the 20th century, the future of these micro-states was the subject of intense diplomatic activity aimed at establishing zones of influence. However, the expansionist tendencies of the various powers were tempered by their common desire to maintain the balance of peace in Europe. At the Conference of Berlin in 1878, Chancellor Bismarck confirmed this desire for renewed colonial expansion. Six years later, still in Berlin, the Western states laid down the rules for imperialist competition. Each colonial power was henceforth obliged to take possession of a territory through effective occupation, to notify its European partners of its actions, to respect the freedom of trade, and to accept the holding of international conferences for the settlement of possible disputes. These principles,

[203] The activities of the *J.G. Godeffroy* company were interrupted in 1879 while the *Deutsche Handels und Plantagen Gesellshaft der Sudsee lnseln* took over the business.

[204] In 1861, one hundred and sixty-one European residents were counted in the archipelago. Ten years later, their number had risen to between two and a half thousand and three thousand. Planters or traders, they were mainly attracted by the sugar cane boom. DOUMENGE François, *L'homme dans le Pacifique Sud*, p.143.

which were generally respected, were crucial to the colonial powers of the day taking possession of Pacific island entities. In France, the concerns of successive governments of the Third Republic were to restore the nation's prestige, which had been badly damaged by the defeat of 1870. Léon Gambetta, then Jules Ferry, both supported in Parliament by the Colonial Party, were the main promoters of colonial expansion. The creation of the Superior Council of the Colonies, instituted by decree on October 19, 1883, attested to this desire to reorient the nation's foreign policy. For the United Kingdom, the Pacific archipelagos were only of minor interest in view of the difficulties faced by its administration in India, the search for markets in the Far East, the slow and laborious penetration of Africa, and the development of the Australian and New Zealand settlements. But from 1880 onwards, the desire to stem the rise of German imperialism and the need to reassure France, whose objectives still seemed uncertain, led to a race for annexation. As a result, the European powers successively planned various settlements according to the economic potential that these archipelagos could present and the political stakes involved[205].

Tonga was one of the archipelagos coveted by the United Kingdom, but it had to counter the ambitions of Germany, which did not intend to let the British have free rein over it with impunity. The signing of a treaty of friendship and trade with King George in 1879, similar to the one signed by the Germans in 1876, enabled the United Kingdom to make up for its delay. As for France, which wanted its colonial claims to be recognised, it successively envisaged, from 1882 to 1896, the signing of a treaty similar to those previously established by Germany and the United Kingdom in Tonga, then the ratification of the 1855 convention, and finally the establishment of a protectorate. Obviously, the Tongan archipelago represented, within the general framework of European colonial expansion, an element in the balance of power which opposed France to the United Kingdom and Germany. The French Ministries of Foreign Affairs, of the Navy and Colonies, of Commerce, the ambassadors of the Republic in London and Berlin, the French representatives in Tahiti, New Caledonia and Australia were involved, to varying degrees, in negotiations with the Tongan government.

While the fate of the Pacific archipelagos was being played out in the secrecy of European cabinets, King George and his Prime Minister Shirley Baker saw the proliferation of bilateral treaties with the European powers as a way to prevent a possible colonisation of the archipelago. The colonial ambitions of the great powers and the conflicts between them were not unknown to the Tongan population, who were informed of these untimely activities by European residents. "*Would you believe that in these small islands, so far from the other world,*

[205] In 1880, the United Kingdom established sovereignty over Rotuma; in 1886, over the southern Solomon Islands; in 1888, over the Cook and Christmas Islands; in 1889, over the Line Islands; in 1892, over the Gilbert and Ellice Islands; in 1893, over the Central Solomons; and in 1899, over the whole of the Solomons except Bougainville and Buka. In 1900, it imposed its protectorate over Tonga. During this period, France completed its takeover of the Society Islands in Eastern Polynesia. In August 1880, Tahiti and the Tuamotou archipelago were annexed; in 1881, the Austral Islands; in 1881, the Gambier Islands. In 1888, it occupied the Leeward Islands whose independence had been safeguarded by the Franco-British declaration of 1847. On 20 October 1906, a memorandum of understanding between France and the United Kingdom established joint sovereignty in the New Hebrides as a condominium. In 1885, Germany annexed northeastern New Guinea, the outlying archipelagos and the northern Solomons. In 1889, the two large islands of western Samoa were granted to Germany, while the small eastern islands of Samoa were granted to the United States. Germany relinquished all influence in Niue, Tonga and the Solomons to the United Kingdom, with the exception of Bougainville and Buka, but maintained its supremacy in most of the Micronesian archipelagos. The United States, which joined the competition later, obtained a monopoly on the exploitation of guano deposits in the Line Islands and Phoenix in 1886. In 1889-90, it established sovereignty over the small islands of Eastern Samoa and later over the Swains Atoll.

all the political and religious events of Europe have a great impact and exert a great influence"[206]. Information from Europe was passed on by the missions when it was likely to serve their interests and gave rise to multiple interpretations, often fanciful or even outrageous[207]. This situation was favoured by the geographical distance between the continents and lent itself to a fragmented vision of the events taking place there, by the monopoly of the British press being relayed in the region by Australian, New Zealand and Fijian sources, which were themselves representative of various currents of opinion, and by the irregularity of the routing of French sources, which only offered belated denials or confirmations of rumours that were being spread. The Wesleyan missionaries' handling of news about the 1870 war and the French government's attitude to the Papacy thus discredited the image of France in Tonga. "*The war in Europe is making a lot of noise around here, and a lot, and to the detriment of the lotu, as you well understand. In the eyes of the Tongans, the Falanise is like the personification of Catholicism. Why then do the governments of Paris persist in not being frankly Catholic? What blindness!*"[208]. While the Marists worried about the impact of the war on their followers, King George and Shirley Baker must have feared the political consequences of these hegemonic rivalries. The German and British interventions in Samoa and Fiji did not reassure them.

1- The Tongan request

The proposal to sign a treaty of friendship between the Kingdom of Tonga and France came from Shirley Baker, who conveyed his request to the French government through Commander Parizot, on the occasion of the latter's tour of missions aboard the *Hussard* in August 1881. "*In a letter dated December 5, (...) I pointed out to Your Excellency that the Prime Minister of King George had expressed to Commander Parizot his desire to see us contract a treaty of friendship with the Tonga Islands following the example of those concluded in 1876 and 1879 by Germany and Great Britain with this small country*"[209]. In this letter dated December 5, 1881, Admiral Brossard de Corbigny, Commander-in-Chief of the Naval Division of the Pacific, informed Admiral Jauréguiberry, the Minister of the Navy and Colonies, of the diplomatic opportunities offered by Tonga. Armed with a file containing copies of treaties and conventions signed in Tonga and Samoa by France, the United Kingdom, Germany and the United States since 1852, he presented his arguments in favour of Shirley Baker's request and insisted above all on the need for France to assert itself in relation to the colonial strategies of the United Kingdom and Germany. Indeed, while these two states were clearly displaying their claims on Tonga and Samoa, Admiral de Corbigny could not fail to deplore, once again, France's timidity. "*This archipelago seems to me to be destined to fall under the domination of a maritime power in the near future, and it is in our interest to foresee the future by putting ourselves on the same*

[206] Father Lamaze to Father Muraire at the procuratorate in Lyons, letter to be sent to the Superior of the S.M. in Rome, Maofaga, February 3, 1865 (A.P.M., 619).

[207] Such was the case with the announcement of the construction of the first Wesleyan church in Paris (Father Monnier to Father Jardin in Lyons, Tongatapu, 6 January 1864), (A.P.M., 793) and the supposed conversion of the Queen of England to Catholicism (Father Monnier to the Superior of the S.M. in Lyons, Tongatapu, 19 February 1863), (A.P.M., 792).

[208] Father Lamaze to the Superior of the S.M. in Lyons, Maofaga, 2 April 187 l. (A.P.M., 646).

[209] Admiral de Corbigny, Commander-in-Chief of the Naval Division of the Pacific to the Minister of the Navy and Colonies, on board the *Triomphante*, at sea, 31 December 1881. (Memoirs and documents Oceania. New Guinea. Sunda Islands. Samoa and Toafa Islands. Volume 3. 1813-1814-1884) (Diplomatic archives of the Quai d'Orsay).

footing as England and Germany as soon as possible"[210]. As for Wallis, where the population had been "*for many years subject to the moral authority"* of French Catholic missionaries, he felt it was urgent to make arrangements to preserve the national interests in case *"the neighbouring colony of Fiji deems it necessary to establish its authority there*"[211].

Clearly, this suggestion seemed to offer the French government an opportunity to follow in the footsteps of its rivals. However, since its commercial interests could not be seriously invoked to justify an intervention in Tonga, France recalled its presence through the Catholic missionaries who opposed "*the Protestant pastors who have made English propaganda there*"[212]. Sensitive to the arguments put to him, the Minister of the Navy and Colonies consulted the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Charles de Freycinet, in order to pursue the steps advocated by Admiral Brossard de Corbigny. He added to the admiral's considerations that the strategic importance of these archipelagos - Tonga and Samoa - was about to increase following the forthcoming opening of the Isthmus of Panama. In this perspective, he added, it was important for France not to be left behind by its rivals. Nevertheless, he expressed concerns about the reactions of France's rivals who might be upset by such an initiative, and feared that the consequences would be disproportionate to what was at stake. Indeed, it was essentially a question of preventing any risk of confrontation at a time when the concern of European states was not to upset the precarious balance of peace.

Admiral Brossard de Corbigny was instructed to take advantage of Prime Minister Shirley Baker's overtures to negotiate a treaty of friendship with the King of Tonga and to obtain conditions similar to those obtained in Samoa, but he was to be careful not to alert the vigilance of the United Kingdom and Germany who might take offence at some of the privileges acquired at their expense. He had to be careful not to "*let it be seen that he intended to assume a superior footing*". In Wallis, he was given the task of signing a treaty with the Queen, the aim of which was to ensure the maintenance of French influence and to prevent a possible attempt at annexation by the English possessions, Australia and New Zealand. Finally, he was instructed not to hesitate to postpone his actions if the situation seemed unfavourable. Admiral Brossard de Corbigny felt that the role assigned to him exceeded his competences and suggested sending a diplomatic delegation. This proposal was rejected by the Minister of Foreign Affairs who wanted to limit the scope of the project.

However, his successor, Rear Admiral Landolfe, was appointed as plenipotentiary officer. But, in a confidential report addressed to the Minister of the Navy and the Colonies on October 6, 1883, he was reluctant to take part in this undertaking. Indeed, he expressed numerous reservations concerning the advantages that the signing of treaties with the authorities of Tonga and Samoa were likely to offer the government of the Republic, which had only a few missionaries to represent it in Tonga and three merchants in Samoa. "*No French merchant ship shows its flag in the area*," he also said. Moreover, the speculation about a regional boom following the opening of the Isthmus of Panama could not justify such involvement in the eyes

[210] Admiral de Corbigny, Commander-in-Chief of the Pacific Naval Division, to the Minister of Marine and Colonies, on board the *Triomphante*, at sea, December 31, 1881. (Memoirs and documents Oceania. New Guinea. the Sunda Islands. Samoa and Toafa Islands. Volume 3. 1813-1814-1884) (Diplomatic archives of the Quai d'Orsay).

[211] *idem*.

[212] The President of the Council, Minister of Foreign Affairs, to Admiral Jauréguiberry, Minister of the Navy and Colonies, Paris, 16 May 1882. (Memoirs and documents Oceania. New Guinea. Sunda Islands. Samoa and Toafa Islands. Volume 3. 1813-1814-1884) (Archives diplomatiques du Quai d'Orsay).

of the other powers who were already indignant about French activities in Raïatea. "*The Governor of French Establishments in Oceania, with whom I got in touch as soon as I arrived in Papeete, did not allow me to ignore that the situation with regard to our protectorate on this island was becoming more and more difficult*"[213]. Indeed, the project to create a French establishment in the Leeward Islands was met with vehement opposition from German and English residents, who accused France of outrageous imperialism because they feared that their interests would be threatened[214]. Moreover, Australia and New Zealand, Britain's unconditional partners in Oceania, took every opportunity to denounce France's "*spirit of invasion*" and to turn the two governments against each other for their colonial policies - France's for being too enterprising, and the United Kingdom's for a lack of audacity[215]. "*The events in Madagascar and in Tonkin still provide him with easy pretexts to stir up public opinion against us*"[216].

All these factors considered - the absence of national economic interests, the anti-French campaigns by Australia and New Zealand, the pressure of German and English residents against the establishment of a protectorate in Raiatea, and the risk of misinterpretation of French activities in Tonga - prompted Rear Admiral Landolfe to postpone his visit to Tonga. "*Therefore, as long as the question of Raiatea is not definitively resolved, the greatest circumspection must be observed in our steps or negotiations*"[217]. Aware of this context, the Ministers of Marine and Colonies and of Foreign Affairs agreed with this cautious advice and postponed the negotiations to a later date. From then on, priority was given to the settlement of the question of the French protectorate on the island of Raiatea[218]. For its part, the Naval Division of the Pacific Ocean, based in the Society Islands, continued its actions in support of the Catholic missions and maintained its observational functions. However, a few months later,

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[213] Annex to the letter from the Navy of 6 October 1883. Rear-Admiral Landolfe, Commander-in-Chief of the Naval Division of the Pacific Ocean to the Minister of the Navy, on board the Montcalm, in the harbour of Papeete, 14 August 1883. (Memoirs and documents Oceania. New Guinea. Sunda Islands. Samoa and Toafa Islands. Volume 3. 1813-1814 -1884) (Diplomatic archives of the Quai d'Orsay).

[214] In 1843, on the initiative of Admiral du Petit-Thouars, France established its protectorate over Tahiti. On the other hand, it admitted the independence of the Leeward Islands (Raïatea, Tahaa, Bora-Bora and Huahine) which were not part of Queen Pomare's possessions. In 1880, the island of Tahiti was annexed, and in 1888 the Leeward Islands were attached to the colony, but insurrectionary movements led by Chief Teraupo'o and supported by the British residents persisted until 1897, when a military operation forced the rebels out of their lair. Teraupo'o and his warriors were captured and exiled to the Marquesas and New Caledonia. They were amnestied in 1905.

[215] Annex to the letter from the Navy of 6 October 1883. Rear-Admiral Landolfe, Commander-in-Chief of the Naval Division of the Pacific Ocean to the Minister of the Navy, on board the *Montcalm*, in the harbour of Papeete, 14 August 1883. (Memoirs and documents Oceania. New Guinea. Sunda Islands. Samoa and Toafa Islands. Volume 3. 1813-1814-1884) (Diplomatic archives of the Quai d'Orsay).

[216] In August 1883, France obtained from Tonkin the signature of a treaty recognising the French protectorate. However, this diplomatic victory came at the end of many difficulties which had seen French military forces engage in combat against Chinese troops. In Madagascar, the dispute between France and the Malagasy authorities over the application of an agreement signed in 1862 also compelled the government of the Republic to demonstrate its strength. Negotiations led to the signing of a protectorate treaty in 1885.

[217] Annex to the letter from the Navy dated 6 October 1883. Rear-Admiral Landolfe, Commander-in-Chief of the Naval Division of the Pacific Ocean, to the Minister of the Navy, on board the *Montcalm*, in the harbour of Papeete, 14 August 1883. (Memoirs and documents Oceania. New Guinea. Sunda Islands. Samoa and Toafa Islands. Volume 3. 1813-1814-1884) (Diplomatic archives of the Quai d'Orsay).

[218] This prudence can be explained by the desire not to rekindle antagonisms at a sensitive time. Despite the improvement in relations between France and Germany since the appointment of Jules Ferry to the presidency of the Council in February 1883, the dispute over Alsace-Lorraine still weighed on the diplomatic initiatives of the two states. As for relations with the United Kingdom, they were marked by the settlement of borders in West Africa, where the French and British military and colonial authorities clashed.

following the resurgence of British and German activities in Tonga, senior Parisian officials once again questioned the appropriateness of French intervention.

Commander Châteauminois, an officer in the Naval Division, visited Tonga in November 1883, a month after the trial of the Mu'a petitioners. In his report, he gave an account of the pressure exerted by Shirley Baker's opponents on Her Majesty's representatives in Fiji to have the Prime Minister expelled[219]. These acts, which defied the authority of King George, resulted in the interference of the British High Commissioner in the internal affairs of the kingdom and hinted at a future expansion of the British Empire, relying on the proximity of the Lau group[220]. "*There was much concern about the recent visit of a British warship which had brought the British consul from Tonga to Fiji. The annexation of Fiji by England seems to be a permanent cause of concern for the neighbouring archipelagos. In Tonga, as in Wallis, as in Samoa, there is the nightmare of annexation*"[221]. Furthermore, the French officer noted that the clauses of the Treaty of Friendship and Commerce signed in 1876 by Germany, relating to the use of Vava'u as a coal depot, had remained without effect. He deduced that the real objectives of the German government were not commercial but political, aimed at the annexation of Tonga. He argued his hypothesis through a field study. While the northern part of Vava'u offered '*sandy beaches sloping gently down*' to the sea, the locations chosen for the establishment of coal depots were bordered by steep cliffs which did not allow the coast to be equipped with wharves and warehouses. On the other hand, they were excellent observation sites[222]. However, for the Germans, the annexation of Tonga was not a major concern at the time; it was primarily a matter of curbing the United Kingdom's hegemonic ambitions and not ceding the advantage to the United Kingdom by showing any lack of interest in the archipelagos.

As for King George, assured of the formal recognition of Tonga's sovereignty by the treaties signed in 1876 and 1879 with Germany and the United Kingdom, he sought to contain the colonial ambitions of the European powers by restricting the possibilities for settlement of their residents through the law of inalienability of the land[223].

In addition, Commander Châteauminois informed his superiors of the sympathy shown on various occasions by Crown Prince Wellington Gu towards the Catholic missionaries. "*In the midst of this political mess, King George's heir, Prince Gu, is drawing closer to the Catholics because they are the enemies of the Protestants representing English influence. The visit of Le Limier has given him an opportunity to show his sympathies for our missionaries; I have done*

[219] In a letter to Queen Victoria of England in January 1882, petitioners from the Mu'a Parliament, which included all opponents of the policies pursued by King George and Shirley Baker, appealed for Baker's removal from the kingdom where he was exerting too much influence. The English merchants denounced his obstruction of trade, the chiefs his usurpation of power, and the Wesleyans his desire to create an independent church.

[220] Located to the west of Tonga, the Lau Archipelago is part of the Fijian Archipelago annexed in 1875 by the United Kingdom. However, at various times, these islands were the site of Tongan settlements. In 1853, Chief Ma'afu, whom King George wished to keep away from the throne, was sent there as governor.

[221] Tour of the missions, political report by Captain Châteauminois, commander of the *Limier*, August and September 1883. (Memoirs and documents Oceania. New Guinea. Islands of the Sunda. Samoa and Toafa Islands. Volume 3. 1813-1814 -1884-). (Diplomatic archives of the Quai d'Orsay).

[222] Tour of the missions, political report by Captain Chateauminois, commander of the *Limier*, August and September 1883. (Memoirs and documents Oceania. New Guinea. Samoa and Toafa islands. Volume 3. 1813-1814-1884) (Diplomatic Archives of the Quai d'Orsay).

[223] This law was passed in 1875 at the time of the proclamation of the new constitution, of which it constituted Article 109.

all I can to encourage him in this direction"[224]. This was immediately seen as a favourable argument for the elaboration of a new negotiation project. Thus, thanks to the credit given to it by the Tongan royal family, France could legitimately and without fear of exposing itself to recriminations from Germany and England impose itself as a diplomatic partner. Consequently, the commander of the *Kerguelen* was instructed by Landolfe's successor, Franguet, to sign a treaty with Prince Gu whose accession to the throne was expected in the short term[225]. "*You will try to enlighten us as much as possible on the future reserved for Tonga in the more or less imminent event of King George's death*"[226]. However, in the end, the Minister of Foreign Affairs categorically refused to do so because of the difficulties the government faced in Tahiti[227].

2 - The French refusal to ratify the 1855 Convention

While the project of a treaty of friendship between France and Tonga seemed abandoned, the Minister of the Navy, Charles Galiber, who had succeeded Admiral Peyron in April 1885, forwarded to his counterpart at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Charles de Freycinet, Shirley Baker's request for ratification of the 1855 convention, addressed to Descamps, commander of the *Dayot*. However, Ministers Galiber and Freycinet agreed that it was not appropriate to change the course of action taken by their predecessors. They were also concerned about what King George intended to do with this proposal: did these repeated requests from the Tongan sovereign reflect the Tongan government's desire to see France - with Germany having refocused its concerns on Samoa - intervene in the event of a British annexation? The two French ministers feared that Shirley Baker, grappling with the High Commission authorities over constitutional reforms under his authority, had conceived of the ratification of the 1855 Convention as a means of thwarting the hegemonic ambitions of his compatriots. Moreover, France, still struggling with the difficulties of establishing a protectorate in Raïatea, was not ready to interfere in the British sphere of influence for the time being. It was held back by the fear of becoming embroiled in an equivocal situation with regard to the other European powers: "*the English consider these islands to be subject to their exclusive influence at present and to fall into their possession one day or another*"[228]. Assured by officers of the Naval Division that cordial ties between the two states would be maintained, King George and Shirley Baker were nevertheless notified in 1886 of the decision by the government of the Republic not to ratify the 1855 convention.

The withdrawal of France, "*the eldest daughter of the Church*", was perceived by the Marist missionaries as a betrayal and provoked in the Catholic community a deep disappointment and a feeling of incomprehension. From their point of view, the existence of a strong community

[224] Tour of the missions, political report by Captain Chateauminois, commander of the *Limier*, August and September 1883. (Memoirs and documents Oceania. New Guinea. Islands of the Sunda. Samoa and Toafa Islands. Volume 3. 1813-1814 -1884) (Diplomatic archives of the Quai d'Orsay).

[225] The rear-admiral, commander-in-chief of the Pacific Naval Division, to the commander of the *Kerguelen*, in the harbour of Callao, 19 February 1884 (Memoirs and documents Oceania. Various islands. Volume 7. 1884-1892) (Diplomatic archives of the Quai d'Orsay).

[226] *idem*.

[227] Mr. President of the Council, Minister of Foreign Affairs to Admiral Peyron, Minister of the Navy, Paris, 9 April 1884 (Memoirs and documents Oceania. Various islands. Volume 7. I 884-1892) (Diplomatic archives of the Quai d' Orsay).

[228] Rear Admiral Marcq de Saint Hilaire, commander in chief, to Admiral Aube, Minister of the Navy and the Colonies, on board the *Duquesne*, Papeete, 7 November 1886 (Memoirs and documents Oceania. Various islands. Volume 7. 1884-1892) (Diplomatic archives of the Quai d'Orsay).

of three thousand Catholics in a population that totalled twenty thousand inhabitants in the 1880s justified some signs of consideration on the part of the motherland. Moreover, their presence, judged derisory by the secular governments of the Republic, nevertheless constituted for the officers of the Navy, who perpetuated the values of the Catholic faith overseas, an element of the greatness of the French nation: "*Yes, Bishop, France is not dead, and she is still that great Catholic nation, because she who enlightened the world knows that it is in Catholicism that the true power of civilisation resides. She will therefore never abandon her children who pursue this holy and eminently humanitarian work*"[229]. But at the time, the national political context did not favour operations for mere prestige. Anti-parliamentarianism, ministerial instability and economic recession, as well as Jules Ferry's colonial policy, which had the effect of creating new disputes with the United Kingdom, the Boulangist crisis and the desire for revenge on Bismarck's Germany, contributed to the relegation of the Tongan question and to the slowdown of overseas activities in general.

3 - A risky initiative towards a French protectorate

After the previous period which was not very favourable to its development, colonial expansion received a new impetus with the formation in 1890 of the Freycinet Ministry, the creation in 1894 of a Ministry of the Colonies independent of Foreign Affairs, and the birth of parliamentary groups attached to the continuation of the colonisation process. Although the efforts of the French government were essentially directed towards West Africa, Egypt and Madagascar, the international stakes raised by the Pacific islands were not neglected. Left out of the agreements signed in 1886 by Germany and the United Kingdom which divided their respective spheres of influence in the Pacific, France was torn between its desire to maintain good relations with its neighbours and the need to secure its positions.

However, while the French government was again considering whether to negotiate with Tonga, the United Kingdom had already secured its supremacy in various parts of the Pacific Islands. Although reluctant to commit forces and resources to an area where its intervention was not sought by the indigenous populations, the United Kingdom was pushed, partly by the fear of another power taking over the archipelagos, and partly by pressure from its Australian and New Zealand colonies. The statute that settled the fate of New Guinea in 1888 was the result of a power grab by the State of Queensland, which had to take possession of the southern part of this archipelago in order to thwart a possible German annexation. The protectorate established in June 1893 in the Solomons, whose population provided Queensland with a labour pool for its sugar cane plantations, was justified by the fear that France would react to the British protectorate established in January and September 1892 over the Gilbert and Ellice archipelagos and to the failure of its policy in the New Hebrides. This last manoeuvre was also a response to the concern to contain Germany’s ambitions. Concerning the status of the New Hebrides, France and the United Kingdom reached an agreement on November 16, 1887 which led to the creation of the Mixed Naval Commission. Having thus demonstrated its goodwill by renouncing its monopoly over this Melanesian archipelago and after long years of negotiations, the French government finally obtained a settlement over the question of the Leeward Islands, to which was subordinated the signing of treaties of friendship with Tonga, Samoa, and Wallis.

[229] T. de Lapelis, commander in chief of the Naval Division of the Pacific Ocean, on board the frigate *La Flore* to Monsignor Elloy, Bishop of Tipasa, Papeete, Tahiti, 21 March 1872. (File of Bishop Elloy, Tonga Diocesan Archives).

Since the departure of Shirley Baker in 1890 and the death of King George three years later, the British, for whom these two men represented a major obstacle in their attempts to extend their influence, intensified their presence. In 1894, while the fate of the Pacific archipelagos continued to be the subject of bitter negotiations between European nations, France undertook, with an enthusiasm which did not fail to surprise after so much hesitation, to set its sights on Tonga which she seemed to consider henceforth as the ideal place for the assertion of her grandeur in the Pacific.

In a letter dated May 18, 1894 and addressed to Casimir Perrier, President of the Council and Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of the Navy referred to the long tradition of friendship between France and Tonga. He gave as proof of this mutual respect the repeated steps taken by the Tongan government since 1881, and the request for a protectorate which had recently been made by Tupou II to the French consul in Sydney. Finally, he urged the President to act with all the more promptness as Tupou II feared a British coup de force. "*While events are precipitating in the Samoan Islands and King Malietoa is powerless to suppress the revolt which has broken out at both ends of Upolu Island, the King of Tonga, foreseeing the forthcoming British and German takeover of the neighbouring archipelago, is convinced that his autonomy will also be threatened. Convinced that he would not be able to escape the protectorate of a European power for long, he was prepared to ask France to intervene in order to avoid falling under English domination*"[230]. Indeed, in a report to his superiors in May 1887, Sir Charles Mitchell, High Commissioner to Fiji, foresaw the imminent establishment of British control over Tonga through an agreement between the United Kingdom, Germany, and France, which had been allocated Tonga, Samoa, and the New Hebrides, respectively.

However, in the same year, on the occasion of the Washington conference attended by the Americans, the British and the Germans, recognition of British supremacy in Tonga was postponed following the Americans' refusal to allow the Germans free rein in Samoa, which the British proposed to cede to them in exchange for a guarantee of non-interference in Tonga. Despite this setback, the United Kingdom continued to pursue its colonial objectives. In 1890, Sir Thurston was delegated by the High Commission to clarify the kingdom's financial situation, which was being undermined by Shirley Baker's ambitions. In 1892, G. de Keroman, the French representative in Wallis, informed the Minister of the Navy and the Colonies of an imminent move by the English. In this context, Tupou II's request for a protectorate could be seen as providential. The Commander-in-Chief of the Naval Division suggested that the French presence in Tonga be strengthened as soon as possible. "*We have always had real sympathies there and our protectorate has never ceased to be desired, as attested by the various approaches made to the government of the Republic by King George and especially those of his grandson and successor. It would certainly be advantageous to follow up this last request by installing a representative in Tonga as we have done in Wallis*"[231]. He set out to demonstrate the strategic advantages of this archipelago, situated on the sea route linking New Caledonia

[230] Ministry of the Colonies, Cabinet of the Minister, Political Bureau, the Minister of the Colonies to the President of the Council, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Paris, May 22, 1894. (Memoirs and documents Oceania. Various Islands. Volume 12. 1892-1895. Samoa and Tonga, 1894-1895). (Diplomatic Archives of the Quai d'Orsay).

[231] Ministry of the Navy, Directorate, General Staff, the Minister of the Navy to the President of the Council, Minister of Foreign Affairs (northern department), Paris, May 18, 1894. (Memoirs and documents Oceania. Various islands. Volume 12. I 892-1895. Samoa and Tonga, 1894-1895). (Diplomatic archives of the Quai d'Orsay).

and the Society Islands, and proposed the establishment there of a naval base for the forces of the Naval Division in the Pacific Ocean.

As for the French representatives in Wallis and the delegate of the Superior Council of the Colonies on mission in the region, Henri Mager, they considered the economic prospects that a commercial outlet in Tonga could provide as of primary importance[232]. Products imported from Marseilles by the *Messageries Maritimes* were to be loaded at Nouméa and then sent to Tonga, which provided "*a clientele of 24,000 inhabitants*". This project, the success of which was conditional on the establishment of a regular steam service between Nouméa, Wallis, Futuna, Tonga, and Tahiti, would have made it possible to compete effectively with New Zealand traffic by diverting Tongan export products from Auckland to Nouméa. However, the implementation of this project would have been a real blow to British and German interests in Tonga, whose economic potential had grown considerably under Shirley Baker's policy. In 1886, thirty trading houses were established in the archipelago, twenty-two of them English, six German, one American, and one Russian. The English had a monopoly on exports, while the Germans controlled the import trade[233].

The concern to reinforce the prestige of France and to work towards the success of the project to establish a French protectorate in Tonga was shared by all the French residents in the region: diplomats, soldiers, merchants, and Catholic missionaries were unanimous in supporting the national initiatives, even in anticipating them. "*The reports of the governor of New Caledonia, those of our representatives in the Wallis Islands, and of the commander of the Naval Division of the Pacific all agree in pointing out the importance of acquiring this archipelago, situated at an equal distance between New Caledonia and Tahiti, on the trade route, the importance of which seemed to increase considerably as a result of the piercing of the American Isthmus*?"[234]. In order to circumvent the administrative delays by the government of the Republic, Henri Mager decided to draft, at his own initiative, a treaty text and to submit it unofficially to the successor of King George, Tupou II. The text was to be transmitted to the King through Father Rennetel, a member of the Marist mission in Sydney, and Father Olier, the superior of the Tonga mission, the latter of whom had a relationship of mutual esteem with the young King[235]. However, it was never submitted to Tupou II for approval. Instead, Henri Mager told the Minister of the Colonies of a fictitious meeting in which Tupou II gave his assent to the project.

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[232] Born in Paris in 1879 and elected to the fourth section (Other Possessions, India, Indian Ocean, Pacific) of the Superior Council of the Colonies in I892, Henri Mager was a fierce supporter of French expansion overseas. However, his radical positions in favour of the development of the local specificities of each colony and his intransigence with regard to senior civil servants who were reluctant to take quick decisions, contributed to his reputation as an undesirable which preceded him everywhere. Convinced of the validity of his patriotic ambitions, he visited the French establishments in Oceania in 1893 and 1894 in order to gather the necessary information for the realisation of his projects. Thus he was informed of the difficulties of King George of Tonga and the hesitations of the French government, which he undertook to overcome in defiance of the most elementary rules of diplomacy.

[233] Note delivered 28 May I894, Tonga or Friendly Archipelago (anonymous). (Memoirs and documents Oceania. Various islands. Volume 12. I892-1895. Samoa and Tonga, I 894-1895) (Diplomatic archives of the Quai d'Orsay).

[234] Ministry of the Colonies, Cabinet of the Minister, Political Bureau, the Minister of the Colonies to the President of the Council, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Paris, May 22, 1894. (Memoirs and documents Oceania. Various islands. Volume 12. 1892-1895. Samoa and Tonga, 1894-1895). (Diplomatic archives of the Quai d'Orsay).

[235] According to LATUKEFU S., *The Tongan Constitution, a Brief History to Celebrate its Centenary*, p.70, King George Tupou II, summoned by the British authorities in Fiji to sign the treaty including a protectorate clause, is said to have been encouraged by Father Olier to hope for the intervention of a French navy ship and the forthcoming signing of a treaty with France.

"*The first question the Reverend Father Olier had to ask King Tubu [Tubou] II was: "Are you bound by a treaty with England or with Germany? "No" was the king's answer. "In that case, will you accept the protectorate of France? Do you want to claim it by signing the draft treaty that is here? The King replied: "Yes, I will accept the French protectorate with all the more pleasure as I would like to preserve my country from English interference. I am very willing to sign the clauses of the protectorate that you present to me. I have one scruple, however, my grandfather asked for the protectorate of France, the French government never replied to him, I would not like to face a similar affront. Finally, as soon as I return from Ha'apai, I will sign*"[236]. It is likely that the delegate of the Superior Council of the Colonies, anxious to encourage French expansion in the region, used this procedure, which was contrary to the customs of diplomacy, in order to put an end to the government's procrastination and to present it as a fait accompli[237]. For his part, the Governor of New Caledonia, animated by the same spirit of national grandeur and disappointed by the failure of negotiations with the United Kingdom over the New Hebrides, offered to place himself at the service of the Minister of the Colonies in order to enter into negotiations with the government of Tonga[238]. "*Can I accept if the King of Tonga asks for the protection of France?*"[239] However, in order to avoid any action contrary to the overall foreign policy of the Republic, the Foreign Minister ascertained from the French ambassadors in London and Berlin that the treaties previously signed by Germany and the United Kingdom with the King of Tonga could not be invoked against the French project. Not only did he receive confirmation that there were no international arrangements recognising special rights for European powers over the archipelago, but Tonga was also outside the spheres of influence of Germany and the United Kingdom as defined in 1886. All these elements considered led one to assume that nothing henceforth should stand in the way of the French project[240].

However, a report dated July 11, 1893 from the French Consul in Sydney to the Minister of Foreign Affairs revealed that despite the 1886 Convention, Tonga had been under the jurisdiction of the British High Commission for the Western Pacific since 1893, whose executive powers had been reinforced by the *Pacific Order in Council* formed in 1877[241]. According to this report, Tonga could not be considered a free field for intervention and the relevant ministries were of the opinion that they should not object to the ambitions of the United Kingdom, which was gradually tightening its diplomatic grip on Tonga without directly threatening its integrity. The ambiguity of British policy in Tonga was due, on the one hand, to the increased powers of the High Commissioner and, on the other, to his refusal to associate

[236] Colony of Diego-Suarez and Dependencies, Delegation, Henri Mager to the Minister of Colonies, Indian Ocean, 15 May 1894 (Memoirs and documents Oceania. Various islands. Volume 12. 1892-1895. Samoa and Tonga, 1894-1895) (Diplomatic archives of the Quai d'Orsay).

[237] Colony of Diego-Suarez and Dependencies, Delegation, Henri Mager to the Minister of Colonies, Indian Ocean, 15 May 1894 (Memoirs and documents Oceania. Various islands. Volume 12. 1892-1895. Samoa and Tonga, 1894-1895) (Diplomatic archives of the Quai d'Orsay).

[238] The Minister of Colonies to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Paris, 18 July 1894. (Memoirs and documents Oceania. Various islands. Volume 12. 1892-1895. Samoa and Tonga, 1894-1895) (Diplomatic archives of the Quai d'Orsay).

[239] *idem.*

[240] Note for the Minister, concerning the Tonga Islands (Memoirs and Documents Oceania. Various islands. Volume 12. 1892-1895. Samoa and Tonga, 1894-1895) (Archives diplomatiques du Quai d'Orsay).

[241] *Pacifie Order in Council* 1893. Report dated 11 July from the French Consul General in Sydney (Memoirs and documents Oceania. Various islands. Volume 12. 1892-1895. Samoa and Tonga, 1894-1895) (Diplomatic archives of the Quai d'Orsay).

himself with the desires of his Australian and New Zealand colonies to expand the Empire by annexing all the self-governing territories in the region. In a circular dated August 31, 1883, the United Kingdom invoked against them the recognition of Tonga's independence by the Great Powers and denounced the danger of violating international law.

Faced with this ambiguous situation, the French Minister of Foreign Affairs proposed to renounce the protectorate over Tonga. This about-face, guided by prudence, was justified by the information communicated by the French consul in Düsseldorf. These reports indicated that, in response to the proposed British annexation of Tonga and Samoa, Germany wished to annex Samoa and compensate the United Kingdom for this loss by granting it exclusive control over Tonga. French intervention would have frustrated both British and German plans.

Thus, once again, the earlier arguments for a protectorate could not be decisive in view of the difficulties that would have arisen if France had continued with its plan. Moreover, acting against German and British policy in the region, France would have had to face opposition from German and British residents in Tonga, who had previously been the source of many obstacles to the recognition of its hegemony in Raïatea. The information provided in July 1894 by Commander Dupuis confirmed the validity of this decision. Charged by the Ministry of the Navy to fly the French flag in Tonga - subject to the agreement of King George II - he revealed the non-existence of any request for a protectorate from the sovereign of this archipelago and thus exposed the scheme devised by the French representatives and authorities established in the region. "*As Father Olier, who is always on very good terms with the young king, told me, he wishes to maintain a government independent of any foreign interference, but would rather lean towards France*"[242].

4 - Tonga, a challenge for French supremacy in the New Hebrides

In fact, the successive procrastinations by the Republic's governments reveal the existence of other priorities, based on safeguarding French influence in Tahiti and then in the New Hebrides, and on reconciling these objectives with maintaining the balance of power between the European states. However, in a final phase of colonial claims, France attempted to take advantage of the Anglo-German rivalry over Tonga and Samoa to gain exclusive control over the New Hebrides despite the agreements that had previously led to the creation of the Mixed Naval Commission[243]. The French were to be given the right to control the islands. "*Samoa would soon be abandoned by the British in favour of the Germans, the British would compensate themselves by occupying Tonga and it would be time to claim possession of the New Hebrides as compensation*"[244]. However, as there was no indication that the United Kingdom was prepared to give up its position in the New Hebrides in exchange for Tonga where French interests were minor, the French government developed a policy of strengthening

[242] French Embassy in the United Kingdom, Political Directorate, P. Geoffroy to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, London, 30 July 1895. (Memoirs and documents Oceania. Various islands. Volume 12. 1892-1895. Samoa and Tonga, 1894-1895) (Diplomatic Archives of the Quai d'Orsay).

[243] The Minister of the Navy to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Paris, 4 February 1896. (New series Volume 28. The Pacific Islands. Foreign Policy. Volume 1. February 1896 to March 1899). (Diplomatic archives of the Quai d'Orsay).

[244] Extract n°48, Captain Lecomte, commander of the aviso carrier the *Scorff*, to the Minister of the Navy, on board the *Scorff*, Nouméa, 20 December 1895. (New series Volume 28. The Pacific Islands. Foreign policy. Volume 1. February 1896 to March 1899). (Diplomatic archives of the Quai d'Orsay).

its presence in Tonga in order, when the time came, to put pressure on the British government and negotiate its monopoly over the New Hebrides.

It was therefore a question of putting in place elements that would have aimed to make France's interests more apparent in Tonga where, apart from the presence of Marist missionaries and the existence of a minority Catholic community, they were only secondary. The idea of negotiating with King George II "*a treaty complementary to the convention of 1855 and similar to the arrangements which England, Germany and the United States have already concluded with this sovereign*" resurfaced. The creation of a French consular agency in Tonga, the establishment of a Wallisian community on land granted by King George II, as well as the deployment of the activities of the Bordeaux trading house which served the New Caledonian trading posts, were in turn envisaged on the advice of the Commander-in-Chief of the Naval Division, supported by the French consuls in Hawaii, Sydney, and Wellington[245]. "*In this way, it would be possible, on the next day when England would like to take possession of Tonga, to accede to this taking possession in return for the abandonment, in our favour, of the New Hebrides on a definitive basis*"[246]. While the draft treaty was being considered by the various ministries, and following a recommendation by the Commander-in-Chief of the Naval Division, the Minister of Foreign Affairs sent a dispatch to the French Consul in Hawaii on January 20, 1898, requesting that he send Maxime de Lambert, Director of Customs and Royal Mail in Tonga, his consular agent's certificate[247]. But the latter refused to take official responsibility for this function. However, he undertook to act as an unofficial agent of the government and kept it regularly informed of political developments in the archipelago and of relations between the sovereign and the British authorities. From 1899 onwards, the French consular agency in Tonga was entered in the register of consulates, but the name of its holder was not included. As a last resort, plans for a branch of the *Ballande* house in Tonga and the establishment of a Wallisian colony were drawn up for presentation to King Tupou II.

They were almost immediately abandoned following the appointment of Sir George O'Brien, successor to Sir John Thurston, Governor of Fiji and High Commissioner in Her Majesty's Government, as British Consul General for Western Oceania. This act was interpreted by the French consul in Sydney as the United Kingdom's desire "*to complete the administrative and judicial centralisation*" in the region[248]. For the captain of the frigate *Lecuve,* and despite the disapproval of Tupou II who tried in vain to make a final appeal to France, British supremacy in Tonga had to be recognised *de facto*[249]. He gave as evidence for an imminent British intervention in Tonga the British plan to install a communication station for the Australian-Canadian cable which was in progress. "*On November 4, accompanied by some of the officers,*

[245] Visit to Honolulu of *Dugay-Trouin* and the Chief of the French Naval Division of the Pacific, Honolulu, 10 October 1897. (New series Volume 28. The Pacific Islands. Foreign Policy. Volume 1. February 1896 to March 1899). (Diplomatic Archives of the Quai d'Orsay).

[246] *idem.*

[247] The name of Maxime de Lambert does not appear in any of the letters consulted in the Marist archives, and apart from the references made to this person in some letters in the diplomatic archives of the Quai d'Orsay, it seems that his trace has been lost.

[248] Sydney, 20 January 1899, French Consulate General in Sydney to Minister of Foreign Affairs. (New series Volume 28. The Pacific Islands. Foreign Policy. Volume 1. February 1896 to March 1899). (Diplomatic Archives of the Quai d'Orsay).

[249] Extract for Foreign Affairs, Captain Lecuve, commander of the *Eure*, to the Minister of the Navy, Noumea harbour, 25 November 1897. (New series Volume 28. The Pacific Islands. Foreign policy. Volume 1. February 1896 to March 1899). (Diplomatic archives of the Quai d'Orsay).

I paid my visit to the King. In the course of our conversation he pressed strongly the fear he felt of his country being annexed by England and added that he hoped France would never allow it. A few days later, the King's father (sic) asked me for an interview, and he emphasised even more strongly than the latter the desire to see France stand in the way of England's supposed plans, insisting on the excellent relations which had always existed between the two countries. I contented myself by replying to both with kind and courteous words, but of no real impact"[250].

From then on, the Tonga archipelago was handed over to the British. In January 1899, King Tupou II, threatened by the Germans who wished to seize the island of Vava'u in return for the old debts contracted by the Tongans towards the *Godeffroy* house, launched a second appeal to the French government. In a letter addressed to the Minister of Colonies on January 10, 1899, Henri Mager proposed that France take advantage of these circumstances to fortify its position in the region: "*I ask you if the time has not come to respond to the call made to France by making it easier for the King of Tonga to conclude a loan enabling him to lose interest in German merchants; the final article of my draft treaty provided precisely for the case where we would be led to render the King a service of this nature, by receiving from him at that time the guarantees necessary for the regular execution of the debt contracted*"[251]. But in April of that year, a British Royal Navy commander was commissioned to settle the question of German claims. The French Consul in Sydney reproached the French government for abandoning the King. "*As regards the support of France, the King could only have asked for it from the missionaries, who were in no position to obtain it for him, and who were doubtless unwilling to compromise their future tranquillity in any way, not being bound to the government of the Republic by any feeling of gratitude, since we give them no assistance either material or moral. The fact is that I have received no communication, even indirectly, on this occasion, and as we have, I believe, no ships of war in these parts, I doubt whether Your Excellency would have been aware of the embarrassment in which the King of Tonga would have found himself*"[252]. In a letter to the Minister for the Colonies on January 10, 1899, the delegate of the Superior Council of the Colonies pressed again for French involvement. While the idea of military intervention was immediately rejected, the government considered diplomatic action. On July 17, 1899, the Minister of Foreign Affairs planned to submit to King Tupou II a supplementary agreement to the 1855 Convention. The implementation of this project was postponed due to rumours of an annexation of Tonga by the United Kingdom. This was the last step taken by the French government before the establishment of the British Protectorate over Tonga on May 18, 1900.

At the instigation of the British, Maxime de Lambert was asked to choose between the position of being a Tongan civil servant and that of an official French consular agent. Shortly afterwards, suspected by the Prime Minister of having conspired to bring about his downfall by relying on his relations with several of the island's great chiefs, he was dismissed from his

[250] Extract for Foreign Affairs, Captain Lecuve, commander of the *Eure*, to the Minister of the Navy, Noumea harbour, 25 November 1897. (New series Volume 28. The Pacific Islands. Foreign policy. Volume 1. February 1896 to March 1899). (Diplomatic archives of the Quai d'Orsay).

[251] Henri Mager to the Minister of the Colonies, Paris, 10 January 1899 (New series Volume 28. The Pacific Islands. Foreign policy. Volume I. February 1896 to March 1899). (Diplomatic archives of the Quai d'Orsay).

[252] Consulate General of France in Sydney to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sydney, 14 April 1899 (New series Volume 29. Oceania. The Pacific Islands. Foreign Policy. Volume II. April 1899 to November 1902) (Archives diplomatiques du Quai d'Orsay).

post. The French consular agency was closed, while responsibility for relations with the Tongan government was passed on to the French consul in Wellington.

5 - Catholic officers in tune with the mission

The ties of friendship between France and Tonga, mentioned on various occasions by senior officials of the governments of the Second Republic, were based essentially on the relations that Catholic missionaries and officers of the Pacific Naval Division had established with the indigenous authorities of the archipelago. In these remote places, these men embodied and propagated the image of a strong and dignified France, concerned with its prestige, a Catholic France. Although the first twenty years - 1840-1860 - of Franco-Tongan contacts were permeated by tensions of varying degrees linked to the establishment of the Catholic mission and to the dynastic conflicts in which the latter had been involved, the Marist fathers and the officers of the Naval Division gradually succeeded in establishing a climate of mutual trust with the sovereign and chiefs of Tonga.

