

THE TAHITIAN ECONOMY AND TOURISM

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During the last two decades the development of the international tourist trade has expanded so greatly that it has become an important factor in national economies. Moreover, the prosperity of the industrial societies of non-socialist Europe, North America, and Japan, the considerably higher standard of living of individuals in these societies, as well as the fantastic progress in transportation thanks to airplanes with a big carrying capacity have made it possible for the tourist trade to exploit non-industrial countries in Latin America, the Far East and Africa.

In the Pacific, especially the South Pacific, it has been the jet plane, cheap fuel during this period, and finally the steady lowering of the real, not just nominal, air travel rates for tourists, that has permitted the integration of this area into the field of world tourism.

For that part of Polynesia under French domination, the main stages were:

- Until 1959, Tahiti could not be reached by plane except from Fiji over the "coral route" exploited by the New Zealand company, T.E.A.L. (1), by seaplane via Apia in Western Samoa and Aitutaki in the Cook Islands.

- Beginning in 1959, the French company, T.A.I. (2) established, with a D.C.6 propeller-driven aircraft, a direct line via Saigon, Djakarta, Darwin, Brisbane, Nouméa, Nandi and Borabora where a landing strip had been constructed by the American army during the last war. From Borabora tourists reached Papeete by sea.

- Since 1961, the opening of the Tahiti-Faaa international airport near Papeete has made it possible for the big air lines to serve the territory: T.A.I. (later U.T.A), PAN AM, T.E.A.L. (later Air New Zealand), Qantas, Lan Chile, and finally Air-France, making connections respectively between Papeete and Noumea and Los Angeles, Honolulu and American Samoa, New Zealand, Australia, Fiji, Chile, and latterly Tokyo, Lima and Rarotonga in the Cook Islands.

Before the arrival of big capacity airplanes, the tourist trade was not unknown in Tahiti. But, compared with what we see today, and even more with what we may expect to see tomorrow, it was not a massive tourist business. Since the end of the last war, a number of larger and larger luxury tourist liners stopped over in Tahiti. The French Messageries Maritimes company, using its mixed passenger and freight liners, brought in a few tourists from Europe. However, it was primarily the American shipping lines such as the Matson Line that brought in the largest lots. But, compared to the big capacity airplanes, the surface liners brought in only a sporadic flow of tourists.

As for hotels, a few were kept by Europeans or Demis (part-Europeans) in Papeete. In the country districts and on the other islands, there were some little Polynesian hotels, ordinarily family concerns. The hotel business reflected to some extent the economic structure of that time, colonial and pyramidal: at the top, the European business circles (3); in the middle, the Demis, a group culturally and socially on the fence between Tahiti's European society and culture and the Polynesian society and culture; at the bottom, the Polynesians. In a parallel way, oriented around an economy combining production with trade, the Chinese held, at least in the business world, a keystone position between big European business and the Polynesian commercial vacuum. When, later on, the

hotel business was to expand in the middle 1950's, capital from Tahiti's Chinese society and economy would become interested.

A single forerunner of a future tourism, the Mediterranean Club (le Club Méditerranée), set up in Punaauia on Tahiti's west coast a modest vacationing village of 10 bungalows, or 20 beds.

It was during these years and the five following ones (the first half of the 1960's decade) that the second generation of hotels put in its appearance. This was mainly in Tahiti, a bit in Moorea and the Leeward Islands. There were several reasons for this:

1) The opening of the airport, which made possible for the first time direct communication between Papeete and the outer world. This development made it possible to look forward to a more extensive and continuous flow of tourists. The business world had acquired experience and was familiar with the possibilities of the airplane and how to make use of it in the tourist trade - coupling together, for instance, travel agencies, air transport, and hotels. The fact that Tahiti was behind the times in this field meant that the recipe was known and there was no risk in planning for the future.

2) The 1959 French devaluation, which lowered the Pacific franc by 20 percent in relation to the American dollar, meaning lower local prices for the American tourists.

3) I believe that Metro Goldwin Mayer's filming of the Bounty odyssey which took ten months, used 2,000 extras as well as 8,000 regular employees, and cost 27 million dollars, constituted a temporary economic boom which stimulated the local capitalists to invest, as well as European business people connected with these capitalists. (4)

In 1963-64 the installation of the Centre d'Experimentations du Pacifique (C.E.P.), a French military base for nuclear testing was begun. This installation had considerable effects of the French Polynesian economy, as it brought about the creation of a truly artificial economy:

- by the creation of direct jobs (building and upkeep of the bases and sites);
- by construction of the Papeete port, extension of the airport, civil government constructions so as not to overload the military buildings (administrative buildings, school buildings, hospitals, island airdromes), all leading to the creation of indirect jobs;

- the setting up in Tahiti of technicians and specialists connected with the activities of the nuclear base along with their families (five to ten thousand persons over and above the regular population which was 98,000 inhabitants in 1967), leading to the creation of domestic jobs, programs for the building of lodgings, land speculation on the part of urban owners, and ultimately the stimulation of the demand for work;

- the job pressure brought on a spectacular rise in salaries, the abandonment of agriculture because the new salaried employees could no longer cultivate and the land owners could find only a few very high-priced workers, with a further consequence of a rise in the price of local products, thus favoring imported products. Furthermore, the higher salaries, increasing the demand with the ability to pay, that is, the buyers' solvency, must have induced the sellers of products and services to increase their prices, not only because these products and services were rare but because they knew that the buyers could pay for them. I believe that the salary increase was a causal factor in the inflation, not because the

increase in salaries directly pushed up costs and hence prices but because they allowed larger profit margins to operate.

