

# American Anthropologist

NEW SERIES

VOL. 41

JANUARY-MARCH, 1939

No. 1

BREED AND BORDER IN POLYNESIA *By* EDWIN G. BURROWS

UNTIL the last few years, Polynesian social organization was dimly described at best, except for brief accounts of the New Zealand Maori. But now a series of regional monographs, nearly all published within a decade, seems to justify a search, by comparison, for some conclusions applicable to Polynesia as a whole. This article is an attempt of that kind, toward a strictly limited objective. In some parts of Polynesia the tracts governed as political units were populated by groups also regarded as kinsfolk, whether by blood, marriage, adoption, or rationalization. In other parts the higher chiefs did not regard all their subjects as kinsfolk, nor were the common people in a territorial-political unit necessarily related among themselves. The object here is to account for this difference in terms of past process. Although some of the customs to be mentioned are still practised, the past tense will be used throughout because European influence is disregarded.

Through all variations in detail, Polynesian social organization retained a broadly uniform character. Polynesians reckoned kinship by means of genealogies that were mainly patrilineal. But even in remote generations matrilineal reckoning might come in as a stop-gap or a means of gaining status. And within recent generations—especially among living persons—kinship was counted through the mother as well as the father. As a rule, marriage was forbidden between close relatives in either line. A woman did not lose by marriage her claim on the usufruct of her ancestors' land. Her children, too, might inherit a share. But unless the children were brought up by maternal relatives, and so taken into that line, matrilineal claims tended to lapse after about two generations. In short, living and recently dead kinsfolk were grouped bilaterally; but the larger, more permanent kinship groups were almost invariably based on common descent from an ancestor in the male line. These groups were not, as a rule, exogamous, incest barriers following rather the closer bilateral grouping. In the literature on Polynesia the typical patrilineal group is variously called family, joint family, clan, descent group, ramage, lineage, and kindred.

Political authority, too, was generally similar throughout Polynesia.

Chiefs ruled with the aid of councils. They succeeded to power, in the main, by virtue of primogeniture. However, personal qualities or influence might outweigh seniority. Almost everywhere in Polynesia rank was reinforced by sanctity. A chief was reputed to share more of the power of a divine ancestor than did his untitled relatives.

Alignment of breed and border was only one of many variables within this general pattern. Another that may prove related to it is numbers, especially in relation to available food supply. Now numbers can not be compared at all accurately, for estimates of early population, where they are available, vary fantastically. Food supply, too, depends on so many factors—area, topography, soil, climate, history (as in the matter of introduced food plants and animals)—that close comparison is impossible with the data at hand. However, certain broad contrasts can be made out. Atolls, little rings or crescents of coral and sand that yield hardly any food but coconuts, could support only a few hundred inhabitants, or a few thousand at the utmost. The larger volcanic islands, grooved by streams that bring down rich silt and keep it watered, could support through Polynesian horticulture tens of thousands; the largest archipelagoes more than a hundred thousand.

A variable of a different kind is the degree to which chiefs were separated from their subjects by class distinctions and tabus of subservience. Here, too, there can be no precise measurement; but broad contrasts are perceptible.

Still another variable that may bear on the problem in hand is complexity of kinship grouping. A household group, defined by use of a common cooking fire, was universal in Polynesia, and so can be disregarded in this study of regional difference. But the larger groups were organized in quite different ways. The bilateral counting of kinship took form in some regions as an explicit group; for example, the *kamo a paito* of Tikopia.<sup>1</sup> Elsewhere, relatives in the male and female lines were grouped separately, as the *tama tone* and *tama fafine* of Samoa.<sup>2</sup> Pukapuka made use of all the possible kinds of grouping; bilateral, matrilineal, and patrilineal.<sup>3</sup>

Even more striking is the fact that the larger patrilineal groups differed in number from one region to another. In some regions they were multiple; from a genealogical point of view, ramified. That is, the smaller groups

<sup>1</sup> Raymond Firth, *We, the Tikopia* (London and New York, 1936).

<sup>2</sup> Margaret Mead, *Social Organization of Manua* (Bulletin, B. P. Bishop Museum, No. 76, 1930).

<sup>3</sup> Ernest and Pearl Beaglehole, *Ethnology of Pukapuka* (Bulletin, B. P. Bishop Museum, No. 150, 1938).

recognized as units also combined, through common descent from remoter ancestors, in larger groups. (Viewed at any given time, the arrangement appears as nested—one group within another. But since Polynesians emphasize a genealogical point of view, this kind of grouping will here be called ramified, following the suggestion of Firth.<sup>4</sup>) Elsewhere, if we can trust the data, there was no such complexity, but only one patrilineal group well enough defined to act as a unit and be designated with a name. An indication that the data are probably trustworthy on this point is the fact that in several regions there are traces of a ramified grouping, but one, at the time of description, ill-defined and with little or no social function.

At the risk of over-simplification, relevant data will be summarized in bare outline from most parts of Polynesia. The best described are among them. For others only hints are on record. A few are omitted for lack of data. The material will be arranged in order to suit the present theme; beginning with regions in which breed and border coincided in the main; then some with intermediate alignments; and finally, some in which breed and border were intermingled.

The atoll Tongareva<sup>5</sup> supported a population of not more than 500. The local culture shows a conceptual ramification of kinship groups, but not a functioning one. "Though all claimed blood kinship from three lines of ancestors united by subsequent marriages, such general kinship was relegated to the background. The independent groups found their cementing bonds in their common descent from more recent ancestors who had established the secondary centers on the land which the group occupied." These centers were small islands or districts on larger islands, "separated by the channels between the islands or by artificial boundaries created between the divisions." Each district had a chief who ruled, on principle, by virtue of primogeniture. The trappings of chieftainship were not elaborate for Polynesia. Tradition tells of occasional leagues uniting several districts to meet an emergency; of two chiefs who divided between them authority over the whole atoll at one period, and a single supreme chief at another. But no permanent hierarchy was established. In the main breed and border coincided.

The atolls Manihiki and Rakahanga<sup>6</sup> shared a population between 500

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.*

<sup>5</sup> Te Rangi Hiroa (P. H. Buck), *Ethnology of Tongareva* (Bulletin, B. P. Bishop Museum, No. 92, 1932).