Until 1848, when the Second Republic came to power, the government of the July Monarchy favoured missionary initiatives. Before his departure for Oceania, Bishop Pompallier was received in private audience by King Louis-Philippe, who gave him an envelope of 1,500 francs, while the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Count Louis-Mathieu Molé, wrote letters of recommendation to the French consuls in South America for the bishop. As for the Minister of the Navy, Claude de Rosamel, he encouraged the commander of the South Sea Naval Forces, based in Valparaiso, to support the initiatives of the Catholic mission. As soon as he was installed in Akaroa, Bishop Pompallier received the support of Admiral Lavaud, commander of the French naval base in New Zealand.

In 1841, Lieutenant-Commander Dubouzet, commanding the *Allier*, helped to open a mission in Tonga by interceding on behalf of the priests with the Vava'u chiefs. In November 1843, the corvette *Bucéphale*, which carried on board Bishop of Amata [Douarre] on his way to New Caledonia, made a stopover in Tongatapu which was all the more remarkable as the Marists, left to their own devices for many long months, were the object of a very special consideration on the part of the crew which contributed to enhancing their profile among the population of the island, attentive to the expressions of respect of which their missionaries were the object. But the weakness of the naval forces engaged in the region and the distance separating them from the South American or New Zealand bases contributed to the irregularity of those tours. The visit two years later, in June 1845, of Lieutenant-Commander Bérard, commander of the *Rhin*, and the appearance of the French flag so long awaited by the Marists, brought renewed vigour to the Catholic mission in Tonga[253]. For his part, Bérard took advantage of his stay to deepen his knowledge of the archipelago and to establish a collaboration with Father Chevron to whom he entrusted the task of writing a report on the political and religious institutions of the kingdom and on the connections that the Catholic priests had been able to establish with the population[254].

In general, these visits had a favourable impact on the population and the mission recorded new conversions among the lowest social strata in need of recognition. These visits continued for

[253] Auguste Bérard, born in February 1796 in Montpellier and died in Toulon in 1852, succeeded Admiral Lavaud in June 1842. He was commander of the New Zealand naval station from 1842 to 1846.
[254] Father Chevron to Father Colin, Tongatapu, 17 June 1845 (A.P.M., 397).

some time with varying degrees of regularity, but ceased from 1849 onwards, following the implementation of an anticlerical policy that set the government of the Second Republic against the Papacy. However, following the events of the war at Pea in 1852, the French authorities in the region were led, despite themselves, to re-establish ties with the government of Tonga for which the Marists attributed responsibility to the persecution of Catholics. For Father Calinon, who was received without eagerness by the Governor of Tahiti, the sending of Captain Belland, commander of *La Moselle*, a Protestant hostile to Catholics, was proof of the government's lack of interest in the missions. The intervention in 1855 of Commander Dubouzet, Governor of the French Establishments in Oceania, marked a return to a spirit of collaboration between the Catholic priests and the French authorities. In order to ensure respect for the convention signed in 1855, the ships of the imperial navy were ordered to stay regularly in Tonga. From then on, the officers gave effective support to the priests by making themselves available to receive their grievances, ensure their protection and look after the interests of their neophytes. The many acts perpetrated against the 1855 convention by the chiefs of Tonga led to the interference of the French officers who did not hesitate to threaten those chiefs with deportation. However, Father Chevron noted that these repressive interventions had a negative impact on the development of the mission. "*Commander Lévêque, on board the Cornélie, urged King George to respect the treaty and especially the article concerning privileges. Since the signing of the treaty, many violations of this article and of the treaty have occurred. In two Catholic villages, chiefs have been removed and replaced by Wesleyans while one Catholic was refused office. But we think that the threats from France are only making things worse*"[255]. Following the deportation to New Caledonia of an anti-Catholic chief by Captain Lévêque, commander of the *Cornélie* that was visiting Tonga in October 1861, the chiefs of two Catholic villages on the island were removed by King George and replaced by Wesleyans, while a Catholic was dismissed from his position in the government[256]. Consequently, the Marists decided to adopt a more conciliatory attitude towards the provocations from Protestant chiefs and henceforth refrained from presenting their grievances to the officers of the Naval Division. Moreover, Captain Lévêque confirmed to Father Chevron the reticence of the Governor of Tahiti towards the mission. "*In short, we believe that this visit will have had a good effect on the natives, and on us by teaching us more and more not to rely on the French government for our mission, that we would be better off settling our affairs with the chiefs ourselves. This is a confirmation of the letter of Bishop Degerines who tells us of the hostility of the government towards the bishop of Tahiti and the mission*"[257]. Immediately, they noted the establishment of a greater climate of tolerance towards Catholics and the beginning of a new dialogue between the French Navy and King George. In the long term, this improved relationship led to a rapprochement between the

[255] Father Monnier to Father Jardin, Tongatapu, 6 January 1864 (A.P.M., 397).

[256] Father Monnier to Father Jardin, Tongatapu, 6 January 1864 (A.P.M., 397). Father Castagnier to Father Poupinel at Sydney, Mu'a, 18 December 1866 and 31 January 1867 (A.P.M., 324). "*Captain Lévêque, on board the Cornélie, took prisoner, from Fiji to New Caledonia, a Tongan high chief who was antagonizing Catholicism, the son of one of the highest and perhaps the most capable of the Vava'u chiefs, a man named Tuitoe (tutoe). Since the beginning of Protestantism, he was Malaga, that is to say, a wellknown preacher and a pillar of Wesleyanism; he has just recently been demoted, with a great number of others, because he allowed himself to smoke tobacco*. Father Monnier to the Bishop of Enos, Vava'u, Christmas 1862 (A.P.M., 791). "*The son of our former high judge, Kalisitiane Tutoe, has returned from his trip to New Caledonia. He says that he was treated remarkably well by the French and that he saw the beautiful churches of Sydney, the houses of the nuns. The commander and officers of the French ship were noted for their generous attitude towards Semisi. This is a great service to the mission as his actions are undermining the prejudices of the chiefs*."

[257] Father Chevron to Father Poupinel, Tonga, 11 October 1811 (A.P.M., 1 088).

Marist fathers and the indigenous authority, and consequently to a better integration of Catholics into society[258]. From then on, the main role of the imperial naval officers consisted of carrying out high-profile operations such as representation at the various ceremonies organised by the Marists, King George or the chiefs of the archipelago, receptions on board their ships or even the transport of dignitaries[259].

The advent of the Third Republic in 1870 marked a reversal of the policy towards the Catholic missions, as visits by French naval vessels were suspended until 1880, when they resumed on an annual basis as a result of the revival of France's colonial activities overseas. According to Captain Franguet, commander of the *Montcalm*, this decision to regularly send a warship to the archipelagos in the diocese of Bishop Lamaze reflected the desire of the government of the Republic to pay tribute to the Catholic mission as part of an affirmation of the French presence in these distant places[260]. In this respect, Bishop Lamaze was instructed by Commander Ménard to carefully comply with the concerns of the French government, ruling out any issue that might compromise the peace and good understanding that prevailed in the region between all governments[261]. For his part, Bishop Lamaze assured the Commander-in-Chief of the Naval Division of the neutrality of his missionaries who were to be careful not to interfere in the dispute between Shirley Baker and Reverend Moulton which divided the Protestant community of the archipelago: "*We have nothing to do with this affair, and we are on the best of terms with the local government. This is what has led to a strong movement towards Catholicism among the population (in one year we have had more than 600 conversions) and consequently towards France, our homeland, because here, Lord Admiral, as in all mission countries, Catholicism and France are one and the same*"[262]. Moreover, the threat of British takeover, combined with the unrest fomented by English traders, led King George to request a stronger French presence. The arrival of the French ship *Duchaffault* in 1892, coinciding with the beginning of the festivities celebrating the jubilee of the mission, brought satisfaction to the sovereign who declared himself happy to see the French flag in the harbour of Maofaga. During these few years, and until the establishment of the British protectorate, the visits of French ships multiplied, and their officers made a point of showing the sovereign all the marks of deference due to a recognised monarch.

At this stage of the study, the establishment and subsequent development of the Catholic mission in Tonga needs to be examined within the broader framework of the expansion of Christian missions in Polynesia in order to highlight the specific elements of the Catholic mission in Tonga by comparing it with the situation in neighbouring archipelagos[263]. Indeed, the difficulties that the Marists in Tonga faced also affected the establishment of Catholic missions in most Polynesian archipelagos. These difficulties lay mainly in the rivalry with Protestant missionaries, in the supremacy of Protestant chiefs, and sometimes in the ambiguity

[258] Father Lamaze to Father Décailly, Maofaga, 14 September 1871 (A.P.M., 648).
[259] Cf. the letter from Father Breton to Bishop Lamaze on 14 September 1880, relating the visit of the Commandant Révéillère, as well as the reception organised in honour of the Crown Prince. Book 11, Appendices.
[260] Commander Franguet to Bishop Lamaze, in the harbour of Callao, 14 February 1884, (Tonga Diocesan Archives).
[261] Commander de Corbigny to Bishop Lamaze, Papeete, 20 July 1882 (Tonga Diocesan Archives).
[262] Bishop Lamaze to Commander Franguet, Wallis, 3 March 1886, (Tonga Diocesan Archives).
[263] The main bibliographical references used for the elaboration of this conclusion are: GARRETT J., *To Live among the Stars, Christian Origins in Oceania*; WILTGEN R., *The Founding of the Roman Catholic Church in Oceania, 1825 to 1850*; ANGLEVIEL F., *Wallis and Futuna (1801-1888), Contacts, Evangelisations, Inculturations*.

of French naval interventions which implied an adherence to the national cause on the part of the Marists, whether or not it was reconcilable with their interests.

In most cases, the Catholic missionaries were preceded by Protestant missionaries, who had sometimes been established a quarter of a century earlier. Tahiti was the first place of landing for a group of missionaries from the *London Missionary Society* in 1797. The protection granted to them by the representative of the Pomare dynasty, the great chief of the island of Raïatea, was a determining factor in the success of their evangelical enterprise. The latter's victory in 1815 over the Tahitian chiefs hostile to his power and to Protestantism generated a massive movement of conversions to Protestantism in the Leeward Islands, Moorea and Raïatea. However, the appearance in 1826 of a syncretistic movement called *Mamaia*, whose members proclaimed themselves to be prophets and who questioned the validity of the missionaries' presence, posed a threat to the development of the mission. This context of indigenous religious demands foreshadows the difficulties the Picpus Fathers were to face when they settled in 1836[264]. Unlike Tonga, where the presence of the Marists served the dynastic antagonisms, the Catholic missionaries of Tahiti did not succeed in gaining an audience among the chiefs hostile to Protestantism. Moreover, the French authorities' imposition of a protectorate in September 1842, which was strongly contested by the Anglo-Saxon residents of the archipelago, brought the Catholic mission into disrepute, while the Protestant church appeared to be a refuge against the French authority. In Hawaii, the conditions for the establishment and success of the Protestant mission, represented by the *American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions*, were also linked to the support of the main chiefs of the archipelago and more particularly of Liholiho. This heir of the Kamehameha dynasty had succeeded in establishing his supremacy over the entire kingdom before the arrival of the Protestant missionaries. His conversion in 1822 allowed Protestantism to spread all the more advantageously as the worship of traditional gods had already been called into question following Captain Cook's visits, and then abandoned under the influence of the frequent contacts maintained by the population with the crews of the trading ships that were heading for China. Thus, long before the arrival of the Catholic missionaries and thanks to the development of their settlements in Hawaii and Tahiti, the Protestants managed to establish a network of catechists who were distributed in small groups in a large number of archipelagos of insular Pacific and who prepared, generally with success, the ground for the permanent implantation of Anglo-Saxon missionaries. In 1830, five Tahitian *LMS* catechists were deposited in Samoa, while those who had been placed in the service of the Tu'i Kanokupolu in Tonga were commissioned to introduce Protestantism to Fiji, where their work was strengthened by the support of the chief of the island of Fulaga - Lau Archipelago - who had been converted to Protestantism in Tonga. These *LMS* catechists, who came from Tahiti, then from the Cook Islands and Samoa where training centres were founded in 1839 and 1844 respectively, played a fundamental role in the propagation of Protestantism in Polynesia thanks to their high degree of mobility and their ability to adapt. In the case of New Caledonia, where several Samoan catechists arrived in 1834, the contacts traditionally maintained by the

[264] Jacques Antoine Moerenhout (1796-1879) was born in Belgium when that state was annexed by France. He was appointed US consul in 1835, but was relieved of his duties for supporting Catholic missionaries against their Protestant rivals, which the Tahitian chiefs complained to the US government about. In 1838, following the intervention of French Captain Abel Du Petit-Thouars, commander of the *Venus*, he was appointed French consul in Tahiti.

inhabitants of this archipelago with those of Tonga, Wallis and Fiji contributed to facilitating their establishment in Melanesia.

The designation in 1826 by Pope Pius VIII of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary (Picpus Fathers) to which the evangelisation of the Hawaiian archipelago was entrusted marked the beginning of the 'grand adventure' of the French Catholic missions in Oceania. Given the predominance of the Protestant presence in the region, the Catholic missionaries were faced with three alternatives in their choice of implantation: an establishment in the Polynesian territories where the Protestants themselves had not yet succeeded in establishing themselves, an implantation in the Melanesian archipelagos which suffered from a terrifying reputation due to the hostility of their inhabitants and the difficult climatic and sanitary conditions, and finally a confrontation with the Protestant missionaries in the area of their missions whose development had to be curbed. Depending on the context and to varying degrees, the balance of power between Catholic and Protestant missionaries, between local dynasties or tribes who played off the support of the missions against each other, between the indigenous authorities and the Western nations, and even between the missionaries and their own national representatives, conditioned the stages of development of the missions and states throughout the Pacific, of which Tonga was one of those that best managed to reconcile its interests with the above-mentioned elements.

Preserved from the control of the Protestant missionaries, and following the difficulties faced by the Catholic missionaries in the Hawaiian Islands and Tahiti, the Gambier Islands were considered by the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith as a base for the expansion of Catholicism in Eastern Polynesia. Only two *LMS* catechists, originally from the Austral Islands, had been resident there since 1834. Far from opposing the arrival of the Picpus fathers who landed in 1837, they put their linguistic skills at their service. The support given to the missionaries by Chief Matua, uncle of the great chief of Mangareva, was an important factor in the development of the mission through the recognition he bestowed on it. On the other hand, a confrontation arose between Father Laval, who wanted to establish a native theocracy, and the French government, which firmly expressed its ambition to include the archipelago in its sphere of influence by sending its troops to occupy the terrain. Father Laval was recalled to Tahiti by his bishop in 1871 and the archipelago was annexed in 1881. This example highlights the limits to which the French Catholic missionaries were constrained when faced with the higher interests of the French state. Another example of clashes between Catholic missionaries and the French authorities is given in New Caledonia by the Pouébo affair, which generated a feeling of mistrust, even resentment, between the administrative authorities and the Marists who were reproached for their stance in favour of the indigenous Catholics[265]. In Tonga, where France made a diplomatic commitment by signing the convention of 1855 which eased the antagonism between the mission and King George, the representatives of the French state had to ensure discretion by the Catholic missionaries at a time when new interventions would have been embarrassing because of the attacks on its policy by the United Kingdom in the Society Islands. Thus, they were explicitly encouraged by the

[265] In 1866, Hypolyte, the chief of the village of Pouébo, petitioned the governor of the island to contest the land concessions granted to the settlers. His deportation to the Isle of Pines and his death six months later led to a revolt in which the mission was spared. As a result, the Marists were suspected by the French authorities of having stirred up resentment. From then on, the Catholic missionaries resolutely sided with the tribes and were viewed with suspicion by the representatives of the state. SAUSSOL A., La mission mariste en Nouvelle-Calédonie, *Journal de la Société des Océanistes*, n° 25, 1969, pp.113-124.

officers of the Naval Division of the Pacific Ocean, whose instructions came from the Ministry of the Navy under the cover of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Colonies, to refrain from any involvement in the politico-religious disputes between King George's Prime Minister, Shirley Baker, and the chiefs of the archipelago. In Wallis and Futuna, the interests of the various protagonists were reconciled with relative unanimity, the native monarchs aspiring to distance themselves from the Tongan sphere of influence and requesting a French protectorate which was established in 1887, and the Marist mission thus obtained massive conversions of the population to Catholicism.

Apart from the special cases of the Gambier, Wallis, and Futuna - where Catholicism did not suffer from any competition likely to undermine its monopoly - confrontation was inevitable everywhere else. Its outcome depended on the internal political situation of the archipelagos or on the ambitions of the European states, or even on a combination of these two factors. In all these cases, Catholicism only affected a minority of the population and was unable to catch up with the advance of the Protestant missions.

For example, the Catholic mission in Hawaii has various similarities with that in Tonga. In both cases, the establishment of Catholicism was made possible by the existence of chiefs opposed to the power of the dominant dynasties[266]. Similarly, the recognition of the Catholic mission was enforced by the signing of conventions which endorsed freedom of worship, signed in 1839 in Hawaii and in 1855 in Tonga following the respective interventions of Commanders Laplace and Dubouzet. However, these diplomatic acts did not erase the traces of persecution to which the Catholic communities of these two archipelagos had been subjected in the 1830s in Hawaii, where the priests were forced to leave - they returned in 1836 - and in the 1850s in Tonga, where tensions culminated in the siege of Pea. In these places, the Catholic mission only managed with difficulty to shake off its seditious antecedents and maintained a certain independence from the powers that be.

In Fiji, where they landed in 1844, the Marists found it all the more difficult to establish themselves as the Protestants of the archipelago had received the support of their powerful Tongan neighbours towards whom they maintained traditional relations of allegiance. Catholic missionaries tried unsuccessfully for eleven years to establish themselves in the Lau Archipelago, whose administration had been entrusted in 1853 to the Chief Ma'afu, cousin of King George of Tonga. However, as in Hawaii and Tonga, the dissensions between the chiefs served their purposes by opening up Ovalau and Taveuni islands to them. In welcoming them, the chiefs of these two islands wished to show their opposition to the great chief of Bau Island, Cakobau, who had undertaken to extend his authority thanks to the support of King George, under whose pressure he converted to Protestantism in 1854. In Samoa, on the other hand, and despite the competition between the *LMS* and the Wesleyan Society, the establishment of the Marists was not part of a dynastic conflict. Their presence was requested by Samoan Catholics who had converted in Wallis and wished to strengthen their faith. The mission developed under the protective shadow of Mata'afa, the great chief of Mulinu'u, a village near Apia on the island of Upolu where they maintained their main centre of activity. Mata'afa, who was a Protestant

[266] The Picpus Fathers of Hawaii had received the support of the family of Chief Boki, governor of the island of Oahu, who was opposed to the unification of the kingdom under the aegis of Kamehameha and who had been baptised by the Abbé de Quelen in 1819 on the occasion of the passage of the *Uranie* under the command of Louis de Freycinet.

when the Marists landed in 1845, converted out of gratitude to the Marists who had saved him from drifting off Wallis in 1842.

The process of conversion to Catholicism by chiefs in a Protestant environment seems, by its repetition and beyond the circumstances, to have a transcendent character on their part, which would in fact be a response to the aspirations born of the introduction of Christianity in these archipelagos. For much more than the prestige associated with the presence of missionaries, the material benefits they had little to hope for from the Marists, or the military support promised several times but was hardly effective, the fact that a chief who refused the authority of his Protestant rivals took Catholic missionaries under his protection seems to have been essentially a response to the desire to gain access to their *Mana*[267]. For as the traditional gods seemed to have failed in their functions as protectors and guarantors of the interests of the defeated chiefs, it was appropriate to seize the power of his enemy whose success was attributed to the *Mana* of the missionaries' god, and thus to offer the interested party the means of re-establishing an intangible equilibrium in his relations with his rival. In this respect, the ardour shown by the new converts during verbal contests whose theme was the recognition of the "true God" and the place given to preaching can be considered as manifestations of this new power relationship which explains the integration of Catholic missionaries in environments that were a priori unfavourable to them.

[267] "*According to the writings of Lévi-Strauss, mana is the spiritual power that exists throughout the universe, although it may be concentrated in an individual, a species, a rock, a stone of unusual, particular or suggestive form. Mana represents a development, a vital activity, but at the same time a community, a participation. In the Tongan dictionary, the explanation of mana is particularly complete and worth quoting: "as an adj., 'supernatural, superhuman, miraculous; accompanied by supernatural or apparently supernatural events. Also used in threats, apparently to indicate that one will need supernatural protection against what I am going to do to you: mana pé hena! "as a noun, miracle, supernatural action or event; supernatural power, or influence or circumstances that follow*". CAPELL A., La traduction des termes théologiques dans les langues de l'Océanie, *Journal de la Société des Océanistes*, n° 25, 1969, pp.43-70.

THE CATHOLIC VIEW
OF TONGA'S HISTORY

CHAPTER V

MARISTS: DETACHED OBSERVERS OF CONSTITUTIONAL UPHEAVALS

After the war at Pea, which saw the culmination of the internal political dissensions between the great clans of the archipelago, the phase of unification of the kingdom was implemented under the auspices of King George. With his military victory having put an end to the dynastic confrontation that had lasted for several decades, he was able to take advantage of the power and prestige it conferred on him to restore royal authority as a guarantee of the integrity of the kingdom's sovereignty. At the religious level, the antagonisms that had espoused political causes were reduced with the disappearance of paganism and were henceforth limited to the split between Protestants and Catholics. The proven superiority of the Wesleyan missionaries, which was based on numerical superiority and a highly structured organisation, was gradually offset by the support given to the Catholics by the French navy. From then on, a balance was established between the two communities, which developed independently of each other within their respective churches. This *status quo* was broken in 1885 by the creation of the *Free Church of Tonga*, the result of internal splits in the Protestant mission, the consequences of which were beneficial to the Catholic mission which recorded a growing number of conversions. In the period prior to this event, which caused major divisions within the Protestant community of Tonga, King George worked hard, despite the inertia of the chiefs, to consolidate his sovereignty and to provide his kingdom with constitutional structures that would guarantee the independence of the state from the European powers. From then on, the Catholic missionaries were to focus their attention on the organisation of their community, which involved the proliferation of places of worship and the development of elaborate educational structures. The distance they maintained vis-à-vis the upheavals that were to mark Tongan society from the 1860s until the end of the 19th century enabled them to preserve a certain autonomy. This kept them away from the passion that swept many Protestants, Tongans and Europeans alike, whose actions inspired them to make critical and even hostile remarks.

I - The new monarchy

1 - Marist scepticism about the emancipation of commoners

From the 1850s onwards, the intensification and diversification of trade with Europeans - merchants, planters and representatives of European nations such as naval officers or authorized delegates - as well as the challenges posed by the Catholic opposition to monarchical authority, prompted King George to embark on a constitutional project and to draw up a more elaborate code of laws than that promulgated in 1850. The guidelines of the 1862 code were the result of a long process of reflection through various meetings which allowed the King to clarify his aspirations. During his visit to Australia in 1853, King George witnessed a society whose values were reflected in the Wesleyan missionaries, and saw the incompatibility between the principles of social equality and justice instilled in him by the missionaries and the harsh reality of a pioneer society. He was particularly struck by the poverty of some of them. Poverty, in the sense of human loneliness and the lack of material resources that it engenders, did not exist in Tonga where the community was responsible for its members. Moreover, the intrigues fomented by the Wesleyan missionaries in Tonga to induce Queen

Victoria to establish a British protectorate over the archipelago damaged their credibility as advisors. As a result, King George began to diversify his contacts and enlist the services of less biased specialists[268].

The meeting with Charles St Julian, a legal journalist with the *Sydney Morning Herald*, and the visit to Tonga in 1860 of the Reverend Shirley Waldemar Baker, were crucial to the implementation of the plan to draft a new code of law[269]. In order to achieve his aspirations, the King first had to reform the traditional system of government and then secure treaties with foreign nations, the aim of which was to secure Tonga's independence and enforce the recognition of its sovereignty. In a letter to King George in 1855, Charles St Julian proposed signing political and commercial agreements with the independent government of Hawaii and enclosed a copy of the constitution adopted by that archipelago two years earlier[270]. For his part, the King provided him with a copy of the 1852 code, which he asked to read critically. In response, his interlocutor drew his attention to the need to redefine the role of the chiefs, whose prerogatives seemed to him incompatible with meeting the needs of the majority. Moreover, according to Saint Julian, the laws promulgated in 1850, which recognised the absolute authority of chiefs within the limits of their landholdings, constituted a virtual attack on the sovereignty of the king. In addition, the journalist defines, in a later exchange, the six essential functions - executive, legislative, judicial, military, fiscal, and diplomatic - of a government respectful of the rights of its people. While the executive power was to be vested in the king, assisted by a small cabinet, the legislative functions were to be carried out by a group of men representative of the different categories of society. However, he did not specify the method of selection[271]. Finally, he set out the main principles on which international law was based[272]. King George concluded from these epistolary exchanges with Charles St Julian that he needed above all to demonstrate his ability to govern his people effectively while working for social equity, something to which the Marists were gradually able to bear witness despite their indifference or even prejudice. "*About the king, we are on very good terms with His Majesty, as well as with all the chiefs; we have not had the slightest difficulty with them for a long time. Tupou is perhaps more impatient than we are for your arrival; he probably hopes that His Lordship will bring him his senior officer's uniform, and he would like to have it for their great meeting which they are going to hold at Vava'u in May, and at which there will be people from Samoa, Nioua, Fiji, Tonga, and Ha'apai; it will be the largest meeting yet seen in the*

[268] RUTHERFORD N., *Shirley Baker and the King of Tonga*, p.17.

[269] Journalist for the *Sydney Morning Herald* and then, from 1853, political and commercial commissioner of the independent Pacific states and tribes to King Kamehameha III, Charles St Julian (1819-1874) pursued between 1850 and 1880 the project of founding a federation of Pacific states under the Hawaiian ruler. In this spirit, he drafted a model constitution for the chiefs of Samoa. He was supported in this project by R. C. Wyllie, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Hawaii, and in this capacity came into contact with King George of Tonga, to whom he gave a great deal of advice which contributed to the constitution of a sovereign state. He applied for the post of British consul in Tonga but the Protestant missionaries strongly opposed the appointment of this man, who was a strong supporter of natives' interests and a devout Catholic. As a result, Charles St Julian was appointed Consul General of Hawaii and later Chief Justice of Fiji where he died in 1874.

[270] SAINT-JULIAN C., *Official Report on Central Oceania*, p.65.

[271] *idem*, pp.66-68.

[272] *ibid*, pp.66-68. The theme of the letter dated 15 October 1855 is relations with foreign powers. According to Charles St Julian, a nation with a government capable of maintaining internal order, protecting the interests of its people and promoting its social welfare had a legitimate claim to be an independent nation. The rights of all nations were equal; one state could not interfere in the affairs of another state unless there was mutual consent. But a nation could only retain its sovereignty on condition that it kept its commitments to its people and to other nations.

archipelago. I wish you could be here beforehand, and especially bring us a beautiful Stations of the Cross to decorate our poor church which will not lack visitors"[273].

Thus, the 1862 code, which preserved the spirit of earlier laws tending towards greater social justice, emphasised the duties of the chiefs towards the commoners. The Edict of Emancipation - contained in the 1862 code and proclaimed on June 2 of the same year - marked a first step towards the abolition of the chiefs' privileges. "*In May the great meeting of chiefs was held, a memorable meeting in the history of Tonga's government. It ended on the 14th of May and had decided on what the natives call the great liberty. The Tongans would henceforth be exempt from almost all the old forms of servitude, but would be subject to an annual tax of three piasters payable by every male over the age of 16. Since then, the tax has been increased to 8 piasters, not including the tax on schools and those of the village, land, horses, carriages, dogs, etc.*"[274]. By freeing the people from the yoke of tradition that allowed the chiefs to maintain their hold on the population, King George destroyed the foundation that legitimised their power, demonstrating his eclecticism, i.e. his ability to make the most of outside influences. However, the chiefs did not resign themselves without resistance, and only the prospect of guaranteed revenue managed to weaken their opposition, which continued for three long years[275]. "*Although on January 1, 1863 liberty was proclaimed in Tonga and servitude was legally abolished in exchange for a tax of three piasters per head for all men and youths from the age of 16 years, the poor of Toga are no freer. If, however, they are not less so*", the persistence of certain customs linked to the respect of *Fatongia* - servitude – were being added to the obligation to submit to the law[276]. In the political and social sphere, the 1862 code paved the way for the establishment in 1875 of a parliament in which nobles and commoners had to confront their interests. However, until then, the chiefs of the archipelago met once every two years to readjust the code. "*In the past, the Tongan government persecuted Catholicism, but now they have changed their attitude towards us and are seeking equality between the two religions. In the last meeting of the chiefs of the whole archipelago, which is held every two years to make laws, or to amend or abolish old ones, certain laws were made which are entirely opposed to Wesleyanism: for example, it will be permitted to bathe on Sundays, but not in groups; to travel on foot or on horseback which was permitted only to preachers*"[277]. In this respect, the 1862 code of law was only a first, albeit indispensable, phase in the development of a constitutional monarchy. On the other hand, the economy of the archipelago underwent profound and rapid changes which were the consequences of the introduction of market production, made possible by the emancipation of the commoners. The Edict of Emancipation, which involved the distribution of land and the introduction of a land tax system, changed the status of the chiefs who became land administrators. They had to provide a plot of land to every man over the age of 16. As a price for renting the land, the commoners had to pay their chief the annual sum of two shillings. The chiefs were taxed in the same way as the commoners; the amount of this tax was set at three dollars in the year the law came into force. In return, the king took over their income as well as that of governors, judges and any other person working in any branch of the government administration. Previous laws concerning the duties of

[273] Father Castagnier to Father Poupinel, Vava'u, 14 February 1861 (A.P.M., 1 155).
[274] Box 3. b. 1. Father Castagnier, Histoire de la mission de Vava'u: 1859-1861, handwritten notes, n. p. (Tonga Diocesan Archives).
[275] RUTHERFORD N., *Shirley Baker and the King of Tonga*, p.18.
[276] Box 5. f. 2. Father Guitta, History of Tonga, book III, p.136. (Tonga Diocesan Archives).
[277] Father Guitta to Father Poupinel, Tonga, 31 July 1868 (A.P.M., 1123).

commoners to chiefs were repealed and the population was freed from the obligations of serfdom and servitude[278]. "*These laws, together with the indifference which grips Protestants and even Catholics as a result of the materialistic spirit with which they seem to be possessed, do not show us a very good future. May the Good Lord be blessed* "[279].

2 - A radical work: The constitution of 1875

The 1862 code, which allowed for significant economic and social progress, nevertheless made the administration of internal and external affairs very complex, making it necessary to continue the work of reforming society until its completion.

Internally, King George had to face the discontent of the chiefs. The chiefs, who opposed his reforms with the apathy permitted by the weight of tradition, continued to control the economic and political machinery of the kingdom. On the other hand, the introduction of the tax system and the deductions made by the Wesleyan mission from the commoners' income led to a general population in debt. Referring to the extreme food shortage in Vava'u in 1863, caused by a long period of drought followed by a succession of storms, Father Castagnier deplored the inflated price of food and blamed it on King George's administration – "*the great meeting in Tonga has not contributed just a little to this public misery*"280. In addition to the many taxes and penalties imposed on the population, the government of Tonga was also responsible for the high cost of food[280]. In addition to the many taxes and penalties imposed on products, transactions and daily practices - the making of tapas, Sunday activities and failure to observe government meal times - the King undertook a policy of major works that resulted in expenditure exceeding the revenue from taxation. "*King George has just given us new laws. He has cut off work from his people, he has levied a tax of three piasters per man. The poor man will not get away with this, he spends too much and has too few people*"[281].

The fragility of these political, economic and social innovations was heightened by the uncertainty of succession to the sovereign who, at the age of 62 and on the date of the promulgation of the code, was entering his seventeenth year of reign. "*However, poor George is tried and tested: one son is half-crazed; the second has a bad temper, and the last has just died*"[282]. As a result, the slightest sign of the King's physical decline triggered confusion and rumours among the chiefs who rushed to his bedside to judge his condition and plan for the future. "*The king's illness has stirred up political passions*"[283]. Moreover, relations between the Wesleyan missionaries and King George - already compromised by their intrigues to establish a British protectorate in Tonga - deteriorated as a result of their intransigence at the funeral of Crown Prince Vuna. Having vigorously condemned the traditional rites - the presentation of offerings to the relatives of the deceased and invocations to the deceased that his spirit should not wander among the living - which accompanied the funeral ceremonies, the Wesleyan missionaries were disavowed in 1861 by the reinstatement of this practice[284]. In response, they

[278] All these reforms were contained in Article XXXIV - *the law concerning tribute* - of the 1862 Code of Law.
[279] Father Chevron to Father Poupinel in Sydney. Tonga, 9 October 1862 (A.P.M., 1 092).
[280] Father Castagnier to Father Poupinel in Sydney, Vava'u, 18 April 1863 (A.P.M., 1 061).
[281] Father Chevron to Father Poupinel in Sydney, Tonga, 30 September 1862 (A.P.M., 1 094).
[282] Father Chevron to Father Poupinel in Sydney, Tonga, 24 November 1862 (A.P.M., 1 095).
[283] Father Lamaze to Father Poupinel in Sydney, Maofaga, 18 February 1868 (A.P.M., 1 140).
[284] WOOD H. A., *Overseas Missions of the Australian Methodist Church*, p.124. The divorce law, which allowed an adulterer to remarry after three years, and the payment of taxes, which the Wesleyan missionaries considered

dismissed some thirty preachers, including several chiefs, "*either because they had smoked tobacco, or because they had brought the deceased some pieces of cloth*"[285]. In response to this affront, King George withdrew the support of the aristocracy. "*He declared that he would no longer preach, and that he would no longer allow civil dignitaries to accept religious offices*"[286].

While they rejoiced at the loss of influence of their Wesleyan rivals and hoped that this disgrace would herald a wave of conversions to Catholicism, the Marist missionaries dared not assume that King George would change his mind. Indeed, he returned to preaching in 1864. However, as a result of these repeated differences, relations between the Wesleyan missionaries and King George were irreparably damaged "*to the extent that I heard with my own ears the King himself and the Governor of Tonga say in my presence that hitherto they had looked upon their ministers as gods, but that it would no longer be so*"[287]. These circumstances, coupled with Charles St Julian's advice to secure the services of competent men, led King George to seek from 1861 the assistance of David Jebson Moss, a British merchant who had been in Tonga since 1850. In addition to being the King's personal adviser and private secretary, Moss was given the title Tui Ha'apai. Unlike his successor, he seems to have had little influence on the course of events. Forced to leave the archipelago for health reasons in 1872, he was replaced by Reverend Shirley Waldemar Baker[288]. A major figure in the political, economic and religious life of the kingdom from the 1870s to the 1890s, his destiny was closely linked to that of King George, whose reign he profoundly influenced. "*And now King George has put himself under the tutelage of Mr. Baker, the Prime Minister, by appointing him his Secretary General, which earns him a handsome compensation. And this Mr Baker is none other than the man who two years ago was expelled from Ha'apai for scandalous conduct, but the rascal has got his nerve and he has risen to the pinnacle now, according to the Europeans and the natives, he is the one who governs Tonga (...) he is a real knight of the cloth who seems to be inspired by the devils*"[289].

Shirley Waldemar Baker was born in London in 1836. Whether he was the son of a good family in search of a vocation or a long-distance adventurer, his origins remain a mystery. According to his daughter, he was a member of the Church of England, headmaster of the *Oxford Home Grammar School* and linked by his mother to London's academic and medical community. Attracted to the law, he worked in the office of an eminent jurist before embarking in the 1850s for Australia where he settled with his uncle, *Crown Protector of Aborigines,* in the colony of Victoria[290]. His many detractors, however, presented him in a more modest light. Probably a gold digger and then successively a herdsman, a chemist's boy and a schoolmaster in a small Wesleyan community during his stay in Australia, he acquired a less academic knowledge than he himself suggested. Ordained as a Wesleyan minister on July 13, 1860, he arrived in Tonga the following month. He immediately established connections with King George and helped to

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as a drain on the mission's income, were all objects of disagreement with King George, who thus exhibited his desire to emancipate himself from their authority.

[285] Father Monnier to the Superior of the S.M. in Lyons, Tongatapu, 19 February 1863 (A.P.M., 792).

[286] *idem*.

[287] Father Breton to Father Poupinel in Sydney, Vava'u, 7.10.1863. (A.P.M., 1 031).

[288] LATUKEFU S., *The Tongan Constitution, a Brief History to Celebrate its Centenary*, p.40.

[289] Father Castagnier to Father Poupinel in Lyon, Tongatapu. 28 May 1873 (A.P.M., 332).

[290] BAKER B.S., *Memoirs of the Reverend Dr. Shirley Waldemar Baker, D.M., L.L.D., Missionary and Prime Minister*, pp.1-6.

shape the 1862 code. However, until 1873, when he was appointed Private Secretary to the King, he confined himself mainly to his missionary activities and distinguished himself by setting up a particularly lucrative system of collections. He was an extremely controversial figure because of his ambiguous personality and his actions, which were not in keeping with the standard of the Europeans living in Tonga at the time. He was not very sympathetic to the Marists who presented him as a venal and tyrannical man. "*It is Mister Baka (sic) who is king. Tupou and 'Uga, his son, do not move a foot or a hand without him, - Koe Loto o Misi Bake (sic) - it is the will of Mr Baker*!"[291] This assessment was also shared by all the chiefs who were concerned about his influence on King George and by the majority of Europeans who criticised him for hindering their ambitions and dissociating himself from their interests. "*Mr Baker is called the Bismarck of Tonga even though he is English. The Europeans here hate him, they gang up on him*"[292]. A catalyst for all opposition, he nevertheless retained the full confidence of King George until his deportation to the United Kingdom in 1890, with whom he contributed in no small measure to the completion of the kingdom's constitutional work and the safeguarding of its independence.

Commissioned by the King to draft a constitution to reform the traditional power structures, achieve a market economy, work for social equity, and obtain recognition from the great European powers, Shirley Baker consulted with the Governor of New South Wales on the constitutive laws of that state. Using these texts, supplemented by a copy of the Hawaii constitution, the model for which had been used in the drafting of the 1862 code, he drew up the broad outlines of a draft constitution which he submitted to King George for approval[293]. From March to September 1875, he used the services of a monthly newspaper - *Koe Boobooi* - of which he was the founder and editor, to disseminate the text of the future constitution and to comment on its principles, which he posited in parallel with the teachings of the Bible. The constitution was presented by its author as the foundation of social welfare in the same way that the study of the Bible offered spiritual emancipation[294]. Shirley Baker used real political skills to capitalise on Tongans' attraction and respect for sacred texts so that the terms constitution – *Konisitoutone [Konisitutone]* - and conscience – *Konisienisi [Konisenisi]* - became inseparable in the minds of the common people. "*A system born of centuries of experience to meet the needs of the Anglo-Saxons was imposed in a single day on a handful of Orientals whose innate convictions were totally repugnant to it. The Konisitoutone [Konisitutone] (constitution) became the fetish of the Tongan people. Most did not know what it was, but it had been introduced by the missionaries, and was a thing closely related, they thought, to its foreign companion the Konisienisi [Konisenisi] (conscience) and thereby their country was elevated, in some mysterious way, to the level of one of the great powers. It was only after the rejoicing and the speeches, after the ecstatic sermons of the black-coated missionaries, that the chiefs had time to realise that they had sold their birthright for a sheet of paper, and that their power had disappeared. They were paying dearly for civilisation*"[295].

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[291] Father Lamaze to Father Décailly at St Chamond, Maofaga, 20 October 1876 (A.P.M., 669).

[292] Father Guitta to Father Poupinel in Lyons, Tongatapu, 23 June 1876 (A.P.M., 528).

[293] LATUKEFU S., *The Tongan Constitution, a Brief History to Celebrate its Centenary*, p.41.

[294] *idem*.

[295] BISHOP BLANC, *Chez les Méridionaux du Pacifique*, p.222. Bishop Blanc quotes a certain M.B. Thomson - in fact, he is probably Sir Basil Thomson, sent by the British High Commission authorities in Fiji to restore the government's financial situation after the departure of Shirley Baker - "*a writer unsympathetic to missionaries of any kind*" as he himself put it. Arriving in Tonga in August 1890, Sir Thomson had little regard for the

The constitution adopted by Parliament on November 4, 1875 consisted of 132 articles divided into three main sections relating to the fundamental rights of individuals, the formation of government and its duties, and land administration. The thirty-two articles in the first part referred primarily to the principles of liberty - including freedom of worship, opinion and press - and the equality of individuals, regardless of their nationality. The most important constitutional innovation was that men and women over the age of 21 had the right to vote in the election of their representatives to Parliament. The second section, which consisted of seventy-three articles, organised the division of powers between the executive - the king, his privy council, and the council of ministers, the legislative - a Parliament composed of twenty nobles appointed by the king and twenty representatives of the people, and the judicial - a Supreme Court, circuit courts and police courts. However, the king reserved to him the right to veto any constitutional amendments or additional bills, the power to dissolve the Assembly, and to award or withdraw titles of honour. But he could not remove a nobleman, declare war or sign a treaty without the consent of Parliament. "*King George wished to turn a kingdom of personal and absolute government, or thereabouts, into a constitutional government*"[296]. The governors of Ha'apai, Vava'u Niua Fo'ou and Niua Toputapu and the Chief Justice were appointed by the King. Together with the government ministers, they formed the Privy Council and were not always drawn from the aristocracy.

The Legislative Assembly was composed of the cabinet ministers - the Prime Minister, the Treasurer, the Minister of Land, and the Minister of Police - chosen from among the twenty nobles appointed for life and whose title was hereditary, and twenty representatives elected by the people through a secret ballot for a term of five years. The parliamentary representation of each island grouping was calculated according to its relative population size: nine chiefs and nine elected members for Tongatapu, five chiefs and five elected members for Ha'apai, four chiefs and four elected members for Vava'u, two chiefs and two elected members for Niua Fo'ou and Niua Toputapu. "*In the meantime, there is little talk in high places about anything other than the forthcoming Tongan Parliament. Who can predict what will emerge from it? At the moment they are choosing the MPs. I think there must be about 40 of them. Here in Vava'u, each village has nominated its MP, and as there are thirty-six villages and Vava'u is only supposed to send ten MPs, they are going to put the names in a box and draw lots. (...). It would seem from what I was told in Lifuka, that we do things differently in Tonga. For we get along very well on issues relating to Tonga, and that those who govern us know admirably well what it is to have universal and restricted popular suffrage, and especially how to make it work. In Vava'u, a village of six taxpayers has as many rights as Neiafu where there are over two hundred! This is what our governor wants*"[297].

The third section, which dealt with rights and duties relating to the ownership and use of land - land distribution, leases and inheritance - suffered from many difficulties in application because of the persistence of traditional practices. It was continuously revised from 1880 until 1882, when the *Hereditary Lands Act* was enacted at the initiative of Shirley Baker, which provided for the distribution of hereditary estates and defined the size of communal and agricultural plots allocated to each taxpayer. The aim of this measure was to stimulate long-

constitutional work of King George. However, any attempt to change its content was seen as a profound infringement of Tongan sovereignty, so he settled for drafting an additional code of laws.

[296] Box 5. f. 2. Father Guitta, History of Tonga, book III, p.143. (Tonga Diocesan Archives).

[297] Father Reiter to the Superior of the S.M. in Lyons, Vava'u, 21 April 1891 (A.P.M., 883).

term agricultural production by encouraging the planting of coconut and coffee trees. Until then, the land, which remained the virtual property of the crown, was divided into landed estates, the use of which was hereditary. These estates were distributed, at the initiative of the sovereign, among the twenty nobles appointed to sit in Parliament. The nobles were obliged to allocate plots of land to commoners who wished to work them, but they retained the power to determine the size of the plots, the duration of the lease, and whether or not it should be renewed. The amount of rent, however, was set by the Cabinet. This third part also renewed the restrictions on the leasing of land to Europeans, whose application had to be submitted to the king for approval. A special regime was granted to the Churches who contracted leases for a period of 99 years. However, from 1885 onwards and in order to control the distribution of both Wesleyan and Catholic missions, Shirley Baker had two laws enacted which increased his unpopularity with the pastors and priests. Under these laws, they were forbidden to hold masses and services in villages where the number of worshippers, who could prove paternal and grandfatherly descent, was less than six, while forbidding establishing a residence if less than thirty. Denounced by the Marists as an infringement on the freedom of worship, these laws were abolished after Shirley Baker's deportation in 1890, but were a significant obstacle to the development of the annexed settlements, whose congregations were generally scattered in the surrounding villages.

The establishment of a constitutional monarchy caused a break with the traditional model, both in the degree of centralisation of power and in the limitation of the king's prerogatives in the legislative field. Although he had the right of veto, the king was accountable to Parliament. He could not commit himself to a decision, the political outcome of which was considered to be of major importance for the future of the state, without the agreement of his Privy Council, the Cabinet, and the other members of Parliament. Although the latter was different from the *Fakataha* or the traditional council of chiefs which was a purely advisory body, the fundamental innovation of this institution was the appearance of popular representation. As well as the persistence of traditional practices perpetuated by the many chiefs who had not only been ousted from power because they had not been appointed by the king to constitute the nobility, but also deprived of their social privileges and dispossessed of their lands because of the disappearance of their title, the implementation of the constitution was hampered by a lack of administration. In addition, the main instigator of the laws, Shirley Baker, was forced to leave the political arena because of repeated attacks on him between 1876 and 1879 by chiefs, British residents, and Wesleyan missionaries. He was summoned by the Wesleyan Conference in Sydney for his involvement in the political affairs of the kingdom and left Tonga in 1879, settling in New Zealand. The death of Crown Prince 'Uga on December 18, 1879 in Auckland, where he had gone to receive medical care, provided Shirley Baker with the opportunity to organize his return to the archipelago by taking charge of repatriating the prince's remains. Displeased with the casualness of the British who offered him the services of a merchant ship, he negotiated passage on a German warship and accompanied the funeral procession to Tonga. As a token of his appreciation, King George offered Shirley Baker to succeed Uga as Foreign Minister and Minister of Land. In 1880, he was appointed Prime Minister. By this time, most of the reforms had fallen by the wayside[298].