- local production increased, but not in proportion to the demand. Salaried workers made greater use of imported products; and their high salary level led them to buy more consumption goods for themselves and their homes. These factors added to the presence of a temporarily expatriated European population with a high standard of living caused a considerable development of Papeete's commercial and semi-industrial capacity which allowed, besides the build up of new European and Demi fortunes, the economic rise of the Chinese to an almost dominant place. But the accompanying inflation made Tahiti the most expensive place in the Pacific for tourists.

As of 1968, it was felt that the prosperity connected with the nuclear base would not last. The period of accelerated work had ended and the territory's administration thought about providing a natural relief to this artificial economy by:

- making use of the expansion in New Caledonia connected with the nickel boom as a safety valve for the state of employment in French Polynesia;

- providing some substitution for the flow of salaries obtained from the nuclear base through the expansion of the Territory's economy by having France subsidize the local public operations, through the expansion of the public services, and through progressively setting up a system of social security aligned to France's own;

- promoting the tourist trade to the rank of the basic foundation of the Territory's economy. It was around 1965 that, in order to coordinate the Territory's tourist policy, a Tourist Trade Développement Office was erected. From that time on, a tourist policy was progressively elaborated and tourism was promoted to the rank of great pillars on which the Territory's economy was to repose.

This was wishful thinking, although it is undeniable that the tourist trade has grown since the first years of the 1960's.

In spite of the growth of the tourist trade, the ridiculously small role of tourism both in the make-up of the gross domestic product as well as in the balance of foreign trade shows up the artificial character of the Territory's economy where the exchanges or trade and the overall production are blown up or inflated by indirect activities, deriving economically from the nuclear base (Tables 1 and 2). What is evident is that in the future the tourist trade will tend to take a bigger and bigger part in exports, not only because of its own growth but because, unless there is some profound new transformation in the economy, it will fall to tourism to be the only steady "export".

Compared to official economic planning forecasts, the growth of the tourist trade has shown a certain slowness that seems to be due in part to certain disadvantages in comparison with other Pacific islands or archipelagoes (high cost of living, inadequate equipment, low quality of services) but also in part to economic growth tied in with demographic growth and the occurrence of the inflationary period that has prevailed in the Territory since the beginning of the 1960's (and following the establishment of the nuclear base) making it depend more and more on the economy of the outside world.

For the purpose of speeding up development, those responsible for the Territory's tourist industry attempted to work on the hotel capacity, equipment, and quality of service. In particular, in 1968-69, the history of the hotel business in Tahiti entered into a new era, that of big hotels dependent on international

TABLE 1
Growth of the tourist industry in French Polynesia

Years	Number of tourists	Length of stay in days	Number of rooms	Occupancy rate
1959	1,472			
1960	4,087		51	
1961	8,653		236	
1962	10,406		306	
1963	14,135		331	
1964	13,085		425	
1965	14,830	7	336	
1966	16,200	6.5	399	
1967	23,574	6.7	488	64 percent
1968	28,402	7.1	742	
1969	37,299	6.4	985	
1970	48,809	6.1	1,230	55 percent
1971	63,222		1,209	62 percent
1972	69,165		1,261	75 percent
1973	77,988		1,386	