<sup>6</sup> Te Rangi Hiroa (P. H. Buck), *Ethnology of Manihiki-Rakahanga* (Bulletin, B. P. Bishop Museum, No. 99, 1932).

and 1,000. Though all traced descent from one original couple, "tradition shows that the families in the first few generations arranged themselves into two groupings according to their descent from two brothers, Matangaro and Hukutahu." Later they split again into four tribes (*matakeinanga*) and twenty-five subtribes (*tukuwahare*). According to tradition, there was formerly one chief (*ariki*). Succession, in principle by primogeniture, got into a tangle, until a dispute was settled by creation of two *ariki* titles. Each conferred leadership over two of the four tribes. Each tribe also had an untitled leader (*whakamaru*).

As to residence and land tenure, "the Matangaro families built their habitations on the sea side of the island [Te Kainga, in the atoll Rakahanga], and the Hukutahu families took the inland lagoon side." "The regular passages back and forth to Manihiki were later established, though food considerations and the establishment of two villages in Manihiki were the result of the still later development of tribes and a dual *ariki*ship." Even when all came to live in one village, "the division between the four groups was maintained in the arrangement of the village. . . . Furthermore, the land in the two atolls was definitely divided among the four *matakeinanga*." Kinship groupings, then, were ramified, and boundaries of both political authority and land tenure, through all changes in residence, coincided at least with the larger kinship groupings.

The pre-European population of another atoll, Ontong Java<sup>7</sup>, is reported to have reached 5,000. The people were divided into two tribes, and the tribes subdivided into joint families including, as a rule, "all those who can trace their descent through males from a common ancestor who lived about six generations ago." The political structure was simple. There were no distinct social strata, tabus of subservience, or even chiefly titles. But the joint families had recognized headmen, who succeeded to power by seniority. The office of tribal priest—several to each tribe—was also hereditary within joint families. Most of the priests were also headmen. The responsibilities of these priests resembled those of officials called chiefs in accounts of some other parts of Polynesia. They were expected "to ensure the favor of the gods so that abundance of food might be provided for the whole tribe."

The tribes were regarded as owning separate parts of the atoll. Some joint families owned islands, and all owned coconut groves; whether these were necessarily contiguous is not clear. With matrilocal marriage, houses were women's property. So were taro beds. Both were inherited from

<sup>7</sup> H. Ian Hogbin, *Law and Order in Polynesia* (London, 1934).

mother to daughter. In spite of this complication, breed and border coincided in the main.

The population of the high islands called the Marquesas<sup>8</sup> was probably from 50,000 to 100,000. The kinship grouping was of the ramified type. Beyond the families—a term used apparently in the sense of the usual Polynesian lineage or joint family—there were larger groups called sub-tribes and tribes. These were localized: "In some of the large valleys, there were single great tribes, with subdivisions, while in other places there was a number of unrelated tribes." The rulers were chiefs who ordinarily came into power by seniority, though chieftainship might be attained through sheer individual ability. There was no sharp social stratification, and behavior toward chiefs was not elaborately subservient.

It is not clear whether the tribes were wholly, or even mainly, made up of kinsmen as reckoned by the genealogies; but at least the sociological attitude within a tribe was one of kinship. "The tribe was like the family of the chief; they were all relatives by birth, adoption, marriage, or friendly alliance. . . . The chief referred to his people as his *hua'a*, the same term as that used for blood and foster relatives; and the people of a tribe referred to other members of the same tribe as *hua'a*. *Tama*, literally child, also meant subject." On the whole, the Marquesas seems to have been one of the regions in which breed and border tended to coincide.

The pre-European population of New Zealand, which included the largest body of land occupied by Polynesians, can not be estimated with any accuracy, but in all probability it was more than 100,000.<sup>9</sup> The kinship grouping followed a ramified pattern, carried farther than anywhere else in Polynesia. Apparently the smaller groups, *whanau* (household,<sup>10</sup> or what may be called lineage<sup>11</sup>) and *hapupu* (a local term for lineage<sup>11</sup>) were less explicitly distinguished than the larger ones, *hapu* (sub-tribe) and *iwi* (tribe). Names of tribes commonly, though not invariably, consisted of the name of the common ancestor, with one of several prefixes meaning offspring or descendants: *Ngati-*, *Ngai-*, *Ati-*, *Whanau-*, *Aitanga-*. A still larger group, the *waka* (canoe), included all tribes tracing descent from the crew of one of the famous ancient canoes of settlement. This seems to

<sup>8</sup> E. S. C. Handy, *The Native Culture in the Marquesas* (Bulletin, B. P. Bishop Museum, No. 9, 1923).

<sup>9</sup> Te Rangi Hiroa (P. H. Buck), *The Passing of the Maori* (Proceedings, New Zealand Institute, Vol. 55, pp. 362-75, Dunedin, 1924).

<sup>10</sup> Raymond Firth, *Primitive Economics of the New Zealand Maori* (London and New York, 1929).

<sup>11</sup> Elsdon Best, *Maori Nomenclature* (Journal, Royal Anthropological Institute, Vol. 32, pp. 182-200, 1902).

have been rather a conceptual than a continuously functioning unit, though it had a solidarity that repeatedly united all the tribes of a *waka* against a common enemy.

The rulers were called *ariki*. "Now *ariki* means a first-born male or female of a leading family of a tribe, so that a tribe may contain a number of *ariki*."<sup>12</sup> One of them was usually made supreme over the tribe; but an exceptional individual might be made tribal ruler by virtue of character rather than birth.<sup>13</sup> A chief took recognized precedence over his people. He was credited with great *mana*, and his person, especially his head, was sacred. But there was no such etiquette of subservience to him as in some other Polynesian regions.

Each tribe had a recognized territory, however shifted by migration or war. Within the tribal domain each sub-tribe was a landholding unit, and the smaller groups all had their recognized claims. Residence was generally in villages, whether fortified (*pa*) or unfortified (*kainga*). After allowing for some practical elasticity, it remains clear that in main outline breed and border coincided.