Over the next ten years, Shirley Baker worked to revise the Constitution, replacing the original text with a large number of amendments that changed the spirit of the 1875 Constitution by

[298] RUTHERFORD N., *Shirley Baker and the King of Tonga*, p.96.

strengthening the powers of the King. In particular, the king was given the power to modify the texts as soon as they were approved by Parliament, whereas previously any amendment had to be submitted three times to the Assembly before being ratified: "*After the constitution was promulgated, a collection of laws and various decrees were drawn up, which had been brought to the various meetings held up to then. Many of these laws were contrary to each other, or had fallen into disuse. A selection was made with the best possible print run, which was printed in Tonga in 1879. A new edition was printed in 1883. New edition in 1890 with English translation*"[299]. These successive changes to the constitutional texts, together with the unrest over the establishment of the *Free Church of Tonga* at Shirley Baker's initiative, led to further protest from chiefs and merchants who, after many attempts, convinced the British High Commission authorities to take steps to remove the Prime Minister from Tonga. Shirley Baker was taken aboard a Royal Navy ship on July 17, 1890[300]. On his departure, Governor Thomson, charged with restoring calm and ending the confusion in the archipelago, proceeded to promulgate a new code of law. The fall of Shirley Baker's government found unanimity among the population who blamed him for the disarray in the face of societal reforms. "*He (King George) took the job of king seriously and intended to do it in a way that was useful to his people. If it had only been up to him, his nation would have found itself in possession of an autonomy as perfect as the unity in which he had fused its most diverse elements; the customs of the past would have been perpetuated, after having sacrificed to the benefits of a new civilization the few features which spoiled them; the Tongan would have remained the man of his country and become the man of his time*"[301].

3 - Symbols for a new monarchy

Although he often tended to favour his own interests - which was the cause of his later troubles - it appears that Shirley Baker was deeply committed to working alongside King George to preserve the sovereignty and independence of the archipelago. As such, he felt it was necessary to reinforce the image of the monarchy with emblems representative of royal authority. "*In 1869, the red Tongan flag was flown for the first time with great solemnity, with a white rectangle and a red cross at the top corner near the flagpole. A royal standard was also devised, lavishly decorated with heraldic figures. A crown was ordered for His Majesty, and the government acquired a state seal bearing the same emblems as the king's standard*"[302]. Agreed to by the King and the chiefs, the flag emblem proposed in 1863 by Shirley Baker reflected the profound impact of Christian teachings. The red background symbolised the blood shed by Christ for man, while the cross was erected in his honour. The 1875 constitution confirmed the choice of this symbolic representation for the Kingdom of Tonga.

After the choice of the flag, the first step in the development of the specific and distinctive signs of the kingdom's sovereignty, the design of a royal seal followed, inspired by the struggle for the advent of Christianity. A crown for the monarchy, three stars, a dove and three swords were distributed around a central cross. The motto "*God and Tonga are my inheritance*" emphasised the alliance between the divine and the secular and reflected the desire to preserve

[299] Box 5. f. 2. Father Guitta, History of Tonga, book Ill, p.153. (Tonga Diocesan Archives).
[300] These events are described in chapter VI. 2. The Protestant challenge.
[301] BISHOP BLANC, *Chez les Méridionaux du Pacifique*, p.216.
[302] BISHOP BLANC, *Chez les Méridionaux du Pacifique*, p.218.

the integrity of the archipelago by asserting monarchical authority through the transmission of its religious, cultural and political patrimony through the ages.

Inspired by the coronation of the Fijian chief Cakobau in 1867, the chiefs in council raised during 1870 the issue of acquiring a crown, which was purchased by Shirley Baker. At the same time, Crown Prince 'Uga drafted the words of a national anthem[303]. To complete this royal display, a throne was carved from the wood of the ancestral tree, symbolising the continuity of the monarchy. Furthermore, this act consecrated the Tu'i Kanokupolu dynasty. "*As the constitution had abolished the old practice of electing the king, on the advice of Mr Baker, Uga, Prime Minister of Tonga, found nothing better to do in 1877 than to cut down the ancient Koka tree at Hihifo under whose shadow, the Tu'i Kanokupolu, sat on the day of his enthronement when the kava was made for him. It was sent to Sydney, and a European throne was made, a piece of furniture that can be seen at Nuku'alofa in the king's residence*"[304].

4 - The break with the traditional principle of royal succession

While King George, supported by his Prime Minister, was preoccupied with consolidating the foundations of the monarchy, the indigenous population - chiefs and commoners alike - missionaries - Wesleyans and Catholics - European residents and British administrators in Fiji were concerned about the sovereign's advanced age and wondered about the modalities of his succession[305]. Indeed, the promulgation of the Edict of Emancipation, the surge in momentum for reform initiated by King George and his Prime Minister, and the example of Samoa torn between rival factions had provoked fears of civil unrest fomented by chiefs frustrated with their lost privileges and contenders preparing themselves for the succession struggle. The direct descendants of the sovereign, those of the Tu'i Tonga, the head of the Tu'i Ha'atakalaua line - Tungi -, and the son of Tu'i Kanokupolu Aleamotu'a - Ma'afu - sent to Fiji in 1853 by King George who had appointed him Governor of the Lau group, had a legitimate claim to power by virtue of his rank in traditional society. "*Peka (Baker) eliminated from the royal succession the famous Ma'afu of Fiji, the legitimate heir in the opinion of all, and replaced him with Uga of Vava'u and his posterity until extinction*"[306].

Indeed, Article 35 of the 1875 Constitution put an end to these uncertainties and made a complete break with the traditional mode of transmission of monarchical authority by introducing the principle of heredity[307]. Henceforth, succession was organised in the following order: the throne was to fall first to the king's eldest son and his descendants, then to his younger brother and his descendants in the event that the eldest died without a successor, and then to his eldest daughter and her descendants in the event that the male branches would become extinct. Finally, the unlikely eventuality of the absence of an heir would offer Ma'afu the opportunity of ascending to the throne. At the time of the enactment of this law, Tevita 'Uga, whose descent was assured by Wellington Gu, was the designated successor to King George.

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[303] RUTHERFORD N., *Shirley Baker and the King a/Tonga*, p.51.

[304] Box 5. f. 2. Father Guitta, History of Tonga, Book Ill, p.148. (Tonga Diocesan Archives).

[305] The date of King George's birth is not known precisely. However, the Marists put it in the year 1800.

[306] Father Lamaze to Father Poupinel in Lyons, Maofaga, 9 February 1876 (A.P.M., 662).

[307] The appearance of new royal titles in the fourteenth century, and then in the eighteenth century, led to an increase in the number of suitors and the creation of an electoral college made up of the chiefs of the main lineages who designated the successors to the titles of Tu'i Tonga, Tu'i Ha'a Takalaua and Tu'i Kanokupolu. Thus, in 1827, "Aleamotua" was designated by Lavaka, Ma'afu and Vaea of the Ha'a Havea branch and Ata and Ve'ehala of the Ha'a Ngatamotua branch.

"*On September 9, 1875, it was on the 17th of that month that Uga, who had for some time left Vava'u to settle in Tonga, was declared Prince at a meeting of the high chiefs. The King said of this in his opening speech to the House that he hoped Ma'afu would not disturb his family arrangements*"[308].

By this means, King George achieved two objectives: to ensure the continuity of the monarchy within his lineage and to remove any rivals from power. "*According to the old practice, Ma'afu of Fiji, the son of King George's predecessor, had the most rights and chances of being elected as his successor, assuming he survived King George. But King George nominated his son Uga, a Vava'u man through his mother, and his legitimate descendants, and only in case of extinction the descendants of Ma'afu. This was quite a revolution*"[309]. This law provoked numerous remarks among Catholics who questioned its legitimacy in terms of tradition and for whom it was a *de facto* usurpation of power from the branch of the Tu'i Tonga which the Marist missionaries had consistently considered the "*true king*" of the archipelago. The title, rank, and dignities of the Tu'i Tonga, who died in 1865, were perpetuated in complex forms that combined the new monarchy with the old. At the time of his death, the council of chiefs had not met to appoint a successor, so his title was to remain permanently vacant. However, the vacancy of a title did not mean the disappearance of its dignity and rank, which King George failed to abolish after the chiefs of Vava'u decided it to be so. In 1875, the representation of the Kauhala'uta branch of the Tu'i Tonga dynasty was entrusted to Chief Kalaniuvalu who was the son of King George's sister. In view of the *Fahu* principle of the elder sister's superiority over other relatives, the sovereign owed her a certain manner of respect[310].

However, the monopoly of the Tu'i Kanokupolu dynasty was strongly contested by Tungi, the grandson of Mulikiha'amea, the last Tu'i Ha'atakalaua who died in 1799. Tungi aspired to the highest offices of government, but could not claim the crown as long as there were descendants of King George. The death in February 1862 of Vuna, King George's eldest son, the death in June 1879 of Tevita 'Uga, his second son, and then the deaths of Ma'afu in 1881 and Gu in 1885, raised Tungi's hopes - "*Great event: Gu died suddenly at ten o'clock in the morning. Yesterday he collected five thousand piasters for the purchase of a ship, he drove around Maofanga, he then enjoyed a very lively lakalaka at night. This morning he had his piasters counted, talked with Baker about business, and died suddenly... Poor young man, he loved us and sometimes said he would be a Catholic*"[311]. However, despite these successive bereavements, King George remained at the head of the kingdom, but not without provoking the discouragement of the chiefs who were impatient for his retirement, a *sine qua non* for the removal of Shirley Baker. "*King George having had the idea of declaring himself, or even actually, of being ill with dysentery; at the beginning of April the chiefs of Vava'u became fearful and afraid, or wished, who knows, that he might die, and hurriedly sent the news of the royal illness to Ha'apai and Tonga. Immediately the Ha'apai chiefs came to Vava'u, hoping to bury King George, and the Tonga chiefs set out to at least take part in the funeral and especially the revelry. But King George, for some reason, did not deign to die, and sent the Ha'apai chiefs home, with orders to tell the Tonga chiefs to return to their homes as well, since he, George*

[308] Box 3.c. Father Castagnier, *Les principaux évènements à Tonga depuis 1858 jusqu'à nos jours (10.04.1882)*, ms, p.36 (Tonga Diocesan Archives).
[309] Box 5. f. 2. Father Guitta, History of Tonga, book III, p.144. (Tonga Diocesan Archives).
[310] MARCUS G.E., *The Nobility and the Chiefly Tradition in the Modern Kingdom of Tonga*, p.38.
[311] Box I. a. Bishop Lamaze, mission diary, 13 December 1879 to 14 August 1885 (Tonga Diocesan Archives).

Tupou, King of Tonga, was no more ill than they were"[312]. Upon his death in 1893, he was succeeded by his great-grandson, while Tungi passed away a few years later in 1900. "*After the death of 'Uga, Gu Wellington, the crown prince, died in March 1885, leaving no legitimate heir. His brother Laifone succeeded him as crown prince, but he too died in 1889 without an heir. Their sister, Fusipola [Fusipala], married to Tu'i Pelehake, nephew of Tu'i Tonga and grandson of King George, died the same year. Queen Salote, the King's wife, also died that year. So that the future successor to King George would be his great-grandson by Fusipola [Fusipala], called Taufa'ahau, a young man of sixteen*"[313].

II - Protestants in turmoil

1 - The Parliament of Mu'a, an instrument of dissent for the chiefs

Since 1862, when the code of laws proclaiming the emancipation of the common people was promulgated, they have witnessed a gradual change in their social status as the establishment of a bureaucracy replaced the traditional prerogatives of chiefs whose powers had been weakened[314]. Each new legislative or constitutional step strengthened this movement despite the resistance of the chiefs to the abolition of *Fatongia* - the exercise of control over the property and work of members of their clans - which had been perpetuated thanks to the absence of demands from the people. Indeed, one of the difficulties in implementing the reforms was that they were instigated by the king, who imposed them on his people in the name of Christian principles and the need to appear in the eyes of the European powers as a modern state. They were thus not the result of a demand from the people whose involvement would have accelerated the movement.

As a result, and to ensure that the reforms were implemented, King George was forced to win over the support and loyalty of the chiefs by granting them financial compensation for the loss of production by commoners. In 1862, after lengthy negotiations led by Tungi who was the spokesman for the protesting chiefs, the king agreed to pay them a fraction of the tax in the form of annuities. However, this measure hardly satisfied them because it created with regard to the sovereign a state of dependence inciting them to obedience. Demonstrations of discontent appeared in various parts of the archipelago where resentment was all the stronger because the reforms were part of a centralising policy. Thus, the chiefs of Niua Fo'ou refused to give the emissaries of King George, who were charged with announcing the promulgation of the new code, the honours that were due to them. "*Niua Fo'ou is about to abandon the lotu of George. Insurrection against King George: refuses (sic) the new law that the Tongan chiefs have drawn up at Nuku'alofa, the chiefs refuse to cook for King George's ambassadors who have come to bring the new law which offends Tongan customs and is like a soldier's suit on a monkey's back*"[315]. This symbolic yet threatening gesture and the thundering revolt from all sides forced King George to make new compromises as communal peace was at stake.

The 1875 constitution, which created a landed aristocracy, helped to quell unrest and preserve the privileged status of the most powerful chiefs - the granting of the title of noble being determined by influence and not by rank - whose cooperation King George secured[316]. From

[312] Father Reiter to the Superior of the S.M. in Lyons, Vava'u, 21 April 1891 (A.P.M., 883).
[313] Box 5. f. 2. Father Guitta, History of Tonga, book III, p.152. (Tonga Diocesan Archives).
[314] MARCUS G.E., *The Nobility and the Chiefly Tradition in the Modern Kingdom of Tonga*, p.11.
[315] Father Castagnier to the Superior of the S.M. in Lyons, Vava'u, 15 December 1862 (A.P.M., 323).
[316] LATUKEFU S., *The Tongan Constitution, a Brief History to Celebrate its Centenary*, p.55.

then on, the land was divided into vast landed estates and distributed between the king and the twenty ennobled chiefs; the latter were responsible for collecting rent from the plots entrusted to the commoners. As for the less powerful chiefs, they were dispossessed of their property and status and then rejoined the condition of their humble cousins, though not without protesting against this process which was not in keeping with traditional values.

Baker's return in 1879, after three years of exile ordered by the Wesleyan Conference in Sydney, added to the protest. His appointment as Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and Minister of Land set off a firestorm. Eager to complete his constitutional work, he began drafting a number of amendments - including *the Act to Regulate Hereditary Land* published in 1882 - aimed at depriving the nobles and chiefs who perpetuated ancestral customs any initiative on the distribution of the land. The creation of ten new titles of nobility to which the communal lands, previously owned by the crown, were allocated, was not enough to satisfy the ambitions of the former chiefs, most of whom were given a parcel of land equivalent in size to that given to the commoners.

The protest movement generated by these constitutional innovations, but also by the financial malpractices of Shirley Baker to which certain chiefs had fallen victim, was organised around the person of Tungi, the chief of Mu'a. Mu'a, the former capital of the kingdom, whose decline had been caused by the rise of Nuku'alofa where King George had established his quarters, was a traditional centre of opposition to the sovereign, the representative of the Tu'i Kanokupolu dynasty. Although he was among the first to be admitted to the new aristocracy, Tungi - the leader of the *Vaka-Tonga* movement which advocated respect for Tongan traditions - had consistently voiced his opposition to the reforms[317]. Moreover, he had personal grievances with Shirley Baker, who had replaced him as Prime Minister and to whom he attributed his ousting from the royal succession. Tungi's relatives, as well as the Mu'a chiefs who had been robbed of their land and indebted to Shirley Baker through multiple loans, formed the basis of the movement[318]. Finally, as Tungi was one of the island's paramount chiefs and as such enjoyed the unconditional support of a large majority of the population, his involvement in the opposition posed a real threat to the sovereignty of King George, whose authority was derived from the family cradle of Ha'apai where his followers gathered. The protesters, who formed an organisation called the 'Parliament of Mu'a', elected Topui, a former Mu'a chief and relative of Tungi, as their leader. Meeting underground, they drafted a petition to remove Shirley Baker, who was denounced for implementing a tax system that was considered coercive. Robert Hanslip, a representative of the British community, also Tungi's personal adviser and supposedly a lawyer, contributed to the drafting of the text, while a New Zealander by the name of Parker, a sheep farmer in 'Eua and a correspondent for the *Fiji Times*, reported on the events. "*Last year in September a number of Tongans frequently met here at Mu'a, the Protestant part,*

[317] RUTHERFORD N., *Shirley Baker and the King of Tonga*, p.80.

[318] These were a few chiefs of lesser rank, members of the Tungi kinship and of Tupouto'a, a high ranking chief whose title was rehabilitated in 1924 by Queen Salote. Since 1862, like most of the inhabitants of the archipelago, they had taken out loans from the German firm Godeffroy or from Baker himself. Stripped of their land, they could not hope to repay their debts with the income from the land and were therefore forced to accept the auction of their property. Others, such as the matapule Tevita Tonga or Tevita Valu, a lesser chief, were robbed of their land by the government who wanted to build a new college. This protest movement was later supported by the supporters of Reverend Moulton, for whom the creation of the *Free Church of Tonga* compromised their acquired status within the Wesleyan structure, and then by European merchants who were competing with the commercial activities of Shirley Baker, who imposed heavy taxes on them. They were also supported by the British vice-consul in Tonga, who was concerned about the Prime Minister's links with the German authorities.

and discussed the laws and constitution of Tonga, the work of Mr Baker. They were supported in this by the English Consul and some Europeans who were enemies of Mr Baker, King George's Prime Minister. The police dissolved these clandestine meetings"[319].

Informed of these gatherings, King George summoned all the Mu'a chiefs to a *Fono* - a traditional council - and demanded that they cease their seditious activities. However, Shirley Baker's response in the press to the attacks formulated against him reignited hostilities, and the chiefs were unanimous in calling for his resignation. During 1881, Shirley Baker did leave Tonga so as not to attend the trial of the petitioners, who were acquitted under section 8 of the constitution, which recognised the freedom of peaceful assembly. Nevertheless, the threat of conviction for sedition hung over the protesters. "*...In spite of this, they continued again. They even did something more serious, they went through certain localities, going during the night into houses, and asked this question either to grown-ups or even to children: do you hate or love Mr Baker? They wanted the following answer: I hate Mr. Baker. They are said to have collected about fifteen thousand names, but it is worth noting that many of those who said, I hate Mr. Baker (Misi Beka) did not understand the significance of the question and even answered half asleep. They even put in the names of children who could not distinguish their right hand from their left and the names of children who were still breastfeeding. When this was done, the list was given to the English Consul with a letter in which the so-called undersigned prayed and begged the Queen of England to have mercy on Tonga, to take her under her protection, that the King was incapable of governing, etc.*"[320] This text, translated by Reverend Moulton who passed it on to the British Vice-Consul in Tonga, was communicated on January 6, 1882 to the Governor of Fiji, Sir Arthur Gordon[321]. "*...the Wesleyan Minister, Mr Moulton, translated the letter into English. All this was known to King George, he first sent for chiefs from Ha'apai and Vava'u to judge all this. Then boats arrived with 400 men to wage war, if necessary. The fourteen instigators of all this had been in prison for a long time. Once their guilt had been judged, King George reserved the right to pronounce the legal sentence. There was talk of hanging some of them, but for the time being they were dispersed to the islands of Ha'apai and Vava'u until further notice. The king was very angry with the Wesleyan minister, etc. Of the fourteen condemned, there is only one bad Catholic who confessed before leaving and four apostates*"[322]. Indeed, on January 11, 1882, King George travelled to Ha'apai where he gathered judges more devoted to his cause, the impartiality of those from Tongatapu being uncertain due to their allegiance to Tungi. Escorted by the Ha'apai police, the judges arrived on January 22nd. On the 30th of the same month, the leaders of the Mu'a Parliament were arrested and imprisoned. On February 11, 1882, King George, fearing the outbreak of civil war, returned with his Ha'apai and Vava'u warriors. When the judges were sent home for failing to bring charges against the accused, King George ordered the prisoners to be hanged. Only the intervention of the British vice-consul allowed the punishment to be postponed[323]. "*May 16, 1882. At Vava'u, the petitioners were threatened with the gallows: the consul objected, but the King resented him and Mr Moulton, the only Wesleyan*

[319] Father Guitta to Father Poupinel in Lyon, Mua, 24 March 1882 (A.P.M., 535).
[320] *idem*.
[321] RUTHERFORD N., *Shirley Baker and the King of Tonga*, p.115.
[322] Father Guitta to Father Poupinel in Lyons, Mua, 24 March 1882 (A.P.M., 535).
[323] RUTHERFORD N., *Shirley Baker and the King of Tonga*, p.115.

minister in Tonga who had translated the famous petition. It was made in Mu'a. Tungi did not sign it, but he is suspected to have done so"[324].

The return of Shirley Baker in April 1882 galvanized the opposition although he had sought to appease the ardour of the protesters by renewing the promise of a regular trial for the Mu'a petitioners, and by ordering the seizure of Crown Prince Wellington Gu's newspaper, *Koe Taimi o Tonga - Tonga Times* - which was stirring up political rivalries. Houma's chief, Vaea, was symbolically convicted of sedition. This warning to all chiefs, coupled with the announcement of reforms to revive the economy, marked a new truce. However, the September 1882 parliamentary session saw many expressions of dissatisfaction with Shirley Baker, who offered his resignation which was refused by King George[325]. "*October 23, 1882: House closed. The King thanks the chiefs, each of whom will keep the lands that have fallen to him and his family forever. Nothing else is published of the deliberations that took place. What a comedy! In fact, the chiefs are not happy; but they let themselves be led by this adventurous minister*"[326].

In order to preserve order in Tongatapu, the second part of the petitioners' trial was held in Ha'apai in September 1883 and in Shirley Baker's absence. Maintaining his willingness to sentence the accused to be hanged, King George was dissuaded by the British High Commissioner to Fiji who said he would hold Shirley Baker personally responsible for their lives. They were sentenced to between two and five years' imprisonment for defaming the king[327]. A further intervention by the British authorities later led to their acquittal.

With the support of King George, Baker was able to overcome the crisis caused by the discontent of the chiefs, but he was now faced with a growing hostility from British residents and members of the Wesleyan Church. The latter were angered by the creation in 1885 of the *Free Church of Tonga* at the initiative of Shirley Baker, who blamed the Wesleyan Church for taking resources from the commoners to finance foreign missions. As for the chiefs, submitted willy-nilly to their fate, they harboured a deep resentment towards the Prime Minister. This accumulation of mutual hatred, shattered illusions and pent-up anger culminated in an organised assassination attempt on Shirley Baker in 1887.

2 – The opposition from British residents

The promulgation of the Edict of Emancipation in 1862 led to an influx of European traders attracted by the prospects of economic development in the archipelago. However, the enthusiasm of the early days was soon followed by disillusionment. Already frustrated by clauses restricting their activities, such as the act of inalienability of the land or the strict control over the importation of wines and spirits, European traders rebelled against the obligation to submit to Tongan legislation and demanded a special regime that they considered more appropriate to their condition[328]. In the face of the government's refusal, some of them abruptly

[324] Box 1. a. Bishop Lamaze, mission diary, 13 December 1879 to 14 August 1885 (Tonga Diocesan Archives).
[325] RUTHERFORD N., *Shirley Baker and the King of Tonga*, p.116.
[326] Box I. a. Monsignor Lamaze, joumal of the mission, 13 December 1879 to 14 August 1885 (Tonga Diocesan Archives).
[327] RUTHERFORD N., *Shirley Baker and the King of Tonga*, p.119.
[328] LATUKEFU S., *The Tongan Constitution, a Brief History to Celebrate its Centenary*, p.39.

defied the laws by refusing to pay their taxes and fines[329]. Presenting the king with a petition signed by the British consul Cocker, in which they expressed their desire to participate in the meetings of the council of chiefs, the Europeans were informed that the foreigners could not join the council. Instead, King George offered to reconsider their case in the event of a formal recognition of Tonga's sovereignty by the United Kingdom, which would allow them to acquire Tongan citizenship[330].

As a result of the injustice they claimed to have suffered, some of them petitioned the Governor of New South Wales to draw a line under the arbitrary authority of the Tonga government. They were encouraged in their demands by the annexation of Fiji in 1875 and rumours of British control over Tonga. On the other hand, the protest was fuelled by Shirley Baker's provocations. The development of the collection system and the conclusion of an exclusive agreement with the *Godeffroy* firm to take over the production of copra for its own benefit undoubtedly threatened the activities of the traders, one of whose main resources came from the export of this product[331]. The measures introduced in the 1880s - aimed at increasing taxation for European residents and tightening the conditions of the year-to-year lease - fuelled their anger and led them to side with the Mu'a petitioners[332].

On his return to Tonga in April 1882, after a visit to New Zealand where he was kept informed by the British High Commissioner in Fiji of developments that were disturbing order in the archipelago, Shirley Baker set about putting an end to the vindictive actions of the European traders by enacting amendments restricting freedom of the press and opinion - *Sedition Act, Act to regulate the printing of newspapers* and the *Libel Act*[333]. Indeed, the protest, which was extended to the entire European community, was growing and organised through the activities of Robert Hanslip, Tungi's personal adviser and publisher of a Tongan newspaper *Niu Vakai* - *Look-out Coconut* - whose articles were highly critical of the Prime Minister's policies. When a petition to the British authorities to remove Shirley Baker from the islands following the enactment of the amendments failed because of Sir Gordon's refusal to interfere in the internal affairs of the kingdom, European residents continued to denounce the violations of the Constitution through the press - *Niu Vakai* in Tonga and *Fiji Times* in Fiji. However, Sir William des Vœux, who succeeded Sir Arthur Gordon as High Commissioner, urged Shirley Baker to repeal the laws. The laws were upheld despite this demand; however, Shirley Baker did not dare to invoke them against Robert Hanslip[334].

Unable to control the activities of European residents, Shirley Baker tightened the legislation, thus increasing its unpopularity. European representation on civil court juries and tax deferrals were abolished. The establishment of the *Free Church of Tonga* in 1885 strengthened the coalition against Shirley Baker, who persisted in his fierce fight against interests he believed, not without reason, to be detrimental to the sovereignty of King George and the integrity of the crown. Reverend Moulton's assertive support for the Mu'a petitioners and his participation in

[329] In 1870, for example, Philip Payne refused to pay for the damage his horse had caused to the owner of a piece of tapa.
[330] RUTHERFORD N., *Shirley Baker and the King of Tonga*, p.53.
[331] RUTHERFORD N., *Shirley Baker and the King of Tonga*, p.35.
[332] LATUKEFU S., *The Tongan Constitution, a Brief History to Celebrate its Centenary*, p.59.
[333] According to the *Sedition Act*, the publisher responsible for statements published in the press that were intended to defame the king or incite revolt was liable to imprisonment for up to twenty-four years. RUTHERFORD N., *Shirley Baker and the King of Tonga*, p.120.
[334] RUTHERFORD N., *Shirley Baker and the King of Tonga*, p.121.

the protest through the press via the publication of the *Local Preacher's Paper* caused a rift between the King and the Wesleyan Church[335]. "*Difficulties of King George and Baker against Moulton, who has the votes of the Wesleyan population, apart from a few officers of the government*"[336]. In consultation with King George, who was anxious to have the Reverend Moulton removed, Shirley Baker presented a long series of complaints to the Sydney Wesleyan Conference about the use of the mission press to support opposition to the government. Moulton was confirmed as president of the Wesleyan Church in Tonga. In 1884, a new petition was made against him. "*King George wrote to Sydney requesting the recall of Mr Moulton. Mr Moulton has gone to Sydney to justify himself; he is protected by the English Consul; and in Tonga, Vava'u and Ha'apai, many chiefs and even those higher-up are for them*"[337].

Thus, the *Free Church of Tonga was* born out of a desire to emancipate itself from a structure with competing interests, and was a new element in the construction of a power structure that, despite the fundamental principles set out in the constitution, combined religious and political authority in a timeless resurgence of the ancestral association between worship and kingship. The first communities were established, at the instigation of Shirley Baker, in the Ha'apai archipelago whose population maintained its loyalty to the king and who undertook a campaign of preaching in favour of the new church. For his part, Shirley Baker drafted two laws aimed at disrupting the Wesleyan mission - *Law of the Six and Law of the Thirty*[338]. These laws were an obvious obstacle to the development of the missions because successive waves of land distribution had disrupted the organisation of traditional village cells, and most commoners had left the village of their ancestors. Moreover, those who were insubordinate and refused to adhere to the new church ran the risk of being banished from their village, having their property confiscated, and suffering numerous mistreatments. Many people joined the king's Church. Dissenters such as Kêlepi 'Otuhouma, chief and magistrate of Eua, Topui, Leka and Tupouto'a, unofficial leaders and spokespersons of the Wesleyans of Hahake, former leaders of the Parliament of Mu'a, as well as four other hereditary chiefs and some notables were dispossessed of their lands, removed from their administrative functions and stripped of their titles[339].

3 - The plot against Shirley Baker

Most of them expressed their opposition to Shirley Baker through this religious confrontation. They thus swelled the ranks of an opposition united in a proposed coup against Shirley Baker. "*Since I last wrote to you in August 1885, events have taken place in Tonga which have caused many to be converted to the true faith. We have been on the verge of a civil war, the origin of which is as follows. Previous letters must have informed you, my most reverend father, that Tonga Wesleyanism (sic) has split into two branches which are enemies of each other. King George, Mr Baker, his Prime Minister, have endeavoured by all means to destroy the Moulton sect. The new sect called the Free Church, the work of Mr. Baker, spreads only by violence. So there was a reaction, the whole Tongan population (natives and whites) has become irritated with Mr Baker, either because of the harassments exerted against the old Wesleyan sect, or*

[335] RUTHERFORD N., *Shirley Baker and the King of Tonga*, p.117.
[336] Father Chevron to Father Poupinel in Lyons, Mua, 30 November 1883 (A.P.M., 483).
[337] Father Reiter to Father Couloignier in Lyons, Fugamisi, Vava'u, 4 January 1884 (A.P.M., 874).
[338] The first decreed the illegality of religious services held in a village with fewer than six inhabitants; the second forbade missionaries - Protestant or Catholic - to establish a residence in a village with fewer than thirty inhabitants who could prove that it was the place of residence of their paternal ancestors.
[339] RUTHERFORD N., *Shirley Baker and the King of Tonga*, p.130.

because of the excessive taxes, duties of entry, exit of goods (10%) etc., etc., which weigh on each other"[340]. In this climate of sedition, some chiefs, not least among whom were Laifone, Crown Prince and Governor of Vava'u, Tu'i Pelehake, Governor of Ha'apai, and Tuku'aho the eldest son of Tungi, planned a palace revolution to expel Shirley Baker. Hahake's warriors, under Tuku'aho's command, were prepared for the assault. However, rumours of the plot reached Tuku'aho's cousin Topu'i [Topui], previously indicted in the trial of the Mu'a petitioners, who suggested a more expedient plan. With the help of four outlaws - kaiva [kaivao?] - he organised an attack on the Prime Minister[341]. "*The young men of Tupou College, without the knowledge of their master, Mr Moulton, had frequent relations with the four Kaiva [Kaivao?] in Nuku'alofa itself; it was decided that after the first day of the year 1887, an attempt would be made to kill Mr Baker. Other young men, Protestants from Mu'a, were also part of the plot, and they were to fire their rifles from time to time in the woods in order to give the impression that the four kaiva [kaivao?] were here when the assassination plot was to be carried out*"[342]. By the end of 1886, weapons and ammunition supplied by Robert Hanslip had been collected. The first two attempts were unsuccessful due to a lack of coordination, and the third was carried out during the night of January 12-13, 1887[343]. "*All of Nuku'alofa were alerted in an instant, everyone rushed to the scene of the crime, people shouted and sounded the lalis in the town; the noise and commotion were indescribable*"[344].

The description of the events differed according to the degree of esteem that the witnesses had for him: edifying for some, a travesty for others. In Father Reiter's account, which presented the events as a ridiculous farce, Shirley Baker appeared to be a poor victim: "*How was it that the two wounded ones fell from the car and found themselves on the ground? I do not know. How did the horse and Mr. Baker get away? I do not know. According to some, Mr. Baker ran for help; according to a more widespread account, which I had in my hands, he fled completely terrified, not knowing to which saint to recommend himself, nor where to find refuge. He arrived home looking so pitiful that he looked like a tired watchdog, fell on a sofa, unable to utter a word, and in such a state of bewilderment that they took him by the head and feet and threw him on his bed where he began to snore. Si non vero trovato (sic). In any case, this is the most likely! When he came to his senses, he asked to put himself under the protection of England and asked the English consul to put the British flag on his house, which was done*"[345]. On January 14, the day after the assassination attempt, King George, fearing a general uprising, sent his envoys to Ha'apai and Vava'u to inform the chiefs of the latest events and to gather his most loyal troops. The Tongatapu chiefs were then summoned and ordered to arm their men. Everyone was summoned to the village of Vaini, the starting point of the search for the culprits[346]. "*Father Reiter returned from a five-day stay in Ha'apai where he witnessed the arrival of the ship that announced the attack on Baker: the warriors prepared themselves, bought rifles, cartridges and powder capsules. In Vava'u, it was the same thing, only there the governor at the lead was saying it was bad luck had Baker been missed*"[347]. However, although

[340] Father Guitta to the Superior of the S.M. in Lyons, Mua, 4 July 1887 (A.P.M., 539).
[341] RUTHERFORD N., *Shirley Baker and the King of Tonga*, pp.139-140.
[342] Father Guitta to the Superior of the S.M. in Lyons, Mua, 4 July 1887 (A.P.M., 539).
[343] *Op. cit*. pp.139-140.
[344] Father Loyer to Father Couloignier in Lyons, Kolovai, Hihifo, 2 February 1887 (A.P.M., 704).
[345] Father Reiter to the parish priest of Boulay, Vava'u on 8 March 1887 (A.P.M., 882).
[346] RUTHERFORD N., *Shirley Baker and the King of Tonga*, p.143.
[347] Father Reiter to Father Hervier in Lyons, Vava'u, 10 February 1887 (A.P.M., 881).

the perpetrators aroused the sympathy of all those who called for such a gesture, the chiefs who were compromised by their hatred for Shirley Baker and yet respected their duty of allegiance to their sovereign dissociated themselves from the seditious action.

Back in his village, Tungi sent Topui after the outlaws who surrendered without any resistance. Meanwhile, the village of Holonga was sacked by the king's warriors and Topui's pigs were slaughtered. Alerted by the women of the village, Topui called for a revolt and tried in vain to obtain the support of Tungi, who summoned him to his home where he had his men arrest him[348]. "*On the same evening, Saturday January 15, there was strong talk of war, the threat came from Nuku'alofa; Topui, Mr Baker's sworn enemy, begged Tungi to accept it... But Tungi refused to take part in the war; he was perfectly right; what misfortunes would have resulted for our district. Besides, Tungi is not a man for war, and if events force him to take part in a war, he will always keep his distance from the bullet. When Topui did not get anything from Tungi, he left in anger; Tuku'aho, Tungi's son, fired at him with a shotgun and missed; Topui was arrested, taken to the king, and then put in prison where he remained until the day he was shot*"[349]. Thus, Tungi handed over Topui and his accomplice, Leka, to the king's soldiers while the other two culprits surrendered for fear of reprisals against their relatives. "*As our four kaiva [kaivao?] were under serious suspicion of having committed the deed, and were in the vicinity of Mu'a, our people were afraid of war or at least of pillage in the search for the fugitives, they asked me to shelter their goods (and) furniture in our houses; here they had nothing to fear. The request was granted, and each one brought to our house everything which could arouse the envy of the pillagers; they kept only the effects which were necessary for them to attend the Sunday services the next day. On Sunday January 16, one of the fugitives, a nephew of Topui, took himself prisoner and was taken to Nuku'alofa. On the 17th, armed men arrived from the western part of the island, sent to search for the kaiva suspected of murder; but Tungi, fearing for the plantations, forbade them to do anything and ordered them to return to their homes, taking charge of the search himself. At eleven o'clock in the morning, our three fugitives, Naisa, Latu, and Palu, their faces smeared like chimney sweeps, but with clean clothes, knowing that it had been decided to take them alive or dead, and, on the other hand, fearing that because of them the plantations would be ravaged, decided to surrender*"[350].

A special court was convened on January 26, 1887. Ten men were accused of bearing arms against His Majesty's Government and sentenced to death. Four others were given light sentences and then acquitted. Several were kept in prison awaiting trial at a later date[351]. "*The trial was opened, Mr Baker, interested in the case, constituted himself judge, which outraged the whites; Mr Watkin, Wesleyan minister of the new sect, was secretary, the jury was composed of Mr Baker's friends, the death sentence was pronounced against six men, Topui, Fehoko his nephew, Aisea Kanoto [Kamoto], Latu and Naisa. Topui, baptised at the age of twelve by Father Piéplu in 1853, later apostatised and did not have the courage to return to the true faith despite his Catholic parents' pleas not to die a Protestant. Moisese [Mosese] Lavuso, baptized as a child by Father Chevron in 1851, was wiser than Topui, who had also become a Protestant a long time before; he converted and was able to appear before God after a good confession. Latu, who had declared himself a catechumen while living in the woods,*

[348] *op. cit*.
[349] Father Guitta to the Superior of the S.M. in Lyons, Mua, 4 July 1887 (A.P.M., 539).
[350] Father Guitta to the Superior of the S.M. in Lyons, Mua, 4 July 1887 (A.P.M., 539).
[351] RUTHERFORD N., *Shirley Baker and the King of Tonga*, p.144.

was baptized unconditionally for having been baptized by the Protestants, and received the name of Michael. At the moment of execution, he made the sign of the cross over himself and was struck by the bullets. It was noted that he was spared more bullets than the others. Naisa, Lavuso and Latu went to their deaths wearing the scapular.... It was on the first of February that this execution took place"[352]. At daybreak, six of the condemned were taken by order of the king to the islet of Malinoa where they were shot immediately. Their four accomplices owed their lives to an intervention by Shirley Baker, who was pressed by the British authorities to have their sentences commuted to banishment. This sentence, whose severity was denounced by many observers, was indeed part of the king's desire to ward off possible further action and prevent a generalized conflict.

The intervention of the British authorities, who had hitherto stayed away from the group of opponents, was triggered by this assassination attempt. Under the judicial powers conferred on him by the *Pacific Order in Council* in 1893, the British High Commissioner to Fiji, Sir Charles Mitchell, was ordered to investigate the circumstances surrounding the attack on Shirley Baker. His investigations uncovered abuses by Baker, who was convicted of violating the constitution, denying freedom of worship, and causing injury to property and persons. However, Sir Charles Mitchell was forced to grant him a further reprieve out of deference to King George, who maintained his confidence in his Prime Minister, and above all out of submission to the blackmail set up by Shirley Baker who threatened to appeal to the German and American authorities if the United Kingdom continued its policy of interference.

Further disputes with the British authorities over the enactment of a law restricting the activities of traders and the writing of defamatory newspaper articles accusing the UK vice-consul of inciting the population to murder marked the end of Shirley Baker's reign. "*Fall of Baker. Governor of Fiji to Tonga to try Baker. All the principal chiefs appeared before the Governor. Each was airing his grievances against the Prime Minister. Reverend Father, a great change is taking place here in the government. Mr Baker, a former Wesleyan minister turned Prime Minister, is being removed from that lucrative position and taken from Tonga. The Governor of Fiji is in Tonga to try Mr Baker. All the principal chiefs have appeared before the Governor to make their complaints against Baker*"[353]. From June 28 to July 5, 1890, the Governor of Fiji, Sir Thurston, convened a meeting of Tongatapu chiefs including Tungi, Tuku'aho and Tu'i Pelehake to determine Shirley Baker's responsibility for the events that had disturbed public order since 1880. As a result of these interviews, he concluded that he was entirely guilty. As a result, Shirley Baker was ordered to leave Tonga on July 17, 1890. Tuku'aho, Tungi's son, succeeded him as Prime Minister. "*In this short stay in Tonga I visited the new api ako beyond the cemetery, admitted Father Loyer to vow of stability, encouraged my sisters and noted the political-religious turmoil in the country. The plot against Baker, the Malinoa massacre of six Tongans, the exile of the Moulton sectarians, the irritation of the whites about rights, the continuous complaints made to the English Consul, the thought that they are coming to take the country, the rumour that the French Admiral will come soon, the disarray of the two sects!!! what a lesson for old King George, but how difficult it is to talk to him about conversion! The*

[352] Father Guitta to the Superior of the S.M. in Lyons, Mua, 4 July 1887 (A.P.M., 539).
[353] Father Guitta to Father Monfat in Lyons, Mu'a, 7 July 1890 (A.P.M., 545).

Baker family lives in the Royal Palace. No matter: Protestantism has lost its religious and political strength, and Catholicism can only win"[354].

The attitudes adopted in these circumstances by the various protagonists evoke those of a time disowned by the spirit of reform but not revoked. The village of Mu'a, a traditional centre of opposition to King George because of the many imprints left by the Tu'i Tonga dynasty and the presence of Tungi, head of the Tu'i Ha'atakalaua dynasty, remained the focus of unrest. The behaviour of the people of Mu'a who rushed to Father Reiter's house when King George's warriors arrived in pursuit of Shirley Baker's murderers, to protect their belongings from looting, was also part of an ancestral reflex which Article 18 of the constitution promulgated in 1875 - in which the government undertook to compensate individuals whose property had been damaged by the civil war - did not succeed in curbing. As in the past, the outcasts took refuge in the sanctuary of Maofaga or on the *Malae* of the Tu'i Tonga, the population sought refuge in the Catholic missionary who enjoyed not only divine protection but also a certain impunity due to the neutrality displayed by the Marists during these events. Moreover, Father Reiter's residence was built on the traditional site of the *Malae*.

Thus, it is apparent from these events that the deep bond between people and the customs of their ancestors continued beyond the reform of traditional structures. While institutions changed under the impulse of an innovative wind, the persistence of behaviour was evident in situations of crisis. The clandestine meetings of Shirley Baker's opponents brought back vivid memories of the old battles between the people of Mu'a and Hahake and those of Nuku'alofa. On the other hand, Tungi's participation in the protest movement and his stance in favour of maintaining Tongan traditions against King George's reforms reawakened ancestral dynastic rivalries between Tu'i Ha'atakalaua and Tu'i Kanokupolu, and justified King George's distrust of Tongatapu chiefs, judges and warriors, of whom Tungi was traditionally the paramount chief. The divisions within the army also stemmed from ancestral rivalries between village communities under antagonistic chiefs[355]. Thus, officers from the western part of Mu'a refused the authority of officers from the eastern district of Hihifo. In order to restore order, King George had to call upon the warriors of Ha'apai and Vava'u, on whose loyalty he could rely as the supreme chief of these two archipelagos. Moreover, on this occasion, Tungi's troops did not join those of the king.

[354] Box I. a. 3. Bishop Lamaze, diary of the vicariate, 25 March 1887 to 27 January 1895, 12 April 1887 (Tonga Diocesan Archives).

[355] The army consisted of an artillery corps and a royal guard. The recruitment of soldiers was voluntary; however, the government drew lots to constitute the king's personal guard, as the number of volunteers was insufficient. The kingdom was now divided into demographic districts and the government set a quota for each district, proportional to the number of inhabitants. An enlistment in the army lasted for seven years. In 1883, King George's personal guard consisted of twenty warriors. KELLY J., *The South Sea Islands: Possibilities of Trade with New Zealand*, p.11. In the event of war, all men were to assemble at the call of the government to form the militia. "*April 1875. In the course of April and indeed throughout that year, akotau or military exercises were raging in Tonga, takapa or drumming was especially in vogue. On the 5th of that month (April) the hau eiki tua [sic] of Mu'a came to Hihifo to eat the food of those who had missed the drill*." Box 3. c. Father Castagnier, *Les principaux événements à Tonga depuis 1858 jusqu'à nos jours (10.04.1882)*, ms, 180 p. (Tonga Diocesan Archives).

CHAPTER VI

THE ECONOMIC CHALLENGES OF THE NEW SOCIETY

I - The break with the traditional model

The promulgation of the Edict of Emancipation in 1862, which allowed commoners to gain private ownership of their tools and to benefit more fully from the fruits of their labour, brought about a slow and profound change in economic and social relations within a Tongan society whose traditional structures could not withstand the pressures of a market economy stimulated by land reform and the introduction of money. This change in trade also had various implications for the life of the Catholic mission. The Marists, who had managed, despite their limited economic potential, to adapt their mode of operation to the traditional system of trading locally produced goods, were faced with the need to find new sources of income in order to procure an increasing number of imported goods, and to integrate themselves into the new economic circuits organised by the European merchants.

In addition to the establishment of a constitutional system, King George believed that a prerequisite for the recognition of Tongan sovereignty and the maintenance of the kingdom's independence was improvement in the standard of living of the entire population through the development of the archipelago's agricultural and commercial potential. However, a dynamic economy presupposed a motivated and abundant labour force, free to benefit from the fruits of their labour. Thus, it was necessary first to limit the land prerogatives of the chiefs whose rank, status and power depended on the number of 'households' over which they exercised their authority and who kept the economy in a closed network from which they alone benefited[356]. This system hindered dynamic production and development of the land because the commoners, deprived of the enjoyment of the fruits of their labour, abandoned themselves to the benevolence and whims of mother nature, which irregularly provided for everyone's needs. King George's reforms were also enthusiastically supported by the Wesleyan missionaries for whom work should allow anyone to gain his salvation.

1 - A policy of centralised land ownership

The proclamation of the Edict of Emancipation in 1862 gave everyone access to ownership of the means of production. It was a first step towards the abolition of the corvée - *fatongia* - by which the chiefs obtained the commoners' total availability and appropriated the wealth of the archipelago. In theory, the chiefs were now obliged to distribute the land among the various households over which they exercised authority, while the government guaranteed the rights of the occupant on condition that he paid an annual rent of two shillings[357]. However, the law did not impose any method of calculating the size of the plots, which was left to the chiefs who thereby perpetuated a relationship of dependence with the commoners. The king merely suggested that it should be proportional to the size of the family. On the other hand, the establishment of a system of leases led to a shift from self-sufficient farming to a more market-

[356] SAINT-JULIAN C., *Official Report on Central Oceania*, p.25.
[357] RUTHERFORD N., *Shirley Baker and the King of Tonga*, p.98.

oriented culture and gave a real boost to the agricultural economy of the archipelago by encouraging commoners to produce in order to pay their rent[358].

The 1875 constitution reiterated many of the provisions of the 1862 code relating to private property and the abolition of serfdom, and also completed the policy of redistributing individual land prerogatives. The creation of a landed aristocracy and the division of the kingdom into hereditary domains gradually altered the economic weight of the chiefs, some of whom, dispossessed of their land after the king's decision to create a restricted aristocracy composed of only a dozen nobles, lost all their privileges[359]. The new royal administration had the function of establishing the boundaries between the hereditary domains of the nobility and the government lands, controlling the distribution of housing areas and public settlements, and drawing up a road plan. However, the chiefs were not yet subject to the obligation to renew leases, and their power to allocate land ensured that the privileges of this small class were maintained and their demands for status and income were met[360]. It was not until the enactment of the *Hereditary Act of Land* in 1882 that there was a real break with the traditional system perpetuated through the land monopoly of the nobility. This act endorsed the constitutional amendments of 1880, by which each taxpayer was allocated a piece of land in the village - *'api kolo* - and an agricultural piece of land - *'api 'uta*. The size of the plots in Tongatapu was henceforth fixed at 100 x 100 *fathoms* in the larger part of Tongatapu and all the islands of Vava'u, and at 50 x 50 in Ha'apai and Hihifo (Tongatapu). In addition to the rental income, the nobles received an annual salary, the amount of which was determined by the ministerial cabinet and paid by the government[361].