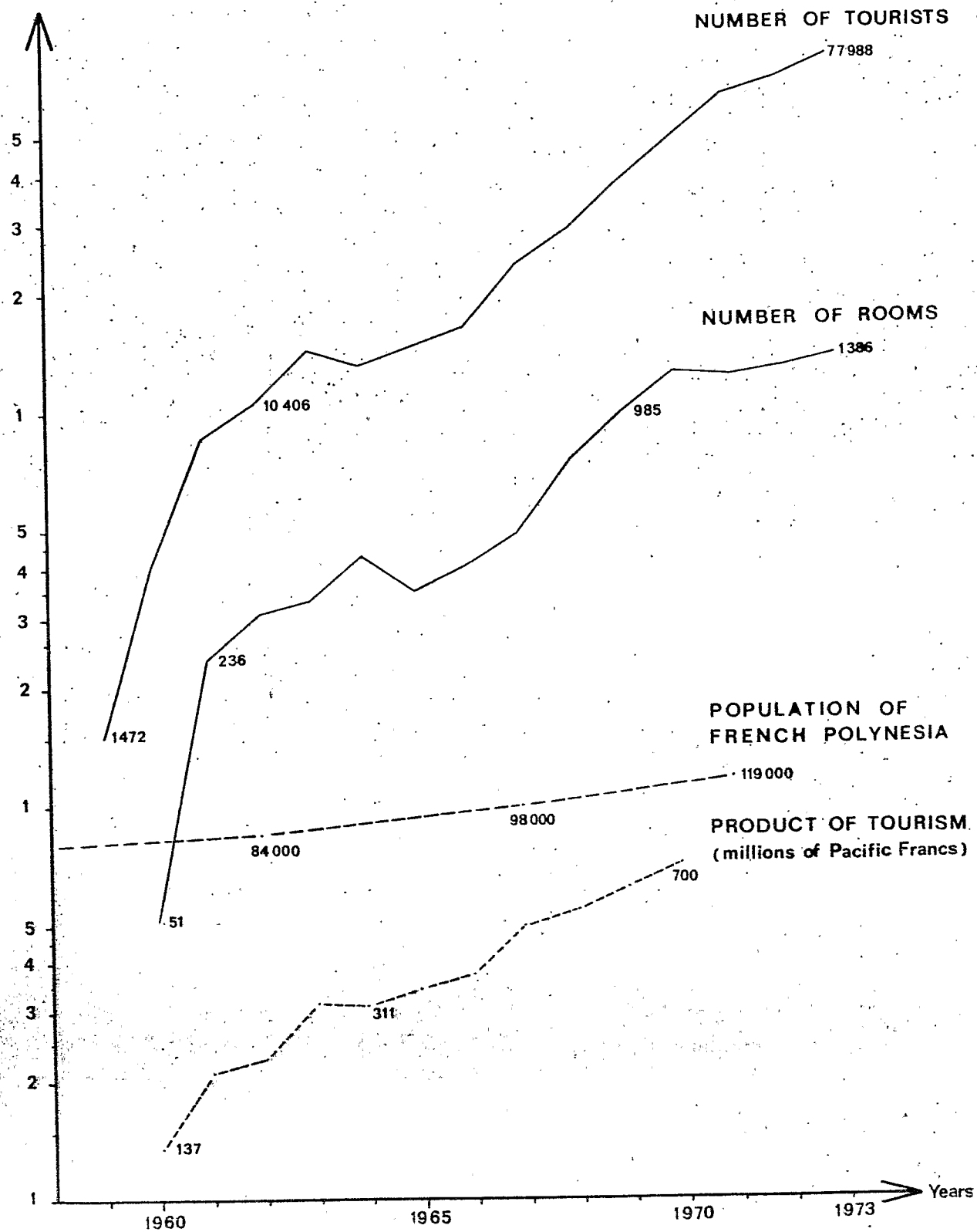
Source: Office of Tourist Development

TABLE 2
Effects of the tourist trade on the French Polynesian economy

Years	Relation of tourism product to Gross Domestic Product in per cent	Relation of tourism receipts to exports in per cent	Relation of tourism receipts to imports in per cent	number of jobs created directly or indirectly by tourism
1959	?	10.32	9.83	
1960	3.21	14.52	12.05	
1961	4.4	21	13.55	
1962	4.5	21.38	11.87	
1963	5.24	30.04	13.89	
1964	3.37	26.87	5.85	
1965	2.56	30.04	4.22	
1966	2.29	22.07	2.90	
1967	2.94	33.09	5.77	
1968	2.73	37.14	4.17	1,500
1969	3.1	35.44	7.07	
1970	3.62	?	?	
1971	?	?	?	2,542
1972	?	?	?	
1973	?	?	?	

Source: Rapports annuels de L'Institut d'émission d'Outre-mer et Comptes économiques de la Polynésie française

TOURISM IN FRENCH POLYNESIA



chains. Two hotels were built in which airlines had an interest, and a third was planned but did not come into being until three or four years later because tourist demand did not follow very closely in the footsteps of supply. In an extremely serious development, the two new ventures affected the 1960's generation of bungalow hotels: most of them are in the doldrums, and the most important of them has had to close its doors. Economically, these two ventures meant the substitution of an international capitalism (American in one instance, French in the other) for local or semi-local capital funds; a further slight step ahead in Tahiti's dependence on the outside world. With these two establishments, the multiplication of travel bureaus, the organization of internal tourist transport, and the development of the local airline network, a whole hotel and business system was set up in order to satisfy the international clientele: to develop the tourist trade, it is only necessary to repeat the same steps over and over again:

- creating further hotel installations, or, more exactly, hotel complexes;
- increase the frequency of international connections and the lines of communication in the network formed by these connections;
- multiply the superstructures of tours and ways to spend one's time.

Problem: what place will the Tahitians occupy in this evolutionary picture?

We have already seen that the income brought in by the tourist sector has remained, in comparison to the gross domestic product, both the yield of slight and almost constant up until 1970. What about personnel income? According to the Tourist Trade Development Office, the tourist trade gave work to 2,500 persons in 1971, (5) either directly or indirectly, or 6 percent of the Territory's working population and the amount of income distributed came to 1,004,138,000 FP (Pacific Francs). (French Polynesia's gross domestic product in 1970 was 21,553 million FP.) When one examines the role of the tourist trade from the Tahitian point of view, one must not lose sight of the ethnic and cultural division of labor that exists in Tahiti. Tahiti is a multicultural society, that includes a substantial number of foreigners. However, particularly in light of recent developments, one must resolutely reject both the official classifications and the usual tripartite or quadripartite classifications of groups:

1) to begin with, whether one likes it or not, there are foreigners in Tahiti, the French ranking first in number, followed by those that the French authorities consider foreigners: Americans, other Europeans, Australians, New Zealanders, etc.;

2) then there are people who feel themselves to be, or feel themselves more and more to be, Tahitians. It is here, according to self-classification, that one can speak of Tahitian society and of cultural pluralism within it. The "Tahitian" groups include:

- a) a very small minority of Europeans, usually born in French Polynesia, to whom the term créole seems applicable;
- b) a Chinese minority that considers itself more and more to be of Tahiti (10 percent);
- c) the Polynesia bulk of the population (80 percent);
- d) a smaller mass, intermediate between the Polynesian culture and Western culture, the Demis (10 percent).

