MOTU MA LE TAULA: TAEAO AFUA

Severed from the Anchor: A New Beginning

THE GROWTH OF THE CONGREGATIONAL CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF SAMOA, WELLINGTON.

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO MASSEY UNIVERSITY IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

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Sotiaka Enari

PRAYER AT VAILIMA

Lord, behold our family here assembled.
We thank Thee for this place in which we dwell;
for the love that unites us;
for the peace accorded us this day;
for the hope with which we expect the morrow:
for the health, the work, the food, and the bright skies,
that make our lives delightful:
for our friends in all parts of the earth,
and our friendly helpers in this foreign isle.
Let peace abound in our small company.
Purge out of every heart the lurking grudge.

R.L.Stevenson

The Congregational Christian Church of Samoa, Wellington, Newtown.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study is dedicated to the efforts of Rev. Risatisone and Mrs. Fereni Ete, and People of the Wellington Congregational Christian Church of Samoa, past and present.

E tali leo matä vanu,
'ae tü matila mauga
e gutu mälö äfua,
mälö maua.

And in Memory of:

My mother Aitaua Sarasopa Enari, who died during the course of this study; whose faith is a memory site of many great stories of dare, rooted-ness, and service;

and,

Ugaitafa Fereti, greatly admired Secretary of the Church who died in Church at the end of my mother's Family Service; the oldest boy who led us from Vaiala to and from Malifa School in the early nineteen fifties.

To the following people without whose help this study could not be possible, I thank you ever so much.

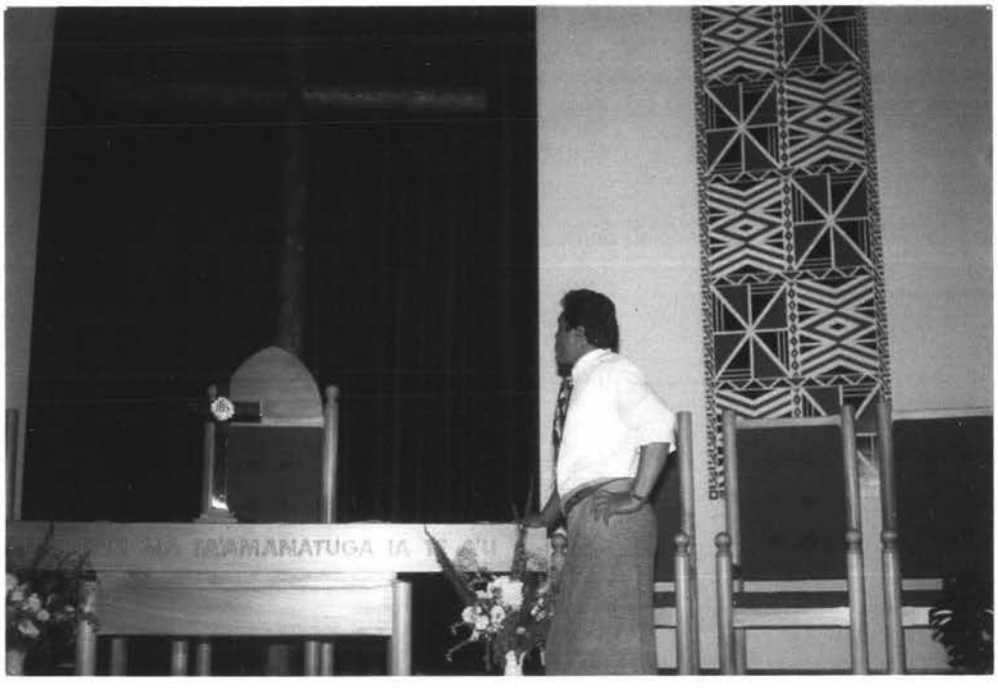
Dr. Marg Gilling for the peculiarly entertaining yet sensitive style of 'enabling' in the course of supervising this work. I appreciated greatly the by-ways pedagogy by which you have led me in this crossing into the past, into learning, into the vastness of space – *va* – to feel. 'Baby it's cold out there' seems to be stuck with my lips in song forever. Thanks for the companionship feel in support and tarrying along with me. To Rev. Risatisone Ete for assistance and 'spot on' criticisms as second supervisor. Your thought provoking approach has been invaluable in the attempt to assemble a frame for this work.

Informants: Fiu Samuela and wife Fuaiupu, Salesulu Galugalu, Falefitu T. Afoa, Taitu'uga T. Patea, Muagututi'a A. Tauafiafi and wife Si'usega, Lealaile'auloto N. Tiatia and wife Taumate, Pepa Hollis, my sister in law Tuimauga Ioana Enari. I was privileged and gratefully thankful for sharing your stories and memories with me. There are others with whom I have brief conversations: Maposua F. Lima, Seti Fiti, Tagaloa Daniels, teachers of the *A 'oga Amata*. Thank you for caring.

Not the least, I acknowledge with great sentiments the support of my family: my wife Ardmore Iunivesite for the encouragement and being a bouncing board for my thoughts in discussions; my children Eseta Pativaine, Reita Aitaua, and Sarasopa, for challenging me all the way. I hope this work will remain a channel for replaying values of past experiences and memories of years gone as you dance life.

I am responsible for any errors, inaccuracies, or misrepresentations that may appear in this work. I have tried my best and I hope this will only be a shoot of more works on this topic by way of corrections, arguments, or further developments.

I cradled the best
but silenced the dirge,
then,
and now.
And light,
radiant light;
I look for you,
well, needing you,
and then you speak:
Only in the darkness
do I mean anything to You.



ABSTRACT.

The utmost dread of a Samoan is realising the condition commonly expressed as '*motu ma le taula*' (severed from the anchor), or '*motu mai fanua*' (detached from the homeland), or '*motu ma le ta'i*' (cut-off from the aim or guide). Living abroad, they have to negotiate their migrant situation and manage their double identity. Deterritorialised peoples as a result of migration are always thrown into wider spaces and deep-ends. It amounts to social, political, economic, and symbolic loss. They are forgotten in terms of having no history. Their histories are bound up in national histories. But the deterritorialised have enabling visions within their cultural texts that transform their situations manifested as they strive to define themselves as a people. Self-definition inclines towards rediscovering history for meaning entrenched in heritage. It sets the path for community building that reconstitutes a base in the new space to hold a life of the edge-way.

The Congregational Christian Church of Samoa (CCCS), Wellington, defined itself as it grew as a faith community and cultural community. Affective-links played a major part in overcoming contradictions and uncertainties that sprang forth from intercultural encounters and marginal existence. Neither the tolerance nor the domination paradigms have much to offer in understanding the growth of the Wellington CCCS. Rather, this thesis looks at the effort of the community through the process of learning from experience, experience being the conglomerate of memory-scapes of the past and present. The process shows human potential responding to the notion of possible worlds, which enables people to endure negativity, find motivation, and empowers them to modify situations, even reconstructing their identity and culture in their new environment. In the final analysis, the resolve of the people counts above all. The resolve is not just a matter of replenished self-belief, but the community-self that believes.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION.

Taia i le va'ai, taia i le tafao.
[Confronted by the focus;
confronted by wandering.]

Introduction.

> Life is not the same river that can be crossed twice. Life is all sorts of rivers and creeks, currents and eddies, cross-overs and tributaries. Even the fording points are on shifting sands.[1]

The Wellington CCCS has crossed many valleys and hills in its growth. This story of a deterritorialised people relays experiences of colonisation, decolonisation, and indigenisation. In foreign soil, they were/are wrapped in monolith histories of victors and national foundational histories.[2] They were sidelined to non-history. History nonetheless is a pilgrimage into time, experiences, and descriptions, entering even into the forgotten past, moving along various positions of interpretations in studying events. The intention of this work is to look at the growth of the Wellington CCCS as a community, and develop a framework to look at its history, to explain how it achieved what it set out to accomplish – a face to a name. 'To be is do-ing' is the core theme, predicated by the following sub-themes. Identity is necessary for understanding space, position, and views of 'being'. Full of complications, identity can only be resolved when meaning appears. Meaning is captured by and through language and is richer when the past is engaged. Language creates and expresses thoughts and feelings, enriched by communal consciousness. Indeed community is vital to learning and essential to self-definition. Therefore, to have a face, deterritorialised people need a firm social ground and a cultural base in order for meaning to appear, for grasping space, position, and a view of existence.

What is Deterritorialisation?

Naturally, necessarily, humans are deterritorialised. Deterritorialisation in this work is a metaphor, a paradox, a lens. It refers primarily to the transference of people from one geographical home to another, implying cultural discontinuity, and social and psychological dislocation. In the time sense, it is transitional life in the realm of

[1] Dening, G. in Neumann, K. et.al.,1999, p.xii; also Carr, E. H. 1964 pp. 77-78
[2] Neumann ibid.

possibilities. From the learning perspective, it is the life-long encounter with *vavala* (appearing) and *mavae* (disappearing) in making sense of things and life.

Every human life is territorialised. Life, life history, history, comprises experiences of bio-territories in attempts to secure individual or communal space, but deterritorialisation is unavoidable: a baby is cut from the mother, a prisoner to the cell. As an opportunity, it is a lottery in new sites where life seems an edging-out-edging-in game. Whether in local or global turf, we are continually creating new *-isms* and *-ologies* and technological devices of deterritorialisation to the point now when anything is possible, but nothing is certain; where the price of everything is known but the value of anything. We are in replacement societies of thrown-out models, fashions, and simulations of an instant world (instant coffee, pills, wealth, weapons, travel, and quick fixes). Post-colonialism is considered a period as much as it is a process of edging-in thinking (*re* rather than *de*), re-possesing, re-processing, re-storing our human face, within landscapes and mindscapes of territoriality.

What do people say that I am?
What do you say?
The mountain is better
Down here – they're funny
Everything
Funny
Am I funny?
What do you say?

Where do people say that I am?
From where are you saying?
Pulotu is the place to be.
Up there – they're panicking
Everybody
Panicking
Am I panicking?
What do you say?

When do people say that I am?
When are you saying?
Ha!
Disposable.

Resettlement in new territories ushers positive experiences but mostly negative ones. With migration continuing, evolution could still be plausible in viewing change in light of 'contact' and 'diffusion'. Cultural selection as a means of survival legitimises a dominant culture, but for immigrant populations, aspects of their cultures fade and new developments (diversification) emerge in their place. The home environment no longer determines diversification. Cultural communities have influenced theoretical constructions for social, political, and economic relationships, reflected in policy changes in many areas. In a multicultural environment, a 'give and take' attitude promotes flexibility and sensitivity. It is desirable and practical for

interaction. Despite exposure to new choices and new forms of control, migrants adjust by complying with order for survival. Situations nevertheless, in conjunction with emerging streams of consciousness, shift theoretical positions for reforming relational systems in the pursuit of justice and equality. Managing diversity on the principles of justice and equality was not, and will not be any easier than it has been; some have been/are/will be more advantaged than others do. The less advantaged are identified as *underachievers*.

Migration is always associated with the lure of the *utopian* myth. It does not often work out for most migrants of a different cultural background. Failure more likely awaits them unless they re-engage the past. Deterritorialisation however signifies 'loss' found in 'the loss' itself. This paradoxical space is crucial to this work.

Methodology.

Cultural history associated with oral history is not saved from scientific suspicion, but it has influenced the revised approach to history writing. Aided by the influence of social science,[3] the realisation is that, if history purports to tell the truth, it needs to step beyond its conventional realm. It sets the scene for interdisciplinary ventures in constructing and understanding history. Chronology, though important, is solely for the narrative, but the unloading of cultural features that are considered significant in/to/for the narrative, is paramount. While the story swings between the past and the present, it moves around the conventional way anchored in retrospection and causality; the quasi-conventional method that attends to patterns and processes and introspection; and the unconventional or the multidisciplinary overview that questions the status of the 'fact' as an issue in representation of observation. Plaiting the three is relevant for 'meaning' to protrude from the 'what' of history.

The Research Question.

My interest in the topic chosen for this work sparked from two points of curiosity. The first was how Pacific Islanders could afford large church buildings, and the second is my need to really understand the significance of the Church to Pacific Islanders in New Zealand. In 1999, David Lange presented a program for the TV3 series 'Inside New Zealand' featuring Pacific Islanders' huge church buildings, of which he commented, were "a recipe for disaster" given their known low economic

[3] Marwick, A. 1970 pp 100-108.

ranking. It was cause to wonder. My reaction was one tinged by a bothersome emotion. I judged his comments to be based on economic rationalism and display artless condescension of Pacific Island people and what matters most to them. The Wellington CCCS is a Samoan faith community with a monument of a church building complex. It is not a disaster.

The Wellington CCCS Church Project in itself was an ambitious undertaking by a community detached from its cultural geographical base. How could they have managed? Taking into consideration the force of Lange's comment, I was equally curious about the motives (or reasons) behind embarking on such a mammoth venture. Being Samoan, I became interested in the relation between faith and pride and their part in the project, and the relations among faith, pride, critical reflection, and meaning, in the life of the congregation. Because this is a story of accomplishment, my major interest was in the learning, to which I initially attributed the success of the congregation. Learning is ongoing, but the way that the congregation followed is the focal point.

Faith is related to religious beliefs. Pride is associated with the consciousness of 'being' Samoan. Critical reflection refers to the process of knowledge production. Meaning is making-sense of what is learned and transformed to, or affirmed as conviction. The importance is to envisage in an encompassing frame how and why the Wellington CCCS became a ***growing*** Church.

I began with two major assumptions. One was that the project-experience lies deep in the heart of the community, as a particular historical period in the growth of this Samoan community. Faith and pride were supposed to feature strongly here. The other assumption was that the story of the congregation is about people – how they think and behave and learn and know, make decisions and act on them. Stating the assumptions in the positive was deliberate, presuming that they were not as easy to qualify as the negative. Important for me in doing research of this nature was a self-imposed caution to be constantly alert to the faults of listening. Preconception always interferes with informants' descriptions, which often become unconsciously diluted within personal experiences and learned views of the listener. Although de-authenticating the text (in this instance oral description), as a release from intentionality seems to be a favourable treat for the intellect, the teller, the voice, the language used, holds authenticity to meaning.

> Historical interpretations comprise an artful re-creation of the past in obedience to factual evidence for the purpose of revealing what man [woman] by his [her] deliberate choices...within the context of his given understanding.[4]

I had to constantly remind myself that I am an 'outsider' although I am Samoan. After all, I was after the ***meaning*** of the informants' history to them. I share the same language with them, and generally, a similar way of understanding, or forming an understanding, of things and situations. Yet, they have an experience that is foreign to me, and I have to listen well and decipher carefully the meaning of what they say.

Data.

The data for this thesis was collected from two sources: records of the Church, and interviews. Church Records consisted of Correspondence Files, Minute Books, and the *Api o le Galuega* (Record Book of the Ministry). The real value of the records is in connection with interviews. Interviews were necessary because the topic had not been researched previously but for a small part. Structured interviews were avoided in order to allow free flowing narratives of informants. A conversational interviewing style was adopted which begins by asking interviewees to tell their own stories of the Church. When they failed to continue, questions on topical issues were asked to stimulate their memories and usually led to in-depth interviews. Topical issues were extracted from the accounts of other informants. Pair-interviews were preferred to one-to-one sessions for instant double-checking of information. Interview information was supplemented by intermittent participant-observation. I attended from time to time worship services, social functions held at the Church, and occasions like district meetings, funerals and so forth. It was a good chance to listen and be able to follow the way they speak and conduct their affairs, as well as asking questions on events and issues in the Church. Comparative analysis therefore was carried out concurrently with interviews, and later, after listening and transcribing audio tape recordings. Topical content analysis took priority for the purpose of identifying processes. However, processes in this thesis are not discussed independent of each other as analysis would demand more splitting up of events and issues, and rather follow a single path of tracing and substantiating. They are parts and parcel of the narrative that has to be appreciated holistically.

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[4] Phinex, P.H. 1964 p.7

Informants.

Engaging informants was by random selection and 'snowballing'. Most interviews were at homes of informants except for the three interviewed at the Church premises. All informants have given permission to be cited in this work.

Mrs. Tuimauga Ioana Enari: No longer attending the Church, a Catholic upbringing, a member in the early years of the Church through marriage, and a woman, her perspective was interesting. Being my sister in law, she was a good person to start with as there was little holding back. Her memory leapt along and around in circles. However, it was useful in that I was able to hear names, events, issues, and practices, in snippets of different periods that I could follow up later on.

Salesulu Galugalu and Falefitu Afoa: The two are the longest remaining serving members. Salesulu was at the opening of the Church and has been a member since. Falefitu arrived and joined in 1968. Both are senior deacons, and *matai.* Their selection was accidental and they were interviewed together in the Church Hall.

Muagututi'a A. Tauafiafi and wife Si'usega: They joined the Church in the 1980s after many years in the Pacific Islanders' Church at Newtown. They provided another angle in looking at the Church. Muagututi'a is a Lay Preacher who is currently looking after the newly established Church at Johnsonville/Newlands.

Lealaile'auloto N. Tiatia and wife Taumate: They arrived in Wellington with their five children in 1971. Coming as a family provided another angle. Lealaile'auloto is a senior deacon and Taumate is active in the Mothers' Fellowship and Sunday school.

Taitu'uga T. Patea: One of the few Samoans in Wellington in the late nineteen fifties and was a member of the PIC for many years. He joined in the late nineteen sixties long after his wife and children. Before committing, he moved between the two Churches. The interview was at his home at Onepu Road, Lyall Bay.

Fiu Samuela and wife Fuaiupu: The lay preacher and wife who first took care of the Congregation soon after the opening of the Church, as they also did for the Porirua Church later. He now lives with his family in Australia. I interviewed them together in Samoa at their family home at Fasito'outa village.

Mrs. Pepa Hollis: She supervises the *A 'oga Amata* (Early Childhood Learning) at the Church. She came to New Zealand in 1983 on a temporary permit. After returning to Samoa, she came back in 1986. Except for the *A 'oga Amata*, she is not greatly involved in Church activities apart from attending Worship. She is in her early forties and the youngest of all the participants. The interview was in the vestry.

Rev. Risatisone Ete: He is the Minister of the Church. As co-supervisor of this thesis, I tried to avoid formal interviews with him. When I did talk with him, it was in chanced conversations at his home, vestry, or Ministers' meetings. The reason being that I was interested in the stories of the people in working with him, the same reason why some of the key people were avoided. This is rather a matter of caution.

Except for Pepa Hollis, other participants were interviewed twice or more. Also, several other people were engaged in brief conversations, or questioned at a chance for instant flashbacks on certain topics or events, including non-members of the Church.

Outline of Chapters.

This thesis comprises ten chapters, a conclusion and an epilogue. Chapter one describes the methodology and the purpose of this work. Chapter two explains the framework introduced by the underpinning thought. Chapter three is a background to the Samoan perspective of history. Chapter four is a profile of the Wellington CCCS with a Wellington and New Zealand backdrop. Chapter five describes in two frames the severed experiences of Samoans reflected in the problems of the Church in its early stages. Chapter six is about restoring a social foundation of the Church. Chapter seven portrays the social, physical, and spiritual development of the Church. Chapter eight looks at the Church Project driven by a dream. Chapter nine concentrates on settling the debt and the effect on the people and the Church in which previous chapters come into play again. Chapter ten is dedicated to the women, especially mothers, of the Church. The conclusion reviews the perspectives of history, culture, and learning, follows by the epilogue. Footnotes and Appendices supplement the main body of this work. Reading the Appendices after Chapter Three would be helpful and is recommended. The Appendices (first three) are separated from the main body of this work. They are wide ranging topics deserving in-depth study.

CHAPTER TWO: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.

E atagia i taga tafili.
[Actions reflect the design]

Introduction.

Until recently, colonised peoples had no histories. What was written about their past was part of colonisers' histories, and what history of them preserved in literature is not of their past – it is futuristic history – about what was done to, or for them. Even in reconstructions, their histories are unbound from the West and western history writing established since European triumphal entry.[5] The assumption is that, indigenous histories being so immersed in Western traditions, are lost in it. This is true of migrants' histories[6] within national histories.

Despite this, Samoan "present" at any given period is internally shaped. The familiar usually neutralises an exotic element involved.[7] A new order that may emerge is a phase of the improvisational-transpositional process enabled by experience, reflection, and critical reflection, as in *uta-fetala'i* (open-minded), and *uta-tamau* (close-minded) manner of exchanges among Samoans[8] themselves, wherever they are. Not all Samoan communities abroad follow a same pattern of growth, and should they be treated indiscriminately, historical truth would be averted. The society in which they exist holds the key to the dynamics of history. Context is the 'buzz' word today, for the past is largely understood from the current situation, from the present experience, of what affects people, how they see conditions and comprehend ideas, thoughts, concepts, and practices that influence views. The shaping of society does not follow naturally. Societies have been and will always be changed through cultural impact. Context therefore is non-stationary, so is the understanding of history.

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[5] E.g. Garret, J. 1982 *Living Among the Stars*. Blaut, J. 1993 refers to Classical Diffusionism as Eurocentric history constructed from the European Tunnel Vision paradigm, stressing inter-borrowing since contact, but presentations pretend that all are European. Linda T. Smith (1999) is another strong text on this subject: "The knowledge gained from our colonization has been used, in turn, to colonize us..." (p.59). Dupeyron, G. R. (1996) is of the view that "...Westerners ...concur in the same task of making the world uniform."

[6] Meleisea, M. has looked into the history of Solomon Islanders in Samoa in *Tama Uli* (1980). I am aware also of the attempt by Featuna'i Lea'ana looking at the Chinese community in Samoa.

[7] E.g. Howe, K. R. (1984) on Christianity: "The Christian church in Samoa reflected far less missionary dominance and far more Samoan characteristics than missionaries would have liked" (p.241). Meleisea (1987) elaborated on the socio-political situation during the German and New Zealand administrations and how hard it was to bend the will of Samoans.

[8] The internal life of Samoa is not paradise as often romanticised. This is obvious is Freeman, D. 1983; Meleisea, M. 1987; Marsack, C.C. 1961; Ala'ilima, F. 1998; Mageo, J.1998, 2001; Shore, B. 1984.

Topic Examined.

The contextual approach to history is partly applicable to Samoans abroad who had to wrestle a threefold release from (1) domination, (2) the inclusion notion of society, (3) and the decolonised past, to historically and culturally identify themselves collectively in the present. It is partly because the relation between the present and the past is better grasped through Samoan worldviews (cosmological and social), and by historical foundations of *fa'alupega,*[9] *taeao,*[10] *mavaega,*[11] and *igoa* (glossary of names), gazing at events in the epicycle of *mana*[12] and *va*[13] and *fa'alvelave*. This is fundamental for understanding motivation and meaning that circumscribe efforts and achievements of Samoans abroad.

The chosen topic is significant in three ways: (1) it is an instance of Samoan communities abroad; (2) a Samoan community in the 'new present' (emancipated), and background by the 'old past' (dominated) and the 'new past' (decolonised past); (3) the Church Complex is a visual symbol of the 'new present' in relation to the 'new past'.

Whether to hold the Wellington CCCS as a homogenous migrant group, or as deterritorialised Samoans poses a problem. Drawing the distinction is necessary to eliminate a perspective confusion. My interest is on the growth of the Wellington CCCS community as deterritorialised people,[14] leaning towards an auto-directed view of achievement and the knowledge path that led them to achieve their aim. On auto-direction regarding Samoans in New Zealand, Macpherson commented:

> A more precise understanding of change depends on moving away from the idea that all change in subordinate ethnic group members' orientations to their language, culture and social institutions is the consequence of pressures exerted by the dominant ethnic group's culture and social structure.[15]

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[9] Aiono Le Tagaloa (1996) translate it as 'honorifics'; Meleisea (1987 p.6) "summarized historical traditions or charter" Freeman (1983 p.364) "a set of traditional phrases that name in order of rank the principal titles and family connections of a local polity, district, and so on" (also pp.122-130).

[10] Literally 'morning'. It is also a section of the Samoan speech format where historical events are recalled and interpreted.

[11] Translated as: farewell bequest, deathbed wish, parting agreement, and treaty or contract.

[12] See Appendix I.

[13] See Appendix II and Appendix III for *Fa'alavelave.*

[14] Equivalent to deterritorialised communities in Samoa e.g. Vaivase, Vaitele, Vaimea, To'omatagi, Talimatau, etc, and ethnic ones like Elise Fou, Sogi, A'ai o Niue, etc.

[15] Spoonley et. al. [eds] 1991

Hence, the approach to the history of the Wellington CCCS is to be a story of a people in how they learn and decide on what they do.

> They are thinking humans, who, with the information available to them, make personal decisions about the value and relevance of their heritage which are rational in their own terms.[16]

With this in mind, it was essential to focus on the relation among faith, pride, critical reflection and meaning. First, because the Church has become the village of Samoans in New Zealand. Second, in undertaking a grand project defying the odds, the Wellington CCCS presented an opening for mining crucial aspects of the story of achievement and learning involved in the process. Pride and faith provide the cornerstone for knowing: pride in the past transposed into the present and faith extended to the present from the ancestral past. Reflection is constant, unavoidable to say the least, and crucial also, in trying to reconcile pride and faith in terms even of the present and past achievements, or the lack thereof.

The problem is obvious. It is often stated by Samoans that the *fa'a-Kerisiano* (Christianity) and *fa'a-Samoa* have truly merged, yet, disparities exist. The third element cannot be ignored namely, the *fa'a-NiuSila* (New Zealand way) or more specifically the *fa'a-Ueligitone* (Wellington way). All these shape the present of the community. Being a homogenous[17] ethnic group, taking a Samoan stance to look at its history is not ill conceived as "A generous history gives back to the past its own present."[18] But Pride, Faith, Christianity, Samoan way, New Zealand way, and Wellington way do not offer a compatible mix. The function of history is to integrate. Commanding ideas of the time are greatly helpful in this task, but only human facility can interlace these diverse forces into one of grace.

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[16] ibid.

[17] Homogeneity could not entail cultural purity. Ethnicity is a relevant concept. Foucault's 'practical systems' in *What is the Enlightenment* (Mathew, H. [trans] 1992) is appropriate, "taking as a homogenous domain of reference not the representations that men give of themselves, not conditions that determine them without their knowledge, but rather what they do and the way they do it. That is, the forms of rationality that organized their ways of doing things (this might be called the technological aspect) and the freedom with which they act within these practical systems, reacting to what others do, modifying the rules of the game, up to a certain point (this might be called the strategic side of these practices)." (Web version 2001 p.11 *http://esever.org/philosophy/foucault/what-is-enlightenment.html)*. Ethnicity includes aspects of exclusions in Foucault's delineation.

[18] Dening, G. in Neumann, ibid.

> A few moments admiring a flower, transient as it is, is sharing a moment with eternity, a linking... the beginning of awe and worship.[19]

History and Knowledge.

Post-colonialism is a new historical time, a new consciousness, a new attitude, an opening for rediscovering indigenous pasts, re-setting paradigms[20] for projects of such interests. Post-colonial time is a 'new present'. From this threshold point, historians deal not just with the 'past' but with the 'new past'.[21] In what manner this new cognizance becomes knowledge is a challenge. For the Pacific generally, it involves, according to Sina Va'ai,

> Interrogating concepts involving the colonisers and colonised in the politics of dominance and subservience, an imperial center and its peripheries or margins, the notion of a culturally superior European self and others of Empire, the orientalising vision which provided an imaginative cultural construct of the Pacific... promoting and affirming a decolonised sense of self and national identity in these Pacific countries....[22]

According to Linda Tuhiwai Smith, imperialism once "help to explain the different ways which indigenous people have struggled to recover histories, lands, languages and basic human dignity."[23] Theory was used in this as the colonising tool of the West that smothered indigenous knowledge, and why these knowledges have been ignored and forgotten about. Attempts to rediscover these knowledges have been and are being made "to *re-righting* and *re-writing* our positions in history."[24] Not swayed however to total rejection because "we live simultaneously within views,"[25] she pointed out the focus to be,

> 'CENTERING' our concerns and world-views and then coming to know and understand theory and research from our perspective and for our own purposes.[26]

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[19] From Rev.Fraser Paterson's sermon "*Consider the Lilies*" 14 April 2002, Khandallah.
[20] E.g. De-imperialising of Pacific History pioneered by J.W.Davidson *JHP* 1966 (1); also see Howe op. cit. *Preface.*
[21] Pappe, S. 1996 discussed this in A recent historical essay: a critical comment in *Time and Writing: The First Mexican Historiography E-Zine No.0 July.* In essence, the new past is the rediscovered past.
[22] Vaai, S. 1999 p.14
[23] Smith, L.T. 1999 p.22
[24] ibid. p.28
[25] ibid. p.39
[26] ibid.

Kapa Kelep Malpo wrote that "conducting research in PNG enabled me to compare the values and the reasons of my people with those of others," and stating, "I am a bridge linking Western ways of thinking to my traditional cultural meaning and values."[27] This assertive statement announcing 'I am' indicates taking ownership by a local of matters formerly outside the domain of indigenous people control. For instance, Bronwyn Elsmore referred to Maori religious movements to,

> ...have usually been regarded as protests against the social and political order of their time, and while this is accepted, the fact remains that because of the Maori's religiously-grounded life, the responses themselves were religiously rather than politically oriented.[28]

Decontextualisation and misrepresentation are prevalent forms of triumphal procession; Lange's TV comment is an example. However, to recapture, construct, and communicate rediscovered knowledge, a framework is required.

Need for Theory.

Historical events bring along wholesale changes, marking off the novel from the previous, the novelty that may be anticipated, deliberated, or came as a surprise. When the prophetic, the determined, and the spontaneous are perceived to coincide (or collide) in events, it is a historian's nightmare to sort out what counts for true knowledge. Myth and reality are ever in the company of each other.

Knowing and understanding are counted on for a solution. They are about relations. Defining what 'is' implies what 'is not'. Or, historically speaking, what has been is haunted by the thought of what should or could have been. The law of necessity does not always follow accordingly, thus cautioning against total faith in causality. History is full of irregularities as with probable expectations nested in possible vision. This was familiar knowledge to Julius Caesar in the course of his military campaigns. Reflecting on irregularities, he noted in *Imperial Caesar*:

> And in the most practical affairs I have always tried to contribute something theoretical or artistic...a victory in war or a success in politics to be something inevitable, complete and perfect, like a fine piece of painting or a lyric poem. ...There is something aesthetically satisfactory in attaining one's aims with no waste and with complete certainty.[29]

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[27] Gilling, M. 2000 pp.27-28
[28] Elsmore, B. 1999 p.10
[29] Warner, R. [trans] 1964 p.25.

Aesthetics seem a methodological gambit for composition *vis-à-vis* the unity and texture of the text. Before the 18th century, history texts were treated as a literary genre. It is no surprise therefore that aesthetics and theory have been treated synonymously. It makes sense that *Imperial Caesar* should be anchored on the 'aesthetics of order' expressed succinctly, "order being born out of disorder, something certain in the place of vagueness, vacillation and the aimlessness of personal ambitions."[30] Yet, inquiry into the truth or reality of the past, and present, requires a more reliable theory attuned to ontological and epistemological demands (as if aesthetic theory is not).

The centrifugal influence of theory in research and knowledge production is ominously undercut by post-modern de-centering campaigns. Theory anyway to Caesar could be added to 'practical affairs'- a choice. Grinding his comment further unveils the entwining of the practical and theoretical in the act of anticipation. Theory performs a synoptic function for affairs observed and analysed. Vital then is the relation between observation, anticipation, and construction. It is a wonder that theory and practice should be conceived separately in research. I couldn't agree more.

Research: What passes for Knowledge.

The primacy of pure-theory has long been respected. It paved the epistemological path from contemplation of the cosmos and life towards the scientific practice of truth finding.[31] Life, understanding life, as 16th century Julian of Norwich believed, "is all in the doing; it is all in the asking." In promoting the reflexive theory, Gillian Fulcher insisted that theory reflects practice and *vice versa*, and she quoted Marx and Engel to emphsise the latter point: "Life is not determined by consciousness, but consciousness by life."[32] Hopes and dreams set to action in any contemporary present are usually initiated by social consciousness derived from life. Theory is practice - the asking-doing process of fulfilling. As Grozs said, philosophy,

> ...is not a rational intellectual system of enquiry...It is a strategy...It is practice that does things, legitimize, challenge, enabling, preventing.[33]

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[30] ibid. p.36. *Imperial Caesar* may be regarded as a literary montage. Keith A.Pearson also thinks that Nietzsche used the aesthetic approach in writing. His metaphors are to be well understood to get his meaning (Patton, P. [ed] 1993) *Nietzsche: Feminism and Political Theory.*

[31] Habermas J, 1988 Appendix p.306.

[32] Fulcher, G. in *Teaching in Higher Education* 1996 1 (2) p. 173

[33] Patton, P. ibid. p.59.

Karl Popper aired a sense of finality on the issue.

> We are *theorizing all the time* even when we make the most trivial statements... There is no sharp dividing line between an 'empirical language' and a 'theoretical language'.[34]

One cannot wait, cannot bother to wait for a theory to do what one has to do. By doing, one learns and one knows. Grozs again:

> Philosophy itself was to be written walking, or preferably dancing...to lift, ...elevate itself... to overcome.[35]

The concurrence of theory and practice does not suggest however the notion of sameness but rather, it identifies the two operations in a process of knowledge production. Reflexive theory for knowing assumes the independence of the object of conjecture from its reflection in research. It mirrors subjects through findings, how they are acquired, moulded, presented, and it provides a frame for discerning what appears common beyond the particular, a phenomenon besides events, and producing a coherent view of all that are being observed. The close alliance of theory and practice in reflexivity makes method and methodology the two oars of a researcher in driving the research, while at the same time both are used for steering research.

Historian at work: Looking On.

History to simply reflect the past is a misplaced emphasis if the past constitutes only events. History reflects people and begins in the current *habitus* and its 'social game', yet looking back. Anthropology often locks its gaze in the past, probing curiously into culture. Sociology focuses on processes and patterns for identifying change. Arthur Marwick entreats "that each discipline, as traditionally conceived, must at all times be ready to make useful borrowings from other disciplines,"[36] thus allowing the scope to be widened. Within this framework combination, is the historian at work in observing, selecting, creating, establishing, arranging, and interpreting, the facts. The historian is left with the rule of truth entirely her/his own, but whose socio-cultural background, her/his present, her/his

[34] Fulcher, op. cit.
[35] Patton, ibid. p. 60.
[36] Marwick, ibid., p. 107. Relativism is strongly promoted by taking this position.

tutored way of 'looking on' and contemplation, are extraneously involved. History reflects the past via the writer of/in a certain present, and positions of looking-on tend towards biased views. Bringing subjectivities into a reasonable degree of being worthy of believing, is the value of research.

Historical inquiry for Foucault should focus on 'How do things happen' rather than 'How do things progress'. Events and facts around them form the spine of history[37] that research ascertains. Not all facts are historical and the historian would have to select them with the understanding that any described single event is multifaceted, multi-caused, multi-perceived. Incidentally, fact is often assailed by doubt and can often take refuge in the positivist rule of 'knowing for certain.' Unfortunately, the force of positivism has diminished being criticised for its absolute posturing. It does not 'stack up' to the array of types of knowing. Notwithstanding, any hope for the truth cannot be conceived without some clues. Pursuing the truth passionately drives the interest even to acquire the minutest of details. Though the primacy of facts remains, they are lifeless, isolated and trifling, if there is no notion of truth or reality for the historian to aspire to.

> The historian and the facts of history are necessary to each other. The historian without his [her] facts is rootless and futile; the facts without the historian are dead and meaningless.[38]

Similarly,

> The historian is not a chronicler of past events but an interpreter of the past and his success or failure depends to a considerable extent upon the balance he succeeds in striking between himself and the past.[39]

Ideas, thoughts, experiences of the period and the social environment, have more substance to proffer. They are about people and for people to make comments about them. History is molded within inter-subjective knowledge socially arranged. Oscillating between the past and the present, history moves around hindsight, insight, and bother. These could not be properly ascertained, or well captured by confining the investigation to a single method. The theory lies in the field of research in doing it.

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[37] Carr, E.H. 1984; Cannon, J. [ed] 1982; Phinex, P.H. 1964.
[38] Carr, ibid. p. 30
[39] Cannon, ibid. p. 8

Just as fact and chronology are lifeless without a historian and her/his aspiration for the truth, or, nostalgia, inner joy or pain that cannot be really known through mechanical research apparatus, so is history. It would be barren of meaning if it does not touch the being of the historian and subjects.

Adjustment: Informed by Research.

And fact, truth, meaning – they are what? In the first round of the research, I had an uncomfortable time. I was cautious about 'stepping on toes' of informants, not sure whether the questions were appropriate. Sensitivity to ethical correctness loaded my conscience. Research trespasses, always poking. Interviewees themselves were unsure whether the information they volunteered satisfied my demands. They paused; they smiled, wriggled their foreheads and stared at times. Was the fact forthcoming? Was any truth imparted? Were they mere responses to questions I asked? Would they dare expose all they know – the sensitive, the delicate, the deep? And the enthusiastic – How much was fabrication? And myself: Did I hear them? Did I understand them? What did I hear? The lecturer? Zarathustra? Myself? Foucault's warning added to the uncertainty crisis:

> You may continue to explain history as you have always done. But be careful: if you look very closely, if you peel away the banalities, you will notice that there is more to explain than you thought; there are crooked contours that you haven't spotted.[40]

Elsewhere he added,

> The way people think is not adequately analyzed by the universal categories of logic. Between social history and formal analyses of thought there is a path, a lane – maybe very narrow – which is the path of the historian of thought.[41]

The undetected, the narrow-ness, is worrying. How much else is latent? My escape was to be convinced that: "The game is worthwhile insofar as we don't know what will be the end."[42]

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[40] Cited in Veyne, P. Foucault Revolutionizes History, Web excerpt 2001 p.2 *http://www.uchicago.edu/research/jnl-crit-inq/foucault/foucault.veyne.html*

[41] Interview with Foucault 1982 in Martin, L. H. et.al. 1988 p. 9

[42] ibid.

It was utterly imperative that I should realign my thinking to hear what the informants were saying. Intending that it should be their history, the approach was simply to ask them to tell their stories. I had been overly interested in the 'fact'. The conversational style of interviews perhaps led into the disclosure of what I least wanted to hear. Events were intertwined with theological beliefs and cultural values of why things happened the way they did. They looked back to recapture the whole picture. While they can describe how and why things happened, they also could not absorb that it was possible - at all.

Their disbelief in what they had achieved changed my way of looking on. Initially, I intended to examine pride and faith as my own wondering suggested self-glorification and faith-fanaticism to have been greatly involved. The meaning of pride and faith transpired in the course of the research for me. This is the meaning I tried to listen to ever so diligently, which hopefully this work will be able to communicate. It was the reason why delving into the historical sense of the Samoans is deemed necessary. Somehow, it presented the meaning of post-colonial time. It is dawning (*vavala*), opening (*matala*), discovering (*au maua*), and achieving (*mafai*).

It is exciting knowledge. The temptation is to readily switch on the analytical apparatus induced by an eager to express.

> Analysis shows that meanings by which human nature is defined are conscious experiences with structural principles, some of which prove capable of elaboration as cultural traditions with corresponding symbolic expressions.[43]

While this may be so, analysis can dissect the entire experience into truth slices. Isn't it common to hear an 'I know' response only to admit later that 'I don't know' when asked to describe?[44] Because this research depended largely on oral sources, I had to deal with informants' descriptions that were characterised by unfinished sentences and disjointed accounts of events. They relayed what they remembered on the spot, often in block-time, leaping in intervals from one period or topic or mood to another.[45] Do they all relate? Marg Gilling has contemplated the situation:

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[43] Phinex ibid. p.29

[44] This is often regarded as a sign of unrefined and untutored faculties.

[45] Sometimes I found it hard to catch up with their memory leap, sometimes they seemed to project and I was supposed to complete.