The atoll of Pukapuka<sup>14</sup> had a population of some 500. The kinship grouping was complicated to a degree unique in Polynesia, so far as is known. Each individual belonged to a maternal sub-lineage, lineage, and moiety; also to a paternal sub-lineage and lineage, and to a bilateral group. Each also belonged to a territorial unit, one of three villages; generally that of his birth and the residence of his father, though adoption (commonly at birth) might transfer membership to another village.

Chiefly titles were hereditary in paternal lineages, though some lineages held no titles. One chief was regarded as supreme over the whole atoll, and there were chiefs in each village, with sub-chiefs subordinate to each. But differences of rank were not emphasized, and the chiefs seem to have had little practical authority. "The governing of the island . . . really lay with the group of old men, who because of their age and presumed experience were considered better able to order affairs than a chief or his executive."

The land was divided among the villages. Some of it was village property, some taro beds were owned by maternal lineages, and some individual claims were recognized. But land sections, typically extending from lagoon to outer beach and including dwelling sites, were held by paternal lineages. These lineages and their principal holdings, unlike the maternal lineages, were localized by villages. So within the patrilineal part of the scheme breed

<sup>12</sup> Elsdon Best, *The Maori* (Memoirs, Polynesian Society, No. 5, 2 vols., Wellington, 1924).

<sup>13</sup> Firth, *Primitive Economics of the New Zealand Maori*.

<sup>14</sup> Beaglehole, *Ethnology of Pukapuka*.

and border tended to coincide. But matrilineal and village holdings ran counter to this alignment.

Niue,<sup>15</sup> an emerged coral island, had a population of some 5,000. The people were divided into two endogamous moieties, regarded as descendants of different groups of original settlers. Each moiety was divided into families, defined by Loeb as "composed of a group of people bearing real or adopted relationship to each other."

Despite the sharp separation of moieties, one official (*patuiki*) was considered supreme over the whole island. But his position was not hereditary, and is thought to date only from the eighteenth century. Moreover, its authority was ritual rather than administrative. The *patuiki* was supposed to have power over weather, particularly rain, and crops. In case of famine he was killed for neglect of duty. There were other chiefs (*iki*) of lower rank but greater practical authority; but the nature and former role of these positions is not clear, as the whole system has broken down. Loeb quotes a statement by Percy Smith that "the native government was in the hands of the *fono*, a council composed of heads of families."

The two moieties inhabited different parts of the island. In recent times all the people lived in eleven villages, none of which was composed exclusively of kinsfolk. Family connections were "reckoned regardless of habitat." So far as the moieties were concerned, then, breed and border coincided; but the families were not localized. Evidence of a different alignment in earlier times will be mentioned later.

Tikopia,<sup>16</sup> an extinct volcano with central crater lake, had a population of some 1,300. The kinship grouping, aside from the bilateral group of living relatives, was ramified. Patrilineal houses or ramage (*paito*) clustered in four clans (*kainanga*). Each clan had a chief (*ariki*). The four chiefs were ranked in an order of precedence, but none of them was supreme. Each besides ruling his kinsfolk, had ritual power over one of the main food crops. The subdivisions of clans were ranked according to whether their leader was also a clan chief, a ritual elder (*pure*), or a mere headman without other authority.

The interplay of breed and border here has been worked out by Firth in greater detail than has been done for any other Polynesian land. When he was there in 1929, the people were living in twenty-six villages, grouped into two main districts. Three of the four clans were scattered, one of them being represented in no less than eighteen villages. But "nearly every

<sup>15</sup> Edwin M. Loeb, *History and Traditions of Niue* (Bulletin, B. P. Bishop Museum, No. 32, 1926).

<sup>16</sup> Firth, *We, the Tikopia*.

village shows a preponderance of households of one clan." And one of the four clans, "Fagarere, which is small in numbers, is concentrated almost solely in a single village, which it occupies to the exclusion of all other clans."

Ordinarily land was held and worked by the smaller kinship groups. But each tract, regardless of its location, was regarded as belonging to the chief of the larger group, the clan. When any question as to the disposal of land arose, the clan chief had the final word. Each chief also had authority, by virtue of his rank, in the village where he lived, but there were no village or district chiefs as such. In Tikopia, then, with the exception of one clan-village, breed and border were intermingled. But chiefly authority followed lines of breed rather than border.

The pre-European population of Easter Island<sup>17</sup> seems to have been about 3,000. It was divided into ten tribes (*mata*), grouped in two confederations. Most of the tribal ancestors were sons of the traditional discoverer and first king. "They were thus, fictitiously perhaps, all related by tracing their origin to the king, Hotu-matua." Some of the tribes, but not all, were divided into sub-tribes. Each tribe was divided into lineages (*iwi*). So the kinship grouping was ramified.

The *ariki mau* or "king" was supreme in rank over the whole island. The title descended within the Honga lineage of the Miru tribe; theoretically at least, by primogeniture. The powers of this official were much like those of the *patuiki* of Niue and the tribal priests of Ontong Java. "His function in society was to insure through his very being the abundance of crops and to exercise his influence on animal life." The *mata-toa* or warriors, who had no hereditary titles but rose by individual valor, were "the actual rulers of the tribes."

The two confederations occupied distinct parts of the island. Within these, there were some fairly distinct tribal territories, but "in some regions along the coast, representatives of more than three groups were mixed." On the whole, breed and border in Easter Island coincided as far as the largest unit of population, the confederation of tribes, was concerned; within the smaller units, too, there was some tendency to coincide, but the alignment was at least blurred. Moreover, while the authority of the *mata-toa* seems to have followed tribal lines, the ritual supremacy of the *ariki mau* extended over all lineages and tribes, most of them not akin to him except through the theoretical ancestor of the whole population.

<sup>17</sup> Alfred Métraux, *Ethnology of Easter Island* (Bulletin, B. P. Bishop Museum, in course of publication).