King George's concern for the optimal distribution and utilisation of the land was accompanied by a desire to preserve its sovereignty. By developing the archipelago's agricultural production, he avoided the risk of the land being invaded by '*adventurers*' and '*needy people*' whose presence could have been a prelude to interference by European states[362]. However, as early as 1862, King George, who noted the growing presence of European merchants and farmers, prohibited the sale of land to foreign nationals. His intention was to counter possible economic and political pressure from Europeans interested in the economic development of the archipelago - as he had observed in Samoa - and to limit the arrival of Asian labourers who were flocking to Fiji. In this respect, Marists were in fact witnessing an increasingly assertive British presence, and were showing a certain scepticism with regard to the respect for the sovereignty of King George. "*It is not yet possible to buy land in Tonga, but it will come, for the English are still invading us; the government will soon be in their hands*"[363]. As for the law that made any application for land leasing by a non-native subject to the approval of members of the Cabinet, it was intended not only to control European settlements, but also to prevent any ill-considered initiative on the part of the chiefs. Moreover, from 1882 onwards, no more land could be leased to a European until all the commoners themselves were in possession of

[358] *idem*, p.20.

[359] According to Article 111 of the constitution, the nobles had to enter into a 99-year lease, renewable for 99 years. The lease of the land was symbolically fixed at one dollar per year, regardless of the size of the estate. In the event that the nobleman had no legitimate heir, the land reverted to the government (Article 127) and its administration was entrusted to nobles appointed by the king.

[360] Leases were taken out for a term of 21, 50 or 99 years (Article 128).

[361] RUTHERFORD N., *Shirley Baker and the King of Tonga*, p.99. 1 fathom = 1.829 metres.

[362] SAINT-JULIAN C., *Official Report on Central Oceania*, letter of 26 June 1855 included in the report.

[363] Bishop Olier to Father Régis in Lyons, Tongatapu, 23 August 1907 (A.P.M., 185).

their two legal plots. The size of the land available to a European was also defined by law[364]. The churches, on the other hand, enjoyed a privileged regime similar to that of the estates of the royal family and the nobility, being granted leases renewable every 99 years. However, the 1875 constitution provided for the control of the expansion of the different religions. The allocation of land to a schoolmaster - whether Protestant or Catholic - required the support of a minimum of twenty people, men and women alike, over the age of 16, and thirty pupils whose attendance had to be regular (Article 116). This law was amended in 1885 by the *Law of the Six* and *Law of the Thirty*[365].

2 – Short-lived successes

Agricultural production, strongly encouraged by the new provisions concerning land use and the introduction of private property, gave rise to an economic boom which manifested itself from the 1880s onwards in a trade surplus. The demand from European traders was such that commoners were encouraged to produce, as they were assured of selling their products and receiving the benefits of their labour. However, with this market-based production system, crop diversification became necessary because the production of copra oil, the archipelago's major resource, was too dependent on the vagaries of the weather.

Among the various recommendations made to King George, Charles St Julian advocated the development of cotton, sugar cane, coffee, tobacco and silk as early as 1855[366]. But most of these activities were short-lived. Cotton was quickly abandoned because of the high cost of production and the poor quality of the product. However, it had its heyday during the American Civil War[367]. In 1873, a government sugar cane plantation project was initiated by Baker, then private secretary to the king, who invested public funds in it, while his position as director guaranteed him a comfortable income. Baker was forced to limit his commercial ambitions when Reverend Moulton exposed the terms of the agreement between the King and Baker at the Wesleyan Conference in Sydney. As a token of goodwill, he had a shipment of groundnuts delivered in April 1875 for the land administration to distribute among the interested farmers, but the venture did not gain much support[368].

Between 1875 and 1880, constitutional amendments made polyculture compulsory[369]. Every man over the age of sixteen was required to plant one hundred coffee trees and two hundred cotton trees. Only the Prime Minister had the power to exempt the taxpayer from this obligation when the composition of the soil was not suitable for coffee cultivation. An officer appointed by the ministry in charge was responsible for inspecting the plantations. These measures relating to polyculture did not produce the expected results, as the farmers preferred to pay the fine of twenty-five dollars rather than undertake this demanding work which was not in keeping with the Polynesian spirit[370]. However, the importation of Samoan labour enabled the German firm *Deutsche Plantagen und Inseln zu Hamburg* to develop various agricultural activities. In 1882, this firm exported thirty tonnes of cotton and fifty tonnes of coffee to Germany and

[364] The 1875 constitution allowed for the leasing to Europeans of up to one thousand acres of agricultural land and five acres of communal land.
[365] Cf. chapter VI.2.1. Opposition from British merchants.
[366] SAINT-JULIAN C., *Official Report on Central Oceania*, paragraph 127 of the report.
[367] *idem*, p.129.
[368] RUTHERFORD N., *Shirley Baker and the King of Tonga*, p.54.
[369] LATUKEFU S., *The Tongan Constitution, a Brief History to Celebrate its Centenary*, p.58.
[370] KELLY J., *The South Sea Islands: Possibilities of Trade with New Zealand*, p.20.

smaller quantities to Sydney; it planned to produce four hundred tonnes of cotton in 1884. The English planters, for their part, sought new activities whose exploitation would enable them to compete with their German counterparts. In October 1885, the British Consul in Tonga drew their attention to the possibilities of *candle-nut* oil (*Aleurites Triloba*) production, which was estimated to be two hundred tons per year. However, this project does not appear to have been successful[371]. British, New Zealand and Australian trade attempts thus remained focused on copra exports. In the early 1860s, the activities of Anglo-Saxon traders were essentially based on the purchase of oil produced by the villagers who were forced to collect income to pay their taxes and debts. However, from 1869 onwards, this activity was abandoned because of the poor quality of the oil and the difficulties of transporting it for storage and packaging. Moreover, as the work of harvesting copra was less demanding than that of making oil, the farmers preferred to sell their production to the German firm. As a result, many Anglo-Saxon traders, forced into bankruptcy, became agents of the *Godeffroy* company. As such, they received a commission on the amount of copra collected, but this arrangement was compromised by the introduction, on the initiative of Shirley Baker, of a system of cash advances which guaranteed him a monopoly on the exchange. In fact, the latter recorded each farmer's promise of annual harvest in a register, who obtained an advance on the income from his production in exchange, and then negotiated the local production with *Godeffroy* who was exempted from commission fees. The situation of the Anglo-Saxon merchants worsened when, in 1872, the Germans reduced their purchase price for copra by 25%, thus eliminating the last competitors[372]. However, after the bankruptcy of the *Godeffroy* firm, the New Zealanders took over the market.

Within their respective spheres of influence, Protestant and Catholic missionaries contributed to the diversification of the agricultural landscape of the archipelago. However, the market garden and fruit crops they developed only allowed limited yields due to the difficulties of reproduction and adaptation of seeds imported from Europe[373]. As for yams, sweet potatoes, arrowroots and breadfruit, they were reserved for local consumption and did not constitute export products. As a result, the coconut tree remained the main agricultural resource of the archipelago and each farmer was obliged to cultivate a minimum of two hundred coconut trees whose productivity was closely monitored.

Overall, Shirley Baker's policy of economic development led to a real increase in productivity, as the volume of exports rose by 48% between 1871 and 1884[374]. In 1883, copra was still the most important crop in terms of volume and value, while other crops - mushrooms, citrus, coffee, and wool - accounted for little more than 1% of the total. These marginal crops, which were less profitable than copra but required constant care, were gradually abandoned. However, wool production continued for some years. Introduced to the island of Eua by New Zealand breeders, the sheep formed a stock of 40,000 heads in 1842. The wool was exported to Auckland and the sheep were reserved for local consumption. However, following a dispute with King George over cattle theft, the Parker brothers, who owned the farm, threw the animals into the sea. Considering the lack of profitability of cotton, coffee, mushrooms, wool and fruit production, the English consul Symonds drew the attention of British traders to the possibilities

[371] *idem.* p.12.
[372] RUTHERFORD N., *Shirley Baker and the King of Tonga*, p.36.
[373] The export of citrus fruits and pineapples was secondary, representing for the year 1883 the equivalent of 1000 pounds sterling.
[374] KELLY J., *The South Sea Islands: Possibilities of Trade with New Zealand, Table V, Increase of Island Trade since 1871*, p.67.

offered by whaling. In 1884, an Englishman obtained permission to establish a whaling station at Ha'apai. But this new venture did not prosper any more than the previous ones. In addition, the customs duties imposed by the New Zealand and Australian administrations on the import of island products hampered the development of these crops, which were less profitable than copra[375].

In conclusion, the transition to a market economy led to a general rise in the standard of living among the native population, whose income allowed them to purchase manufactured goods in Europe. Anglo-Saxon imports were more sought after, offering a better price/quality ratio than German products[376]. Cotton and other fabrics came mainly from the UK, Australia, New Zealand and to a lesser extent Germany. A decision by the council of chiefs in 1871 to require the population to dress in European fashion led to an increased demand for these items. Flour and biscuits - consumption of which increased between March and August due to a seasonal decline in local food production - were imported, as were potatoes, onions and other vegetables from Adelaide and San Francisco where production costs were lower. Hardware and ironwork were imported from the UK and Germany. Lumber was mainly imported from California. Canned meat and fruit was a long-time New Zealand export monopoly. Boats, light dinghies and large vessels were imported by Anglo-Saxon residents in Tonga. All these imports, valued in 1871 at £64,000, amounted in 1884 to £105,000, an increase of nearly 65%. However, as exports could not reach such a volume, the archipelago's trade balance was, at the end of the century, largely in deficit[377]. Moreover, the growing indebtedness of families, as well as the many political difficulties that arose from 1885 onwards, marked the end of the kingdom's economic prosperity. In 1900, the total volume of trade amounted to £145,005, of which £74,094 were imports compared to £105,000 in 1884, and £70,911 were exports compared to £200,000 in 1884[378]. Thus, the volume of trade in 1900 was half that of 1884. This phenomenon can be explained both by the slowdown in production and by a fall in the consumption of imported products.

3 - Taxation

The emancipation of commoners and artisans in 1862 was accompanied by the introduction of a tax system based on the collection of a direct tax, the amount of which was calculated on the income of individuals, and an indirect tax consisting of fines and customs duties. In a letter to King George in October 1855, Charles St Julian recommended the introduction of a tax system to ensure harmonious economic development. He advised the payment of taxes in money rather than in kind, considering on the one hand that "*a revenue in cash can be easily collected, easily secured and easily dealt with*"[379], and on the other hand that taxation of labour power was not

[375] KELLY J., *The South Sea Islands: Possibilities of Trade with New Zealand, Table V, lncrease of Island Trade since 1871*, p.17.
[376] *Foreign Office Annual Series 1886, No. 25. Diplomatic and Consular Reports on Trade and Finance. Pacifie Islands. Report for the Year 1884 on the Trade of Tonga. Printed by Harrisons and Sons. 8 p. 1886. Vice-Consul Symonds to Consul-General Thurston, 30 October 1885*. In 1884, total imports amounted to 105,000 pounds and were divided between: cotton and other fabrics (£60,000), flour and biscuits (£26,000), hardware (£2,000), timber (£1,000), salt and preserved meats (£8700), salt fish (£1,700), soap (£2,800), butter, cheese, potatoes and other foodstuffs (£1,500), sugar, tea and tobacco (£300) and miscellaneous (£1,000).
[377] KELLY J., *The South Sea Islands: Possibilities of Trade with New Zealand, Table VII, principal imports to the islands in 1884*, p.65.
[378] Details of imports in 1884: New South Wales: £35070, New Zealand: £34804, and miscellaneous origin: £4220. Details of exports in 1900: New South Wales: £22280, New Zealand: £13295, and others country: £35336.
[379] SAINT-JULIAN C., *Official Report on Central Oceania*, letter of 15 October 1855 included in the report.

very profitable when payment was made in kind. Furthermore, Charles St Julian warned the sovereign against the dangers of excessive taxation, the introduction of which would have risked hindering the economic development of the archipelago. Finally, he advocated the adoption of a land tax based on productivity[380].

Following an initial tax assessment in 1862, the government set the annual tax at three dollars for all males over sixteen years of age[381]. In 1875, it was seven dollars. When in 1880 the administration of communal lands failed to meet the revenues to be claimed by the nobles, the tax previously levied on these lands was commuted to rent, while the government compensated for this loss by increasing the land tax[382]. "*1862: abolition of the old corvées, royalties and subjection to the chiefs. At first there was only a tax of four piasters or better 20 gallons of coconut oil. But at each meeting, the tax was increased, and in 1890, it was established that each taxpayer would pay 12 piasters, on the personal side, and with the others he pays 15 piasters*"[383].

In addition to the direct levy, Shirley Baker introduced a drastic system of fines to increase the revenue of the state, which was heavily indebted due to numerous major works. Thus, the slightest infraction was heavily penalised. "*Law enacted in 1867: a Catholic was condemned to pay 10 piasters (50 francs) for having carried a hen in his boat on a Sunday*"[384]. The prohibitions on dancing, smoking, wrestling, making tapa or wearing traditional fabrics were among the most lucrative because the number of repeat offences was high due to their customary nature. Europeans were not spared from this frantic quest for state funds. Trade and imported goods were heavily taxed. In 1880, a wholesale merchant, established in town, had to pay an annual fee of seventy dollars (fourteen pounds) compared to fifty dollars in the countryside; for a retail merchant the annual fee was twenty-five dollars (five pounds) in the town and twenty dollars in the countryside. The licence to sell wine and liquor, which was reserved exclusively for Europeans, was set at one hundred dollars (twenty pounds), the licence to own a billiard table at thirty dollars (six pounds), a buggy at five dollars, a horse at one dollar, a *cart* at one dollar, and a dog at twenty-five cents[385]. Shirley Baker thus temporarily succeeded in restoring the solvency of the government, which from 1889 onwards was confronted with the fall in the price of copra, leading to indebtedness among farmers and discontent among civil servants whose salaries were no longer guaranteed[386]. As for the Europeans, they gradually left the kingdom, discouraged by the intransigence of Shirley Baker who imposed heavy taxes on their activities[387]. The intervention of the British authorities, who

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[380] RUTHERFORD N., *Shirley Baker and the King of Tonga*, p.19.

[381] SAINT-JULIAN C., *Official Report on Central Oceania*, letter of 15 October 1855 included in the report.

[382] RUTHERFORD N., *Shirley Baker and the King of Tonga*, p.97.

[383] Box 5.f.2. Father Guitta, History of Tonga, Book III, p.152. (Tonga Diocesan Archives). Between 1879 and 1881, the volume of taxes collected increased by 120% (£5888 in 1879 to £13,000 in 1881). This increase in state revenue was the result not only of an increase in taxation, but also of the introduction of a more efficient method of collection. RUTHERFORD N., *Shirley Baker and the King of Tonga*, p.98.

[384] *idem.*

[385] KELLY J., *The South Sea Islands: Possibilities of Trade with New Zealand, Table VII, principal imports to the islands in 1884*, p.15.

[386] RUTHERFORD N., *Shirley Baker and the King of Tonga*, p.165.

[387] For example, the 1885 improvement in port structures, with the construction of a wharf and unloading ramps, resulted in a 2.5% increase in the already high customs duties. *Foreign Office Annual Series 1886, 11°25. Diplomatic and Consular Reports on Trade and Finance. Pacific Islands. Report for the Year 1884 on the Trade of Tonga. Printed by Harrisons and Sons. 8 pp. 1886. Vice Consul Symonds to Consul General Thurston, 30 October 1885.*

took control of the government's accounts after Shirley Baker's deportation in 1892, helped to alleviate some of the financial difficulties, but the impetus for economic reform was now lost.

II - Marist perception of the new society

1 - The economic precariousness of the Marists

The changing economic relationships within Tongan society led to a change in the nature of the exchanges between the Marists and members of the Catholic community. The material precariousness of the Catholic missionaries, inherent in their weak economic potential, became a chronic and profound handicap from the 1860s onwards. In the first years of their establishment, they had reached a balance based on bartering and on limiting their needs, but the introduction of a market economy greatly disrupted these exchanges, as the demands of the neophytes increased over the years. "*The neophytes, in order to compete with the Protestants, want a church made of planks. But they are less generous than the Protestant neophytes. Consequently, the mission has to cover a large part of the costs*"[388]. In the situation prior to the 1860s, the account managed by the procuratorate, fed on the one hand by the annual viaticum granted by the Organisation for the Propagation of the Faith and on the other hand by external donations, allowed each missionary to obtain the products indispensable for the proper functioning of his establishment, such as bells, statues, decorative objects for the church, small equipment for the schools and for the upkeep of the enclosure, cassocks and mass wine[389]. But from 1866 onwards, the construction of wooden and then stone churches, the addition of bell towers, the purchase of frames, doors, windows and stained glass put a strain on their budget. In addition, the cost of the products needed for everyday life increased. The exchange value, which specified for each commodity the quantity of other commodities equivalent to it in terms of their utility - a subjective estimate of the satisfaction derived directly or indirectly from the possession of a good and its use - was replaced by a market value, the prices of which were set by the merchants. "*Rising cost of living. More possibility of functioning with a system of exchanges because the population prefers to receive money to pay for the goods*"[390]. The introduction of a price system based on the evolution of supply and demand proved to be catastrophic for the mission, which could hardly cope with the rise in prices. "*Our position becomes difficult in another respect, the temporal one. We can no longer find children or young people to be of service to us. Father Lamaze keeps two that I would not have the patience to endure. I would rather fast on bread and water every day than be obliged to live with them... However, each child costs us no less than 100 to 130 francs a year, not to mention the food. Then everything becomes excessively expensive. And then there's another thing: the fathers find that our living arrangements are unsustainable. There is no poor sailor living here who is not 20 times better housed than we are. I am being shot at for not wanting windows until now; then it's the chairs, then it's the furniture... Father Chevron asks to be replaced by a father who has more European ideas than he does*"[391]. The settlement of Maofaga was the most affected

[388] Father Lamaze, Christmas in Tonga, 1 January 1874 (A.P.M., 657).

[389] Other expenses were added to the function of vicar: in 1896 Bishop Lamaze allocated part of his land coupon income, 134 francs, to the maintenance of the Tonga press and the other part, 1,050 francs, to the payment of fees for Masses in favour of the deceased of the mission, three solemn services founded in perpetuity. *Foundations for Masses*, Maofaga, 17 November 1896, Bishop Lamaze's file C. I. a. *Personal documents*. (Archives of the Diocese of Tonga).

[390] Father Guitta to Father Martin in Lyons, Mua, 27 June 1885 (A.P.M., 538).

[391] Father Chevron to Father Poupinel in Lyons, Lifuka, 12 June 1866 (A.P.M., 447).

because of its proximity to the port and the presence of many Europeans who spent lavishly[392]. As a result, the neophytes were asked by the Marists to participate financially in the development of the mission. In Mu'a in 1866, on the occasion of the elders' assembly, one of the faithful, Atannasea, "*the great promoter of these meetings that we have just sent to the good Father Breton*", proposed to collect money from all the Catholics of the village every two months. The first one made it possible to obtain the sum of three pounds sterling[393]. In 1870, it was decided that an annual donation of six shillings per person should be allocated to the maintenance of the church[394]. Thanks to this initiative, the principle of making collections spread among all Catholics in the archipelago; the financial contribution of the neophytes was gradually integrated into the running of the mission and the sums collected became increasingly important. However, participation remained uneven from village to village and depended on the number of Catholics, their resources, their attachment to worship and the circumstances of the solicitation: the large gatherings organised for liturgical feasts or school competitions had a greater impact than local meetings and made it possible to collect larger sums. In 1879, the Corpus Christi procession of Catholics from Vava'u, Hihifo, Maofaga and Mu'a brought in five thousand francs - or a thousand piasters - for the Marist fathers, who also welcomed the generosity of some Europeans[395]. In 1880, three annual quests were established in Mu'a: on the occasion of the celebration of Corpus Christi, at Christmas, and for the ceremony of blessing of unconfirmed children[396]. However, although the Marists observed with satisfaction the economic participation of their neophytes, they regretted the progressive disappearance of offerings, which had a symbolic value and an effective involvement by the members in the life of the community. On the occasion of the celebration of Father Chevron's golden jubilee, the Marist fathers collected the sum of one hundred and fifty piasters, while one hundred and seventy-five pigs and more than one thousand *fai kakai* - a cooked dish wrapped in a banana leaf - were presented[397].

Although they made it possible to cover a certain number of expenses, the collections were not enough to develop the establishments, which were confronted not only with the rising cost of living but also with the cost of labour. "*Father Chevron is a pharmacist, a doctor and, above all, a cook for the little children, who can do almost nothing without being helped. Today, young people of sixteen and above do not want to work for the whites for less than 2 shillings a day, even for cooking*"[398]. Consequently, Marists, whether priests, nuns or bishops, had to show ingenuity, putting to use their spirit of initiative, their talents for creativity, their availability and their ability to establish a network of benefactors.

One of the ways in which they regularly raised money was through subscriptions from family members, friends and benefactors. This was done to cover exceptional expenses for specific purchases. Father Lamaze thus succeeded in equipping the tower of the church in Vava'u with

[392] Father Lamaze to his brother, Mu'a, Tongatapu, 28 September 1869 (A.P.M., 634).
[393] Father Castagnier to Father Poupinel, Tongatapu, 18 December 1866 to 31 January 1867 (A.P.M., 324).
[394] Father Guitta to Father Poupinel in Lyons, Mua, 1 September 1881 (A.P.M., 534).
[395] Father Chevron to Father Poupinel in Lyons, Tongatapu, 22 January 1879 (A.P.M., 469). In a summary of the amount of collections made between 1870 and 1885, Father Guitta announced that the Catholics had contributed 14,875 francs to the maintenance of the Mu'a establishment (repair of the church, bells, lights, mass wine, etc.). Father Guitta to Father Martin in Lyons, Tongatapu, 27 June 1885 (A.P.M., 538).
[396] Father Chevron to Father Poupinel in Lyons, Tongatapu, 20 October 1880 (A.P.M., 476).
[397] Father Castagnier to Father Poupinel in Lyons, Maofaga, 4 January 1882 (A.P.M., 367).
[398] Father Chevron to Father Poupinel in Lyons, Mua, 9 October 1881 (A.P.M., 478).

a bell. The European and Protestant population of the archipelago gradually participated, but to a lesser extent, in the support of the Catholic mission. In 1872, a New Zealander named Parker, who had invested his fortune in sheep farming, proposed to the Europeans to subscribe for timbers to build a church on the island of Eua. Within a few weeks he had raised the money needed to implement the project, in which Tungi, the governor of Tonga, and 'Uga, the king's son, took part[399]. Father Castagnier, who was in charge of the station at Vava'u in 1883, also turned to the European population to rebuild the village school which had been destroyed by a cyclone, while the Catholics set about building the church[400]. To raise the necessary funds for the construction of a boarding school for young girls in 1882, Bishop Lamaze made a lecture tour throughout the Catholic establishments in New Zealand where his services were remunerated. In order to improve their daily life, the Marists had the possibility of collecting mass stipends. "*We offer up Masses to the discharge of the procuratorate but also in our district we receive stipends from our neophytes for a number of Masses on behalf of their deceased relatives; these are charged by the Vicar Apostolic at 5 francs, while those of the procuratorate are charged at 20 sous or 15 sous*"[401]. Throughout the year 1867, Father Chevron offered up one hundred and fifty masses and asked to be registered for another hundred and fifty[402]. In 1889, Father Forestier made available thirty-five masses each to the fathers in Tonga. The station at of Hihifo knew a certain prosperity for about ten years thanks to the filly offered by a catholic of Windsor to Father Castagnier who negotiated for her offspring. The females were sold for one hundred and sixty francs and the foals for one hundred francs[403]. In Vava'u, Father Reiter benefited from the exploitation of citrus fruits: the missionary's farm was covered with orange trees whose fruits had the reputation of being the best in the Pacific after those of Tahiti and Rarotonga[404]. From March to August, New Zealand freighters loaded the boxes at Vava'u, the steamer's last port of call before arriving in Auckland after its tour of the Pacific archipelagos. But overproduction in New Zealand put an end to this crop, which could no longer find an outlet. "*This year: no luck with orange trees: first of all, there are not many of them and in New Zealand they sell so badly that the merchants don't want them anymore. We have been selling ours for six months, but the buyer lost so much on the last two shipments that this time he did not show. In previous months there were six or seven thousand boxes of oranges each time. This time, there are not six hundred, they say*"[405]. As for the nuns, they provided their establishments with regular income by giving private lessons and making various embroidery works and clothes. "*At the end of September 1871, an ordinance was enacted to wear a full habit at least for the main Sunday lotu, which made the natives extraordinarily tired, especially our Catholics, as the Protestants were already somewhat accustomed to it. This law was severely enforced for several years, but was eventually abandoned. This served to provide us easily with material resources from the sale of clothes*"[406].

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[399] Father Castagnier to Father Poupinel in Lyons, Hihifo, 7 January 1872 (A.P.M., 330).
[400] Father Castagnier to Father Poupinel in Lyons, Vava'u, 27 December 1882 (A.P.M., 372).
[401] Father Guitta to Father Forestier in Lyons, Mua, 7 January 1889 (A.P.M., 543).
[402] Father Chevron to Father Poupinel in Lyons, Tongatapu, 24 May 1867 (A.P.M., 449).
[403] Box 3. c.: Father Castagnier, "*Les principaux événements à Tonga depuis 1858 jusqu'à nos jours (10.04.1882)*", ms, p.27. (Tonga Diocesan Archives).
[404] KELLY J., *The South Sea Islands: Possibilities of Trade with New Zealand*, p.15.
[405] Father Reiter to the Superior of the S.M. in Lyons, Vava'u, 8 June 1893 (A.P.M., 885).
[406] Box 3. c.: Father Castagnier, '*Les principaux événements à Tonga depuis 1858 jusqu'à nos jours (10.04.1882)*', ms, p.32 (Tonga diocesan Archives). However, this law does not seem to have fallen completely into disuse as Father Bergeron reported in 1932 on a petition written in this regard: '*The natives have presented to the Tongan*

However, all these means were not enough to cover all the costs of the mission. In 1884, the vicariate's debt amounted to twenty thousand francs[407]. The annual allowance from the Propagation of the Faith was barely enough to ensure the daily running of the mission, and the Vicar Apostolic was forced to take drastic measures to force the missionaries to reduce their expenses. For example, he refused to charge the cost of imported goods to the vicariate's budget and asked that it be charged to the missionaries' income. This measure caused general consternation and did nothing to solve the debt problem[408]. In 1887, Father Olier suggested that the procuratorate use accounting tricks to reduce the amount of customs duties and various taxes - which amounted to about 10% of the value of imported goods - by writing a reduced payment note compared to the actual price[409]. Consecrated bishop in 1906, he inherited the management of the debt and closely supervised the work undertaken in the various establishments of the mission. "*The church and presbytery of Mu'a are going very slowly, Father Guitta has too many debts for me to let him go ahead without counting the cost; his people help him but do not work hard enough as soon as I leave; they rest under the pretext of working in their plantations*"[410]. In fact, in addition to the costs incurred for the repair of the church roof - about ten thousand francs - Father Guitta still had to obtain roofs for the two side chapels, the sacristy and the bell tower[411].

The material precariousness of the Marists, a real obstacle to the maintenance and development of their establishments, could not find its origin solely in the lack of resources among the population. In fact, as the system of collections set up by their Wesleyan counterparts within their community attested, the population benefited, at least in the 1860s and 1870s, from substantial income - a situation that changed in the 1885s because of the growing indebtedness among commoners due to multiple loans taken out for the purchase of consumer goods. This situation of chronic bankruptcy reveals the inability of Catholic missionaries to fit themselves into the logic of a market economy and a refusal to see their functions in terms of those of merchants. In addition, they considered that everyone's participation should above all be a manifestation of their commitment to the faith, and as such should not be obligatory.

2 - A lucrative Wesleyan organisation

The Catholic missionaries, who were in favour of voluntary donations, denounced - all the more vigorously because of their difficult economic situation - the activities of their Protestant counterparts who took advantage of the fervour of their followers to amass profits. In 1856, the total budget of the Wesleyan mission was sufficient to pay the salaries of ten missionaries and

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Government on which they depend, a strange petition, the first of its kind. The Tongan law obliges the natives to cover themselves from the neck to below the knees; they ask for the suspension of this law and the temporary permission to wear the old native costume consisting of a simple tapa of the country tied to the belt, because, they say, they do not have at present the means to buy fabrics. This law regarding the wearing of clothes was made by Reverend Baker when he was Prime Minister of George I. It has often been criticised, and the wearing of European clothes instead of the ancient Lavalava is regarded by many as a cause of tuberculosis and other modern diseases among the natives. Letters to Missionaries, Volume II, 1931-1934, No. 36, 10 January 1932.

[407] In 1884, Shirley Baker imposed a further increase of 2.5 per cent on customs entries and trade tariffs. Only the following items were exempted: flour, wine, sugar, biscuits, doors, windows, sheet metal, marine anchors, chains, bags, tar, lumber, animals, books, manufactured tools, coal, oars, plants and products from neighbouring islands. KELLY J., *The South Sea Islands: Possibilities of Trade with New Zealand*, p.18.

[408] Father Olier to Father Couloignier in Lyons, Maofaga, 20 January 1884 (A.P.M., 821).

[409] Father Olier to the Superior of the S.M. in Lyons, Maofaga, 1 June 1887 (A.P.M., 824).

[410] Bishop Olier to Father Régis in Lyons, Tongatapu, 23 August 1907 (A.P.M., 185).

[411] Father Guitta to the Superior of the S.M. in Lyons, Mua, 1st June 1906 (A.P.M., 550).

two hundred and thirteen schoolmasters, to operate two hundred and two schools throughout the archipelago, and to support more than seven thousand schoolchildren[412]. Until 1869, when the parent society in London ceased to provide for the financial necessities of the *Australian Wesleyan Methodist Society*, which had been established in 1855 and to which the Tonga mission belonged, the Wesleyan missionaries used a variety of means to save the funds allocated to them by London. As early as 1846, they had taught their neophytes the technique of making coconut oil, which was exported to Sydney through Australian merchants for the benefit of the mission. In 1854, King George ordered each man to produce four gallons of oil annually to support the mission[413]. "*June 1859: Protestants were then in great demand to make oil (the cobrah system - sic - had not yet been introduced in the country); the John Wesley, a large 3-masted ship, was constantly carrying this oil to Sydney. It so happened that the chief of Maofaga even wanted to extend to the Catholics the prescription to make 10 francs, which is equivalent to 50 gallons of oil. It goes without saying that there was no concern about this prescription*"[414].

The proclamation of the Edict of Emancipation in 1862 and the resulting economic upheaval changed this pattern. From then on, farmers with a net income divided it between taxes, Wesleyan mission collections, and the purchase of various products for their personal use. The export of coconut oil continued to feed the mission's coffers until a more lucrative collection system was introduced in the 1870s. Fearing that the fiscal pressure on their community members would limit their generosity and restrict the mission's potential for development, the Wesleyan missionaries, at the instigation of Shirley Baker, undertook to provide neophytes with an advance on their annual production of oil or copra from the mission funds that they themselves had helped to establish[415]. This system was unanimously supported by the Protestants, whose demand for cash had increased since the launch in 1867 of the *Godeffroy* company, which offered the Tongan population a wide range of imported products. Strongly criticized by the chiefs because of the high level of indebtedness it generated among the commoners who were unable to pay their rent, this activity was abandoned in 1870 in favour of a less obvious but more profitable and equally lucrative process: the Wesleyan missionaries, on the initiative of Shirley Baker, henceforth undertook to enter into exclusive contracts with merchants, who were better able than the churchmen to obtain the recovery of debts by confiscating the property of the debtor whose purchases had been paid for by the mission on his behalf[416].

Forced to be self-supporting from 1869 onwards after the London-based parent company ceased to provide funding for missions in Oceania, Tonga's Protestant missionaries established a system of annual subscriptions whereby each member of the community could obtain a '*membership ticket*' to the mission. In addition, Shirley Baker, appointed President of the Wesleyan Church in Tonga, instituted a system of competition between villages. To this end, he distributed an earthenware plate to each village headman, who was responsible for ensuring that everyone made a cash contribution. The aim was to present the fullest plate at the big

[412] The budget was £1386 in 1856, £1547 the following year, and the missionaries were each paid £140. BOLLARD A.E., *The Impact of Monetization on Tonga*, p.26.
[413] *idem*, pp.27-28.
[414] Box 3. c.: Father Castagnier, "*Les principaux événements à Tonga depuis 1858 jusqu'à nos jours (10.04.1882)*", ms, p.8 (Tonga Diocesan Archives).
[415] RUTHERFORD N., *Shirley Baker and the King of Tonga*, pp.21-35.
[416] BOLLARD A.E., *The Impact of Monetization on Tonga*, p.31.

festival - *Fakamisimole [Fakamisinale]* - which brought together all the villagers of the archipelago, and to be chosen as the winner of the competition during which the donations of each community were counted out loud. As such, pressure was put on relatives and friends, and shame was heaped on the less eager[417]. The Protestants of the Ha'apai archipelago - who seemed somewhat reserved about this process - were obliged to produce fifty buckets of coconut oil or the equivalent in currency under the penalty of being deprived of their pastors. As a reward for their participation, the Wesleyan missionaries promised their community members the building of churches and schools and the gratitude of God[418].

This system, which exploited the self-esteem of individuals who vied with each other to receive the honour of being cited as an example by the missionaries, was undeniably effective. The amount of money collected increased from year to year[419]. The peak was reached in 1875 during the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the mission. A special effort, required for the occasion, marked the launch of a vast project to multiply the number of places of worship throughout the archipelago and to allow for liquidating the stock of wooden churches, imported from New Zealand by Shirley Baker. "*On 19 November 1875 there was a storm which lasted two days and knocked down many houses; but it did not diminish the ardour of the Polotu in which the people were excited to give for the Fakamisimale [Fakamisinale] because they were promised beautiful wooden churches, which was done throughout Tonga by order of Mr Baker who was then Prime Minister; in some places, such as Vava'u, the natives were even shown plans of churches and made to choose from. So the chiefs felt obliged to train people to give a lot. Many got into debt with Mr. Baker, who lent them piasters and then charged them in cobras (sic). Several merchants thought it was also proper to lend money so as not to leave Baker with a monopoly on the cobra (sic); the amount of piasters collected in Fakamisimale [Fakamisinale], in the single corner of Hihifo was 5,162 (sic), and in the whole of the archipelago, was enormous. And this was only a decoy which nonetheless was not enough to enlighten the people about the deceitfulness of their missionaries. Many people had given in spite of themselves only for fear of the chiefs, and it was very difficult to get people to pay their debts on this occasion*"[420].

However, this over-exploitation of everyone's income generated a deep-seated protest among the Protestants, especially as the funds collected by the Wesleyan mission in Tonga were mainly intended for the development of the overseas missions. Thus, 'Ata [Ata] and several other chiefs refused to accept the timber brought by Shirley Baker for the construction of new churches[421]. In addition, Baker set up a credit union at this time to enable farmers to take out loans to build European-style houses if they wished. However, the damage caused by two successive cyclones in 1876 and 1877 prevented the harvesting of copra, which the farmers wanted to use to pay off their debts. From 1877 onwards, *Godeffroy,* to whom these debts had been passed on, began to crack down and, while Shirley Baker increased the dividends of his credit union by 10% per annum, most of the farmers had their property seized for unpaid debts

[417] RUTHERFORD N., *Shirley Baker and the King of Tonga*, p.28.
[418] *idem,* p.30.
[419] List of contributions from 1854 to 1876 in pounds sterling: 1854: 1,200; 1855: 1,100; 1857: 1,225; 1861: 1,874; 1863: 2,500; 1864: 3,000; 1866: 3,770; 1867: 2,000; 1869: 5,480; 1870: 3,200; 1871: 4,500; 1872: 7,000; 1874: 5,500; 1875: 15,227; 1876: 5,000. BOLLARD A.E., *The Impact of Monetization on Tonga*, pp.28-30.
[420] Box 3. c.: Father Castagnier, "*Les principaux événements à Tonga depuis 1858 jusqu'à nos jours (10.04.1882)*", ms, p.37. (Tonga Diocesan Archives).
[421] *idem.*

and were reduced to misery by the impossibility of paying their land rent, repaying their debts accumulated with the loans taken out in 1875 for the fiftieth anniversary of the mission, and paying their taxes[422].

In 1878, under pressure from Tungi who was deeply resentful of Shirley Baker, the Assembly of Parliament limited the collection of debts to £1 per person, but this was rejected by King George. The principle behind this proposal was not accepted until 1881, when debt collection was limited to £3 per person[423]. However, the difficulties in collecting the tax provoked the dissatisfaction of King George who advised Shirley Baker of the need to put an end to the abuses of the mission. In 1881, while serving as Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Shirley Baker had the practice of *Fakamisinale* banned. "*The Catholic fathers are pleased with Baker's policy but the Wesleyans are not, for the King has prohibited the practice of Fakamisinale*[424]. However, the effect of this decree was to inflame the conflict between Shirley Baker and Reverend Moulton, which was driven by an acute rivalry over the boundaries of their respective spheres of influence. As a result, and with the support of King George, Shirley Baker proclaimed in 1885 the establishment of an independent church - the *Free Church of Tonga* - with funds from collections to be used exclusively for its own purposes, and halted the development of the Wesleyan mission which was deprived of its sources of income.

Thus, the system of collections was maintained for the benefit of the *Free Church of Tonga*, but the total amount of money collected was less[425]. Moreover, there was such confusion within the Ministry of Finance that the majority of taxpayers no longer contributed much to the tax[426]. "*However, in high places, it seems that there is little agreement. The ministry and the king are more or less in agreement. So if the Ministry says: we have to auction off a junk of those who are too late to pay their taxes, and we'll start next week, His Majesty will say no, in Vava'u, we won't do it because I'm there but you can do it elsewhere! If the Ministry says: we will pay the taxes in copra, the King will say: we will pay them as we like, in copra or in money. The ministry will sell the copra in advance and will undertake to deliver a considerable quantity of copra, but it will not be able to do so following the royal statement: we will pay the taxes as we wish. And so it is with all kinds of business*"[427]. After 1892, many debts were suspended because they were linked to Shirley Baker's presence. As for the German debt of the *Godeffroy* firm, it was taken over by the English who thus benefited from a right of inspection over the finances of the kingdom and thus brought to light the misappropriations committed by various government authorities[428].

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[422] RUTHERFORD N., *Shirley Baker and the King of Tonga*, p.54.

[423] RUTHERFORD N., *Shirley Baker and the King of Tonga*, pp.80-83.

[424] Father Guitta to Father Poupinel in Lyons, Mua, 1 September 1881 (A.P.M., 534).

[425] In 1889, it amounted to £1,289. BOLLARD A.E., *The Impact of Monetization on Tonga*, p.32.

[426] The direct descendant of the Tu'i Ha'atakalau dynasty, Tuku'aho, succeeded Shirley Baker as head of government. However, his inability to re-establish the financial situation of the State led him to seek the support of the British authorities in the person of Sir Basil Thomson. Nine months of painstaking work were required to bring the government's accounts up to date. But the death of King George in February 1893 and the beginning of King George Tupou II, who was prone to wasteful spending, caused further difficulties.

[427] Father Reiter, Vava'u, 21 April 1891 (A.P.M., 538).

[428] A few months after coming to power, King George Tupou II, wishing to free himself from Tukuhao's [Tuku'aho's] embrace, undertook to replace him at the head of the government with Sateki, who was more pliable than his predecessor, and to appoint his son to the post of Finance. In order to meet his countless expenses, the sovereign incurred large debts to an obscure figure suspected of spreading corruption within the government. At

In 1878, while investigating the indebtedness among Tongans, Alfred Maudslay, the British *deputy commissioner* and vice-consul, sent by the High Commission to examine Shirley Baker's policy which was strongly opposed by British residents, obtained no information in Tongatapu where the population had been instructed by Shirley Baker's preachers not to divulge any information relating to this situation. On the other hand, in Niua Fo'ou, where the population was more autonomous, he found that the three hundred taxpayers of the island had paid ten to twelve thousand dollars a year - more than two thousand pounds sterling - for the mission, 50% of which was borrowed.

Faced with the financial stagnation into which many Protestants were plunged, the Catholics could not hide their jubilation. Indeed, this delicate position among Protestants generated, from the 1870s onwards, a general revival of esteem for the fathers of the Catholic mission who had always been concerned to denounce the harmful implications of institutionalised collections. On the other hand, the financial demands of the Protestant mission combined with its internal divisions caused a wave of conversions to Catholicism. And so Protestants, whose attachment to the Christian faith was unshakeable, expressed thereby their disapproval of the excessively worldly activities of their pastors.

3 - The influx of merchants

The prospects for economic development created by the promulgation of the 1862 code had a profound effect on Europeans who hoped to find there a new fortune. "*We currently find in all our islands a host of stuffs that we did not have in the past, and we are invaded by white merchants who come to try and make a fortune here. For example, in Tonga we have 44 stores where you can find almost everything that is needed for living*"[429]. The presence of these merchants, most of whom were Anglo-Saxon, but also German, Russian and Polish, was in line with the objectives of King George, who wanted to provide his kingdom with a modern infrastructure thanks to foreign investment. However, this enterprise did not meet with the expected success, as the fear of external influence and the will to pressure these newcomers were strong. In this respect, the decrees promulgated by Shirley Baker from the 1880s onwards constituted a real obstacle to economic development, which was shattered by the weight of taxes and various duties.

The year 1862 marked the beginning of this wave of immigrants, whose number had hitherto been restrained: two of them were settled in Nuku'alofa and two in Lifuka and Vava'u, where they carried out commercial activities[430]. Four years later, Nuku'alofa had fifty-four immigrants, all of whom traders in their own right or on behalf of large New Zealand or German companies[431]. This movement was further reinforced in 1876 with the annexation of Fiji by the United Kingdom, whose nationals were already seeing the British colonial sphere extended to the Tonga archipelago. "*The entire coastline from Nuku'alofa to Maofaga is taken over by merchants. Not to mention the small ones, we have three large companies firmly established in Tonga, one from New Zealand, one from Hamburg, richer, it is said, than Godeffroy's and*

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the request of the Tongan chiefs, the British authorities in Fiji were asked to restore order in the kingdom. Sateki and his son were deported and Fatafehi was appointed Prime Minister in 1905.

[429] Father Olier to the Superior of the S.M. in Lyons, Tongatapu, 9 May 1898 (A.P.M., 835).

[430] Box3. c.: Father Castagnier, "*Les principaux événements à Tonga depuis 1858 jusqu'à nos jours (10.4.1882)*", ms, 180 p. (Tonga Diocesan Archives).

[431] RUTHERFORD N., *Shirley Baker and the King of Tonga*, p.24.

finally this last one you know ... The Tongan huts are relegated far from the shore"[432]. This sudden influx, so hoped for yet also dreaded, required the establishment of a legislative framework to control and manage the activities of these traders. As early as 1852, King George had established a trading fee that was collected by the chiefs who only granted permission to trade after collecting the fee for their own benefit[433]. From 1874 onwards, every trader had to pay a single fee, the amount of which was fixed at five pounds sterling[434].

Political tensions between the British merchants and Shirley Baker, who they blamed for interfering with their interests, led in 1880 to increases in fees which were added to the prohibition on buying land[435]. In addition, they were put at a serious disadvantage by the introduction of a new system for calculating exchange rates. In the years before 1880, the government received only French, American or British currency, so English merchants had to import large quantities of English currency and importers were given negotiable currency in payment for their goods[436]. From 1870 onwards, the *Godeffroy* firm took advantage of the shortage of currency generated by the European conflict to introduce Chilean and Bolivian dollars with which it paid for the sales of copra over which it had a monopoly, while the small intermediary merchants continued to use their national currencies[437]. However, the diversity of currencies led to total confusion in trade and taxation, and in a session of Parliament in 1880, Shirley Baker issued a decree guaranteeing the exclusivity of the Chilean silver dollar, whose real value, set at four English shillings, was higher than the nominal rate[438]. Forced to use this currency, merchants had to exchange their own currency for bills of exchange from the firm *Godeffroy*, which charged a five percent commission on the transaction. Thus, adding up the transaction costs and the difference between the face value and real value, the merchants lost about twenty-five percent[439]. In 1887, Shirley Baker, urged on by the British High Commission authorities in Fiji - who were in turn urged on by the Tonga-based merchants -reinstated the legality of British, French and American gold and silver coinage, while the Chilean currency was retained at the rate of three shillings to the dollar[440].

These measures aimed at reducing the growing influence of the merchants, who had formed a pressure group with the chiefs whose grievances against Shirley Baker were also numerous, effectively underlined their precariousness already initiated by the competition that Shirley Baker delivered to them thanks to the mission's funds. In order to fight against this

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[432] Father Lamaze to Father Poupinel in Lyons, Maofaga, 9 February 1876 (A.P.M., 662).

[433] SAINT-JULIAN C., *Official Report on Central Oceania*, p.12.

[434] RUTHERFORD N., *Shirley Baker and the King of Tonga*, p.52.

[435] LATUKEFU S., *The Tongan Constitution, a Brief History to Celebrate its Centenary*, pp.58-59.

[436] *Foreign Office Annual Series 1886, No. 25. Diplomatic and Consular Reports on Trade and Finance. Pacifie Islands. Report for the Year 1884 on the Trade of Tonga. Printed by Harrisons and Sons. 8 p. 1886. Vice-Consul Symonds to Consul-General Thurston, 30 October 1885*.

[437] BOLLARD A.E., *The Impact of Monetization on Tonga*, p.40.

[438] In reality, the Chilean dollar had a nominal value of 3 shillings and 3 d? The *Godeffroy* firm, in agreement with Shirley Baker, exchanged this currency at face value for bills of exchange that could be paid in Sydney, Auckland or San Francisco. While this system allowed the *Godeffroy* firm to make a 20% profit on transactions for which it had a monopoly, it also contributed to a substantial improvement in the financial state of the archipelago since taxes and other duties were now levied at the highest rate (RUTHERFORD N., *Shirley Baker and the King of Tonga*, p.97). In 1884, the *Godeffroy* firm imported £14,000 worth of Chilean currency while Anglo-Saxon merchants exported £10,000 worth at a loss of 10d per dollar. KELLY J., *The South Sea Islands: Possibilities of Trade with New Zealand*, p.18.

