

George E. Marcus, *The Nobility and the Chiefly Tradition in the Modern Kingdom of Tonga*. The Polynesian Society Memoir No. 42, 1980. Pp. vi, 170, figures, tables, and index. \$15.00.

This is a good book but it is not an excellent one. I wish that it had been available to me prior to my own research in Tonga in 1970 and 1971, for it would have been extremely useful. Marcus, who received his Ph.D. in Anthropology from Harvard University in 1975 (*The Ancient Regime in the Modern Kingdom of Tonga: Conflict and Change Among the Nobility of a Polynesian Constitutional Monarchy*), has been an extremely prolific young author in the past few years, and his articles have appeared in *Oceania*, the *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, *Anthropological Quarterly*, and the *American Ethnologist* (just to mention a few). This

42nd Memoir of the Polynesian Society was originally published in that journal in 1978 (Vol. 87, nos. 1, 2, and 4).

This book, in my opinion, is not an excellent one, for Marcus has appeared to do little updating since the original *JPS* articles, and the bibliography of the volume reveals no cited work with a date later than 1976 and that was his own article in *Oceania* (Vol. 47:220-241 and 284-299). The book also suffers from a lack of maps of the Pacific area and maps of the Tongan Islands themselves. While Tonga is clearly known to Pacific readers, mere latitude and longitude as identifying markers are not really sufficient for a wider audience.

On the one hand, the book does provide the reader with the useful and standard background information on traditional Tongan society and the role of the nobility in contemporary Tongan society. And it does have some interesting line drawings on the Tupou dynasty (p. 7), the present affiliations of the noble titles (p. 54), and an interesting diagram on the "nobility in terms of the former criteria of 'eiki/chiefly status attribution" (namely, "body, authority, and title"), but Marcus clearly fails to point out that the first two diagrams are certainly not unique presentations by him but were clearly sketched out by Adrienne Kaeppler in her outstanding 1971 article on "Rank in Tonga" in *Ethnology* (Vol. 10, No. 2:174-193); and while he fails to cite my own 1973 article on "Tongan Adoption Before the Constitution of 1875" in *Ethnohistory* (Vol. 20:109-123), that article used a 2x2 matrix (p. 120) to discuss the role of titled 'eiki, titled non-'eiki, non-titled 'eiki, and the bulk of the Tongan populace, namely non-titled non-'eiki individuals.

Briefly then, Marcus has done his research and makes extensive citations of "see, for example" and "for descriptions and analyses see so-and-so," but what is lacking is the presentation of information by an earlier researcher, Marcus' new opinion on Tonga, and the dialogue which will allow the reader of this book to state "I agree with you George Marcus! You've made a brilliant statement and you have destroyed earlier erroneous versions on information about Tonga!" This dialogue is not here. Marcus takes the reader in one giant step from the standard "background of modern Tongan society" into contemporary times, and he tells us little of nineteenth century Tonga and the early twentieth century Tonga. He fails to make reference to Scarr's exemplary *Fragments of Empire: A History of the Western Pacific High Commission 1877-1914*, published in 1968, and to the role that Scarr pointed out of the High Commissioner in Tongan politics from 1876-1914 (1968:82-114). In addition, Marcus would have the reader erroneously believe that "the basic work on nineteenth century history has been Latukefu's (1974) *Church and State in*

Tonga and Rutherford's (1971) *Shirley Baker and the King of Tonga*" (1980:102), and that "as yet, no published material has appeared on the twentieth century," regardless of a 1977 volume edited by Rutherford with a chapter entitled "George Tupou II and the British Protectorate" by 'Eseta Fusitu'a and Rutherford (*Friendly Islands: A History of Tonga* 1977: 173--189) and which also had Marcus' own chapter on "Contemporary Tonga--the Background of Social and Cultural Change" (1977:210--227).

In brief, it is my opinion that when Marcus writes relatively short articles and short chapters for volumes, he does an excellent job. When he tries to weave the separate chapters into a lengthy "memoir" he does badly. He does not have the breadth of a Harry Maude (*Of Islands & Men: Studies in Pacific History* published in 1968) nor does he have the coherence of a Colin Newbury, whose 1980 publication of *Tahiti Nui: Changes and Survival in French Polynesia 1945-1967* was a true pleasure to read! In this Polynesian Society Memoir, though Marcus says correctly that "the nobility is an appropriate unit of study, but it cannot be understood apart from the total condition of change" (1980:159) he is merely repeating what Decktor-Korn states in her note in *The Journal of Pacific History* in 1978 (Vol. 13, Parts 1 & 2:107-113). And somehow I simply cannot take as "definitive" Marcus' statement that "unfortunately, there have been no detailed studies of Tongans living abroad (1980:116), since I am aware of at least one 1972 M.A. thesis in Anthropology from the University of Utah, by Barbara Anne Chapman, entitled *Adaptation and Maintenance in the Extended Family of Tongan Immigrants: Salt Lake City*, which studied 250 Mormon Tongans in Salt Lake City, Utah, from November 1971 to June 1972. Marcus is clearly not aware of everything that has been done concerning Tongans, and there are some definite "gaps" in his cited references.

This 42nd Memoir of The Polynesian Society is certainly useful to have, but it should not be viewed as the definitive work on Tongan nobility. It is merely a guidepost for future needed research in and about Tonga.

Charles F. Urbanowicz
California State University, Chico