The island of Mangaia in the Cook group,<sup>18</sup> partly emerged coral and partly volcanic, had a population estimated at between 2,000 and 3,000. The term *matakeinanga*, used elsewhere of a descent group, was applied to all the people; but they were divided into ten tribes. The local dialect had several generic names for tribe: *ivi* (bone), *vaka* (canoe), *pare, e*; but the usual one was *kopu* (womb). The specific names of four of the tribes began with the prefix *Ngati-*; one other with the similar *Nga-*. Two of the ten tribes were divided into sub-tribes.

"The groups originally had their own government chiefs." Later on, the only hereditary titles were those of two high priests of the god Rongo, priests of the tribal gods, and a Ruler of Food. As a result of long inter-tribal conflict, in which no one tribe succeeded in maintaining supremacy, political authority came to be one of the spoils of war. "The leader of a war party, by securing the victory, was said to have acquired the *Mangaia* (temporal power). As Temporal Lord of Mangaia, he was the equivalent of a military dictator and his power was passed on, not through hereditary succession, but through defeat in war. Each battle led to a confirmation or change of the Temporal Lord." Each ruler appointed delegates to govern districts and sub-districts.

Land was another of the spoils of war. The tribes were landholding units, but their holdings were not, within recent times, contiguous. Evidence of change from an earlier state will be presented later. At the time of first European contact, breed and border were clearly intermingled. Yet the political and military units were still composed of kinsfolk.

In western Polynesia, intermingling of breed and border was general. It was found even in one small group of atolls, the Tokelau Islands.<sup>19</sup> The population of the Tokelaus was subject to great vicissitudes through hurricane, tidal wave, and famine. Addition of Macgregor's estimates for the different atolls gives a total of 1,200, which may serve as an average. Not all the people traced their descent to one ancestral couple. There is evidence of two waves of settlement; indeed, the present population of Atafu is attributed to an immigration only five generations ago.

Kinship grouping was of the usual Polynesian type. "Kinship is extended to persons connected by lineal descent and collateral relationship in both the mother's and the father's family, but genealogies are reckoned by patrilineal descent. . . . The functional kinship group based on blood

<sup>18</sup> Te Rangi Hiroa (P. H. Buck), *Mangaian Society* (Bulletin, B. P. Bishop Museum, No. 122, 1934).

<sup>19</sup> Gordon Macgregor, *Ethnology of Tokelau Islands* (Bulletin, B. P. Bishop Museum, No. 146, 1937).

relationship is the kindred or persons reckoning descent and inheriting property from a common ancestor." There is no mention of either larger or (except the biological family and household) smaller kinship groups than this; that is, no evidence of what is here called a ramified grouping.

Each kindred had a recognized head who succeeded to power by primogeniture. "Formerly the kindred head (*matai*) received an hereditary title." There were also higher chiefs, who ruled over whole atolls, populated by other kindreds as well as their own.

Land was, in principle, held by kindreds. "The common ownership of land is . . . the determining factor in the formation of the kindred, for when the land of a kindred is divided, new groups form in the succeeding generations, each based on the ownership and inheritance of one of the new land divisions." But these holdings were not necessarily contiguous. In recent times individuals have come to be regarded as owners of land, and even an individual's holding is typically scattered. On Atafu "each . . . consists of one large piece or several small pieces planted with coconuts, pieces of wooded land, and land in the village for houses or cook sheds." So in this more private control of land, as well as in public political authority, breed and border were intermingled.

Futuna is commonly grouped with the smaller neighboring island Alofi under the name Hoorn or Horne Islands.<sup>20</sup> Both are high volcanic islands with a shore strip of emerged coral. The population has averaged about 2,000 during the period for which figures are available. There was but one recognized kinship group, the patrilineal kindred or lineage (*kutunga*). Another term, *kainga*, was based on property. It might be applied either to the landholdings of a group, or to the group itself. When used of people rather than land, it might either be limited to the household that shared a common cook shed, or be extended to all who had a claim in the hereditary land. In the latter sense it was synonymous with *kutunga*. There is no evidence of ramified grouping.

Each kindred had a head man, or occasionally woman, called *pule* to express authority, or *taokete* to express primogeniture. This position did not confer the title of chief (*aliki*). Chiefly titles were hereditary within kindreds, so that some *pule* were *aliki* as well. There was a term for commoner (*seka*) as distinguished from chief, but no sharp distinction between kindreds that held a title and those that did not. Ritual subservience, though present, was not marked. A few chiefly titles, for historical reasons commemorated in tradition, did not confer authority over territorial units, but were recognized by positions in the chiefly kava circle, and might entail

<sup>20</sup> E. G. Burrows, *Ethnology of Futuna* (Bulletin, B. P. Bishop Museum, No. 138, 1936).

some function such as distributor of food at feasts, or peacemaker in intervillage quarrels. Most of the chiefs, however, were rulers of villages (*aliki fenua*). The villages were grouped in two independent districts, each ruled by a hereditary "king" (*sau*). Thus political authority, unlike kinship, was nested.

The inland wilderness (*vao matua*) was regarded as village or district property. Most of the cultivated land, as already brought out, was held and worked by kindreds. But a village typically included both land and people of several kindreds, not regarded as of common descent. Moreover, since early in the nineteenth century, inhabitants of the Alo district held land in two other districts no longer continuously inhabited: their ancestral district of Tua (adjoining that of Alo and politically a part of it) and the island of Alofi, conquered by the Tua-Alo people. Chiefs, whether of a village or district, did not regard all their subjects as kinsfolk. So breed and border were intermingled.

Uvea or Wallis Island,<sup>21</sup> rather flat but mainly of volcanic soil, with islets dotted along the encircling barrier reef, had a population of about 4,000. The social organization was very similar to that of neighboring Futuna. A difference in terminology between the two illustrates the simple kinship grouping common to both. *Kainga* was the usual Uvean term for the patrilineal group which this writer, repenting of the use of "kindred" for Futuna, has called a lineage. Hereditary property was commonly called *api*. The term *kutunga* was sometimes used for lineage, but was regarded as a borrowing from Futuna, and properly applied only to the speaker's own lineage. To use it of another would be impolite. This shift in usage between the two localities confirms the separate finding in each, that the two terms used for kinship groups did not designate different groups, but were used of the same ones, with slightly differing connotation.