[439] RUTHERFORD N., *Shirley Baker and the King of Tonga*, pp.97-98.

[440] Letter from Shirley Baker dated 9 December 1887, King's Palace, Nuku'alofa. Mitchell Library, Sydney.

unscrupulous partner and to enable the supply of their stocks, the merchants had to lend the Tongans - who were destitute after the passage of the mission's collectors - the money they themselves had borrowed from Shirley Baker or the *Godeffroy* house[441]. The bankruptcy of the *Godeffroy* house in 1880 put an end to the hopes of the less fortunate merchants. "*Traders no longer make a fortune in Tonga, some have already left. Mister de Winter is leaving with his sister*"[442]. However, the dominance of British merchants remained. Of the major trading houses established in Tonga in 1884, ten were Anglo-Saxon, four German, one American, and one Polish. Of these, three Anglo-Saxons and three Germans remained in 1900 while their trading posts were run by former small traders[443].

4 - The experience of progress

From the end of the 18th century and due to the wars between the chiefs, the villagers, who had previously been scattered around the domains of their chiefs, gathered in villages, establishing a mode of habitat entrenched behind a fortified enclosure. About a third of the population was thus distributed among the different island groups of the archipelago, while the remaining two thirds gathered in Nuku'alofa[444]. From the 1870s onwards, the village lost its traditional character and underwent major changes on an archipelago-wide scale. "*You wouldn't find the Tonga we found 18 years ago; it was the real Tonga then, but today it is the modern Tonga*"[445]. The landscape was gradually changed by the appearance of buildings built on the European model, with materials imported from Sydney or California. On the initiative of Shirley Baker, and with the revenue from taxes and fees, King George decided to build an administrative infrastructure: government offices, treasury and banks were built alongside warehouses and trading posts. The increase in trade and the improvement of maritime links underlined the need to build hospitality facilities: in the 1880s, an international hotel was built along the coastline. The Royal Palace and the private residences of the chiefs offered their imposing facades to a population stimulated by this ostentation. "*We are driven by our own. Everyone wants to be European. The Wesleyans are far ahead of us in this respect. Every Protestant village wants to have its own wooden chapel imported from Sydney with arched or ribbed windows, with coloured glass, bells etc.; the taxes are enormous, Maofaga: 15 to 20 piasters per man; Houma: 50 piasters per man. The king has a house built for himself worth 25 to 30,000 piasters. Each chief and many natives have horses and carriages, and houses*

[441] RUTHERFORD N., *Shirley Baker and the King of Tonga*, p.67.

[442] Father Castagnier to Father Germain in Lyons, Maofaga, 25 January 1880 (A.P.M., 358).

[443] *McArthur and Co, Parsons and Co, Parker Brothers, Young, Ford and Reilly; Galloway; Bernard; Peascol; Pursley; Langdale; Sparrow: British; Walters: Usa; Moses David: Poland; Plantagen und Handles Gesellschaft; Ruge and Co; Wolfgram; Sanft: German. Commercial Directory, 1900* (A.P.M., O.C.)

[444] BOUTILIER J., HUGHES D. and TIFFANY S., *Mission, Church and Sect in Oceania*, p.396. During the 19th century, population growth was irregular. In 1839, Wesleyan missionaries estimated the population of the archipelago at 18,500. In 1882, 22,000 inhabitants were counted. An epidemic of Spanish flu in 1867, followed by a famine, led to a sharp rise in mortality and a sharp fall in the birth rate. Between 1874 and 1884, the population lost almost a tenth of its inhabitants - 23,000 in 1884 compared to 25,000 in 1874 - KELLY J., *The South Sea Islands: Possibilities of Trade with New Zealand*, p.65. In 1893, new epidemics raged among the population. "*The Friendly Islands enjoy peace under the new King, as in the time of King George; but they are invaded by a terrible epidemic, which begins with measles, is followed by dysentery and other miseries, and ends by taking away the old, the children, and the imprudent of middle age. Since my arrival we have been surrounded by the dead and the dying and the sick. Even here, the plague is less severe. But it is spreading to the farthest villages and to the islands of Ha'apai. If it continues its ravages, we will lose one twentieth of the population*." Bishop Lamaze to Father Martin, Superior of the S.M. in Lyons, Maofaga, 19 August 1893 (A.P.M., 128).

[445] Father Guitta to Father Poupinel in Lyons, Tongatapu, 23 June 1876 (A.P.M., 528).

made of timber with glass windows. Father Lamaze is sometimes discouraged by the abundance displayed by the king, the chiefs and some Europeans"[446]. Despite their limited resources, the priests of the Marist mission tried to follow the movement which had led the Wesleyans to embellish their temple in Nuku'alofa with towers and turrets in 1873[447]. In Maofaga, the churches, the college and the residence "*are clad with timber instead of the old reed screen*". All the houses were provided with a wooden floor. In 1871, plans for the construction of the sisters' boarding school included a two-storey building with about 30 glass doors, a veranda and a fence. "*Maofaga will be beautiful when it offers the four facades of the college, the church, the residence, and the convent on the harbour side*"[448].

The work undertaken at the initiative of King George to create a network of roads improved communications between villages and facilitated the transport of copra. "*I notice on September 21, 1863, that the king on horseback and the queen in a truck are solemnly inspecting the main roads, wide and aligned, which have nearly been completed throughout the whole of Tonga, which has been a very great chore for the natives and has contributed to the removal of many coconut trees*"[449]. Responsibility for road maintenance fell to the chiefs, who divided the work among the commoners who farmed their land[450]. To complete this work, the 1875 constitution envisaged compensation for chiefs who were forced to give up parcels of their land to widen the roads. The provision of this infrastructure led to the rapid development of transport. "*Everyone has cars and horses in Tonga... We have to keep up a bit... Going by boat is becoming more expensive than going by car or horse. Father Petelo has a spring-cart which carries the Reverend and his boxes to Hihifo. Fathers Lamaze and Calinon have just received a dog-cart; Father Guitta, further away from the capital, still has only his old dump truck; in front of all these vehicles, the venerable Father Chevron is in real disarray*"[451]. As for the inhabitants of Nuku'alofa, who enjoyed a certain amount of prosperity due to their activities in the administration, banking or import-export sectors, most of them owned a horse and a car[452].

This development dynamic was combined with a desire to open up to the outside world and to open up the archipelago by developing trade activities. This approach was part of a collective impulse, the entire community being interested in innovations that allowed it to access the elements of a certain progress which in turn flattered Tongan pride. "*All of Tonga is preparing for a great Kataoga [Katoaga] (meeting) of rejoicing on the occasion of the completion of a wharf which the government is building at Nuku'alofa*"[453].

In the 1880s, Shirley Baker commissioned extensive work to improve the harbour structures and the shipping and postal service. The wharf included two types of landing stages, one for goods, made of sawn coral blocks, the other for passengers, made of stone. From one end of the quay to the other, two ramps were laid for the transport of goods and luggage. The various

[446] Father Chevron to Father Poupinel in Lyons, Mua, 4 September 1874 (A.P.M., 459).
[447] Father Lamaze to Father Poupinel in Lyons, Maofaga, 8 August 1873 (A.P.M., 656).
[448] Father Lamaze to Father Décailly at St Chamond, Maofaga, 14 September 1871 (A.P.M., 648).
[449] Box 3. c.: Father Castagnier, "*Les principaux événements à Tonga depuis 1858 jusqu'à nos jours (10.04.1882)*", ms, p.14. (Tonga Diocesan Archives).
[450] According to Article 27 of the 1867 code, a fine of one dollar was to be imposed on the commoner who did not fulfil this duty. The roads were inspected every three weeks by the king, in the presence of the commoners and chiefs, who had to pay a fine of four dollars if they were absent.
[451] Father Lamaze to Father Germain in Lyons, Maofaga, 15 November 1874 (A.P.M., 660).
[452] KELLY J., *The South Sea Islands: Possibilities of Trade with New Zealand*, p.12.
[453] Father Castagnier to Father Poupinel in Lyons, Maofaga, 30 April 1881 (A.P.M., 363).

commercial premises lined the harbour and had private quays where ships could load and unload their goods[454]. The authorities saw a sharp increase in the tonnage of ships and traffic in general[455]. But exporters were soon discouraged by the high cost of customs duties, port fees and pilotage fees[456]. Only an extension of the deep-water quay would have given hope for a reduction in unloading costs for cargo ships that had to hire canoes to unload their cargo. However, cash flow difficulties postponed its realisation to a later date.

The increase in trade also allowed for the creation of a regular service with the main centres of activity in the region. In October 1881, Parliament voted to grant an annual subsidy of £500 to the New Zealand firm *McArthur and Co*, which had established several trading posts in the archipelago and had three ships operating an annual Auckland-Tonga service[457]. Trade with the port of Auckland was favoured because of its geographical proximity. In the 1880s, a seven days' sailing was sufficient to cover the distance between Tonga and New Zealand, while twenty-one days were needed to reach Sydney[458]. In the early 20th century, the spread of steam navigation made it possible to reach Auckland in four days and Sydney in eight[459]. However, inter-island connections remained irregular. "*Tonga, December 1, 1897. Your letter of January 23, 1897 has not been answered. I spent a whole year in Wallis, Futuna, Niua Fo'ou, Keppel [Niua Toputapu], Vava'u; and I have only been back home for a month. In these parts, there is not much regular communication with the rest of the world*"[460]. In 1908, Bishop Olier nevertheless managed to travel between Tonga, Samoa, Fiji and Sydney in eighteen days[461]. But these connections, subject to numerous constraints such as climatic hazards and quarantines, were too unprofitable to be continued by shipowners on a regular basis .

Witnessing the upheavals associated with the introduction of a production economy, Catholic missionaries deplored the new preoccupations of their faithful. "*Thrown into the European trade and customs which the English call civilisation, they are less devoted to religion and become much more businesslike*"[462]. However, this unreasonable craze caused by the massive influx of consumer goods and the presence of many foreign traders was short-lived. It lasted for about the decade of 1870-1880, feeding on the momentum generated by the prospect of new freedoms. The seduction of European vanities was at work. "*The movement that is driving Tonga towards Fakapapalagi is not slowing down*"[463]. The women dressed in imposing gowns. *"The crinoline! Ah, if the ladies of France could see those of Lifuka swelling under this piece of toiletry, they would hasten to leave them, and with no less reason than they once left the golden belt*"[464]. The men paraded on their horses. Many families went into debt for colonial-

[454] KELLY J., *The South Sea Islands: Possibilities of Trade with New Zealand*, p.14.
[455] In 1884, twenty-eight British ships - including fifteen from New Zealand - made the Sydney-Fiji route. Seventeen German ships - whose tonnage was greater because they loaded part of their cargo in San Francisco - came from Sydney or Brisbane. In the same year, two other ships, one American and one Norwegian, also called at Tongatapu.
[456] Each captain had to pay a tax of £1 per ton of cargo for a minimum load of 5 tons. The port duty in 1884 was 4 shillings, the cost of pilotage was fixed at 2 shillings per foot. KELLY J., *The South Sea Islands: Possibilities of Trade with New Zealand*, p.14.
[457] *idem*.
[458] *Op. cit*. p.16.
[459] Bishop Olier to Father Régis in Lyons, Saint Vincent Hospital, Sydney, 12 June 1908 (A.P.M., 187).
[460] Bishop Lamaze to Father Nicolet in Rome, Tonga, 1 December 1897 (A.P.M., 155).
[461] *Op. cit*.
[462] Father Chevron to Father Poupinel in Lyons, Mua, 21 July 1879 (A.P.M., 471).
[463] Father Lamaze to Father Poupinel in Lyons, Mua, 19 July 1876 (A.P.M., 266).
[464] Father Calinon to the Superior of the S.M., Lifuka, 30 July 1866 (A.P.M., 300).

style houses with verandas, doors and windows. Work on the plantations was industrious, but religious attendance dropped. "*The natives are all preoccupied with their plantations and the means of earning a few piasters*"[465]. However, the eruption into Tongan society of the notion of productivity - which most Tongans sadly experienced as a result of the demands for profitability imposed by the Wesleyan missionaries - had little of the impact that Shirley Baker had hoped for. Having briefly tasted the illusion of modernity, the momentum of which was broken by the financial collapse of individuals and of the state, the indigenous population abandoned the temptation of innovation in favour of a return to the community that provided for their subsistence needs. The failure of this policy of economic innovation by Shirley Baker and King George can be attributed not only to the cyclical conflicts between the British merchants, who were the mainstay of the economic dynamism, and Shirley Baker, but also to the gradual realisation of the untoward implications of this notion of productivity. The existence of the term *Ma'anumanu [Maanumanu]*, which defines an attitude of materialistic insatiability condemned by the community, bears witness to this[466]. Thus, the values of *Vaka-tonga* - the Tongan way of life - defended by Tungi regained their full strength from the 1880s onwards. Gradually, certain customs were re-established, such as the making of tapa, which allowed Tongans to return to their traditional attires. The making of *Ngatu was* also authorised in order to allow the dead to be buried in this plant material as their ancestors had done, and to allow newlyweds to return to their ceremonial costume. The 1878 ban on appearing in a kava with a *Vala* - a piece of plant material woven around the waist and tied over the tapa - was also suspended in the 1880s. Families who had their property seized by the *Godeffroy* firm, which was collecting its debts, returned to their parents. During the religious ceremonies organised by the Catholic mission, the Marists noted the desire of their neophytes to maintain the traditional forms of rejoicing on these occasions: Tongan mats were preferred to the canopies and banners sent by the procuratorate; traditional songs continued to mingle with liturgical songs and speeches to enliven the kava and banquets. Thus, traditional customs continued beyond political and economic contingencies, and contrary to Father Chevron's judgement, '*civilisation*' - a term associated in his mind with the most damaging effects of the Wesleyan missionary presence - was not to supplant religion, which remained an important element of cohesion in the midst of all the upheaval.

From the 1860s until the establishment of the British protectorate, Protestant missionaries and European merchants were the vectors of an economic, social and cultural development whose main innovations were gradually assimilated by Tongan society. The 1862 code and the 1875 constitution, the general policy pursued by Shirley Baker, and the restrained but profound influence of the merchants had political implications for the centralisation of power and the emergence of a small landed aristocracy. Similarly, learning about productivity and the establishment of a system of monetization, the emancipation of commoners and the appearance of new social intermediaries will constitute the key elements of the economic and social evolution.

While these transformations were taking place, the Marists' view of them was marked by its reserve towards what they denounced in their correspondence as the application of an Anglo-Saxon model of mercantile civilisation, oriented towards the pursuit of profit and a source of

[465] Father Chevron to Father Poupinel in Lyons, Tongatapu, 22 January 1879 (A.P.M., 469).
[466] VAN DER GRIJP P., *L'ambivalence du progrès. Contradictions dans le développement économique et social aux îles Tonga en Polynésie occidentale*, p.125.

social rupture within the community as a whole. According to the Marists, the increase in crime and divorce among Protestants was undoubtedly proof of this. However, anxious not to become involved in the politics of King George, and having experienced the disastrous effects that confrontation could have on the development of their mission, as well as the freedom of worship recognised for Catholics, the Marists kept out of the events and tended to withdraw into their own community. In this respect, the death in 1865 of the Tu'i Tonga and with it the disappearance of the royal title seems to have put an end to their involvement in the dynastic conflicts and to their hopes of one day celebrating the advent of the representative of the branch of power whose legitimacy had been, according to them, usurped[467].

From this point onwards, their writings convey a sense of immutability that contrasts with the upheavals that affected Tongan society in the second half of the 19th century. This distance was reflected in a high degree of social and religious cohesion within the Catholic community, which was unique in the Tongan context at the time. Only the significant number of conversions to Catholicism, resulting from the division in the Protestant church, an immanent manifestation of their prophecy according to the Catholic missionaries, disrupted the course of daily life. Paradoxically, this distance from events and the durability of its institution allowed the Catholic mission to appear in the eyes of the Protestant aristocracy as a reference point in Tongan society. While they deplored the effervescence of their own missionaries, the king and the Protestant chiefs ramped up their expressions of trust with respect to the Marists. The deathbed conversion of one of them was an event in itself; however, the fact that King George attended his funeral and honoured him with traditional offerings at the time - 1871 - when they had been outlawed by the Protestant missionaries represented for the Marists an eloquent act of the esteem with which they were beginning to be held. In the following year, 'Uga and Tugi contributed to the subscription launched for the construction of the church in Hihifo. In 1881, the pupils of the Catholic school in Maofaga wrote a song of praise for the king who presided over the Catholic school competition. Thus, little by little, the Marists even conceived of the hope of obtaining the conversion of King George to Catholicism, which would not have failed to represent in their eyes the consecration of the *Truth* such as they advocated during their preaching by opposing it to heresy. They had to be content with a partial victory, for while the division of his Church had not affected the king's Protestant faith, it had led him to bow to the Marists' argument about the precedence of the Catholic Church. However, he still invoked the universality of God against his conversion.

[467] "*The fathers write and tell us of the death of our dear and brave Tu'i Tonga. He is given a truly royal funeral; the king, in accordance with the ancient custom, shows that he is but a poor commoner to this great chief, this Majesty, this true Lord of the country. His graveyard, called his lagi or heaven, which the chiefs cannot even approach, is truly imposing. We had beautiful ceremonies; the Maofaga singers performed the 'Libera me' twice. But what is better than all this to prove that the Tu'i Tonga was loved, ...is that there is a multitude of pigs at this funeral. Last night I went to look at one kitchen alone..., I counted from 70 to 80 victims lying there all roasted, each one carried from one api to another with the customary ceremonies and songs... The Catholics are truly saddened by the death of their great chief; however, we think that since his burial was so solemnized in the Catholic lotu, it is a triumph for us, even in the eyes of the Protestants who do not say so, but do not think less of it*. Father Lamaze to Father Poupinel in Lyons, Mu'a, 1st December 1868 (A.P.M.)

THE CATHOLIC MICROCOSM

CHAPTER VII

THE MISSION'S INFRASTRUCTURE

While the administration of the Vicariate of Eastern Oceania was entrusted to the Picpus Fathers, the brief *Pastoral Officium*, dated May 13, 1836, set the geographical limits of the Society of Mary's jurisdiction. The Vicariate of Western Oceania extended over a vast area which included all the islands and archipelagos situated to the west of the Society Islands[468]. Bishop Pompallier was appointed to establish the first Catholic missions in this region[469]. Quickly, the immensity of the maritime spaces which resulted in the irregularity of connections between the archipelagos and the difficulties of administration of the missions forced a reorganization of the vicariate. Thus, the islands of Wallis, Futuna, Tonga, Samoa, Fiji as well as New Caledonia were separated in 1842 to form the Vicariate of Central Oceania, the responsibility for which was attributed to Bishop Bataillon who was elevated to the episcopal dignity for the occasion. As Catholicism expanded in the region, this vicariate was the object of successive divisions which aimed to constitute more geographically restricted entities. The Apostolic Vicariate of New Caledonia was created in 1847, that of the Navigators - Samoa - in 1850. The archipelago of Fiji became an Apostolic Prefecture in 1863 and a Vicariate in 1887. However, it was not until 1936 that the islands of Wallis and Futuna were separated from the Vicariate of Central Oceania, which was then renamed the Vicariate of Tonga[470].

I - The men of the mission

1 - Episcopal authority

From the establishment of the Marist mission in Tonga until the end of the nineteenth century, three bishops succeeded each other as Vicar Apostolic of Central Oceania[471]. Two of them, Bishop Bataillon and Bishop Lamaze, left a particular mark on the administration of the vicariate because of the longevity of their ministry. According to their personalities, intransigent and haughty for the first, diplomatic and altruistic for the second, they established with both Catholics and Protestants ties that oscillated between veneration and attachment, and contributed, each in their own way, to endowing the Catholic mission in Tonga with a strong image, a reflection of their own grandeur.

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[468] WILTGEN Ralph, *The Founding of the Roman Catholic Church in Oceania*, p.127.

[469] The Superiors General of the Society of Mary were successively Jean-Claude Colin (1836-1854), Julien Favre (1854-1885), Antoine Martin (1885-1905), Jean-Claude Raffin (1905-1922), Ernest Rieu (1923-1947), and Alcimus Cyr (1947-1961). From 1836 to 1922, the headquarters of the congregation was established at 4 de la montée Saint- Barthélémy at Lyon, then from 1922 to the present day at 63 via Alessandro Peorio [sic] in Rome.

[470] The Superiors of Central Oceania were Bishop Bataillon, titular bishop of Enos, first vicar apostolic (1842-1877); Bishop Elloy, titular bishop of Tipasa, second vicar apostolic (1877-1878); coadjutor of Bishop Bataillon (1863-1877), Bishop Lamaze, titular bishop of Olympus, third vicar apostolic (1879-1906); Bishop Olier, titular bishop of Tipasa, fourth vicar apostolic (1906-1911), coadjutor of Bishop Lamaze (1903-1906); and Bishop Blanc, titular bishop of Dibon, fifth vicar apostolic (1912-1937).

[471] The title of Vicar derives from the distribution of prerogatives between the Holy See and the Congregation. Delegated by the Pope for the administration of vicariates or provinces (from 1898), he is nevertheless responsible to the Superior General. The transformation of the apostolic vicariates into dioceses in 1966 led to the disappearance of this title in the context of the missions.

The first Vicar Apostolic of Central Oceania, appointed in 1842, Bishop Bataillon had previously exercised his missionary vocation in Wallis[472]. A member of the first convoy organised by Bishop Pompallier to Oceania in 1836, he achieved rapid and massive success in evangelising the Wallisians. His remarkable adaptation to the island environment, his ability to negotiate with the chiefs and his determination in general, naturally designated him for this function at a time when the administration of the missions by Bishop Pompallier was the object of much criticism on the part of the Marist missionaries established in the region. However, he maintained a particular devotion to the mission in Wallis throughout his life, and this to the detriment of the neighbouring missions whose missionaries had the greatest difficulty in supporting this marked preference, both on the material and pastoral level. Concerned about the need to create an Oceanian clergy, he was behind the ordination, on June 10, 1865, of the first indigenous priest of the vicariate, Saokimi [Soakimi] Gatafahefa, a young Tongan born in Fiji and educated in Futuna, whom he accompanied to Rome in 1856 to be trained for the priesthood[473]. In the same perspective, in 1859 he bought a property in Clydesdale, located in the suburbs of Sydney, in order to found a college for the purpose of welcoming new vocations. The establishment was provided with an agricultural annex which, in theory, was to provide substantial income for the missions. However, the inability of the Polynesian students to cope with the isolation, the solitude and the climate of the place led Bishop Bataillon to give up this enterprise, the failure of which was obvious. The estate was sold at a loss at the end of 1871. This acquisition, which had required a disproportionate investment in relation to the missions' limited resources, was the subject of much criticism from the missionaries, who complained about the lack of resources allocated to the development of their own stations, and found it difficult to understand that such a choice had been made to their detriment. When Bishop Bataillon died in Wallis in 1877, he was briefly replaced by Bishop Elloy who died the following year[474].

Bishop Lamaze, consecrated bishop in 1879, had officiated in Oceania for seventeen years when he succeeded Bishop Elloy[475]. Arriving in Tonga in 1864 to replace Father Monnier who had been transferred to Sydney, he carried out most of his apostolic activities in Maofaga where

[472] Born on 6 January 1810 in Saint Cyr-les-Vignes in the Lyons region, Pierre Bataillon headed towards an ecclesiastical career from his early years of study. He was ordained a priest in Lyon in 1834. He made two trips to Europe, one in 1856 and the other in 1872, as part of his episcopal duties, in order to settle with the Roman authorities the differences that opposed him to the Superior General of the Society of Mary. A missionary in Wallis since 1837, he owed his appointment as vicar to the successes he had achieved in the evangelisation of this island.

[473] Unable to commit himself to celibacy, Saokimi Gatafahefa ended up at the Meanee Seminary in New Zealand where he served as a coadjutor brother. The story of this first indigenous priest and the reasons for the failure of this initiative are developed in Chapter VII-3 on the establishment of an indigenous clergy.

[474] Bishop Louis Elloy was born on 29 November 1829 at Servigny-lès-Raville in the diocese of Metz. He was ordained a priest in 1853 and sailed for Samoa in 1856. Appointed pro-vicar of Bishop Bataillon and procurator of the missions in Samoa in 1859, he was charged with founding a school in Australia for the boys of the vicariate. He used his time there to print a Samoan catechism. In 1864, he was consecrated coadjutor of Bishop Bataillon. During a second stay in Australia, he celebrated the funeral in Sydney of Prince Louis-Philippe de Condé - grandson of King Louis-Philippe - who had contracted a fatal illness during his voyage around the world. Vicar Apostolic of Central Oceania in 1877, he died the following year during a trip to France.

[475] Born on 27 March 1833 at Saint-Michel in the diocese of Saint-Dié in Lorraine, Armand Lamaze was ordained a priest in 1857. Before joining the Society of Mary and embarking for Tonga in 1863, he was parish priest at Saulxures-sur-Moselotte. As Vicar Apostolic, he paid particular attention to the development of the seminary of Lano founded by Bishop Bataillon. On 17 January 1886, he ordained the first four native priests trained in Lano. In 1896 and at his request, the Samoan archipelago was separated from the vicariate of Central Oceania. He died at Maofaga on 9 September 1906.

he later established his residence. In the context of his functions as vicar, his priorities were the education of the natives and the development of a women's apostolate. He encouraged the creation of schools even in the most isolated villages, and founded a college at Maofaga for the training of teachers and catechists, while he established a minor and major seminary in Wallis. Contrary to Bishop Bataillon who showed little enthusiasm for the idea of welcoming nuns, Bishop Lamaze organised the installation of three of them in Tonga, and supported the work of the indigenous nuns whose apostolate with the women seemed to him to be essential. In addition, in order to increase the cohesion of the community by creating a solid nucleus based on the most fervent Catholics, he initiated the creation of the *Kautaha Malia* - Order of the Rosary - whose members, registered and distinguished by the wearing of a medal, were obliged to recite the Rosary daily. "*During the long interval that elapsed before books could be printed in the indigenous languages and neophytes could be initiated to read them, the Rosary took the place of everything; and even today, it is the most popular, clearest and most eloquent of the books for teaching and piety*"[476]. This devotion constituted a form of preaching that was particularly popular with the population as much for the simplicity of the rite as for the opportunities for distinction and involvement in the life of the mission that it offered to those concerned, and who felt that they were the elite Catholics of Tonga. The popularity of the Rosary was such that it led to the canonical erection of the Confraternity of the Holy Rosary in March 1889. On the other hand, Bishop Lamaze showed his desire to provide the mission with durable buildings, encouraging the construction of stone churches rather than wooden ones, the latter not being very resistant to cyclones. In terms of innovations to strengthen community cohesion, he was also responsible for the creation of *Koe Fafagu*, - '*The Bell*' - Tonga's first Catholic newspaper in 1892. This initiative paved the way for the development of a Catholic press in Tonga. *Koe Fafagu was* edited by Father Olier and later by Father Thomas. It appeared irregularly so that its printing was interrupted in 1899, resumed in 1904 by Father Blanc until 1909, continued by Father Morel, and finally abandoned at the end of 1910. The *Tauma [Taumu'a] Lelei* - "*Good wind for sailing*" - was founded in 1929 by Bishop Blanc and the first issue was published in June 1929. While Bishop Blanc was in charge of editing the *Tauma [Taumu'a] Lelei*, Father Thomas was in charge of the *Koe Fafagu*. The *Tauma [Taumu'a] Lelei* was the most widely distributed, with a circulation of about 1,000 copies, and was based on the international press. This monthly magazine was distributed throughout the islands of the archipelago, while a bulletin intended exclusively for the members of the mission, and more particularly for the indigenous clergy, was published as needed. The print run was limited to about 100 copies. The publication of *Tauma [Taumu'a] Lelei* was suspended in 1939, when Bishop Blanc was retired due to his advanced age [sic]. However, the idea of an internal mission publication was taken up in 1946 by Father Rodgers who started a new newspaper called *Koe Mooni* - "*The Truth*"[477].

An eminent personage, benefiting from an authority enhanced by remoteness, and the incarnation of the grandeur of the Apostolic and Roman Church, the bishop was an essential cog in the development of the mission. Being himself endowed with a prestigious title,

[476] Circular letter. 1889. March. Canonical erection of the Confraternity of the Holy Rosary in the two vicariates. Letters from Bishop Lamaze to Abbot Victor Renaud, 1883-1906. Lot transferred with other letters received by Abbot Renaud from Frs Aubry, Thomas, and Jouny, by Father O'Reilly, 25 July 1970.

[477] This information is taken from the responses to the questionnaire of the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith's committee for the missionary press; anonymous handwritten document, undated. (A.P.M.).

Epikopo, he was associated with the greatest in the kingdoms as representative of the Tu'i Tapu - the Pope. As a result, his arrival was always eagerly awaited and majestically welcomed. His visits provoked a movement of people throughout the villages of the island. The men gathered to beat the drums while the women and children gathered along the shore. Meanwhile, a few Catholics stayed with the priest to prepare the episcopal throne, which was placed on a pulpit in the sanctuary of the church, decorated for the occasion with garlands of flowers and fabrics. As soon as he set foot on the ground, the bishop knelt down to bless the land, which he commended to the grace of God. Then, escorted by the Catholic chiefs, he went in procession to the church where he proceeded to a first blessing while waiting for the time of the pontifical Mass. He was then awaited by his hosts who had gathered around a kava. In the evening, a traditional banquet with songs and dances crowned the event. The presence in full uniform of the French military staff in whose company he had travelled added to the pomp and solemnity of the celebrations. "*The dense crowd pressed to hear and see especially our French officers and sailors whose feats of arms the missionary so often recounts*"[478]. The pomp and circumstance of the feverish and enthusiastic Catholics and the unanimity that the event took on among the Tongan population reflected the impact of these visits in which the Marists saw the consecration of their work. These rare moments were also privileged in the life of the community because of the deep feelings they engendered: feelings of unity, power and greatness that emanated from the bishop and the missionaries who surrounded him, assisted him and served him. "*In Oceania, a chief must always have an honourable following. A large following enhances the episcopal dignity*"[479]. This pageantry was seen by Catholics, but also by Protestants who were fascinated by it, as a tangible manifestation of the radiance of the Catholic Church. The processions that accompanied the bishop on his travels were therefore particularly important. "*We just did a pastoral tour that lasted almost a month. A great Tongan chief had graciously placed his fifty-ton ship at our disposal. Eighty people made up the entourage of his Lordship: musicians, school children and catechists*"[480]. It appears that the bishop was respected and honoured like a great chief.

By his presence, he seemed to confer some of his sacred aura on the Catholics who flocked to place a kiss on the episcopal ring. This ritual is reminiscent of the ancestral forms of veneration of the Tu'i Tonga who, despite his desire to free himself from these practices in order to access the sacrament of baptism, was confronted with the desire of his people to maintain them. The Tu'i Tonga was not so much revered for his personage as for the symbols he embodied in traditional religion, symbols which the bishop also carried in the Catholic religion. There were many conversions to Catholicism among the commoners attached to the clan of the Tu'i Tonga, and it is possible that the acts of veneration perpetuated through the personage of the bishop had a continuity with the ancestral approach to the sacred. Just as their ancestors obtained the protection of the gods by going to the Tu'i Tonga to pay their respects, so did Catholics in Tonga who received the sacrament of Confirmation from the bishop, as they were assured of their incorporation into the Church and thus of their encounter with Christ.

It is clear that the prelate's visits were essential moments for the community as a whole and for each individual in particular. Also, the missionaries despaired of the irregularity of his stays which, moreover, had a disturbing impact on the Protestants. "*The bishop inspires dignity and*

[478] Father Olier to Father Poupinel, Maofaga, 8 December 1883 (A.P.M., 820).
[479] Father Lamaze to Father Poupinel, Maofaga, 28 November 1869 (A.P.M., 638).
[480] Father Olier to the Superior of the S.M., Tongatapu, 3 August 1891 (A.P.M., 832).

veneration among the natives. Protestants and pagans share this feeling. It is even in their eyes what casts splendour and lustre on our religion and gives it a far greater superiority over all known sects in the region. Take away the bishop and the prestige is gone: our Christians are mortified and scandalized and we ourselves are exposed to contempt and indifference on a par with the English ministers. Our enemies know this so well that the long absence of the bishop has already made them triumphant. They have said over and over again that the bishop has gone to the whites, he will not be seen again in these countries. And this is the reason which they regard as one of the strongest for retaining their people in heresy and inspiring ours with discouragement and mistrust"[481]. In February 1850, Father Chevron complained to the Superior General of the Congregation that he had not received a visit from Bishop Bataillon since June 1848[482]. In 1873, it took Bishop Elloy more than a year to complete a tour of the missions in his vicariate, namely Tonga, Samoa, Rotuma, Futuna, Wallis, and Fiji. In this regard, Father Chevron saw the disadvantages of this state of affairs in the first years of his installation in Tonga. "*The lack of regularity in the Bishop's visits is a great disservice to the mission because the natives lose confidence and the fathers lose credibility. However, as long as the vicariate groups together under the same authority different archipelagos which are too far apart to allow for a coherent management, the missions will suffer from the irregularity of communications with their bishop, because the connections between the archipelagos of the Pacific are rare and disorganised*"[483]. In establishing the episcopal see in Tonga in 1879, Bishop Lamaze made a more regular presence than his predecessors who resided respectively in Wallis and Samoa. However, he still made frequent trips to the neighbouring islands of Wallis, Futuna and Samoa, as well as two trips to Europe and one to New Zealand to raise funds for the mission. In addition, maritime links were sometimes completely interrupted for varying lengths of time, either because of climatic conditions or because of health risks. "*Bishop Lamaze has been held up for two months in Vava'u, where he had gone for the blessing of the new church, built in Fugamisi (mountains of dreams). The steamer which operates from New Zealand to Sydney no longer passes through since an epidemic fever is ravaging Fiji*"[484]. From 1896 onwards, when the administration of the Vicariate of Samoa was entrusted to Bishop Broyer, the Catholic mission in Tonga achieved a new stability and gained increased recognition in the eyes of the whole population of the archipelago[485].

However, these rare visits, when they did take place, did not always meet the expectations of missionaries and Catholics alike. "*On the subject of the Bishop, I need to give an opinion about one thing. Father Soret seemed astonished that we received his Lordship with such eagerness. He told us several times that we would be much more delighted when we saw him off. He said this in such a comical way that we could not help laughing at first, but it was repeated so often that we were tired of it. So I told him several times that it was a falsehood. But he replied that, although we did not want to admit it, he knew what we were thinking*"[486]. Indeed, the missionaries expected him, in the case of Bishop Bataillon, to ensure, by liaising with the chiefs of the archipelago, the smooth running of the mission with regard to their reception, their

[481] Father Piéplu to Father Favre, Tongatapu, 12 December 1856 (A.P.M., 847).
[482] Father Chevron to the Superior of the S.M., Tongatapu, 30 October 1849 (A.P.M., 411).
[483] Father Chevron to the Superior of the S.M., Tongatapu, 27 June 1843 (A.P.M., 392).
[484] Father Olier to the Superior of the S.M., Tongatapu, 27 September 1898 (A.P.M., 836).
[485] On 1 January 1940, Bishop Blanc transferred the bishopric of Maofaga to Nuku'alofa, the capital of the kingdom.
[486] Father Chevron to Father Poupinel, Tongatapu, 30 July 1868 (A.P.M., 1 105).

supplies, their travel and their security. However, according to Father Calinon, who referred the matter to the Superior General of the Congregation, the bishop had failed in his mission by being too trusting of the chiefs who did not give much importance to the promises they had made to him, leaving the fate of the missionaries at the mercy of their convenience. "*You can see from this (concerning the dependence of the Marists on the population) how a bishop and chiefs dealing together, one with his European ideas, the others with their savage ideas, must get along. This makes it easier to agree, and both sides believe they have made a good deal*"[487]. It is certain that Bishop Bataillon maintained a distant attitude in his relations with the Tongan chiefs which made the missionaries think that he would not get more involved for their benefit. Thus, when Bishop Bataillon made a stopover in the archipelago on the eve of the war at Pea, he had a brief meeting with King George and was assured that the lives of the missionaries would not be harmed. Then he left the island without any more sureties. Moreover, rumours from Wallis about the prosperity of the mission did not help to bring the prelate closer to the Catholics in Tonga. "*Since Bishop Bataillon's last visit, almost a year ago, our position has seemed less brilliant, though undoubtedly more solid. The natives, like inexperienced children, had made everything bigger. Basing themselves on some words which I would not dare to qualify that escaped from Bishop Pompallier either in Wallis or in Futuna, the natives took pleasure in imagining that the bishop was going to arrive with a squadron, perhaps a fleet of warships and transport ships; that he was going to distribute to them in abundance, clothes, spades, axes, pots, knives, etc. Then, based on the somewhat exaggerated words with which the Protestant missionaries were treated in Wallis, they imagined that the bishop was going to summon these missionaries to his court and that with one word he was going to reduce them to confessing, at least by their silence, that they were nothing but impostors*"[488]. These successive differences prompted the Tongan missionaries to appeal to the Superior General of the Congregation to intercede with Bishop Bataillon on their behalf; this was done but never led to the establishment of relations exempt from certain resentments.

In contrast, the consecration in 1879 of Bishop Lamaze, who had previously been in charge of the Maofaga mission and who had already established a relationship of mutual trust with Tonga's Catholics, brought about profound changes for the Catholic community in the archipelago through the transformation in the bishop's relationships with King George and the Protestant aristocracy in general. Flattered that Father Lamaze had been consecrated a bishop, King George was also sensitive to the marks of deference shown to him on various occasions: a letter of condolence sent from Rome at the time of the death of the Crown Prince, a few presents including a case of Bordeaux wine to which King George responded by offering him a giant tortoise, attested to the consideration that Bishop Lamaze held for the monarch at a time when ties with the President of the Wesleyan Church were weakening[489]. This wise attitude shown by Bishop Lamaze combined with the discretion of the Catholic missionaries in the face of the setbacks faced by Protestants allowed for a dialogue to be established between the

[487] Father Calinon to the Superior of the S.M., Tongatapu, October 1845; copy of a report on the temporal administration of the Vicariate Apostolic of Central Oceania. (A.P.M., 272).
[488] Father Chevron to the Superior of the S.M., Tongatapu, 17 June 1845 (A.P.M., 397).
[489] Father Castagnier to Father Germain, Maofaga, 26 July 1879 (A.P.M., 351). Father Castagnier to Father Lamaze, Maofaga, 28 October 1879 (A.P.M., 355). Father Castagnier to Bishop Lamaze, Maofaga, 23 February 1880 (A.P.M., 360). Father Castagnier to Father Poupinel, Maofaga, 7 May 1880 (A.P.M., 361).

Marists and King George. "*King George for some time has liked to see us at his court, the Wesleyan bigoted queen is beginning to smile less*"[490].

2 - Missionary priests

Since the foundation of the Catholic mission in 1842, the lack of personnel was a constant obstacle to the development of the mission establishments. Generally speaking, the arrivals hardly compensated for the departures and deaths. The rules of the Society of Mary provided for the presence of at least two missionaries in each establishment, because of the dangers of isolation for young priests left to their own devices without the spiritual help of a companion. But the dispersion of the islands and their remoteness generally prevented the application of this rule, especially as the small number of faithful in certain establishments hardly justified the presence of two missionaries. Thus, Father Breton, rightly called "*the hermit of Vava'u*", remained at the head of the mission in this archipelago from 1863 until his death in 1881. His solitude was broken once a year - when the climatic and material conditions were suitable - by the visits of his confreres from Tongatapu who took turns in order to hear his confession. He himself made only rare visits to the neighbouring islands. From 1850 to 1900, the Catholic evangelisation of the archipelago depended on a handful of men. Indeed, during all these years, the number of missionaries officiating in Tonga fluctuated, depending on the period, between two and seven, this last figure corresponding to a maximum number which was maintained exceptionally during four consecutive years, from 1891 to 1895[491]. Generally, the Marists were five in number. Apart from the priest resident in Vava'u, the other four were divided between the establishments on Tongatapu: Maofaga, Mu'a or Hihifo. In fact, this situation forced the bishop to limit the movements and transfers of his missionaries, which the latter always resigned themselves to with difficulty when it was imposed on them, especially if they had to stay in Hihifo, where the Protestants had always maintained a strong hostility towards the Catholic priests, and where the distances to be travelled between the villages of the district were greater than in Mu'a and Maofaga. In 1870, the mission at Hihifo was entrusted by Bishop Bataillon to Father Castagnier, who found this decision as a form of alienation and for which he was somewhat bitter. He nevertheless remained there until 1881, mainly translating biblical texts in the solitude of his presbytery where Catholics hardly crowded, being scattered in small numbers in remote villages.

Among all the Marist missionaries who exercised their apostolic vocation in Tonga, some distinguished themselves by personalities more outstanding than others, either by their greater capacity for adaptation or self-sacrifice, the vivacity of their enthusiasm, the strength of their obstinacy or the longevity of their priesthood. Father Chevron belonged to this category of men who left an imprint of their presence in our memories. He was undoubtedly a central figure of the Catholic mission in Tonga as his reputation for compassion extended beyond the confines of his establishment to all the islands of the archipelago[492]. A man of prayer and supplications,

[490] Father Olier to Father Poupinel, Maofaga, 10 May 1881 (A.P.M., 816).

[491] Cf. figure 1. 2. in the appendix: graphic representation of the presence of Marist missionaries inTonga from 1842 to 1940.

[492] A native of the Haut-Bugey region, from a family renowned for its religious fervour, he entered the ecclesiastical college of Belley at the age of fifteen. At the age of 18, he was accepted into the diocesan seminary of Bourg-en-Bresse where he studied theology for three years. A teacher at the Belley school, then a professor at Ferney college, he was ordained a priest in 1831, at the age of 23. In 1838, attracted by distant shores, he contacted the Society of Mary. In 1840, he had his first experiences of missionary life with Father Bataillon in Wallis before joining the mission in Tonga two years later.

an exemplary missionary in his ability to endure hardship with equal self-sacrifice as well as in the wisdom of his reactions, he was until 1884, the date of his death, the pivotal figure of the mission of Mu'a and a reference point for the other missionaries of Tonga for whom he was the '*venerable Father Chevron*'. "*I would put myself in the category of those who, by a kind of maternal tenderness for the natives, want to excuse as much as they can the faults of their children*"[493]. However, his impassivity in the face of events aroused the exasperation of Father Calinon whose impetuous character could not easily accommodate this state of mind. Calinon clashed with Chevron over the support to be given to the mission by officers of France's Pacific Naval Division. Chevron had been appointed by Bishop Bataillon as the superior of the Tonga mission, so Father Calinon was forced to agree with him but not without bitterness on his part. It is probable that these incompatibilities in temperament between the two missionaries, one a man of compromise, the other authoritarian and combative, were the cause of Father Calinon's departure for Australia in 1867. However, from the 1870s onwards, Father Chevron himself recognised his difficulty in adapting to the upheavals of the time and in responding to the growing demands of his neophytes for improvements in their daily life. Thus, he suggested to the Superior of the Society of Mary that he be replaced by a priest "*with younger ideas*". When this proposal was turned down, he continued his habits and way of life, refusing to travel on horseback and keeping his home simple. On the fiftieth anniversary of his priesthood, he was presented by his faithful in Mu'a with a long tapa and a black tapa to line his grave, honours traditionally due to the greatest chiefs. Tongans were particularly sensitive to the fact that Catholic missionaries, unlike their Protestant counterparts, chose to dedicate themselves to their land of mission until death. Finally, other missionaries, such as Fathers Grange, Nivelleau and Piéplu [sic] who only stayed for relatively short periods of time and were not buried in Tonga, left few memories of their stay.

Obviously, occasional disagreements could not fail to arise between these men whose character traits were exacerbated by the crampedness of the island environment and whose limited number removed any possibility of escape. However, the cohesion of the Catholic community in Tonga would not have been assured without the existence of deep bonds that united the missionaries, maintaining the feeling of belonging to the same great religious family, that of the Society of Mary. "*Our occupations of all kinds prevent us from noticing our isolation. I am speaking the European language here. For we do not see ourselves as isolated, but as a family whose ties, though spiritual, are no less strong*"[494]. From 1842 to 1854, Fathers Chevron and Calinon were the focal points of the mission, temporarily supported by Fathers Grange, then Nivelleau and Piéplu, whose physical weakness or moral disarray did not prepare them to endure the realities of missionary life. "*Father Grange, as a result of the state of privation in which we have been left until now, is completely discouraged. He was about to leave with the corvette, but Father Provincial objected. Grange's reflections are justified in substance, but he accompanies them with forms which are a hundred miles from the religious spirit. Father Grange is in a state where he cannot be counted on for the missions*"[495].

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[493] Father Chevron to Father Colin, Pea, 19 January 1847 (A.P.M., 405).

[494] Father Chevron to his family, Tongatapu, 21 September 1849 (A.P.M., 410).

[495] Father Chevron to Father Colin, Tongatapu, 17 June 1845 (A.P.M., 397). Father Grange to Father Colin, Tongatapu, 20 February 1844 (A.P.M., 513). "*I notice that the history of the voyages is more of a romantic narrative than a true history. Indeed, I only find accuracy in these stories in their geographical position, and even then not always; the reason is that those who have written these accounts have rather depicted their exalted imagination than the customs of the peoples of whom they speak, customs which it was impossible for them to*

From 1858 onwards, the conflict between Bishop Bataillon and Father Colin, Superior of the Society of Mary, was resolved by the latter's resignation, and the Tonga mission was immediately reinforced by two new arrivals, Fathers Castagnier and Guitta. Their arrival was greeted by Fathers Calinon and Chevron with all the more satisfaction as it coincided with a boom in Catholicism following the signing of the 1855 Convention, which allowed for the opening of new establishments. While Father Chevron retained responsibility for the mission of Mu'a, that of Vava'u was entrusted to Father Castagnier, and that of Ha'apai to Fathers Calinon and Guitta. For many years, this small group formed the backbone of the Catholic mission in Tonga. Father Calinon died at Maofaga in 1876 at the age of 71, Father Chevron at Mu'a in 1884 at the age of 76, Father Castagnier at Vava'u in 1910 at the age of 80, and Father Guitta at Mu'a in 1914 at the age of 85. With the death of these men, the era of the pioneers came to an end while the era of the missionaries who were better prepared for the conditions of life in Oceania, by learning English, mastering the rudiments of Tongan, and being welcomed into a structured community, began. The arrival of Father Breton in 1862, Father Monnier in 1864, and Father Lamaze in 1865 gave the mission a new lease of life. This new generation, who benefited from the experience of the older ones, set to work more quickly than its predecessors as all the elements were in place to facilitate their integration. The reopening of the Hihifo establishment was assured by Father Castagnier who was replaced in Vava'u by Father Breton. Father Lamaze took charge of the Maofaga station, which he managed for the rest of his life, together with Father Monnier. In 1862, Father Guitta returned from Vava'u to assist Father Chevron at Mu'a, in accordance with his most cherished wishes. In 1872, the failure of the Catholic settlement at Ha'apai led to Father Calinon's return to Maofaga, while the mission at Vava'u continued to grow steadily.