> To describe the totality, to try and grasp holistically is what some of us [pakeha] try to do; but when we try and do that **so we can share with others** – for whatever reason, we take away from that totality, from that process; take away some of the strength, the integrity, the essence, the mana. This I have only just understood, and started to word, but the sense-ing has been there right through this time of research.[46]

Sense-ing is essential and Jeanette Mageo added a further reason why:

> Cultural memories are never purely intragroup or intergroup but are forever taking on fresh nuances in changing historical and personal situations. Cultural memory is a topography of infinitely many possible locations: these genres represent the poles. In daily life, memory genres fade into and out of one another and are continually negotiated ...[so] when people hear a story or story fragment, they also hear echoes of other stories.[47]

The significance of totality can easily be lost in split notions. Significance as a term itself is more than the words that explain it. Definition points - it never reaches.

The decolonised past opens up the *taeao* (morning) of post-colonial 'being'. History is change, or to change if you like as Marx intended, and truth is realised in a time-space order of 'being in becoming', in Heidegger's meaning of truth (*aletheia*) as 'unconcealment',[48] better still, 'un-concealing'. At inception, the Wellington CCCS was a tiny seed, or, in the expression of the language, *O le masina fa'ato'a va'aia* (the first sighting of the moon). What was/is to come is aptly presented by the song below with a *que sera* refrain.

> *Le masina ua va'aia i luga o mauga* (The moon is seen above the mountain)
> *Mafaufauga e le uma.* (Inciting incessant thoughts)
> *Ta-a la la la, ta-a la la la la la-a la la la la, Ta-a la la la la-a la la la la.*

Ta-a la la la, - the pulse, the to and fro-ing, that and so forth-ing - carry the curiosity to any knowing-scape in the interest of giving the past its own present. History not only wriggles (*milo/taumilo*), but also roams around (*ta'amilo*).

Writing therefore takes note of the fact as not simply given, but created. So, while grammar of language is necessary for communicating the story, the style intends for the ***voices*** and ***noises*** of history to be heard intermingling. The narrative is designed to sustain **sense-ing** throughout, knowing that in writing, the voice fades.

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[46] Gilling, M. 1989 p.55
[47] Mageo, J. 2001 p.11
[48] Clark, T. in *Philosophy and Literature* 1987, II (1) pp 73-91

Still, the voice is 'crying on the way' (*o lo'o tagi mai ala*) from the distance. And I write history to hear how I hear it, to see how I see it.

Conclusion.

Reactions to Western conventions of history have been articulated in various ways. Historians like E.H.Carr and Arthur Marwick advocated a crossover, probing into social sciences for constructing history. However, the Western rule can still persist. Decolonising ventures have consistently pressed orientalising or indigenising perspectives into recognising 'alternative' or 'other' ways to show strong reactions to misrepresentations, but more importantly, as a reference to other knowledges. It is all very well except that history has to have its identity. As the truth is vessential in historical study to 'give back the past its own present', history is the comprehensive fact itself, being a reference to its main function of integrating events. The truth is impossible to determine without facts of events. But there are others: experiences, feelings, and beliefs, which decry rigorous insistence on the objective truth, – the factual –dictated by a particular rule or discipline. History is intersubjective and the reflexive theory is essential for soliciting general agreements upon matters researched and presented. Reflexive theory draws emphasises the understanding that knowing is in the doing, and/or doing reflects knowing, beliefs, values, way of life of people. It assists well in assembling an ordered way of understanding a situation, from the disorder of anxiety and disarrayed memories, echoed in discussions, and action manifestations that composed the data of research.

On cultural history, subjects are involved in views and construction of history and for theory to be highly reflexive, is to be grounded in interactions of the research process, between the subjects and researcher, between theory and practice, language and understanding. Grounded theory is the process itself where "facts" are gate-openers to a whole lot of nuances and phenomena, and to be regarded as potential revealers and precursors of the truth about the past. Yet, to deepen the understanding of the past, one has to be a child in the womb of the historical experience, to struggle within, and to feel while looking on, in the interest to look beyond. Word and writing represents. Somehow, history is often fenced or packaged and labeled. To give the past its own glory and agony, history writing strives to integrate events and create a wider screen for understanding.

CHAPTER THREE: SAMOANS and HISTORY.

E tu manu ae lë tu logologo
[A bird stands but the voice travels on.]

Introduction.

Time and writing benchmark history. Before the literate revolution in the Pacific, Samoa had had recording systems with a checking network. Almost everyday their history was recited and debated in one form or another.[49] Concerning everyday living,

> ... there is one dictum that is so fundamental a guide for conduct that it can be made even to someone older, "Stand at your post" (*Tu i lou tulaga*)." Here *tulaga* refers both to a position and to a role. "Stand at your post" is a metaphor for performing a role in the group that accords with one's status and rank, which to Samoans is tantamount to behaving respectfully.[50]

The expression also means to 'be' your age or gender. A variation *Tu i lou tofi* renders the same and it is a reminder to 'be aware of who you are.' *Tofi* also means inheritance or heritage, and it defines the present, that is, 'who you are'. Aristotle's dictum 'know thyself' according to Aiono Le Tagaloa[51] in the case of Samoans, is knowing one's Surrounding (*Si 'osi 'omaga*) and Direction (*Fa 'asinomaga,* she also associated it with *Fa 'alupega* which she translated 'Honorifics').

Fa 'alupega.

A canon of dignities, *fa 'alupega* as well is a plethora of histories, survived by a socio-political order of relationships that governs the people of Samoa, in family, village, district, and the country levels. Honorific is an archive of genealogies and cultural knowledge. Honorific retains the dignity text that spells the *tofi* of one, and all. A reminder to 'stand at your position' puts a person on a stand to face the historical reality of who he/she is.[52] Hence, a Samoan is reminded to 'remember that wherever you are, remember where you are' – the ancient in the meantime.

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[49] This is done in formal occasions like *fa 'alavelave* e.g. funerals, dedications, weddings, visits, village meetings, mutual acknowledgement of children (*fa 'afailelegatama, fa 'ailoa le fanau*) between families, even in casual conversations. Besides, The Lands and Titles Court is in session almost every weekday to hear historical claims by different parties to *matai* titles and customary lands. Oral traditions and folklore are observed and shared understanding on which claims are based.

[50] .Mageo J.M. 1999 p.4.

[51] Le Tagaloa, A.F.M. 1996

[52] *Fa 'asinomaga* in Aiono Le Tagaloa's meaning is nurture in one sense, identity in another. We are nurtured and directed into what we become.

Igoa.

'Names' are recording devices of lands, special grounds, villages, rivers and pools, *matai* titles, and names of individuals. *Malae o le ma* (Ground of Shame) is an example. In a formal 'ava ceremony, a recitation by an untitled male announces the time of drinking at the end of speeches. A common introduction to the recitation *Ua logo i Pulotu le mapu a Taï* (*Taï's* whistling has been heard in *Pulotu*), refers to the War of Freedom between *A'eä Sisifo* and *A'eä Sasa'e* (West and East of Savai'i Island). According to tradition, Taï climbed a coconut tree head-down-feet-upwards like many others as an imposed condition of a previous defeat of the West. He puffed so much that it sounded like whistling. It caught the attention of the famous Nafanua, the female liberator who became the sole ruler of Samoa later on. She disguised herself during the war by covering her breasts. About to win a battle at Sagone, the breast-cover fell off exposing her true gender. The revelation was embarrassment added to defeat on her opponents, hence 'ground of shame'. Her *mana* and prowess were feared by all. Henceforth, in incidences of major conflicts between families and districts, her assistance was contracted by one of the parties. Mercenaries were dispatched under the command of her general Tupa'i to settle the affairs on the condition, that she would obtain the *Ao* (paramount titles) of allies in victory, resulting in her being the sole ruler. Nafanua ruled by a satrap system of little difference to that of Alexander the Great. *Malae o le Ma* is one record among others originated from the war. Liberation dawned a new 'morning' on the West.

Taeao.

As aforementioned, *taeao* (morning) is part of the Samoan speech. It is the part when the speaker refers to history. In the context of the speech, *taeao* is construed as a historical event of significance, to have affected, influenced, and brought about a major change into the life of Samoa as a whole. Freeman indirectly referred to it in discussing the hierarchy of the *fa'aSamoa*.

> The Samoans are thus a proud people, punctilious, and complex, God-fearing people whose orators delight in extolling the beauty of mornings that dawn with the sanctity and dignity of their ancient polities serenely intact. Yet, as we shall see...instead, the morning dawns in fearful trembling and shaking, for as anyone who has grown up within a Samoan polity well knows, the Samoan way is difficult indeed.[53]

[53] Freeman, D.1983 p. 130.

Addressing the 'morning' usually introduces an orator's speech and it merely refers to the day. A day is welcomed as new because of the occasion, but its significance, 'sanctity and dignity', obviously is due to the hierarchy order of yesteryears 'serenely intact', instantly pointing at history. The *taeao* section of the speech follows later when some historical events will be cited and compared. One is chosen above others as the theme of the speech and thought of the day. Retrospection is the way to introspection. *Taeao* signifies events having significant influence on the lives of people apart from classifying history into periods. In the English language, a period is generally expressed as 'In the days of/when'...whereas Samoans would say 'In the nights of/when... (*I ona po o/ina*).[54] Most *taeao* are celebrated events of marked changes.

Mävaega.

Most *taeao* are linked to a *mävaega*. Nothing during the Tongan or the German and New Zealand occupation of Samoa was referred to as *taeao* until it was over (*mavae* – came to pass, or part). In one recorded Samoan cosmogony, God *Tagaloa* ordered the rock '*mävae*' and the rock parted or split up, giving birth (*fanau mai*) to a new rock. *Mävaega* indicates the end of a period and the springing forth of a new era. Twenty or so 'generations' ago, the Tongans dominated Samoa. The Tongan occupation ended with the *Mävaega i le Tulätalä* (farewell announcement at the *Tulätalä* rock) by the defeated Tongan hero Talahifei'i, the parting speech to which the title of the current Samoan Head of State, Malietoa, is traced. The Tongan chief promised Samoa that if they ever come again they would only be visiting. There have been no conquest intentions by any Tongan since, suggesting that the *mävaega* was recognized by the whole of Tonga as well. The Tongan occupation has passed (*mavae*) and a new morning (*taeao*) was dawning, with dignity attained and secured in the title Malietoa. When orators therefore address the 'sanctity and dignity' of the day, the significance is in history.[55]

Talafa'asolopito

Samoan *talafa'asolopito,* (history) is the 'story of sequences of edges'. Between ends, were periods of events with contributing importance. There was no

[54] This to distinguish the past as if the present i.e contemporary reference, when they habitually say '*I aso*' (in the days), or '*O aso*' (the days). *I ona po* is periodization speech.
[55] See Le'aupepe, P. 1995 pp.22-24 (Samoan Text) for a list of some *mavaega*.

need of dates for the edges (*pito*) were connected by remembered *mävaega*.[56] The *mävaega* was/is adhered to in the obligatory manner, but life was/is not chartered as neither human appetite nor wild ambition could be controlled all the time, let alone the unexpected. Whatever transpires from any of these, will somehow arrive at an edge at some stage. As to the details of events, it is commonly admitted in the expression *E tala 'ese'ese le atunu'u* (the country has different versions). And these differences are often tested in formal occasions. For instance, the *taeao* part of the Samoan speech allows for the other party to interject (*seu*) either to indicate a mistake with the intention to 'cut' the speech, or simply out of politeness. The reason for the latter is if there is a connection (*fäiä*), and normally, the interjection leads into recounting the pedigree on which the connection is identified. If the interrupted speaker disagrees with the details, he would readily request again for him to finish off the recounting, purposely to re-establish their own version. On the other hand, if he agrees, he would move straight on to the benediction (*fa'amatafi-lagi*) part of the speech.

Gafa.

Genealogy (*Gafa*) is not just a consanguine story. The history that ennobles it (*tau-tupu)*, is important. More often than not, however, the emotional quality of genealogy is emphasised. Genealogy *per se* again is not strictly confined to the study of origins alone. Its essential function is tracing relations, to show when and how and why relations changed (history), revealing the political, social, and psychological factors involved and features of constituted relations. How cultural and familial connections were/are initiated, and the way they are maintained, strengthened or weakened, command the historical interest of Samoans. It is the history of the ***Va.***[57] It includes spiritual relations with ancestors, and with the God that they have come to believe in. History to Samoans takes the mysteries and the known seriously.

History and The Future.

An old tradition of Samoa tells of the *Mävaega i le Tai*[58] (farewell bequest at the Lagoon). Brothers Ulufanuasese'e and Saveasi'uleo decided to part on the latter's hope to establish a center of national government (*mälö*). Saveasi'uleo bequeathed his

[56] History periods are also in terms of generations (*augätupulaga, augäatua'ä*).
[57] See Appendix II
[58] Leaupepe, P. ibid. pp. 33-34 (Sauoaiga Ioane 1989 includes an English translation).

brother their home but he would seek residence in the western part of the country. He would be consulted on matters of government interest. He left with a prediction that they would meet again (reunited) at the 'edge' of their line (*ta te feiloa'i i i'u o gafa*). Ulufanuasese'e first born were Siamese twin girls, Taema and Tilafaiga, who were accidentally detached from each other later on. They roamed the sea travelling from one island to island until they came to *Pulotu* where their uncle was living. But they were unaware of their connection. Saveasi'uleo impregnated Taema and she gave birth to the famous Nafanua. In Nafanua, the brothers' genealogy was 're-connected' in whom also the political powers of Samoa were united.

Advanced knowledge, the impact of analytical schemes, of science and technology on planning and implementation, seems to allow no room for the prophetic vision any more. Accidents in most cases do happen without prior knowledge. Probing beyond the obvious unravels unexplainable phenomena which are regarded not separate from life. History often by-passes these gaps. Connecting the regularities and irregularities, the known and mysteries in a collage of life, is discerning of ***Mana*** history. It is living history that suggests the notion of a predictable future though how it will be unraveled remains enigmatic. Besides, the future is not divorced from the past, and in the present; they are connected.

Conclusion.

In contesting the validity of Margaret Mead's research, Derrick Freeman[59] has raised some eyebrows about Samoans. Are Samoans pretenders? During my research, it was hard to draw out the 'secondary reason' underpinning the descriptions of informants. It became clearer when delving into the situations of members in the early years of the Church, and during the project period. Underneath processes and patterns of events is the human ethos of Samoans. Their life stories are attached to the past, to their *tua'ä* (forbears), to the history of families they briefly touched upon without elaboration, to the history of people they could not freely speak about. They hinted at some of these experiences with half a smile, masking deep-seated convictions which most were not prepared to analyze. When pressed for more information, it resulted in confusing descriptions of some events. They speak from their own 'positions'. Some things are hard for them to talk about, especially subjects that involve families and touch on emotions, or any that forces making dogmatic theological statements. They

[59] op. cit.

believe, but not without questions. Of the latter, they treat it jokingly because the conviction persists *'E le aofia matagi i se manatu'*, interpret as 'no opinion can encompass all winds'. And the winds keep on buzzing.

Industrial history emphasizes change. Its traditional version exploits the theory of evolution manufactured into a variety of instruments, always promoting progress in terms of development that suggest the new is better. Existentialism has cast doubt on the idyllic 'new'. It also opens up the dogmatic and manipulative past to criticism. The present becomes central, as it is the point of retrospection, introspection, and problematic experiences. Somehow, history has shifted from a record keeping exercise to a study of problems and solutions, even biographical narratives are written as stories of political struggles and victories. In any event, history is nostalgic. Despite striving for the truth by emphasizing the fact, history is always about sadness, disenchantment, glorification, and jubilation. But we cannot talk about any of these in exact terms. History is interpretation of events, like a rendition of a song, or an adaptation to another tune.

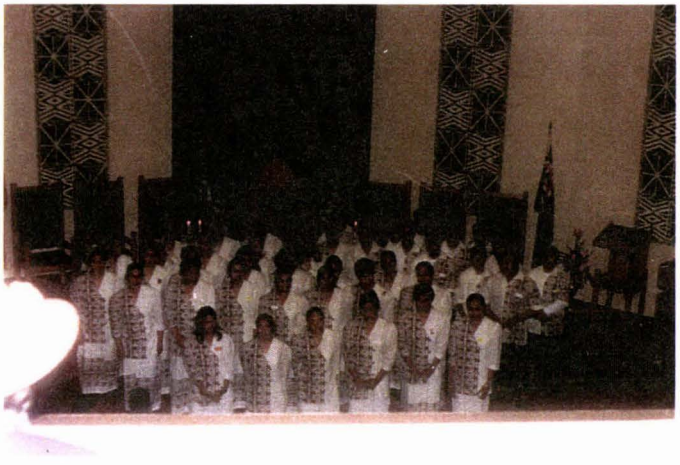
Choosing to look at the history of the Wellington CCCS through pride and faith, is simply the reason that both hurt and healing, the causes of disappointment and gratification, both were and are discouraging and enabling. Like the winds, they blow but remain; they remain but new.

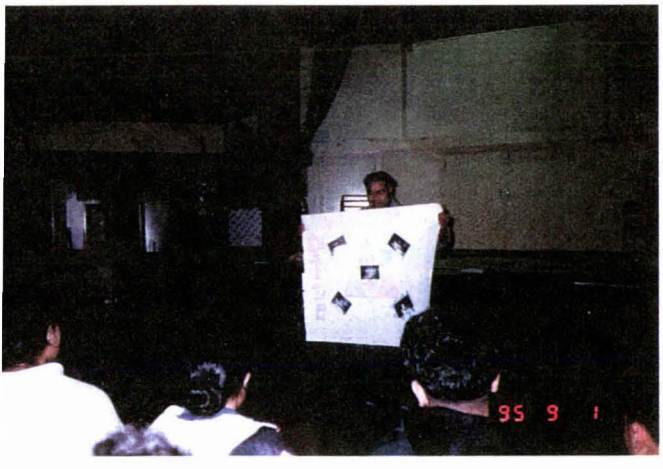
Wandering voices in the air
And murmurs in the world
Speak what I cannot declare,
Yet cannot all withhold.

But the meanings cleave to the lake,
Cannot be carried in book or urn;
Go thy ways now, come later back,
On waves and hedges still they burn.

(From "My Garden" by R.W.Emerson)


POSITIVELY
WELLINGTON





CHAPTER FOUR: THE PRESENT TUNE.

'Oa'oa i faleseu, ae sa'a i ma'a o malie.
[Enriched in a catcher's shelter, and dancing on the rock of gratification]

Introduction

> In token that this building has been erected for the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa in Wellington, New Zealand, I deliver to you the keys thereof and pray you now to dedicate this building to the worship and service of Almighty God.[60]

The above words were read by Mr.Chris Kay of Gabites Porters and Partners Building Company at the beginning of the Dedication Service of Church and Hall, 20 June 1984. *"It was a different feeling on the day. I had a different feeling,"* lay-preacher Muagututi'a Tauafiafi emphasised.

We stand proud among others when we become what we are. We become what we are in what we do. This chapter is about the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa (CCCS) Wellington, at present.

The twin Samoan *Fale* shaped Church and Hall, joined by a simple deck-like structure, stand distinguished at 172-180 Owen Street, Newtown. A frontal view from a fair distance presents an impression of the double-*alia* in sails. Early Christian mission in the Pacific was closely associated with the boat. Samoans speak endlessly of the Gospel-Culture double-canoe[61] that identifies and shapes the Samoan way of life. Alternatively expressed by Falefitu Afoa,[62] the twin buildings initially appeared '*like the breasts of [the Queen of] Sheba.*' It is now the nurturing centre of this Samoan community in Wellington.

Wellington: New and Old.

Wellington is an urban jungle but the capital of New Zealand promoted 'absolutely positively Wellington' despite being 'the windy city'. In the 1970s, high-rise buildings began to invade its skyline. Many are homes now of political and entrepreneurial brain-piths of New Zealand society. They grew in height as in number, likewise in function and influence.

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[60] Dedication Service Program, 1984

[61] In Samoan, *"E va'ava'a lua le Talalelei ma le Aganu'u."* The Gospel and Culture sail together.

[62] An impression he shared with others jokingly before the real shape unfolded.

Suburban settlements near and in the outskirt areas of Wellington region have been expanding extensively since the 1960s. Newtown is an old suburb. It grew rapidly, and consequently, became widely known for its social ills as its physical appearance deteriorated somewhat. A long overdue facelift of the shopping center in 1999 removed old dented concrete walls and wriggled windowframes from sight. Adding in restoring a degree of aesthetic dignity are renovated homes, spreading vibrantly around the area like thick undergrowth to lofty modern buildings. Newtown reflects the new-old mix face of Wellington.

Around the city, the burgeoning new, alongside but not really overtaking the old, is readily noticed in the contrast of buildings. Colonial icons in the old Museum like the Railway Station, stand rather monotonously solid in distinction to the Te Papa National Museum on the waterfront. The contrast between Old and New St. Paul Cathedrals, or the Beehive next to the old Parliament Building, or the Michael Fowler Centre adjacent to the Old Town Hall further indicate innovative and renovative processes going on in Wellington, physically and aesthetically.[63] Each building holds its own character, its own beauty, and its own significance in the orchestra of colonial, decolonised, and postcolonial architecture.

Some features disappeared forever. The 'old bomb' car on Wellington streets in the 1970s has vanished. Fordism transformed New Zealand traffic and life in many ways. By the late 1960s, Japanese brands led by Toyota infiltrated the New Zealand roads. Parking-meters parades and multi-story car parks followed. Only a few remnants of old transport are seen in Wellington today. Out in the suburbs where old villas and state houses are common scenery, new technology has invaded the inside. These changes are signs of educational and employment opportunities and needs.

Opening wider these opportunities was behind the free market philosophy driven ideologically by the Labour Government of the 1980s. But the de-welfarism[64] intended by 'rolling back the State' shocked New Zealanders. In aggressively applying "Rogernomics" and overhauling the systemic fabric of New Zealand, the single idea of competition was highlighted to stimulate a shift away from the dependency-syndrome towards a more proactive attitude. It regrettably led more to a 'survival of the fittest' state than one of 'caring'. Libertarian and liberal predilection favoured a less coercive and intervening state in practical ways of applying social

[63] See McKenzie, J. in Wilson, J. 1989 *The Past Today* pp. 154 - 163.

justice and egalitarian principles, to allow and encourage individuals and communities to demonstrate their productive abilities. Self-determination argued on moral grounds of individual responsibility for one's own well being, revived the self-help gospel again.[65] Free market and privatisation became the major policies that was believed would rescue New Zealand from the economic chasm into which it had fallen. The welfare state was blamed as 'hopelessly utopian' for all the economic troubles. Wellington itself as a city and region was to find its own path ahead, and create its own character within the new social and ideological milieu of New Zealand. In the late eighties and early nineties, decisions oscillated between 'hanging on to' and 'letting go of' preferences derived from the past, and having to weigh out the pros and cons of liberalism and neo-liberalism, and their implications within the social democratic political framework. It effected a reformation of New Zealand society.

Minority ethnic groups fortunately found, within the symphony of reforms, some space to play and develop their own tunes wherever and whenever possible. Regarding Pacific Islanders, encouragement for their own initiatives was hinted in the Labour Party Policy '81.

> Pacific Island people, living in New Zealand, have built strong communities, and are concerned to keep their special cultures. The Labour Government will do all it can to support them in this.[66]

Although the Labour Government in recognition of the Treaty of Waitangi gave the partnership doctrine extra political significance, discussions on bi-culturalism gave multiculturalism as much chance for public hearing as well. Only then that the tunes of the Samoans were recognized in dynamic markings, through what they have already established and developed in church communities.

Samoans in Wellington.

Samoans in Wellington in the 1980s went through a time of mixed feelings, not just because of the social and political uneasiness. Technology gradually replaced manual skills thus weeding out wage earners of many years to redundancy. The negative effects on individuals and families were enormous. On the promising side, re-skilling programs for underachievers in schools, plus on-the-job-training schemes,

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[64] Boston, Dalziel, St John [eds] 1999.
[65] ibid; Cheyne, C., O'Brien, M., Belgrave, M. 1998; Peters, M. 2000.
[66] Labour Party Pacific Island Policy 1981 p.3.

provided younger generations chances for better employment prospects. A good number of successful young people went on to gain degrees or better work qualifications. Many are in the workforce and providing for family and community demands. Subsequently, younger generations of Samoans have become assertive in family and church circles, but their views and tastes are different from their seniors. The old and new in this respect have a 'gap'.

Somehow, Samoans in Wellington were not overly perturbed by the gap. The semi-relaxed life of Wellington perhaps was one reason why. Compared to the fast-lane life of much bigger Auckland, the first port of call for new arrivals and fund-raising groups from the Islands, and a much bigger Samoan population, it meant that kinship or cultural obligations did not heavily bombard Samoans in Wellington in a frantic way. Families had more times together, and church groups likewise, had ample time to attend to their own affairs. The church was their voice. The comparatively low Samoan population in Wellington was an obvious disadvantage when embarking on a church building project. Numbers really count.

The Wellington CCCS project was an ambitious one.[67] Notwithstanding, the church stands complete and debt free. The architecture however, though new, is an old shape.

The Wellington CCCS.

Since the late 1990s, the church roll has hardly altered much from about the three hundred-fifty and four hundred mark[68] of which children make up about fifteen percent of the total. People leave and new members join.[69] To be present and mixing with the people on any Sunday is both a privilege and a fascination. They commute from around Wellington by cars[70] to Sunday Services, some from as far as Porirua and the Hutt Valley, in their conventional Sunday-white especially in summer months. The car park can no longer accommodate vehicles, and people disappear after services as quickly as they come. Time has become important.

Entering the church at service time is getting into different space. The touch of the internal instantly alerts. Worship begins at noon every Sunday except on special occasions when a change of time is required. Conducted mainly in Samoan, English

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[67] The final cost according to Rev. Risatisone Ete amounts to NZ$1.7 million

[68] *Api o le Galuega* (Record Book of the Ministry).

[69] ibid. p.110 ff.

[70] In the mid-1980s, only a few families owned cars.

sometimes is thrown in during children's sessions or in sermons when necessary. Well rehearsed music of the sixty to eighty-member choir is always another shade of worship. They sit distinguished in uniform opposite and keeping eyes on the children. The hymns are mostly old familiar tunes sung in a polished manner by the choir with added 'interesting' harmonisation by attendants. Sunday school precedes worship where children are also reminded on how to behave in worship. Usually, adults of distant families bring their children in and stay on for the service. In the interim, they catch up with others on current affairs. It is a common scene on any Sunday to see bunches of males and youths scattering outside enjoying in conversations before and after worship. These are update chances on occurrences around New Zealand and Samoa. Sports dominate conversations and hearing theories on the All Blacks or the Wellington Hurricanes will surprise anyone new by their views. They are fond of creating humour out of any news. Women on the other hand would be engaged in some tasks, otherwise they prefer soft chat at the pews. The volume of information disseminated and discussed on Sundays is high.

Following public worship would be a group meeting or service. The general structure of the congregation can be understood through the groups:

- Sunday School (also the Pastor's School)
- Youth (Junior and Senior)
- Choir
- Mother's Fellowship
- Deacon's Fraternity

Each group operates more or less independently. To add are various committees, the main ones comprising:

- Finance
- Property
- General Purposes Committees

The Board of Trustees and the congregation hold the power of endorsement on important matters. Ensuring cohesion among groups relies heavily on the administrative capacity of the minister, secretary, and treasurer in particular. Their workload is relatively reduced by the fact that adults are involved in more than one group or committee, which hastens communication and avoids misunderstanding. The solidarity of the community is not hard to detect as reflected by the strength of groups operating and guided by the principle of co-operation, but non-interference. But the

mix and overlapping functions makes it hard to pinpoint specifically their area of influence, as responsibilities are often shifted around by delegation or volunteering.

The buildings serve the congregation well in many ways. At least once a month, individual groups hold a function or meeting in either of the buildings. The Deacon's Fraternity for instance meets every last Thursday of the month before the congregation meeting on Sunday. The Mothers' Fellowship has its own days. Prayer meeting is a regular Wednesday evening event, like choir rehearsals on Saturday afternoon. On weekdays, the *A'oga Amata* (early childhood learning), run by the women of the congregation, uses the hall. It is the venue for Samoan pre-school teachers training from around Wellington, facilitated by the wife of the minister, Mrs. Fereni Ete. At certain intervals, it is used as a study centre, or the pastor's school studies,[71] rehearsals for the Children Sunday[72] and Christmas programs, and by the youth groups. The facilities are especially useful when hosting district and sub-district events or any other elaborate occasion at the church.

The Wellington CCCS like many well established modern organisations, is always threatened by the lack of sufficient funds and therefore, financial demands on church members are ongoing. It is vitally important to understand that such demands also guard against the alienation-effect. In the extreme, babies are even included in the demand to donate; otherwise, parents themselves make voluntary donations on their behalf. Primarily, it is an act of publicly identifying one with his/her own family. In the church context, adults do it in the hope that children will continue to do so in the future, to belong and to upkeep the family history within the community. Members and adherents are asked anyway, just as they do in families. It is a matter of free response to the asking. Within the church, 'they become what they are in what they do.' Identity and commitment are inseparable in the Samoan psyche. It is why any contribution is acknowledged - always acknowledged. It is a cultural practice widely criticised in a number of ways, but it has been adopted and retained for equally if not more important reasons. Without this practice, the church project would not and could not have been achieved.

For securing a reliable financial base, the congregation is divided into donor-groups with one Sunday in the month allocated to each for group contribution.

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[71] The *'A'oga Faife'au'* with its own syllabus set from Samoa in Samoan.

[72] Second Sunday in October. Children recite verses from the Bible and perform in plays. It is the day to recognize the children and it seems originally, was a day when children evangelised the old.

- Deacons
- Mothers' Fellowship (including single female)
- Employed
- Male (including children)
- Families.

A female may be a deacon and a working mother and she has to choose her own core group. The maximum expected of individuals is ten dollars. Deacons set twenty dollars as their monthly due. But group boundaries are not strictly observed. Individuals occasionally step out to help other groups and all groups accumulate separate funds of their own that become handy in emergency situations. At such times, a group is either requested to help, or offers assistance voluntarily as they frequently do.[73] While it seems a lot, by rough calculation, a member donates at most twenty dollars per week to the church.

Special donations are not infrequent. For use of the premises, donations are welcomed from outsiders and member families of the church. Baptisms, birthdays, anniversaries, graduations, visitors, weddings, leaving the church, are common reasons for extraordinary gifts. Even the dead make parting donations at funerals and/or on anniversary dates. These special donations are significant as they are associated with the stages of an individual's life, and they are 'family' presentations. At times, financial demands are somewhat overbearing.

The running annual budget for operations, remittances, and maintenance of the church can easily exceeds the two hundred thousand dollars total.

Major Payments.
Insurance Premium – for Church and Hall, Manse, other items.
Property Rates
Repairs and new equipment
Electricity and Telephone
Hosting
Major Remittances.
Donations - for the CCCS: Tollage Samoa, Mission Fund, and Christian Endeavor, Vigilant Fund.
- for District (*Matägaluega*) and Sub-district (*Pülega*) purposes
Gifting - visitors, individuals, member-families on certain occasions etc.
Alofa - the stipend of the minister.[74]

The sad story is that, expenditures increase by the year. Some means for generating revenue other than the '*tagi i lima*' (pleading /bleeding of hands) custom is required.

[73] This was quite apparent in the post-Dedication period in paying the loan.
[74] The minister's stipend is not set but depends on family giving on a specified Sunday of the month.

At the base of it all is the family. Most families of the congregation are, by Samoan standards, fairly well placed materially.[75] Grown children now working contribute largely to the welfare of their families. For recent arrivals and young couples who do struggle, moral and material support from relatives and the church family help in their coping and development. Whether in better or poor station, spiritual nurture is vital to family stability and growth. For most families, the church has been, and is, the schoolroom for many lessons to be learned about developmental and safety matters. The church's concern for the family and vice-versa revived and now sustains the strong cultural element of the community. Weddings, birthdays, funerals, involve the church. Customs are a blueprint for these occasions. As for the sick, they are visited by a 'group' of deacons and communicant members (not by an individual church visitor) rostered for each month. It accentuates communal care rather than individual-client relation.

Although spiritual welfare cannot be 'properly' measured, the general contentment within the community suggests good nurturing in this aspect. One can hypothesise on the possibility of 'being used to' as a result of shared understanding developed throughout the years, to be a reason for what might be perceived as sustained equilibrium. This condition reflects the spiritual coming of age of its members in the social world as they relate confidently to the rich cultural and religious diversity of the Wellington environment. Having a chance to observe members' devotion to the course of the church, one may be able to grasp the spiritual state of the congregation by sensing the communal feeling girding their existence as a believing people.

Communality thrives on and relishes the idea of many. Samoans keep reminding themselves *E lë sua se lolo i se popo se tasi* (a single nut cannot produce oil). Just as many hands make light work, many opinions are held to render a better decision. Basically, *O le tagata ma lona äïga* (a person and his/her family) is the emphatic directive for heeding voices of relatives, as widely applied also in the context of the church family. It is believed. It is advised. Yet, the trouble of 'too-many' voices and noises often seeps in, sometimes quite destructively. The history of the church building project reflects a fair degree of single-mindedness from the planning stage to final payment that thus avoided the 'too-many' impediment.

[75] Notwithstanding, socio-economic analysis of society will place the majority of families in the lowest class. Church families (*matäfale*) may be nuclear or extended.

But now in their catcher's shelter, within a rather burgeoning environment, the congregation continues to face more challenges and benefits too. And they are dancing, with them, through them, because of them.

Facing the Future.

Like any church in New Zealand, the CCCS is imported. Planted in New Zealand, it is in Samoa so to speak. While it provides a comfort zone for its members, the church is nonetheless facing tremendous pressures constantly. The Wellington CCCS exists in the old-new continuum, wrestling with the dualism of the Samoan way and the New Zealand way, their past, and present. The juggling process goes on. New or old ways are checked against convictions of members, the capability of the congregation, the practicality of any strategy, value concept, or understanding, for acceptance. For instance, in Samoa, there are two formal worship-services each Sunday. This is not practical for the Wellington CCCS so that its Sunday program is vastly different from that of any church in Samoa. Modifications are inevitable but not at the expense of the Samoan-ness of things they consider and do.

The Wellington CCCS is symbolic of the 'new as the old' in one sense, but a church that has to continually find a pathway in the mixture. There is the need for ongoing adjustment, yet members are watchful that adjustments do not sell out its identity. As well, keeping the fundaments of faith in the midst of theological rethinking, or insisting on the traditional form of worship while tastes are pointing at alternative styles, is more than a challenge; it begs the forgetting of traditional practices and beliefs. As a social organization, it eliminates or modifies what may threaten its survival. Recently, the congregation decided to do away with elaborate Samoan cultural presentations found burdensome to its members. The question now is how its Samoan-ness could be preserved in the face of needed changes. Confronting the common issue of traditionalism, the congregation will continue to compromise and improvise. It poses the problem of governance[76] and nature of the church with regard to cultural memory, or Samoan self-understanding,[77] as authority and authentic reference. Reverend Risatisone Ete was pensive about it when we talked in the vestry:

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[76] See Huffer, E. & Soo, A. 2000 for discussions on facets of governance.

[77] Ioka, D. Ph.D. Thesis, 1997, pp.5-18. He used 'Samoan-mind' with the same connotation suggesting that any Samoan is conditioned by the *fa'aSamoa* and its Biblical-culture.

My opinion as of now, if the present [younger] generations are not well looked after (nurtured) for the future, it is difficult for the [Samoan] Church to exist here [in New Zealand]... this is what I know. It means, this is a great burden that ministers are carrying today. I don't know about the others, but as I believe and endeavour to attain, there should be a huge impact of the church within the Samoan way of life and Samoan culture, on the lives of the [younger] generations living here. Because if that impact is insufficient [to impress] on the children as they head into the future, it is hard for the Samoan Church to survive here. Probably the children will change the church to another one. What method they will employ we can never tell now. So, it seems a challenge for us ...to fully prepare the younger generations for the future...because they will never be able to stick with the Congregational Church [of Samoa] without their commitment to the church, without knowing what the Samoan Church is all about.

Of the suggestion *e ta'avili le lalolagi ae tumau fa'avae* (the world rotates but foundations remain); that there is a commonwealth of literature on Samoa available and more to come; that ethnicity-talk will stimulate the sense of belonging for recourse in the thinking of the young generations, to remain or return to the Samoan Church, Rev. Risatisone Ete is not fully confident.

It seems the church is the medium that survives the Samoan culture here. That is my belief...it's the church. It seems the church has become the village, like any in Samoa... No matai (titled person) is recognized here except in the church. There, his/her honouring addresses (fa'alupega) and cultural dignity is exercised, in congregations, in the church. Sitting at home, no one will recognize him/her. People are recognised here it seems, because of their participation in church affairs and in occasions like dedications of church buildings, church district meetings, and this and that. Even the relation with the government, I think it is the church through which the government relates to Samoan people most of the time. It is here [church] that many who are working in the church and the government become known. So the church has a

great responsibility here. I am thankful myself that the EFKS[78] *was established here in New Zealand. True that there are other half-Samoan and half-Palagi congregations, but they do not really (though partly) represent the culture and the Samoan way of life.*

The major concern for him is the future of the church. It is a genuine concern too, given the winds of change and orientations of young generations of Samoans.

But should we look on the other side, there is a challenge. We are trying to firmly hold the church inside the culture, and the Samoan way of life, so that it would thrive in the lives of the young ones, which is good, which is what should be, what should be happening. On the other hand, we ought to be mindful of the locus, of the environment, in which people live and in which our children are living [regarding] the influence of the fa'apapälagi (european) way of life, and the fa'apapälagi culture itself. The fear is that, if we hold fast [to the fa'aSamoa] and bring up our children to be like us, it is a mistake in my view. [79] *We ought to look also at the needs of the younger generations within the New Zealand environment, and the fa'apapälagi way of life where the English language is widely used. Not only that, but [to understand] the trend the work of the [Wider] Church is following, and how the church operates. Numerous changes are evident but are not found in the Samoan Church. The challenge is: How can we make the best of both worlds, at once? We have recaptured our culture and attempt to retain it. But we need to make allowance for the needs of the younger generations today, yet retain the culture within that allowance. Can that be done? That is the question. How can that be done? We fear the trend of the young generations [presumably away from the Samoan Church] which is not being accommodated within the other trend, of new churches heading towards us, which the young are happy to head towards...How can they be retained here while that [fa'aSamoa?] is not what they want?*

[78] Samoan for CCCS: Ekalesia Fa'apotopotoga Kerisiano Samoa
[79] Underline is mine.

The fault perhaps is inadequate elucidation on the Samoan Church and aspects of the Samoan culture to give the young meaning.

> *The big question, Is there anything being done for the young? ...[Also], is there a keenness shown by the young to demand: We want to get this [understanding] of our culture; or, we are eager to know this now, to prepare us for the future. This is another problem. Nothing is done in the manner as you (author) suggested and the depth you think it should be presented to the young, to inform them, and prepare them from now to face the way to the future. I accept that that should be done. That is why I said before, this is the time for the Church to prepare the young...for to them will we hand over the Samoan Church. And when handing over, it should already be instilled in their lives and their systems, their whole minds, the way this Church had traveled. This is the value of this exercise you are engaged in now, because most of the young have no knowledge of the church before the church building. They do not understand the path that the church had to trundle. And this is the significance of what you are doing - for them to learn from when they read it....*

In the 1990s, members of the junior youth were visible and vocal in signalling their difference, by exhibiting their charismatic tendency mingled with the New Zealand way ideology. It spread some panic in the church as 'young power' was thrust at the face of the older generation. Older members were not instantly aware that it originated from outside, from a 'born again' Samoan students' group at Victoria University, which somehow adopted a militant strategy for ethnic inclusion. 'A Samoan is a Christian' was the slogan, but their Christian ideals were not compatible with values of the older generation. Meaningful negotiations will continue healthily only if there is a readiness for everyone to rediscover the background expectations as to why the church was established in the first place. External influences will constantly invade the Wellington CCCS in more ways to shadow the memories, and such knowledge, like lofty buildings of Wellington City over the old ones, to regard them as sediments of the past, irrelevant to the present and future. Forgetting will be greatly regretted. Writing about settlers, Stephen Turner aptly suggests:

> The cultural history of the settler is neither British nor European, nor properly indigenous, and depends on actively acknowledging or engaging with history. The danger of forgetting is that history too will be zoned, plotted and fenced off – picketed history – leaving settlers with no feeling for the processes of settlement that are foundation for the distinctiveness of their cultural situation.[80]

Slicing up the history of settlement occurs when a section of the population does not understand how the present came to be. Younger and future generations have no vivid experience of the church in the past, much of the reason why it is more likely that they will find it less important to them. Snippets of history will not help them either in really grasping the reasons and motives of their parents and elders, for establishing and growing the church to what it is now.