Tahitian society is pyramidal in form, the successive stages from top to

bottom being made up of the levels a/ b+d /c. Now, from the point of view of the tourist industry and following from the fact that the Polynesian population (c) is almost completely unqualified; it can be seen that its members hold only the lowest employment positions:

- minor hotel personnel (chamber maids, waiters, manual laborers, gardeners);
- taxi drivers (not always Polynesians, however);
- salaried employees in the shops where the tourist do their shopping, some bosses of enterprises that make curios (but not all), workers in such enterprises;
- some (but not all) producers of flowers and sea-shells used as garlands for the tourists, and especially the working girls who actually make up necklaces and wreaths from flowers and shells.

In brief, the lowest level at which tourist industry work is carried out corresponds to the Polynesian level of Tahitian society. Of course, this lowest level of workers contains a greater number of persons than the higher administrative level and therefore involves a higher total amount of earnings. But, as the salaries are unequal, one may estimate that only a part of the total amount of salaries brought in by the tourist industry goes to the Polynesians. For it to be otherwise would require:

- that the Polynesians be promoted technically and professionally to an extent to allow the great majority of the population to benefit more in the division of tourism revenues;

- that the ownership of the means of production (notably the hotel establishments), and therefore the rights to a share of the income, is shifted to the lower end of the social scale. But, the present orientation towards international mass tourism through the establishment of large scale hotel complexes goes in the opposite direction, as illustrated by the succession of generations of hotels in Tahiti. Some have recommended going back to the semi-family style Polynesian hotel forms. Would this be compatible with the solution adopted at the present time of mass international tourism? Obviously not. Should, then, mass international tourism formula be proscribed? It is not obvious that the Tahitian economy would come out ahead that way.

The present focus on large tourist enterprises adds to the present basic inequality in the allotment of incomes the danger of spatial segregation:

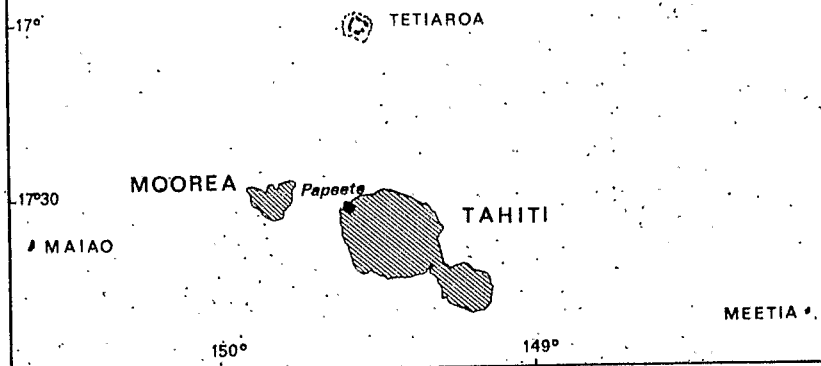
- the building up within the country of geographic blocks or aggregates composed of large scale tourist units which operate as closed systems;

- the movement of the tourists outside the block within a social space cut off from that of the majority of the population: the tourist goes from hotel to tourist site by way of tourist cars; he moves side by side with other tourists; with the services they offer, the big hotel units make it unnecessary for the tourist to make use of the facilities used by the people of the country. Pushed to the limit, this model leads to turning the tourist zone into an annex of the countries providing the tourists.

THE CASE OF MOOREA

Moorea is a small island, 136 square kilometers, with about 4,800 inhabitants. It is 15 miles from Papeete, the capital of the Territory of French Polynesia. Since 1960 its economy has changed from an exclusively agricultural one to a monetary one with tourism as one of the main factors.