United rule over Uvea was expressed in a chiefly hierarchy more elaborate than that of Futuna. The system of lineage heads or managers (*pule*) was about the same. So was that of village chiefs; but there was a tendency to regard these as only on the border of true chieftainship. They had hereditary titles, but were called *matua fenua* (village elder) at least as often as *aliki fenua* (village chief). The villages were grouped into three districts. Over all was a single king (*hau*). He governed with the aid of a group of chiefs who outranked the village chiefs. It was customary to refer to the king and these "ministers"—excluding village chiefs—as *te kau-aliki*, the body of chiefs; and to the village of Falaleu, where most of the "min-

<sup>21</sup> E. G. Burrows, *Ethnology of Uvea* (Bulletin, B. P. Bishop Museum, No. 145, 1937).

isters" dwelt, as *te fenua aliki*, the chiefly village. Class distinction was confined to details like this, but subservience to chiefs was more marked than in Futuna. Uvea, for example, had a "chiefs' language" of respectful substitutes for certain common words.

Most of the arable land was held by lineages. The holdings were more or less localized by villages and districts, yet might be widely scattered. Villages included a number of lineages, so the subjects of a chief typically included persons with whom he recognized no kinship. Breed and border were intermingled.

The Tongan archipelago is a numerous group of islands, mostly flat stretches of emerged coral, but with some volcanic peaks. The pre-European population seems to have been between 20,000 and 25,000. Gifford<sup>22</sup> gives several terms for groups of kinsfolk. *Kainga*, translated "relatives" and defined as bilateral in application, apparently refers to the group of living kinsfolk reckoned bilaterally according to general Polynesian practise. The most clearly defined group is the patrilineal lineage (*ha'a*). "Divisions of *ha'a* exist, called *faahinga* and *matakali*, as well as *ha'a*. The use of these terms is not uniform. . . . Doubtless they are used interchangeably today and their former, perhaps distinct meanings have become merged." There are traces, then, of ramified grouping, but no clearly defined or vigorously functioning ramification.

Rank, a vital factor in Tongan society, was not so much a matter of distinct classes as of a finely graded continuum in which both seniority and sex had weight. It culminated in a hierarchy of chiefly titles, including *matapule* or sub-chiefs and *eiki* or high chiefs. Supreme among them, theoretically, was the Tamaha, daughter of the female Tui Tonga; then the female Tui Tonga, "usually the oldest sister of the male Tui Tonga;" then the male Tui Tonga. But in practise the male Tui Tonga seems to have functioned most actively as the embodiment of supreme rank; and for a long time before Europeans appeared, political authority had been delegated to another chief, junior in sacred rank to the Tui Tonga; first the Tui Haatakalaua, later the Tui Kanokupolu.

Gifford shows how the importance of rank tended to blur kinship alignment. "Everything points to the necessity of a line of powerful chiefs for a nucleus about which the lineage groups itself. Without such chiefs it appears to wilt and die and its membership gradually aligns itself with other rising lineages. This process of realignment naturally contravenes the rule of patrilineal descent, which theoretically, and largely in practise, determines lineage membership. Adoption into lineages is practised."

<sup>22</sup> E. W. Gifford, *Tongan Society* (Bulletin, B. P. Bishop Museum, No. 61, 1929).

Land tenure, too, followed rank, at least in theory. "Informants were agreed that anciently all land was the Tui Tonga's and was bestowed by him upon the various chiefs." But it was rarely reallocated. "It seems to have been the custom that land so bestowed remained indefinitely in the recipient's family, each succeeding holder of his title being confirmed in tenure. Much the same scheme seems to have held for the tracts allotted to *matapules* and commoners." In the course of time wealth in land sometimes got out of line with rank. "Today the two great *matapules* Motua-puka and Lauaki, possess hereditary lands of considerable extent which places them in a position superior to many chiefs who are without hereditary lands." Still, the general rule was that the larger landholdings were accredited to holders of chiefly titles, whose authority was subsidiary to that of the ruler of the whole archipelago. The inhabitants of these larger units were not regarded as all akin.

Early estimates of the population of Samoa, for all their wide variation, indicate greater numbers than in Tonga. The largest of them was that of the American naval captain Charles Wilkes in the 1830's, 46,000. This, together with the present population of more than 60,000, suggests that the pre-European population may have approached 50,000.

As to kinship alignment, Mead<sup>23</sup> says: "The Samoan descent group is a curious bilateral grouping in which all the descendants in the male line are balanced against the descendants of the women of the family." This apparently represents the bilateral reckoning of living relatives that is general in Polynesia, but with paternal and maternal groups distinguished more explicitly than in most other regions. Mead does not discuss larger groups based on unilateral reckoning; but her distinction between "male line" and "descendants of the women" hints that patrilineal reckoning was carried further than matrilineal in Manua, as in Polynesia generally. Moreover, accounts from Samoan islands more populous than Manua, notably that of Kraemer,<sup>24</sup> mention large groups composed, at least ostensibly, of kinsfolk. These had no generic name, but each of them had a specific name, that of a common ancestor, with the prefix *Sa-*. This prefix is common also in place names, as Samoa, Savai'i. But, unless in remote times, the groups bearing such names, while more or less localized, were not confined within definite boundaries. Each seems to have cohered about a cluster of chiefly titles rather than a common place or ancestor. The impression left by the literature that they resemble the Tongan *haa* (a cognate prefix), is confirmed by Dr F. M. Keesing, author of *Modern Samoa*.

<sup>23</sup> Mead, *Social Organization of Manua*.

<sup>24</sup> Augustin Kraemer, *Die Samoa-inseln* (2 vols., Stuttgart, 1902).

So there is a trace of ramified grouping in Samoa, but apparently in a vague, perhaps vestigial form.

The smallest Samoan political unit was that governed by the *matai*, least of titled officials. Most writers call this unit by some such name as "family group," emphasizing kinship; but Mead, emphasizing common residence, calls it the household. Apparently within this little group breed and border tended to coincide; yet residence was shifted at pleasure by individuals of lesser responsibility. The larger political units were essentially territorial: village, district, and (more unified in theory than practise) "all Samoa." They were ruled by chiefs and councils, and kinship remained a vital factor in succession to these offices. But there was no fixed rule of succession, which was swayed by political intrigue. Moreover, the population of territorial units, even down to the village, was not typically regarded as all akin. So in Samoa, except for the smallest units, breed and border did not coincide.