The decade 1880-1890 was marked by the arrival of four new priests, who ensured the renewal of the personnel and continuity of the mission following the episcopal consecration of Bishop Lamaze in 1879 and the death of Father Breton the following year[496]. As for Fathers Castagnier and Guitta, one in Vava'u and the other in Mu'a, they continued, despite the weight of years, their work of building churches and chapels. The most outstanding figures of this third generation were Fathers Jouny and Thomas[497]. The Marist missionaries who arrived in Tonga at the end of the nineteenth century established a structured mission which they worked to consolidate before gradually giving way to the indigenous clergy.

The activities of the Catholic missionaries in Tonga were confined to the island of Tongatapu until 1858. Seventeen years of Marist apostolate led to the opening of two new stations: one at

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know, and if I were to tell the history of these peoples with full knowledge and integrity, my narration would be the direct opposite of theirs. In fact, the navigators who gave us information on these countries arrived in a harbour where they stayed for 15 or 20 days without knowing the language and only saw the chiefs on board in their bathing clothes, so they could hardly judge the whole thing any better... But what surprises me more is that almost all the missionaries continue to give credence to these false ideas and they would like me to do the same. Their reasons, they say, are to excite more and more vocations. But has there been a vocation based on error capable of doing much good."

[496] These were Fathers Olier and Loyson [sic] in 1881, Father Jouny in 1888, and Father Thomas in 1889.

[497] Fr Emile Thomas was born on 12 September 1861 at Rebeuville in the Vosges; ordained a priest in 1887, he joined the mission of Tonga where he resided until his death in June 1942. Father Jouny was born on 12 September 1846 in Plougenast; ordained a priest in May 1872, he then spent two years at the scholasticate in Belley to teach canon law. In 1874, he embarked for Wallis where he served for twelve years as chaplain to Queen Amelia, chaplain to the prisoners, and professor at the seminary of Lano. In 1886, he was appointed by Bishop Lamaze to open a mission in the Niuas. From 1887 until his death in 1931, he lived in Niua Fo'ou.

Ha'apai, the other at Vava'u. From that time onwards, and despite a generally favourable context for the growth of Catholicism due to the tolerance expressed by the majority of Protestant chiefs and the arrival of missionary reinforcements, the Catholic mission developed unevenly from one archipelago to another. In 1858, a station was opened at Lifuka in the Ha'apai archipelago, and another at Fugamisi in the Vava'u archipelago. The population of Ha'apai, the first to have converted massively to Protestantism under pressure from its supreme chief Taufa'ahau, refused for many years to welcome the Marist missionaries, while that of Vava'u, more independent of royal power, less withdrawn to itself, and stimulated by the presence of a Wallisian community established in this archipelago, showed itself more receptive to Catholic doctrine.

In Tongatapu, the administrative division of the mission was modelled on the civil divisions established by the king in the 1880s[498]. The island was thus divided into three sectors whose centres corresponded to the main villages: the central district, whose chief town was Maofaga, included the villages of Pea, Veitongo, Folaha and Longoteme; the eastern district of Mu'a, the villages of Hahake, Hamula, Fuamotu and Halaliku; and the western district of Hihifo, the villages of Houma, Hahakame [Ha'akame], Ha'atalo [Ha'alalo], Teekiu and Utulau[499]. The principal residence of the missionaries was established in the main centres which functioned as a base from which to serve the surrounding villages. In 1885, the central mission had about six hundred Catholics, of whom one hundred and sixty resided in Nuku'alofa, the political, administrative and economic hub of the kingdom, and two hundred in Pea[500]. The one in Hihifo had two hundred and twenty faithful in sixteen villages, and the one in Mu'a had nine hundred and fifty scattered in twenty-four villages. In 1887, Father Guitta was in charge, in addition to the church of Mu'a, of ten chapels spread out in different parts of his district. Once every fortnight, the Catholic population of each of the island's villages was visited by the priest, who celebrated mass, participated in the recitation of prayers and catechism. During the rest of the time, the priest delegated the duty of daily instruction and prayer to the auxiliary - *Tokoni.* The resident catechist [*Tauhi*] announced the three angelus with the sound of the *Lali* and saw to the recitation of the rosary. He was also responsible for the upkeep of the chapel, the reception of Catholic visitors and the preparation of ceremonies and sacraments. Every Friday, the priest and the catechists would meet to draw up a weekly work plan. Every three years, they gathered for a retreat in Mu'a. In the context of a small missionary team, the presence and work of the catechists was of great importance in the Catholic village communities, including the initiatives they took at the liturgical level. "*There is evidence that Catholicism has taken deep root in people's hearts. Thus, catechists from Mu'a wanted to show their love for our S.J.C. [Lord Jesus Christ] in the Eucharist. In addition to the adoration on Holy Thursday, they meet three other times during the year. We rejoice in being able to establish the works of Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. The practice of this devotion was determined in Tonga by the catechists. They have given us a plan which is basically the same as that followed in France. Three times a year at Mu'a, from Mass to Evening Prayer, they practice the solemn exposition of the Blessed Sacrament which they adore in turn, and the faithful who wish to do so may join them*"[501].

[498] Although a letter from Father Guitta dated 27 June 1885 mentions this administrative division, neither the circumstances nor the date of its establishment are specified.
[499] Cf. map II: Tonga Archipelago, representation of the different island groups.
[500] Father Guitta to Father Martin, Tongatapu, 27 June 1885 (A.P.M., 538).
[501] Father Lamaze to Father Poupinel at Sydney, Tongatapu, 13 December 1866 (A.P.M., 625).

Each year, the catechists received ten percent of the collection of *Kataoga [Katoaga] Ofa* - feast of love - as remuneration for their services. In some villages, the government granted them a plantation which they could exploit as they wished. But this compensation was hardly enough to support their families. Moreover, the percentage granted on the collections represented a symbolic sum compared to the salary received by the Protestant auxiliaries to whom they did not fail to compare their situation. As a result, the Marist Fathers on many occasions lamented their difficulties in maintaining the perseverance of their catechists, frustrated at not having their economic and social aspirations met. This system, which was intended to make up for the shortage of priests, had other shortcomings as well. Catechists were generally based in the village where they lived, and rarely agreed to move to a place far from their relatives, let alone to visit other Catholics in the district or to isolate themselves in the midst of a Protestant population. The catechists were trained in the college at Maofaga, but most of them came from Mu'a where the faithful were the most numerous, the most fervent and the most attached to their mission, to the great pleasure of the fathers of Mu'a - "*Our young households would never go to Maofaga*" - and to the displeasure of the others[502].

3 - The laborious beginnings of the indigenous clergy

The scattering of Catholic communities in the archipelago and the lack of missionaries encouraged the latter to focus on the training of catechists. However, their long-term goal was to create an indigenous clergy to respond more specifically to the needs of the Tonga mission and gradually to take over its development. "*For that it would require (nice parishes in the middle of this vast ocean) a large number of indigenous clergy, and by the time they were formed, many souls would be deprived of the help of religion*"[503]. Moreover, the formation of an indigenous clergy was to allow for a faster integration of the priest into the community thanks to a mastery of the language and a knowledge of the environment, which implied for the European missionaries a more or less laborious phase of adaptation and learning. "*Father Breton is not successful in his mission. His problem is the study of the language; he provokes laughter when he speaks Tongan*"[504]. The constraints of isolation or remoteness were also to make it possible to establish a mission in the islands where the Marists had not been able to open a mission because of major communication difficulties, as in Niua, situated outside the maritime routes. Among all the factors that prompted the encouragement of vocations must also have included the economic factor, as the existence of an indigenous clergy would make it possible to limit the cost of travel and that of stewardship.

As early as the 1860s, Bishop Bataillon demonstrated his desire to foster vocations among the young Catholics of his vicariate by placing the most fervent in the service of a priest who gave them regular instruction. Those who showed a real inclination for the priestly life were sent to Clydesdale, Australia. But the experience was a failure for these young boys, who were cut off from their environment, suffering from the climate and the rigours of a discipline ill-suited to their traditional way of life[505]. Consequently, the prelate then developed the potentials of the minor seminary he had founded in Wallis in the village of Lano in 1845. This small structure was more suitable for the needs of the vicariate than the one in Clydesdale, which was disproportionate to the small number of students who attended. The first results of a lasting

[502] Father Bellwald to Father Régis, Mu'a, 17 May 1899 (A.P.M., 192).
[503] Father Lamaze to Father Hingre, parish priest of Vagnez, Maofaga, 30 November 1866 (A.P.M., 624).
[504] Father Monnier to the Superior of the S.M., Tongatapu, 15 April 1859 (A.P.M., 786).
[505] HOSIE J., *Challenge, the Marists in Colonial Australia*, pp.168-185.

establishment of the Catholic Church in Tonga through the vocations it nurtured were not observed until the final years of the 19th century. Indeed, earlier attempts were unsuccessful. In this regard, the example of Father Soakimi Gatafahefa is indicative of the major obstacles to the development of an indigenous Catholic clergy. Born in Fiji to Tongan parents, and having spent his childhood in Futuna, Father Soakimi Gatafahefa was the first indigenous priest of Tongan descent. In 1856, he arrived in Rome, accompanied by Bishop Bataillon who introduced him to Pope Pius X and enrolled him in the College of the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda Fide. He was ordained a priest on June 10, 1865 after nine years of study during which, in addition to the usual courses, he learned the subtleties of the French language. He returned to Tonga in July 1868, but not before visiting the Marist houses in France[506]. The account of his stay in Europe surprised his fellow citizens who were astonished at the generosity of the religious authorities who had provided for his needs during all those years[507]. As for King George, he did not hide his pride in having the first Catholic priest in the vicariate among his subjects. However, the long years he had spent in Rome had served to weaken the connection with his origins. Rejected by the Tongan Catholic community because of his lack of knowledge of the customs and faced with the slander of Protestants who feared that he would be emulated, he brought about resentments during his stay. "*...and again the minister preached to Mu'a saying that I went to see the Queen of England, and that the Queen had chased me away because I have no money to pay the entrance to the palace; but this is incredible lies... And now there are Catholics who have made songs of their faka missionary and all their nonsense*"[508]. Moreover, he was plagued by constant requests from his relatives, and was transferred to Futuna before the year was out, where new difficulties arose[509]. Indeed, he incurred the wrath of the bishop for having incited the population to chase away the Marist missionaries whose presence no longer seemed indispensable to him since he was capable of fulfilling the same functions as them. Bishop Bataillon sent him to Wallis where he entrusted him with running the seminary at Lano. But having failed to keep his vows of chastity, he was forbidden to receive the sacrament on January 5, 1873. He ended his days in a New Zealand monastery where he fulfilled the various functions of a coadjutor brother and where he died in 1893. The lessons of this failure underline the difficulties for an indigenous priest to submit to the rigorous constraints of his new life, and more generally to define himself as a priest within his familial and social environment, and finally to situate himself in relation to his fellow co-religionists. "*I am not able to hold any position here. I rarely go to Hahake, and more rarely or never elsewhere. The least effort I make brings me down. Father Soakimi is not capable of holding office. He would have made an excellent brother. He is always busy with manual work. It is said that our neophytes are ashamed of his instructions. He is as Kanak in his relationship with the natives as any of them. He is, however, of a gentle character. He would easily be dominated by the chiefs and his parents. Everyone is of the opinion that he would be better off elsewhere than here*"[510]. As they were obliged to live in the solitude of the presbytery and to remain celibate, the first indigenous priests found it difficult to resist the daily temptations; the pressure from their relatives, who demanded, in accordance with custom, their presence at

[506] ANGLEVIEL Frédéric, *Wallis and Futuna (1801-1888), contacts, evangelisations, inculturations*, volume III, p.488.
[507] Father Breton to Father Poupinel, Vava'u, 19 March 1872 (A.P.M., 251).
[508] Father Gata to Father Poupinel at Sydney, Tongatapu, 21 September 1867 (A.P.M., 1 131).
[509] ANGLEVIEL Frédéric, *Wallis and Futuna (1801-1888), contacts, evangelisations, inculturations*, volume III, p.593.
[510] Father Chevron to Father Poupinel at Sydney, Tongatapu, 17 February 1868 (A.P.M., I 104).

family events and their material support, contributed to making their situation precarious. In addition to these difficulties of adaptation to priestly life, there was the problem of relations between the native priest and the Marist missionaries, who wished to keep them under their tutelage and considered them above all as auxiliaries. For some Marists, living with a native priest was an attack on their European pride. Thus, upon the death of a Futunian priest who was assisting him, Father Loyer asked to be joined by a Marist and not a native priest. "*I would never send an indigenous priest to evangelise the half-wild people of the Ha'apai Islands. The indigenous priests are in general too familiar with the natives, even with the opposite sex, hence a great danger, a continual danger to them. Moreover, they are not easy to lead; and as far as I am concerned, I am too reluctant to confess to one of them*"[511]. In this context of reluctance, the formation of an indigenous Catholic clergy was slow and required a journey towards greater maturity on both sides. The experience of the first indigenous priests had shown that respect for celibacy was a major obstacle to their ministry, so the Marists favoured increasing the number of catechists, whose family's presence at their side guaranteed their stability.

On December 19, 1885, at the seminary in Lano, Bishop Lamaze ordained five seminarians and three weeks later four deacons. Apart from Soakimi Gatafahefa, these young men were the first priests to be ordained in the entire Pacific region. As students, they had received the basic theology necessary for the priesthood and some French to use the books sent by the procuratorate in Lyon. The priests trained in Lano and sent to Tonga were Fathers Sosefo Maugateau, Petelo Liku Mo Aka Aka, Lolesio Kavauvea, and Lamata. Father Sosefo Maugateau, born in Futuna, died in Ha'apai in 1894. Son of one of the first converts of Father Chanel in Futuna, he was noticed for his devotion by Bishop Bataillon who enrolled him in the seminary at Lano. He devoted the first eight years of his apostolate to the mission on Tongatapu before assisting Father Jouny. Father Petelo Liku Mo Aka Aka was born in Wallis on November 11, 1859. He taught philosophy to the students of Lano for a long period, interspersed with a few stays in Rome and Australia where he tried to make amends for his breach of the vows of poverty and chastity. He was attached to the Tonga mission from 1903 to 1938. Father Lolesio Kavauvea was trained in Lano and ordained in 1886. He died in Tonga in 1918 after contracting the Spanish flu. Father Lamata was also trained at Lano and ordained in 1891. He died in Tonga in 1900. All three were born in Wallis. A second ordination ceremony was celebrated twelve years later by Bishop Lamaze in 1897, but none of the young men seem to have ministered in Tonga. A third was celebrated by Bishop Blanc in 1922. On the death of Father Jouny in 1931, Father Petelo took over the mission of Niua Fo'ou. However, his inability to cope with the responsibilities entrusted to him did not allow him to ensure the smooth running of the establishment. Moreover, because of his generous nature, he distributed most of his property to his family and accumulated debts. Father Setefano, sent to the rescue, obtained rapid results but was hardly encouraged by his superiors, who reproached him for shortcomings in the area of doctrine and methods of evangelisation judged not to be in keeping with the idea that the Marists had of their apostolate. Indeed, he seemed less attached to the recitation of prayers than to the kava ceremonies to which he devoted himself morning and evening. In Maofaga, on the other hand, Fathers Sagato and Kelekolio [Kailao] were, with Bishop Blanc, the pillars of the mission. Father Kelekolio, director of Api Fo'ou - Blessed Father Chanel's College - was assisted by four young men. In addition to administrative duties,

[511] Father Loyer to the Superior of the S.M. in Lyons, Lifuka, Ha'apai, 20 March 1894 (A.P.M., 708).

he taught four hours of classes daily, arranged food for all the members of the college, acted as vicar for the parish of Maofaga, and visited the remote villages of the district on Sundays. Young Father Petelo [Likumoakaaka] was also a vicar at Maofaga[512]. Always on the move, he travelled through his district of sixteen villages, each with a chapel, where Mass was celebrated at least once a month[513].

To prevent the negative effects of the division of the vicariate which occurred in 1935 and which cut off Tonga from Wallis and Futuna, Bishop Blanc began, as early as 1933, to consider the creation of a minor seminary at Maofaga. The prelate taught Latin, history, physiology, scripture, philosophy, and theology. In 1939, four Tongan seminarians who had completed their two years of philosophy and begun their theology were tonsured. These young men were a new hope for the mission and the three native fathers trained at Lano Seminary in Wallis - Fathers Kelekolio in Tongatapu, Petelo in Niua Toputapu, and Setefano in Niua Fo'ou - hoped to welcome them into their ranks on the occasion of the centenary of the Marist mission, the anniversary of which was scheduled for July 1942. Two of them, Fathers Felise [Afei] and Petelo Faone, were indeed integrated into the Tonga mission[514].

II - The social dimension of the mission

1 - The female apostolate

The announcement in 1866 of the visit of a *Fefine Tapu* - a sacred woman - aroused enthusiasm among the Catholics of Tongatapu who were impatiently awaiting the arrival of the nuns whose existence had been recounted to them by the missionaries, but also by Wallisians passing through Tonga[515]. They were therefore greatly disappointed to learn, the day after her arrival on the island, that she was not one of them, but an English Catholic woman - which nevertheless came as a pleasant surprise to the Catholic population of the island who reserved a welcome for her commensurate with the occasion - who was making a short stopover in Tongatapu[516]. In fact, this anecdote reflects the deep desire of the Tongan community as a whole to receive the nuns, whose presence was requested in various parts of the archipelago by both Catholic and Protestant chiefs. The latter did not spare any efforts to encourage the nuns' installation by offering new land for the construction of convents or by participating in collections whose funds were to be used for the development of their establishments. "*I had feared the appearance of the sisters until now. Good information given by some English captains has led some Wesleyan chiefs to express their desire to see them brought here. We think that they will do us a great deal of good, and will at least relieve us, for my part, of a furious chore: the care of female youths*"[517]. Thus, there was unanimity for their establishment in the archipelago - if not among certain Catholic missionaries who never lost a certain reserve with regard to the role of the nuns[518]. "*The departure of Sister Marie des Anges will allow the house (sic) in Tonga to*

[512] The eldest, a Marist since 1889, celebrated his golden anniversary of priesthood in December 1935 at the age of 76; he was living at Niua Fo'ou with Father Setefano.
[513] Letters to missionaries, 1 February 1935, Central Oceania. (A.P.M.).
[514] Letters to missionaries, 21 May 1945, Central Oceania. (A.P.M.).
[515] In Wallis, the Tertiaries had been present since 1857.
[516] Father Lamaze to Father Hingre, parish priest of Vagnez, Maofaga, 30 November 1866 (A.P.M., 624).
[517] Father Chevron to the Superior of the S.M. in Lyons, Tongatapu, 9 July 1858 (A.P.M., 411).
[518] Despite the opposition of Bishop Bataillon, the priests in Wallis wrote a letter to the Superior of the S.M. in 1857 to ask for the help of teaching brothers and nuns (Frédéric Angleviel, *L'apostolat féminin à Wallis et Futuna, 1857-1886: des catholiques lyonnaises aux sœurs autochtones*. Typed document, page 5, Nouméa, n.d.).

be firmly re-established. Sister Marie de la Pitié remains to guard the place and the cows"[519]. In this respect, it is certain that the first contacts between the missionaries and the nuns were delicate. On the one hand, the missionaries wanted them to benefit from the experience they had acquired in the indigenous environment, and reproached them for applying too strict rules of enclosure, which they considered unsuited to Tongan conviviality; on the other hand, they affirmed their desire to retain a minimum of autonomy and to escape their control. "*The work of the sisters is positive, but they still have a spirit of mistrust towards us. This is a real shame, especially in countries where they are not familiar with the customs. By their enclosure, they keep away many people whom it would be useful for them to see*"[520].

The majority of the fathers, and especially Bishop Lamaze who as a young child had been entrusted to the care of a nun and whose own sister had joined the Congregation of the Sisters of Providence, were aware of the important role that nuns had to play with young girls and women whose education had long been neglected because of the multiple occupations with which the missionaries were burdened and their difficulties with controlling the fairer sex. "*Reflecting on what could be most useful in Tonga, I thought that if we too could have sisters in the future, it would be a real blessing for us and especially for our little girls*[521]. Indeed, the arrival of the sisters allowed the apostolic field of the mission to be enlarged and a more respectful distribution of conventions and functions to take place. While the missionaries tended to stay outside the house or shared a kava with the men, the nuns entered the intimacy of the homes where they contributed to introducing into daily life a sacred dimension to which women had always shown themselves particularly sensitive, as evidenced by the success achieved among them by the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament. "*I will tell you that for everything related to the Blessed Sacrament, we love what is beautiful, rich, even precious. This devotion works wonders in Tonga: it is the devotion that improves our women; Our Lord is never here without an adorer. The men provide coconut oil every Saturday for this lamp and for the altar*"[522].

Initiated into the mysteries of the religion for which they had renounced their status as procreative women, the nuns were given a sacred dimension by the population, as attested by their Tongan name - *Fefine Tapu*, the sacred woman. They were thus honoured with the respect of all, Catholics and Protestants, chiefs and commoners, despite the outrageous rumours spread by the Wesleyan missionaries. "*The ladies of Tonga would have liked to greet the nuns we left behind in Futuna. A most influential Protestant chief asked us why these devoted persons did not come to Tonga to teach the young girls and care for the sick. We believe that today they would bring about a favourable revolution in the island and would give by their conduct, as Father Chevron did by his, a formal denial of the lies of the heresy which portrays us as libertines, giving them the title of prostitutes. They would be less exposed than in Europe; we have very severe laws which would prevent the most impudent from attacking their honour*"[523]. Unlike the wife of the Wesleyan missionary, who was perceived as an auxiliary whose freedom

[519] Father Castagnier to Bishop Lamaze, Maofaga, 25 January 1880 (A.P.M., 359).
[520] Father Lamaze to Father Poupinel in Lyons, Maofaga, 25 April 1873 (A.P.M., 654).
[521] Father Lamaze to Father Poupinel at Sydney, Tongatapu, 13 December 1866 (A.P.M., 625).
[522] Father Lamaze to Mrs M., Maofaga, 1 October 1869 (A.P.M., 636). Father Guitta to the Superior of the S.M., Mua, 29 July 1879 (A.P.M., 529). "*Since the apostolate of prayer has been established in Tonga, we have seen happy effects on the neophytes: in Maofaga we have about 50 people; in Mu'a 42 men and 88 women; but no one in Hihifo*."
[523] Father Monnier to Father Guitta, Tongatapu, 10 September 1858 (A.P.M., 783).

of action was controlled by her husband, the nuns played a specific role in the social promotion of women by setting up structures and providing a framework adapted to their needs. Their actions went beyond the religious divide between Catholics and Protestants, as many examples were given by the Marists of Protestant chiefs enrolling their daughters in the sisters' schools and colleges. Moreover, it is likely that their image of themselves as virtuous was a reference point for all women, regardless of their faith. For the missionaries, the education of the women was an additional factor in the propagation of the faith insofar as the role of educator held by the sisters enabled them to bring the children to Catholicism. "*Lamaze admitted that women should be well educated in religion, so they can teach their own children. Consequently, he established convents of nuns in Niua Fo'ou, Vava'u, Ha'apai, Hihifo and Mua*"[524]. Thus, the arrival of the nuns in Tonga was an important asset to the mission and gave it a new impetus.

The absence of a female missionary congregation dedicated to Oceania until the 1860s explains the late arrival of nuns in Tonga in 1871. Indeed, the moral prejudices that prevailed in Europe at the time were the main obstacle to the female apostolate in these distant lands, which were little known to the French population[525]. As much as the missionary adventure was conceived as likely a response to male vocations, churchmen avoided promoting the female apostolate in places where women could not benefit from minimal supervision and reception structures. Bishop Bataillon's unenthusiastic reaction when he saw Marie-Françoise Perroton disembark at Wallis in 1846, who was placed under the protection of the king of the island by Commander Marceau, is an illustration of this[526]. The mission in Wallis was a privileged place for the adaptation to missionary life of the first three volunteers from the Third Order Regular, the secular branch of the Society of Mary organised in 1845. In 1857, three new missionaries embarked for Oceania. They were Françoise Bartet (Sister Marie de la Pitié) from Lyons, Marie Basset (Sister Marie de la Miséricorde) from Saint-Laurent de Chamousset, and Jeanne Albert (Sister Marie de la Sainte-Espérance) from Saint-Chamond. The rule of this group of Tertiaries was approved by the Pope on May 31, 1857; and although they did not belong to any congregation and did not attend a novitiate, they wore the habit of a nun. They took a vow of obedience to Bishop Bataillon, and on May 31, 1858, Marie-Françoise Perroton was integrated into the Third Order of Mary and took the name of Sister Marie du Mont Carmel. In 1859, six Tertiaries landed in the islands of Bishop Bataillon's vicariate, who maintained his refusal to consider them as nuns.

The Congregation of Our Lady of the Missions, founded in 1861 in Lyons, marked the beginning of a structured apostolate for women missionaries. However, the congregation's demands for independence led to a conflict between their Superior in Samoa and the Vicar Apostolic, whose authority she questioned. As a result, the Roman authorities, aware of the

[524] D. 1. a. Circular letter of Bishop Armand Mathieu Olier, Bishop of Tipasa, Vicar Apostolic of Central Oceania: 1907 (Archives of the Diocese of Tonga).

[525] MIJOLLA (M.C. de, sister), *Les pionnières maristes en Océanie, aux origines des sœurs missionnaires de la Société de Marie, 1845-1931*, pp.15-16.

[526] Marie-Françoise Perroton was the first lay woman missionary to exercise her vocation in the Pacific. She arrived in 1846 in Wallis and Futuna where she was joined by others only in 1858. Her departure had been motivated by an appeal launched by Fathers Bataillon and Viard in 1842 in the *Annals of the Propagation of the Faith*, in which they expressed their desire to be assisted by nuns to instruct Polynesian women. However, contrary to her expectation, her arrival in Wallis was met with the disapproval of Bishop Bataillon, for whom she was an additional burden. In charge of teaching young women, she also took care of the laundry and cooking for the missionaries of Wallis. ANGLEVIEL F., *L'apostolat féminin à Wallis et Futuna, 1857-1886: des catholiques lyonnaises aux sœurs autochtones*, p.5.

problem, arbitrated the conflict in favour of the bishop. The nuns were faced with a cruel dilemma - whether to leave Oceania and return to one of the houses of Our Lady of the Missions or to submit to the authority of Bishop Bataillon. In November 1863, with the sisters having decided not to renew their vows of obedience to the bishop, the latter considered founding a community of native sisters. From 1867 onwards, he tried to establish common houses where the girls of each village could meet after their daily chores. The enterprise was abandoned in 1867 because of a lack of supervision. In the meantime, the Tertiaries had been integrated into the Congregation of Our Lady of the Missions without a novitiate. The construction of the first convent in Wallis was completed in July 1874; another was opened in Tonga. In exchange for running the schools and the training of Tertiaries, the bishop undertook to pay the expenses incurred for the repairs of the establishments and the upkeep of the schools and to provide them with an allowance for their travel expenses and the make-up of their clothes, an annual allowance of £20, a house, and a plot of land. The death in 1877 of Bishop Bataillon rekindled the disagreement between the mother superior of the congregation and the Marist fathers who deplored their excessively strict rules of enclosure[527]. In 1881, the Third Order Regular of Mary for the missions of Oceania put an end to this confusing situation: these diocesan nuns, formed in Saint-Brieuc, took a vow of obedience to the Vicar Apostolic, while their recruitment, formation and assignment were the responsibility of the Superior General of the Society of Mary. This arrangement also had the advantage of allowing the native postulants to complete their novitiate in Wallis, at the end of which they joined the diocesan congregation of the vicariate. In 1881, Bishop Lamaze canonically erected the diocesan Congregation of the Third Order Regular of the Society of Mary, and seven postulants were given the habit of novice; two of them, Malia Antonio and Malia Mikaele left for Tonga after celebrating their profession of faith[528].

The main recruitment centre for the sisters of the Third Order Regular of Mary for the missions in Oceania was in France, but the congregation tried to incorporate Irish, American, Australian and New Zealand sisters and to stimulate vocations in the mission lands. To this end, a branch of the Third Order Regular of Mary was established in Boston. The minimum age required for postulants was eighteen, the maximum age was thirty-five. The novitiate lasted twelve to eighteen months and was usually held at Sainte Foy-lès-Lyons where the young women were trained as nurses and teachers. Farmers' daughters and domestic workers were known to be excellent recruits[529]. Within each mission, the Vicar Apostolic appointed a central superior, who was the auxiliary of the head of the mission and the spokesperson for the nuns. The material expenses incurred for their needs were borne by the missionary when the nuns, who did not receive an allowance, had no personal savings[530]. "*In Niua Fo'ou, we now have two*

[527] ANGLEVIEL F., *L'apostolat féminin à Wallis et Futuna, 1857-1886: des catholiques lyonnaises aux sœurs autochtones*, pp.12-20.
[528] *idem*, p.21.
[529] The Missionary Sisters of the Society of Mary, *Nos pionnières, d'après les textes législatifs et les documents ayant un caractère officiel, 1855-1932.* Volume 1 to 114, General Administration, Rome 1987, pp.199-203.
[530] The sisters, like the native priests, were not to receive an allowance; their expenses were paid by the stations to which they were attached. In his financial forecasts for 1905, Bishop Lamaze proposed that the budget be divided as follows: 2,000 francs for the bishop, 1,000 francs for each of his twenty-two missionaries, 1,000 francs for the running of the College of Blessed Chanel, 1,000 francs for the two coadjutor brothers, and 9,000 francs to be shared among the eighteen sisters of the vicariate - six in Tonga, nine in Futuna, and fifteen in Wallis. (Maofaga, 16 July 1902, Bishop Lamaze to Father Régis, C.VI.b. *Incomings [sic] Letters, Bishop Lamaze*) (Archives of the Diocese of Tonga).

churches and an establishment of indigenous Tongan sisters. My resources are quite insufficient to maintain all these people: 2,000 francs do not go far when you have to create everything and then maintain a native priest and two sisters"[531].

The first nuns who arrived in Tonga on March 15, 1871 were accompanied by Bishop Elloy. Their arrival was eagerly awaited by the Catholics of Tonga as the Wesleyan missionaries had opened a girls' school at Nuku'alofa two years earlier[532]. Three nuns were temporarily housed in the college of the Maofaga mission while waiting to move to a wooden house that Bishop Elloy had purchased. The welcoming ceremony organised by the Catholic population of Tongatapu was particularly warm. "*There has never been a more cordial reception*"[533].

Sister Marie de Jésus and Sister Marie des Cinq Plaies founded a community in Maofaga where they opened a school for girls. The latter's maiden name was Emilie Jobet (1843-1878) who was a butcher's daughter, born in the Sarthe region. After her profession of faith in Lyon, she set sail for Oceania. She arrived on March 15, 1871 in Tonga where she lived for three years from 1874 to 1877. She died the following year in Apia. The former's maiden name was Mary Healy (1840-1906) who was born in England, and spent her youth in New Zealand where her parents had settled. She did part of her religious formation in Sydney before leaving for the novitiate in Lyon in 1868. Destined for the mission in Apia, she stayed in Tonga for two years from 1875 to 1877. Both quickly recorded satisfactory results both in attendance of their establishment and in the contribution of Catholics to their daily needs. "*In one year, the sisters were able to buy a cow for milk, and 21 girls were able to move in with them, as well as day students (women catechists)*"[534]. The superior of Wallis, Sister Marie des Anges, joined the Tonga mission in 1873. Until 1880, when she left for New Zealand, she was involved in the training of the new arrivals by virtue of her long experience in the missionary life[535]. In 1885, there were seven nuns, a number equivalent to that of the Marist Fathers at the time: four from France - Marie de la Pitié, Marie-Xavier, Marie-Pierre, Marie-Delphine, one Futunian - Marie-Viktor, and two Wallisians - Malia-Antonio and Malia-Mikaele. Françoise Bartet (Sister Marie de la Pitié), born in Lyons in 1820, daughter of a confectioner, embarked in London on November 30, 1857 for Futuna where she worked until 1874 before settling in Maofaga. There she shared her experience of missionary life and her knowledge of Polynesian customs with her younger sisters. In 1883, she joined Sister Marie-Pierre in Vava'u, with whom she worked to open a convent. She died three years after her return to Maofaga in 1894 at the age of seventy-four. Marie Magnillat (Sister Marie-Xavier), born on March 12, 1855 in Montcarra in Isère, daughter of a farmer, trained as a nurse with the Hospitaller Sisters of Lyons. She arrived in Tonga on January 21, 1881 with Bishop Lamaze and devoted her whole life to the convent of Maofaga where she died in 1923. Recognised by all, shortly before her death she was visited by Queen Salote who paid tribute to her dedication. Nicknamed *Mamé*, she was the source of many vocations. Sister Marie-Delphine, also a farmer's daughter, born in 1860, travelled with Sister Marie-Xavier whom she helped in Maofaga where she was in charge of the English class.

[531] Father Jouny to his cousin, Father Coeurer, vicar at Bodès (Côtes du Nord), Niua Fo'ou, 11 November 1892 (A.P.M., 557).
[532] Father Lamaze to Father Poupinel, Maofaga, 28 November 1869 (A.P.M., 638).
[533] Father Lamaze to Father Poupinel, Maofaga, 2 April 1871 (A.P.M., 646).
[534] Father Lamaze to Father Poupinel in Lyons, Maofaga, 28 February 1872 (A.P.M., 651).
[535] Marie Moraux (1824-1890), the daughter of a Vosges winegrower, left for London in 1852 when her congregation of the Ladies of Compassion had to leave the diocese of Langes. In 1862 she joined the novitiate of the Third Order Regular of Mary in Lyons, then left France for New Zealand in 1864.

In 1886, her health forced her to leave the mission for treatment in Australia. Pierrette Reirieux, (Sister Marie-Pierre), daughter of a landowner and farmer from the Rhône, arrived in Maofaga at the age of twenty-one in 1881. The following year, she opened a school in Mu'a. From 1883 to 1899, she lived in Vava'u where she ran a girls' school. After collaborating with Sister Marie de la Pitié, she entrusted the running of the Tongan school to the Futunian Sister Malia Vika. She died in Sydney in 1911. Silenia Tipai (Sister Malia Vika), born in 1848 in Futuna, arrived in Tonga in 1881 where she devoted many years of work to the education of the girls at Hihifo. She died in 1902 at the age of 54.

Their activities gradually spread to the whole archipelago: Mu'a in 1882, Vava'u in 1883, Hihifo in 1884, and Niua Fo'ou in 1891[536]. In each of these places they benefited from the structures previously put in place by the Marist missionaries, contributing through the construction of convents and schools to the geographical extension of the mission which now formed an imposing whole, reflecting the growth of the Catholic religion in Tonga. "*Maofaga will be beautiful when it offers on the harbour side the four facades of the college, the church, the residence, and the convent*"[537]. An important factor in the development of their work was pressure from the indigenous authorities who encouraged and even solicited the establishment of convents, recognising their important role in caring for women and the sick. As early as 1875, 'Uga, the son of King George, petitioned Bishop Bataillon to establish a school run by the sisters in Vava'u. Tungi, the Governor of Tonga, expressed a similar desire for Mu'a[538]. In general, they were the object of special attention, with King George going so far as to grant them playing grounds so that the convent at Maofaga could have access to the coastline[539]. Europeans in the archipelago also played a role in this. "*The establishment of the sisters delighted the whole population but even more for the Europeans than the Tongans*"[540]. In this regard, it happened that the opening of some establishments, such as that of St Theresa of Jesus of Our Lady of the Missions in Vava'u, whose legal act of foundation had been signed by 'Uga in 1874, was postponed by Bishop Bataillon who wished to establish it instead in Wallis[541]. It was not opened until 1883, when the sisters' institutions, whose activities had been confined to Maofaga until then, began to flourish throughout the archipelago. The arrival in 1882 of Sister Marie-Louise, followed by Sister Marie Saint-Pierre, made it possible to set up a convent in Mu'a[542]. However, the precarious state of health of Sister Marie Saint-Pierre forced the sisters to restrict the number of girls they could admit. The young girls admitted to the convent - in exchange for a contribution in kind, yams or bananas - numbered thirteen in 1883, while the day school welcomed about sixty pupils[543]. In 1885, there were three convents in Tongatapu. The one at Mu' a, which had the highest proportion of Catholics, had sixty-five day students and twenty-five boarders in addition to the one hundred and fifteen girls enrolled in the Tongan school[544] . The school at Moafaga [Maofaga] was especially well known for its English classes

[536] The mission at Hihifo was closed, but the mission's activities were continued in Houma from 1928.
[537] Father Lamaze to Father Poupinel, Maofaga, 14 September 1876 (A.P.M., 668).
[538] Father Lamaze to Father Poupinel in Lyons, Maofaga, 25 April 1873 (A.P.M., 654).
[539] Father Lamaze to Father Poupinel, Maofaga, 7 November 1872 (A.P.M., 653).
[540] Father Breton to Father Poupinel, Vava'u, 19 March 1872 (A.P.M., 251).
[541] Father Breton to Father Poupinel, Vava'u, 25 July 1874 (A.P.M., 256).
[542] Father Castagnier to Father Poupinel in Lyons, Hihifo, 12 November 1874 (A.P.M., 340).
[543] Father Chevron to Father Poupinel in Lyons, Tongatapu, 16 February 1883 (A.P.M., 481).
[544] The village of Mu'a was divided into two parts. The first, Lapaha, where the residence of the Tu'i Tonga - *'Ahofakasiu* - was established, was predominantly Catholic, while the second, the stronghold of Tungi, was predominantly Protestant.

for the children of Europeans living in Nuku'alofa; the school had twenty-five children including twelve boarders[545]. In Hihifo, Sisters Marie Xavier and Marie-Antonie looked after about fifteen pupils. In Ha'apai, in the 1890s, the nuns successfully participated in the reopening of the mission whose activities had been interrupted for more than twenty years[546]. While there was only one Catholic in the archipelago, sixteen students, including the daughter of the deputy governor, attended the sisters' school, whose impact in this archipelago, which was entirely under Protestant rule, was a prelude to the development of the Catholic mission[547]. However, the pressures of Protestant kinship remained powerful and the nuns were confronted on many occasions with early departures by the schoolgirls[548]. On the other hand, in Niua Toputapu, where Bishop Lamaze decided in 1891 to found a convent thanks to the arrival of two indigenous sisters, Sisters Amata and Mikaele, who were better able than European nuns to cope with their isolation, the opening of a school was accepted with joy by the population, who had been somewhat neglected on their small island lost in the middle of the ocean[549].

The daily life of the sisters was generally divided between caring for the sick, formerly cared for by the missionaries, preparing classes, running the boarding schools, and working on the plantations to support themselves and their boarders, as well as maintaining the schools, churches and chapels. Their teaching method was very popular with the population as a whole, but their limited capacity could not meet the demand[550]. In addition to reading and writing, the girls were trained in sewing, embroidery, singing and music. The English classes that were gradually being organised in most of the Catholic missions in the archipelago were particularly sought after by Tongan and European elites, who abandoned the schools run by local female teachers who had received little training from Catholic or Protestant missionaries.

For the sisters, the question of material resources was similar to that of the Marist missionaries. They had the advantage of income from fees paid by Europeans and Tongans who wished to enrol their children in English classes, as Tongan classes were free. However, these resources were insufficient to meet the costs of maintaining the schools and running the boarding schools, where students generally had little money. Many parents helped to supply the schools by providing part of their own crops. During periods of food shortages or cyclones, the sisters alone were responsible for providing food, which consisted mainly of rice and flour. In addition, they were responsible for providing for the clothing needs of their girls[551]. In order to raise funds, they organised sales of works made by the girls or of clothes they sewed in the night before. In Maofaga, the sisters received the special support of Bishop Lamaze, who covered half of the costs of extending the convent, which was to accommodate about fifty

[545] Father Guitta to Father Martin in Lyons, Tongatapu, 27 June 1885 (A.P.M., 538).
[546] Father Loyer to Father Nicolet, Lifuka, 10 October 1895 (A.P.M., 709).
[547] Father Reiter to Father Hervier in Lyon, Vava'u, 29 January 1886 (A.P.M., 879).
[548] Father Loyer to Bishop Lamaze, Lifuka, 8 June 1896 (C. II. a. 6. Archives of the Diocese of Tonga).
[549] Box 1. a. 3. Bishop Lamaze, Diary of the Vicariate, 24-07-1892 (Tonga Diocesan Archives).
[550] In 1892, there were 366 indigenous students, including 88 boarders. C. IV. a. Circular letter from Bishop Amand Lamaze, Bishop of Olympus, Vicar Apostolic of Central Oceania, and Administrator of the Navigators: 1892 (Archives of the Diocese of Tonga).
[551] Compared to the more solitary and destitute sisters of the other establishments, the sisters of Maofaga who benefited from the prosperity of this mission could be considered privileged. On the other hand, their material needs were great. On various occasions, they received support from Bishop Lamaze. In 1902, he granted the sum of 1,500 francs for the construction of a new boarding school and classrooms. He also undertook to pay the annuity, while they were to contribute half the costs. Bishop Lamaze to Father Régis, Maofaga, 16 July 1902. C. Vl. b. *Incomings Letters, Bishop Lamaze* (Tonga Diocesan Archives).

boarders[552]. On the other hand, the Catholic community gradually mobilised by organising collections to allow for the necessary improvements to be made so as to increase the capacity of the boarding schools. In 1909, the expansion of the premises was financed exclusively by the Catholic community of Maofaga, which took up numerous collections to collect the funds necessary for its realisation[553].

Whatever the material difficulties they faced, unlike the fathers who had to fight for their integration, they were widely accepted by the population, who immediately saw the benefits of their numerous skills. In the 1930s, Sister Julia, who replaced the doctor in Ha'apai when he was absent, supported her establishment by selling medicines. In Niua Toputapu, in 1937, Sister Marie-Angèle undertook the construction of a cistern thanks to the generosity of the island's population. In 1927, in Vava'u, Sister Mercedes, who had been teaching piano to the mission girls for many years, founded an English school. Her popularity contributed to the success of the initiative and the large number of children enrolled forced her to turn away children. In the first school year there were thirty-three pupils, daughters of Tongans and Europeans, Protestants and Catholics alike. The following year, she accepted more than forty girls, but blocked enrolment for two years and gave priority to Catholics. Nevertheless, Protestant girls were admitted to the school on condition that their parents accepted the Catholic teachings provided by the sister. The fees enabled Sister Mercedes to raise funds for the construction of a new convent to accommodate four or five sisters and over a hundred boarders. Its inauguration was celebrated on December 13, 1928 after six months of intense work. The entire Catholic community of the island had joined the twenty permanent workers on the site to speed up the work. One hundred and thirty pigs were cooked for the banquet. Bishop Blanc expressed his approval of the work accomplished by the three nuns of Vava'u by sending two new sisters, Angèle and Eva.

The convent, which was the largest building on the island, was located close to the missionaries' residence and had a unique view of the bay of Vava'u. The ground floor of the building contained the classrooms, the parlour and the refectory; the first floor, the boarders' dormitories, while the basement consisted of a storeroom, a washhouse, shower rooms and flush toilets that were admired by all. The kitchen and the courtyard were independent. When classes resumed in January 1939, the sisters had 140 pupils and three months later 150. For the English classes, they set up a teaching programme that was better than the official guidelines. The tuition fee was two shillings per week. Outside of school hours, Sisters Mercedes and Eva were available for private lessons. The Tongan classes had sixty-five students. In 1934, Sister Romuald proudly had thirty-four boarders from all the islands of the archipelago recently visited by Father Tremblay. The marriage of one of the boarders to a recently baptized young man was the object of a great celebration which mobilized the entire Catholic community of this archipelago. Despite this, families were still reluctant to let their children live far from their native island. In 1934, the fall in the price of copra, successive storms and the slowing down of commercial activities led the nuns to revise the amount of the registration fees downwards.

[552] [sic] Compared to the more solitary and destitute sisters of the other establishments, the sisters of Maofaga who benefited from the prosperity of this mission could be considered privileged. On the other hand, their material needs were great. On various occasions, they received support from Bishop Lamaze. In 1902, he granted the sum of 1,500 francs for the construction of a new boarding school and classrooms. He also undertook to pay the annuity, while they were to contribute half the costs. Bishop Lamaze to Father Régis, Maofaga, 16 July 1902. C.Vl.b. *Incomings Letters*, *Bishop Lamaze* (Tonga Diocesan Archives).

[553] Father Olier to Father Poupinel, Maofaga, 18 June 1883 (A.P.M., 818).

Fifty boarders lived in the convent. Attendance at English classes dropped, while attendance at the Tongan school increased. However, the situation of the Vava'u sisters soon recovered thanks to funds raised in their homeland by the American nuns. The arrival in Niua Toputapu in the late 1920s of two sisters, Albine and Euphemia, who were also Americans, was a great event for the whole population of the island. Their work attracted a large number of people to the mission and was an important factor in conversions. At the end of their first year of work, seventeen Protestant children, out of the sixty schoolchildren enrolled at the beginning of the school year, had converted to Catholicism. Their school, whose popularity continued to grow, had seventy-five pupils at the end of 1928. Six families, whose parents had been baptised by Father Breton, entrusted thirty-five children to the school. In 1933, the convent welcomed forty boarders and the school eighty pupils. The sisters introduced singing lessons five days a week for the children, while Sunday evenings and Wednesday evenings were reserved for adults. All these initiatives, which went beyond the strict framework of teaching, contributed greatly to the recognition of the female apostolate and to the affirmation of the role of women within the community. In March 1934, a small Third Order fraternity was founded in Tongatapu. Two years later, it had eleven professed women and six novices[554]. The first child baptized by Father Macé on the occasion of his visit to the island of Niua Toputapu on November 21, 1913, Malia Pisila, made her vows in Maofaga in 1934 and took the name of Sister Bernadette. She was, after Father Petelo Maka Ki Moana [Maka Mei Moana], the second vocation from this island. A few years later, she returned to her native island where her father was already a catechist.