WINDWARD GROUP

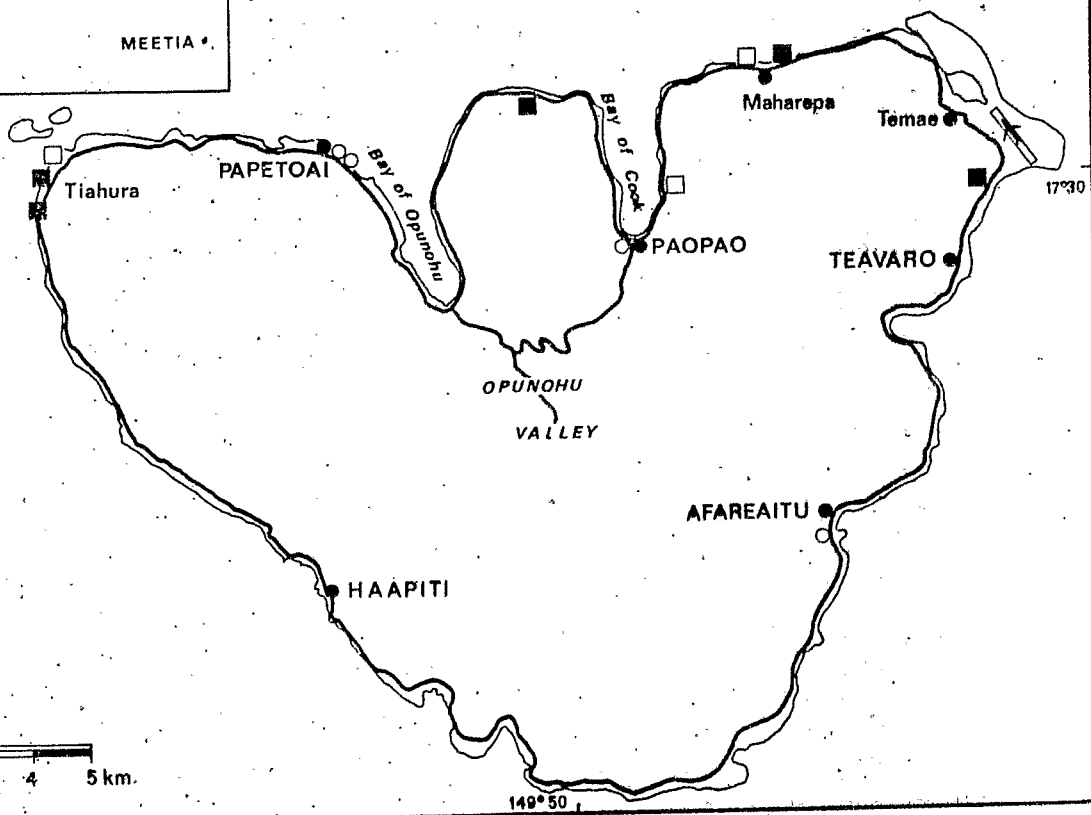
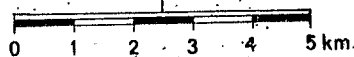


SOCIETY ISLANDS WINDWARD GROUP MOOREA

LEGEND

- Road
- Village
- Polynesian Hotel
- Hotel : before 1967
- Hotel : after 1967

N



Until the beginning of the 1960's, Moorea had an exclusively agricultural economy in the sense that, grosso modo, the population lived according to the formula: subsistence economy plus cash crops. The cash crops made it possible to acquire the industrial goods that the inhabitants needed and that the island (as well as the Territory) was unable to supply: lumber, tools and mechanical appliances, metal roofing, tinned goods, rice, salt, sugar, kerosene, clothing, etc. The subsistence economy (taro patches, banana plots, gathering breadfruit, and a few other cultivated foods plus fishing in the lagoon or on the reef) primarily involved family production for family consumption. However, some portion might be sold, either at the village or district level, or at the Papeete town market, to provide, except at the village exchange level, a source of some money. The cash crops (copra, vanilla, coffee) provided, according to the status of the land on which they were cultivated, either a salary, or a harvest, or part of a harvest. It was, however, the groups foreign to the Polynesians of Moorea (Europeans, Demis, and Chinese) who, as landowners, merchants or traders, actually made the growing of cash crops a commercial system and provided the money that allowed the people to clothe themselves, fill out their diet, build masonry or concrete houses, and purchase such equipment as outboard motors for their boats.

1960 was a turning point. Until then, cash crops brought relatively good prices, allowing the people a minimal standard of living despite their relatively low productivity. The vanilla crisis (caused by disease plus soil exhaustion from badly kept plantations plus a fall in price) was the first blow against the economic edifice of those days: it led to the abandonment of plantations, the departure of certain planters, and the progressive development of a wage economy. But the copra plantations persisted and continued to be, until the years 1967-68, an important parameter of the Moorea economy. (Because of the installation of the nuclear base on Tahiti, copra production declined more quickly in Tahiti.)

Comparative table of copra and vanilla production in Moorea

TABLE 4

Year	Copra (metric tons)	Vanilla (metric tons)
1960	1142	150.6
1961	1317	159.7
1962	1520	131.5
1963	1538	80.4
1964	1651	42.5
1965	1364	29.8
1966	1645	13.6
1967	1273	5.9
first 8 months of 1967	951	
first 8 months of 1968	567	

Sources: Groupement des exportations de coprah de l'Océanie française, Huilerie de Tahiti, Rapport GUESHIER, ouvrage ORSTOM Tahiti et Moorea.

In 1968, the state of employment within the Moorea population was as follows:

- rate of employment within the economically active population 63 percent
- importance of traditional agriculture (food growing, fishing, copra) amongst the employed members of the population 46 percent

- importance of wages amongst the economically active portion of this population 44 percent

A part of the salaried persons worked in Moorea for the government (notably, in public works), on construction jobs, or in the tourist hotels; the rest worked in Papeete on Tahiti--primarily young workers who lived in Papeete during the week but spent their weekends in Moorea where they maintained their permanent home.