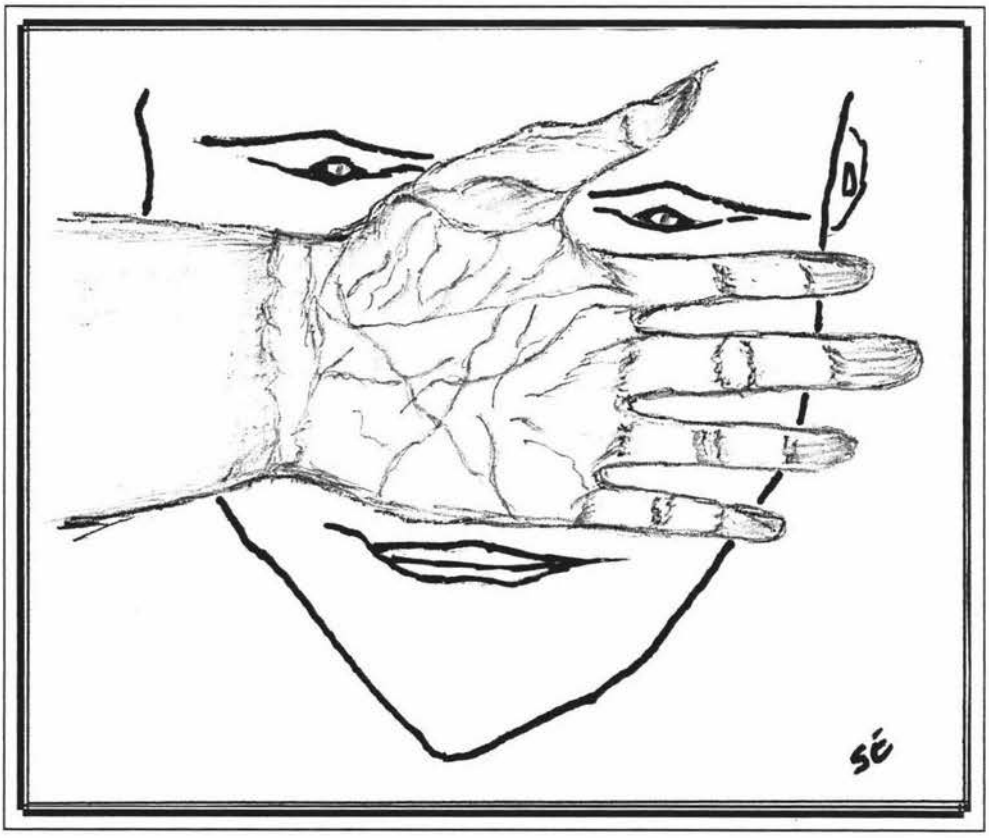
Wellington CCCS, because of its deterritorialised nature, is in the crossroad of times and cultures. Wellington and Newtown have not and cannot be cut off from the history of the church; it is where it came to being and situated. Its people have a different historical experience that could only be shared through their stories. The past becomes profound even more if the experience is made explicit for understanding how invaluable the endeavours of past and present members had been. It provides essential reflective learning for motivation, focus, coping skills, and power of endurance.

Conclusion.

Among the urban changes of Wellington, the Wellington CCCS came to achieve a historical milestone in its Project and becoming more involved in institutional and societal acrobatics as part of its new growth. Whilst enjoying the freedom of being an autonomous well-organised community, the reality of 'the bigger the dearer' impelled the extension of its interests beyond the parameters of primary concerns. It is essential for grasping the dynamics of society in order to participate in the wider socio-economic spaces, to exploit and influence for its own good. It is practically set, structurally and operationally at present, moulding its own culture as described herein, and reflecting a more stable faith community. Yet, the new is rising high all the time and together with the pace of change, has already forced the Church today into a mobile one, not just in terms of population movement, but also in terms of beliefs, values, and tastes. It results in a prompt of internal management expediency

[80] Neumann et. al., 1999 p.32

on two fronts: in the structural mechanics of institutional control, and in the communal social infrastructure of the cultural-religious admixture for generative purposes. Financial commitments have multiplied and are increasing still, but structural control cannot generate revenues or meaning, much of the reason why the understanding of cultural and religious phenomena is important for ensuring a strong social foundation, upon which all else is dependent. Traditions are not necessarily old for everyone; the newness of the old must be made accessible. The old and the new may only be a difference and not an implication of the supremacy of one or the obsolescence of the other. Understanding this is more than just realising it to be crucial; it is the source of meaning. As 'lost meaning - lost commitment' is the current worry, the resilient faith of the founders and those who persevered so devoutly to grow, and consolidate the Church, has to be told and retold every now and then. Through these stories, even fragments of them, will to some extent provide a feel and stimulation for the imagination of the young, and future generations, to be stretched into the past, and only then, the present will perhaps become duly appreciated. *The past does not come to restrain; it comes to bring hope.*



CHAPTER FIVE: THE PAST: VOICES IN A FOREIGN PLACE.

Ua mapu i falematü saunoaga,
ae ta'oto i laoa le ütaga.
[The word rests in safety dwellings but
steering lies in the house of thoughts]

Introduction.

Language, traditions, values, beliefs, knowledges, and theories carry the past into the present. Some fade into oblivion either forgotten about, or being made idle. Others are substituted, modified or removed. However, it is hard to erase any when the present revolves around the past, when the past is a latent force, a reference, the way into the future; and despite not being encouraged to remember, yet the past is somehow captivating, swirling, inter-twinning in the life of a community, even one detached from its land-base. In new lands of settlement, people tend to continue doing what is continually done in their homelands.

Initially, Samoan communities abroad were not merely relocating institutional-models. They negotiated them through 'thorn and bush' experiences in a foreign landscape. As in the case of the Wellington CCCS like many others, the church structure did not constitute a community. It was the beginning of self-discovery, and going through rough patches, it remembered. But as this chapter will argue, the Samoan Church was/is going to be what Samoans in Wellington were to make of it.

Once were no people.

Loneliness is not obscured in Emele-Moa T. Fairbairn's[81] brief account of her early days in Wellington. The scarcity of Samoans was a fact of life. Her family moved to New Zealand in 1943 when husband Ian Fairbairn found work with the Internal Affairs in Wellington. "We were the only Samoans in Kilbirnie and it seemed like we knew every Samoan in Wellington, and New Zealand." She joined the Salvation Army at Kilbirnie. It was near and there was no Samoan Church. Tolo Bernard would be one of the few Samoans in Wellington. Tolo did not ever visit Samoa again once he left, until his death in 1996 his nephew Eteuati[82] told me. So too

[81] Fairbairn-Dunlop, P. 1996 p.37-38
[82] Eteuati resides at Island Bay. Mr. Bernard's funeral was at the Funeral Parlour Chapel, Kilbirnie. Twelve only people attended. Single in his life, not a Church member, he ignored his family as well.

Talosaga Gilbert the City Council bus-driver. Others were 'scholarship students' who knew that they would return after studies. Karanita Enari said he and his flat-mates (Herbert Clarke, Albert Wendt, Mamoe Lauaki, Neroni Slade) occasionally attended the Methodist Church at Taranaki Street where a few Samoans were worshipping, but mainly to expect an invitation to a good Sunday meal.[83] Then, "we heard about a Pacific Islanders' Church up there at Newtown." Emele Fairbairn also mentioned the LMS Church at Kent Terrace. By 1980, Samoans and Samoan Churches became a feature of Wellington. "Go to Church" was/is the voice from the distance of parents and ministers on farewell nights; of great-grand-parents, family and village *matai* who 'are lying in the ever-darkness' (*ua ta'atitia mai sägapouli*) of family grounds.

Samoan migration to New Zealand became a growing phenomenon in the 1960s due to the demand for labour-workers.[84] Seti Fiti was lucky "*because my former boss at Treasury in Samoa was able to find a bookkeeping job for me when he came over.*" Now retired, Seti looks after invoices accounts of the Wellington CCCS. Many Samoans like Heine Forsythe,[85] a New Zealand welter weight boxing champion, and Luätua, currently senior Elder of the Pacific Island Church, Porirua, worked at the wharf. The wages were much better then. Others manned the labour forces of factories and freezing works, some, bus-drivers. The 'migration-chain' perpetuated the kin-system through individuals paying passages of relatives over.[86] Immigration criteria were young and energetic, able to speak some English, able to pay the fare. So many came single, male and female alike. Young families were also possible to be relocated over. Erik Olsen and Marcia Stenson [87] wrote of the motives of early British settlers in New Zealand which were/are true of Samoans also.

> Certainly the desire to better their circumstances was an important motive for most of the new settlers...Some came just to make their fortunes quickly, hoping then to return...Most hoped for a chance to improve their material circumstances and to live in more comfort.

[83] See Netina's story in Fairbairn-Dunlop ibid pp 131-135
[84] Spoonley, Macpherson, Pearson, Sedwick [eds] 1984 pp. 107-110.
[85] K. Enari on Heine Forsythe in our conversation at Vaiala December 2001: "He would be on the bus to work in a three-piece suit, hat, and a satchel. He changed at the bus stop to his working overall and walked to the wharf." Heine returned home a long time ago.
[86] Fairbairn-Dunlop ibid. pp. 38 & 40.
[87] 1989 p.100

But Samoans have an added agenda: to better circumstances of families back home, hence their social status.[88]

There was no intention among Samoans themselves, let alone a systematic plan as in the Wakefield Plan,[89] to build a Samoan community. Although state housing was of great help in the initial period of settling, Lealaile'auloto N. Tiatia[90] who arrived in 1971 shook his head in bemoaning the constant threat of eviction. The New Zealand economy was deteriorating in the 1970s[91] inevitably affecting the family budget tremendously, and for Samoans who have extra remittances to home and Church, their situation was far from being promising. Single and in Wellington in the 1960s, Galugalu Salesulu and Mere were probably better off than those who came a decade later. When they got married, "*the first wedding in the* [CCCS Wellington] *Church*" Salesulu claimed, they instantly faced the idea of family and what it entailed. A year after their wedding, Muagututi'a and Si'usega Tauafiafi bought a $15,000 home at Newlands in 1973. Whenever possible, Samoans would buy homes and seldom moved elsewhere.

***Fa'alavelave* and Social Dislocation.**

During the sixties and seventies, wages were reasonably good. Collective bargaining allowed in the General Wage Order of the Arbitration Court helped Samoans whose only influence in negotiations, perhaps, was being a number of a disenchanted group. Muagututi'a Tauafiafi worked for a 'very small wage' of $15 a day to start with in a car factory but said, earning $300 a week was not unusual. On our way to golf one afternoon, I chatted with John Martin[92] who before then, often told me stories about Samoans working in a bulb factory at Miramar. He was an accountant for the company in the seventies when "about eighty of the ninety workers were Samoans. They were hard working people." I asked about the wages. "They earned good money - $500 a week," and was quick to add, "lots of overtime."[93]

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[88] A corrugated-roof house has been expected of any family with someone in New Zealand. Now it's a vehicle. See also O'Meara 1990 p. 5. A third of Samoa's national income is from outmigrants.

[89] ibid. p. 102 They would not have the capital to buy land. Besides, the hybridized character of New Zealand society was the promoted paradigm in the 1970s against separatist tendencies. But mainly, Samoana came from different parts of Samoa and different villages. Village communities exist in New Zealand as Registered Organisations. They respond to home village requests.

[90] He arrived with wife and five children and rented at Newtown. He is a deacon of the Church.

[91] See MacRobie, A. and Hawke, G. in Rice, G. W. [ed] 1989. Both referred to the floatable economy of the 1960s. Hawke believed that 'senior officials and informed commentators' knew by the end of the decade, that post-war economic structures were not going to work (p.436).

[92] Mr. Martin is an Elder at the Khandallah Presbyterian Church, Wellington.

[93] See also Fairbairn-Dunlop ibid.p.40

Chances of time-and-a-half, double-time, and triple-time work, Samoans would grab thankfully, not letting go of a bonus performance either. Longer hours were not a problem as long as the pay-envelope was thick. Some had two or three jobs. New Zealand's economy was better compared to Australia, Europe, and Japan then,[94] and could afford to pay the extra hours, but in 1975, charges on essential services were increased by fifty percent.[95] Unemployment reached five thousand and it grew rapidly to over twenty two thousand in 1978. As a consequence, a good number of Samoans were on the dole and a social class emerged *'o le 'au-penefiti'* (the benefit-lot), ridiculed, sometimes with utmost condescension from their own peers. New arrivals joined the 'lot', some for a much longer period than anticipated.

The financial liability of the growing population was a state concern, but was felt by Samoans in another context - *fa'alavelave* - in occasions of funerals, weddings, and fundraising. Especially in the 1980s with more relatives in New Zealand than previously, adding to mate-relationships through work, the pub, and sports, it meant that there were more remittances in terms of kinship obligations, or conscience giving. These occasions became frequent, giving rise to the slogan 'too much', uttered musically like, in an accented elongated tone. But *fa'alavelave* was here to stay.

One meaning of *fa'alavelave* (trouble) was reflected in Samoa with a New Zealand cause, in the cases of *Tariu vs Falelatai* 1982, and the *Fagaloa* killing 1994.[96] In both cases, the victims defied village-will. Both had been living in New Zealand for sometime and shown by their attitudes, they had assimilated the individualistic-capitalistic mentality with a clear view of right and wrong based on property ownership rights. Though not in the same degree as was manifested in the two mentioned cases, which illustrated the conflict in ways of thinking, the

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[94] Rice, ibid. p. 449.

[95] ibid. p.393. Included were: postal charges, electricity, rail, transport, reduced subsidies for milk and bread, freight and transport by a 22% rise in petrol price. Labour wage increased by 3% only.

[96] Tariu of Matautu village at Falelatai was a bus-owner who would not contribute to anything pertaining to his village interest. He continued servicing and doing repair works on the buses on Sundays which was quite noisy. Tariu was instructed by the village council to cease his Sunday public disturbance. Tariu said he was working on his own land and continued his Sunday labour. As a result of his defiance, he was excommunicated from the village and additionally, no one of the village was to travel on his buses. Tariu sued the village council for jeopardising his business interest. There was a series of serious events. It brought about a clash between the legal system and the village council decision headed by a Judge.

The Fagaloa murder concerned a head *matai* of a family and village of Lona. He returned to Samoa from New Zealand and established himself as a shop owner in his village. He defied village conditions besides not attending village meetings. He antagonised his nephews by claiming family land on which the latter had been working on while he was in New Zealand, and treated it as private property. Being a

disjunction of the *fa'aSamoa* (Samoan way) and *fa'aNiu Sila* (New Zealand way) still exists in various forms among Samoans in New Zealand.[97]

Before 1980,[98] Samoans enjoyed much more liberty away from social constraints and demands of *fa'aSamoa*, relishing greatly the chance to develop on one's own terms. New Zealand's industrial culture offered the opportunity for those who had an eye for material improvement, to a degree that was not possible in Samoa. In the same period, Samoans were generally relating as equals as cultural status was well smothered by a lot of things. Only a very small number in New Zealand had *matai* titles, and those who had titles were reluctant to be recognised as such. Many would not consider to become one. Parents therefore were more able to focus on the nuclear family and future development than on figuring out genealogies and associated rights within traditions. The latter was left to relatives in Samoa. The negative side was the gradual loss of cultural-taste and cultural-memory.

New Zealand had enormous space, geographically, socially, and resource-wise, compared with the village enclosures Samoans were used to. Freedom and luxury was therefore a *fa'alavelave* (problem). Criminal behaviour among Samoans is a familiar issue, which can be seen as a manifestation of what Freudians might attribute to cultural repression. But the arm of the law in Samoa was never long enough simply because the village was/is mostly responsible for setting norms and supervision of appropriate behaviour. Without any law, there is no crime. So Samoans considered some of their actions not illegal; they never were in Samoa. Despite that, there was a tacit rule of commonsense - one ought to know better – to learn and adjust to the *fanua ma le tapu a fanua* (land and the *tapu* of the land)[99] as a reminder that 'wherever you are, remember where you are.' Samoans young and old were constantly caught in the Hamletian *fa'alavelave* of trying to work out the 'nobler thing' within the New Zealand legal framework of 'rights' and 'wrongs', to which they were not accustomed or knew much about. On the other hand, the juvenile delinquent problem in Auckland 1986 exposed the limit of law enforcement.

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matai of high status, he exercised his authority much more than people could accept, and it led to his demise. See also Va'a in Huffer and So'o [eds] 2000 pp. 158-161.

[97] Tiatia, J. 1998, *Caught Between Cultures* is a good text on this.

[98] Three reasons for this date: Samoan Churches were yet to have pronounced impact. 2. Transport to and from Samoa was not as frequent. 3. Not yet in a commercial mode of thinking, financial demands from home were modest.

[99] See Appendix II p.156 This perhaps contributed also to assimilation and eventual colonisation of the person.

Young Pacific Islanders, mostly Samoans in the age group of ten to thirteen from all over Auckland, converged at the city early in the evenings to hunt down their common opponents. The Police imposed a curfew but could not enforce it and the assistance of Pacific Islanders' Churches was enlisted to deal with the situation. After three nights of policing, no children were to be seen in their nocturnal preying exercise. In Wellington, Social Services Agencies such as the *Samoa Atia'e* (Wellington), *Folau Alofa* (Petone) and *Taeao Manino* (Porirua) were formed to deal with Samoans unwarranted behaviour.

The problem was much deeper. On the night in 1965 that Mike Leui'i won the New Zealand light-heavyweight title from Siliga Toelupe, the new champion was served deportation papers there and then at the ring for having overstayed his permit. He later spent the night at the police cell, and was on the next available flight home. It should not go without mentioning the mark Samoan sports people have made in New Zealand. This story concerning Mike Leui'i, who was at the mercy of the law without support, tells something of what Samoans in the sixties and seventies dreaded most. Any Samoan was always at the risk of being arrested and many were. It was one thing to be free from the watching eye of culture and traditions; it was another to experience the absence of support when needed.

Many would be conscious of this every day. Single Samoan women for instance would be worrying about their security that the *äïga* umbrella, their shade from danger, was missing. Paula. S. Masoe reflected on her past.

> *I came to New Zealand in 1961 an eighteen-year old girl. I had wanted to do many things in Samoa [meaning she was a rebel] but I can't. Now I can. Then I realized I no longer had the security of parents, of brothers, the family and the village. I was on my own and I had to decide for myself. All of a sudden, I became an adult.*[100]

If Paula was caught a young person, Oscar Kitely's play *Fresh Off the Boat* brought to attention the problem of an uncle lost in the wide space of New Zealand. He enjoyed much too much social life yet keeps expecting his niece to do what he likes. He comes

[100] Paula Masoe is a Family Therapist with the Taeao Manino Social Services, Porirua. The excerpt is taken from her talk (2001) at the Workingmen's Club, Petone, when addressing the Samoan Ministers' Fraternity in Wellington on the issue of Domestic Violence.

to realize that his niece is not the Samoan he thinks she should be, and the tension mounts between them. Distant from the gaze of traditions, he forgets, even in the short time he has been to New Zealand.

Certainly language was/is a major *fa'alavelave* (impediment). A popular joke of the 1950s spread in Samoa in different versions, originated in New Zealand. Here is my version. With good intention, a Samoan coached his relative who spoke no English for his first day at work. 'Yes' was easy enough to say and remember, and he advised the relative that whatever the boss would tell him to do, say 'Yes'. Arriving at work the boss said 'Good morning' and he parroted his yes. 'How are you?' Yes. 'And your name is?' Yes. After a few more questions and the same answer, the boss got frustrated and asked, "Do you want me to kick your ar...?" Yes. He got it as well as the sack. The moral of the joke: Samoans had to learn the English language to survive. The factories, the wharf, the buses, the offices, the pubs, were the schools; listening and watching were their learning methods.

A common joke of the sixties among Samoans in New Zealand was the 'Two Sections' joke.[101] After several trips into a shopping area with his relative sponsor, a recent arrival was well instructed on his first trip alone, to tell the driver 'one section', and he would get off onto familiar ground. A few more trips on his own made his confidence grow and he learned more. The other day, he climbed onto the bus and said "Two sections please." He never came back. Feeling confident with the mastery of English, some went into the vastness of New Zealand life. The joke is the unsaid part – 'until one got into *fa'alavelave*' - of any kind.

The typecast joke by comedian Eteuati Ete at a gathering of Samoans at Victoria University[102] has another angle. The stereotypes were the New Zealand-born-Samoan, and Samoan-born-Samoan, working at MacDonalds. The New Zealand-born in a polite tone serving the customer, "Hello! How are you...How can I help you?" After packing the order, handed over, he said, "Here you are. Enjoy your meal. Have a nice day." The Samoan-born has a stiff voice. "Hello! What do you want?" Ready to pack the order, he turned around and asked, "Do you want to have me here or take me home?" (Do you want to have it here or take it home?). The language deficit prevails,

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[101] Three people told me the same joke: Papali'i P. Taouma, Galumalemana A. Hunkin, Tuala K. Enari, all were in New Zealand in the 1960s.

[102] The Launching of Tupua Tamasese Efi's book "*O le ma talanoaga ma Ga'opo'a*" (My Conversation with Ga'opo'a) at Victoria University, December 2001.

but it is an identity joke that reflects 'difference' within bounds. As will be reflected by the story of the Wellington CCCS in the following chapters, internal differences and conflicts were, for a length of time, especially hampering the intentions and chances of its anticipated development.

Community Awakening.

It would be too far-fetched to harbour a view of progressive social dislocation as may be inferred from the above, that led to a surge of community sentience. Communal living as Pacific Islanders were used to, was always at the back of their minds, and naturally, Samoans would seek ways to re-establish communities to meet their psychosocial needs. The Church was the best available means.

As early as 1954, LMS and Congregational Churches of Pacific Islanders existed in a small scale. Samoans gathered on their own at Kent Terrace for worship. Papa Tariu Teia, the Cook Island minister who founded the congregation at Newtown, included Lilieni Poutoa and her brother who were Samoans, in his extended household.[103] The amalgamation of the two congregations later on may be explained in terms of affinity-gravitation,[104] indicating a missing aspect of their way of life in which a bigger size congregation was much preferred. The increase of many Samoan Church communities today in New Zealand invariably points at another extension of an awakening that resided in them all along. Lumping ethnic and denominational identities in the Pacific Islanders Church under the Congregational Union in 1958, and the Presbyterian Church oversight since 1969,[105] it was only a matter of time before the convergence would diverge again. From a social-psychological perspective, affinity-refinement[106] may explain this preference. But I argue, it has not been a clear edge-cutting process that gets longer and longer. Rather, it was a swirling process of human circumstances that deterritorialised Samoans had to encounter and work through in attempts to recover, or recreate suitable situations to cater for their various needs. It led to the adoption of a more fitting and rather relevant social worldview that was meaningful to them. Yet again, because of socialization in their

[103] Tangi Ngaro, a Cook Islander, provided this information before his death in 2000 in conversations with him and wife Vaine. He was the young boy of Papa Tariu's household.
[104] Based on similarities.
[105] Pacific Islanders were London Missionary Society (LMS) people. First they were put under the Congregational Church, then later the Presbyterian. This certainly was nipping Pacific Islanders communities and bringing them under the religious culture of New Zealand.
[106] When similarities are narrowed down.

new territories, it could only lead to enculturation, particularly of views and way of thinking on certain material and social interests.

In the 1970s, with social, economic, and immigration problems widening the void in them, they then just lived on hoping for the better and awaiting streaks of *taeao*. The Wellington CCCS is one strand. The 'awakening' is linked to the *fa'alavelave* consciousness within which Samoans were wrapped. They came to enjoy excess freedom from the constraining grip of the Samoan way of life, but their situation had not been all that comfortable.

Wellington CCCS: The Beginning.

Galugalu Salesulu happened to read about the official opening of the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa in a newspaper, and he attended the first service on Sunday 25 June 1965.[107] It was held at the Christian Revival Centre, Vivian Street. Rev. Elder Minister Siaosi Ieriko from Auckland presided and inducted some deacons to look after the congregation.

Lene Leilua was one of the deacons. He and his family were *taulämua* (initiator) who spearheaded the move away from the Pacific Islanders Church (PIC). The group would include his brother-in-law Tuileva Pilitati. In his report on the second anniversary of the Church in 1967, Lene Leilua however referred to Aripa Elisara as another person who was in initial discussions for starting the Church.[108] Aripa Elisara's part in the process was vital because others withdrew when the 'tough got going.'[109]

From the time of the establishment of the CCCS in 1963, the cleft among Samoans in Auckland had widened between those who remained in the Pacific Island Church (PIC), and the so called dissidents who had established two congregations in Auckland. The majority in the Pacific Island Church would make any attempt to prevent the spread of the new one. When the opening date of the Wellington CCCS became known, a mission to abort was designed for which purpose, Setu Solomona was sent down by the PIC Samoan Ministers Fraternity in Auckland, to accomplish.[110] The CCCS group from Auckland consisting of Rev. Siaosi Ieriko, Sola Brown,

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[107] The date recorded in the Ministry Record Book p.3 is 26 June 1965. Ioka (ibid p.303) recorded 27 June 1965. If a Sunday, then it would be the 25 June 1965 as Salesulu stated.
[108] Ministry Record Book p.5 noted by Rev. Puni Leota.
[109] Most of the information I use here is from D.Ioka's Ph.D. Thesis.1997 pp.298-304
[110] The conflict arising out of the establishment of the CCCS in New Zealand is the core of D.Ioka's Thesis.

Mafola Timaloa, and Elder Deacon Apelu Te'o of Fa'atoia Samoa, arrived a day before the opening. But Setu Solomona, who had been in Wellington two days before, had successfully fulfilled his mission on the previous evening and returned jubilant the following day, after blasting[111] the CCCS Auckland delegation. Lene Leilua had withdrawn.

Aripa Elisara[112] heard about the new development and rushed over to voice his disappointment, only to find himself in the company of dejected Aucklanders of the CCCS at Lene Leilua's place. A catholic catechist (probably Lui Sefo)[113] was among them, a friend of Leilua who drove Setu Solomona to the airport earlier on, from whom he learned of the unfortunate situation. Aripa Elisara was adamant that the opening had to take place, but Leilua was unmoved, just apologetic. At which point, the catholic catechist intervened in a touching speech, drawing Leilua's attention to reconsider his *va* (relation) with the Toea'ina (Elder Minister), and with God. He stressed the point that while things appeared oddly untenable, if it was God's will for the Church to grow, it would. Lene Leilua was persuaded eventually and the opening service went ahead on the following day as originally planned. The risk was taken - in the name of God.

Twenty-two original members attended the inaugural service at Vivian Street where Elder Deacon Apelu Te'o delivered the charge address. Those inducted as deacons were Lene Leilua, Aisa Lam, Leota Fili (Field), Aripa Elisara, and Fa'apoi Atoa. The onus was on them as well to conduct Sunday Worship except Communion on the second Sunday of the month. Rev.S.Ieriko or an appointed ordained minister would come down to conduct. Deacons to lead worship? The arrangement was a risky one for all concerned.

Faith or Myth.

Giving in to the direction of a higher mystical power was the ground of possibility thinking for the chosen leaders. That Lene Leilua was persuaded by the incursion of the catholic catechist and Aripa Elisara, is one side of the story. A Samoan who came to New Zealand was a religious person. Christianity has been ingrained in village life since the mid-1800s (but they were always religious). British

[111] See Ioka ibid. p.301 for what Setu Solomona said.
[112] ibid. See footnote 1025 for Elisara's recorded account.
[113] Mentioned in Rev. P.Leota's account.

missionaries who transported the new religion to Samoa were Calvinistic by conviction who advocated salvation of the inner soul,[114] stressing a transformation of personal life to be pure. Samoans on the other hand developed religiously on the experience of *mana*. Central to soul theology is the idea of humans breaking into God's territory (transcendence). By contrast, *mana* theology is God breaking into the human-world (immanence). These two became traditional doctrines of the Church.[115] In a time of uncertainty, one would reflect on the *va*-text of experiences inundated with stories of such experiences. Belief is too much for reason.

The Faith of Tupe (*Le Fa'atuatua of Tupe*) for instance, was a revered authority on the mystical *mana* as I was growing up in the fifties, and was still frequently quoted as an illustration during the following two decades. Although his name seemed forgotten in the nineties, the Tupe Miracle has had an enormous impact on Samoans. It was purely accidental that an eyewitness relayed the story to me in 2000.[116]

Briefly, Elder Pastor Tupe Safa'i of Sato'alepai Savai'i was to commence the open air service on the centennial of Atauloma Girls School in Tutuila. Legalo (a Tokelauan) was a student representative of the Sister School in Upolu, Papauta. Showers were trickling down from thick black clouds hovering above. A downpour was building up and naturally, the crowd rose rolling up the sleeping mats they were sitting on. People were streaming into the building when Tupe yelled, "*Taofi*" (stop);

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[114] Howe, K. R. ibid. pp. 113-117; Mageo, J. 1998 pp.144 –147; Wilson, B. 1982 pp 73-79.

[115] The distinction has to be clearly drawn between the Church as an institution and its ethos, Christianity. Entering into the discourse on religion, one finds that *Lotu* is the same term for both. Llowell Holmes (1974) found no particular place of worship in Samoa (also Howe ibid. p.239) unlike Tahiti, Hawai'i or New Zealand Maori (Elsmore 1989). Wherever Samoans meet for any occasion, they worship. The '*ava* ceremony, *tapua'iga* (praying sessions for protection and better results) are forms of worship. Houses of chiefs and orators are used for such occasions, one reason for regarding them as sacred (*sā*), but they also worship at sea on a fishing excursion or a trip, even on sports field. Non-disparity of the sacred and secular of *Lotu* is worth noting i.e. it is part of the cultural and everyday life. Ioka (op. cit.) elaborated this regarding the Samoan Biblical culture. Howe is of the opinion that Samoans transformed the Christian Church into a Samoan one. "Christianity as a doctrine and the church as an organisation had been assimilated into village life and, to missionaries, this meant that there was far too much local interpretation" (p.243). From the LMS viewpoint, Samoa was to find its own institutional garment for Christianity, and what transpired in posterity was a Church formed within the socio-political cultural context, that "their Christianity was not something imposed on them; rather it has been absorbed, adapted, and given a uniquely Samoan expression" (ibid). I also want to de-construct the Western propagated conversion-mania, or political manipulation or materialistic rationale for the acceptance of Christianity. Samoa grew into Christianity. There are too many parallels in terms of moral codes, theology, and values between the two, and I even go as far as saying, that Christian theology was/is enriched by Samoan beliefs. The language-factor is significant in this area.

[116] She resides at Waiora Street Porirua. She told the story in a casual giggly manner with lots of Hi- Hi breaks and sentences punctuated by 'had you seen' (*se ana e va'ai i ai*).

then he prayed instantly for a fine time. Rain ceased to fall in the area occupied by the gathering, but was pouring down on the periphery, and the service went on uninterrupted. Such like stories of their own experiences were also told in Churches by returned Samoan missionaries to Papua New Guinea. Western thinkers call it the 'God of the gap' theology or the 'God drop' experience, (divine-intervention in legal jargon). The validity of the experience is not the concern here. What is of importance is that this dominant theology of *mana* is what Samoans took into their country of permanent residence abroad, hence the catholic catechist reminder to Lene. The myth of possibilities was/is always an inflection of *mana* and never construed as a 'hand-out', but a directive towards a desirable outlook.

The politics of re-evangelising Samoans in New Zealand, again, is not the focus of this discussion. Importantly, the initiative came from the laity.[117] They initiated faith communities before calling a spiritual leader. In respect of this, I argue that the community became the voice of the church, whereas the institutional character of the church became the organiser. The community-voice was/is that of the people, and not the institution. It was/is the voice of Samoans (not of the Western person) rising out of the emotional elasticity, the contradictions and paradoxes of *fa'alavelave*, out of the risk in coming to New Zealand, in view of possibilities. "What will the future be, I wonder," sang Julie Andrews from the big-screen in the 1960s, in *The Sound of Music*, a film that many Samoans went to see several times.

Early Years: 1965-1974.

Five years into the establishment of the Church, the pews were sparsely occupied. I witnessed it when taking a Sunday Service at the Anglican Chinese Mission Church at Taranaki Street, in December 1970. Reverend Puni Leota invited me to the manse and as Taitu'uga Patea[118] commented much later, "*it was not fit for a minister to live in.*" The interior was not finished and the exterior wall was corrugated roofing, I was baffled and wistful. Signs of growth were not showing five years on, except in the manse that was purchased through a loan.

Rev. Puni Leota and wife Lagisi arrived from Auckland for the induction on 24 Septemper 1966 and he recorded their first day.

[117] See Tiatia, J. ibid. on the beginning of the Pacific Islanders Church.
[118] A senior deacon of the Church.

> The congregation waited for us and we got into the bus [that took us] to the hall at Vivian St. for the greetings. Then the service followed and the covenant protocol with the Samoan Church in Wellington...Then a joyful feast in the hall. This is the day we began working in the new ministry. ...Then we came to the house of Fuauli [Aiono][119] and stayed there on 24th Sept. 1966 until 15th July 1967, then we moved onto the manse which the Samoan Church in Wellington had bought on 15th July 1967 – 122 The Ridgeway, Mornington, Wellington.[120]

The 1966 roll shows 12 deacons, 10 wives, and 78 members. The congregation had grown within a year.[121]

Prior to the arrival of the minister, the congregation was under the care of Fiu Samuela, a lay preacher from Aleisa. He and family attended the PIC for three months before the switch. They missed the opening. "*Had we known,*" Fiu told his wife, "*sorry we didn't know the day it was opened.*" His wife Fuaiupu confirmed her husband's story.

> *We arrived in April 1965. In June, my brother [the one who does not go to Church, interrupted Fiu] came with a newspaper and said, 'The church at Vivian Street is in the paper. This church of ours (Samoan) has begun...Let's go and worship there.' Then we went to church there...The couples present [on our first Sunday] were Lemauga Lene Leilua and wife Viliata and their three children, Miriama is the only name I remember; Fili Field and his wife Vaililiga and their three children, one is Phillip Field the current Member of Parliament;[122] and the three boys (single men), Aisa Lam, Fa'apoi Atoa, and Fuauli Aiono. Those were the only ones.*

Leading worship that Sunday was Aisa Lam. In responding to an expression of welcome after the service, Fiu also informed them that he was a lay preacher but would not lead any service until Rev. Siaosi had seen his reference from Samoa. The information was gospel news to the founders of the Church. Fiu was God sent. That same evening, Lene Leilua contacted Rev.Siaosi who rang Fiu imploring him to begin leading worship. "*I feel a warmth in me now*" Rev.Siaosi told Fiu, "*for there is*

[119] According to Fiu Samuela, the Congregation paid only the electricity. Fuauli took care of all other expenses.
[120] Ministry Record Book p.1.
[121] ibid pp.2-3.
[122] First Pacific Islander in the New Zealand Parliament.

someone to help out." Meanwhile, the attendance number had begun to get smaller and smaller within a matter of only a few weeks. Responsibility called for Fiu and it further bolstered his allegiance to the Samoan Church.[123]

People switched from the PIC to the CCCS for various reasons. Family ties have always been a strong one. Galugalu Salesulu stayed on to support his relative Fa'apoi Atoa, one of the first deacons of the Church. It took time for Muagututi'a Tauafiafi to commit but finally decided, "*I have to return...My mother and relatives are worshipping there.*" Falefitu Afoa attended one morning service at the PIC Newtown the week he arrived in 1968, and did not feel at home with the worship style and the English language. He switched the following Sunday. For Taitu'uga Patea, it was not easy in his case. Apart from being a longstanding member, his brother and sister and their families were attending the PIC. But he was thinking deeply about "*le ekalesia a o tatou matua ma tua'ä*" (the church of our parents and forbears).

> *Above everything else, it seems for myself, it's the root that was planted in Samoa. Growing up watching my parents...this was the word of my father, 'Be ever mindful of the work of God'; and I saw while in Samoa, the life of service, devoted to the Church...not just my parents, but was seen all over Samoa. However poor, they serve with true belief in God.*

For any or all of these reasons, people began to drift into the Samoan Church. Fuaiupu remembered Etoa Baker (Tokelauan) and wife Toevaega, Aiono Samoa and wife, Lemusu Lemusu and wife Kirisimasi, Tu'ese Brown and Maria, Tiafau Efu, Viliamu Daniels and his uncle Sione Kurene, as only a few. This was a good sign to be confident about the growth of the Church. Fiu's conviction was strengthened as he said, "*It was done with my belief it will grow. Whatever problems which came our way that we faced, we tried with patience.*" There were even serious problems to be

[123] There is a conflict of accounts here. Fiu and Fuaiupu said they attended the Sunday after the Opening, which would be the first Sunday in July. The impression from Fiu's telephone conversation with Rev. Siaosi was that, he started taking services on the second Sunday after the Opening, which left one Sunday for deacons to lead worship. According to Salesulu, deacons led worship for sometimes, the reason why people would miss services. He remembered well Aisa Lam for his style of pacing the width of the stage during his sermons, and they were long. But Salesulu is not mentioned in the list of people on the first Sunday Fiu attended. The probable explanation would be, that it was a matter of weeks before Fiu took the services as he insisted in the conversation with Siaosi, that he should come down and read his reference to the Congregation for formal confirmation and start of his work.

faced in the course of time but meanwhile, the concern was to see the Church growing and it was not easy despite the promising signs.

> The prediction, if such it can be called, can be realized only through the occurrences of unique events, which cannot themselves be predicted; but this does not mean that inferences drawn from history about the future are worthless, or they do not posses a conditional validity which serves both as a guide to action and a key to our understanding of how things happen.[124]

Some of these people left later to start churches at Porirua, Petone, and Wainuiomata, just as they had switched from the PIC. It was possible - after Wellington.

Early Hurdles.

Early frustrations of members came initially from Samoans of the Assembly of God Church (AOG) at the Christian Revival Center,[125] Vivian Street. They held combined services with a group from Lower Hutt apart from their own. As the new Church began using the premises, its members often arrived for worship to find that they had to wait much longer before they could start. The impatient went home. Delayed start was not the only thing that bothered them, but the attitude towards them too as Fiu explained:

> *Samoans were difficult. It was better perhaps if there were only the papalagi, ...Some days when I arrived, our members were pacing the street and they [AOG Samoans] were still having their cup of tea and making lots of noises as if they didn't care at all, when it was already time for us to start. Then I would walk up to the older ones, ... [and said], 'It should be our time now.' But I can see [in the reactions] their attitude...I am thankful myself to our own members for heeding a word that I said.*

The tension that brewed was brought before *palagi* members, but they already knew that they would be disadvantaged by their denominational identity. They had to look elsewhere eventually.

Meanwhile, Samoans at the PIC were cynical and relentlessly critical of the new Church. Fuaiupu's brother was the first to voice utter disappointment. Fiu was

[124] Carr, E.H. cited in Marwick, A. 1970 p.100
[125] It belonged to a Palagi Assembly of God Congregation.

challenged many times. When telling me about the conversation with Ta'avao Ai'ono, Fiu seemed agitated.

> *Because one of the things [they] said to me, 'Why have you gone to do that? But, can you do it?' Likewise the words of this brother, because he is from Fasito'o [village] (so is Fiu). 'Why are you doing it? Can you?' I told him 'I cannot but God can. Also, I want to make use of my calling.' What these people always inclined on stressing were our children. They do not speak Samoan. Now you have started the Congregation, and in due course when all of you moved on, who is going to do it? No child will want to worship in the Samoan language. They don't understand. Children understand the English language now used in worship. What will be done then? What can be relied upon? My only word, 'That is the matter for God. But we use Samoan in our Sunday School. If our children can speak and understand Samoan, they will be able to worship in the Samoan language. If days go by and no one is found to conduct worship in Samoan, a Samoan service can [also] be done in English. But it is the Samoan Church. If pastors realize that [Samoan] is not understood, use English. [Samoan] Ministers understand English and it can be done.'*

Ta'avao Aiono was another to exit the PIC and became the secretary of the new Church by the time Rev. Puni Leota arrived. Later he was treasurer of the Wellington Church for years before becoming assistant treasurer of the whole CCCS.