Dr Gordon Brown, who spent three years in American Samoa, tells me that control of landholdings follows *matai* titles. Most matters of wider concern are regulated by the chiefs and councils of territorial units. But the *Sa* groups, Keesing says, are active in succession to titles and ceremonial exchange of fine mats. So political authority is divided partly on lines of breed, but rather more on lines of border.

Mangareva,<sup>25</sup> name of the largest of a group of small volcanic islands, is sometimes applied to the whole group, whose European name is Gambier Islands. "It is probable that at no time was the population of Mangareva greater than a few thousand."

The kinship grouping is thus outlined by Te Rangi Hiroa: "In the course of time one or a few biological families became a large family group which assumed the proportions of a tribe. Members of such a group were descendants (*aitanga, ati*) from common ancestors." Multiple names for kinship groupings—*ina'o*, "a large family or tribe;" *ivi*, "family, genealogy, a parent;" *pa'a*, "the generic name for inhabited bays, or for a tribe"—suggest a possible multiplicity of the groups themselves. But since these names have differing connotations, they may have been applied to groups of the same order, either in different connections or loosely as synonyms. Te Rangi Hiroa considers this usage the more likely. At any rate, there is no such clear ramification of kin groups as in some other parts of Polynesia.

For a considerable time before European contact, there was one supreme chief (*akariki*) over the island of Mangareva, with influence also in the lesser islands. Succession was in principle by male primogeniture, "which

<sup>25</sup> Te Rangi Hiroa, *Ethnology of Mangareva* (Bulletin, B. P. Bishop Museum, in press).

means the eldest son by the first wife." There were two orders of lesser chiefs: supporters of the king (*buru, ravatua, pikitua*), and heads of tribal groups (*'akao*). A class distinction was recognized between nobles (*tongo'iti*) and commoners (*'urumanu*), but there was also a middle class (*pakaora*) composed of "diluted aristocracy," or of commoners who had become wealthy in some such way as receiving a gift of land for distinguished service in war.

"The land was owned by the aristocracy, and Laval states that estates were distributed among about ten large landowners." Landholdings were of various kinds. Besides *kainga riro* (lands taken in war) there were small hereditary freeholds (*kainga tumu*), presented by a chief to an ancestor of the holder in reward for service. When they were placed under protection of a chief in return for tribute, they became *kainga 'apai* (lands carried over). Land could also be worked by a system of leasing or farming on shares, and was then called *kainga patu* (lands agreed upon).

On the whole, despite evidence of a tendency for relatives to cluster in the same neighborhoods, it is clear that in Mangareva the higher chiefs were not regarded as related to all of their subjects, and that the lands they ruled extended across any lines based on kinship. Evidence of a different alignment in earlier times will be brought out later.

Estimates of the early population of the Society archipelago, high volcanic islands of which the largest is Tahiti, range from Captain Cook's 200,000 to Captain Wilson's 16,000. Arii Taimai<sup>26</sup> gives evidence in support of the larger figure. At any rate, the numbers must have been greater than 10,000, and may have been greater than 100,000.

Kinship groupings are nowhere clearly described. However, Henry<sup>27</sup> mentions one class of marae or sacred court for "clans" (*marae mata'eina'a*, marae of canoes of the district), and another (*marae tupuna*, ancestral marae) for "families." This suggests a ramified grouping.

The larger islands were divided into recognized districts. Within these there is evidence of a clustering of kinsfolk. Arii Taimai says of the marae, a structure associated with definite tracts of land, that "it represents, more than all else, the family." In her account of her own people, the Tevas of Tahiti, she gives the clearest picture of localization. "The distinguishing mark of the Tevas was their clanship. . . . The eight Teva districts recognized Teriirere or Temarii of Papara as their political head, although Teriunui o Tahiti, the Vaiari chief, was socially the superior and Vehiatua

<sup>26</sup> Arii Taimai E, *Memoirs* (In English [with Henry Adams as amanuensis], Paris, 1901; in German, *Mitteilungen*, Hamburg Museum für Völkerkunde, No. 8, 1923).

<sup>27</sup> Teura Henry, *Ancient Tahiti* (Bulletin, B. P. Bishop Museum, No. 48, 1928).



of Teiarapu was sometimes politically the stronger." But the same author records an incident from the traditional lore of Moorea that shows how rank could override birth in giving title to land. Two lesser chiefs "wished to dignify their marae and give it the rank of the maraes of high chiefs . . . for, whoever he might be, the chief who mounted the marae made it and them sacred to himself, became in fact the head of their family." After telling how they induced the high chief Marama to ascend their marae, the story concludes: "Thus Marama was chosen chief of Afareaitu, and became head of that district, as well as those he had inherited, and those he had conquered."

The etiquette of subservience to the highest chiefs reached an extreme here. One of its forms illustrates the nature of lordship over land. In the words of Arii Taimai, "as the very ground the Ariirahi stood on became theirs, they were always carried on a man's shoulders when they went abroad, that they might not acquire the property of their neighbors." The sharp social stratification on which all sources agree is brought out by Handy:<sup>28</sup> "At the time of discovery there existed in Tahiti a class of people, known as the *manahune* (plebeians) that was subject to, but in the social order quite distinct from, the land-owning group which included the *arii* (feudal lords), and their supporters, the *raatira* (landed proprietors)." The land-owning group, he continues, "represented not so much a class, as one family, intermarrying among its own members and holding itself above, and free from mixture by marriage with, the lower orders of the ancient society."

In spite of the meager data on kinship grouping, it is clear that in the Society Islands political authority extended across the bounds of kinship.

Hawaii, another group of large high islands, presents a similar picture. As to the population, Captain King's 400,000 is pretty surely over the mark.<sup>29</sup> Bligh's 242,000 may be nearer. At any rate, Hawaii was surely one of the most populous of Polynesian regions.