87 percent of the island's employed population worked on the island; 13 percent worked off the island. Within the 87 percent employed in Moorea, 46 percent were in agriculture and fishing, and the remainder were divided into three categories:

- 1) 13 percent were government employees (public works, agricultural and forestry service, department of education, health, police);
- 2) 16 percent were salaried hotel employees (hotels and the Club Méditerranée);
- 3) 12 percent were employed in production and services induced by the tourist trade. These included:
 - a) construction (essentially in 1968, extension or creation of hotels, restaurants, Club Méditerranée, private residences) (3 percent);
 - b) schooner transport connecting Papeete and Moorea, and truck transport on Moorea (3 percent);
 - c) transportation of tourists and vacationers by passenger-freight trucks, taxis, mini-buses, etc. (1 percent);
 - d) retail business affected by the tourist trade, including three shops specializing in selling pareus (cloth wraparounds), curios and related items to the tourists, and various industrial services (5 percent).

As for jobs away from Moorea (13 percent), they split up as follows:

- 2 percent were government jobs mainly in Papeete;
- 1 percent were in hotels and restaurants;
- 3 percent with the nuclear base and the arsenal;
- 7 percent in other civilian enterprises.

This exhaustive enumeration shows, across a range of activities, how important the tourist trade was even when it was just beginning.

Before the 1960's, there were small family hotels on Moorea that catered to two groups: a local clientele made up of civil servants or transient professionals or local vacationers, mainly Europeans or Demis; and a few tourists, primarily Americans, who came to Tahiti by sea and later by seaplane.

The modern tourist trade started on the north coast of Moorea, at Cook's Bay (Paopao) and in the neighboring area. This wave gradually grew and in some ten years reached the whole of the northern sea coast and even spilled over into the other sides of the triangle making up the island.

Moorea tourism in its present form is a child of the travel bureaus who take charge of a client in order to show him the beauties and charms of Polynesia: tours and excursions around the island, chants and folk dances, and tama'ara'a (feasts). The necessary ingredients for this Polynesian style tourism are the neo-Tahitian style bungalow hotels, the Papeete-Moorea boat, the colorful passenger-freight trucks, the Tahitian earth oven, and troupes of dancers. These ingredients have been made part of the package tour that brings visitors from their country of residence, guides them through Polynesia, and then brings them home again. For many of the visitors to Tahiti part of their package includes a day or two in Moorea during which they experience a regulated exposure to Polynesian life there as arranged by the travel agencies in Papeete and organized by the tourist hotels on Moorea. (Individual travelers often visit Moorea on a package tour purchased in Papeete.)

This new style of tourism began in the late 1950's when a Papeete travel agency extended its activities to Moorea by establishing a small hotel on Cook's Bay. This magnificently sited hotel has grown over the years, its activities increasing fivefold between 1959 and 1967. The impact of tourism began to be felt among the local population as this hotel extended its "tour" activities through using local passenger-freight trucks to transport tourists around the island, through dance shows (which served to stimulate dormant dancing skills among islanders, particularly those from the ancient village of Temae) and through feasts (which drew on the local production of pigs, taro, breadfruit, cooking plantains and other traditional foods).

During this early period of moderate tourism growth on the north coast of Moorea two developments stand out:

- 1) The inclusion of Borabora in the island "tours," shortening the tourists' stay in Moorea;
- 2) The opening of a second hotel started by a Tahitian but soon taken over by an American group. It is run by Americans who specialize in attracting and welcoming American tourists. The dynamic energy of the hotel is remarkable. It is frequented by a large clientele, attracted by the possibilities of relaxation that the hotel offers him (tours around the island, pleasures of the sea, dance shows by the Temae group, and tama'ara'a). Their clientele is partly brought in by travel agencies, and partly attracted by the hotel's reputation in the United States, particularly among travel agencies and airline personnel there.

Trading schooners, a seaplane belonging to the local air service, and since 1966 a tourist boat brought tourists to these two hotel centers. Each has had its own transportation system and its own little network of services gravitating around it. Each has employed a large staff both for operation (waiters, chamber maids, kitchen staff, repair and upkeep services, garage) as well as for the extensions (masons, cabinet-makers, carpenters). The Temae dance troop was split between the two hotels.

The tourist trade obtained 43 percent of its employees directly from within the district of Paopao (6) and it may be estimated that it "induced" two-thirds of the population's activities by indirect or direct demand for labor.

The Paopao tourist trade has created its double in neighboring Maharepa. This agricultural village of Demis and Tahitians as pictured by F. Ravault (7) mutated into a tourist center with the implantation of the American hotel in 1963 and the polarization of the village people's activities that it brought about. In a manner of speaking, the hotel "digested" the village. Besides this, it attracted or aroused indirectly through what I call the "effect of suggestion," a

set of new activities connected with tourism that turned Maharepa into a second Paopao.

In 1967, building was in full sway in Maharepa-Paopao. Maharepa was preferred over Paopao because of its drier climate and clearer weather. Some Tahitians built housing in order to lodge the new European arrivals (hotel staff, teachers, etc.) and because the weekends began to attract people from Papeete. Europeans bought land and built dwellings. There was a rage for the neo-Tahitian pandanus and bamboo style of architecture. One of these new builders installed a curio shop in his group of bungalows. Similarly, one of the two shops added as an annex a pareu printing workshop. To the East of Maharepa, a European started the first ice manufacturing enterprise in Moorea. To the West, between Maharepa and Paopao, new buildings appeared which were to fill in the empty space between the two tourist complexes.