There was an internal threat as well. While more and more people came to church on a regular basis, hardly anyone had shown an interest to commit. This agitated members for it seemed to them that the Church was being taken advantage of. Lene Leilua, in particular but not the only one, made direct remarks, not once but several times, concerning the non-committal situation to the point that people were offended. Fiu got infuriated and told them off, not once, but several times also.

> *Don't be rude. I tell you, you have no business with the people...If you have decided to establish a Samoan Church, work then for the good of the Church. Do not rely on those who are coming...You have been overly rude. I'm close*

in saying to you, get on with your Church or I'll be leaving.' That was what they were very afraid of.

Fiu on hindsight appreciated very much the respect of members for him at such times. He admitted to me that he had been uncertain about the growth of the Church at some stages. "*But I had courage*," saying "*because that was the theme of my prayers to God – Love me, I am only a weak and foolish servant.*"

During the interview with Fiu, I noticed a long scar on his skull. I gathered later from his wife and daughter that he had a tumor removed from his brain and he suffers an amnesia problem. Then I was conscious of how hard he tried to recall, and where he was not sure he would say, "*the old lady [wife] will help you on that.*" Frequently, Fuaiupu corrected him on details like dates, numbers, and sequences of events, but she would rarely contest the bulk of his story. I was saddened knowing that the Church was deprived of some history due to his condition, but amazed at the same time at how the important experiences of life, his life, sit fresh in a battered brain.

Shaping the Community.

New to Wellington, and coming from Aleisa, they had come from a de-territorialised community. Samoans would be skeptical and thought very little of Fiu and Fuaiupu in taking on a task that appeared impossible, one that was antagonizing many Samoans in Wellington.

Aleisa was unlike most traditional villages in Samoa. The inhabitants were of different backgrounds from several places: Samoans and half-castes landowners, Chinese on leasehold lands, and a fairly good number of farm labourers. In the sixties, it was like any agricultural rural area in New Zealand. The people were more individualistic and materialistic in their outlook, and with no tight village control, Fiu and Fuaiupu would have surely encountered a number of serious cases of unruly 'bush-behaviour.' An isolated community and sparsely populated among the forests and plantations, Aleisa was an environment quite ideal for meditative life. The Church was the only instance of communal relations among its dwellers if they joined the local one. Fiu and Fuaiupu were part of a small congregation with a mission-ministry in need of stabilising and developing. So New Zealand life as well as the situation they got into, was not new to them. More important, they brought along an experience

that was not common in Samoa, but Samoan nonetheless. It helped a great deal in their ministry especially in shaping a minority faith community of Samoans in its initial stage. So despite the difficulties of the first year of the Wellington CCCS, Fiu and Fuaiupu were able to withstand the negatives by applying their previous experience into growing the new church.

By the time Rev. Puni Leota took over the reins, the Church had taken form. According to Fuaiupu, deacons were having monthly meetings, the Sunday School was growing, "there were lots of children" added Fiu, so as the youth group. Both of them agreed that the backbone of the church was the 'Mothers Fellowship,' which organized the women of the congregation into a working machine of the Church. It grew stronger still after the new minister and wife took over. Its energy was felt in the church and women's spirituality too.

The choir was effective in drawing peole, well organised under the leadership of Galugalu Salesulu and Ie Va'aga (died in the Polynesian Airline explosion 1969 in Samoa). They bought a harmonium for the choir. The organist was "*old guy Fili Field (Leota) who play fluke*" (play by ear). Aripa Elisara's home at Linden was chosen for rehearsals for its middle location between Wellington and Porirua. The Congregation participated in events and affairs of the *Pulega* (District) comprising three Congregations – Grey Lynn, Otara, and Wellington. They had to travel to Auckland for such occasions. One was the end of year Dedication Service of the Offerings (*Me*) for the Samoan Church when each congregation was to provide a *Me*-Hymn (still done today). Galusalu Salesulu told laughingly what he remembered of one *Me*.

> *Our hymn went really flat. Elder Minister Poasa from Samoa was the leader of the Service. He told a story about a Tongan who was once a choirmaster in Samoa. Come the time for his choir to sing the note was given, and someone said, 'It's wrong'. The Tongan said, 'Let's carry on wrongly then'. We knew that the comment was a reference to us... When we came down, we were badly scolded by Leota (organist). 'The reason why our hymn went flat was because you are a scared lot. That's why your voices failed to open up. Very scared.' Then I said, 'Mr. Organist, our voices were not flat; the organ was out of tune; it didn't match our voices' Then we all laughed.*[126]

[126] Paraphrased to present cohesion

Something went wrong in the church in the few years of its existence, and it went on 'wrongly' for some times. Falefitu Afoa who arrived in 1968 was able to pick up the vibes and eventually caught up in it, though more of a spectator than being directly involved. His opinion of the time was that, Motuga Matafeo Watts, a mother, was the only one worthy of the title deacon. She was the choir leader as well. Falefitu insisted that the choir was the first group that held a *Siva* (fund raising social dance) before it spread wide to Samoan organisations in Wellington.

The 'Fighting' Church.

I was taken to a *Siva* somewhere in Wellington while on holiday from Fiji in 1970. It was quite a revelation. From a European or a Samoan perspective, this dance was unusual. Neither the gentlemanly nor *fa'aaloalo* (respectful) manner was seen. People stood around all over the floor, many were drunk as Samoans say, 'to the neck' (*tau i le ua*). Asking a girl to dance was by a 'flick' of the head from a distance, or a 'psst' then grabbing the arm. The attire was a mixture of the dirty and the flashy. It was the time of Elvis, the Beetles, and Tom Jones; of Ray Columbus and Happen In, and Woodstock; of Muhammad Ali and Joe Fraser, La'avasa and Mahanga; of Apollo 13; the days when the can-can was ousted by the mini-dress; the days of Bryan Williams, Albert Wendt and the Yandall Sisters. They were the days of television, hippie cult, racism, and the Vietnam War. That night, it was live theatre all around in a play without a director, and Ioelu Malofie's band just kept on playing.

Suddenly, there was commotion. People drifted outside. I followed to the door and saw a brawl between Maori and Samoans all over the street. I flicked back my head; there was a brawl all over the floor among Samoans themselves inside; even the ladies were swinging their high-heel shoes. People were lying injured on the road; people were lying injured on the floor. I stood and observed in amusement. Anarchists were in the city. I smiled. They will be in church tomorrow, are they?

Foucault's problematisation of history treats events as war.[127] Were they oppressed? The dance maybe was an edge for letting go the troubles of *fa'alavelave* (in all sorts of ways), that were attacking them from the rear and from the front' (*tau mai tua, tau mai alo*) perhaps. Deleuze on the other hand speaks of the "pressure of surrounding forces that determine the hardness (coherence, cohesion) or the

[127] Gordon, C. [ed] 1980 p. 114.

inseparability of its parts."[128] Was this a manifestation of it? Perhaps the Church has come out of its embryonic stage into being a rough child.

Fighting in the Wellington CCCS was well known. Muagututi'a, who at the time was still attending the PIC, smiled at the mention of it in an interview. It was branded "*o le 'aulotu taua'i misa*" (the fighting Congregation), he said. Taitu'uga Patea remembered "*almost at every meeting was a fight, even at worship sometimes.*" Salesulu and Falefitu laughed about it too. Fiu and Fuaiupu who had left to start the Samoan Church at Porirua on 28 Feburary 1968 heard of the fighting 'every Sunday.' It seemed going to Church was like going to a *Siva* to pick a fight, and worse still, in the presence of the minister. Salesulu remembered that this was common in the time of Rev. Puni and continued when Rev. Risatisone, who came in 1974, witnessed several incidents in his early days. Women were the main culprits according to Salesulu. Falefitu would not specify but said, "*the minister always apologised to the people concerned,*" who was "*such a loving person. That was Puni. He pleads with people.*" The scuffles were ongoing and usually taken to the road often holding up the traffic. When managing to break up a fight, a reconciliation ritual followed on in the Church. Falefitu explained:

> *If only there were video [cameras] at the time as today to record (laughed), because people involved were brought to the front and made to kneel before the Congregation and apologise. Then that Hymn was sung (giggled) 'E lo'u Ali'i ua ou sese' (My Lord I have erred)... even myself who was not involved in the scuffle, I felt deeply moved. Then [Rev.] Puni would stand up and said a prayer. After, they shook hands and embraced each other. But then they went home and some fomenting [of groevnces] went on. [Come the following Sunday], again they fight.*

Taitu'uga blamed the older group (*'au-matutua*) for all the troubles. They argued a lot. The language used was despicable. A power race was going on and wives and relatives were hooked-in to join as well. The minister himself, was soft and silent as usual. He would be deeply hurt like many of his congregation who watched and

[128] Deleuze, G. 1993 p.6. In this allegorical exposition of Leibniz monadism, Deleuze takes the analogy of matter as body, as both elastic and hard in the manner of the Cartesian wax to illustrate inseparability.

listened. The Church was like a club where domination impulses were unleashed to the detriment of the Congregation itself.

Unfortunately for the minister, his virtue became his weakness. Senior deacons challenged him incessantly in a very insolent way. This unsettled newcomers who were thinking of joining. Some disappeared. Others had enough and stayed home. Although the Table below shows a growing or stable roll and improvement on the financial side (see Taulaga-Samoa List), it does not reflect the mood of the time. It meant that the willingness was present but the atmosphere was terribly alarming.

Year	Members List	Taulaga-Samoa List	Annual Giving	Fund Raising
1966	100	100	385 Pounds	
1967	84	163	$709.20	
1968	81	142	$454.00	*Registering $1626
1969	153	182	$856.00	
1970	no record	201	$759.00	Ann. $1446.56
1971	178	202	$685.00	Ann. $3655.90
1972	no record	252	$841.00	
1973	no record	no record	no record	
1974	no record	226	$974	

Table 1. *Registration of names of the Congregation when families would attend to present monetary gifts on behalf of their relative members.

Looking Back.

Most returned to the Church even stronger people and families, Salesulu believed, when Rev. Ete arrived and remained staunch members till thereafter. Salesulu was reminiscing as he turned his face towards the windows of the Church Hall. He was immersed in the past once again.

> *How hard to forget the Church in those days when thinking of the present. Most probably the church survived under those circumstances, simply because of those who really wanted to work, because the human is easily discouraged. When people came [to Church] and saw what was going on then they left in disappointment. But others remained until this time. They saw and accepted problems and they remain...Most probably it is the life of service, the people*

who truly felt it were those who persevered. Now things are progressively getting better...

He would be thinking, I felt, seeing his gestures, of those difficult people as well; difficult people they might have been but who stayed on. "*They did it for the life of others,*" ended Salesulu's reflection. When I asked Ioana Enari to reflect on the troubled years of the Church, she too turned outside; the memory was silenced. But for Taitu'uga Patea, Muagututi'a Tauafiafi, and Lealaileauloto Tiatia, they could not restrain their tears. They whimpered in front of me and apologized after. They remembered – too much, too well.

Trying to get to the bottom of the troubles was a fruitless endeavour on my part. There was a definite reluctance of anyone to be explicit on whatever the cause of the continuing problems in the Church was, except for some hinting remarks indicating that they too were involved or passively affected at some point. It appeared too sensitive for expression. But the language of general criticism in clouded abrupt sentences did not betray the unpleasant experience, and Rev. Ete could be right when I mentioned the difficulty. "*May be the people thought that, that is yours* (information for the research), *and these are ours to keep*" he hypothesised. I respected that. From it I could only infer that they did not really understand what was happening.

The social milieu allowed little chance for relationships to grow and there was no influential person either who could anticipate or analyse the problems of the day. Members were driven along by a strong wish for the Church to grow. Signs of steady growth at times were noticed, but they usually ran parallel to clutching demands and fears that jammed up their beings. Their canoe was cruising along (*ua se'e lo latou va'a*) beyond the point of no return, in a movement that seemed all too familiar but a new experience that was grabing the congregation then – of a Samoan Church trying to understand itself. It was extremely hard for a nomad church as it were; a church that was without a physical home, or a firm social foundation as a concrete base from which and upon which it can build itself. Instead, the Church, as expressed in Samoan, was 'floating around' (*fa'atafetafea solo*), having no anchor and no roots. Its life was insecure like a 'bird standing on a palm leaf' (*pei o le manu e tu i le launiu*) swaying around, and like feet struggling underwater having nothing on which to stand (*e 'ausaga lë tuvae*). In the interviews, Falefitu kept on reiterating a common query of

his '*Pe mo'i ea lenei mea*?'- Is this thing for real? The Wellington CCCS at this stage was more likely to wind up than to survive.

End of the Beginning.

In order to rejuvenate the failing spirits of members, the congregation needed a guru leader or a dexterous preacher with a heart throbbing message. In the early seventies, Rev. Puni Leota was appointed the *Toea'ina* (elder minister) in the region with several CCCS Churches in Wellington. It meant that he was much involved in various affairs of the bigger church. In spite of personality clashes that were still shattering the church, the congregation had an eye for further development of the Willis Street property, and this was a strong reason for not giving up. Sunday services continued to cater for members' religious needs but it seemed the congregation drifted on into a culture of casualness, considering also that the minister was neither a guru nor a charismatic leader. He was getting on in age.

Rev. Puni Leota was a real gentleman, a people person who joked and laughed with everyone, said Taitu'uga. His focus was on a gathering-ministry greatly needed at the early stages of the church said Salesulu and Falefitu. He is well remembered in being grandly patient and calm in times of flared tempers. Meek and humble, he was trodden upon, treated less than an equal should be by confused senior members of his congregation. Yet, he remained a peacemaker. He had come from an isolated ministry at the very tiny island of Apolima, where everyone knew everybody. Before then, he was a missionary to Papua New Guinea where he would have witnessed divine intervention. But like the early European missionaries to the Pacific, he naively believed that the Holy Spirit was more powerful than the chiefs. He came to a growing urban jungle of buildings and noises and depersonalised people, and led a nomad church in the city. He came to work among Samoans detached from the culture he understood well and thought they too would know. And he continued visiting as he would in Papua, chatting with whomever as he would in Apolima. He died on 18 May 1974, still the missionary.

Recalled from Porirua to look after the congregation, Fiu Samuela was far from being impressed with what he came to see. Shrinking attendance on Sundays was readily evident but the attitude and indifference irritated him the most. Right away he gave out a warning to the congregation.

You know very well that I am not a shepherd but another sheep. I am one of you (meaning he has as much right as anybody in the church). So no sheep is to be cheeky with another sheep.

Fiu and Fuiaupu expressed utter disappointment on the occasion of farewelling Rev. Puni's wife Lagisi. The gift for her was ridiculously small. Furthermore, the state of the manse, which was obvious to them, had not been attended to for badly needed repair works. Subsequently, he took his family to work on it together with some new people he managed to draw into the church. Gradually, members joined to lend assistance and the congregation once again began to show some life. But the church was without funds according to Fiu and verified by Taitu'uga.

The property at 320 Willis Street purchased in 1971 was intended for a church building. The revenue for the church came by way of car-park charges. An instruction from the City Council to attend to the state of the building on the property had the congregation to decide on some demolition works as a preliminary stage for the church building. Unfortunately, an anomaly emerged with a demolition contractor involving finances and the matter ended up in court. Payments for the contractor and court costs siphoned all the church's savings. The sweat of almost ten years had gone down the drain due to a poor decision, and it showed how exceptionally vulnerable they were, and easily taken advantaged of. This stricken state of affair was probably a further cause for the shrinking congregation. When the new minister arrived said Taitu'uga, "*the church had no cent, nothing whatsoever.*"

In accepting the call, Rev.Risatisone Ete sent a request for a few months postponement, until Malua Theological College where he was teaching was closed for the year. It gave him time to think about his ministry. He came to a penniless Church. He came with a vision.

Conclusion.

This chapter is in two frames. The first is a scan of the social, economic, and psychological conditions encountered by Samoans in the fifties and sixties, providing a backdrop to the second frame namely, the early years of the Wellington CCCS. Enculturation was inevitable in being deterritorialised, and the situation of Samoans in New Zealand disclosed a range of troubles they came to face, that would throw more light on understanding *fa'alavelave*. A small population without a concrete social and

cultural foundation, Samoans were susceptible to values and practices of urban industrial society, including standard values of the churches under which they were placed.

Like many immigrants, Samoans regarded New Zealand as the land of milk and honey, and therefore, the opportunity to advance their material state was valued more than to worry about equality. They held in high esteem their new situation in comparison to the previous life. Exposed to more choices away from the control of *fa'aSamoa*, they stepped into territories they had not been before. Freedom was the cause of social, psychological, and legal problems many found themselves in. On the other hand, opportunities offered only limited chances for ambitions. Also, mobility within the strata of society was not a priority and was not encouraged.

Maintaining strong connections with the homeland presented another major problem. Forces of urban life soon unsettled the Samoan value system. To restore their cultural systems, the church, apart from family, was the best available public platform to revive communal life for some form of 'in-cultural' socialisation. But the institutionalisation of their church communities under the Congregational and Presbyterian forms of governance disrupted such inclination and was unsettling for some. Outside the church, they were exposed to other systems, forms of operations, and behaviours. All these contributed to a state of value-confusion that was noticeable when Samoans were left on their own. Despite internal differences, a strong urge for communal life based on cultural standards was growing. Had other churches left them on their own without intervention, Samoans would have learned quickly how to minimise social problems and relationship discrepancies. But the confusion was already thick and too complicated to the effect that, when they attempted to synchronize the New Zealand way with the *fa'aSamoa*, it tended to be to the exclusion of the latter. In attempts to restore it, they were prone to a pattern of illusions in which they intended one thing and did the other.

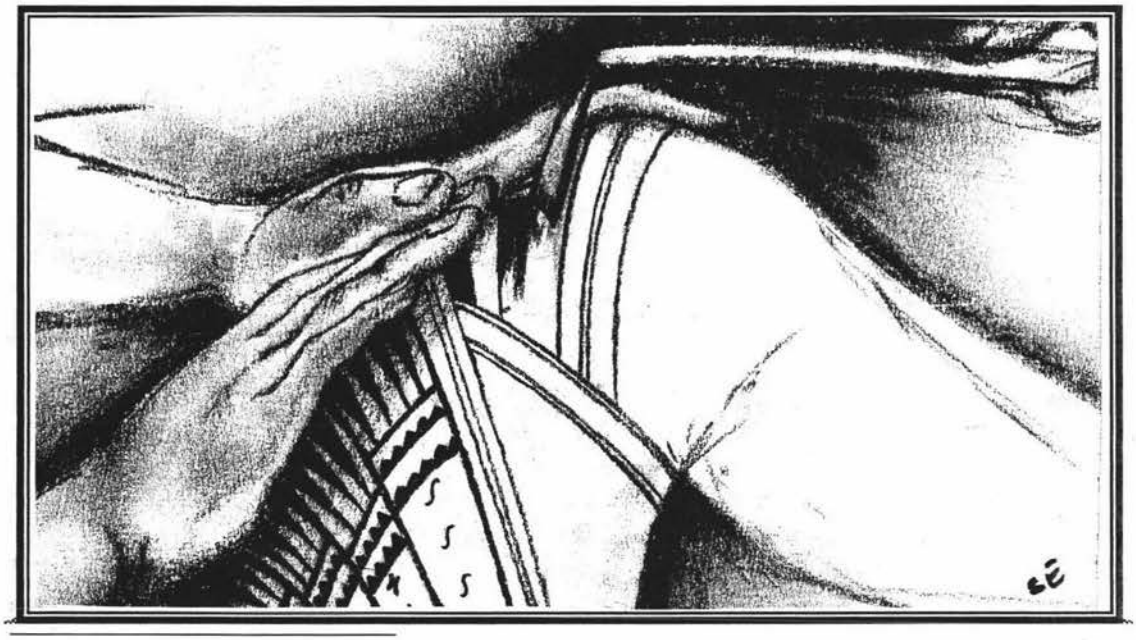
The problems were reflected in the early years of the Wellington CCCS. Those who had settled into the religious culture of New Zealand believed that the Pacific Islanders' Church was the best option for Samoans. The expectation was for Samoans to join PIC congregations. With the increase of the Samoan population in the nineteen-sixties, a different scenario emerged. A strong inclination towards a cultural community in the form of a Church became apparent. The transition, as shown by the story of the Wellington CCCS, was a terrible experience of a group in a

chaotic state, without a firm social base, a church still to gain recognition in Wellington. Incompetence was evident in leadership role and style. However, the shaky start and dreadful conflicts were introductory phases with the better to come. Samoans usually refer to such turn of events as '*e tomua mala*' (fate comes first).

The meaning of the church they had established was something they were to find out in the course of time. It was not clear until much later, having already trundled along sites of uncertainties. Notwithstanding confusion and what else of similar effect that disrupted their intention, the voices of absent fathers and mothers, and relatives who had passed on, continued to echo in their reflections. But the *fa'aSamoa* was downgraded, so were its core principles to which Melani Anae referred:

> Samoan experiences of *aiga*, church, *matai*, and *fa'alupega* systems, *gagana Samoa* and associated values and expectations of *tautua, fa'aaloalo, feagaiga*, and *usita'i*, occasioned by the day-to-day living of *fa'aSamoa* and cemented together by numerous *fa'ạlavelave.*[129]

Recovering these values was gradual. Nevertheless, *fa'aSamoa* was intact. Members have only to remember and piece the parts again for reconstituting an ethos base. Duplicating a home community, however, was not to be in New Zealand. Contact and confrontation always breeds new knowledge and new forms. The Wellington CCCS went through perhaps the 'baptism by fire' to find itself a firm base.



[129] Anae, M. in *Viewpoints and Perspectives*, 1997 4 (2) p.44.

CHAPTER SIX: RE-WRITING THE BASE-LINE.

***E ta'ape a fatuati.*[130]**
[Scattered but an assembled structure.]

Introduction.

Samoans have been discussed in the literature on New Zealand society as a minority ethnic group in the low socio-economic class.[131] Yet, it is much more complex than this. Arthur Marwick looked at class differently in terms of interest.

> Class happens when some men [and women], as a result of common experiences (inherited or shared), feel and articulate the identity of their interests as between themselves, and as against other men [and women] whose interests are different from (and usually opposed) to theirs.[132]

This exists within minority ethnic groups. The Wellington CCCS had a strong ex-PIC component that was always, and expected to be, dominant. New-arrivals soon became a force to be reckoned with in the process of restating what the church was to be, as members played out the politics of role and status. In regards to status, in New Zealand terms, it was the fight to control. In Samoan, it was/is the fight for recognition. Not all ex-PIC memberes thought alike and it was one reason for the problems in the early stages of the church. The clashes were disheartening yet helpful in self-unfolding its reality in the course of many encounters.

A Samoan church abroad comprises different people from different social-political units in Samoa.[133] To think of a homogeneous universe of Samoans is a grand error. Samoan families, villages, districts, have classes of people of different interests, different cultural orientations. The people have had the experience of what is widely known today as multiculturalism[134] – as a playing field of encounters and borrowings that lubricate the social machine of society; in the case of the Wellington CCCS, a community.

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[130] *Fatuati* is a compound word. *Fatu* means to construct or compose, and ä*ti* is build up or develop. Also *fatu* means 'stone' and *ati* refers to building a stone fence. In a 'saying', words have emotional connotations. *Fatu* literally means heart or courage, and *ati* means to pierce through. The word can also mean, 'gathering or developing courage that strikes through'.
[131] Compare class in Nash, and Gidlow et.al., in Spoonley et.al [2nd ed.] 1994, pp. 161-175, 264-265.
[132] Marwick, A. ibid. p.209
[133] See Appendix II p.156.
[134] Villages, districts, and families have cultural aspects that differentiate one from others.

Robert Hughes conceived multiculturalism as an ongoing encounter of the West and the rest, within which, as he also maintained, answers to human problems reside, though this has been denied in the decolonisation campaign.

> It is an act of the shoddiest condescension to suppose that this can no longer be so, and that this immense, complicated, many-celled edifice, this beehive that reductionists mistake for a 'monolith', can no longer contain any answers to the need of the weak, the aspirations of the deprived and the demands of those who seek cultural self-definition.[135]

To recognize the cultural reality of a group is a matter of restoring identity and self-esteem, which "comes from doing things well from discovering to tell the truth from a lie and from finding out what unites us as well as what separates us."[136] The truth however, apart from being elusive, is the common cause of controversies.

While ex-PIC and the people of the early sixties were trying to influence a right-wrong path for the Wellington CCCS to follow, later arrivals were in a search to restore meaning. They tried to understand what was going on in a process of negotiating "new definitions and new concepts of authority", breaking down "traditional forms" that Mezirow suggested, "in order for new meanings to emerge." Above all, "To be free is to 'name' our reality."[137]

The reality of the Wellington CCCS was that, first, members were away from villages; second, they were not from a single village; third, they came equipped with a means of social-network into a culture commanded by the idea of fairness and justice. The difference is that, fairness and justice in New Zealand is the "ideology of individual rights" whereas in Samoa, it is "the ideology of *aiga* (family) and *nu'u* (village)."[138] In so far as the Wellington CCCS was concerned, the encounter between these ideologies was always going to drive the congregation into rough waters before the calm. There were all sorts of illusions at this period, the parent one being that members were confused about the form of a village church, and a deterritorialised one in a foreign urban environment.

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[135] Hughes, R. 1994 p.153. He refers to Western incursion and the process of inter-borrowing by both sides. Multiculturalism and cultural borrowing have been going on since the existence of the human race. See also Crocombe, R. 1987 chapters 1-4 on People and Migration, Culture and Diversity, People and Change, Language survival.

[136] ibid.

[137] Mezirow, J. 1991 p.3. Transformative learning is negotiated meanings, purposes, and values. The process is done critically, reflectively, and rationally, and not by accepting reality defined by others.

[138] Meleisea, M. ibid. p.114 ff. Culpitt, J. 1995 p.237 "The western tradition is one of justice for individuals and not justice for groups."

I maintain affective-elements[139] of *va*-consciousness in this chapter to be the sole enduring force that sustained the existence and growth of the Wellington Congregation. As briefly alluded to in the previous chapter, the emotional attachment to the homeland encouraged re-visiting memory sites of the past, amidst anxieties and pains of *fa'alavelave*, for re-constituting the present.

Physical Distance.

Space and time define each other. They intertwine. Parting brings this understanding to the heart. Watching sons and daughters, siblings, relatives, friends, and lovers leaving for New Zealand in the fifties and sixties was enervating. Faleolo Airport and the Apia Wharf erupted with sounds of wailing and streams of tears on farewell days. The dread was real since it was commonly known that a possible home-visit for any was in a space of three to five years, if afforded. Those who came to New Zealand dreaded the thought of going back on a fortnight trip on the Matua or Tofua. Most stayed for very long periods. Separated, they vowed to 'meet in prayers' (*feiloa'i i talosaga*) apart from periodic letters in the mail.

To ease the anxiety of relatives at home was the reason for launching the weekly Radio Program "*Tala mai Niu Sila*" (News from New Zealand) from Wellington in 1960, originally by Si'anaua Nanai and continued by Paaniani Sa'ega in 1963 (and Sofi Pua in Auckland). By the mid-sixties, Tafuna Airport in Tutuila was opened to international flights. The Pan American Airline had weekly flights to New Zealand via Tafuna. Air New Zealand used the route for people from New Zealand with connecting flights to and from Upolu, by Polynesian Airline DC3 planes. Furthermore, much improved international telephone services in the mid-seventies made communication easier and more frequent between Samoa and New Zealand. Consequently, the number of Samoans coming to New Zealand increased by a tremendous proportion. The practice then was a three months permit for Samoans to come and secure a job, then return home to process permanent residency. Others were granted permits having confirmed a job by presenting documents from employers. Those who came to Wellington always looked for a Samoan Church.

Samoan migrants in the seventies and the eighties consolidated the CCCS in Wellington. Their emotional-link was intact and they came in numbers. They were easily dominated and manipulated, but their strength was following and doing as a

[139] See Iati, I. in Huffer & Soo, ibid.

fold. The privileged position of ex-PIC founders of the Church was leveled out by the emerging class of new-arrivals with the *fa'aSamoa* influence. They had the numbers, the language, and a better grasp of the dynamics of *va* to their advantage. Most important, they did not suffer the real impact of physical distance, as would those who have been in New Zealand for a lengthy period.

Loyal Allegiance.

On arrival in 1971, Lealaile'auloto Tiatia attended the PIC. His wife Taumate stayed home. "*I didn't want to go to any other Church*," she said. A sister came from Auckland at Taumate's request to familiarize her with Wellington's surroundings, and the bus route to the Webb Street address where the CCCS was holding worship services. There was a strong pull towards the Samoan Church despite its dented reputation.[140] The fact that it existed was enough. Taumate recalled the difficulties.

> *We had five children and we took them to Sunday School. We walked to Church while we were in Newtown, or took a bus on bad days. Four years after we arrived in New Zealand, then we moved here (Newlands). We bought a home and shifted. Oh how difficult for our family. We should have stopped going to that Church, it was too far, and look for another one nearer... at the time no one of our family knew how to drive. We walked from here to the station at Johnsonville to catch the train to church. We arrived at the [central] station then caught another bus to the Church, whether Cambridge Terrace or Webb Street...then the father of the family got to get a driving license... There were problems but they did not stop us from going to church... The Church was quite useful for the children. They could learn the Samoan language there, and stay with the fa'aSamoa.*

Lealaile'auloto and Taumate's story mirrors that of Fiu and Fuaiupu. The Roll increased (See Table 1) as families got bigger and new arrivals joined. The pull towards the Samoan Church for recent arrivals combined history and cultural forces. Although new arrivals had relatives in the PIC, family-ties did not apply all the time. The language, style of worship, and customary general behaviour were the deciding

[140] Also, Tumua Patea attended the Samoan Church from the beginning while husband Taitu'uga was still with the PIC. He had differences with his relatives on the issue of switching.

factors for many in choosing the Samoan Church as a comfort zone over mixed congregations.

Cultural Clash.

Those who came in the seventies were silent as the 'old hands' were still playing cat and mouse. Falefitu, who had been a member for a few years by then, began to question the worth of his going to church. He was also suspicious about several things including finances. "*We always drink with them (deacons), including office bearers of the Church, and the only time you knew they were deacons was [when they served] at Communion.*" At their pub sessions, he often dared to inquire about Church finances. Meanwhile, the silent ones were observing and learning.

Falefitu emphatically blamed an office bearer for the rift that fragmented the congregation into 'gangs'. He was playing the number game to get support for whatever he proposed. He had prior conversations with people before meetings, and was "*very disappointed with you if you do not support what he wanted.*" For Falefitu, this practice was '*tafale*', the art of persuasion for committing people to agree by way of opposing 'others' before a matter was formally raised and debated. In the Samoan way of thinking, matters of importance are supposed to be presented before everyone, '*fola i lumamea*' (lay out in the front) for each to throw an opinion in, '*velo aso i ai*' (throw ribs onto). Participatory involvement in discussions was desired rather than issuing 'banked-decisions'. Like most deacons of the Church, the office bearer had come from the PIC and had assimilated the practice suitable in that context – lobbying for support. In the end, votes count. And this is democracy by vote as opposed to democracy by voice towards consensus. To be fair, the office bearer was being pragmatic in getting things moving in the Church, but the two cultural orientations took time to be sorted out and the clashes exhausted many over the course of time.

Heated exchanges went on in debates on the right way according to the order of things. The PIC orientation was quite legalistic. Ex-PIC members would have learned the press-button right from it, to determine the wrong – the operant conditioning of many New Zealanders. The danger for Samoans was their unfamiliarity with the language, as well as how things were systematized and related. Being dictated to in such a manner was not going to be tolerated by new arrivals after a while. This traditional press-button way had to be broken down. It was hard. The

colonised minds were in control. Unfortunately for them however, they were at odds among themselves, hardly agreeing on the 'right'.

Meanwhile, Lene Leilua, respected as the oldest and founder of the church, was pushing his authority too far for the liking of many. He strongly insisted that the *matai* be not recognised in the church. "Deacons are the *matai*" he announced. Polarizing these terms yet equating them at the same time, was a terminological disguise of power motives. Role was confounded with status. Becoming a *matai* himself later[141] was another reason for discontentment especially when he spoke authoritatively. Rude interjections came from untitled younger men who reminded him that "there are no *matai* in the church." Lemauga Lene Leilua was caught in two worlds neither of which he could manipulate. He lacked the speech-*mana* to convince the silent group, and was always embroiled in tussles with peers. With the impudent interjectors, sometimes he issued them direct challenges. Making things even worse for himself, he constantly embarrassed the minister before the congregation and such conduct discredited the authority that was essentially needed for the leadership of the church of which he was part. New arrivals found his behaviour quite out of custom and they tacitly deprived him of due recognition.

Despite perpetual arguments and fighting in the church, the situation furnished a learning experience for the rest. When I suggested to Lealaileauloto that the church would have been a pleasant experience for them then, coming in as new members, he burst into laughter. He really laughed. It was a flash of how terrible the situation had been, and how foolish it was. Then he became philosophical.

> *True. There were happenings (troubles), but it is not an exception anywhere. It occurs anywhere. But there is something good about these happenings... where you find another good [lesson] for the future, and that is very true. Things happen to improve the conditions of other things. [But then], whoever said he was angry (laughed loudly again), well, he would be sore...*

I had not mentioned anything about the fighting in the church then, but his reaction further confirmed for me the miserable circumstances they had to endure. Many people like Lealaile'auloto were more of spectators who frequently witnessed the

[141] He took the *matai* title of Lemauga after the opening of the Church. Fiu Samuela remembered taking the bestowal devotion.

threatening situation of the church, yet they kept on going for the social utility and continuing the habit they were used to in Samoa.

The conflicts indicated that the Samoan church was not going to thrive under a Presbyterian style of governance. It worked for Samoans in the PIC that a regime was present to control and guide. In the Samoan church, there was the *va*-problem of physical-distance from its headquarter. Besides, the authority in congregationalism lies with the congregation itself. But this was Samoan congregationalism in which village governance played a major part. Though absent in New Zealand, senior people of the time tried to run the church on Samoan village lines which was not going to work either. It was not a village, and its power was void of cultural dignity. The reason was that, the leaders and members were drawn to think more on lines of equality and fairness, but there was no compelling force to make people comply or commit, except by the customary feeling towards the Church derived from the cultural conditioning in Samoa. Discrepancies in internal relationships were hurting.

The church did not really suffer a functional disability, amazingly, in spite of all the internal troubles. The response to the demands of the Church was fairly good (see Tables 1 & 2). Although church attendance for a good number of members was not regular, the people still attended Church in the continuity mode. They went as Falefitu said about himself:

> *I had been close to the pastor of our village before I left Samoa...and it seemed I brought his word with me – 'If you go to New Zealand, go to Church. No matter what Church, just go to Church'...on my first Sunday, I did not find in the Church that I first attended what I was willing for...Coming also to the Samoan Church and saw what was going on, Salesulu is quite correct. There was no feeling then like it is at present. We came to Church just to see and listen, to meet acquaintances or any past schoolmate, or any person from my village, and particularly the 'weak side' of coming to see if I can find a girl [friend] for myself."*

And they silently responded to the Church when it called, as they had seen and done in Samoa. (The Table below shows the positive response through the years despite the rocking situation at times. There was evidently a concern for the Church).

Year	Functions	Venue	No.of Families	Raised
Jun.1970	Family Plates: Ch. Ann.	Church, Webb Street.	49	$1446.56
Apr.1971	Donations:	Thistle Hall	28	$3,950.00
Jun. 1971	Family Plates Ch. Ann.	Town Hall	48	$2538.33
Jun. 1972	Family Plates Ch. Ann.	Town Hall	48	$2754.94
Jun. 1973	Family Plates Ch. Ann.	Church, Taranaki St.	24	$2135.00

Table 2. Note the drop in 1973 of families. Compare the Roll of Donors 1973 for the Taulaga Samoa in Table 1 showing a stable number.

Language.

The language of verbal exchanges in meetings often tended to be aggressive and bluntly direct, in the manner Samoans usually referred to '*e le afei ina upu*' (words are not covered), as opposed to oratory etiquette of polite speech used in formal discussions. Straight to the point was the call. The catch was translating New Zealand thinking into Samoan. Because senior members of the congregation came to New Zealand as young persons, many had lost the language-aroma and the profundity of words, and sadly, cultural sensing. The Samoan language had become for them a servant of the New Zealand mind supplemented by English (English words and phrases cut through Samoan sentences), thus clearly showing the effect of a prolonged absence from Samoa. The difference was slightly apparent to me when interviewing Salesulu and Falefitu together. There was an element of struggle with Salesulu's speech and his recollections were largely randomly presented. Falefitu was clear, systematic, and articulate to some extent.

The Samoan language was not important just for expression; listening was extremely crucial. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Rev. Puni Leota used to apologise to people who were involved in melees, but regrettably, the gist of speech was lost to many to infer that the spirit of the word died in the ears of listeners. The language was simply not there for healing. Yet in its simple form, Samoan language was clear in intimations of what was to be done. None would have an excuse of not understanding. It was/is integral in growing the Church.

> Language is the vehicle by which thoughts, customs, desires, hopes, frustrations, history, mythology, prayers, dreams and knowledge are

communicated from one person to another. It has been said that a people without their own language have no power or unique identity.[142]

The Samoan language was marginalised. While the rule in schools was for every pupil to speak English every time, the social rule imposed on Islanders as often pointed out to them, that speaking in one's own language in the presence of others was 'rude' behaviour. So they were easily rude, thus a rude people, and were rude in church. It was no wonder that many Samoans who could still speak their language were finding it to have less and less significance. The vocabulary became depleted and the meanings of words gradually faded and the Samoan language became a tool employed for shallow conversations and work instructions, leaving no space for deeper reflection upon it, except when going to Church. Also, cultural ceremonies were rare for practising the appropriate language of such occasions, as well as learning from it. The outcome of that had been the avoidance of *fa'aSamoa* and commonly labeled as *tigaina* (hurting).

Members of the Wellington CCCS had opted for a Samoan Church expecting the Samoan language to be used everytime, and where Samoan customs would be exercised. Not being equipped with the proper language of formal occasions made it impossible to perform cultural customs when they were required. As Taitu'uga said:

> *The culture was not strong. There was none in [the Church]. Whatever situations there were in which cultural customs were ought to be carried out, it was not demonstrated. Perhaps because there were not that many people who had [matai] titles. It seemed that was one reason that I know of to have been the cause of violence inside the Church.*

Cultural ceremonies were not the only part of the *fa'aSamoa* Taitu'uga was hinting at. He also hinted at the poor relational life (*va-fealoa'i*) among people in the Church and seemed to blame Rev. Puni for being too easy going with the members. It was the reason why they crossed the culturally sanctioned boundary (*sopo tua'oi*) between the Minister and members of a congregation, in so far as the respect accorded to a Minister was concerned. And here again was clear evidence of the cultural deficit that distraught relationship at the time.

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[142] Barlow, C. 1996 p.114

Rejection of *Fa'aSamoa*

The dislike of *fa'aSamoa* melted after a long time of strong opposition against it. 'No *matai* only deacons' was a reified slogan used as a favourite propaganda by influential people to edge out an inclination towards a *fa'aSamoa* orientation within the church. It remained that way till the late-seventies. Falefitu pointed at a major difficulty.

> *The person who was the treasurer was not a matai. He was very strong in the saying 'the deacon is the matai.' How hard therefore any matai who came along in trying to push such [cultural] stand, it was far from being acceptable.*

In church anniversaries and fund-raising functions however, invitations were sent out to other Samoans who would be reciprocated appropriately according to customs, if and when they responded. In the seventies, CCCS Congregations in Wellington[143] and New Zealand increased and they were either visiting or hosting meetings and other church events. Customary protocols would not be avoided.

Hosting a district meeting (*tofiga*), the Wellington Congregation decided against a greeting '*ava*-ceremony. "*Our culture was not strong at the time*" according to Salesulu.[144] On the day, he and others including the treasurer were on their way to the venue.