2 – The school as an apprenticeship in the faith

Tonga's schools were the focus of rivalry between Catholic and Protestant missionaries. For the latter, it was not only a question of distancing children from the beliefs of their ancestors through the exposition of natural mechanisms, of educating them in the faith of their respective churches, but also of forming a religious and civil elite[555]. "*As schools are, in Tonga, as elsewhere, the great battleground between good religion and error, we are very much occupied with our classes*"[556]. However, in this area, the Marists, faced as in other areas with difficulties of supervision and resources, and unlike the nuns, were forced to confine their activities to the needs of the Catholic community. Moreover, they were hardly in a position to establish an educational monopoly given the powerful infrastructure put in place by the Wesleyans. Indeed, the Protestant missionaries had managed, from the moment they settled, to set up a particularly dense network of schools and colleges in all the islands of the archipelago. In addition, they benefited from the material support of King George from the beginning of their mission. Convinced that the superiority of the white man lay in his technical and scientific knowledge, he had schools built for the younger ones and training institutes for the others[557]. "*The Protestant teachers had nice houses and neat enclosures because the parents of the students maintained them in keeping with the consideration of the chiefs*"[558]. In 1858, the Wesleyan

[554] Letters to missionaries, 19 March 1936, Central Oceania. (A.P.M.).

[555] The teaching of the principles of astronomy or gravity, the knowledge of the realities of nature and the world offered Tongans a new vision of the world which relegated the old beliefs to the realm of mythology. For example, the Marists' explanation of earthquakes overturned the tradition that earthquakes were caused by the movements of the god Maui during his long sleep.

[556] Father Lamaze to Father Germain, Maofaga, 27 February 1876 (A.P.M., 664).

[557] LATUKEFU Sione, *Church and State in Tonga, the Wesleyan Methodist Missionaries and Political Development, 1822-1875*, p.74.

[558] Box 3. b. 1. Father Castagnier. History of the Vava'u Mission: 1859-1861 (Tonga Diocesan Archives).

missionaries had more than six thousand pupils, compared to four hundred for the Marists, spread over one hundred and sixty schools, supervised by six hundred and fifty teachers[559]. Reverend Moulton, who arrived in Tonga in 1865, was the founder of the first institution of higher learning - Tupou College - which opened in 1866[560].

In response to this initiative, Father Lamaze undertook in 1869 the foundation of a Catholic college in Maofaga, which enabled the mission to retain the best elements in its midst, as there was a great risk that students whose aspirations could not be met by the Catholic missionaries would renounce their faith and join a Protestant college. On the other hand, the major advantage that the Marists had over their Protestant counterparts was that they had a good general culture of learning acquired during their studies and that they offered an education for which they had generally been trained, most of them having taught for some time before their departure for Oceania. This advantage enabled them to compensate in some way for their material shortcomings by contributing to the good reputation of their teaching. "*Although Father Olier does not yet speak Tongan, Prince Gu ... wants to make a national college and he is already talking about including Father Olier as one of the tutors*"[561]. In 1897, the programme drawn up for the Catholic schools offered a variety of subjects: reading, writing, arithmetic, drawing, geometry, history, geography, agriculture, culinary arts, carpentry, architecture on the one hand, and catechism, ecclesiastical history, and sacred discourse on the other. In the first years following its foundation, the teaching provided at Maofaga was reserved for the twenty best students of the mission and was aimed primarily at training catechists and schoolteachers[562]. "*We obtained two catechists from the Ako at Maofaga. One, the first from the Ako and at the same time the most senior, his wife, daughter of a government officer, was also the first from the Sisters' girls. We have good hope of development in the Hihifo district thanks to these two married people*"[563]. By 1871, there were thirty of them[564]. By this time, the conditions of teaching had improved considerably due to the widespread publication of books translated into Tongan, with the need to learn Latin having been a rather off-putting aspect for the catechists[565]. In fact, this literature served to counteract the Wesleyan influence which remained very active. In 1888, Father Thomas was put in charge of the school and in 1887, the structure was enlarged following the construction of a new building along the Maofaga coastline[566]. "*Our work is nearing completion: we shall soon have a college in Tonga, a little jewel of a chapel, to which only one thing will be missing, the statue of the Blessed Martyr to whom our monument is dedicated*"[567]. His guidance was also strengthened by the support given

[559] WOOD H. A., *Overseas Missions of the Australian Methodist Church*, p.126.

[560] Students were subjected to a strict regime regardless of their rank. The Reverend Moulton, for example, obtained from King George that his son Wellington Gu should have no privileges in the college. However, access to the college was restricted to the future elite of the nation and the church.

[561] Father Castagnier to the Superior of the S.M., Maofaga, 12 June 1881 (A.P.M., 364).

[562] Father Castagnier to Father Poupinel in Sydney, Mua, 4 June 1867 (A.P.M., 325).

[563] Father Castagnier to Father Poupinel in Lyons, Hihifo, 30 January 1874 (A.P.M., 334).

[564] Father Chevron to Father Poupinel in Lyons, Tongatapu, 26 March 1871 (A.P.M., 454).

[565] Father Lamaze to Father Germain, Maofaga, 22 November 1876 (A.P.M., 671).

[566] In 1928, Fathers Thomas and Kelekolio had eighty boarders at Maofaga. In 1933, Father Kelekolio succeeded Father Thomas, and maintained the activity of his establishment alone, which then had more than one hundred young people. The minor seminary, which Father Boussit took over in 1938, helped to strengthen the structures of the Maofaga College, which became the centre of Catholic education in the archipelago. In 1941, two seminarians prepared for ordination.

[567] Father Thomas to the Superior of the S.M. in Lyons, Maofaga, 12 February 1895 (A.P.M., 911).

to Father Thomas by Father Olier[568]. Given the limited number of priests available for the mission, the fact that two of them were released from their day-to-day responsibilities and entrusted with the running of the college is indicative of the importance that the Marists attached to its functioning. In the 1890s, the school diversified its activities and opened up to the outside world by publishing a newspaper called *Koe Fafagu - The Bell*. In contrast, the college at Mu'a, founded in 1872 with forty students, took longer to develop than the Maofaga college which received the best students and therefore benefited from increased material resources. However, a certain emulation was established over the years between the two establishments, and at the end of the 19th century Father Bellwald was proud of the quality of his students at Mu'a[569].

In addition to the desire not to cede ground to the Protestants, the foundation of a college intended for the training of catechists and schoolteachers constituted a necessity of the first order, given the cruel lack of personnel with which the Marists were confronted. However, it seems that at the time - the college was founded in 1872 - the pressure from the Catholic community in favour of opening new schools was stronger than in previous years, with the question of school teachers having not been posed so acutely until then. Two years after the opening of this establishment, Father Lamaze still deplored the fact that teachers were insufficient in number to meet the needs of the mission, and that the missionaries were forced to make up for their absence by drawing on all the energy of the best volunteers. Thus in 1874 at Hihifo, a Wallisian catechist who had accompanied Father Chevron in the early days of his installation in Tonga was appointed schoolmaster despite his old age and infirmity, as the young master of the school had been raised to the rank of catechist[570]. This was in stark contrast to the Wesleyans, for whom the recruitment of schoolmasters did not seem to be an obstacle. Was it the prospect of social advancement or the prospect of substantial remuneration that encouraged them to accept this function within the Protestant mission? According to the Marists, who could offer their teachers neither, the problem of remuneration prevailed. "*We are organising a sale of the printed books through a Catholic agent of the German company: we will have 150 to 200 copies. Some of the copies are offered as gifts to the catechists and schoolteachers who receive nothing, whereas those of the Protestants are paid handsomely*"[571].

As a direct consequence of this situation, education could not be provided on a regular basis in the villages where the Catholic mission was located. Some schools had to be closed regularly for lack of teachers or even of premises after a severe cyclone had destroyed them. In order to fill these gaps, the Marists nevertheless tried to group the pupils of each district in one place. From then on, the problem of frequent absenteeism arose. "*Pupils are fickle and find it too far to come to school. The school does not function*"[572]. When the teaching was done by the Marists themselves, their multiple occupations forced them to set reduced timetables. At Mu'a, Father Chevron established school days on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays with two hours in the morning and one hour in the afternoon. Moreover, as the missionaries had to provide for the sustenance of their pupils, school days alternated with agricultural work, each school having a plot of land whose production made it possible to ensure day-to-day life. "*In view of the great*

[568] This building was constructed in a place called Api Fo'ou, which gave its Tongan name to the institution, which was also called Blessed Chanel College.
[569] Father Bellwald to Father Régis, Mua, 17 May 1899 (A.P.M., 192).
[570] Father Lamaze, Christmas party in Tonga, Hihifo, 1 January 1874. (A.P.M.,657).
[571] Father Chevron to Father Poupinel, Tongatapu, 8 September 1876 (A.P.M., 464).
[572] Father Castagnier to Father Poupinel, Maofoga, 3 September 1878 (A.P.M., 350).

shortage of yams, the children had to be fed in the European way; they ate more than half of my food"[573]. In fact, with the operation of Catholic schools being economically burdensome for only a relative efficiency, Father Chevron came to question in 1882 the validity of their existence, as preparatory schools had been set up by the government, even though they themselves depended on the presence of these children for carrying out day-to-day tasks. "*Father Guitta is in charge of the ministry and the preparatory schools for the college at Maofaga. The preparatory schools could be abandoned but it is the only way for the fathers to have children to help them out. The children arrive at 7 or 8 o'clock in the morning, leave at midday, come back at 4 o'clock and have all the time they need to prepare supper and bring in the cattle*"[574]. Moreover, the schools constituted a factor in the cohesion and development of the Catholic communities of the archipelago, and so there could be no question of renouncing their maintenance. Indeed, their creation, in places where the Catholic mission only managed to develop with difficulty because of a strong Protestant presence, made a significant impact. In Hihifo, Father Castagnier, albeit despairing at not being able to reunite a flourishing community, noticed in 1877 following the opening of a school, a strengthening of the ties between Catholics scattered in the different villages of his district plus a greater consideration towards him on their part[575]. In Ha'apai, the Marists observed similar effects. "*We visited Lifuka for a few days in 1885. There are a few Catholics from Tonga[tapu] or Samoa, but not one from Lifuka. But in September I counted about twenty Catholics and sixteen children in the Catholic school. On my last visit I counted thirty five Catholics. The daughter of the deputy governor of Ha'apai, chief of Lifuka, is in the Catholic school*"[576]. When in 1886 the Marists began to develop the activities of the Catholic mission on the islands of Niu'a Fo'ou and Niua Toputapu, the school was built at the same time as the church[577].

An improvement in the functioning of Catholic institutions occurred from the 1880s onwards as a result of a government innovation. This innovation, initiated by Shirley Baker and King George, was to make it compulsory for government employees, whether Protestant or Catholic, to pass an examination in reading, writing, dictation, and arithmetic. While establishing equality of access to office, this innovation also brought about a general standardisation of education, and schooling became compulsory for all. The application of this measure, decreed in 1878, was delayed due to discontent on the part of the chiefs who feared being irrevocably removed from power, and so the new system did not come into force until 1880[578]. For the Marists, this measure had many positive aspects which quickly helped to erase their concerns. Indeed, they feared that government control over education would imply co-education in establishments where religious instruction would have been banned. However, they retained the management of their establishments and benefited from the material support meant to encourage their works for which the king expressed his satisfaction. "*Mr. Baker, since he is no longer a Wesleyan minister, has been kind to us. In his last letter he said to Father: 'I thank you in the name of the King for all you have done for the schools*"[579].

[573] Father Castagnier to Father Poupinel, Maofoga, 18 July 1876 (A.P.M., 342).
[574] Father Chevron to Father Poupinel, Mu'a, 17 June 1882 (A.P.M., 479).
[575] Father Castagnier to Father Germain, Hihifo, 26 February 1877 (A.P.M., 344).
[576] Father Reiter to Father Hervier, Vava'u, 29 January 1886 (A.P.M., 879).
[577] Father Olier to Father Hervier, Maofaga, 1 June 1886 (A.P.M., 823).
[578] Father Chevron to Father Poupinel, Mu'a, 24 November 1877 (A.P.M., 468).
[579] Father Castagnier to Father Poupinel, Maofaga, 12 June 1881 (A.P.M., 364).

This encouragement was given concrete form by the government taking over the salaries of teachers, of which it assured the distribution according to needs, and of those of the nuns who had responsibilties[580]. In addition, by making school compulsory, the government increased attendance at Catholic schools. "*The 18 ako - schoolchildren - must be home by eight in the evening. The priest rings a first bell then a second. Then one of the keepers of peace appears and calls the roll: for the one who is not present: "forced labour" or a fine of six pens for the benefit of the officer making the roll call; then evening prayer*"[581]. Although they retained their prerogatives, the Marists had to delegate one of their own to Shirley Baker, who entrusted him, after teaming up with a Wesleyan missionary, with visiting the schools, inspecting the pupils and presiding over the examinations, while the government was represented locally by the chief of each village[582]. This was a first step towards the opening up of Catholic schools in a Protestant environment[583]. For all schoolchildren in the archipelago, the timetable was organised over three days, with two hours of class in the morning and two hours in the afternoon. In 1880, the Catholic schools in the archipelago had three hundred and fifty pupils divided between the villages of Mu'a, Maofaga and Hihifo for Tongatapu, Fugamisi for Vava'u, and Neiafu [Lifuka] for Ha'apai[584].

Beyond their educational and religious functions, the schools' activities had a social dimension, which was most evident at the award ceremony for the best students of the year - *Katoanga*. This event closed out the examination period. Pious books with red covers were awarded to the most deserving. The others received, depending on their level, a pocket knife or a comb for the boys, a linen shirt, alder fabric or flasks of eau de toilette for the girls. The handing over of a rosary, a medal of the Virgin Mary or a pious image consoled the weakest students. Whatever the value of the prize, these presents filled the families with pride[585]. The examination included various oral and written tests and combined academic and religious knowledge. It included an examination in public reading, the recitation of the catechism and pieces from the Gospels, and tests in writing, arithmetic, geography, and history. Each group, itself divided into four sub-groups which separated the girls from the boys and the most brilliant from the rest, carried, under the tutelage of their schoolmaster or mistress, all the hopes of their village, as all the schools in the archipelago were invited to the ceremonies. Only poor weather conditions or a

[580] Father Guitta to Father Poupinel, Mu'a, 1 September 1881. (A.P.M., 534). When in 1913 the government decided to develop its own structures and to suspend the subsidies granted to denominational schools, the Catholic missionaries re-established the principle of financial participation for their English classes attended mainly by the sons of European traders and the young Tongan elite. Catholic school fees were set at two shillings per week.

[581] Father Guitta to Bishop Lamaze, Mu'a, 20 April 1880 (A.P.M., 532).

[582] Father Guitta to Father Poupinel, Mu'a, 1 September 1881. (A.P.M., 534). In 1928, Father Bergeron together with Reverend Wood - author of the *History and Geography of Tonga* - were appointed to the School Review Committee, headed by the Ministry's Director of Education.

[583] This desire was accentuated at the beginning of the century and was realized by the development, on the initiative of Father Olier, of various extra-curricular activities, such as cricket or the streamlining of the brass bands which made it possible to gather in the same formation Catholics and Protestants. These formations consisted of four cornets, two flugelhorns, a small flugelhorn, three violas, three baritones, three basses, two double basses, two trombones, a bass drum, cymbals, a triangle and castanets.

[584] In 1912, the Catholic primary schools had five hundred and twenty pupils divided between the establishments of Maofaga, Pea, Lapaha, Houma, Kolovai, Folaha, Kotongo and Hamula on Tongatapu, from Lifuka in Ha'apai, from Neiafu in Vava'u, from Agaha in Niu'a Fo'ou, and from Vaipoa in Niuatoputapu.

[585] Reverend Moulton stimulated the enthusiasm of his students with the promise of distinctive awards: laureate robes and various badges. By modelling the Anglo-Saxon system in this way, he aspired to establish his college as the only higher education institution in Tonga.

period of famine - the Catholics of the village where the ceremonies were held had to provide food for the banquets - could prevent this great gathering[586].

The enthusiasm of the population for these festivities did not fail to surprise the Marists themselves. It is likely that their popularity stemmed from the fact that they revived traditional competitions during which the performance of the winner of physical contests, the skill of the best craftsmen, and the finest productions of farmers were celebrated. The comparison can be extended to the forms that *Katoanga* took. "*All the students adorn themselves with traditional ornaments, cover themselves with sandalwood powder and perfumes such as necklaces made of fragrant berries (Kahoa Kakala) and green-leaf girdles (Sisi Kakala)*"[587]. The events were, as in the past, interspersed with dances and speeches. As for the traditional songs, banned by the Wesleyan missionaries during the first years of their installation, they were rehabilitated on these occasions, albeit adapted to the new circumstances. Father Chevron was the instigator of this rehabilitation in the 1860s. However, if the form was not modified, the biblical stories were substituted for the content of the original words. Genesis, the story of Joseph, Moses and the birth of Christ were the main sources of inspiration for Father Chevron, who had these new texts interpreted by the pupils of Catholic schools before teaching them to their parents. The Wesleyan missionaries tried to persuade King George to condemn these practices as pagan. However, in view of the success of this endeavour and the unpopularity of their request, they withdrew their complaint[588]. In this way, children and adults prepared themselves for many months - the school examinations took place in November - for the repetition of these songs, which were not without a certain form of proselytism. "*Pius IX is known, loved and sung in Tonga. All the names of the pontiffs classified by century will be recited or sung, together with the principal saints who have sustained the columns of the Church. Each tribe will provide a group of children who will sing the popes of two or three centuries. It is already a pleasure for me to hear these children trying their hand at this noble exercise at night. The Pope, a prince whose 258 predecessors can be named up to Saint Peter, even if he is the father of a religion that is hated, is nevertheless a chief of undeniable nobility*"[589]. The impact of these ceremonies on the population, both Catholic and Protestant, was measured, in the eyes of the Marists, by the increasingly persistent participation over the years of prestigious guests. The *Katoanga* held at Maofaga in 1882 by Bishop Lamaze was presided over by Prince Gu and Shirley Baker, who rewarded the best students with a small sum of money[590]. The best students from Mu'a and Hihifo, supported by their parents and presented by Father Guitta, competed with those from Maofaga, each of whom had to defend not only the reputation of their school, but also that of their whole community. The girls from Pea, Maofaga and Longoteme provided the entertainment for the festival with the presentation of traditional dances - *Otuhaka*. On that day, the Maofaga students won the honours while the Mu'a students went home hoping for a

[586] Father Soret to Father Yardin, Tongatapu, 28 February 1863 (A.P.M., 906).
[587] Father Monnier to the Superior of the S.M., Tongatapu, 19 February 1863 (A.P.M., 792).
[588] Singing was later exploited for liturgical purposes by Wesleyan missionaries. Bible-themed poems were set to music in traditional tones and rhythms. The Reverend Moulton introduced numerical notation, allowing choirs of several hundred voices to be formed for the performance of classical pieces. The college took the lead in this movement and the students spread the practice to every village in the archipelago. LATUKEFU Sione, *Church and State in Tonga, the Wesleyan Methodist Missionaries and Political Development, 1822-1875*, p.79.
[589] Father Monnier to the Superior of the S.M., Tongatapu, 19 February 1863 (A.P.M., 792).
[590] C. II. d. 1. b. Soane Hoho, Tongatabu, 17 July 1882 (Tonga Diocesan Archives).

victory the following year. Beginning in 1888, the Wesleyan missionaries established a similar system of competition for students in their schools.

The *Katoanga* was the eventual culmination of successive stages with a social purpose, and offered its participants the means to emerge as an individual personality, recognised for their qualities and talents. In addition to the prize awarded at the end of the competition, the winner benefited from a prestige that reflected on all his relatives. While traditional society recognised particular skills in different fields by endowing the holder with a specific status - such as fishing masters or canoe sculptors - this new way of valuing the individual constituted a means of integrating the social hierarchy through education, independently of the rank granted by birth, and provided a mark of personal status endorsed by academic knowledge. "*One of Father Lamaze's students obtained the position of secretary in the Ministry of Police with a salary of 2,000 francs per annum*"[591]. For the Catholics in Tonga, long left out of a society dominated by Protestantism, the educational structures put in place by the Marists provided real opportunities for integration[592]. The Marists were able to note with satisfaction that they had contributed to the formation of an elite integrated into the structures of the Church and the government, as well as to the disappearance of the monopoly of the aristocracy in the civil and religious domains.

3 - Ceremonies as factors of social cohesion

Beyond their liturgical dimension, the great ceremonies of a religious nature constituted a tangible manifestation of the cohesion of the Catholic community of which they formed the cement by providing the occasion to celebrate in the same spirit of communion their belonging to the same community. In this respect, it is significant that the Marists noted a larger than usual number of communicants at these ceremonies. "*The neophytes are all good and fervent Christians; hardly a month goes by without their approaching the sacraments and all participate in the big feasts*"[593]. The unity of the community, whose members were scattered in different parts of the archipelago, was also reconstituted in the enthusiasm which sometimes led them to make daily sacrifices so that nothing was missing from the festivities. "*We thought it necessary (on the occasion of a baptism ceremony) to recommend to the natives not to celebrate on that day but to keep to what was necessary. With this, there were still 27 roasted pigs on the carpet; our share was three large roasted pigs, not to mention the chickens... In the evening we had a very nice greeting, at least for the countryside there were at least sixty candles or lanterns. On other occasions we have had up to 80*"[594].

On the other hand, these ceremonies were indicative of the way in which the indigenous people perceived and experienced Catholic worship. The contribution of certain traditional customs in

[591] Father Lamaze to Father Poupinel, Maofaga, 19 July 1876 (A.P.M., 665).

[592] In his book, *The Nobility and the Chiefly Tradition in the Modern Kingdom of Tonga*, MARCUS G.E. discusses the emergence of new social intermediaries as a result of the establishment of the churches and the constitution of the state. Indeed, the organisation of missions and the establishment of state structures opened up new areas of social mobility which generated a new aspiration within the population. Apart from a small nobility with a number of privileges, the descendants of the many lines of traditional chiefs had joined the ranks of the common people. For them, education was seen as a means of social advancement as powerful as the teachings of the missionaries. The access of all to academic knowledge led to the emergence of a middle class whose aspirations were realised within the institutions of church and state. The promulgation of the 1875 constitution ended the existence of social categories whose raison d'être depended on kinship with one of Tonga's three royal dynasties.

[593] Father Chevron to his family, Tongatapu, 17 January 1844 (A.P.M., 394).

[594] *idem*.

the conduct of processions, the choice of dress or songs allow for the identification of a form of liturgy specific to the Catholic community in Tonga. While within the church walls, the attachment to liturgical rites and objects seems to have been maintained as in the early days of the mission, it appears that outside the church walls and over the years, Catholics have affirmed their preference for expressions closer to their traditional culture. Thus, the hymns alternated with Tongan songs, the former being reserved for the religious ceremony, the latter for the festivities surrounding it[595]. On the day of the feast, the celebrations began with a procession, not along the paths from the missionary's residence to the church, but on the *Malae*. "*For our Tongans have always made a kind of procession to honour their chiefs by marching before them in a square and carrying kava to them. This year: procession to the square of Mu'a, the square visited by Captain Cook*"[596]. Similarly, in representing their community colours and carrying the Blessed Sacrament, Tongan Catholics favoured the modesty of their handmade mats, which they felt were more emblematic of their commitment, over fabrics imported from Europe, however rich they were. "*For Corpus Christi processions, people prefer Tongan mats to the banners and canopies you have recently sent us*"[597]. Rather than following the example of the Protestants and thus going against the law promulgated in 1862, which provided that everyone should be dressed in the European style, Catholics continued to use their traditional attire. For the Corpus Christi celebration in 1869, a hundred or so little girls dressed in their *Ngatu*, covered in perfume oil and adorned with *Siri [Sisi] Kakala* - wide sashes of fragrant woven flowers - carried the banners. "*It's all very graceful; this costume suits them much better than the pieces of cloth these Tongans put on to imitate Europeans*"[598]. The boys, whose costume differed a bit from that of the girls, carried censers and scattered flowers on all sides. The cross of the clergy was supported by the choir children and the canopy was entrusted to the most fervent Catholic chiefs[599]. The solemnity of these great ceremonies testifies to the development of an original form of religious syncretism that combined traditional ritual expressions with the Roman liturgy. In this regard, it is notable that of all the feasts that were essentially related to divine worship and Marian veneration, the one that particularly appealed to the Catholic community in Tonga was, as the Marists noted, Corpus Christi - *Fu'a [Fua] Tali 'Eiki*. Was the origin of this popularity in the adoration by the faithful of the consecrated host presented by the priest, involving a collective aspiration and thus closer to Tongan religious sensibility than the celebration of the sacraments - baptisms, weddings or funerals - which were more intimate and to which Tongans were more unfamiliar? "*There will be no Corpus Christi procession in Vava'u because neophytes and money are lacking. But we have heard of the splendour of this ceremony in Tonga; a few attended; all yearn for the day when they will be able to compete with their brothers on the big island*"[600]. In order to give the ceremony greater prominence, all the Catholics of the island, and indeed of the archipelago, gathered in a village whose population had been designated several months beforehand to receive the faithful who converged on the place - say two days before and the day before the ceremony[601].

[595] Father Lamaze to Father Hingre, Maofaga, June 2, 1869 (A.P.M., 633).
[596] Father Lamaze to Father Hingre, Maofaga, June 2, 1869 (A.P.M., 633).
[597] Father Reiter to the Superior of the S.M. in Lyons, Vava'u, 8 June 1893 (A.P.M., 885).
[598] Father Lamaze to Father Hingre, Maofaga, 2 June 1869 (A.P.M., 633).
[599] *op. cit*.
[600] Father Lamaze to Abbé Hingre, Fugamisi, 12 June 1868 (A.P.M., 631).
[601] Father Lamaze to his brother, Mu'a, 28 September 1869 (A.P.M., 634).

In addition to the Catholics' deep desire to reconstitute their unity and strength through massive and majestic ceremonies, the Marists encouraged this form of human exchange which drew the attention of Protestants to them and contrasted with the austerity of the Wesleyan rites. "*The Protestant chiefs marvelled (at the Corpus Christi procession held in Vava'u in 1880), as their religion is so bare and cold compared to the Catholic religion*"[602].

At the same time as the Catholic community was gradually being integrated into Tongan society, it was becoming more structured and diversified through the appearance of new social intermediaries, the most obvious being nuns, indigenous priests, catechists and school teachers. The elements that intervened in this favour were based on: the establishment of the residence of the bishop, whose functions were considered to be a power in the community and for the community with regard to relations with the outside. They were also based on the development of schools and colleges which generated the creation of a Catholic elite, either civil or ecclesiastical; the integration of Catholic notables into the state structures dominated by Protestants which served the recognition of the community as a whole, as well as that, within the structure of the mission, of the native priests and catechists which allowed for the establishment of a greater cohesion between the Marists themselves and their Catholics. The existence of confraternities, whose members had granted themselves a special status in relation to other Catholics because of their greater fervour, strengthened the structures of the mission by constituting stable cores of the faithful, used as an example to their co-religionists. Thus, initially composed of a European priest, a coadjutor brother and a few Catholics, the human structures of the mission were transformed, over the years, into a group built on a complex hierarchy. The relationships between the bishop, the missionaries, the native priests and the catechists, as well as those between Catholics themselves, notables, members of confraternities, schoolmasters and the ordinary faithful were all part of two combined hierarchical systems within the Catholic community, the one proper to the Catholic Church and the one inherent to Tongan society. Within this framework, only the nuns seemed to benefit from a special status which placed them, in the eyes of the Tongan population as a whole, outside these hierarchical systems, even though they were responsible to their bishop.

[602] Father Breton to Father Poupinel, Vava'u, 1 August 1880 (A.P.M., 263).

CHAPTER VIII

GEOGRAPHICAL CENTRES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MISSION

I - Tongatapu: the first mission centres

The apostolate of the Marist fathers was divided between the duties of worship, the distribution of medicines, school teaching, village visits, and the preparation of ceremonies. However, each of the missions functioned as an autonomous unit and developed, each in its own way, its particularities.

1- Mu'a, a dynamic community[603]

Founded in 1852, the station at Mu'a owes its reputation as the driving force of the Marist mission in Tonga to the cohesion and dynamism of its community. The existence, prior to the opening of this establishment, of a nucleus of neophytes constituted around the chapel of Hahake benefited Father Chevron who had the task of structuring it. In this district where Protestantism had not been able to establish itself because of the traditional influence of the Tu'i Tonga, the success of Catholicism was mainly explained by a rejection of the religious monopoly and political hegemony of the Tu'i Kanokupolu. By converting to Catholicism, the Tu'i Tonga expressed his refusal to submit to a dynasty later than its own. Long hoped for by the Marists, it was the culmination of a long history steeped in rivalry with the Tu'i Kanokupolu. At the time of his baptism, he brought in his wake most of the commoners attached to his domains. When the Marist fathers were faced with the need to find a new location after the destruction of the mission at Pea, the Tu'i Tonga took the initiative to rebuild the church destroyed during the sacking of the fort of Pea in the centre of the *Malae*, symbol of his passing grandeur. He provided them with land to extend the enclosure so that they could support themselves[604]. This gesture reflected both the Tu'i Tonga's sentiments of benevolence towards the Marists, but also a desire to maintain continuity of his sacred office. As a form of parallel enthronement, the conversion of the Tu'i Tonga gave him a new religious identity. The deposed ruler thus established himself as the tutelary authority of Catholicism, which he made sacred among the pagan population still attached to the values of the traditional monarchy.

However, his reserve, in religion as in all things, caused disappointment among the Marists. While they ardently wished for him to carry the torch of Catholicism in the manner of the Tu'i Kanokupolu, the icon of Protestantism, the Tu'i Tonga entrenched himself behind the ramparts of his condition and limited his commitment to the fulfilment of his religious duties to which he adhered with great rigour. In contrast, the community of Mu'a, driven by a dynamism derived from its ancestral commitment to the values embodied by the Tu'i Tonga, showed great initiative. In 1887, the Tu'i Tonga's son, Sebastian Fakaua, signed in his name and in the name of all the Catholics of Tonga a letter of congratulations to Pope Leo XIII on the occasion of his

[603] In 1885, the district of Mu'a had 24 villages with a total population of 3,000 people, 950 of whom were Catholics (Father Guitta to Father Martin in Lyons, Tongatapu, 27 June 1885 (A.P.M., 538).
[604] Father Monnier to Bishop of Enos, Vava'u, Christmas 1862 (A.P.M., 791).

priestly jubilee. For the occasion, the whole community of Mu'a mobilised to make mats and tapas, the beauty of which was to honour their chief and missionaries[605]. These gifts, sent to Rome, were an expression of their fervour and respect for the great sacred king of the Catholic Church - *Tu'i Tapu* - as the pope was called among the Catholics of Tonga[606]. While the impact of the Tu'i Tonga benefited the mission as a prerequisite for its recognition, the cohesion of the community rested primarily on Father Chevron's personality, his apostolic spirit, his untiring patience, and his leniency towards sinners. As the founder of this station, he devoted more than half of his life to it, i.e. forty-two years of unremitting work. During this time, he was assisted by Father Guitta, with whom he formed a harmonious team and who succeeded him in 1884. In 1882, in addition to the religious celebration which brought together all the priests of the archipelago and all the Catholics of the island, the civil commemoration of his priesthood's golden jubilee took on the characteristics of a ceremony in the great Tongan tradition. The presentation of offerings, songs, dances, speeches and banquets were a tribute to his apostolate[607]. Even the Protestants themselves shared the admiration of Catholics for this man and showed their gratitude by generously participating in the collection organised for the occasion.

In 1867, the Catholic community at Mu'a, which numbered 1025 faithful - compared to about 300 in 1850 - had reached its maximum growth rate. From then on, it was a stable group quantitatively, since in 1935 it registered only 1200 Catholics, as was also the case in Vava'u: "*the progress of the mission is not made in numbers but in its internal organisation*"[608]. However, it remained the largest Catholic community in the archipelago. The community of Mu'a stood out from the other Catholic communities of the archipelago because of its original internal structures, which contributed to making this mission a centre of experimentation in matters of liturgy and community life, and the initiatives carried out in Mu'a were followed with attention if not enthusiasm by other Catholics of the archipelago. In 1866, the catechists of the district, who had formed a weekly study group to teach catechism in the neighbouring villages, began to meet quarterly to assess the needs of the mission and to set priorities for its operation. With the support of the Catholic population of the district, they decided to contribute to the food supply of their two missionaries by a quarterly donation of yams, and to proceed with an annual collection intended for the upkeep of the mission premises and the relief of the needy. In 1880, three annual collections were planned. That same year, Father Chevron introduced the adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. The group of women was divided into six units corresponding to each working day of the week; in turn, one of the ten or twelve women in each unit had to spend half an hour with the Blessed Sacrament[609]. Through this activity, he noticed a greater community and individual involvement in the liturgical life. The catechists of Mu'a were a force for all the Catholic communities of the archipelago; sent to Ha'apai or Vava'u[610], they actively participated in the development of new Catholic centres. Consequently,

[605] Father Guitta to Father Nicolet, Procurator to the Holy See, Mua, 27 September 1887 (A.P.M., 541).
[606] During the year 1887 and in the space of three months, the following were offered to the Pope: 22,261 hours of work carried out by the sisters' interns; 22,429 hours of silence observed; 1,501 sacramental communions; 6,638 Masses; 8,080 Stations of the Cross; 63,571 rosaries; 4,493 mortifications. Father Guitta to Reverend Father Nicolet, Procurator to the Holy See, Mua, 27 September 1887 (A.P.M., 541).
[607] Father Castagnier to Father Poupinel, Maofaga, 4 January 1882 (A.P.M., 367).
[608] Father Breton to Father Poupinel in Lyons, Vava'u, 10 June 1867 (A.P.M., 247).
[609] Father Guitta to the Superior of the S. M., Mu'a, 26 February 1874 (A.P.M., 524).
[610] Box 1. a. Bishop Lamaze, mission diary, 13 December 1879 to 14 August 1885 (Tonga Diocesan Archives) and letter from Father Guitta to Father Martin, Tongatapu, 27 June 1885 (A.P.M., 539).

their formation was a permanent concern of the Marists for whom they represented the most effective means of combating the supremacy of Protestantism. From 1874 onwards, Fathers Chevron and Guitta, who were in charge of the mission during all these years, also encouraged the development of liturgical exercises by instituting the practice of the apostolate of prayer. This spiritual training involved the daily recitation of the Rosary to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and participation in the communion of reparation on the first Friday; the members met once a month. On this day, the missionaries noted a larger than usual participation in the commemoration of the Eucharist and distributed with an average of one hundred and thirty-five communions[611]. In 1879, forty-two men and eighty-eight women attended the prayer; in 1880, one hundred and ten men and one hundred and seventy women[612]. In addition to these activities devoted to the exercise of worship, each member of the community participated, since 1867, in the improvement of the material conditions of the mission: the young girls washed, ironed and mended the church linen, while the men carried out carpentry and plantation work.

The initiatives of the Catholics of Mu'a created a competition with the other missions of the island. The communities of Mu'a and Maofaga maintained a certain rivalry towards each other, the stake being the influence of their respective missions. Although this competition sometimes caused some tension - in 1879, Father Bellwald complained about Father Lamaze's efforts to establish the centre of the Catholic mission of the archipelago in Maofaga - it was a positive element in its development[613].

2 - Maofaga: a vocation of openness

While the majority of Catholics continued to resist valiantly the siege undertaken by King George at Pea in 1852, the weaker ones seized the opportunity of a truce to take refuge in Maofaga, where the island's traditional sanctuary was located and where they were assured of not being pursued. On his return from Tahiti in 1855, Father Calinon joined them there to form a new community. The establishment at Maofaga quickly acquired a privileged status because of its geographical location, which was conducive to both commercial and cultural exchanges. Its proximity to the capital, Nuku'alofa, two leagues away, as well as its wharf, which could accommodate large foreign ships, stimulated its development. This advantageous location predisposed the village of Maofaga to become the centre of Tonga's Catholic mission and the residence of the Vicar Apostolic from 1879.

As the site of the episcopal establishment and cosmopolitan meetings, it had to adapt its structures to accommodate the many Catholics who came from the four corners of the island to visit the bishop and receive foreign crews calling at Tonga. Indeed, English, New Zealand, Australian, German, and Dutch merchant ships, American whalers and official vessels of various nationalities frequently passed through the bay. In 1866, the mission church in Maofaga had to accommodate the one hundred and fifty Catholic sailors from the *Tuscaroa*, a frigate of the American Navy. Father Lamaze conducted the service using his knowledge of the English

[611] Father Guitta to Father Martin, Tongatapu, 27 June 1885 (A.P.M., 538).

[612] The success of the Brotherhood of the Apostles in Mu'a and Maofaga was also recorded in Vava'u whose members were keen to receive their insignia: a golden medal four centimetres in diameter representing on one side the bust of Father Chanel and on the other the inscription *Houtaha Apesitolo Vava'u* [sic].

[613] Father Bellwald was born in Luxembourg on November 17, 1861. Ordained a priest in 1889, he embarked a few months later for Wallis where he resided for a year before arriving at the mission of Niua Toputapu to which he devoted himself from 1891 to 1895. From 1906 to 1914, he was more particularly in charge of the college of 'Api Fo'ou at Maofaga. He died on March 16, 1914 in Maofaga.

language. In general, these events attracted most of the island's neophytes to the mission, as well as a number of Protestants who were surprised to find that foreign Catholics were engaged in a ritual similar to that practised by those in Tonga.

The people of Maofaga, who had a front row seat at episcopal receptions, knew the proper way to welcome the bishop in the absence of their resident missionary. As soon as the bishop arrived, he was to be taken to the house reserved for the kava ceremony, while the Catholics of the island crowded around to kiss his ring and receive his blessing. While awaiting the return of the missionary, the elders inquired about the health of the pope, the development of the Catholic - *Lotu* – religion in the world and especially the news of the priests of the vicariate who had previously stayed in Tonga. From 1883 onwards, performances by the brass band were added to the decorum.

From 1876 to 1878, Father Lamaze undertook the construction of a large church with foundations made of lime-coated stone and walls of California wood. This process was intended to limit the damage caused to buildings by the many earthquakes that had hit the region. More than a dozen lime kilns were built for the purpose: workers cut down trees over a metre in circumference and then dug a hole in the ground large enough to hold all the wood. The next step was to clear blocks of coral with axes and levers at low tide, which were dragged by force of arms to the shore where they were squared and cut. This operation took two or three weeks. Then the workers placed a few branches of dry wood at the bottom of the funnel-shaped hole, which they first covered with a large quantity of green wood. They then placed corals while the inner surfaces of the oven were lined with dried coconut leaves. When this phase was completed, they set the coconut leaves on fire, causing a thick smoke to appear. The green wood trunks and coral blocks collapsed and cracked. After a few days, when the fire had burnt out, they collected the charred coral and mixed it with sand mixed with water to make mortar. Shovels, axes and wheelbarrows were the only tools available for construction[614]. For his part, Father Lamaze obtained from Sydney the bricks needed to build the doors and windows and the parquet for the church floor. As for the priests' and nuns' compound, it was lined with a wooden fence; the reed partitions of the house, the convent and the college were gradually replaced by planks.

Apart from the exceptional occasions when the presence of the bishop or a French crew disrupted the daily routine, the community lived to the rhythm of morning prayers, nightly recitations of the Rosary, and adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. Every day, at sunrise, the neophytes went to the church in small groups. It was the main meeting place for the community, which gathered there even before the arrival of the priest to meditate, recite the Rosary or follow the Way of the Cross. The time of the Sunday Mass was fixed at 6:30 am in summer and 7:30 am in winter. Apart from the text of the consecration of the bread and wine, recited in Latin, it was celebrated in Tongan. After the liturgy, catechetical instruction followed, and then the *Talavai* - distribution of remedies. This was an opportunity for the missionaries to hear about the small events of the week and to discuss the concerns of each person.

While everyone dispersed to attend to their family chores, Father Lamaze boarded the *poopa [popao]* - a pirogue manoeuvred by three rowers - to cross the bay and visit the other villages in the district. After an hour's crossing, he arrived in Ago [sic] where the *Lali* sounded to

[614] Father Castagnier to his brother, Vava'u, 22 February 1894 (A.P.M., 382).

announce his visit. The Catholics would gather in the "*house of prayer*" and the liturgy would follow the catechism for the children, the recitation of the Rosary, and the instruction of adults. Then he continued his rounds, but not before drinking the kava prepared in his honour by the catechist, asking for news of those absent, and greeting the congregation. The same gestures were repeated in the other three neighbouring villages. The Catholics of Pea, numbering about 50 in 1878, were the largest group in the district after Maofaga[615].

When he arrived at Maofaga in 1866, which had a strong community of five hundred members, Father Lamaze gave new impetus to this mission which he endeavoured to highlight so that it reflects the image of a certain prosperity for Catholicism. In his view, Maofaga was to be the "*showcase*" for the Catholic mission in Tonga. Thus, he took advantage of the geographical proximity of the capital and the port utilities of the village which attracted a large and diverse population. He encouraged the people of Nuku'alofa to visit the mission, while he himself established friendly relations with the royal family and Protestant chiefs more than his predecessors, as they were free from the old prejudices that kept Protestants and Catholics apart. To celebrate his episcopal consecration, Bishop Lamaze sent King George a case of bottles of Bordeaux, and received a large sea turtle in return as thank you[616]. At the celebration in honour of the completion of the new church, not only Lasike [sic], the great Catholic chief of Maofaga, but also 'Uga were present[617]. King George himself went to the church to meet the priests and sisters.

After his appointment as Vicar Apostolic in 1879, Fathers Olier and Castagnier succeeded him. When he was sent to Vava'u in 1881, Father Castagnier was replaced by Father Thomas, who took over the direction of the mission college. In 1906, Bishop Lamaze's funeral was celebrated in the Cathedral of Maofaga in the presence of the king and all the government ministers.

3 - Hihifo: a reluctant population

The first church in Hihifo was blessed by Father Chevron in December 1858. Father Breton resided in the village until 1863, when he was replaced by Father Guitta. Father Castagnier succeeded Fr Guitta from 1870 until 1882, until Father Loyer was appointed to replace him[618]. However, despite their perseverance, all of them only obtained a few conversions and deplored the difficulty of integrating into this district, which was much larger than the neighbouring districts. Forced to make exhausting journeys to visit his neophytes scattered in the distant villages, Father Castagnier resolved in 1874 to buy a horse-drawn carriage[619]. Despite this innovation, which greatly facilitated communications between the priest and the population of the district, the number of conversions barely increased.

A traditional stronghold of the Tu'i Kanokupolu in Tongatapu, the Hihifo district was under the control of the Protestants. The chief Ata, an ally of King George, had long been opposed to the establishment of Catholic missionaries who had no support in this hostile environment.

[615] Father Castagnier to Father Poupinel, Maofaga, 3 September 1878 (A.P.M., 350).
[616] Father Castagnier to Father Poupinel in Lyons, Maofaga, 7 May 1880 (A.P.M., 361).
[617] Father Castagnier to Father Germain in Lyons, Hihifo, 14 May 1878 (A.P.M., 349).
[618] Fr. Stanislas Loyer was born at Hengoat in the diocese of Saint-Brieuc on 11 November 1843. He was ordained a priest on 28 October 1870. He embarked for Rotuma in 1872. In April 1882, he went to Tonga where he was joined by one of his sisters who was admitted to the Third Order Regular of Mary. He died in Lifuka on 8 August 1902.
[619] The 6 villages in this district were Matafonua, Teekiu, Vaotu'u, Hahakame [Ha'akame], Hahalalo [Ha'alalo], Utulau.

Despite these particularly unfavourable conditions for the development of a Catholic mission, Father Breton achieved some results[620]. By 1862, he had managed to establish a small community of twenty-one people. The conversion of a young man, Massima [Masima], the son of a district chief, and five of his friends, was a source of great satisfaction to Father Breton, who was soon to join the mission at Vava'u, and spurred hope of further conversions, especially as Massima's wife was a niece of King George. But in this environment, where hostility to Catholics was strong, such acts of defiance against kin and the chiefs were rare. Shortly after his arrival in Hihifo in 1862, Father Castagnier, who deplored his inactivity, complained to his bishop about being sidelined. His idleness forced Bishop Elloy to entrust him with the translation into Tongan of a summary of the Old and New Testaments. Although Father Castagnier expressed concern about the future of the mission, all the Catholic missionaries in Tongatapu were in favour of keeping it open, as the closure of the Ha'apai mission would have been seen by Protestants as a great victory over their rivals. Moreover, they defended the idea that, unsupported by a missionary, the neophytes would have apostatized at the time of their death in order to obtain remedies from the Protestants. Consequently, Father Castagnier set about making his establishment prosper materially. He sold the colt born to a mare given to him by an English protector in Windsor and took advantage of the abolition of the thirty piasters tax reserved for merchants to ask the nuns to make clothes which were sold at a large profit. He thus assured the mission an income of two to three pounds a month. This financial ease allowed him to embellish the church, which became an object of curiosity and pride for the villagers.

In 1874, the departure of the Wallisian catechist who had arrived in Tonga in 1842 with Father Chevron, due to paralysis of the limbs, was a new trial for Father Castagnier. He tried to replace him with the schoolmaster, but had to give up because he could not find a successor among the Catholics of the district. A new hope for development arose, however, when two young men educated at the Fathers' school at Maofaga settled in Hihifo - the wife of one of them was the first pupil of the nuns established in Tonga - and a school was established in 1876. Indeed, the Catholic community became more closely knit. The division of the Wesleyan Church in 1885 led to an increase in the number of Catholics, which by then had grown to a community of two hundred. However, the movement of conversion to the Marist mission ceased as soon as the Protestants were at peace. In 1938, the Hihifo station was abandoned in favour of Houma. Father Callet was given the responsibility of building a central church for the district in place of the small wooden chapel with a tin roof[621]. He bought a horse and revived the Houma station, which had been abandoned for nine years.

In 1909, after repeated requests, and with the support of the French naval authorities in the region, the Marists obtained a concession of land at Nuku'alofa. This new station was placed under the responsibility of Father Blanc who entrusted the sisters with the task of opening a school teaching English where many children, both European and Tongan, sons and daughters of merchants and notables, would be welcomed. This establishment in Nuku'alofa, which the Wesleyans had long defended, was the result of long years of confrontation with the authorities,

[620] At the opening of the mission, there were only two catechumens. In 1862, there were twenty-one. For all the villages in the district, there were 220 Catholics. Every Sunday, the priest celebrated twenty to thirty communions. "*This is the district most attached to heresy*". (Fathers Breton, Castagnier and Monnier, Hihifo, Tongatapu, December 1862. A.P.M., 244).