1967-68: The Maharepa phenomenon, "the demonstration effect" which ended up by creating in this village a double of the Paopao hotel complex, tended to occur again on the North-West corner of Moorea with the Club Méditerranée which catered to a similar clientele, and featured the classic "tour," thereby stimulating a profusion of annex services and a proliferation of enterprises for transporting tourists.

This year of 1968 was also noteworthy for freeing Moorea from being an enclave in its relationship with Tahiti: this resulted from the inauguration of an airport in Temae on the North-East corner for little planes transporting some fifteen passengers. Until then the tourist trade made use of trading schooners making Moorea more than an hour away from Papeete. From then on, Moorea was only seven minutes away from the international airport in Faaa and open to mass tourism thanks to the organization of a true air lift or air bridge between the two islands. From that time on, hotels, curio shops, taxi enterprises, car rentals multiplied. The new hotel installations stumbled along for several years, but, little by little, the clientele followed, and progressively the new hotels began to fully function. Thus, on both the North-West and North-East corners and between the two bays of Cook and Opunohu, and at Maharepa new projects began to spring up. This northern area of Moorea was the site of most of this new tourism expansion, while the other areas remained fairly stationary as new economic enterprises tended to integrate the earlier existing elements: one with another, to weld them together. There was, however, some tendency for development to spill out of this framework both onto the South-West and the South-East coasts.

Can the creation of this area and its expansion be attributed to tourism? From the reply to this question, one may draw conclusions about the stimulating and multiplicative character of tourism within the economic system. The reply would have been unhesitatingly in the affirmative if other factors had not entered into play.

- 1) In 1967, before the advent of air shuttle service between Papeete and Moorea, one of the two hotels in the Maharepa-Paopao sector was slumbering; the other, fully active, was functioning almost in a closed circle; aside from the salaries paid by these enterprises (but they represented only a part of the salaries earned in the whole sector) the stimulating effects were slight. The economic reality lay elsewhere in the coming together of a basin area of agricultural production in the process of being reconverted and a consumer environment of Europeans, Demis, and Chinese installed there, opening up an outlet for local produce and having a stimulating effect on the nearby human environment.
- 2) The inner Paopao basin was in a state of complete reconversion: dynamic Demis, Polynesian and Chinese cultivators had replaced vanilla growing

with market garden crops for the local market and the Papeete market, and with pineapple growing. Paopao showed the way, since followed in other areas for changeover from the former Tahitian system of agriculture to a commercial system of agriculture designed to satisfy the local market: the commercialization of agriculture for internal needs goes along with the creation of a Tahitian wage economy.

- 3) A secondary school college was opened in Paopao. That meant teaching staff and pupils coming in from all over the island to live in the virtually empty inland area of this part of Moorea, opening up several possibilities. Public and private investments followed, giving work to construction enterprises and creating employment in the Polynesian neighborhood in the Paopao region.
- 4) Paopao did not escape the attraction for wage laborers exerted by Papeete during the boom years of the Tahitian economy in 1967-68. The infusion of money earned by those who took jobs in Papeete, plus easy credit, led to investment in homes (following Demis and European models), and hence a boom in construction, as well as the launching of new enterprises, notably in transportation.

The success of the Paopao-Maharepa sector was due to a combination of factors. More exactly, tourism developed, thanks to plane service, in the midst of favorable factors: the reconversion of the agricultural basin; the existence of a relatively large market of consumers with a high standard of living; and the existence of available money among the people created in this region of Moorea an environment favorable to taking up the innovations inherent in touristic growth. If the services required by the sudden expansion of the tourist trade upon the opening of the Temae airport, for example, had not been obtainable from suppliers in Moorea, there is no doubt that Papeete firms would have supplied them, in which case the Moorea people would get only salaries from the tourist trade. In addition, tourism development, along with the installation of an agglomerate of Demis landowners and of teachers with a high standard of living, as well as the appearance of complementary services (business, repairs, transportation), led to the birth of a form of urbanization running along the length of the belt road. This urban growth, in turn, led to a new influx of professionals attracted by the presence of a clientele of residents and tourists, and of people from Papeete setting up secondary residences there.

Tourism plus a commercial type of agricultural activities plus the residential phenomenon (permanent and temporary) together created a pole or core of growth on the North shore of Moorea. This core grew under the influence of new developments:

- hotel developments in the empty spaces,
- an administrative development based upon the exploitation of the Opunohu Valley lands (a practical agricultural school plus an experimental station plus a tourist site, viewpoint and archaeological sites).
- the growth of businesses and services.

With a few gaps, this core of growth goes from south of the airport to the East until up to and beyond the Northwest corner of the island. What effects did it have?

- 1) It cut Moorea into two regions: in activities and in landscape there is a marked contrast between the north coast of Moorea, and the south-east and south-west coasts. That is a primary boundary determined by the core.

- 2) Not everyone living along the north coast was equally affected by this growth. From the head of an enterprise, to the operator of services, to the ordinary salaried worker, to the person with nothing, there are varying degrees of integration which allows us to talk of a second boundary.

A part of the population had not been integrated into this growth from the pole and tended to look at the tourist units as well as the European teaching colony as some sort of foreign bodies. This state of affairs connects up with that of the inhabitants of the southern half of Moorea, whose primary resource had become wage labor. For half of them this meant working in Papeete, with its implications: the tiresome coming and going between the village of residence and the place of work and the temporary break-up of the family.