> *There were only two matai of the congregation at the time...We got to Webb Street and [saw] an 'ava bowl being carried along (chuckled). There we split. Nothing was done, because the treasurer got mad and said, 'We told them nothing of the sort was to happen. Let's split'. I said no, let us still go and leave the matter to our Sunday meeting. But no. He said that each one of us should go and attend to our own affairs. Then we all went and we didn't know how the meeting was catered. I didn't know it myself, [because] I didn't go either. I returned [home] with my paper-bag of rice I took. Our culture was not that strong at the time because of that...We were extremely against [it]. Deacons were the matai. I had a verbal exchange with the old man Lemauga and that was what I said to him. I told him, the deacon is the matai...*

[143] Porirua, Petone, Wainuiomata. All these Churches have split up as a result of dissension.
[144] Confirmed by Falefitu, Taitu'uga, and Lealaileauloto.

The Wellington CCCS insistence on its no-*fa'aSamoa* policy later succumbed to relational (*va-fealoa'i*) customs of culture. Realising the cultural deficit among church members, Maka Iosefa and one other *matai* from Iva village attempted a conscious-raising campaign. They volunteered to conduct some sessions on the *fa'aSamoa*. Attendance was minimal. "*Our fa'aSamoa only began to be in order recently when Rev. Risati arrived"* remarked Falefitu "*but even when he came, he had no interest in it either*." Just out of a teaching position at Malua Theological College, he arrived to run the congregation like a school.[145] But new arrivals in the late seventies had *matai* titles. Also, several members of the congregation were called back home to be conferred the titles of their families. On their return, they acknowledged their being a *matai* by providing the congregation with a meal and/or cultural presentations if deemed proper, or gifting the church with money. The number of *matai* grew which led to the emergence of another class in the church – the custodians of culture and cultural relationships. It became imperative for members to properly understand the meaning of customs and how they were supposed to be performed, with a particular effort to become well versed in the language in its different codes and deeper meaning. "*Only then*," Salesulu stated with conviction, "*that the Church has wisdom*" (*fa'ato'ä iai se tofä*[146] *a le Ekalesia*).

Reassembled Base.

There is a *saofa'iga a matai* (seat of *matai*)[147] today in the church Rev.Ete admitted. Its recognition has not been a result of a strategy towards its acceptance, or by means of a pressure tactic as in the attempt to disqualify *matai* previously. It just emerged as an institution within the congregation. *Matai* took their cultural position (*tu i lou tulaga*) by repositioning themselves from being 'just' deacons. Women, according to Lealaileauloto, incessantly encouraged it by asking on events of hosting a visiting party, "*Are we going to have a inu*?"[148]. Because of their *va*-function that was required and appreciated, the 'seat of *matai*' automatically became important in making some decisions befitting their status and role. Subsequently it became a

[145] Rev. Ete confirmed this in a conversation with him at Massey University, Wellington. It shows how members were taking seriously the meaning of *Fa'afeagaiga*.

[146] See App. II pp.159-160. *Tofä* above is the corporate-mind of the Church.

[147] The class or college of *matai* is duly recognised in its functional importance. Once a *matai*, there is a shift of attitude and outlook into a maturity mode to be manifested in thoughts, speech, and behaviour. Many deacons are *matai*, yet the merge does not confuse the two although younger untitled deacons are respected likewise in the Church.

[148] *Inu* means 'drink' is another word for the Greeting 'Ava Ceremony.

symbolic regime that took care of relationships of the church, the area where the class of deacons had failed quite badly before.

A political viewpoint would see the 'seat of *matai*' as a culmination of an inconspicuous maneuver on the part of new arrivals, or by *matai* themselves. Institutional politics was not involved in the transformation. On the contrary, the emergence of the *fa'aSamoa* was circumstantial. An essence argument given the homogeneity of the congregation would imply a predictability notion, that *fa'aSamoa* in the end would naturally prevail, hence *ta'ape a fatuati* (though scattered yet assembled). Again, the 'return' view based on recent and frequent connections is not lacking grounds, substantiated by the inflow of new arrivals and improved communication means. It lends support to the essence argument. But the *fa'alavelave* wrapping theory is conducive to a learning argument in recognising human input to say, in their silence, they watched, listened, worked, and figured out. In doing, they waited patiently. Intriguing though is the simultaneous and spontaneity aspect of events, which makes it more confusing to pinpoint how a new phase arose except to point at a time in which any event took importance. Anyhow, recognising and taking on board the *fa'amatai* was another sign of the cultural growth of the Church.

Throughout, however, there was on-going borrowing from any system, structure, a different worldview, religion, philosophy or culture, and whatever was available for the picking. As well, there were valuable lessons learned from their own negative experiences of the church on which Lealaile'auloto commented earlier on. They were momentous in the same way the understanding procured from the rejuvenated spirit stimulated by the 'return' experience was held in importance. It is important to realise that the missing factor in the church was the 'village' that had been taken for granted as if physically present - a false consciousness, an illusion – which was a major cause of instability. It took a while for the congregation to come to the realisation that their church was only 'identical' in terms of being 'equivalent' to a Samoan church in Samoa.

In the course of time as Salesulu explained, members began to direct their thinking towards the church in Wellington. They could not go on putting more emphasis on the development of their village churches in Samoa that the responsibility of upkeeping their own in New Zealand has become the priority. The switch of emphasis was encouraged by the need to consolidate what has evolved before their eyes concerning the church as community and an establishment.

The 'Samoan Church' was therefore an ideology *per se*[149] that Samoans of the Wellington CCCS had to work out its meaning. Resemblance nonetheless, was the beginning of the re-discovery of the place and meaning of *fa'aSamoa* in their communal life. The voices of the past were heard again, the experiences of engaging in *fa'alavelave* in the family, village, and church, were likewise re-summoned in retrospection. The meaning splintered momentarily as they did things together until the church building project reactivated the social-cultural consciousness to its maximum utility. In the process, from the embryonic stage of the church to the aftermath of dedicating the project, they discovered and re-discovered, invented and re-invented, imagined and re-imagined, break-in-parts and seen-in-whole, what they were/are/will be. But while cultural memory provided the means for the assembly of practices and values in re-shaping the community, the means were so woven into the fabric of Wellington life as to make the assemblage have relevance. Rev.Ete for instance, pondered already on the future of the Samoan Church in New Zealand.[150]

Fa'aSamoa

Entrusting the church to the care of several deacons in the beginning was a convenient decision. 'Deacons as *matai*' however, was an initial hint at the involvement of the *fa'aSamoa* mentality in the role-structure of the church. It was impossible to think of the church institution in the Samoan way without the *matai*. *Matai* has a connotation for Samoans which "deacon" lacks. Despite its outright rejection in the word-game, the *matai*-deacon concept would be lingering in the minds of members. Lene Leilua was unfortunate when he took the *matai* title Lemauga, especially when the conferring happened within the first year of the church. His intention was always going to be misconstrued from the New Zealand and PIC perspective that was strongly contagious, but he would have known then how

[149] O'Brien, M. in Green, P.F. [ed] 1994 p.129. Ideology in the critical sense is considered as a platform of 'struggle and contest' of beliefs *vis-à-vis* social order 'in a given context', and "particularly to the relationship between the set of ideas that operate in a society, the forms of domination and subordination within that society, and the struggles over the reproduction of those forms." Samoan Church was a proposition for Samoans who were in a meaning search, in the course of which, negotiations of meaning involved the dominating of some beliefs by one set of views or conviction. A Samoan church with no *matai* and no *fa'aSamoa* was a contradiction, but the practical running of the church had to be contextualised. The democratic principles of fair and just as individual specific have been the antithesis to the Samoan *matai* authority as leader. I simply propose here that the situation was a confusing one for members of the congregation caught up in the dynamics of negotiatiating conceptual and social meaning of the Samoan Church for them.

[150] Chapter 4, p.36 ff.

essential the *matai* and *fa'aSamoa* were, to the church, and for its growth. He died in 1976 almost without significance. Yet, the Wellington CCCS is the living monument of his courage and farsightedness.

The choir played a vital role in the church as it does today. Singing itself has its gravity for Samoans. As another avenue of drawing in people and organising members who voluntarily joined, it has been quite significant to the growth of Wellington CCCS. Forming the choir is the case in point. Members organised it as would be in a village context. Whereas a paid Choir Director in New Zealand churches has the sole responsibility of organising the choir, a Samoan church choir would have its leaders for that purpose, apart from the choral master. Choir leaders changed in time. After Ie Va'aga and Salesulu in the beginning, Motuga Watts and Tuileva Pilitati took over. In the village setting, the choir is usually the responsibility of the non-*matai* sectors - the *aumaga* (males without titles) and *aualuma* (the ladies). They have their leaders too.

In the similar manner, women organised themselves as an independent body, providing the essential support for the church. The *fa'amatai* system in a village setting include the 'house of women' (*fale o tama'ita'i*). Its parallel in the church is the 'Mothers Fellowship' (*Mafutaga a Tinä*). Fuaiupu relayed how mothers started off by having Saturday meetings in halls they booked and paid for, and from thereon they decided on financial commitments and prayer-devotions among themselves. They automatically took over preparations of the communion sacrament, furnishing the manse, catering for special functions, and becoming Sunday school teachers. It has been/is the mainstay of the church and a silent transforming agent ever since.

Without the village, the family network proved effective in its stead. Although the church consisted predominantly of nuclear families in the early days, families extended in the course of time beyond nucleated boundaries. The idea of family was greatly exploited in major functions through which the church raised funds in terms of *family plates* on anniversary days, and on occasions like raising a deposit sum for purchasing the Willis Street property in 1971 (see Table 2. Donation). It continued to be heavily exploited for the project, before and after. On many of these occasions, relatives outside the congregation, regardless of denominational affiliation, joined to contribute. As well, at any *fa'alavelave* (funerals, weddings and so forth), the family in the end made special presentations to the church. For this reason, Samoans in Wellington have in one way or another contributed to the development of the

Wellington CCCS. The extended family on the other hand has been an effective channel for internal missionising and gospel gossiping, in consolidating and growing the church.

The New Zealand Way.

With few *matai* and not a village, the congregation needed a system with which to operate. The early leaders wrestled the quagmire of having no strict canon for control. First, they lacked a reference to consult for determining the 'right way'. Second, they presumed that all members were accustomed to or had preferred the New Zealand 'correctness', whereas others were taking the relationally appropriate (*talafeagai*) and inappropriate (*lë talafeagai*) stance. Although values seemed not hard to understand, the feeling was different. Third, the rejection of *matai* removed the dignity element from the consciousness of members. Fourth, the rejection of *fa'aSamoa* meant that everyone was equal. But this was what most wanted - a free arena. Notwithstanding the negative situation, members participated as free individuals and they built up their value judgements which very much later became the value-system of the congregation itself. Members came to refer to precedents, and therefore realised the significance of any decision to be made. Before, the reference was either the New Zealand way or the Samoan way, but mostly, personal experience. The synthesis took a long time to happen, yet, the diversity of outlooks, beliefs, and norms were to be of great use in the long term. As it is today, the New Zealand way is part and parcel of its referential canon of the congregation.

Christianity.

This aspect of the church will be discussed at length in the next chapter but suffice to state at this point, without a Christian consciousness the church could not have survived at all. It could have gone defunct in the face of the choking conditions of *fa'alavelave* the congregation went through. There was a lack of inspiration sometimes for sure, but people withdrew only temporarily. Of all things, the belief of the people was fundamental to the continuity of the church. It took time for many to negotiate their moral and spiritual values in the new setting of existence. While Christian standards were always challenging, the advantage was having them as personal reference when nothing else worked. They were pointers to height, width, and deepness of their faith.

Lemauga Leilua stuck out to the end not for any particularly strong reason but that his rough experience deepened his belief. Salesulu was not ashamed to admit the numerous times he had stayed away as a result of arguments, and sometimes, great disappointment with both ministers. Eventually he would return. Suspicion inflated Falefitu's curiosity about members' motives and the finances of the church. He remained. *Fa'alavelave* were disruptive, upsetting, and many perceived them to be disintegrating and crippling, through their associated demands and frequent recurrence. But *fa'alavelave* were/are the 'test' that consolidated and a strong social force for congregating Samoans in the Wellington CCCS. Christianity could not grow for Samoans or their churches in deterritorialised situations, without it. Simply, ultimately, *fa'alavelave* is a call to respond. The strength of the response shows the strength of the emotional-link, to family, friends, relatives, and the church. It was/is learning, and breathing,[151] together.

Breathing hard in giving constant birth to the faith community flashed the images of: Motuga Watts, Felila Maiava, Tusipasi Mata'u, Fuaiupu Samuela, Nonoa Tauafiafi - and all mothers who silently advised, directed, illustrated, tolerated. Fereni Ete has high commendation from Taitu'uga Patea for being a hardworking *faletua*. And Malaea Fepulea'i is a phenomenon. She laughs, sings, and dances while doing whatever is there to do. The Mothers' Fellowship keeps on growing in depth and utility.[152]

The Winds Play On.

From twenty-two original members to two hundred fifty within a decade may not sound a convincing sign of growth. However, members left to establish or attend churches in their residential locale. For instance, Tagaloa V. Daniel resigned from Wellington in 1975 to join the Petone congregation. A group led by Ta'ase Misa and Tuileva Pilitati went over to establish the church at Wainuiomata. Likewise went Aripa Elisara, Maka Iosefa and others who later joined the Porirua Church. The establishment of these churches provided both a morale boost and a challenge for the Wellington CCCS; its members had no option but to keep on growing the church. It was not lightly considered. Failure was a disgrace. But by 1974, the exodus and the aging minister had sown a feeling of resignation. The congregation may also have

[151] Breath also is expression (*mānavaga*) of concern, knowledge, and wisdom. These are demonstrated in *fa'alavelave* occasions.
[152] See chapters 4 and 5.

been in a state of emotional languor after years of internal strife. Sunday attendance and membership diminished dramatically. When the minister died, the Church seemed to die too. There was no reason to go on. There was only belief.

About the same period, New Zealand was feeling the bite of a recession together with a psychological effect of industrial problems during the Norman Kirk years. Unemployment continued to rise with the cost of living getting higher still. Meanwhile, apartheid was catching the attention of the population on another level as the Maori Renaissance led to a phase of strong political activism, notably the 'Maori Land March' led by Whina Cooper. Samoa itself, caught in aggressive General Election campaigns, was awakened to the issue of 'voting-*matai*',[153] while Pacific Nations got on the Independence trail and decolonisation. Although the cross-cultural theme was strongly advocated, indigeneity tended more towards inward looking to culture.

Circumstances changed the edge-way life of the Wellington CCCS. The major political and historical issues of national and international concerns, captured public interest. Re-claiming of Maori rights and heritage, the *matai* issue that raised suspicion about what title was genuine and which was not, and political independence in the Pacific, were wide conceptual and symbolic topics that caught the interest of the members of the Wellington CCCS. They changed the outlook of people both consciously and unconsciously. They followed hints in cross-cultural 'stories of a river and a lover' *(tala a le vai ma le usuga)*, until they were critically aware of their implications for the growth of their church.

Conclusion.

Class interests in competition for dominance tend towards divisiveness. Clashes otherwise may indicate the vibrancy of a growing community, but only when a dialogue on contestable interests is conducted in a healthy manner. The Wellington CCCS in the early part of the seventies was not healthy in any sense, with only rare optimistic signs of preventing a collapse. Whereas differing interests should have provided experiential gains in exchanges and debates, the situation did not do much

[153] *Matai Palota* refers to titles given to people for the purpose of voting in General Elections. Women and teenagers were conferred such titles as only *matai* were eligible to vote then. This was an emerging class which seemed to upstage the class of foundational *matai* (*matai fa'avae*) of villages. Ridiculed somehow but in Election seasons, they were expensive. The other aspect was the splitting of a single title among several holders. It had a 'levelling effect' (see Tcherkézoff in Huffer & Soo, op. cit.) politically, but also, it diminished the aura of the title somehow.

good for the community. Personality clashes were common manifestations of a power struggle that allowed little room for reconciling different viewpoints. It was common in contesting idealistically the right way in opposing the culturally appropriate way. The conflicts reflected the ambiguities they were wrestling with. There was yet another factor, an irrational force also; the underlying connected-ness that paradoxically divided and held members together. Past experiences were mixed with the new in the *fa'aSamoa*, the New Zealand experience, and Christian values emphasised in both countries. The mixture, the cognition, the emotions, the inadequacies, provided the congregation food for contemplation in examining a way in the course of time, to understand, to enable them individually to remember who they were/are, and it led to reconfiguring their collective self.

Historically speaking as argued in this chapter, the revival of the *fa'aSamoa* provided a social base for relearning the value of relationships, abetting the bringing about of favourable order within their social sphere. It made them aware of their reality. Despite the abysmal situation, the church survived through emotional ties. The restoration of *fa'aSamoa* nevertheless had not been deliberate. Its importance was gradually realised and reinstated into the general life of the church. Before the recognition of the college of *matai*, the church was operating on social groups, in terms of gender, age, and employment. But these were held together by the family network. When *matai* and *fa'aSamoa* acquired formal recognition within the structure and operations of the church, the recognition of everyone was completed, that is, including children. They were all 'hooked-in' (*lave*). It is true that they were all recognised before then, in the roll, as contributors, and so forth, but the *fa'aSamoa* has been undergirding all these as the family was used and relied upon. Yet trying to fit the family as a device in a mechanical structure, thus discarding the cultural element of its constitution, did not fare well in members' relations, and as evident in the earlier years, relationships were given no firm ground to thrive. There was always going to be clashes, because people were caught up in a false consciousness, pretending to be free of their cultural background. Moreover, the mixture of the *fa'aSamoa* and *fa'aNiu Sila* was a prolonged enigma to them. Until the *fa'aSamoa* was in order, only then could people see the value of the two ways, and the necessary adjustment from an attitude of being strangers to each other (different villages or families), to a communal feeling. The next chapter will elaborate on further developments where the minister's role was vital.

CHAPTER SEVEN: MODULATING THE THEME.

Ua mai vai 'ae magalo 'ava.
[Water is bitter but 'ava is naturalised.]

Introduction.

Samoan tradition has it that Malietoa and Tuimanu'a had a private *'ava* ceremony (*alofi-sä*) on the ocean. The former had sent an invitation for Tuimanu'a to an offshore meeting. Malietoa brought along the *'ava* substance, a *ta'amu* leaf for a bowl, but he had consumed water on the way. Seawater was used instead for the mix. When tasted, seawater had lost its saltiness. They were surprised. Hence the expression 'Water is bitter, but *'ava* is naturalised' implying divine intervention. Or, it might have been that the bitterness of the *'ava* could not overwhelm the fulfillment they both felt as a result of their maritime rendezvous.[154]

This chapter focuses on the Christian message and how it tranformed bitterness and discordance within the Wellington CCCS into positive energy. A new minister, with a different vision, an alternative method and style, these brought about a 'dawning' in the life of the church. As the religious and community consciousness was gradually restored, it fostered a movement towards secular interests like the structuring and co-ordination of practices, owning property, education and its social significance in relation to society at large.

A Samoan Church is a Christian Church. Like other major religions, salvation is a universal message of Christianity except salvation is conceived "in a variety of ways."[155] In all the interviews, I heard no reference to 'Christ' but 'God' throughout. This will become important later on but I have to make a claim here: Christianity united the beliefs of Samoans as it did for Pacific Islanders. It does not by any means imply uniformity, or to suggest a simple way of believing in the Christian message, for the understanding involved much more than the evangelical story. Christianity brought to light universal beliefs and values of *fa'aSamoa*. And as Jeannette Mageo suggested in what she called 'aural superimposition,' "when people hear a story or a

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[154] *Alagaupu, Mavaega, Tofiga.* Internal Affairs 2000, Samoa. p.70. Some tend to believe that the occasion was Malietoa's missionary visit to convince Tuimanu'a of Christianity. The result was the maritime-treaty between the two paramount chiefs that guaranteed the complete Christianisation of all Samoa. Tuimanu'a is the kingly chief of Manu'a Island. The last Tuimanu'a accepted Christianity who bequeathed his people that he be the last to hold the title, but the status and authority of the title be continued through the To'oto'o (the ring of chiefly orators). Va'a, L. (Huffer and So'o ibid.) is of the view that the discontinuity of the Tuimanu'a title was by USA law that erased any kingly pretension.
[155] Wilson, B. ibid., p.28.

story fragment, they also hear echoes of other stories."[156] The echoes need hooking-on together for a general view of the collective memory.

Gathering Ministry.

Members of the church could not be RSA members, they could not be members of sports club, not company or school board members, not members of prominent organisations; they were included as union members with little voice if any; not members of an art group, not accustomed to symphony or stage drama or ballet. Where would they be? Working, watching TV (possibly), at the movies, the pub, or a *Siva* for the *supper*. Women's situations were worse. And they had also left the PIC. Members of the Wellington CCCS were social outcasts by default.

I watched Salesulu and Falefitu playing cards on our interview days. The sound of children of the *a'oga amata* filled the church hall with their singing and running and yelling as women teachers prepared their meals. On Thursdays, they told me, a bigger group gathers for team competition. Later I learned that this was what they used to do in the days of Rev. Puni. They congregated at various homes some evenings to play card. Now, they have a common home where they can come at any time. "*This is a second home*," they uttered, with relief, with pride.

Towards the end of Rev.Puni's ministry in 1974, Salesulu and Falefitu in hindsight believed that he could not have done much more. Their eyes wandered around the premises to indicate to what they were referring. Everyone spoke highly though of Rev. Puni's character, they said, and the relevance of his ministry at the time they did not belittle. He was a gatherer. When people were flimsy, he would reach out to encourage and reassure. Wellington, however, was changing rapidly. To continue gathering, Rev. Puni needed to know how to drive to get around, but he did not. He relied mostly on Salesulu and Falefitu, according to Taitu'uga. He had unmatched patience to endure the bitterness of times, Taitu'uga wondered on hindsight if another minister would have lasted. Yet, the congregation was looking towards a church home, but they lost the savings they had accumulated. When they

[156] Mageo, J. M. 2001 p.11. She examined the offerings and limits of cultural memory embedded in memory tales "a site of historical transit between the past and the present"(p.2), in relation to history and values. She followed up her socio-centric paradigm of Samoan-Self (1999) and made the point that in tales and stories as remembered, history can be constructed. The disadvantage is resurfacing differences of the past that may tend towards 'decay'. The possibility of history and value loss due to the loss of collective memory, is a major problem.

lost all savings in the court case,[157] the congregation went into a lull. Luckily, there was a group of devout people who worked on with eagerness. Roughly twelve or so families remained in the church when Fiu Samuela was recalled to the congregation in the interim. Despite the spreading anxiety within the congregation, Lealaile'auloto was optimistic "*that the work of God will grow*," and his belief was bolstered when Rev. Ete arrived, who "*had different ways of improving the church in any of its aspects, especially the spiritual side.*"

This 'Boy' is Different.

Falefitu sounded sentimental when speaking of Rev. Puni saying,

> *...he goes to the people...he liked to come and draw people in*," [but] "*it was different with the coming of this boy*"[158] (referring to Rev. Ete). "*This boy does not persuade people for God.*

"*He would not reach out to anyone*," added Salesulu, and "*if you tend to be weak... you will be weak alone.*" One has to regain strength to get up again and returned to church, as there was no sign that he would get back to anybody. It did not take much time for the members to realise this for Rev. Ete's intentions were quite clear.

The new minister anyway was well advised by Fiu "*not to visit the people*" for reasons that he would later find out himself. Falefitu explained a major one when the minister visited his home. He offered him beer as deemed proper with the generosity New Zealand way, since there were drinks in the room. Falefitu was chided.

> *This was his very word to me:*[159] *'Tali and Fa'atamali'i,*[160] *on any occasion in your family, if I come, it is sä, sä, sä (forbidden) that I set my eyes on these things. This is a challenge for me, because if I say nothing, then you think, the minister came, saw, and said nothing. But now I have said it – Sä. Never let me see it again. It's up to you when I leave.' Since then, whenever an occasion was to happen, nothing (alcohol) was to appear at the front.*

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[157] Refer to p.64

[158] Boy is *tama* with 'distinction' than just being a young male e.g. 'the man' was popular in the 1990s.

[159] In the interviews *upu* (word) often refers to a thought, used interchangeably with *tala* (story). The importance of *upu* in Samoan is not in the single word but in the intention in a sentence or story fragment.

[160] Tali is Falefitu's first name; the latter his *matai* title; Fa'atamali'i is his wife.

And Salesulu's story:

> *I am a person who enjoyed very much the 'water' (alcohol)...Risati came to our house on my son's birthday [celebration] and I served him [alcohol drink]. He said thanks for the courtesy but he would not accept such a thing. Then I gradually reduced [the habit]. Risati was the cause of my abstinence, but before, [I] would be on it for two days and continued on...*

Alcohol (*'ava*) was a social problem. Alcohol was not only naturalised; it became sweet (*ua suamalie 'ava*). Men came drunk[161] to choir-rehearsals, meetings, sometimes at services. Lealaile'auloto confirmed that many of 'us' had to have a drink to remove phobia (*fa'ate'a le mata fefe*) when going to any function. So serious was the problem that at the induction of some new deacons, Rev. Puni had to remind them (sarcastically though) about their positions as deacons, recalled Falefitu:

> *You, in regard to your office: be holy in your drinking; be holy in your walking; be holy in your dancing (laughed); be holy...because the deacons I came to find at that time (cynical laugh to end his sentence)...*

The office of deacon was not seriously respected and "*treated like a game*." It was the tip of the iceberg.

Statehood, urbanisation, political economy, had drawn the attention more to the society-based view of people looked at within the structure, as mere functional individuals. Christianity likewise was considered in terms of individual salvation in which the function of the person was to break into God's territory through the puritanical way. Unfortunately, like secularisation, alcohol had naturalised the sacred instead of the other way round. Urban social life was much too attractive and too swamping for many Samoans. Championing individual liberty weakened community consciousness. It was potentially disintegrating for the Wellington CCCS, debilitating for deacons who seemed to believe that they possessed the church. Good organisational skills in some were often undermined by power tussles, encouraging a form of 'tribalism', as family-clan awareness had been strong then. The ganging

[161] A smell of liquor on anyone was enough to label a person drunk.

factions still existed. To be involved in a feud of biased stories from rival camps was the last thing a new minister for this particular church needed to be entangled in. Keeping a distance was discretely proper.

Heeding Fiu's counsel against making home visitation a priority, Rev. Ete made the pulpit central to a transforming attempt, hammering out the dichotomy of good versus evil in their empirical, romantic, aesthetic, and exegetical nuances.[162] Conservative theology it may have been, but it was at the level of the people, thus re-setting the pathway of learning, opening up a streak of reflections on their past experiences needed for self-directed improvement. Not that they were really in want of another prescription of moral-spiritual correctness; it was in their shared-memory text. Persuasion-visits by the minister therefore were not required.

Much desired instead was a seasoned message to neutralise the tartness of the sea of influences. Muagututi'a said of the first time he heard Rev. Ete preached, *"it was different...especially the Samoan language."* Precious thoughts are often lost in poor speech. Judging from the comments of many, the congregation was appreciating both his thoughts and the languag-ing. One significant quality of Rev. Ete is the fact that he is bilingual and conversant in both. A cousin of mine who came down from Auckland for my brother-in-law's funeral in 1991 could only remark after the service, "Wow! That man," having heard him for the first time. English and Samoan were used. Such was the great impression of the stimulating impact 'this boy' had on congregation members right from the start. He demonstrated the power of language, and the 'word' transformed.[163]

Power and knowledge are inseparable in Foucault's view.[164] Those who maintained the upper hand in the congregation had been in New Zealand much longer. They assumed they knew more and were probably correct too. Furthermore, they guarded their authority with their seniority status in the church, by perpetuating the practice of *'fesili mulimai iä muamai'* (later-arrivals must ask the first-arrivals). The thinking and language did not really change and Rev.Ete was picking it up. At a congregation meeting, one of them was signalling for a chance to speak, but was completely ignored by the minister until the matter was closed. The member raised

[162] See Rev. Ete's Sermon in Appendix IV.
[163] Kepa, T. M. A. 2000 *Educational Philosophy and Theory* 32 (1) is pushing for migrant languages to be used in instructions in school for learning to be effectively emancipatory.
[164] Gordon, C. [ed] op. cit.

himself and rudely announced his displeasure. "I have been raising my hand for a long time. Why didn't you give me a chance?"

The response was brief and stark. "I have the sole authority here. I choose who to speak, and who not to speak. Sit down."

Falefitu well remembered it, as he believed the occasion to be the beginning of a change in manners of disposition. The Reverend understood his position well and he could be snappy. Members were on their guard. In terms of a positive outcome, people began to direct their speeches at the chair, not at each other, which was the cause of many arguments. Unfortunately, the minister tended to become the target of members' disappointments; even his own wife joined the people with their questions and attacks upon him. The minister's patience was truly tested but the change somehow reduced ill feelings among members themselves. It was a welcome change. The congregation began to share and discuss, gradually regaining once more through the practice, the feel of communal touch.

The loss of community was the loss of salvation. Salvation is like paying passages of relatives to come over. It is a communal chain – the saving of a life-way - upon which individual saving is dependent. In New Zealand, people were proselytised into society-based thinking that emphasised the individual. Not ignoble by any means, only that they were caught in the 'pushes and pulls' of their existence, as they too were aware of the discrepancies of the Samoan way. They had an illusion for instance that they were competitive in the individual manner when in practice they were competing as families and groups. They ended up competing as a congregation to secure a church home for themselves. Given the belittling attitude towards, and isolation of the Wellington CCCS, the denominational identity of the church needed to be augmented to instil the community spirit, and making its members become more aware of the institutional character of this Samoan Church.

Trail-Blazing.

In the first ten years, the church had four venues for worshipping. From Vivian Street, they moved on to the Apostolic Church at Webb Street, then to the Anglican Chinese Mission Church, Taranaki Street. Rev. Risatisone Ete was inducted at the last one on 21 December 1974.

Towards the end of 1975, the congregation was given termination notice of usage after December. Hasty negotiations went on with the Congregational Church at

Cambridge Terrace. Panic was evident at the end of a letter from Rev.Ete to Rev.J.H.Chambers on 9 Dec. 1975: "Thus the burden of this letter is to earnestly seek your help – whether your Church at Cambridge Terrace can be made available to our Church from January 1976." Luck was with Rev. Ete. Permission was granted as conveyed in a letter of 16 December 1975 from the Secretary Mr.E.J.T. Hill, for use of the church to begin as requested. Like previous venues, the congregation could only use it on vacant time. Extra use was negotiated as they had done at 70 Webb Street with the Charisma Chapel frequently requested for weddings, Mothers Fellowship Services, and other such occasions. The Thistle Hall at Cuba Street was retained for social functions and meetings.

An increase in the membership of the church was noticed from time to time except the total was not large enough, said Taitu'uga. Regular attendance of members was not guaranteed. A probable reason was that, only a small number of members had cars. Fiu Samuela had to take several trips every Sunday, transporting his family and the minister's to and from church. For after church functions, the majority walked from Cambridge Terrace to the Thistle Hall, and this went on for a good period of time. Payments for both venues were usually behind and there were letters of complaints about the lack of proper care of the premises. It meant the congregation was always at the danger of being sent on its way again. The struggles and threats of 1975 did not extinguish the slight sense of optimism that was resparked by having a new minister. Eight years later, members came to enjoy playing cards and having other social activities in a spacious hall of their own, at the completion of the church project. Social cultivation in the church played a major part in accomplishing this.

Education.

Evelyn Downs who taught at Papauta Girls School in the 1920s was especially interested in the way education should be conducted in Samoa.

> It is for those who seek to bring to the Samoan villagers a wider knowledge, and a fuller development of personality, to consider how the intrinsic truth of Christianity can purify and enlarge the spirit and outlook of a Samoan way of life, to decide how education in its truest sense, the development of the inherent qualities, can bring to these conservative and primitive communities that higher appreciation of personality so essential to real progress, to give the Samoan student the critical faculty which may protect him and his race from indiscriminate acceptance of all things foreign.[165]

[165] Downs, E. A. 1944 pp 10-11.

Education was to be of great consequence in the new period of the Church's life. Fresh from Malua Theological College, the experiences of the minister and wife were a bonus in revamping the Sunday School. Mrs.Fereni Ete was effective in this area in so far as programs and training of teachers were concern. An added session of quizzes by the minister even attracted adults' participation, before worship services. The pastor's school (*a'oga a le faife'au*)[166] was/is invaluable in Samoan language retention particularly through reading, writing, and reciting in examinations. These competencies were to be publicly demonstrated later in the highlight of their year, the Children's Sunday, when they recited Bible verses (for beginners), performed in drama or skits, and singing. The youth group was the channel for continual religious instructions and cultural orientation, where the young and old were mixed until their separation later on into the junior and senior groups. Before the split, parents and their children came together to Thursday or Friday sessions, and even after, some of the juniors would continue to be members of the senior group. Usually at Sunday meals (*to'ona'i*), deacons and wives were deliberately engaged in discussions on biblical and theological statements, as younger males and females who served, listened on. It was on-going learning for lay preachers apart from their periodic training sessions. At every possible chance Lealaileauloto maintained, the minister would stress the themes of knowledge, wisdom, and perseverance, not just for the young to hear, but parents in particular. In the minister, the people were hearing the familiar 'voices' of their former teachers, their parents and forbears, of their previous pastors and chiefs. Their voices are the sources of courage, motivation, and noble intentions.

Most of the children who grew up in this period excelled later in their different fields of study and training, and are well placed now in the workplace. Some continued on to higher education and had gone on to levels far beyond expectations. Worth mentioning in this capacity were/are those who entered Malua Theological College[167] for the simple reason that preparatory study for the entrance was solely facilitated by the Minister, and more importantly, the progress made by some after graduation.

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[166] Originally, the objective was to improve literacy competencies, but were added subjects like science (*femitia'i*), geography (*tala i le lalolagi*), arithmetic, comprehension, Samoan grammar, apart from Biblical and doctrinal topics, for general knowledge. Children started attending when they were able to speak. Secular subjects were eliminated from the syllabus in the 1970s. See.Downs ibid. pp 20-21 for a description of the Pastor's school and Education in Samoa.

[167] Founded in 1844 as a Training School for early pastors and missionaries. Malua College is currently offering the Bachelor of Theology and Bachelor of Divinity Degrees.

1979 Rudolf Stanley – became a minister in Samoa and Christchurch – died 2002
1981 Tasi Matagi – currently minister of Wainuiomata CCCS.
1985 Peni Leota – currently Lecturer, Malua Theological College, Ph.D. candidate.
Fe'atuna'i Liua'ana – same as Peni
Naite Fa'anana – was a minister in Samoa.
1996 Peletisara Lima & wife Michiko (nee Ete) – both currently Lecturers, Malua Theological College.
1997 Risatisone Ete – entered as Student/Lecterer; currently Ph.D. candidate, Australia.
1998 Titi Fereti – currently with the Church awaiting a call.
1999 Vaega'au Liko – to complete
Siaosi Salesulu - "
2001 Poloaiga Imo - "
Aliota Lealaileauloto Tiatia - "

The first two pioneered the way to ministry training. Those who followed were much younger with either one or two degrees or better qualifications in their trades. They entered theological and ministry training adequately equipped. In turn, they replenished the Samoan-ness of the church. All those who were raised in the congregation are still regarded by members of the church as 'our children' (*o a matou fanau*). That goes for everyone including those who are no longer associated with it. Even Phillip Field, the first Pacific Islander in Parliament, is referred to as 'a child of the church'. Academic and employment successes were not the only admirable outcomes of the educating project. Minimising and eliminating criminal tendencies among its people has been quite a feat. Family situations were improved.

The scope covered by the educational project for years and still, ranges from the elementary to the tertiary level. Later additions included the *a'oga amata*,[168] and training programs for Samoan early childhood teachers run by the minister's wife. The home study centre is a recent one. Yet the youth groups, choir, women's fellowship, deacons fraternity continued the learning chain within the adult section of the community. Pepa Hollis has observed that the general educational program of the church is well set, and has greatly helped the congregation in many ways.

Education was/is very close to the minister's heart, he told me, and was/is at the base of his ministry. Though a minister, his relationship with the congregation was more like that of a teacher-principal to a school. He might be rather instructional from the pulpit, but the general nature of the ministry would make him a facilitator in most

areas. Education has been/is the major transforming agent of attitudes for communal enlightenment extremely vital in the life of the church. It truly restored pride and confidence, and expanded faith.

Social Significance.

Education and religion played a large part in the social development of the Wellington CCCS. By 1980, the social significance of the church as a community for its members was gradually unfolding. The rapport among members of the congregation pointed to greater things. Members' enthusiasm to talk about their church was no longer hidden from the Samoan public manifesting signs of growing pride among, and confidence within, themselves. Fruits of internal nurturing programs injected a degree of seriousness in the attitude of younger generations towards educational success. That Rudolf Stanley and Tasi Matagi attended Malua Theological College in the early 1980s was added pride for the church, a pride needed indeed at the time in which the congregation was at the starting point of the road to tackling its grand project. The Porirua CCCS by comparison was well established then in terms of property assets, having already built a manse, a church building and hall. Its location was advantageous as Samoans could easily find homes there. Yet, arguments persisted internally resulting in a division between two major factions of people from two village polities in Samoa. Lacking was an ethos-base.[169] The two groups vied for control and influence, eventually ending in a split. Wellington CCCS on the other hand, after a rough time of negotiated meanings of roles *vis-à-vis* practices, behaviours, attitudes, and guiding concepts (principles), had reached a stage where members concurred on a socio-cultural-religio value-mat of their own weaving, enhancing social relationships and order.

Making progress in this respect put the Wellington CCCS on a firm social ground, but it did not end the worries of the church. The church building project was

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[168] The first to be set up in New Zealand in 1985 based on the Pastor's School model and perhaps the Lakena Nursery at Papauta.

[169] In my view, the division apart from the politics grounded on affective-ties (village and family allegiance), was a recurrence of the unsettlement experience that Wellington CCCS went through in the 1970s viz., the battle of opinions between ex-PIC and new arrivals. This also was the cause of the split at Wainuiomata resulting in the break-away group affiliating with the Congregational Christian Church of American Samoa, and would be true also of the Petone CCCS split. The point is that, arguments continued on the right-wrong poles. These instances showed (1) the difficulty of perceiving Samoans as a homogenous unit; (2) the difference between institutional structures and communities; (3) the lack of mental space given for negotiation i.e. improvisation and compromise. These *inter alia* are aspects of the deterritorialisation dilemma *vis a vis* self-definition.

far still from reality. Adequate finances was the main concern which depended on an adequate roll for contributions, or a good number of financially well off members, neither of which the Church had. The Wellington CCCS was denied a rapidly increased roll due to the outward movement of Samoans from central Wellington to suburban areas, and the establishment of several more churches of other denominations. These churches gave recognition of the Wellington CCCS, although recognition was as much as it could get. The minister was invited to join certain ministers' fraternities in Wellington, the Congregational Union of New Zealand (CUNZ) and the National Council of Churches (NCC). Having a church building of its own would have enlarged its image, and it would have been duly respected.

However, when the demolition in 1981 of buildings at the present site at Owen Street was carried out, it marked the beginning of a momentous step in the life of the church. The congregation had a task ahead to complete while its latent significance was petering out. The social significance of a church building had never disappeared from sight: a symbol of identity; a meeting ground of religion and culture, of traditional and rationalised systems and structures, of secularised and transcendental social control; a venue for generating and transmitting knowledge for shaping and dressing characters, and setting pathways. Members consequently adopted a responsible attitude towards the project. At this juncture, the congregation was just beginning to collect funds to finance the project. The cost of the property and demolition expenses used up the money it had.

Eagerness for the project strengthened the emphasis on community concern. Quite noticeable in this area was a shift towards the traditional way of thinking regarding Christian and Samoan values and concepts, thus heightening the level of emotional responses that were manipulated to the ends of their common dream. The shift from societal to communal, from rational to traditional way of thinking, was possible through hearing the past, and being reminded of the learning and experiences in Samoa.[170] Memebers of the Wellington CCCS resorted to familiar strategies known to them, and that would work for them.

[170] This may be considered a shift from deterritorialisation to decontextualisation i.e. peoples amended their social worldviews by inviting their cultural heritages into their current social milieu. Social decontextualisation in this sense is a 'reaction' to nationalised or globalised systems, apparent in attempts by indigenous populations and ethnic minority groups, an effect of the decolonisation process by which their cultures and histories are recontexualised within societies as their way forward.