[621] Father Georges Callet was born on 12 June I909 in Saint-Etienne. He was ordained a priest on 23 February 1936 and is the last representative of the Society of Mary in Tonga today.

and representation by the Catholic mission at the official ceremonies held in the capital was an expression of its recognition. In May 1935, Father Poncet was the guest of Queen Salote who presided over the various events organised in honour of the jubilee of the English King George V. The Api Fo'ou College brass band provided musical entertainment for part of the festivities and the pontifical mass, celebrated for the occasion in the Maofaga Cathedral, was attended by many personalities from the archipelago. On January 1, 1940, Bishop Blanc established his residence in Nuku'alofa, which then became the administrative centre of the mission.

II - Uneven development in the other islands of the archipelago

The expansion of Catholicism which began in 1855, following the intervention of the French authorities from the Naval Division of the Pacific Ocean, spread throughout the archipelago. However, like the missions in Tongatapu, progress in Ha'apai, Vava'u and Niua was slow and uneven.

1- Ha'apai: a hostile environment

The influence of King George in Ha'apai, the archipelago of which he was traditionally the supreme chief, the opposition of the local chiefs and that of the Wesleyan missionaries, the multitude of islands and their mutual remoteness, the difficulties of collaboration between Fathers Calinon and Guitta, the isolation and the lack of resources, all combined to give the Catholic mission in Ha'apai the reputation of being the most ungrateful of the archipelago. This establishment was the object of discouragement and bitterness among the Catholic missionaries who followed one another there in vain.

When freedom of religion was proclaimed in 1855, the Catholic missionaries intended to take advantage of this concession to enter the Ha'apai archipelago, which had been conquered by the Protestants in 1836 and whose expansion had been assured by the unconditional support of King George. The refusal of Lausi [Lausi'i], the king's brother and governor of Ha'apai, to receive Fathers Calinon and Guitta on his terrain, immediately provoked a new intervention by the French naval authorities who considered this act as a violation of the 1855 Convention. Captain Lebris, commander of the *Bayonnaise*, arrived in Tonga on July 21, 1858. After long and arduous negotiations, he obtained from King George assurance that he would facilitate their installation at Lifuka and the guarantee of his governor's loyalty to them. After the departure of the French corvette, the Wesleyan missionaries expressed their strong disapproval of the perceived unfair practices of their rivals and took offence at the way King George had been treated by the French authorities. Reverend Verkoe went to Sydney to sue the commander of the *Bayonnaise*. However, King George and the Ha'apai chiefs, fearful of reprisals, were more conciliatory and directed the people to make themselves available to Fathers Calinon and Guitta for the construction of their establishment. On August 6, 1858, the missionaries disembarked at Lifuka. They were soon confronted with the obstacles put in place by King George and the Wesleyan chiefs and missionaries who coordinated their efforts to prevent any conversion to Catholicism. King George, whose influence was stronger in Ha'apai than anywhere else, announced that anyone wishing to be baptised into Catholicism was to be considered a traitor. The chiefs held clandestine meetings to encourage people to resist the Marist missionaries, discourage them from offering or selling food to the missionaries, forbid

them from attending worship there or ask for their help in case of illness, while they appointed an officer to enforce these orders[622]. In Ha'apai, Protestantism was the religion of the Tu'i.

When Fathers Calinon and Guitta complained about the damage done to their establishment, the island chiefs, under the pretext of preserving their integrity, forbade anyone to approach the mission area. In this regard, Lausi [Lausi'i] invoked the order given to him by King George, under pressure from Commander Lebris, to protect their persons and property[623]. For the first few months, the Tongatapu neophytes provided for the missionaries' needs through the regular shipment of food parcels. But King George soon put an end to this collusion between the Tongatapu Catholics and their two missionaries. Despite the prohibitions, a small group of people gradually ventured into the confines of the Catholic mission, the main reason for transgressing the orders being a desperate search for remedies to cure their loved one. A small nucleus of catechumens gradually formed: a family of seven in Foa, an old man on the island of Uhia [Uiha], and a few others passing through Ha'apai[624].

In addition to the intransigence of the chiefs, the difficulty of evangelising the Ha'apai archipelago lay in the dispersion and remoteness of the islands of this archipelago, which numbered about fifty, most of which were uninhabited[625]. Moreover, Fathers Calinon and Guitta were plagued by sharp disagreements which generated a deep discontent within their team, not conducive to their integration among the population. Father Guitta, who had only recently arrived in Tonga, had not yet mastered the language and suffered from the isolation in which Father Calinon kept him, despite the bishop's admonitions to be more sociable. Their disagreement was based on the application of the mission regulations concerning exchanges with the natives, which Father Calinon recommended as a means of providing for their needs, given the weakness of the financial support provided from France. However, Father Guitta considered this method to be inconsistent with the spirit of the Society, as instilled in him by Father Chevron, by whose side he had worked to develop the mission at Mu'a, before his departure for Ha'apai. Guitta returned to Tongatapu, while Father Calinon, who was determined to secure the survival of his establishment, was visited once a year by one of his confreres from Tonga or Vava'u.

During a pastoral tour he undertook in 1867, Bishop Elloy made a stopover at Lifuka. Unwilling to make vain gestures, he ordered the closure of the mission, which he entrusted to a catechist. The catechist carried out his duties - gathering the few neophytes on the island in the morning and evening for prayer and receiving visiting Catholics - until the establishment was reopened in 1891. By then, the Catholics converted by Father Calinon had died or apostatised to join the Protestants. In 1869, Father Lamaze stayed at Lifuka for a fortnight. Apart from the catechist, he met only one Catholic named Tomasi on the island of Kotu; this one persisted, despite the hostility of his relatives, in ringing the *Fetapa* - the angelus - three times a day on a *Lali* reserved for this purpose. This colourful character never separated himself from his rosary, praying aloud under the mocking eye of his neighbours. As for the population,

[622] Father Soret to Father Yardin, Vava'u, 16 January 1860 (A.P.M., 903).
[623] Father Monnier to the Superior of the S.M. in Lyons, Tongatapu, 15 April 1859 (A.P.M., 786).
[624] *idem.*
[625] Number of inhabitants on the main islands of this archipelago in 1869: Lifuka: 600; Uiha: 600; Hahamo [Ha'ano]: 300; Fou [Foa]: 200; Nomuka: 200; Tumua [sic]: 200; Holeva: 200; Lofaga: 100; Mougaone: 90; Kotu: 40; Fotu [Fotua]: 30; Oua: 20; Matuku: 20; Fetohu [sic]: 20; total: 2620 people, the vast majority of whom were Protestants according to information provided at the time by Father Guitta.

with whom Father Lamaze tried to establish a dialogue, they carefully avoided broaching the subject of religion.

From 1891 onwards, the Marists received a warm welcome in Ha'apai, whose population had ceased to be hostile to Catholicism since the division within the Wesleyan Church. The Ha'apai chiefs showed great lenience towards Catholics, whose decisions they respected from then on, being themselves disoriented by the quarrel that animated their own missionaries. In this favourable context, the reopening of the mission of Lifuka became a priority for the bishop. "*The visits we make in passing are insufficient. But with a missionary we would start, or rather we would start again. We have asked for a missionary for a year in Samoa, another for Futuna; but Ha'apai is more urgent than Futuna and the political circumstances are favourable. If it is possible, Father, have mercy on Ha'apai. I would like to thank you in advance*"[626]. Father Loyson [Loison] and a Futunian priest, Sosefo Mougateau, then reclaimed the land ceded in 1864 by King George. They established a new residence and built a chapel. However, despite the participation of the population in the development of the mission, the difficulties linked to the scattering of the islands persisted: 5,400 inhabitants, the great majority of whom were Protestants, were spread over 16 islands several miles apart. For Father Loyer, who replaced Father Loison in 1894 and deplored the lack of maritime communications, this scattering was the main obstacle to conversions[627]. In 1895, only a dozen children and Sister Saint-Yves attended the celebration of the Mass[628].

In 1896, a terrible storm tested Father Loyer who only managed with great difficulty to feed his schoolchildren and maintain his cricket team, a powerful element of social cohesion within the community. The ten or so young men who made up the team gathered every evening at the mission to sing, discuss and drink kava[629]. In addition, the school, which had seventeen boys, the singing classes, and the brass band also helped to stimulate the small group of Catholics gathered at Lifuka[630].

In 1934, a catechist settled in Foa and Father Tremblay built a chapel in one of the four villages on the island where he went every Sunday to celebrate Mass. Nomuka was the third centre for the development of Catholicism in Ha'apai. There was not a single Catholic on the island of Oua at that time, but the fact that the chief's daughter was a boarder with the nuns at Lifuka was a sign that it would soon be established. Only the chief of Ha'afeva Island was angry about Father Tremblay's visit. He refused the building of a house of prayer and confiscated the land of the few people who wished to convert to Catholicism. Nevertheless, they were able to worship thanks to the land granted by the *Burns & Philip* company. In 1937, three hundred Catholics were counted out of a total population of seven thousand, and Father Tremblay celebrated mass in the most remote parts of the archipelago. In some islands where the Catholic missionaries had not been able to go before, the population discovered with curiosity this religion which aroused a certain attraction: thirty-three villagers of Uhia [Uiha] Island

[626] Bishop Lamaze to Father Martin, Superior of the S.M. in Lyons, Maofaga, 21 August 1891 (A.P.M., 98).
[627] Father Loyer to the Superior of the S.M., Lifuka, Ha'apai, 20 March 1894 (A.P.M., 708). In 1928, Father Tremblay undertook the construction of a cutter to visit the islands of the archipelago. Thanks to the *Fetuu Moana* - "*Star of the Sea*", blessed by Bishop Blanc in 1933 and officially launched on 5 April 1934, he began the real work of penetrating the archipelago, some of whose inhabitants live in the greatest isolation.
[628] Lifuka, 26 November 1895, Father Loyer to Bishop Lamaze. C.11.a.6. *Incomings Letters, Bishop Lamaze* (Archives of the Diocese of Tonga).
[629] Lifuka, 8 January 1896, Father Loyer to Bishop Lamaze, *idem*.
[630] Lifuka, 1 February 1896, Father Loyer to Bishop Lamaze, *ibid*.

registered for catechism as soon as the priest made his first visits. To meet the material needs of his mission, Father Tremblay raised funds in the United States, his native country, where he gave lectures to young seminarians and to various religious institutions in the country on the theme of the Marist apostolate in Tonga. In 1938, Father Eckert founded a brass band in Uiha and procured, to the great satisfaction of the neophytes, a bell for the village church[631]. Although the majority of the band members were Protestants, the Catholic community of Uiha formed a strong nucleus within the archipelago. In 1946, Father Boussit built chapels on the islands of Nomuka, Ha'afeva, and Foa.

2 - Vava'u: a tradition of exchange

This place had a special attraction for the Marists because of the medals buried, according to Catholic tradition, by Bishop Pompallier during his first visit to Vava'u in 1836 [sic]. In the context of their eviction by the Protestant chiefs, this symbolic gesture placed the archipelago under the benevolent gaze of Mary and announced a forthcoming return. The island's evangelisation, although delayed, appeared inevitable. While the mission of Ha'apai inspired feelings of bitterness and sadness in the Catholic missionaries, that of Vava'u suggested success and aroused enthusiasm. On the other hand, the Catholic mission at Vava'u owed its reputation as the "*Pearl of Oceania*" to the beauty of its location. In 1861, King George offered the Catholic missionaries a choice of three locations. They refused the first one, which was too far from the centre, also the second one, because of the floods which made access impracticable. They chose a site on a hill, a site that was pleasing to the eye and offered a wide view of the bay. The path leading to the church was decorated on both sides with a row of fruit trees[632].

The station of Vava'u was founded in 1858 [sic] by Father Castagnier and the first Mass was celebrated there by Bishop Bataillon on September 29, 1859 in the presence of about sixty Catholics. Unlike Ha'apai, the six thousand inhabitants of the Vava'u archipelago at the time were spread out over islands not far from each other. Father Breton, who replaced Father Castagnier in May 1863, devoted himself to this mission until his death in 1881[633]. His way of life, characterised by voluntary destitution and his inclination for meditation and solitude, earned him the nickname "*the hermit of Vava'u*". He aroused in the population a feeling of respect, but also of unease and incomprehension at his capacity to renounce material things, which he imposed on himself as a mortification. "*I received yesterday evening from Captain MacLeod a letter from Father Breton which could be called a lamentation. He begs of me a favour to go and visit him as soon as possible. At the same time he wrote to Father Lamaze to ask him not to detain me, and even to join his prayers to mine. He seems affected. He calls himself the abandoned one of Vava'u after having told the father about his bodily and moral miseries, he says: from time to time, one is inclined to be bored, to linger, to be envious of others, to remember of the past, and even to regret it. They claim that I am satisfied with just any visit. I resign myself, that's all*"[634].

[631] Father Jacob Eckert was born on 29 January 1906 in Esch-sur-Alzette, Luxembourg. He was ordained priest on February 25, 1932 and left for Tonga on November 3, 1935. He died in Tonga on 11 November 1981.
[632] Father Soret to Father Yardin, Vava'u, 16 January 1860 (A.P.M., 903).
[633] Father Castagnier to Father Forestier in Lyons, 11 July 1888 (A.P.M., 376). There were about a hundred Catholics in Vava'u at the time.
[634] Father Chevron to Father Poupinel in Sydney, Tonga, 17 February 1868 (A.P.M., 1,104).

Founded at the same time as Ha'apai, the mission of Vava'u developed rapidly due to the presence of about a hundred Wallisians, baptised in their native island by Bishop Bataillon, who established in Tonga following the exile in the 1850s of one of their chiefs. Even before the arrival of the Marist missionaries, they introduced the rudiments of Catholic doctrine to Vava'u and created a rivalry with the Tongan population. The settlement of Wallisians - and Samoans - on this island also corresponded to the traditional flow of exchanges between the archipelagos of Central Polynesia. The numerous movements of population, attributable to the geographical position of the archipelago of Vava'u, situated in the centre of a triangle Tongatapu, Wallis and Samoa, had repercussions on the numerical composition of the Catholic community. A wave of emigration to these archipelagos, the cause of which is not clear, led to a reduction in the number of Catholics during the 1860s: out of a hundred or so neophytes, only forty remained[635]. However, these departures were quickly compensated by new arrivals. In 1862, Father Castagnier celebrated the baptism of about thirty catechumens from Tongatapu and Wallis, and thus gathered eighty Catholics at the mission[636]. In 1869, several dozen Wallisians, who contested the election of their new queen, took refuge in Vava'u, contributing temporarily to an increase in the number of Catholics.

These quantitative fluctuations underline the artificial nature of this expansion, based not on conversions, but on an external and irregular influx in the population. On the other hand, these movements breathed a dynamism into the mission at Vava'u, which became a stable community around a core of about fifty people. Father Breton was supported in his task by a Catholic catechist from Tongatapu, Amone, father of six children. His eldest child, Sesalia, a nineteen year old girl, and his youngest child, Dassiela, a seventeen year old boy, were regular communicants. For Father Breton, the presence and diligence of these young people represented a hope of sensitising the local youth to the practices of the faith. Indeed, their influence was quickly felt within the Catholic community and six of their companions were baptised at Christmas: among them, Luciola, the daughter of the former governor of Vava'u, and her younger brother Isaia, who was admitted to the altar boys' group. For Father Breton, the conversion of the latter was a real victory, as all the other members of the family were Protestants. Even Chief Setaleki showed a certain benevolence towards him, reflecting his lack of prejudice and his open-mindedness. A few months after settling in Vava'u, Father Breton was visited by a Catholic family whose father was none other than Simonet, the sailor who had deserted Dumont d'Urville's expedition in 1826 and who had been the translator for Bishop Pompallier during his stopover in Vava'u in 1836 [sic]. His wife and her young sister, aged seventeen, had been educated by the nuns in Tahiti where they were from.

Father Breton's establishment reflected the level of development achieved by the mission at Vava'u. The house, completed in October 1861, replaced the temporary *fale* - traditional dwelling - which he had occupied until then. Two hanging tapas divided the main room into three smaller rooms: the chapel, the reception room, and the missionary's bedroom. Near this residence was the house of Brother John and the children, who helped with the various tasks of the mission. The following year, a chapel was built in line with these buildings. A hedge of *fiki* - ficus - separated it from the functional premises and surrounded the enclosure divided into two spaces: the front of the mission was open to the public, while the backyard was

[635] Father Soret to Father Yardin, Vava'u, 16 January 1860 (A.P.M., 903).
[636] Father Monnier to the Bishop of Enos, Vava'u, Christmas 1862 (A.P.M., 791).

reserved for the kitchen and the vegetable garden[637]. In 1865, the missionary's residence was extended to include a common reception room, a room for distinguished guests in the Tongan tradition, a guest room, and a conference room which was largely open to the Protestants with whom he had managed to establish interactions[638]. In contrast to Ha'apai, where any attempt at dialogue with the population was immediately stifled by the Protestant chiefs, the confrontation between the two churches generated many exchanges among the population. Beyond theological disputes and liturgical differences, everyone admired the common origin for both dogmas: Christianity. Consequently, the validity of one over the other was not a question of authenticity but rather of precedence and power relations. For the Protestants of Tonga, the legitimacy of Wesleyanism was based on its earlier arrival in the archipelago, the endorsement of the sovereign and the prosperity of the Wesleyan missionaries. Despite the explanations of Father Breton, who defined the Apostolic and Roman Church as the origin of Christianity, some catechumens were reluctant to convert because 'Uga, the Governor of the island and Crown Prince, had reservations about Catholicism[639]. However, the Prince managed to undermine the Protestants' certainty by his careful maintenance of the dialogue. Wesleyans flocked to Father Breton's house to observe and comment on the pious images displayed in the reception room of the residence. Visits from Gu, son of 'Uga and grandson of King George, and his brother Albert and their companions were frequent. In 1873, the great debate initiated by 'Uga on the legitimacy of Catholic doctrine turned in favour of Father Breton[640]. Although he did not achieve mass conversions, he nevertheless succeeded in establishing an atmosphere of trust and courtesy between Protestants and Catholics.

The life of the Vava'u community and that of Father Breton was characterised by its regularity. Waking up at four o'clock in the morning to practice his exercises of piety, Father Breton met his neophytes at sunrise for the recitation of the prayers and the Rosary. Every morning, he taught the children. At noon, he rang the bell for the Angelus. At nightfall, the Catholics gathered again for prayer and the singing of hymns. On Wednesday evenings, the adults attended catechism classes. After the death of Father Breton - *Patele Petelo [Peleto]* in Tongan - in 1881, his work was continued by Father Castagnier. The number of Catholics, which stood at one hundred and fifty in 1886, reached two hundred in 1894 from a total population of five thousand inhabitants[641].

The construction of a stone and wooden church in Fugamisi in 1894 entailed a financial investment disproportionate to the mission's resources. The wages of the workers, paid one piaster per day, customs duties which amounted to ten percent of the value of imported materials such as cement, hydraulic lime, bricks, parquet, roofing or stained glass, and the payment of freight, were deducted from the missionary's allowance which obliged Father Castagnier to go into debt, something he complained bitterly about. These material difficulties discouraged the missionaries of Tongatapu from taking over from him when he was too old to remain in charge of the establishment and was retired. It took Father Kervegan and then Father

[637] Father Soret to Father Yardin, Vava'u, 16 January 1860 (A.P.M., 903).
[638] Father Breton to Father Lagniet, Vava'u, 27 December 1870 (A.P.M., 248). But from 1873 onwards, material difficulties arose, forcing Father Breton to give up the comfort of a spacious house. The house was sold to a German trading company in order to enable the purchase of a small wooden church in Sydney, while Father Breton lived in a traditional house.
[639] Father Soret to the Father Superior of the Society of Mary, Vava'u, 30 April 1861 (A.P.M.,904).
[640] Father Lamaze to Father Poupinel in Lyons, Maofaga, 25 April 1873 (A.P.M.,654).
[641] Father Castagnier to Father Martin, Vava'u, 2 January 1894 (A.P.M.,381).

Macé more than fifteen years to pay off the debt incurred on this occasion while ensuring the day-to-day running of the mission. In 1909, three hundred Catholics were registered at Vava'u. The church, the presbytery, the convent and the school formed the centre of activity of the mission. The two French nuns in charge of the dispensary, the boarding school and the school, which had about twenty children, also took care of the maintenance of the premises and the laundry. The boys' school, numbering about a dozen, was placed under the responsibility of a coadjutor brother. In 1925, Father Kermann [Kerrmann] built a chapel in the village of Makone [Makave] where he went once a week to celebrate Mass[642]. In 1933, the Catholic community of Vava'u had 542 members. However, the development of the mission was hindered by a law that forbade the establishment of any chapel, mission residence or school in villages where the number of adult and resident representatives of the same religion was less than thirty. The government's aim was to control the growth of the many churches that had been established in Tonga since the turn of the century. In most villages where there were only one or two Catholic families, the Marist missionaries circumvented the law by celebrating Mass in the home of a Catholic.

In 1935, Father Kermann [Kerrmann] started building a chapel in Pagai where sixty-seven Catholics were gathered. The plan to establish the mission in Ulugake [Utugake], a large village four or five kilometres from Neiafu, was put on hold because of the fall in the price of copra, which led to an overall drop in the standard of living of the population and a reduction in the mission's income, which was mainly provided by the collections. At that time, the number of Catholics was 552, compared to 450 in 1929 and 345 in 1926. In 1940, Father Kelekolio started the construction of the stone church in Neiafu.

3 - A late establishment in the Niua's

The remoteness of Niua Toputapu, separated from Vava'u by one hundred and sixty-seven nautical miles, and Niua Fo'ou, closer to Samoa or Fiji than to Tongatapu, preserved them from the political and religious turmoil that shook the main centres of the kingdom. Apart from the occasional trip to visit relatives or attend the great ceremonies celebrated in Vava'u, Ha'apai or Tongatapu, the population of these two islands lived in complete isolation. This isolation explains the late implantation of Catholicism in the Niua's. Moreover, contacts between the missionaries of these two establishments and their confreres in Ha'apai or Tongatapu were rather rare and brief. Visits by ships were, moreover, limited by the difficulties of docking due to the challenging approach to their coasts. Niua Fo'ou, with its rocky coastline and crashing waves, offered a perilous access and swimming was still the safest way to reach the shore. From November to May, frequent storms prevented ships from calling there. For many years, neophytes who wished to share their faith with other Catholics were forced to move to the neighbouring archipelagos.

a – The mission of Niua Toputapu

[642] Father Albert Kermann [sic] was born on 24 April 1888 in Guebwiller in Haute-Alsace. He was ordained a priest on 29 June 1914. However, the events of the First World War delayed his departure for Oceania where he arrived in 1920. Until 1928, he was attached to the mission of Vava'u. Then he assisted Father Jouny in Niua Fo'ou where he lived for two years before going to Australia to complete his second novitiate. In 1930, he returned to Niua Fo'ou and then to Vava'u where he undertook the construction of a church. During the war, he organised the evacuation of the population of Maofaga to the interior of Tongatapu Island. He died on 21 September 1945 in Tonga.

In the 1860s, the total population of the island was six hundred. In 1866, about twenty Catholics from the Niua's settled in Maofaga[643]. However, the following year, Soane Kivalu, the brother of the chief of Tongatapu, was baptised in Vava'u on October 2, 1867, and decided to return to his island of Niua Toputapu to establish the Catholic religion there[644]. Until 1880, Father Breton, based in Vava'u, made regular visits to the Niua's and was the only link between these Catholics and those in the Tonga mission. In 1876, his pastoral tour lasted twenty-four days. He was accompanied by a neophyte from Niua Fo'ou whose sister lived in Niua Toputapu. When they reached the island, a Wallisian Catholic guided them to the village of Hihifo where they were received by the catechist, Amafio Mafileo. This Mafileo, born in Wallis but of Tongan parents, had been converted by Bishop Bataillon and had left his adopted land in the early 1860s to settle in Niua Toputapu with his wife Soana and their three children, Akalita, Malia, and Joane-Batita[645]. Akalita, aged twelve, was illiterate because the Protestants had denied her access to school. Apart from Mafileo and his family, the other Catholics on the island were Automalo, who performed administrative duties for the government, his wife Virginia, Juliana, Virginia's mother, and Genofeva, a twenty-three year old girl baptised in Wallis. During his stay, Father Breton performed the wedding of Keleto, a forty-year-old Catholic whose wife, a Protestant, converted for the occasion[646]. Several years after this visit, Father Breton met again, by chance, Automalo whose three eldest children had joined the Protestant mission. Only the two youngest had been baptised Catholic[647].

In 1877, Father Breton, then sixty-two years old, suggested to Bishop Olier [not Olier but Elloy] that a resident missionary be assigned to the island. But the prelate died the following year and his successor, Bishop Lamaze, recommended waiting until a native priest was ordained before opening a permanent establishment there[648]. Since Father Breton's last visit in 1876, the number of Catholics had doubled; by 1880, the community numbered forty out of a total population of nine hundred inhabitants[649]. But these being dispersed, in 1886 Fathers Jouny and Sosefo established a new nucleus from about thirty Catholics, born in Niua Toputapu and baptized in Wallis[650]. They were supported by Kulitea, a high chief of Wallis, who accompanied Father Jouny in his new mission. By 1891, the Catholics numbered sixty. At the time, Father Bellwald, assisted by a native curate, succeeded Father Jouny who was to move to Niua Fo'ou to develop the mission there. Despite this real growth, the activities of the Niua Toputapu establishment were temporarily suspended due to the departure in 1895 of Father Bellwald who could no longer bear his isolation. The neophytes were then taken in charge by Father Jouny who made frequent trips from one island to the other.

In 1924, these neophytes, whose numbers were growing steadily, wrote a petition to Bishop Blanc to ask for the permanent installation of a missionary and nuns. A hundred or so Protestants, interested in the opening of a convent, joined in their request. For Father Macé, the reopening of the mission was imperative and, in the same year, he was warmly and

[643] Father Monnier to the Bishop of Enos, Vava'u, Christmas 1862 (A.P.M., 791).
[644] *idem.*
[645] Father Breton to his cousin, Vava'u, 27 October 1876 (A.P.M., 259).
[646] Father Lamaze to the Superior of the S. M., Maofaga, 4 June 1867 (A.P.M.,629).
[647] Father Breton to his cousin, Vava'u, 27 October 1876 (A.P.M., 259).
[648] Father Lamaze to Father Hingre, parish priest of Vagnez, Maofaga, 30 November 1866 (A.P.M.,624).
[649] Father Lamaze to the Superior of the S. M., Maofaga, 4 June 1867 (A.P.M.,629).
[650] Niua Toputapu, n.d., Father Jouny to Bishop Lamaze. C.11.a.5. *Incomings Letters, Bishop Lamaze*. (Tonga Diocesan Archives).

enthusiastically welcomed by the entire population of the island[651]. In ten months, he celebrated a hundred baptisms. When they disembarked in November 1927, Sisters Aline and Euphémie opened a school, registered sixty-nine enrolments, of whom fifty-five were Catholic children, and welcomed thirty-two boarders. The large families of the island, although Protestant, did not hesitate to attend Mass and one of the chiefs gave Father Macé a sum of money for the upkeep of the mission premises. In 1929, the number of Catholics had doubled in comparison with the first years: it amounted to two hundred and thirty-five, against one hundred and twenty-three in 1924, from a total population of seven hundred inhabitants. In September 1930, the number of Catholics had reached two hundred and sixty.

The nuns settled in Hihifo, a more populous and active village than Vaipoa, where the missionary's residence was located. In order to put an end to the rivalry between the chiefs of these two villages, a church was built in each of them. A German trader from Niua Toputapu, a veteran of the First World War who converted to Catholicism in 1928 with his wife and three children, entrusted Catholics with the task of loading a boat with copra so that Father Macé could repay the debt incurred as a result of the work to enlarge the church. About fifty men worked day and night for a fortnight for the benefit of the mission. Their contribution also made it possible to raise the funds needed to complete the work.

In view of the encouraging progress of the establishment, Bishop Blanc decided to open a station at Tafahi where he sent a catechist in 1929, whose son had been ordained a priest at the end of his novitiate at Maofaga. Of the sixty-five inhabitants of the island at that time, forty were Catholic. In 1932, Father Macé celebrated the first mass in the village of Falehau where fifty-one people, including twenty-nine adults, were baptized. From 1930 onwards, the growth of the Catholic community was largely due to an increase in the birth rate and a decrease in the death rate. Father Macé recorded fourteen births during the year and no deaths, and celebrated seventy-two baptisms in 1933[652], and thirty-four in 1934 with only two funerals. Of the ninety pupils the sisters had, only two had not yet been baptised. The visit in 1935 of two Wesleyan pastors, who preached against Catholicism despite the harmony between the two communities on the island, increased the disquiet among the Protestant population, according to Father Macé. The following Sunday, three adults converted to Catholicism. These hesitations among the Protestant community were accentuated by the division between the Wesleyan chiefs since the death in 1934 of Ma'atu, the island's high chief. In an attempt to revive the fervour of their followers, missionaries of the Free Church of Tonga began building a church in the village of Hihifo in October 1933, close to the one built a few months earlier by Father Macé. However, the Protestants, who had hoped to outdo the Catholics - at least in terms of the height of their bell tower - "*had their work cut out for them*". The inauguration of their church was celebrated

[651] Fr Jean-Baptiste Macé was born on 2 September 1881 at Saint-Martin de Beaupréau in Maine-et-Loire. He was ordained a priest on 29 December 1906 by Bishop Olier, with whom he embarked for Oceania. In charge of the mission of Vava'u, he was asked to look after Bishop Petreluzzi who was on a trip to Australia. The Roman prelate, forced to stop over on the island due to failing health, thanked him for his generosity by sending from Rome three hundred images and three hundred medals which were distributed to the Catholics of Vava'u. After a short stay in Niua Toputapu, Father Macé went to Ha'apai where he exercised his apostolate for twelve years. In 1925, he accepted responsibility for the mission of Niua Toputapu, which he left in 1937, shortly before his death in Vava'u on 13 May 1938.

[652] Out of a population of 324 Catholics, Father Macé counted: 1 family of 11 children, 2 families of 10 children, 1 family of 9 children, 6 families of 8 children, 5 families of 7 children.

without enthusiasm, without even a single speech in this country where the eloquent oratory of those present paid homage to the accomplishments of the community[653].

In 1935, the rhythm of births helped maintain the stability of the Catholic community, which had been affected by several departures. The number of Catholics then stood at three hundred and fifty-two, as more than thirty of them had left the island to settle in Tongatapu, following the famine caused by violent cyclones that had been raging in recent years.

On December 25, 1930, a particularly devastating cyclone hit Niua Toputapu. The church of Vaipoa and the sisters' residence were the only buildings that resisted the gusts of wind. All four hundred houses on the island were destroyed and the ruin of the plantations heralded a long period of famine. In January 1935, the raging sea invaded the villages of Vaipoa and Falehau, washing away the chapel built in 1932. The Catholic community organised itself into groups of five or six people to provide children with the minimum food necessary. The mission's flour, reserved for the evening meal, was the main ingredient of a single dish. The two nuns sent their pupils home to their parents, as they were no longer able to provide for them. While waiting for help to arrive from Tongatapu, Father Macé obtained food for the mission children from the villagers of Tafahi. He remunerated those Tafahi villagers by paying the debts of all those who had been sentenced to prison for not having paid their taxes due to insufficient income. From September 1934 onwards, the situation gradually improved - the harvest scheduled for April put an end to the food shortage - and the children returned to school while the boarding school activities were revived.

On March 19, 1935, a second cyclone swept away the hopes of the population. To feed the sixty children of the mission, Father Macé appealed to the neophytes of Vava'u and Lifuka. But in these two archipelagos, provisions were also exhausted. However, he managed to obtain two boxes of biscuits through the representative of the *Morris Hedstrom* company in Niua Toputapu, which was a flimsy solution. In January 1936, the ship destined to load the copra could not dock due to bad weather conditions. The copra rotted in the sheds and the population went into debt to pay the government tax. However, Father Macé managed to provide two meals a week for the mission's children. The cyclone of January 18, 1936, the fourth in five years, destroyed the last bursts of energy of the island's inhabitants, whose discouragement gave way to quarrels and plunder. Nine women, including several Catholics, were imprisoned for theft and many families left the island for more clement lands. As for the island of Tafahi, it was totally devastated. Finally, three months later, help arrived. The *Burns & Philip* ship was carrying four hundred baskets of taro harvested in Tongatapu. But the ton of rice shipped to the sisters in August was consumed before the end of November, and all the plantations had been destroyed before they reached maturity. As a result, the families of the catechists from Hihifo and Falehau also decided to abandon their village and set sail for Tongatapu. Father Macé, worn out by these trials, died in 1938.

b - The mission of Niua Fo'ou

When the mission of Niua Fo'ou was opened in 1891, Father Jouny reaped the fruits of the work of Father Castagnier and the Wallisian catechist Fa'ainu. The latter's companions, scattered in the villages of Esia and Futu, used to gather every Sunday at Angaha to attend

[653] Letter to missionaries, 8 January 1933, Central Oceania (A.P.M.).

Mass[654]. Two nuns, the Tongan sister Malia-Amato and the Wallisian sister Malia-Mikaele, joined Father Jouny, assisted by Father Lamata, in leading the Catholic community of the island, composed of one hundred and thirty members. In three months, the small school built in 1896 gathered about fifteen children[655]. In 1917, one hundred and fifty out of a population of one thousand two hundred were Catholics. By 1926, their number had doubled, while the total population had remained stable since 1917.

In 1928, they were visited by Bishop Blanc and Father Kermann [Kerrmann], who was to succeed Father Jouny, then aged eighty-three. In 1931, the year of his death, a terrible cyclone destroyed all the plantations on the island. The Catholics, totally destitute, turned to Father Kermann [Kerrmann]. But he was unable to help them because he was in debt from recent works. The convent, which could not be rebuilt after the storm of 1915, was abandoned. Moreover, communications with passing ships were made impossible by the absence of an anchorage following the eruption in 1930 of the Niua Fo'ou volcano, which had modified the underwater morphology near the coast. At that time, mail was thrown into the sea in an oil drum and the men of the village swam out to retrieve it. In 1946, Father Shall [Schahl] counted four hundred Catholics. But in 1947, the evacuation of the island was organised because of the risk of volcanic eruption. The volcano, which had erupted more than ten times in a century, had already caused a lot of damage that each reconstruction had been a source of debt. The evacuation was organised on December 22, 1947. The missionary's residence, that of the nuns and the church were dismantled and transported to Nuku'alofa, where the population was installed in a former American army camp while waiting to be settled on the island of Eua.

As the conditions of implantation and evolution of each Marist establishment in the archipelago attest, it was mainly criteria inherent to traditional Tongan society that determined the distribution and development of Catholic communities. Indeed, the margin of manoeuvre enjoyed by the Marists in this respect was particularly limited, and the choice of their establishments was primarily motivated by constraints to which they were unfamiliar and which resided essentially in the ancestral division between the great clans of the kingdom. Attempts to establish a Catholic mission in Vava'u resulted in two failures in 1837 and 1840, due to the refusal of the chiefs to accept Catholic missionaries on their lands, strongly encouraged by the Wesleyan missionaries. The success of the mission at Pea, on the other hand, was due to Moeaki's desire to assert his opposition to a political power dominated by the Tu'i Kanokupolu, whose sovereignty he rejected. Consequently, the presence of the Marists was from the outset inscribed in a context of power struggles that led them over time to places where their presence transcended, often without their knowledge, their apostolic functions and where they were expected to provide the constitutive elements of an identity for a group that had rejected or was excluded from the dominant Protestant power. Conversely, in the places - Hihifo and Ha'apai - where they tried to impose themselves regardless of the power struggles that locked them out, and because they were inhabited above all by the higher necessity of bringing light to the "*heretics*", their powerful but blind faith led them to failure. And while Bishop Elloy succeeded in forcing his missionaries to close the Ha'apai establishment, which they experienced as a humiliation in the face of Protestants, their resistance was stronger in the

[654] Father Jouny, 40 years in the Niuas (A.P.M., typed notes).
[655] Niua Fo'ou, 24 May 1896, Father Jouny to Bishop Lamaze.C.II.a.5. *lncomings Letters, Bishop Lamaze* (Archives of the Diocese of Tonga).

case of Hihifo, where they waited in vain for enemies to be converted, but few of whom surrendered to the Catholic faith, the others having found their salvation in Protestantism.

Since 1850, when the Marists had a little more than 350 faithful out of 18,500 inhabitants, two major events influenced the quantitative growth of the community: the signing of the Convention of 1855, which allowed the Marists to extend their geographical influence and to integrate the Catholics of Vava'u into their community, and the division, in 1885, of the Wesleyan Church, which led to the conversion of a number of disoriented Protestants. The impact of the division within the Wesleyan Church was numerically greater than that of the signing of the Convention, which only led to the return to Catholicism of those who had been forced to apostatise after the war at Pea. The latter, however, was the first phase of a development to which the Wesleyan division gave a short-lived, but nonetheless real, impetus by freeing Protestants from the monopoly established by the Wesleyan missionaries. The formal recognition of the Catholic religion by the Tongan state in 1855 offered an alternative to all those who, in 1885, no longer recognised themselves in the Protestant Church, and who could thus testify with impunity to their inclination towards an indivisible Church. However, the importance given to this event by the Marists, who were witnessing an unprecedented movement of conversions, must be considered in relation to the total population of the island, the vast majority of whom remained faithful to the Protestant faith. But the Marists had never ceased to hope for an upheaval in their favour, and the division within the Wesleyan Church awakened, in vain, all their latent hopes.

In 1892, the date of the mission's jubilee, 2,258 Catholics were registered, an increase of almost twenty percent compared to 1881, when they represented only 10 percent of the total population[656]. The impact of the division within the Wesleyan Church was particularly evident in the Wesleyan stronghold of Hihifo, where the Marists had only managed to gather with difficulty in previous decades. The impact of the division within the Wesleyan Church was particularly evident in the Wesleyan stronghold of Hihifo where the Marists had managed only with difficulty, in previous decades, to reunite some twenty neophytes. In 1885, however, they had more than two hundred Catholics in that district[657]. In Ha'apai, where Catholics were absent, this event essentially favoured the reopening of the mission by undermining the prejudices maintained by the Wesleyan missionaries, which kept the Marists away from this archipelago. However, in this case, the scattered nature of the islands seems to have been a further obstacle to the development of the Catholic mission in Ha'apai. The development of the community from the 1930s onwards, attributed to the construction of a mission boat which enabled contact to be made with these remote populations and the gradual establishment of

[656] The figures published in the *Letter to Missionaries* of 28 February 1940 (no. 65) and dated 30 June 1939 provide a complete picture of the situation of the Catholic community in Tonga. This quantitative assessment was made possible by Tonga being separated in 1936 from Wallis and Futuna whose statistics, by their magnitude, concealed the Tongan censuses. Statistics of 30 June 1939: "*3 secular indigenous priests; 7 Marists including five French, 1 Luxembourger and 1 American; 27 Missionary Sisters of the SM including 10 Oceanians, 7 Canadians, 6 French, 1 Italian, 1 Luxembourger, 1 Spanish and 1 Australian; 8 Marist Sisters; 4 major seminarians and 1 minor seminarian; 35 male catechists and 35 female catechists; 13 schoolmasters and 28 teachers. Population: 1938 census: population: 33,785; Catholics: 5,626 (in 1938: 5,420) including 5,576 natives, 20 foreigners and 30 half-castes; 50 catechumens; 60 pagans; the others are Protestant. 4 churches (for over 400 people) and 25 smaller ones; 6 pharmaceutical centers and 15,400 consultations in the year; 19 elementary schools: 427 boys and 546 girls; 6 higher schools with 203 boys and 138 girls*".

[657] C. IV. a. Circular letter of Bishop Armand Lamaze, Bishop of Olympus, Vicar Apostolic of Central Oceania in 1892 (Archives of the Diocese of Tonga).

core groups of Catholics, is evidence of this[658]. On the other hand, in Mu'a, whose population had converted massively to Catholicism as soon as the mission was established, the division of the Wesleyan Church had little influence on the number of faithful, amounting to 1,025 Catholics in 1867 and 1,050 in 1892. The Mu'a mission nevertheless retained its numerical superiority[659]. On the other hand, it should be noted that this impact was as irregular as it was short-lived, a fact that made the Marists despair, as they noticed a few months after the creation of the *Free Church of Tonga* a return to the previous situation[660].

In addition, since the beginning of the twentieth century, new minority churches and Christian-inspired communities, whose appearance was perceived by the Marists as a threat to the development of their community, had successfully established themselves in the archipelago: the Anglican Church had two hundred and sixty members, the Mormons had four hundred and eighty adherents, the Seventh Day Adventists numbered two hundred and sixty, and finally the Pentecostals, gathered in local units called Lord's Assemblies, had about thirty members. The emergence of these diverse communities led to a feeling of mistrust on the part of Catholic missionaries, who questioned the origin and motives of these groups, and to fears of a possible decrease in their numbers. However, it seems that the emergence of these new churches had less influence on the Catholic community than on the Protestant community, from which most of their new followers were recruited. For example, Bishop Alfred Willis, formerly of Hawaii, came to Tonga to found an Anglican establishment at the invitation of a group of former Methodists who had renounced their faith after Shirley Baker established the *Free Church of Tonga*. It is likely that the rapid success of these new denominations was largely a reflection of the deep unease caused by the division within the Wesleyan Church, which had prepared a favourable ground for their emergence. Although numerically smaller than the Protestant community united in 1924 into the *Free Wesleyan Church of Tonga*, and despite the emergence of new religions, the Catholic community has maintained its rank as Tonga's second religion.

[658] In 1937, three hundred Catholics were registered there out of a total population of seven thousand.

[659] In 1892, the mission of Mu'a maintained its monopoly with 1,050 Catholics; while there were 639 in Maofaga, 160 in Vava'u, 60 in Niua Toputapu and 133 in Niua Fo'ou. In 1928, this monopoly remained; the community of Mu'a had 1,200 Catholics compared to 900 in Maofaga, and 300 in Hihifo.

[660] Father Reiter to Father Hervier, Vava'u, 10 September 1891 (A.P.M., 884). Thus, in the course of 1891, at Vava'u, Father Castagnier celebrated one marriage, two funerals, and five children's baptisms, while some adults attended catechism and baptismal preparation.

CONCLUSION

If we exclude the first years that followed their implantation, years during which they were involved in the political power struggles among the chiefs, Marists were privileged witnesses to a fundamental period in the current constitution of Tongan identity. This period coincided with the reign of King George Tupou I, whose major achievement was to safeguard the integrity of that identity from the pressures of the Anglo-Saxons, whether they be Wesleyan missionaries, merchants or British diplomats. In this respect, the testimonies of the Marists reveal various aspects inherent to their socio-cultural origin and their apostolic vocation, "*Unknown and hidden in the world, it is the only way to do good*". In contrast to their Protestant rivals, the Catholic missionaries of Tonga were unique in considering their mission land as their land of adoption and then as their eternal resting place. This attitude enabled them to make the most of an always slow and sometimes difficult adaptation, and to remain, often in the same village, the contemporaries of successive generations. In this way, they were able to gain over time the esteem of those who were a priori the most reticent - because they were Protestants - and to establish in-depth connections with the population.

However, it must be admitted that as the years passed and the integration of the Marists into society progressed, the relevance of their outlook on Tongan society waned. Their increasing immersion in the Catholic microcosm and their interest in the inner workings of that microcosm was accompanied by a detachment from the major events in Tongan history which they were nevertheless experiencing. Their small number, which never exceeded a critical threshold beyond which they could have significantly influenced the course of events, can be invoked to explain this desire for discretion. In any case, it was certainly one of the factors of their integration. Indeed, it seems that the discretion and humility that characterised the Marists' presence in Tonga were necessary conditions for the maintenance of the Catholic community in the archipelago. For, from their establishment until the end of the nineteenth century, they were confronted with the destiny of one man, King George, whom it was evidently futile to oppose, so powerful was his will. Hence their deep regret that he was not a Catholic. There are various indications that there was a certain need for the Marists to withdraw from the Tongan political scene and to avoid combatting a force which they were not in a position to oppose. Indeed, King George, pursuing the inevitable course of his ambitions, possessed the means, as he had proven during the period 1850-1860, to dismantle the Catholic community, without however directly harming the physical persons of the Marist missionaries. The failure of the first attempts at evangelisation and the resulting persecution, the desire to avoid the interference of French officers, the reserve shown towards the difficulties King George faced with the Wesleyan missionaries, the gradual establishment of a dialogue with the Tongan aristocracy, and then the eulogies pronounced upon the sovereign by Catholic schoolchildren all testify to a resolutely wise approach which allowed the Marists to protect their interests and those of their faithful in the best possible way.

On the other hand, and in addition to their religious impact, the Marists played a leading role in maintaining the richness of Tongan culture wherever its expressions did not directly contravene doctrine. This attitude was in direct contrast to their Wesleyan rivals whose moral principles and cultural austerity had previously led them to prohibit all forms of expressions attributed, in their thinking, to resurgences of paganism, and thereby generated a form of

dispute regarding the general acceptance of traditional customs. In this way, the Marists contributed to preventing a profound fracturing of the population from their ancestral ties, and as such were thus agents of the continuity of tradition. In this respect, the Marists received the implicit assent of King George, who on several occasions showed his refusal to submit to the pressure exerted by the Wesleyan missionaries in favour of the abolition of certain customs. The role of the Marists as defenders of tradition was best symbolised by the affirmation of their ties to the Tu'i Tonga and his family, custodians of Tonga's most ancient tradition.

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THE CATHOLIC MICROCOSM

Caroline Toutain

Marist Presence and Perceptions in Tonga 1840-1900

The contribution of the missionaries of the Society of Mary to the history of the Kingdom of Tonga has never been fully explored by English-speaking historians, even though Marists have left behind a great deal of material relating to the development of Tongan society and the Protestant missions, particularly Methodist, during the 19th century. This study, based on the Marist archives, aims to provide a complementary approach to the history of Tonga. Thanks to this work we discover a Polynesian minority to whom Catholicism has given its religious, cultural, political, and social identity.... The study begins in 1842 when the Marist Fathers settled in Tonga, and continues until 1900 when the British protectorate was established and retreat of the Catholic mission from the limelight. This work is divided into three main parts: the first relates the expansion of the Catholic mission in a mainly Protestant island context, and the perception of the Marist Fathers upon their arrival. In the second, the various aspects of the Marists' apostolate and development of missions in Tongatapu are studied, as well as the political and military ramifications of the appearance of a Catholic community within a context of international competition between France, UK, Germany and USA. The third part is a study of diplomatic relations between France and Tonga since the signing of the 1855 Convention which recognized the sovereignty of King George I. The writings of the Marists are of great interest as painstaking records of all the changes that took place in Tonga during the second half of the nineteenth century....

Translated by
F. Tavo