Though Hawaiian kinship terminology has been a stock example ever since Morgan's time, the only description of the larger grouping by kinship seems to be a brief paper by Handy and Pukui,<sup>30</sup> based on field work long after Hawaiian culture ceased to be a living whole. It mentions only one

<sup>28</sup> E. S. C. Handy, *History and Culture in the Society Islands* (Bulletin, B. P. Bishop Museum, No. 79, 1930).

<sup>29</sup> Romanzo Adams, *The Population of Hawaii in 1779* (Proceedings, Hawaiian Academy of Science; Special Publication, B. P. Bishop Museum, No. 21, 1933).

<sup>30</sup> E. S. C. Handy and Mary Kawena Pukui, *Ohana, the Dispersed Community of Kanaka* (Mimeographed by the Institute of Pacific Relations, Honolulu, 1935).

group larger than the household. "The fundamental unit in the social organization of the Kanaka was the dispersed community of *ohana*, or relatives by blood, marriage, and adoption." Though the possibility of a ramified grouping when Hawaiian culture flourished is not precluded, there is at least no suggestion of it in the evidence at hand.

By contrast, there was a complex nesting of political-territorial divisions. The *ohana*, though more or less dispersed, had typically a local nucleus. Its members dwelt "some inland and some near the sea but concentrated geographically in and tied by ancestry, birth and sentiment to a particular locality which was termed the *aina*." The larger and clearer-cut land divisions were the *ili*, in some cases one tract, in other *lele*, leaping or discontinuous; the *ahupuaa*, a number of *ili* forming a continuous segment from seashore to mountains; and the *moku*, literally island but applied also to independent districts of large islands, comprising a number of *ahupuaa*. Each *moku* was regarded as the property of its supreme chief. He allotted its subdivisions to lesser chiefs, who in turn distributed the smaller tracts to their subordinates. Except for certain *ili kupono*, specifically granted in perpetuity, all allotments were subject to change at the chief's pleasure. Conquered land was taken over by the conqueror (*lanakila*; cf. *rangatira*, *raatira*, sub-chiefs elsewhere). He installed his lieutenants over it, though he did not necessarily dispossess humbler tenants.

Subservience to the highest chiefs was as marked as in the Society Islands, though expressed in somewhat different ways.<sup>31</sup> So was the class distinction between chiefs (*ali'i*), commoners (*maka'ainana*), and the despised *kauwa*, a term applied to a servile class as well as to any individual servitor, even one of high rank. The emphasis was on separation between rulers and subjects, and the political units were not regarded as bodies of kinsfolk.

In general, types of alignment of breed and border in Polynesia had fairly distinct distributions. Coincidence of breed and border was found either in marginal regions (Marquesas, New Zealand), or in atolls with comparatively small population (Tongareva, Manihiki-Rakahanga, Ontong Java). Intermingling of breed and border appeared in two separate areas; one western (Samoa, Tonga, Futuna, Uvea, Tokelaus), the other farther east (Society Islands, Hawaii, Mangaia, Mangareva). Between these two areas stretched a continuous line of islands where breed and border either coincided (Tongareva, Manihiki-Rakahanga) or were aligned in unique intermediate fashions (Pukapuka, Niue). Two isolated regions, Easter

<sup>31</sup> David Malo, *Hawaiian Antiquities* (Honolulu, 1903).

Island to the east and Tikopia to the west, also had intermediate alignments peculiar to themselves.

The patterns of rank and land tenure were distinct in the two areas of intermingled breed and border. In the western one, rank was delicately graded rather than stratified, and land tenure was fundamentally hereditary. In the more easterly one, rank involved class distinctions that, at least in general accounts by natives, were sharply drawn; and hereditary claims to land were subsidiary, as a rule, to the arbitrary authority of chiefs. On other grounds these two areas have been shown to constitute general cultural subdivisions within Polynesia.<sup>32</sup>

This situation suggests that coincidence of breed and border was the earlier alignment; and that intermingling of breed and border developed in at least two different regions. Similarities within the two areas of intermingled breed and border can be most readily explained by diffusion. Yet the role of purely local dynamic factors is emphasized again by the variations in detail that give each region a pattern in some respects unique.

Within a number of regions ethnographers have noted internal evidence of change in alignment. A summary of the more explicit statements follows.

For Mangareva, Te Rangi Hiroa<sup>33</sup> describes original settlement by groups related either by common descent, intermarriage, or at least rationalization. "Members of the group settling in a locality were more or less related. By common descent and through intermarriage they formed an extended family group. They tended to forget the ancestors of minor status and to memorize the descent from leaders of the expedition. . . . Families from a common source spread out within the same bay (*pa'a*) with boundaries formed by natural features." The term *pa'a* has been noted as one of the names for a large kinship group. But later, this coincidence of breed and border was disarranged. "After a fight, the victor divided the lands of the conquered among his family or most active supporters. . . . Wars that led to change of ownership, also led to change of tenants." Thus breed and border became intermingled.

Of Mangaia the same authority says:<sup>34</sup> "The tribes originally occupied definite continuous areas, but the subsequent wars led to a break in the continuity of the areas occupied. The conquerors, in annexing food lands from the conquered, took subdistricts which were remote from their original lands. The redistribution of food lands led to the scattering of tribes. Other territorial complications were brought about through the giving of presents of land by conquerors to friends of other tribes."

<sup>32</sup> E. G. Burrows, *Western Polynesia* (Ethnographical Studies, Gothenburg Museum, Vol. 7, 1939). <sup>33</sup> *Ethnology of Mangareva*. <sup>34</sup> *Mangaian Society*.

The outstanding peculiarity of the Mangaian pattern was that political power, instead of resting in a hereditary line of chiefs, passed from one military leader to another with the fortunes of war. This instability suggests that Mangaia may have been in a state of transition up to the time when European influence gave its history a new turn.

Easter Island, too, may have been in a transitional state, as political authority there was in the hands of warriors without hereditary titles.<sup>35</sup> Métraux recounts the traditional division of the land among the sons of the discoverer Hotu-matua. These sons became the eponymous ancestors of most of the tribes. "Probably at one time every tribe had its own territory which was known by the name of the group." Later on "the old territorial divisions . . . came to be mere districts where the main part of the *mata*, perhaps the senior line, was settled." Intermarriage, adoption, and war are suggested as factors in this later partial intermingling of breed and border.