***Fa'afeagaiga* rediscovered.**

Equal credit also must certainly be given to the efforts of church members. No matter how skilful Rev.Ete had been and continuing to be, 'a fisherman is liable of a miss' (*E poto le tautai 'ae së le atu i le ama*). As Taitu'uga reflected on Rev. Ete's ministry, he referred to the expression '*E leai se faiva e 'asa ma se mäumäu*' (there is no effort without waste).

> *The situation in our living relation (va-nonofo) with the elder minister (toea'ina), I have not known if there was any shuffle (gäsë). Because the truth is, from a human viewpoint,*[171] *and I'm not shy [to say], it is not the case that the minister was solely good; it is not that the congregation was wholly good. They worked together. That is the true word. There were times when the minister was at fault from a human viewpoint. The minister is not a god. Many times I felt the [vexing] effect in my mind in working with the [elder] minister. But no. The focus was on God and his will.*

Apart from being an ex-teacher, Rev.Ete was also a former policeman. Even worse for the congregation, he was/is a committed person. The single-mindedness with which he rigidly pursued his objectives soured relations with parishioners at times. Fortunately, there was no strong challenge against his stiff approach otherwise, a major hiccup could have spoiled the ministry. Reflecting on the congregation Taitu'uga continued:

> *My observation of the Church [was that], members were not that old, but they were noble people. Whatever, they drink it, [and] there was no numbness. The fact was, if the [elder] minister wanted something, it went ahead unaltered. It is a working congregation. [Members] just observe and do.*

From a counter-ready frame of mind to tolerance on the part of members of the congregation, was a grand step, and interactions despite differences of opinions and feelings, focused largely on problem solving. They were on the path to achieve something they had been longing for – a legitimate recognition of their group through

[171] The expression *va'aiga fa'a-le-tagata* is commonly used in contrast to a theological or spiritual view namely *va'aiga fa'a-le-agaga.*

proving to the public and themselves, what they were/are, in what they can produce. From 1975, the congregation was on a focus-path towards the church building project led by the minister. But a leader is only as good as the follower. In working together, they shared the threat of doubt, the anguish of having to compromise thoughts and ideas, the agony of sacrificing individual conviction and knowledge, the disgust, and 'fogging' out.

The spin of mind-frame unveiled recovered knowledge. The minister has been referred to in a variety of terms – *tama* (boy), *toea'ina* (old person or position of elder minister), *tamä* (father), *faife'au* (pastor, servant), and *fa'afeagaiga* (honorific title). The terms signify in their intimate and positional connotations the background expectations about a minister. *Fa'afeagaiga* became the moderating concept for acceptable standard of behaviour in relations with the minister. Falefitu reflected:

> *Think of Samoa. Well, [the relation with] pastors in Samoa is not as intense. But the very thought – Who am I a single person to make a statement against the pastor? Samoa is a bit better because in the village, my father has a right to say something, being a party in instituting the contract with the minister. But here, how can Falefitu from [the single village of] Fasito'otai dare be disrespectful to the* fa'afeagaig*a <u>of all Samoa</u>. There is fear in the* fa'afeagaiga *...as if that is another power coming towards you that you have to tolerate.*

This learning was fruitful recovery of the *va-nonofo* idea concerning the relation with the minister, regarding the change of the term from the role performer *faife'au,* to the covenantal relationship in *fa'afeagaiga,* and the relation became emotional and deeper. Members followed with trust. They were not going to let their minister down, after all, the *fa'afeagaiga* embodies their social identity, and collective and cultural dignity, stretching the consciousness further to touch-base with the intrinsic spirituality notion of the concept.

The congregation had people who helped to reset a healthy atmosphere and recover this understanding. Ta'avao Aiono's previous experience as secretary and treasurer became extremely useful. Fiu continued to provide valuable counsel for the minister. The addition of Mapusua Fealofani Lima,[172] an accountant, was greatly

[172] He and his family left St.Ninian Presbyterian Church Karori and joined in 1975.

valued in later years. Trend-setting perhaps the mood, hence the shift in thinking, has to start with Viliamu Daniels (Tagaloa) who was the secretary of the church when Rev. Ete arrived. He was an exemplary figure in conduct, but his main virtue was that, he listened. A humble person with not too many ideas, he assisted with more than he was recognised for, in keeping the congregation well informed, in the 'noble' (*tamali'i*) manner. His successor Ugaitafa Fereti, whom the congregation endeared very much, held the position from 1976 until his sudden death on 23 May 2000. Taitu'uga spoke fondly of him.

> *He was a person of the work; a very persevering person; a person full of humility; a person who created peace; a reconciler of the Church.*

Ugaitafa Fereti as secretary saw to the church project from the initial stages until the final payment of the debts. How fitting that his death occurred inside the church.

Fa'afeagaiga became more meaningful with the recognition of *fa'a-Samoa* and 'seat of *matai*'. The minister once again was properly perceived beyond the category of a mere performer. Although the congregation had not lost sight of *fa'afeagaiga*, it had always been shuffled aside, paid lip service because the essential feeling to uphold its significance was absent. Also, how it was understood was not the same way as would be in a village context, where the minister is immediately placed in the ready-seat of status and security. The meaning of *fa'afeagaiga* in the Wellington CCCS was negotiated out of bitterness and befuddlement. However, the minister was not aware of the change. He was busy doing just what members of the church were hoping to see happening, the effect of which enabled them to redeem the deeper meaning. The notion of *va-tapuia*[173] was revived, salvaging the respect that had been crudely distorted by the lure of liberty and liberal thinking. True respect is never fully gained by disciplinary means, or manipulative mechanisms, but comes through understanding the meaning of ideal concepts of relationships. Noble dispositions (*aga fa'atamali'i*) together with restored spirituality, were regained social assets, and these proved priceless in the course of the project. The emerging atmosphere was a healthy one for constructive thinking in planning out strategies for

[173] See Appendix II.

the project. Despite minimum consultations on this matter, there was the ability of many to interpret what was proposed.

Anxious Years: 1980 -1985.

By 1980, the church was already running smoothly. Yet, members of the congregation felt that having worshipped at Cambridge Terrace for five years was far too long. What was happening to the funds for the church? When would we hear of a church building proposal? They felt as foreigners in two ways: as immigrants, and as a church people.

In the same year, the CCCS held a special General Assembly in Samoa, at Sapapali'i where John Williams originally introduced Christianity to Malietoa Vainu'upo, and was accorded the honorific *fa'afeagaiga.* The occasion was to mark the 150th Anniversary of the Samoan Church. The feeling evoked by history and celebration had an impact on the delegates of the Wellington CCCS, especially the minister himself, to move things as a beginning of another era. Unfortunately, the General Assembly, having decided on a monument of a six-story John Williams Building in Apia, asked for increased financial contributions from each congregation through the *Taulaga Samoa.* A later decision allocated certain sums for each congregation according to size, specifically for the project. They were received in the month of May apart from the usual December offerings.

As financial commitments multiplied, the Wellington CCCS was also falling behind in payments. After prior warnings concerning an invoice of 31 January 1980, a letter from Phillips and Impey Ltd in 1981 stated, "We are now treating your account as seriously overdue. Your urgent attention will avoid the embarrassment of imposing a seven day ultimatum." A similar one was from M.S.D.Speirs Ltd. "We regret that payment of your account as required has not been made...and insist that payment be made immediately," referring to an invoice of 31 March 1980, and numerous others. So were the Town Planning Consent fee ($600.00) for purchase of the Owen Street Property and the Wellington City Council demolition permit ($782.50).

Additionally, the prolonged Samoan Public Servants Association (PSA) strike in 1981 got people in New Zealand involved. Some people in New Zealand were pro-government (Samoan) and others felt for the public. As it gained momentum, it also made relationships among Samoans, even among relatives, delicate. Although Samoans in New Zealand were divided on the issue, the unfortunate circumstances of

relatives at home obliged them to send extra remittances and for some time, too. It coincided with the citizenship case[174] in regard of the overstayer issue in New Zealand. Ta'avao Aiono raised the matter with the minister for support on the Privy Council costs. Both incidences as well as financial demands had psychological effects on Samoans, and members of the Wellington CCCS were not exempted. These *fa'alavelave* were truly important to which they responded, but their main concentration was on the church project.

I passed through in 1983 on my way to Dunedin and attended a Sunday Service at Cambridge Terrace. Tasi Matagi was preaching on the day. A special collection was made for him afterwards, besides the usual '*atina'e*' (development fund), family-plates for the church building, and the *alofa* (stipend of the minister). The attendance, though not a large number, was totally different from 1970. I remembered the crowd of young children on that occasion.

In 1985, the congregation hosted my family in a holiday arrangement by the CCCS in New Zealand, for scholarship students of the CCCS from Samoa. By then, the project was completed. I had a session with the choir that epitomised the church at the time – the solidarity, the eagerness, the joy. I arranged a traditional tune to Hymn 40 (a translation of Isaac Watt's 'When I survey the wondrous cross') for them and observed young Egelese Ete labouring hard on it on the electric organ. He is well known now in choral music and currently studying for a M.Mus. at the University of Auckland. His excelling has long been coming, but he is one instance of success among many of his generation, hatched within the soul and dynamics of the community where water was/is bitter, but grace was/is even sweeter.

Conclusion.

To guarantee change, learning needs to be stimulating to elicit intended outcomes. The influence of the minister on the congregation in this area has been enormous. Firstly, his intentions were made clear on the area of social development while the plan for the church building loomed secondary as a counterpoint. His previous experience proved to great advantage in his new post even coming to be entangled in the dynamics of a new environment. As argued in this chapter, his impact stimulated the rediscovery of faith and pride by members themselves, through

[174] The Case of *Lesa vs Crown* taken to the Privy Council. Dr. Barton and Rosenberg represented Lesa. Samoans across the country fundraised for the cost. The decision changed the course of history and socio-political relations in New Zealand, regarding Samoans and other ethnic groups.

recapturing Samoan traditional way of knowing and understanding, which empowered them to wade through bitter experiences, to realise the web that was their communal-self. Education (learning) was pivotal to the transformation but the change had to begin with the development of what Evelyn Downs called the 'inherent qualities of personality'.

Secondly, his language played an extremely important part in transforming the mindset that members displayed in behaviours and attitudes towards the church and its message. Of historical interest in this regard, well before the Labour Government of the 1980s promoted community initiatives, the Wellington CCCS had already been proactive in doing things for themselves. At this point, members of the Wellington CCCS appeared capable of dealing with anything that seemed to jeopardise the growth and further development of the church.

The Samoan language and the Christian message empowered members. Responding to these enamoured their emotions with memories of yesteryears. The understanding of Samoan values and practices were uncovered gradually, and made use of, in reconstituting a formula of value-consensus that improved internal relationships, especially relations between members of the congregation and the minister. It was encouraged further by the desire for a church building of their own in that, their feelings were enfolded by a communal focus, than being drawn to societal concern at the time. However, there was an outward movement as well, in terms of secularising its programs, operations, and co-ordinating of practices, thus enabling members to extend their view of the social significance of the church. Education and religious training went hand in hand in fostering this consciousness, which, as anticipated, merged together the common intention of members for a localised faith community, and expanding its social utility to meet the common dream of parents and their children.

The previous chapter concentrated on tracing the path of restoring a social base, to which the possibility of developing a community, and sustaining its stability, are attributed. Whereas the focus on the religious aspect in previous years had merits, it was easily interfered by other forces. This chapter illustrates how the social base was further reinforced by a change of approach, one that hinged modern and traditional views in processes of sacralisation and secularisation, and utilising societal and communal concerns, in consolidating the church. The community was the best vantage point for looking at society, but its survival and growth could not be ensured,

let alone enlarge its social image and utilitarian objectives, if it did not share societal interests and offers.

Notwithstanding all these, it is the revival of a deeper Christian faith within members to which the intensification of the change is attributed. Members' responses to the Christian message signified inner belief, shown by the common courage they shared in mobilising their aspiration of the past towards fulfilment.

CHAPTER EIGHT: THE PROJECT – 1ST MOVEMENT.

Ua fa'aoloolo ma'au
[Looking and inducing favours]

Introduction.

Good planning harvests premium results but they are unlikely to be achieved if much needed resources for implementation are scanty. Modifying the plan to suit capability is a rational step to take. Sometimes, urgency forces the reverse – taking a risk. Daring under such circumstances, Samoan leaders often resort to the expression of a game in the lagoon, *togi le uto ae fe'ausi i ai*[175] (cast a float and swim towards it). Either it shows belief in human potential, or a trust in the people. Meanwhile, leaders would be like pigeon-catchers, who in waiting, imitate the pigeon's cry (*fa'aoloolo*), while swinging their heads around (*ma'au solo*) in looking for signs of a flock. Undertakings of a huge nature are often thought of in a game-like manner, capitalising on the competitive and sacrificial aspects of human nature. Luck and accident are not discounted.

A Dream is born.

I asked Fiu and Fuaiupu about the Church Project. *"It's the minister, all of the minister's doing"* they repeatedly affirmed in a tone of finality. The others, Salesulu, Falefitu, Taitu'uga, Muagututi'a, Lealaileauloto and wife Taumate could not agree more. Rev. Ete himself admitted that, *"There wasn't much consultation on the project."* All of them insisted however that a church building had been in sight well before Rev.Ete arrived and was only a matter of time. Was it going to be what it is now? They all believed otherwise. *"It is a big question mark,"* said Falefitu, *"if something like this could have been achieved without Risati."* Salesulu was no different. *"I think if it was not for Risati who initiated this work, it is doubtful if it would be like as it is. This work was hatched in Risati's time, not a continuation from the past."*

Coming to the Wellington Congregation, Rev. Ete appreciated the fact that it did not have a church building. An opening was available to him to materialise what had been in his mind for years. *"It was my dream,"* he spoke contemplatively, echoing that famous quote of Martin Luther King Jr. The dream was born in Fiji, at the Pacific

[175] It may have been derived from, or was used for deciding on a successor (like flipping a coin) in the tradition of *fa'a-a'auga-tama* in the village of *Taga*, in which three candidate brothers compete in reaching the float.

Theological College (where he was a student in 1969), "*in John Garret's*[176] *course on Indigenising of Worship.*" Rev. Ete had also been lecturing in Worship and Liturgy at Malua Theological College before and after his studies in Fiji. Indigenisation underlined the whole project and nothing was to retard his intention. He was passionate about it.

Piling.

Soon after he had started his ministry, the congregation was set on a focus-trail. Rev. Ete arrived in December 1974 at a church without funds, one that was still making loan-payments for its Willis Street property. As soon as February the following year, a special fund was created and itemised for a church building to which member families of the church contributed on a weekly basis. On the 10th anniversary of the church celebrated on 29 June 1975, family-plates were reintroduced and the total of $7,201.00 collected on the occasion went into the fund. For the congregation, it was a substantial amount. It amazed members that they could have collected such a large sum. The enthusiasm was hoisted thenceforth. Suddenly, all monetary gifts to the church were automatically destined for the special pool.

In July, Rev. Ete explored possible channels of government assistance in a letter to G. O'Brien MP, indicating that the congregation was "in the process of launching a building project." The enquiry was raised with the Minister of Maori Affairs but the expectation of a concrete outcome failed to be forthcoming, despite also an assurance from F.D. O'Flynn MP to Rev. Ete in 1981, "You can be assured that all the Wellington Labour MPs and all my fellow Labour City Councilors will continue to do everything in their power to improve the lot of Island people living in Wellington." An application sent to the Todd Foundation in December 4 1975 seeking funds mentioned the "intention to build a Church building and Hall at Willis Street Property" as the reason. A later correspondence to the Trustee Bank regarding increased interest charges on the church's loan for the project, indicated that the congregation had no outside assistance at all.

Weekly contributions continued. Two dollars was common for the majority at the time when five or ten dollars were considered quite large sums. By 1981, the demand was escalating. A committee appointed for fund-raising re-applied 'family-plates' in 1982 and after, issuing a list of families (five or six) for each month with a

[176] See footnote 6 p.8.

notice statement (iv) in the list explaining that: "Contributions for the Church will continue as usual – but family-plates on Sundays are additions. Families on Sundays of their 'family plate' shall be exempted from the normal contribution for the Church." Giving continued to increase as time went on. The minister did not understand much about the condition of the people, the majority of whom were driven to deep-ends by continuous demands of the church. He invested in the patent gusto of members and their religious *va*-regard for the church, for anticipating positive responses. The pride and faith of members were really tested.

Driving the Gamble.

After the 150th Anniversary of the CCCS in 1980, the congregation, steered by the minister, shifted into another gear in the endeavour towards achieving their long suspended dream. The Willis Street property was sold. The surplus from it, plus accumulated funds of past years was used for purchasing the Owen Street site. A piece of good news followed later relayed by Jeffries and Murphy Law Firm, regarding a drop in City Council rate-charges from $3,298.00 to $967.00 as the area was no longer classified industrial but residential.

One bold decision taken by the church then was refusing to host any fund raising group from Samoa or elsewhere in New Zealand, as was in the cases of Alamagoto, To'omatagi, and Vaivase-tai requests. Obviously the church was desperately raising funds of its own. For the first time during Rev.Ete's ministry, a *tusigä igoa* (registration of names) was decided upon (the second in the church). It was a great day for the congregation and for Samoans in Wellington who gathered at Cambridge Terrace on 26 September 1981, to lend support. A feast followed at the YMCA Hall. Finances obtained from the event provided the base-fund for the new church. In the same year, the congregation managed to collect for all its various commitments to the CCCS, a total of $13,680.00. This total was not exceeded again until 1987 (see Table below).

The congregation was experiencing new circumstances and they increased their efforts as they went along. New strength, new capability, new enthusiasm were propelling the congregation. "*It was the time of the minister's brain working in full function. He has just come...he was young, he was youthful*" complimented Salesulu. Falefitu added, "*Because he was acting a double role. Not only in his pastoral work, but also his role as if a boss,*" he ended chuckling. Visualising the end result before it

actually materialised was exhilarating. The thrill solicited by the positive expectation induced a beautiful feeling among the congregation on launching the project. To envisage the project then through the enormity of the cost would have been a different story altogether. At the time, the immensity of the project cost-wise was not known. "*I thought the project was not that big. When it progressed, it was an expensive one*," Taitu'uga remarked. Deacons and board members anyway agreed to the launch of the project; the congregation, as usual, endorsed it later.

The Board of Trustees formed in 1976 became the caucus group of the congregation during the project period. In its early days, the Board was referred to in a mocking manner (*ula i ai*). Because it was a new unit within the church structure, members were unable to grasp its essential function, as it was different to churches in Samoa where major projects of the kind were normally under the control of the *matai* and deacons. The congregation got used to the idea of a board after a while, and board members themselves soon came to understand its function through meetings. They became very much involved in the dream making the dream theirs, as they became close allies of the minister in the course of the work.

Interruptions.

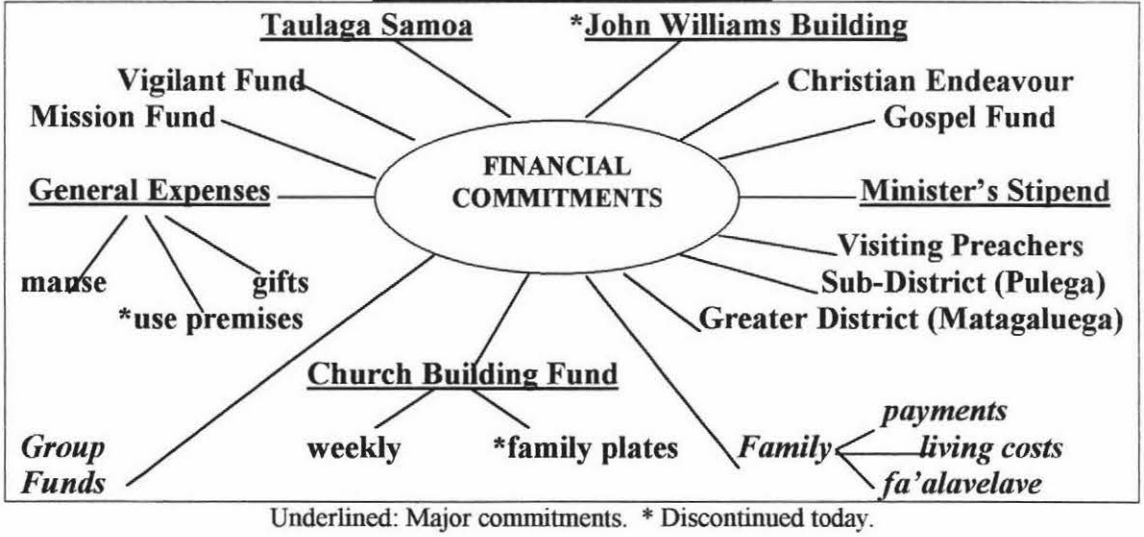
Often, dreams are either impeded or encouraged, depending on circumstances. Fulfilling a dream implies a hard way ahead. As common experience would confirm, problems are to be expected. In what form or shape they appear are not predictable, and circumstances can influence human emotions and reasons to decide for or against. Wise counsel is necessary when emotions appear to take control of critical situations.

Within six month of settling in, the minister was engulfed in some worrying circumstances that drew his attention to the reality of his situation. The Immigration Department called for his residential-permit (and family) to be reviewed and that had been a fright at the time of close checks on migrants and the tidying up of immigration rules. The residency permit was settled after negotiations and explanations. It forced him to deal with matters pertinent to Government statutes and policies. The experience proved handy when the manse was burned down in December 1975, and his family was placed in emergency housing, an arrangement that enraged him. Firstly, sharing a 'shelter' with another family was a ridiculous arrangement, and secondly, the shelter was not a decent accommodation fit for a family, let alone anyone to live in. He wrote to various people and departments

concerned with little hopeful response. An application for a state house was instantly rejected for the expressed reason that the minister had not been in the country long enough to be eligible for one. These survival issues affecting his family directly made him looked beyond his congregation.[177] But he had learned also of bureaucratic red tape and unfruitful results. He needed to be the captain of his own ship.

Although the congregation was sympathetic with his situation, there was little that people could do about it. However, when members requested that the church building fund should be spent on the manse, he would not 'budge'. Later, when urgent repairs were needed for the new manse, the same happened. About thirty thousand was needed at the time when members were truly hard up financially. His resolve was unshaken. Debate led to unrestrained tempers. People grumbled and began to raise suspicious questions about the church's funds. It was worsened by the fact that the majority of Board Members could not answer the simple query of whether the church had any available funds at all. They did not give any explanation, as they were unsure themselves. They simply worked on the urgent need with heightened zest to procure finances. The rest was passed on to officers of the church and the minister. Monthly financial statements as common practice encouraged people to give more. Members heard on Sundays the names of contributors and a total read out after the services, a bank balance maybe, and a 'big thank you'. Given the multi-commitments (diagram below) to which members were subjected while their particular request at the time was denied, they had all the reasons to be disillusioned. They were - extremely.

WELLINGTON CCCS, 1983



Underlined: Major commitments. * Discontinued today.

[177] There were other delicate domestic matters affecting the minister's relationships with the congregation that were discouraging and adding extra pressure. His situation in regard to housing and immigration was common to Pacific Islanders. Nothing much they could do about it then.

Eventually, a loan was proposed for the repairs. Signaling their disappointment, members argued that there was to be a loss on interest paid whereas borrowing from the church building fund would incur none – a simple common sense, simple arithmetic argument. Reimbursing the fund was also promised. Some members claimed the right to 'our money' to be used in whatever 'we' decided on. Despite emotions and reasons, the answer was 'No', *"and the Minister heard adverse comments from the people. No, he still wouldn't give in."* It was not the last of such arguments and unfavourable remarks. In spite of this, Falefitu explained that,

> *Church [members] knew how heavy it was of what they were going to face. But at that time, we felt [that] if we were going to be weakened... (unfinished sentence)... because it was the beginning of [a period of] no letting up, because not only [that] the contributions [were] on every Sunday, but also things like family plates, ten families... It was all in persevering and [with] the love of God. Although the people had seen what was going on but they kept on coming. Almost every Sunday without a miss, was a new family added to the Church.*

Members may have failed to take into account that the minister had been a bursar at Malua Theological College. Presumably they never knew that Rev. Ete had taken a year's course on developmental planning in Japan.[178] His knowledge and experience no doubt were put into good use but Taitu'uga again said of the situation:

> *Most of the things were ignored because of the work of God. True. However difficult, however poor, but being one in spirit, and unison support, and putting together of minds, however difficult, I believe that is the way to accomplish something - one heart.*

Problems began to emerge elsewhere - in homes. Sometimes, a couple disagreed with the 'No' reply, or some other decisions that upset personal ego, or the family budget, then they went into a recess, angry, feeling low, guilty, confused. In other cases, the wife felt and thought differently, and rows continued in the home

[178] He learned the importance of human development, training, and family atmosphere in business and developmental projects.

between couples. In retrospection, men were not lacking in singing high praises of their wives for their views and counsel offered to them during those unsettled times. Financially weak families did not even want to be seen as infirm as well, despite struggling. They were competitive with the wives taking the lead. For instance, some of the women like Savaliga Tiatia became deacons first and that eventually drew their husbands in to take up the position and the challenge. Her husband Tiatia Liko is the current secretary of the church.

The financial situation of the church would have improved had it not been for various external commitments. Extra contributions for the John Williams Building and the PSA Strike in Samoa were extraneous demands that crossed in the path of the church. As well, there was the Privy Council Case regarding Samoan residency in New Zealand. The growing dissension in the National Party put people in a state of uncertainty at the time of frequent union strikes and the 'think big project' lying in tatters. There could not be a worse time to launch the project. Before the Rogernomics reform needle stung most New Zealanders in the late 1980s, members of the Wellington CCCS had had a taste of the injection already. Taitu'uga continued:

> *Families were affected in a big way...Because the very truth itself was that, whatever important thing that came up in your family at times of contributions, contribution was the priority. Family demands could be disregarded and fa'alavelave, except a funeral perhaps, but everything else were ignored. Anything relating to contribution was never forgotten. This is one thing with the life of a Samoan – a Samoan refused to be defeated by another Samoan. Failing to contribute on a Sunday would be a great embarrassment for anyone if a name were not read out as to perceive puny.*

Member-families that failed to keep up weekly contributions would miss church at intervals, but not the Sunday of their family-plate turn. A good amount on this day was a 'making-up' effort. Because of this, amounts of family-plates kept on increasing from Sunday to Sunday. The increase was not confined to contributions for the project. Annual offerings for the Samoan Church (CCCS) were likewise improved (see below), the same with the minister's stipend. Giving more is usually interpreted as irrational competition for reputation and praise. For many, it was/is reciprocating to the author of blessings or demonstrating the mettle of their faith.

Total Remittances p.a. to the CCCS

Year	Total	Year	Total
1980	$10,227.26	1986	$11,940.00
1981	13,680.00	1987	20,851.00
1982	13,319.00	1988	19,290.00
1983	11,057.00	1989	24,344.00
1984	12,040.00	1990	26,985.00
1985	11,547.00	1991	31,540.00

Not included: Stipend, Church Building Contributions.

High-toned enthusiasm, or fear, may have diffused the full impact of financial strains. Evident however, was the improved financial capability as shown in continual increases. It probably gave decision-makers confidence to go ahead with the project Hypothetically, the manifested capability encouraged decision-makers to negotiate a bigger project than what did the congregation was expecting.

The Architecture.

The church building plan had won the architect the New Zealand architecture prize of the year. Its unique design is why the twin-*fale* is also classed among the landmarks of Wellington, and included in sightseeing tours of the city. The planning of the buildings no doubt was to the satisfaction of the congregation, not just for its artistic appeal and cultural value, but also its practical utility for purposes of the church and any function to be held at the premises. The plan, however, was the cause of many woes later.

Never in the wildest dreams of any member of the congregation would have envisioned a church building of the type they now owned. According to Taitu'uga, most of the deacons anticipated a 'modern type' building like new contemporary churches in New Zealand. He heard that the plan might have been borrowed from Samoa but was not really sure, like the majority who did not know either. No wonder Falefitu and company misinterpreted the shape initially (in page twenty-seven) as he explained, "*This was not the shape we were thinking of because we did not see it. We were just informed of the plan and we went to have a look.*"

"*Most probably*" said Muagututi'a, "*I was the first one to be shown the plan of the building...I was very excited.*" He described the day the minister came to his work place full of eager and joy to explain the plan to him. He readily appreciated the idea

of a church in the shape of a Samoan *fale*, and not the usual gothic or a modern style building. He had no idea of the cost.

Setting eyes on the buildings for the first ever time, the plan aside, I was of the opinion that the idea had been suggested by a Samoan, and I believed then, it was a wish of the congregation. I put the question directly to Salesulu inquiring about whose idea it was that determined the shape of the church. His explanation seemed to deviate from common opinion.

> *The building - it is the architect. Because the [first] time we went to negotiate a plan, and the architect said, this is my belief and my own understanding of what he said. He said he has happily accepted the purpose of our visit and he would like [therefore] to draw a plan that would easily reflect the identity of the people who own the property. If the public passes by and watches on [they would] be able to identify the people through what they own. That was the architect's expressed idea. The minister accepted it immediately. I'm not too sure of Risati's side of the story and it is better to ask him. But that is my own understanding...according to the architect as I heard him said.*

Like others, he did not anticipate a building of the sort.

> *My own feeling [is that], true it is nice from any person's viewpoint, but that was the cause of the suffering - the plan, the shape. A straightforward structure would have cut down about half of the cost. I did not well figure out what sort of shape it was going to be; I did not know the cost. [I] had thought that three hundred thousand [dollars] was enough. That was what happened. When we were told of the cost, it was progressing into a million...the shape.*

He laughingly explained that the congregation did not have ample finances, yet the delegates tried to bargain with the architect "*a bigger plan for less cost as we used to do.*" In the end, the original projected total cost of the project was estimated at half a million or thereabout, but the congregation was not aware. It was a frightening total at the time. Notwithstanding, its symbolic significance and a shape that surely would be preferred by many, the architecture took over the emotions of members, but even if these were absent, the fact that a church was being built was all that mattered. There

were several alterations introduced during the course of the work. The addition of a hall to the plan had not been common knowledge either. Learning that it was included, the congregation was surprised, but ecstatic too. What was anticipated as a simple structure in the beginning, ended up as a complex one, and there were complications with the costings that the committee had to settle with the architect later. But what Samoan would say that a Samoan *fale* is simple, though simple it may appear?

It is not too excessive to say that the architecture enticed many minds to recapture the Samoan culture. The shape evoked memories of familiar images of the past. The *fale* reminded them of etiquette standards, norms, positions, and relationships; of speeches, stories, songs, dances and family devotions; of the aura, dignity, pride and awe. Art objects are judged on their intrinsic or extrinsic values and whatever beauty it is perceived to posses. However, Samoans in general largely appreciate art for its utility value and the church has more to it than a different shape, more than expressed or impressed splendor. Art is created to be useful, to interact with, as part of actual living. In the *fale,* they would have a home where they could find warmth within windy cold Wellington.

Building.

Free labour provided by church members could have minimised the cost. The Board wisely ignored this to avoid any potential problem. Gabites Porters and Partners Builders was contracted through the architect for the project which took about twelve months to complete. The corner stone of the church was laid underneath the very spot where the Holy Communion Table now stands, as intended by the minister himself. As building progressed, members visited to watch in their spare time, even members of other Samoan congregations came around after work. This was in accordance with the spirit of *tapua'iga* (rendering moral and spiritual support). Although the word got around in the beginning that the shape was of a Samoan *fale*, they did not really know, as Salesulu had said, how it would finally appear. The congregation was left in a curious state. They were gladdened and proud nonethles, when the shape revealed itself. Said Taitu'uga:

> *The Congregation thought, it was to be a cheaper project, but when the building took shape, that was one part of [our] pride – the Church and Hall of*

the Congregation...in New Zealand...a pride it was, because it appeared it was built in the Samoan way (shape).

The morale was high, boosting the effort to sustain loan installments. So far, payments were on target. The ground floor of the hall was not included in the original plan until very late when it was considered best for practical reasons to continue with it. The builders might have suggested it as well. When it was near completion, a welding mistake caused a fire in the church. It caused a scare and derisive comments from outsiders who interpreted it as divine-intervention (on a Tower of Babel said Falefitu), against excessive proud-ness[179] and ambition. Though relatively a minor, damage it caused a setback nonetheless for builders who were fighting against time. Dedication was approaching when it happened and it was only then that the congregation found out that the pews were not included in the contract. A hasty decision on internal furnishing of the church was made. Luckily the bank responded favourably.

Spared from manual labour, the congregation concentrated on weekly contributions. The project was financed by a loan from the Trustee-Bank. For whatever reason the bank agreed on lending a substantial amount to a group that had no previous record of dealing with a big project, was a mystery to church members. The payments were consistent but the costs kept on mounting. There is a general consensus expressed by Salesulu regarding the project: *"O se galuega manuia tele"* (It was a work full of blessings).

Of course there was suffering. Lealaileauloto did not deny it but he believed that meeting the financila demands of the church then were much easier compared to the current situation. His opinion reflected the mood of the time when nothing was more important in their minds than to see the project to its completion. His general opinion was based on the situation of his own family. He and wife were both working while their children were still in school. They were paying two mortgages on their home, sending money to Samoa, besides remittances to the church. And they were able to do all. What the project taught them, which he strongly believed was the same for all families, was learning to take budgeting seriously. He also believed that during the project period, many of the families bought homes of their own.

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[179] Proud here means 'high-mindedness' - *mimita* or f*a'amaualuga* in contra-distinction to Pride as love of self or adoration of matters that pertains to identity – *mitamitaga.*

Despite the political and economic uncertainties of the late 1980s, many parents were able to find work, and consistent earnings enabled them to meet their commitments. Budgeting was invaluable learning. Support came from their grown children when they found employment. Importantly, the project raised the awareness to do something for them as well. As they developed the church, they also developed their families. Moreover, they were looking into what they were as individual families, and as a church family, in New Zealand, towards the future.

Dedication.

The dedication of a church building is a grand occasion. This *fa'alavelave* is one instance of how a western custom via Christianity was accommodated and transposed into the *fa'aSamoa.* Instead of just a devotion service, elaborate cultural practices are added to the celebration. The 'program' adopted by the Wellington CCCS is a standard one in any Dedication.

Tali Aiga: The hosting-reciprocating of extended families and friends two days at least before the actual day, who present money and fine-mats to member families of the church for their allocated contribution (*tüsaga*) as decided by the congregation. In return, member families reciprocate their 'helpers' likewise in the customary way.

Feiloa'i le Ekalesia: The congregation meets to collect contributions (*tüsaga*) from member families. Wellington CCCS decided on five thousand dollars ($5,000) and hundreds of fine mats per family. There were seventy-four (74) member-families.

Po Pese: 'The Night of Songs' before the day when invited congregations would compete in symphonic-like choral presentations[180] of the history of the project. Choirs present monetary gifts and reciprocated by prizes of fine-mats and perhaps money.

Ta'alolo: The processional presentations - fine mats, money, food, by villages or congregations having a connection of significance to the Church. For instance, Lalomalava village, (minister's village) on this occasion presented one organised by the then Prime Minister of Samoa, the late Tofilau E. Alesana, a head *matai* of the village. The Ketesemane CCCS, Porirua, presented fifty thousand dollars ($50,000) on the day. All *ta'alolo* were reciprocated with fine mats and food.

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[180] Symphonic-like as it includes a series of movements. The movements follow closely the topical format of the standard Samoan Speech. It is called the *Pese Tele* (Grand Song) and comprises: *Laulau-siva* (exciting introduction); *fa'atulou pa'ia* (addressing the dignities); *fa'afetai* (thanksgiving); *fa'aaloalo i e ua maliliu* (remembrance); *taeao* (historical mornings); *autu o le aso* (theme of the occasion – history, including humour); *fa'amatafi lagi* (benediction).

Tusiga o Meaalofa: Recording of monetary donations from guests and invitees to the occasion. They are reciprocated with the traditional *sua* and/or fine mats.

Sauniga: The Dedication Service

Taumafataga: The feast prepared by the congregation.

Fa'asilasila le ma'au: Acknowledgement of monetary gifts and the grand total.

Fa'aaloaloga: Presentations of prizes and reciprocation as above, family ones excluded.

Fa'amävae: The farewell and blessing speeches to close the Day.

A frequent quote of the day implying relief, victory, happiness was, *Ua tini pä'ö le uto e pei o faiva o tapalega*[181] (The float has hit its target as in the art of knocking around). It stated the reality of the experience of being 'knocked about' in the effort to get to the end of a great challenge. The effort deserved a grand celebration to recall the history, to record the memories, to reflect on the past, to remember the people, to feel the present. This was the feeling instilled for the Wellington CCCS by choirs on the 'night of songs' and participant speakers in the Dedication Service.

The celebration was huge and complex. It was punishing, panicking, frightening, and sweating. It was physically and mentally fatiguing. It was great learning as well – through watching, listening, remembering, and doing. It was elevating and memorable - the dream...the suffering...the *mana*...the *va* with him...her...them...God! Thanks. Congratulation! The Church in the Samoan *Fale* was opened. A morning! The light stays in Wellington.

Conclusion.

Chapters six and seven have referred to the restoration of the social-cultural foundation on which the financial base was anchored. Human development and fiscal planning were carried out concurrently in pursuing the dream of the congregation and minister. Because of insufficient resources at the time, the congregation took it step by step. Though sacrifices characterised efforts made, the suffering was mingled with and countered by the resolve, '*e leai lava se mea e le mafaia*' (nothing is impossible to achieve), taking risks in view of the outcome. There had been an indication of

[181] *Tapalega* is water-hockey referred to as art (*faiva*), played with a float of a fishing net as a ball, and sticks of dried coconut leave branches. It used to be played in the lagoon close to shore between two rocks, or at water-falls. The word comes from the verb *tapale* – knock about.

planning nonetheless, measured against the financial capability of the congregation, despite heavily capitalising on communal will. Strong leadership was a crucial factor as unfavourable circumstances were prancing around ready to thwart. The risks and side-risks intimate other ways of getting to the goal, as long as the focus is not sidetracked. Despite the struggle and differences in the Wellington CCCS, there was '*one heart*'.

This chapter exposes the impetus of a dream. Firstly, a dream originates history making to say that history is in the vision (eschatological impetus). Situations, events, ruptures and luck, were manipulated, sewn together, confronted, eliminated, recaptured, revised, in the pursuit of the dream. Second, it is the source of motivation (kinetic impetus). A dream taken seriously excites and replete the passion, for one to be adventurous in thoughts, to endure time and odds, to be self-searching, as passion is self-replenishing in the event of facing impossibilities that advises resignation. It searches solutions for its sake, for passion thrives by having higher aims. Thirdly, following a dream brings to light what people have, which previously they thought they did not or could not posses (becoming impetus). It breaks the cage of potentials, allowing the latent to thrust open to proceed to the fore. Fourthly and perhaps most importantly in regard to the Wellington CCCS Project, a dream can only maintain its thrust, if and only if, it has a utilitarian end (maximising impetus), which distinguishes it from raw ambition. These themes are further intensified in the following chapter. It is important to note at this stage, that deterritorialised people had one thing in common that originates their migration – a dream. In a different space of existence, it can easily be lost. To revive, which is an aspect of a dream, is to look to the past. Indigenisation for the indigenous is a dream in itself, true also for immigrants especially when they are of a minority group.

The history of the Project is about the materialising of the indigenisation dream, to contain, control, and continue, the 'dreaming' for the betterment of many. In brief, this chapter is about the growth of the vision and its coming to fruition, thus manifesting another phase and face of growth of the Wellington CCCS. With the project, members found themselves in their loss.

CHAPTER NINE: THE PROJECT – 2ND MOVEMENT.

E talanoa manu 'ae le talanoa atu.
[Birds confer; bonito do not]

Introduction.

When a shoal of bonito descends silently into the ocean deep, seagulls make rambling noises on the surface. When a serious problem occurs in a community, it draws members to discussions for a solution. Fiscal problems always have social repercussions. This chapter looks at the problem solving strategies the Wellington CCCS employed for paying the debt, how it affected the social life of the people, and the impact on their faith and pride.