Furthermore, in the urbanized northern region, as in all cases of unplanned and uncontrolled urbanization, a barbarous series of actions occurred: mountain slopes were cut, land was leveled, terraces were constructed, and then building activities would be given up for a while. The trash heaps of industrial civilization appeared here and there; the lagoon suffered from extractions of "coral soup" for surfacing the roads; and the roads were widened and graded so that the automobilists might speed (and break the traffic regulations). In short, the landscape was thrown into a state of havoc. In the five years separating 1969 from 1974, the contrast is eloquent.

And there is more: the third generation of hotels has appeared on Moorea. They are still in the bungalow style but with the introduction of a luxuriousness that requires inputs and resources that place them beyond the possibilities that the Polynesian human environment can offer. Of course, to flatter the tastes of the clientele, the creators of the hotels designed developments which were the exact opposite of the little Polynesian family hotel. In the long run this means a reduction of the Polynesians to the role of suppliers of unskilled labor, because a sophisticated hotel set-up involves a degree of sophistication on the part of employees which would tend to eliminate Tahitians from the hotel industry.

The conclusion that I draw from this analysis is the following: As the Moorea example shows, there is a contradiction in Tahitian tourism between, on the one hand, the dynamic force of international tourism aiming at re-creating (or, even more, magnifying) in the tourist areas the comfort that a clientele with a high standard of living is familiar with (or at least dreams of) and, on the other hand, that which a beautiful but poor country, where the tourist trade must be a key element in the economy, can offer. A unique Polynesian tourism formula is called for to reconcile these two conditions. Such a formula would make it possible for the whole population to participate, and would also be acceptable to the clientele who would adapt to it. In this way tourism could become more of a means of diversion, of making acquaintances, and of leisure for people than a financial business dominated by money.

NOTES

- (1) T.E.A.L., Tasman Empires Air Lines.
- (2) T.A.I., Transports aériens intercontinentaux, a French company integrated in 1963-64 into a new company, the U.T.A., Union de Transports aériens.
- (3) In the broad sense of the term, that is French, Europeans stricto sensu, Americans, and New Zealanders. The main business firm in 1960 was a New Zealand concern.
- (4) Rents tripled; employed labor was paid four times the local rates.
- (5) Estimated at 40,000 persons, 1971 Report of the Institut d'Emission.
- (6) In 1968, 89 jobs out of 203.
- (7) RAVAUULT, 1967, Maharepa. Etude de structure agraire, ORSTOM, mimeographed.

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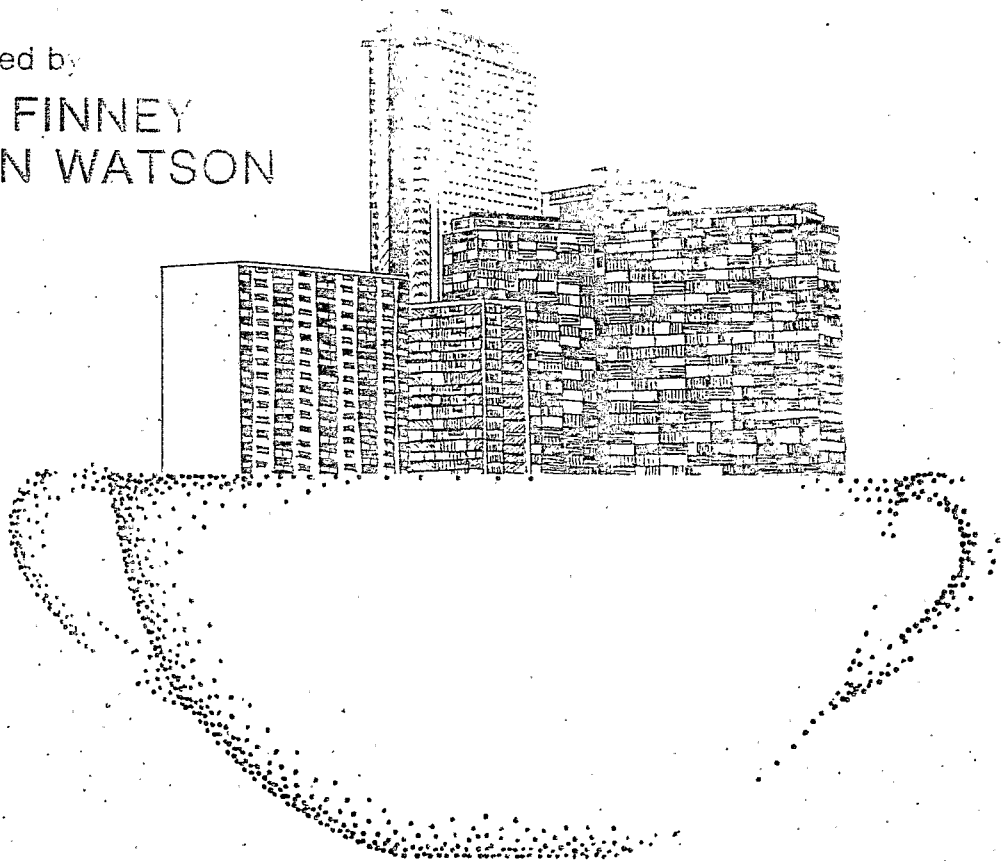
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