The unique local variant found in Niue is attributed by Loeb<sup>36</sup> to local development, based on the division of the people according to descent from two immigrant groups. These seem to have grown into the endogamous moieties which were the basis of the partial coincidence of breed and border. Evidence that families, too, were formerly localized is found in the literal-meanings of two terms for the family: *magafoa*, people of a village, and *fagai*, people who eat together. "It is said that every village was first settled by a family. Some village sites and the resident population still bear the same name, as Tamahamua, Tamakautonga, Tamahatokula. *Tama* means the children of, or descendants of." Later the families were scattered, as already noted.

In Hawaii, Handy and Pukui<sup>37</sup> point out that there were specific titles for the rulers of the largest land divisions, *moku* and *ahupuaa*, but none for the ruler of the smaller *ili*. "I infer that the *ili* . . . was essentially and probably originally the province of a single *ohana* [kinship group]. . . . Inevitably in the course of intermarriage between families, the *ohana* would ramify throughout the *ahupuaa*, and ultimately into neighboring *moku*, though there would remain a concentration of closest-related *ohana* [relatives] in the original *ili*. This is precisely what has occurred in the case of one *ohana* belonging to Ka'u, Hawaii, whose history and status has been studied recently." Reallotment of land after conquest has been mentioned as another factor of change in Hawaii. The term used for commoners as distinguished from chiefs, *maka'ainana*, is cognate to terms used elsewhere

<sup>35</sup> Métraux, *Ethnology of Easter Island*.

<sup>36</sup> *History and Traditions of Niue*.

<sup>37</sup> *Ohana, the Dispersed Community of Kanaka*.

for large kinship groups: *matakeinanga*, *mata'eina'a*, *mata*, *kainanga*. This supports other evidence of a shift in emphasis from kinship to class stratification.

For the Tokelaus, Macgregor<sup>38</sup> records that the inhabitants of Fakaofu conquered other atolls, whose later chiefs traced descent to branches of the Fakaofu line. Thus conquest imposed the authority of these chiefs over subjects to whom they were not primarily akin.

In Futuna the local name for the kinship group (*kutunga*) was repeatedly used in tradition for the old populations of geographical tracts. "Migration and conquest have replaced political units based on kinship by purely territorial ones."<sup>39</sup>

For Tonga Gifford says:<sup>40</sup> "Of the place names recorded, 284 begin with the stem *haa*, the term used in designating the several great modern lineages. . . . It is likely that the people in each ancient locality did constitute a single family."

In Uvea<sup>41</sup> this stem *haa* (*ha'a*) appears in the names of two groups of immigrants from Tonga, prominent in early traditional history; and in the names of three villages, suggesting "that they were once clusters of kinsfolk."

In Samoa, Mead<sup>42</sup> found the conflict between breed and border still going on. "Relationship allegiances undermine the growth of village authority, mock at village pride, contravene the whole village system. . . . But the household, like the village, is a local unit. . . . Every member of the household is knit up with the social and industrial life of the village. For the behavior of all, the *matai* is responsible to the *fono*. In consequence, the *fono* is only too happy to see natural ability override blood claims, and the residence unit assert itself against the blood units."

The Tuamotus are among the regions not discussed here for lack of data. Kenneth P. Emory, who is preparing material collected in two trips among these islands, reports that alignment of breed and border differed from one island to another. Perhaps, when the evidence is in, the Tuamotus will afford a test case in miniature of much of the hypothesis presented here. At any rate, the variations are one more indication of the importance of local factors in change.

Progressive encroachment of border over breed seems to have been the rule in Polynesia. As territorial units grew larger and stronger, kinship grouping became simpler or vaguer; for in both areas of intermingled breed

<sup>38</sup> *Ethnology of Tokelau Islands.*

<sup>39</sup> Burrows, *Ethnology of Futuna.*

<sup>40</sup> *Tongan Society.*

<sup>41</sup> Burrows, *Ethnology of Uvea.*

<sup>42</sup> *Social Organization of Manua.*

and border, complex ramified kinship grouping was either absent, or the larger groups were vague in conception and limited in function. Several processes that favored change in this direction have been suggested: intermarriage, adoption, migration, and—perhaps most powerful of all—warfare arising from rivalry over land or ambition for enhanced status.

The regions where breed and border continued to coincide are exceptions to this rule. Three of them are atolls, with a population limited by meager geographic resources. Here there was probably little incentive to change. The old arrangement continued to serve. But the fact that it also persisted in two extensive and populous regions, the Marquesas and New Zealand, demands special explanation. The marginal position of both regions would diminish change through diffusion from without; but pronounced local developments might be expected in such populous regions, and indeed are known to have taken place in other matters, such as graphic art style. In view of the importance of local factors in the intermingling of breed and border elsewhere in Polynesia, some special deterrent to this process must be looked for.

For the Marquesas, Kenneth P. Emory suggests a geographic factor. The tribal territories there, most of them at least, were valleys separated by precipitous ridges. These natural barriers discouraged communication and may well have reduced intermarriage and adoption between tribes. They also acted as fortifications, making conquest harder than in more accessible terrain, and tending to prevent permanent subjugation of one tribe by another.

For New Zealand, Te Rangi Hiroa (Dr P. H. Buck) suggests another geographic factor. He points out that the Maoris had more land at their disposal than any other Polynesians. War was indeed as common as elsewhere in Polynesia. But it did not involve subjugation of the vanquished. If a defeated faction was so decimated as to put an end to its group existence, individual survivors could either flee to unoccupied land and form a new group, or join one already in existence elsewhere, or remain as captives and eventually be assimilated by the victors. If the vanquished were still numerous enough to persist as a body, they might be driven off to other land; other land was always available. But very often the vanquished were left in possession of their old territory. The victor would return home, content with the glory of victory or revenge. A sequel to conquest repeatedly mentioned for other parts of Polynesia—setting up a ruler over a population to whom he was not akin—was quite foreign to Maori culture. Thus, in this exceptional setting, breed and border continued to coincide.