The weight of the enormous debt sank deep into the stomachs of the congregation and numbness was to be expected. The project seemed after all a 'recipe for disaster' in that, the astronomical cost was in excess of two million. Even the sound of a million-dollar church itself was stunningly novel to the ears of a Samoan. While time-spread payments, usual for loans, somehow eased the anxiety of the congregation, withdrawal of members loomed real. More detrimental was the psychological effect especially on leaders, as for anybody else, and leaving the Church would have easily rid one of all worries.

Instead, the congregation danced. People danced to avoid embarrassment and decay. They danced the rhythmic *säsä,* the grace of *mä'ulu'ulu*, the group *soa,* the syncopated *fa'ataupati* (slap-dance) and the awe of *'ailao-afi* (fire-dance). They made noises every week, every month, every Sunday. More people came to watch, then joined. It was the time when the community had numerous *tausala* dancing its double meaning: as honoured maiden, and price (*tau*) of error (*sala*). Dancing was exhausting, but they were before the Wellington audience, Samoans, and everybody else. The performance has to have a *taualuga* (finale). They danced to the best of their abilities, fathers and mothers, girls and boys and young children, with intensity, showing and gathering profound knowledge in the course of time. By doing so, it strengthened their unity for a desire swelled in them to dance, and sing, with, and for God. "*Whatever situation it gets into, and problems, the Gospel will never die*," said Lealaile'auloto. They danced to the tune of their belief, in knowing that the dance was healing too for the *fa'alavelave* that was troubling them all.

The Debt.

The incredible cost of the project as mentioned before, was far from the imagination of many of the congregation. At a post-dedication meeting of the congregation, a board member stated in lamentable and uncompromising terms the reality before them.

> *This debt will not be paid in full, neither by us, nor by our children, but by our children's children.*

The bad news roused grudging remarks repeated among members like 'I felt I was about to choke' (*Fa'alogo atu ua ou tau mole*), 'My centre seemed to stop' (*Pei ua nofo lo'u moa*), 'I felt as if something had stuck in my throat' (*Pei ua mau se mea i lo'u fa'ai*). After the laughter on the dedication celebration came the gloom of the debt. The last thing they needed to hear was a type of rhetoric like the above, and amazingly, many resented it. Surprised, saddened, appalled, worried, these were all felt of course, deeply, but indifference was not part of the common reaction. Like seagulls, they murmured (*muimui*) a lot, as informants said, "*It was the only recourse but it will still be done*" (*Pau lea o le mea e tua i ai 'ae fai ä*).

The option of leaving the Church did not escape the consideration of many, but was largely decided against because, "*Who is going to enjoy the things we sweat on*," and "*Who is going to claim for himself all these*," and "*I have suffered and spent a great deal, and it would be foolish to let go of something that I believed in initially*." These, I suspect, were wordings on the moment of interviews, but the comments failed to disguise extreme disenchantment of the time.

Contrasting opinions were pitched as contemplative comments. As Muagututi'a mused, "*I was personally gladdened by the chance of participating in the building of a Church because I had not experienced it before, even in Samoa*." He talked about growing up when the Church edifice stood out distinctly in his village, and often told tales about it had made him curious. Seti Fiti put it mildly but directly in saying, "*We joined to help pay the debt*," and emotion was in the intoning of the naked words. Newcomers shared Falefitu's constant skepticism, *'Is this thing for real?'* They had been watching and waiting to see how it will turn out. During the commencement period of the project, some joined, while others reserved their decisions to further observe how it would transpire. When the shape of Church and

Hall became revealed, it attracted them. They banded, then committed, to be part of the experience they missed in Samoa, or, to relive the experience of a project in the village.

Pepa Hollis believed that the difference in numbers between 1983 and 1986 had not been remarkable but the increase was particularly noticeable in the latter as the year rolled on. According to records,[182] the Church Roll shows little change after the dedication. Lealaile'auloto agreed with others that the number of exits roughly balanced that of those who joined. Like him, some took leave for a period. The important data concerning the size of the congregation at the time suggests a stable total of member-families (*matäfale*), as this number was crucial to the financial structure of the church. Beside new recruits, larger families split up into more *matäfale* as a result of getting married, becoming a deacon, or moving to one's own home. Seventy-five plus *matäfale* were long sustained. In addition, a good total of adherents referred to as *puletua* were yet to register as *matäfale,* but joining with the rest in paying the debt.

Church Roll.

Yr.	Tl.	Yr.	Tl.	Yr.	Tl.
1980	216	1990	325	2000	395
81	-	91	358	2001	419
82	-	92	380		
83	-	93	391		
84	-	94	380		
85	-	95	395		
86	320	96	400		
87	300	97	395		
88	315	98	-		
89	320	99	383		

From *Record Book of the Ministry.* - Total not in records

One reason for the delay in registering as members had been the long shadow of the immigration cloud hanging over their residency situations. It was removed by the Privy Council decision on Samoan citizenship that lifted both a legal and psychological restraining uncertainty. Free at last from being treated as second rate citizens, as permanent residents who were in danger of deportation at any time, they joined and worked with ardor. The project became a monument to that great moment of emancipation. Even the confidence of the congregation grew as the Labour Party

was true to its campaign policies coming into power, particularly on education and employment opportunities, and Pacific Island projects. David Lange, PM, in opening the Pacific Island Affairs Advisory Council in March 1985, said in his address:

> It is my Government's wish that the Pacific Island people in New Zealand be able to participate and contribute fully to New Zealand's social, cultural and economic life...in a way which ensures that the Pacific Island people in New Zealand maintain their own cultural identities.[183]

Friendly signals waved by the Government were greatly welcomed. Child Support and Family Support in particular helped tremendously. More to the advantage of the Wellington CCCS was the Equal Employment Policy in connection with re-skilling training. Children of the Church were finishing schools and were on job searches, while new arrivals had the chance to become work-ready in Access Programs. They were the resource class that rendered much needed assistance to parents in the post-dedication period. Wages were reasonable and prices of commodities were more or less stable. Luckily also for the project, the introduction of Goods and Services Tax (GST) came a little later. In brief, the first couple of years of the Labour Government were fairly favourable ones. Later on, increased taxation as a result of disclosed fiscal deficiencies in the public purse, spread a heat of high inflation that members of the Wellington CCCS felt severely.

The greater the struggle, the greater the relief, and satisfaction when it was all over. Paying the loan was to spread over thirty-six years. Eight years after the Dedication, the debt was settled. Settlement within a short space of time unfortunately, drove families to the brink of existence. Taitu'uga rested his elbows on his knees as he leaned forward, as if becoming alive once again to the experience of the time while speaking about the repercussion of the project on families.

> *As I have said before* (in the previous chapter), *however great family needs have been, they were largely ignored, even the poor children in crying out for items, that their shoes were bad, that their school materials were bad, them too were neglected.*

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[182] Record Book of the Ministry.

Rows between couples as a result were perpetual. Taking time off from church was not a rare habit. Nothing could be farther from that comfortable memory of pleasant enthusiasm, than the pride with which they worked their way towards the monument, now standing as the manifestation of their dream. The days were the most testing of times, probably for everyone of the congregation in their entire life.

Combining self-love with the desire to win was a dangerous mix. The desire to rid the debt was transformed into a competition, and was much of the reason why the people found the period of debt settlement extremely burdensome. Competition was not the only interpretation of the struggle, but despite any positive ones, members endured the niggling effect of the 'contribution nag' on Sundays, and in every meeting. They became fretful, anxious, and guilty. Sadly, some withdrew. The offended, the weak, the embarrassed withered, alone, and faded away never to return. It was not just the bruising pressure of financial demands but the niggling language also, - its tone, and temperaments. The minister himself was in his time of great fears too, becoming easily petulant, easily faltering, and so were the deacons, especially members of the Church Committee and Board Members who were more well informed of the progress than most. In the heat of a debate in one meeting, the minister stretched his muscle and pointed out to a Board Member, "I am a one-word person" to which the latter replied sternly, "I don't know if your [being a] one-word person is equal to my own one-word person." (*Oute le iloa i lou tautala tasi pe tutusa ma lo'u fo'i tautala tasi*). When a fund-raising housie to which the minister had openly objected was approved in another meeting, he threatened the organisers of resigning from the parish if it got into a mess at any stage.[184] Conflicts and threats were exhibitions of personalities, egos, power-grips, and depressions. "*We were the other two people who argued a lot*," said Falefitu, referring to him and Salesulu, when interviewing both, and he was not joking; they were. The mood swing of the period was a genuine threat to the community spirit. But they were on their twin *alia* sailing along, to paraphrase Coleridge in *The Mariner*, on 'ecstasy, ecstasy everywhere but not a joy to sip.' Agony, the silent form of flickering passions, was sapping unmercifully the strength of the congregation.

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[183] *Pacific Island Affairs Newsletter*, June 1985. The Labour Party came into power in 1984, the very year in which the project was dedicated.

[184] The regulation on Housie was quite specific that many were closed down for compliance failure.

The pride of the Church was imprisoned; the faith of the congregation was being knocked around. Community soul was wounded, but the breathing *tofä* (far-sightedness, wisdom) remedied the situation. Members and groups then became steady in taking up their positions (*tu i tulaga*). Ta'avao Aiono's experience of being a former treasurer and secretary was summoned to more practice. Maposua Lima's accounting background and business know-how, then the treasurer, was called to full exercise. Ugaitafa Fereti's calming reconciling hand needed to be long enough to reach out into hearts. Rev. Ete's theological tune demanded clear biblical harmonisation that the song of such characters as are in the saga from the east, "Be glad in the days of prosperity; and remember in the days of adversity" (Ecclesiates 7:14a) could be heard and sung. The *matai* and deacons' speeches had to be rich, and their performances likewise needed to be exemplary for the rest. Mothers' voices, as individuals and as a Fellowship, had to be raised, their breaths to be heard. The Church was in a big *faalavelave*.

Anomalies.

In February 1985, the Building Inspector reported unfinished work on the project and notified the church that he had contacted people concerned to attend to incomplete tasks. The electrical system of the buildings for instance was deficient but the contractor demanded extra pay for the job. Fortunately the electrician's fee had not been paid in full. The matter was referred to the lawyers who advised a release of the outstanding balance payment only, and it was better that another electrician should be sought to fix the faults.[185] Mr. Mulipola, a member of the PIC Newtown, was requested to troubleshoot the problem and he agreed with minimum pay. There have been several unfortunate incidents of this type emerging. The Bank raised the mortgage percentage from sixteen, which was already high, to seventeen and a half.[186] Negotiation followed but the Bank indicated inflexibility that after a while, the church threatened to transfer all their accounts to another one.[187] Even the lawyers at one stage withheld money released by the church, a total of $133,000 for payment of project costs, in their own accounts as investment. They were asked to re-deposit it in

[185] Minute 7, 19/6/86.
[186] Minute 2, 21/3/85.
[187] Minutes 1, 4, 24/7/86; 1, 21/8/86.

a church account.[188] There were more dipping-in instances of extractions from the church's funds as if a gold mine.

The major worry invariably was the debt. As early as March 1985, the church tried to obtain a total estimate of the cost of the project from the architect through the lawyers. A meeting was arranged among the architect, lawyers, and auditor to provide the needed information.[189] By September still, a report was yet to be received. One Mr.Hosking was called in to assist the church's lawyers in investigating the costs of the entire project as some discrepancies had been identified in irreconcilable accounts. As a result of the investigation, the congregation was informed in February 1986 to withhold all payments until further notice. In November, the lawyers notified the church of a lawsuit against the architect and a court case was looming pending the result of negotiations between lawyers of both sides.[190] By February 1987 a court case appeared inevitable although negotiations continued. Litigation was prevented in the end (a better solution too), by an outside the court settlement which saved the congregation a substantial amount according to Rev. Ete. No doubt the congregation had gone through nervous times as the siphoning of church funds as in the Willis Street anomaly was before members again. This settlement together with extra loan payments meant that, the project costs that could have easily reached four million, were minimised to $1.7 million. Much was saved through consistent payments.

Strategies.

In conditions of *tau mai tua, tau mai alo* (pressed both from the rear and the front), humour is a good resort to ease the pressure. The grumbling was disguised in twists jokes like reversing the Biblical quote "Cast your things into the river, after many days you will '*not*' get them back." Hegel's twist, 'to find shoes and food before the kingdom' would have been a popular joke. Why did they have to press on? Were they too Durkheimian[191] in their psychological make up? Were they still primitively wired in their views? Were they too proud to recoil? Humour and cynicism hinted at how well aware they were. Why then? I could only guess to probe.

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[188] Minute 1, 21/8/86.
[189] Minutes 6, 22/6/85.
[190] Minutes 1, 2/11/86; 2, 20/11/86.
[191] Durkhein, E. 1933. Special reference to 'collective personality' hence 'collective conscience' within mechanical solidarity in traditional societies, - hordes or clans, expounded by Mageo (1999) as 'sociocentric self' of the Samoans in distiction to 'egocentric self'.

Anticipation for the Dedication to raise a grand total towards paying off the debt was undoubtedly high. Over half a million dollars[192] was received on the day and it was an impressive amount except it was well short of the $1.7 million final settlement of all expenses.

There was more. Insuring the Buildings was a must and the congregation in its February 1985 meeting committed to pay $1 million insurance cover plus $50 thousand on furniture.[193] Meanwhile, the mortgage on the manse was still to be paid off.[194] Because they have a good hall, requests for use by churches or other groups began to flow in for instance, Porirua CCCS Youth, New Brighton (Christchurch) Mothers' Fellowship, Vailoa Palauli Youth, Victoria University Samoan Students, to mention a few. They had to host them despite donations received afterwards. As well, additional contribution for the CCCS University (Samoa) was decided at the General Assembly.[195] These were on top of normal annual remittances and domestic responsibilities and needs. Additional ways to procure revenue had to be found.

Having a systemic framework in place was an advantage. Chapter Four has shown how the general structure of the church is vital to financial strategic planning. Human development discussed in chapters six and seven alluded to the rebuilding of the social foundation upon which fiscal planning could rely on. Before the actual building started, the congregation has already had a refined system for acquiring revenues through group initiatives as if private sectors of the congregation split up into core sections of deacons, mothers, and the rest.

To illustrate their systematic-profile was the way members attended to rules for use of the Hall after the Dedication, as per minutes 27 January 1985, listed below.

1. The conditions and plans and procedures for the use of our new work of the Church and Hall.
2. It is open to any *matafale* for use free of charge but will receive any donation.
3. Outsiders' requests through a *matafale* for using the Hall, is $300.00.
4. Funerals including those outside the Church are free.
5. Dances are taboo.
6. Utensils are not to be used by outsiders, only by families of the Church.
7. For Bookings, contact Rev. Ete.
8. Committee members consist of 2 delegates from: deacons, mothers, congregation, ladies (single or widow)

[192] The totals in the *Api o le Galuega* are not conclusive.
[193] Minute 1. 24/2/85
[194] Minute 8. 24/8/85 refer to decision on final payment of $13,000.
[195] Minute 12. 27/1/1985. Everyone including babies to contribute.

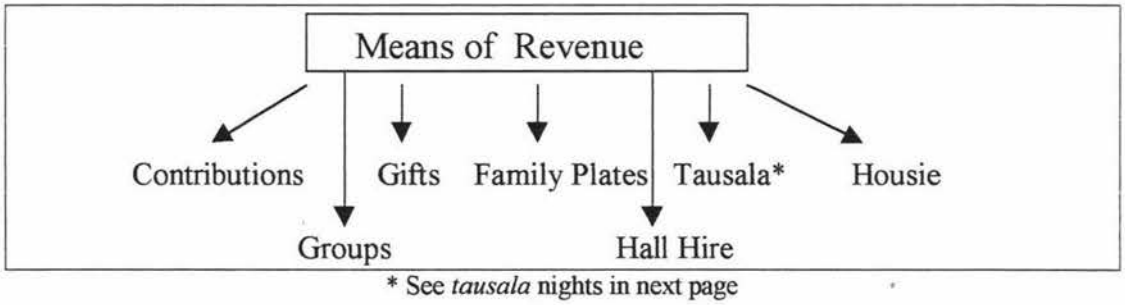
The last item is important in indicating the selection of committee members as group-based on the idea of group representation. Minute 13 of the same meeting referred to the resumption of group monthly contributions for the church loan of: employed, males and deacons $30; mothers $25. Minute 17 refers to election of various committees of the church with the special mention of a committee for 'mothers and girls' and 'fathers and boys' contributions.

The group-structure is not too confusing but the co-ordination of resourceful functions may not be as clear. Buying a $4,395.00 photocopier machine for the Sunday School gives an idea. This was the way operations went on for settling the debt.

Sunday School	$2,395.00
Women's Fellowship	$ 400.00
Youth	$ 400.00
Choir	$ 400.00
Congregation	$ 400.00

If the monthly contribution fell short of the required amount, groups were asked, or they volunteered to make up the total. The point is that, the practice has been a juggling-jumbling of resources. For example:

Meeting	Minute No.	
▪29/9/85	1	$300 from working fund to pay principal.
▪16/11/85	8	Minister-Deacons to add $100 p.m. to principal.
▪23/2/86	6	Accept $200 from choir for principal payment.
▪24/7/86	3	$2000 from Church Anniversary for principal.
▪25/1/87	5	$2,500 principal p.m. to catch up.



* See *tausala* nights in next page

It meant that apart from monthly contributions, respective groups were fund raising also in having *tausala* nights and housie (began in 1987) to supplement their weekly and monthly contributions. For accounting purposes, savings suggestions, and co-ordinating fund-raising activities, Maposua Lima had high praises from his peers

for being a tactician in the process. He steered debt-settlement as a project in itself. The strategy anyhow seemed a no-strategy approach but has a focus viz, to meet required payments, and to save waste-money by shortening the period of settling. The congregation came to share this feeling and it brought about another phase of the unsettlement experience, of debt settlement. But it is a faith-community.

> In essentials, religion functions for individuals and communities, at its worst for a client and at its best for a fellowship. Its votaries are served as total persons, not as role performers, and in the same spirit, the service demanded of them by their faith is that of earnest personal commitment.[196]

'Earnest personal commitment' however may not be confined exclusively to individual responses. In all these seemingly secularized extensions of growth, the congregation did not steer free from the inclusive notion of social-self, including even the what/who at the center of their enterprises.

> Simpler people appear to have taken cognizance of themselves, of their origin, social arrangements, and destiny, by reference to a projected sphere of the supernatural. Their ultimate concerns...were super-empirical and such ideas, beings, objects, or conditions, commanded solemn attention and perhaps dedication. Everyday life was deeply influenced, and sometimes completely organized, with respect to a realm of transcendental suppositions.[197]

For the same reasons, they were not simple. They had known too much, too deeply; they knew irrationally and illogically to worry about a balance-transactional life as would be 'analysed' in column accounting of exchange practices. At this very stage of its growth, the church was like a 'flower opening up with an open balance'.[198]

On *tausala* nights, the young and old, male and female danced together. A teenager but usually a younger girl was fashioned up in traditional costumes, decorated to dance at the centre as the symbolic representative of her family. Relatives and friends would support her by donations, a young person who may never again have the chance to be at that position. Their innocence may have been exploited, but the exposure would be of significance in posterity. On *tausala* nights, a young life was opened up to the hands of the family; a young life, who embodied

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[196] Wilson, B. 1982 p. 155.
[197] ibid. p. 150-151.
[198] Paterson, F. ibid.

family dignity, was opened up to public generosity, and while on face value it appeared to be commercialised, the symbolism impressed deeply.

Mothers had their turns on family-plate Sundays. They presented themselves before the congregation on behalf of their families, with an attractive amount in the plate, followed by begging the congregation to come out in support, for more. The number of family-plates was raised to fifteen each month in 1985. Why mothers took up this role escapes my knowledge but it worked well. According to Muagututi'a and his wife Si'usega, family-plates were like a stand-up comedy show. They entertained themselves again in describing to me a memory of four old widowed mothers all included on one Sunday. The oldest one got up before the others and began reminding everyone:

> *I have no husband. My husband died a long time ago. I'm alone. Those other three, yes, they are widows too, but their husbands passed away not that long ago* (which was not true). *They are well endowed by the estates of their husbands. But me, I'm barely surviving on the dole. So you shouldn't think of donating any for any of those mothers, but all of you should come to support me. Come now. I'm old and alone.*

It was a good emotive speech that appealed to the sympathy and empathy of the audience, but a joke about herself in exposing her poor state, and her supposed rivals' situations. It reflected the element of competitiveness.

Ioana Enari had a different experience. She had never before stood in front to speak to a public audience for such purpose, until her first Sunday of the plate, and what an introduction to get up to beg. Formerly a Catholic, it was a novel unsettling step for her to have taken. At first, "*I cried in shyness*," she said, "*but I got used to it and I got better in speaking*," except, she was not as sporty as the others in cracking a joke on the spot. Ioana would not forget the entertaining part of family plates and remembered with admiration how members of the congregation were ready to help the less able families. She now holds a chiefly *matai* title and she owes her speaking competency and confidence to the begging plates. She was just one of the many.

Housie was another example of improvisation. The first one was on Boxing Day 1987. It was opened with devotion and, in accordance with the minuted

decision,[199] the housie was to be run by the mothers. Instead of money prizes as the norm, families were asked to provide tins of corned-beef and numbers as substitutes. Participants took home a chicken prize and the money went to the church. It was a fortnightly (sometimes weekly) activity of the community to which they looked forward anxiously, as a housie was more than just a game on Saturdays. It strengthened social bonding in sharing news, jokes, ridicules, and laughter, despite being debt-conscious. It was an unfair game as well because the winners would afterward share their gains with others. "*As people got numb with [normal] contributions,*" said Salesulu, "*it was the housie*" which provided the backup. Housie games and *tausala* nights proved very successful. Both were treated at the same time as entertaining social activities of and for the community.

The history of the debt was a history of the 'test'. In their dancing was the voice of singing and crying, the synergy for movement and survival. Members of the congregation were so self-conscious of being Samoan that the bleeding of hands (*tagi i lima*) came to lose its meaning to the notion of moral obligation and service, though brooding extreme discomfiture. However, the comfort was in the thought of 'doing', in reflecting and remembering the 'doings' of others. They juggled and jumbled while sailing along until the debt-load was thrown overboard. The strategy throughout was keeping their togetherness intact.

It is Finished.

Concerning the congregation, the meaning of *tautua* gradually came to light more vividly, and for many, it became a lively experience once more. Its meaning is more than the suggestion of service, slave, aide de camp, attendant, lady in waiting and the like; more than a right or moral responsibility call. Simply and ultimately, it is sacrifice. They *tautua*, - the families, the groups, individuals, - not just for rescuing their precious achievement, or salvaging the twin *fale* as a symbol of their identity, not for any rationale no matter how sound it might have been at this stage, but because of the 'knowing' in their bones and flesh and blood – their life – then and now. As Salesulu reflected before on the devotion of people in the past, "*They did it for others,*" so they had to do the same. The saving chain was not to be severed again.

On the 24th Anniversary of the Church in 1992, the Church Committee earnestly entreated that family plates (all families) should not be less than $150 as a

[199] Minute 1. 20/11/86 approved by the congregation on 23/11/86.

final effort of settling the debt. "*The people wanted to finish*," said Taumate. A total of $33,000 on one day indicated a definite determination on the 'last paddling strides to the finish' (*toe ape-foe mo le tini*), to close the debt chapter. Added Lealaile'auloto:

> *As if a burden has dropped - only delight stood before you.* ***It is finished****! But I was not thinking of any praise. Glory is to God. The best thing was having a place to go to. [Laying of the cornerstone], the feeling on that day was great excitement...a beautiful day at the start of the work. Our [Samoan] High Commissioner, Fe'esago was present. Dedication...happy...but there was something still hovering. But it seems the day when the debt was fully paid...*

His last sentence was suspended as he came to a sudden pause. Taitu'uga rounded it up perhaps more succinctly:

> *The feeling because of the [grand] debt of the Church [was that], many will pass on from this life but the debt will not come to pass. This is a true word before God. There was never a hope that that was to be the time for the debt to be paid in full. But human planning is different from God's will...The theme was in the desire to do something good. The weak were not going to be routed by the able. That was the spirit of those who served in the Church. No family plate fell below the thousand [dollar] mark, even weak families reached thousand. It came as a great surprise [to us all] when it was announced that the debt had finished...God's ways are different. When the announcement came that a [special] service will be held to mark the end of [paying] the debt, I'm not so sure whether the feeling of the Israelites when liberated [from Egypt] could be compared to the feeling we had...****The debt was finished****! We were absolutely jubilant.*

Pepa Hollis sat among the congregation during a service on 15 August 1992, watching Rev. Ete and Maposua Lima burnt the papers in a copper container inside the Church, in a debt dead-end ritual. She watched, without a smile. It had silently sunk into her womb, to spring forth again. She was happy for her widowed aunt, Tusipepa Mata'u, a long serving deacon, and member of the Mothers Fellowship. She was quietly pleased in witnessing the relief, thanksgiving, excitement, and tears on the

faces of the people - her people. Falefitu's popular quote most probably would be in their minds: **Is this for real?** They would remember how it was for quite sometime, being 'poor face-to-face' (*mativa fesäga'i*).

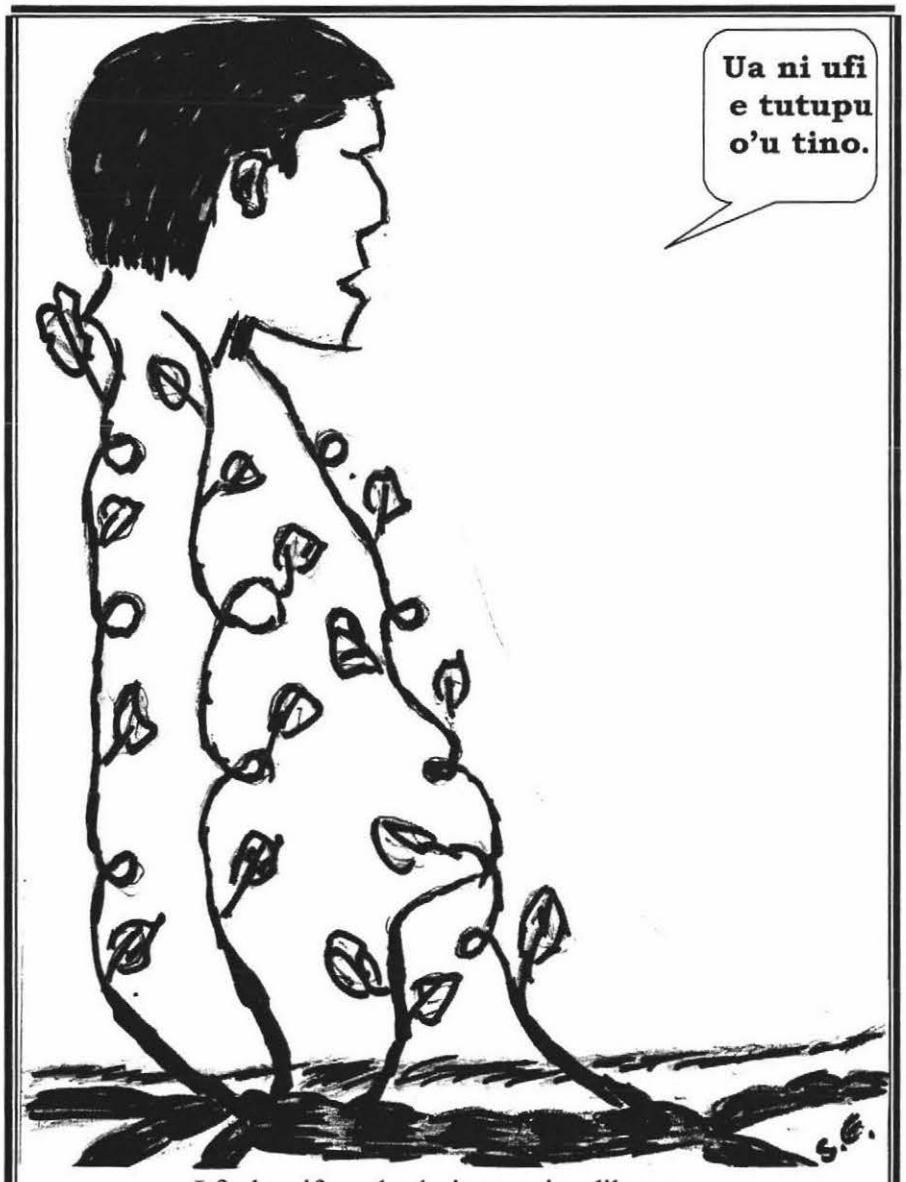
Having cleared all debts, the congregation came to truly own the property. The property provided a guarantee for any further development they had in mind, where money was needed. It was/is easier for the church to gain the confidence of lenders, not just because of the form of security it can produce, but the reputation of the congregation on attending to financial matters had earned the church high trust. The *A'oga Amata* was in need of outdoor facilities soon after. An adjacent piece of land to the church's premise was available and Mrs. Ete requested the church for security on a loan intended by the School for buying the land. Another rattling debate went on as some were against the thought of subjecting again the property for that purpose. The congregation agreed to it in the end. The *A'oga Amata* has acquired the land and is currently well provided for by the Ministry of Education on required resources. The young ones have a common home. The young ones of the future will enjoy it too.

Conclusion.

The post-dedication period was the most difficult time in the life of the congregation, financially and emotionally. There was no doubt about a great plague of fear spreading at the time, evinced by the notion of impossibility that crept into mental projections of members, in view of the giant debt they had to wrestle with. The problem of affordability and resigning members had been a worry. Yet they rose up to the challenge in accepting any condition, to alleviate the financial burden. The psychological condition was far more debilitating. Despite all trepidation, they managed to free themselves. That they had done it was more than luck and favourable circumstances on their side.

Relevant is an overview that claims the achievement was possible through the congregation coming to have an anchor then. The anchor can be interpreted in several ways. In the main, the doing itself, doing something held them together, as what they were/are, and importantly, sustaining and energising the togetherness power. It was not possible just by agreement because there was no enforcement, nor by functional unanimity, as not every family was of the same calibre. It was more as demonstrated in the resolve of members to stand up and take their positions in light of *tautua*. *Tautua* is doing and doing 'is'. This conviction was lubricated by their religious belief

fed upon by the gospel story. The amazing story above anything else was that, they worked the whole settlement among themselves, working out the solution and its implementation, from the means they have. They unsettled themselves in their settlement of the debt. And like everything else, it was quite risky. On the other hand, one of the most dangerous act to perform, and advisedly proper to refrain from doing so, is 'to tickle the stomach of a Samoan' (*ege le manava o le Samoa*). The debt did just that.



I feel as if my body is growing like yams.

CHAPTER TEN: A TRIBUTE TO WOMEN.

Saö Fa'alalelei!
[How exquisite!]

I feel that the story of the Wellington CCCS is incomplete without saying something about mothers of the congregation. Writing about them has been an extraordinary difficult task to undertake. My lack of confidence to write about women was uppermost. But worse still, I failed to procure what must be considered as sufficient specific information to legitimise the inclusion of a chapter on women, particularly mothers, for one reason that "*They have no voice, just supporting and reminding*," said Lealaile'auloto. I asked my wife for help and she said to write about what they do.

> O Solitude! Solitude, my *home*! I have lived too long wildly in wild strange lands to come home to you without tears! Now shake your fingers at me as mothers do, now smile at me as mothers smile, now say merely: 'And who was it that once stormed away from me like storm-wind? – who departing cried: I have sat too long with Solitude, I have unlearned how to be silent! You have surely learned that – now?[200]

I remembered Taumate (wife of Lealaile'auloto) on interview days. She participated from the kitchen, washing dishes and preparing a cup of tea for me and her husband while listening on, throwing in her share intermittently, still at her chores, rushing to check the laundry, coming to prepare the lunch for her grand children, and after the interview, she would be off to work. This only became vividly important when I was going through the rare comments on mothers from the interviews. I mused on Pepa Hollis response when I asked her what voice mothers have in the church. "*Run*" she said, "*doing this and that, anything. Fathers made the decisions and mothers helped them*." At first it sounded sweeping, cliché, too familiar, but I can now catch the total picture from the beginning.

> The custom of women bringing food prepared in their own kitchens to a public or community occasion is an example of women's role in the public world, although it is not usually regarded as such...To some community occasions, women might bring along food, but their main contribution will be working together with other women, and sometimes a few men, in the kitchen of the house, hall, marae or community centre transforming the food into a meal...

[200] Nietzsche, F. *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Hollingdale, R.J. [trans] 1961, p. 202.

> 'Ladies plate' suggest both a lack of choice for women, and their taken-for-grantedness...It suggests that women belong in the supper room, not the committee room.[201]

The gender divide perpetuated by cultural socialisation continues to exclude women from decision-making roles, or positions of power. Park did not fail to disclose the communal utility of ladies plate, signifying the transformation of individual contributions into a collective event. She mentioned Samoan women "of high rank [who] are more likely to participate in community events." Usually Samoan women participated as a group for they have their allotted position in the social organisation of the *fa'aSamoa*. In the story of the Wellington CCCS, the Mothers Fellowship, which included single females as well, has been highly commended for its part in growing the community. Quoting Pepa Hollis here again, saying, "*Mothers (women) are referred to as the weaker-side (itüpä väivä). To the best of my knowledge, mothers are the stronger-side (itüpä mälosi) in any organisation.*" Then she laughed and added, "*The weaker-side ought to change to be called the stronger-side.*"

Pepa was not alone in that view. "*Mothers have more strength in working [for the church] than men*" insisted Fuaiupu, "*even in the present time*," added emphatically husband Fiu. I began to visualise the mothers whose voices begged for family-plates during anxious times of the church. I imagine the mothers dressing up the young daughters to dance on *tausala*-nights and them beside the little ones. How anxious they would have been on Saturdays to win a housie prize, a chicken or a *pisupo*, for the evening meal or Sunday *to'ona'i;* as they had put all their cash into the game. How worried they must have been in their calculations, figuring out whether they had enough for subscriptions: the choir, the youth group, the Sunday school, the Mothers Fellowship and for some, the deacons pool. When the church play host to visitors, they cook, manage the kitchen, and decorate the hall and church.

Were they destined to be Sunday school teachers also? Even though she had no teaching experience, Taumate claimed she was drawn in to become one. She gained so much in sharing with other mothers teaching the young. I watched the young mothers during the research period who run the *A'oga Amata,* and even recorded one telling a story about a mother waiting at the bus stop with her child to be taken to

[201] Park, J. [ed] 1991 pp. 12 &14.

school. Very interesting was the way she managed the fluctuation of her voice in her own language, and capturing the attention of the very young listeners.

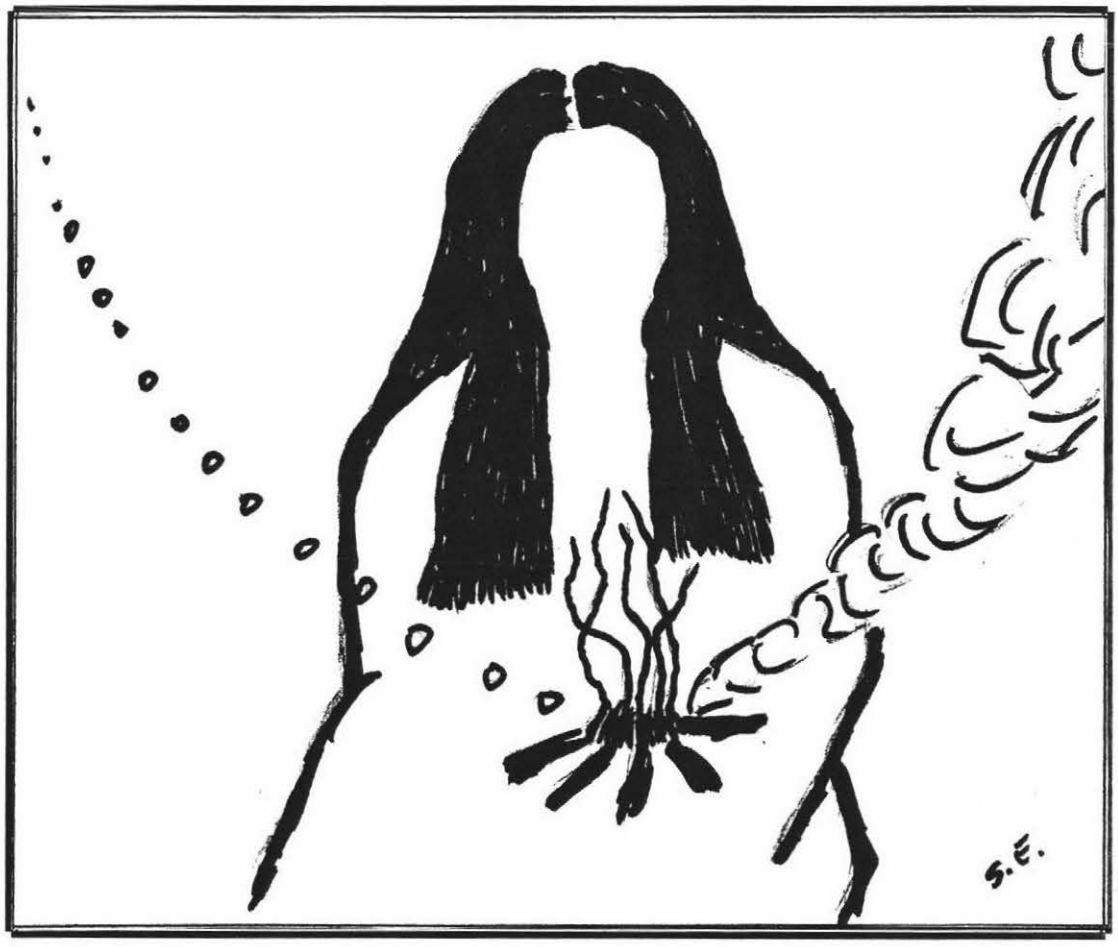
When women are together, they project an impression of intensity. Women in the choir always appear solid as they cluster together in heavy white on Sundays in white dresses and hats. In public or in their own specific functional spaces, they cluster together. Commendations on their endeavours were emphatic from the men, but it amazed me that comments were only short references. Were they just shadows moving around doing, doing, doing, looking at and not noticed? Listening to, and not hearing? The taken-for-grantedness of women is expecting a lot from them while acknowledging little. Yet, Mothers of the Fellowship did not worry much about praises. They got on with the everyday life of the church, finding their own comfort in prayer meetings, in types of social events they can come up with for fundraising.

Falefitu's comment was typical of the undetailed form of commendation: "*Mothers are strong. Deacons are strong also but [easily] defeated. Mothers are strong because they are related by love (fealofani).*" Surely the power of their solidarity as a group should be public knowledge, but I doubt if it was/is. They are like silhouettes moving behind the male curtain of the congregation. Perhaps the highest commendation came from Salesulu, again, brief but stressed as a truth: "*If it was not for the strength of the Mothers Fellowship, this project will never go well*" (*Ana lë mälosi le Mafutaga a Tinä i le galuega lenei, e lë manuia*). How? When? Why? Was it not that too significant to win proper attention? Or, were mothers' doings much too many to be counted, much too large to be measured? Were the traces of their drive like the route of a canoe upon the lagoon? And a canoe it was that the congregation travelled on from the early stages of the church; the Mafutaga a Tinä was the backbone, the working machine, and the praying group of the church. I recalled at this point what has been said about Samoans and the Pacific Islanders in their community initiatives - they did it unrecognised.

I am reminded of Athena the Greek goddess who stayed home to look after the city, standing at the gate to receive any visitor, sometimes appearing as an old male, or mother, sometimes a young lad or a desired lady, sometimes a young child – welcoming, guiding, and hosting. Mothers of the church were all of these most of the times. I am reminded of Mrs. Park, the black mother who, despite all the airing voices of males in the USA against segregation, would no longer be forced to leave her bus seat to be deterritorialised to the rear area. She just did it. She stayed put. Who would

pass by the memory of Whina Cooper and the Land Hikoi, and for Samoans, the stories of many Sina (ancient, recent, current ones), and the host of defiant biblical mothers, the one who saved Moses, and Esther before the king. Yet, women are ever treated with condescension because of their sexuality, because they get pregnant, and still forgetting – the womb, the tomb, life. How much longer would they be deterritorialised?

My wife advised me to write about what women do and not what they say. I can now sensed why she suggested it. I am reminded of the weaver; mothers who weave the mat for the family to sit on, the mat to sleep on; the mothers who spend days, weeks, months, years, weaving the monotonously plain fine-mat, but full of *lave*; the mat that is used to initiate, acknowledge, and seal all formal relations of the *fa'aSamoa*; the mat used to beg forgiveness, the Samoan mat of love and security, of power and grace; an unlettered text, but one that holds and gives meaning to the *fa'aSamoa*. The Mothers' Fellowship is on which the Wellington CCCS Congregation reclines, or in Samoan – *O le fala-se'ese'e o le Ekalesia i Ueligitone*.



CONCLUSION.

Ua api le uli.
[The rudder is rested.]

The journey is over; it is time for reflection. Where am I, at this point, this moment – in the past or the future? What is the difference? Now that the story has been told, it is time to look back. A mirror-like reflection presents, perhaps, a true image of the one before it, so it is believed. Look again, the left has become the right; the horizontal inverse often missed. To correct is to turn the back on the mirror and the result is no-image. What the mirror cannot do is to alter the vertical dimension.

Nietszche teemed the suggestion of repetition in history. "Behold this moment...From this gateway Moment a long, eternal lane runs *back*; an eternity lies behind us, ...For all things that can run must also run once again forward along this lane."[202] Heading the same way, it will become clear to us "for the first time when we arrive at where we start," as T.S. Eliot comments in *Four Quartets*. Linda Tuhiwai Smith reminds us that whatever theory is used to look, it is only a tool, an instrument, a construct – not the reality. In the end, we have to grasp the human feeling, the experience of human life in reality. History recognizes and crosses experiential gateways that register the transition into, and out of historical human circumstances. Ouch! We are real.

This story is of a Samoan experience abroad. A story of faith and pride usually follows a struggle-happy climax pattern. This one is no different, except, it was not the reason behind starting it. Similarly, it seems the story of the Wellington CCCS witnesses to the creation of a higher form from a simple one. Grand endings, besides not being the objective of history, are masks sometimes. Interpretations vary. Taking the view of the subliminal appeal that drops low to gut level is not untenable, that is, the up-facing faith and pride of members got them into hades circumstances, or the celestial dream that led to broken spirits. Pride and faith were adopted however, to get to the meaning derived from the story of a people here told, a people peripheralised in more than one way, unknowingly or willingly. In any event, what they have come to accomplish was not a 'recipe for disaster'. Meaning (*uiga*), seriously considered is rendered *fatu* (heart), or *a'ano* (flesh). After description and reasoning, feeling (*lagona*) is engaged to summarise.

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[202] op. cit., pp. 178-9

The history of the Wellington CCCS responds to the criticism regarding huge church buildings of Pacific Islanders. It captures reverence and the importance they place on their religious belief. It reflects the church as the hub of ethnic minority communities detached geographically, culturally, and spiritually, from the home base. Living in a rather fast changing and instant world, churches offer a sense of permanence – a home. They are virtual images occupying not switched-on cyberspace, but historiospace of experiences and heritage. For Pacific Islanders and most immigrant groups, the church is where their loss is found, celebrated, and in which they reterritorialise themselves as a people, a culture, a faith.

The story of Wellington CCCS conveys an experience of identity recovery. Despite the emphasis on difference in multicultural societies, immigrants are more likely to lose the sense of who and what they are. Two reasons to state here are the 'labeling' creations that misrepresent people, and inclusive policies of national or societal interests. Regarding the first, the result is what Melani Anae called 'pan-ethnic identities' or 'hyphenated-identities', constructed by 'others'.

> Pan-ethnic identities, whether constructed by westerners or Pacific Islanders, are inevitable and here to stay but this does not mean that people (or ethnic groups) caught within these pan-ethnic identities are homogeneous.[203]

Ethnicity seems no longer a safe identity-marker she goes on to say, when considering *vis-a-vis* different generational and cultural experiences (e.g. young and old, New Zealand-born-Samoan and Samoan-born-Samoan). The experience argument, stretched far, will endorse the individual rather than a people identity. But humans, aren't they able duplicators, retrievers, imitators, followers, feelers, empathisers, learners, and decipherers? Experience can be shared transmitted experiences. Concerning the second, inclusive policies usually put people under the categorical-device for practical purposes relating to systemic-structural organization of society. Categories do overlap. In any case, identity is fluid, and the general outcome is an identity-list for instant selection by the identified, and identifiers alike, for purposes of convenience.

People do not always think of who they are; they just get on with living, and this may be the main reason. It was very much the attitude in the fifties and sixties

[203] Anae, M. ibid, p.128.

when Samoans pursued Protestant values of respectability and industriousness 'to fit' into New Zealand society. Multiculturalism nevertheless has drawn their attention to self-awareness. Might it not be better to see myself/ourselves as other people see me/us? But then, if one says that I am a Martian, what does it mean? Culture is commonly nominated for identification. Notwithstanding its abstractness or mutability, it is probably less vulnerable to fluid definitions. Commonly associated with tradition, culture is held to be a thing of the past. Yet again, globalisation, multiculturalism, technological-age, mass media, discourses, commercialism, (the list goes on), decentralise the anthro-ethnological base of culture. Culture is instant too but the word-game, or perspective-game, may have been rather overplayed so that some meaning-permanence is in need of restoring. Culture seems to retain its meaning in the face of on-going conceptual changes. It is nature and nurture.

> It is the genuine achievements of man that anthropologists have in mind when they say that culture is cumulative, comparing culture history to the growth of a snowball as it is rolled down a hill. Even achievements that are superseded rarely disappear.[204]

Egyptian culture of old has died and yet monasticism is still around. The printing press and paper money, the two most influential items in the world today, are products of Chinese ancient culture. Christ is dead; Christianity survives. Solon disappeared but democracy is alive. Marx is dead; the revolution goes on. Language, art, music, and tools have their roots in ancient cultures and civilization.

Aganu'u (culture) in Samoan suggests doing, *aga* being action and direction, of the *nu'u,* village or country, of all that pertains to human interest; the pipeline of livelihood, learning and wisdom, the womb and tomb that emits the sense of being, and meaning of then, now, and hereafter, giving people pride in what they have, and faith in what they know. Cut from culture, the consequences are obvious. The Wellington CCCS recovered its identity through 'building' and 'growing' the community. Although the story seems to highlight the achievement in the 'project', the history is more important - of *aga* 'doing', and *aga* 'heading towards'.

Language is an integral part of culture. It is essential to iterate at this juncture the importance of language in relation to identity; particularly, the heritage entrenched

[204] Murdoch, G.P. in Shapiro, H.L. [ed] 1960 p.259.

in it. Apart from its communicative utility, language indicates, gravitates, and creates closeness and belonging-ness. Language, heritage, and belonging all intertwine, in projecting an element of *our-self* that is deeply in the individual *self.*

Even if there is closeness, there is distance - *va.* The 'we' wrap has been floated as a social and psychological condition characterising Samoans in the works of Jeanette Mageo and Jemaima Tiatia. It is considered at best, for the support-care view; at worst, for the pressure it entails. The 'we' is tendered theoretically in opposition to 'me-self', the latter to characterise individualism, the former, to refer to communalism. In the early years of the Wellington CCCS, 'we' was absent. The homogeneity element did not come through given repeated clashes and conflicts. Time is the best healer, and in reconstruing their image, it was not just of 'we are Samoans,' but also, a church of families. The church, though carrying the CCCS banner, was not truly Samoan until the distance was managed –managing the *va* – in recognising the difference of others. *Fa'aSamoa* recognises the individuality of people in a different way, and this requires the understanding of positions, and spaces. It is knowing, respecting, and management of the relational web that identifies the nurturing *aganu'u fa'aSamoa*. What they do, how they do it, why and when, by which the Wellington CCCS community is known, and chapter four gives a hint.

The conviction of Rev. Ete is that the church grows because of the people - their faith - by their response to the Gospel. He tends to lean more to the influence of the Gospel (I think he means the *mana* of the Word). H.Richard Niebhur's 'ideal type' sect analysis in Bryan Wilson's[205] discussion of religious perspectives, is useful to understand the growth of the Wellington CCCS. It outlines a pattern of denominalisation, institutionalisation, and secularisation. In the institutionalisation stage, the concern for training the second generation and a return to/revival of the past become the main one. It is important to note however, that the faith-community discussed here (and should be stressed again and again) is one that was facing the survival threat, thus, trying to survive in every sense, as it tried to embody a meaningful gospel. While its growth may substantiate the 'ideal type' sect analysis, it developed differently in several aspects. Often covered by the emphasis on processes of development, is the ground-faith of members, which was unsettled then by

[205] Wilson, B. ibid. pp. 95-100. N.B. 'Sect' at the time referred to 'break-away' groups from streamline Churches in protests, or being anti-dogmatic. The CCCS in NZ was a reconnecting break in Ioka's view, from the Pacific Islanders' Presbyterian Church.

language and social interpretations, that did not really touch-base with their spiritual dimension. Yet, in *fa'alavelave* conditions, inside and outside the church, the gospel optimism was/is manifested by their responses.

The issue of church and culture has been dialogued for sometimes. Jemaima Tiatia raised it recently in *Caught Between Cultures.*[206] Christianity, she concluded, is being 'acculturised' as a criticism especially of Samoan communities. Historically, anywhere at anytime, Christianity was/is 'acculturated'. The Samoan Church itself from the London Missionary Society's viewpoint was to find its form, its institutional gown, in Samoa. At present in Samoa, the Catholic Church, once the most colonising institution, has become the most Samoan in its culture. By virtue of the *mävaega* and *feagaiga* and *taeao* constantly recited, the Gospel and Culture are continually regarded not so much in opposition, but a continuum namely, *e va'ava'a-lua le Talalelei ma le Aganu'u* (the Gospel and Culture travels together), having the notion of a symbiosis, co-existence, and co-habitation between the two. One moves, corrects, enables, and empowers the other (dichotomous, supplement, compliment).

The point is that it is not the gospel or culture in which human survival or assurance is found. It is the space between them – the *va* – where meaning lies; the relating, the managing of what both offer, the synthesizing, and making productive. Regardless of the faith of pioneers and people of the Wellington CCCS, the early stage alluded to a Christianity that was naively conceived to be without culture, a church with Samoa in its name but which rejected the *fa'aSamoa*. In later years, the *fa'aSamoa* propped up the church in trouble. Before then, the input of the Gospel, through Rev. Ete's ministry, was able to stimulate, and regenerate the *fa'aSamoa* understanding residing in members. Anyway, he was adamant in saying that the community grows 'because of the people.' Their faith was found again, strengthened, and demonstrated. The Wellington CCCS is not just a cultural community, and its identity is not complete without being understood as a faith community. Regarding the transplanted model of the church, it has been pointed out that it was not entirely the case with the Wellington CCCS. The growth discloses a constituted and constituting church. Their Christianity however is how and what they live out in Wellington, seen in history.

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[206] 1998.

Secularised interests of the church, especially the emphasis on retaining and learning the Samoan language, the stress on the value of education, and providing programs in Samoan to advance it, are examples of the difference, and of reasons why the Samoan language was encouraged.

> It is difficult to realize the enormously important role that language plays in our social behaviour. What would a society without language be like? It would of course have no writing or other means of communication by words, for all these are ultimately dependent on spoken speech. Our means of learning would therefore be greatly restricted...All of history would disappear, for without language there would be no way of re-creating past experiences and communicating to others. We should have no means of expressing our thoughts and ideas to others or of sharing in the mental processes of our fellowmen. Indeed, it is very likely that we should not think at all...Most important, a society lacking language would have no means of assuring the continuity of behaviour and learning necessary to the creation of culture.[207]

The point expressed above cannot be emphasised more, and the loss of language is equally dreaded. In the early years of the Wellington CCCS, the language deficit was obvious, but it was not the language of casual conversation that was missing; it was the language that excites the memory and so the need was to learn the language that orders relationships, the language that deepens understanding and the spiritual sense. During the research, I was able to understand, imagine, and feel the depth and breadth of informants' expressions. Their stories were freely expressed, and although the conversational language was used, the meaning got deeper until it hurt, became serious, sagacious and religious. I have attempted in the narrative to convey the feelings, motives, and reasons underneath the growth, getting into expressions that reaches deep in meaning. Being bilingual was an advantage for members in the early years, but when knowledge of both are limited, so are the meanings. Samoans have been 'ridiculed' by others and by Samoans themselves, for speaking broken and incorrect English (see jokes in chapter five). But many Samoans lost their first language as well. The result was miscomprehension and misunderstanding that broke communication, making relationships volatile.

Through Rev. Risatisone Ete, another level of speech, another touch, another texture of the Samoan language was heard that stimulated thinking and reflection, thus having members digging up the archive of meanings, and reconstructing relevant

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[207] Hoijer, H. in Shapiro, H.L. ibid. pp. 196-197.

sense. With new arrivals and the increase of *matai* in the congregation who had to re-study the language, the meaning of the community became clearer and deeper. Freely conversing in one's own language removed low self-esteem, opening the space for social and psychological emancipation. In maintaining the Sunday School and *A 'oga a le Faifeau,* set a floor-base for the young. In their latter years, though they may speak English most times, the Samoan understanding has taken root in themselves.

Language is central to education. Looking into the problematic situation of Samoan and Tongan adolescence immigrants in education, T.M.A. Kepa has this to say:

> Consider, for example, the rigid separation between the content of education, which is artificial, undesirable and does not enable immigrant students to study, to create, or to recreate their ideas in practical work in school. The contents of education have to emphasise and connect with everyday experience encountered by the students and teachers. Through learning that makes sense to the people in school, the creation of the 'new teacher' and 'new student' is possible.[208]

The value of language in education, and education in development, and goal achieving, is uncontested. We think, recall, record, and create, through words. The point of having a free language milieu is that, it encourages creativity and generation of meanings. It thus transforms the teacher and student, and this has been very much the story of the Wellington CCCS. Communicative action in Habermas is meaning (i.e. knowledge in agreement), both for the project and community building, was possible through the language that was clear, understood, and emotional. The story of this Samoan community further validates any argument for use of a person's first language in learning. Understanding Samoan meanings is vital to reading this work. The retention of stories and histories and heritage depends largely on language.

What is history? Time? Literacy? Events? What is Namierian history or Marxian history, or Troeltchian, or Meleisea-an history? Foucault declared his type as a periodisation history of thought; Herodotus is claimed to be the father of history when he could well be considered the father of ethnographic writing. *Imperial Caesar* is treated an autobiography – which one is history? What is historiography? Thucydides style? How can a history of decolonisation or postcolonialism be styled, worded, and arranged? And are topical issues the defining paths of history? If my skepticism or historical agnosticism upsets you, isn't it an event? And if some form of

[208] *Educational Philosophy and Theory* 2000. 32 (1) p. 62.

persuasion breaks my skepticism, how do you feel? If a reason-based feeling moves you to dismiss my questions as simply rambling, how do you feel now? Do you think you hold the truth? Granted that you do, how can you convince me and everyone else? Should you be able to convince the world, did you think it was possible? It became a reality; did you believe it really happened? Satisfied? Amazed? This is not an attempt to upset but trying to get back to identify history. Central to history is the event – the growth. In asking the questions, I illustrate the problems I had to confront in this work. More importantly, it is for reiterating the point about 'sense-ing' beyond theories and the written word.

Theories, frameworks, perspectives, were undeniably very involved in the effort, to see, weave, and word the story. Positivism, reductionism, empiricism, holism, were tossed around in the study so that the result would have a measure of credibility and validity. Albeit the movement from objective and subjective to measure a corrective outcome was unavoidable, this work was to be *projective*. The text is intended to lead, and to excite the 'sense' to be probing. Analysis, synthesis, and integration of events will help, but they will fall short of satisfying the undergirding premise - "I feel therefore I know" - very much the way I approached the research, which I endeavour to reflect in the story.

There was a reason for it. The theme of 'risk' emerged early in the research and was consistent throughout. It is a point of this work therefore, to expose the 'historical circumstance' of Samoans, to reflect the 'historical possibility' in order to ensure that the three main concepts of *va, mana*, and *fa'alavelave* circumscribing the 'risk condition', become more transparent. *Fa'alavelave* in particular is always characterised by such conditions. It has been worded as a 'wrapping theory' in contradistinction to what it actually does, that is, 'bursting through culture, while it demonstrates culture'; and more often than not, bursting is taking risks, sometimes irrationally, or, because it is the commonsensical thing to do. This is not infrequent in responding to events and circumstances of everyday life. The whole experience and learning that was obtained by members following the establishment of their church, became their preoccupation in relation to the institution. They used them to nurture the church to flourish and expand more. Unfortunately, given the circunstances in which they found themselves, they had to be daring. Taking risks reactivated pride and faith imbedded in their social conscience.

> The theoretical formulation of reality, whether they be scientific or philosophical or even mythological, do not exhaust what is 'real' for the members of a society...the sociology of knowledge must first of all concern itself with what people 'know' as 'reality' in their everyday, non-or-pre-theoretical lives. In other words, common-sense knowledge rather than 'ideas' must be the central focus for the sociology of knowledge. It is precisely this knowledge that constitutes the fabric of meanings without which no society could exist.[209]

Fa'alavelave largely occupies the social consciousness of Samoans, and common sense is summoned continually in dealing with everyday activities, socialization, social conditioning, in problem solving, and constructions. Risk, as a historically situated circumstance, is the point here. The response to a vision for the church was a sensible thing. It was difficult but it was possible.

Samoans in the fifties to the seventies were wealth producers for others, and continued to be under liberal and neo-liberal political and economic reforms of the 1980s and 1990s.[210] They did not have a political privilege of any form or the number for a revolutionary campaign, whether through discourses or an effective force to change anything. Instead, they did what they had to do. They build up themselves from what they have, and where they were/are. Like many other Samoan Churches in New Zealand, growing the Wellington CCCS was a community-initiative, before community became a political and social terminology.

Contesting the citizenship issue (a risk) has been a communal effort. The outcome influenced to some extent the nature of politics, social policies and social interactions, the nature of race relations and attitudes to ethnicity. But then, they were labeled again as ethnic minority and immigrants. Subsequently however, the diversity (pluralistic) model of society dislodged the monolithic paradigm of society from discourses and policies of the seventies. The change was fueled by the preceding riveting debate on colonisation and decolonisation of the sixties. It proceeded to promote a participatory/contributory community view of society. Theories and politics in these areas are not a major concern of this work, but they are mentioned specifically for the significance regarding the 'historical-possibility'.

The historical circumstance therefore serves in bringing to light the historical possibility which the Wellington CCCS historicised. It reflected the situations of actors in the wider societal frame of New Zealand. The subjectivist view of the

[209] Berger, P. & Luckman, T. 1991 p. 27.
[210] Peters, M. 2001; Boston et. al. 1999; Cheyne et. al. 1998.

congregation as agent, actor, history-maker, demonstrated human potential, in members who suffered and celebrated and believed, actioning desires and thoughts, according to their own lights, incidentally, providing an in-road to the third dimension – the *fatu* (heart) and the *a'ano* (flesh) of them all. The westerner may talk of it as 'soul' (Hegel's *geist* or spirit) of a people.

Self-rediscovery has been an opportune pathway for pride and faith to emerge. One can now see from this point in time the impetus residing in the heart of the community, vaguely perceived, but ticking along, (only members of the Wellington CCCS could understand in full), but which would cause anyone to wonder and judge. Nevertheless, their history is a self-explanation of their social reality, of *fa'alavelave* to which they responded at the instigation, and direction of the leadership. Their success was not instant but was rather in the sense of the expression, *sä fau ao fau pö* (it took days and nights to construct). Rev. Ete's role in the construction (or re-construction) is as plain as daylight in his colossal input on growing the church and community. Leading is one thing, the encounter is another. The transition from the institution of role performers to a community of relational obligators (positional system revived of *va-tapuia* and *va-nonofo*), ensued from *fa'alavelve*. The value of the encounter (encountered knowledge) enabled them to develop towards achieving their dream. The dream was not forgotten, yet, the encounter became a historical moment of their awakening, not to the future, but an awakening to the past. Quoting Lilikala Kame'elelihiwa:

> The Hawaiian stands firmly in the present, with his back to the future, and his eyes fixed upon the past, seeking historical answers for present day dilemmas. Such an orientation is to the Hawaiian an eminently practical one, for the future is always unknown whereas the past is rich in glory and knowledge.[211]

In profiling the church in chapter four, the new-old polemic was introduced for the *va*-view that lay stress on the whole history of the church. Playing the *va* is filled with inter-subjectivities readily obvious from informants' stories. We live by feelings and not merely matching events of causal-effect extractions; we live by thoughts and not merely to sustain our breaths like throbbing machines from one moment to the other. And we meander in crossing many spaces and times.

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[211] Trask, H. K. *The Contemporary Pacific* 1991 3 (1) p.164

The cultural view involves sociological aspects of *fa'alavelave* in relation to risks taken, and the *va*-game. During the unsettlement period of the church, more risks were taken because the *va* was always broken. Mending it was clear on the point of self-definition as 'doing', not mere description, where *fa'alavaleve* come into play as a conceiving-achieving effort (*fai se taeao, saili mälö*). Possibility, risk, and dream, are forms of uncertainty, which excite human potential. A materialist view that includes a chance argument would ascribe the suffering of members to the minimal means available to them. Modest means they might have been but still (to offer an alternative opinion), they were accessed anyhow.

The church nevertheless had merest chances of survival. Decisions at any stage of the project were rather imposed against the odds of social and economic situations, and timings were wrong. In this respect, the historical circumstance suggests that taking risks was the only option. They were conscious decisions anyway from which the congregation suffered in consequence. However, there was certainty out of the uncertainty, and it is attributed as in the stories of informants, to the strength of the *mana* belief. It re-awakened the congregation to reform the *va* with God for managing intra-inter-relationships, and the *va* with the past and the future.

The congregation imagined a secure church in having a building. In the early stages, cohesion was lacking. Cultural sensing was missing to clothe theological beliefs and normative values. The indigenisation dream, despite the attitude of the minister to the *fa'aSamoa*, essentially (necessarily) followed the *fä'aSamoa*. The historical circumstance made it necessary for them to negotiate the meaning of their church community, to reterritorialise themselves. At their disposal were the *fa'aSamoa, fa'aNiu Sila*, and *fa'aKerisiano*. Reintegration of faith was not a copycat reconstitution. It was not pride in a village, or merely as Samoans either, but pride in expression of their humanity, to be among others. Pride and faith became merged in remembering their families, their *matai*, teachers and pastors, their forbears, their history, in memory territories. They remembered *va* and *mana,* and *fa'alavelave* the social conscience, the problem, that provided the solution as well. At crisis time, they took their positions (*tulaga*).

I have said little about Rev. Ete and wife Fereni for any judgement has to come from the members of the congregation. Be that as it may, the history of the Wellington CCCS bears witness to their efforts for anyone's verdict. One important feature needs reiterating – they had a dream. It was kept alive by a concern for a

people that once was not a people, ransacked by all dynamics of deterritorialisation. It was transformed into a possibility. A moral-ethical evaluation in terms of means and ends, is not the concern here. The history largely describes what happened, and how things progressed and explains why. These can be understood in totality through sense-ing and feeling the circumstance, and the human need for relief.

Mothers of the church were the stabilising and comforting group, like an anchor in stormy times, or a shelter in rainy days. Spiritual feminism was/is present in the growth of the church. Still, the attitude towards women anyhow, culturally based or for whatever reason, has curtailed their social mobility. In this work, the Mothers Fellowship remained the 'amber' that sustained the fire when it was not burning. It has to be appreciated as the light, the warmth, the *ta'i* (guide) there all along.

To conclude, the church complex of the Wellington CCCS is an amber that re-lights memories of the past, in particular, the new past. Postcolonialism is not a signal for severance. It is lifting the cap of the old past, to retrieve the new. Post-structuralism and postmodernity have advanced the emancipatory pathway. The world is drawn again to the past beyond definitions, structures, and centres. This thesis is about projecting postcolonial indigenisation viz., identity moves in doing knowledge. The story of the Wellington CCCS provides a metaphor of this event. In its own special case, the Gospel nurtures the people and members of the congregation grows the Gospel in their way, in learning to live together, to know, to do, to be.

Imaginings, I have lots.
Fulfilling, it wasn't to be,
then,
and now.
I followed,
to what end,
is disappearing.
I called for you,
to hear you again
and then you speak:
Remember, only in **WE**
Do **I** will have any meaning.

EPILOGUE.

Tapuitea – morning-evening Star.

A ou tu mai i sisifo, e te talisua ai;
a ou tu mai i sasa'e, e te alaseu ai.
[If I appear in the west, it's time for your dinner;
if I appear in the east, it's time for dawn fishing]

The Twin-*Fale* at Owen Street is commonly referred to as Church and Hall. Its symbolic meaning, the architecture, the internal decor and iconography, is not appropriate to expound here, for meaning is not exhausted in any single person's interpretation. It is better that it be left open to personal contemplation for enriching the imagination. The utility value however of the *fale* as they stand now, has sealed a home of a historical experience, where *taeao* and *mavaega* and *gafa* are recalled and recited; where *va* and *mana* are experienced and reflected upon; where *fa'alavelave* are situated and acted out; where the future of the young and any of the community is placed and nurtured. For Samoans who pass by and see, it would project the connection of the past, the present, and the future. Culture and Christianity sail together beside each other as the *Fale-Tapua'i* (Worship House) and *Fale-Talimälö* (Hosting House) travel in history with the message that deterritorialisation is a transition, a *taeao* of founders and creators and sustainers, and their *mavaega* for continuity.

I chose to take up this study purely out of historical interest, about historical experiences and achievements of Samoans abroad. The growth of the Wellington CCCS is only one of such stories. Many stories of significant events and people have been lost, being deleted from contemplation and therefore gradually faded into dimness. *E pala le ma'a 'ae le pala le tala (*the stone rots but not the word). My sole interest is to put the experience into word, into a story, to inform others, especially the young and future generations, for their appreciation and whatever else that they themselves may contribute to the story at any time. I want to hold up the agony and ecstasy for many to touch, and the knowledge to taste, else they will vanish with the older generation when they do pass on.

I write it not for cherishing the risks, but to honour faith and pride that remedies humans from conditions of uncertainty. It does not glorify any effort but one that continues to save the learning chain of experiences that germinate and generate know-ing. It is not merely about the means to ends, but also the know-ing that senses

and creates meaning. The essential theme of development of the total human and all areas of the community, I hope is being projected. This Wellington CCCS Project is an ambitious one. Realising the development of the community in the generic sense gives a wider understanding of why it was to be ambitious.

Faith and pride are signifiers of what may drive ambition. Unreined, they tend to lose their impetus to emotionalism or rationalisation. Wisdom-language of culture derived from experience and transmitted in traditions and history, provide a safety valve from instinctive and technical-reasoning stretches. World languages have parallel meanings, but understanding the word in ones own language has a different feel. The cliché of 'learning begins at home' is still emphasised in education more than ever. Through our own mother language, we can learn more meaningfully and produce knowledge and understanding, to make needed contributions, to the stories of Knowledge economy and Knowledge Nation currently tendered. The old generations who learned in the buses, the pubs, the wharves, the sports field, the factories, and building churches, doing *fa'alavelave*, in the *va,* and encountering the *mana* all the time, have made their contributions. With limited knowledge of English, they had the Samoan language to work from/with. They learned more than often imagined, and have more knowledge than graded. I have come to understand this in my research, for their whole mental and emotional development is conditioned by *fa'alavelave,* which is as rich a site for extracting knowledge and theories on the sociology of knowledge and pedagogical methodologies. Alternative theories and practices should be found in older Samoans, by asking them to tell their experiences themselves.

I hope this study has also reflected well the managing of borders, as evident in shifting around of boundaries in light of positions, and encouraging choices, for relevant and free performance, transforming potentials to abilities. It was jumbling and juggling all the time. We are in an instant world where contentious issues and propositions have shaken Christian and theological foundational beliefs as well. These are all instances of deterritorialisation, but this is postcolonial time for rediscovering our spirituality, in culture, not in journalistic or marketed or populous theologies. It is in the philosophy of the *va*, the sociology of *fa'alavelave*, and history in *taeao, mavaega, gafa, suafa* and *fa'alupega.* And *mana.*

So I leave you with the *Mavaega a Tapuitea* above: When you see the *fale* in Newtown, recapturing its story in the evening – it is time to dine from it; in the morning – it is time to catch more.

LORD,
Thou sendest down rain
upon the uncounted millions of forest,
and givest the trees to drink exceedingly.
We are here upon this isle
a few handfuls of men [and women],
and how many myriads upon myriads
of stalwart trees.
Teach us the lesson of the trees.
The sea around us,
which this rain recruits,
teems with the race of fishes;
teach us Lord the meaning of the fishes.
Let us see ourselves for what we are,
one out of the countless number of clans
of thy handiwork.
When we would despair,
let us remember that these also serve
to please Thee.

R.L.Stevenson: ***Prayers at Vailima***

APPENDIX 1.

MANA.

In Polynesia, *mana,* generally interpreted as power, is central to religious beliefs. Western definitions associate it with supernaturalism, forcing it to be understood in the material-spiritual dualism. In understanding *mana* from the Samoan perspective, the notion of fate (*mala*) comes into play prominently.

To avoid fate, is an ontological statement. The Samoan adage "*E momoe ma manü 'ae sau mala e atia'i*" (We sleep with blessings but fate comes to check) has a predictable notion, suggesting something beyond human control. Its ontological status is language-based, but the problematic of fate is an epistemological issue. In any sense, empirical, rational, or irrational, we attempt to avoid fate by compliance with norms, or to counter its manifested forms. Generally now, fate is conceived capable of being prevented by human decision and action, but experience reminds us that human efficacy is hardly ever sufficient to remove the fate kingdom. Fate is the rupture of blessing and it depends on the worldview one takes to look-on, that is, whether life is necessarily fateful, or blissful.

Modernism has brushed aside a mystical cause either of blessing or fate. The rational and scientific human is at the center of life, a legacy of the Enlightenment. However, Horkheimer and Adorno in *Dialectic of Enlightenment* pointed out a repeated 'return' to *mana* as a sign of decadence or a point of discontinuity in the history of ideas. *Mana* to them is the supernatural, which paradoxically, is also continuous in thought that suggests a cyclical history,[212] implying its ever-presence.

An imposed term, supernatural signifies a phenomenon in the study of Pacific religion often associated with magical powers, divination, dreams, and anything in the category of the unknown scientifically, the unexplainable.

> Belief in the supernatural is, however, widespread and profound. Spirits will pervade the world of the modern Samoan. Because of the decline of magic, magicians, and magical formulas, he feels that he has lost contact with, and some control of, the spiritual world in which his ancestors flourished. He feels helpless, and is probably even more superstitious than were his pre-Christian forebears. The early missionaries, of course, tended to breed superstition. They were themselves mostly very credulous, and often poor observers. They did little to alleviate the Samoans' fear of the unknown.[213]

[212] Cumming, J [tran] 1998. Myth and *Mana* are not erased once and for all as the modernist seemed to believe. It is the 'ghost' of history that keeps appearing.
[213] Rose, R. 1959. p. 97. Chapters XI-XIII elaborates.

Early missionaries themselves were aware of the unknown. They introduced another power to eliminate the fate of ignorance from human consciousness, by having faith, but faith always is the reason for *tapua'iga* (praying in hope). Rose seemed to suggest a push button removal. Delete superstition and the nature of fateful events are capable of being described. Yet, in the worldview of Samoans, there are mysteries, hence fate, that cannot be explained.

Samoans believe that 'fate does not come as daylight' (*e lë sau fa'a-ao mala*) alluding to the existence of unopposed forces. So fate is the reason for being cautious throughout life. This is constant warning. Just as fate is true to experience, so is *mana*, as a cause, or a counter. Though conceived as the 'other' superimposition, it is the extra-natural within the natural realm of human affairs recognized sometimes instantly, sometimes gradually, sometimes in a medium, sometimes in a revelation, sometimes intuitively. At the event of a drastic atrocity, the thought of *mana* comes to mind. Strong in today's thinking is placing history in human determination. Samoans believed the same with a conviction that in the midst of it all, *mana* somehow interferes to prevent or intervenes to enable.

Mana has been analysed and labeled in categories of *mana-Atua* (God), the *mana-tagata* (human), the *mana-o-tua'a* (ancestors), the *mana-fanua* (land), *mana-upu* (word), and so forth.[214] They are forms of manifestations. *Mana* is even conceived as a quality, associated with the power of knowledge. It is my contention that *mana* is not limited to the fetishism of the unknown, or of the extra-terrestrial realm. It is extra-natural (but natural it is) in the world of humans, always offering a possibility. The old way of objectifying and analysing no longer applied to the understanding of *mana* from a postcolonial standpoint.

Mana has been/is tested out and in this sense, experimented on. Rev. Siaosi Leleimalefaga who was the minister at Utuali'i village (late 1970s), suffered extreme pain as a result of a bone of a sea-eel he ate that got stuck in his throat (*laoa*). He would not heed the advice of parishioners to get Kako Ai'i to heal him especially when the treatment was described to him. He was too scientifically minded to accept a weird type of treatment. Getting more uncomfortable, Kako was eventually sent for. The healer made him open his mouth and mumbo-jumbo a formula while fanning his opened mouth with a special leaf. He was told that for the next three mornings, he

[214] See Barlow, C. 1996 p. 61.This is not done in Samoa. It is knowledged but not defined. Samoans are definition prone and very scientifically minded, very analytical people as well, but not with *mana*.

should wake up early to open his mouth to the rising sun, and the rest was done from home. Pathetic though, the minister obliged anyway, and on the third day he felt the bone becoming dislodged from his throat and he spat it out. Another incident in 1966 concerned a Malua Theological College student. The College visited Piula Theological College (Methodist) in their annual get-together. A game of cricket was played and a ball was hit to the direction of the stone fence beside the road. The Malua student ran towards the fence to catch it causing Piula students to chorus out 'Don't' (*'aua*). It was too late. He was on the fence catching the ball. Then a stone slipped off. Piula students stood in silence. They knew. They told us after the match that the student was going to be expelled. Two weeks later, a secret misdemeanor of the Malua student was revealed and he was eventually expelled.

The experiment has been in history. Kako continued a tradition passed on from family healers of old. It worked for generations otherwise it would not be practiced. For the Piula fence, it had happened many times before. There are some things in life that cannot be explained; we only know and live by it.[215]

Mana has been analysed in the light of another 'knowledge interest', to prove and to technologise (magic). The need to scientificate whatever comes across the human knowledge path in modernity tends to rule out the phenomenological perspective. But science is the instrumentation of thoughts to probe (experiment) in wonder. In most cases the findings created new terminology that alter the way of looking at things (lexical effect). The reductionist interest to split up anything to probe further into the nature of a substance does not offer just the bare characteristic for definition. It is understood 'in relation' to something else, to a whole, structurally, functionally, and conceptually.

Mana as extra-natural in the religious interest renders an understanding of the unknown capable of known experientially. It signifies something true and continuously knowable (not in details) that we may ignore by choice. For the purpose of this thesis, *mana* explains what the people were wondering about, hoping for, relied upon, as the ever possibility in life. There is nothing wrong in traversing the unknown by taking risks. *Mana* is the *fäiä* (bridge) between the known and the unknown, the possible and impossible. It moves life – a living story.

[215] They were scientifically verified by the experiment formula of its time before modern practice.

APPENDIX II.

VA and FA'A-SAMOA.

'Way of life' invokes the notion of culture and identity, spurring interest in systemic and structural foundations of society *vis-a-vis* human action, and description that cannot ignore historical and psychological information. *Fa'aSamoa* is a way of life in which *va* is the dominant conceptual and action force. *Va* goads an emotional ambivalence for Samoans, one of being gripped by a cultural consciousness that an individual would desire freedom from; the other of valuing its aesthetic ambience that engenders admiration of an order open to expression and flexibility. *Va* in the *fa'a-Samoa* is both knowledge and power (opening and grip) and conceiving it to encompass all designated meanings of the English word 'relations' is a good beginning.

Meaning	Literal	Figurative	Conceptual	
Va: - *nimonimo* - *laolao*	Space beyond visual unoccupied	absence, expanse, heaven open	not inconceivable incomprehensible, free	
Va: - *lalata* - *mamao / loloa*	Distance close far / limitless	measurable reachable / intimate unreachable	calculable approachable unapproachable	
Va: ma'ava, ava - *aisi*	Opening break	apart / ajar divide	disconnected allocate	
Va - *mavae*	Between, open up / part	interval parting / farewell	connectedness remember	
Va-fealoa'i ***- feagai***	Social inter-face, in relation to	behave accordingly, reciprocity	recognize dignity, relationships	

Relations - relationships, for what they signify are perplexing concepts themselves. The adorning strength of the *fa'aSamoa* lies in its 'ambiguity' portending the convolution of *va* that is hardly obscured in ethnographic works by Margaret Mead[216] Derek Freeman[217] and Jeanette Mageo.[218] In her exegesis of the Samoan

[216] 1928
[217] 1983
[218] 1998

'self', Mageo has dug into the psychological-deep of the social fabric of the Samoan way of life to analyse the content of constituting elements that configures Samoan character and culture. Guided through by the egocentric-sociocentric dichotomy, her study adapts the psychological positivist paradigm to a cognitive end, wading through in logico-lexical analysis conflated with interpretations of formal-informal behaviour. The concepts in the text in which the predominant sociocentric Samoan 'self' is expounded, may be difficult for readers to digest. The sociocentric idea however provides another hint to the complexity of *va*. Freeman opted to un-conceal the 'dark side' of the *fa'aSamoa* in countering the 'uncontentious, free-loving' image by Mead. Freeman exposed the border-*va*, and Mead the open-*va*, that will be discussed later. All three but Mageo's exposition in particular, reflect the ambiguity-darkness of the *fa'aSamoa* they painstakingly endeavoured to throw light upon.

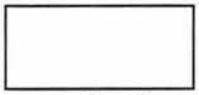
Any culture is a complex entity and the lexical foundation of cognition continues to be a problem for cultural understanding as meaning keeps changing from time to time. Revision and conflation of concept signifiers take different but concurrent syntactical processes of meaning production through retention-connection of existing *va* (spaces), rearranging meaning harmonies for social interaction. Sense is in knowing the *va*.

Up to this point, the reader has certainly been involved in a task of managing the language *va*, the thought-view *va*, author-reader *va*, for procuring understanding. Knowledge as the guiding theme proposes *va* as its cognitive basis, production of knowledge as participation in the *va*, and basic to any 'way of life' is the managing of *va*. In the cognitive sense, *va* is objective just as in admitting to the cognition of the *va-thing* (that which occupies the distance {space} between two positions) and *va-nothing* (why it is called 'space' - *noa*). The interplay between *va* and *noa* is important.

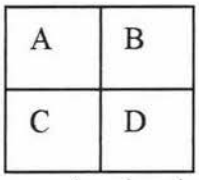
A□	□B
A → B – *Va* : Space or Distance - thing	
implies - *Noa* : unoccupied - nothing	
derives - *Ava-noa* : empty, opportunity (*ava* - opening, ajar)	

Occupying the *noa* is the occupation of *va*. The *va* is occupied in three ways: by connecting, filling or partly, and closing. When a space is closed, *va* becomes a

'border between' creating two entities, more in progression, and when bordered, it is *tapu* (taboo).



Open empty (*noa*) space (*va*).



Bordered spaces are *tapu* enclosures; borders become *va* i.e. between.

Va, Tapu, Feagai.

A homogenous society in Durkheim's opinion "has no arrangement" being a single mass "whose parts were not distinguished from one another...devoid of all definite form and all organization."[219] Though he believed that religion is predominant in the social life of such a society, he rejected Fustel de Coulange's view that social organization was derived from religious belief. Durkheim believed otherwise that social arrangements explain religious beliefs, religion being a 'psychic' development of homogeneous group solidarity. Contrary to the first point, Samoa as a homogeneous society is highly organised with a well defined social structure. It is also an error to isolate the religious from social arrangement on which the *tapu* system is based. *Tapu* reflects boundaries between:

Human (in general) ***and***		**Individual** ***and***	
God -	*tapu-Atua*		
human -	*tapu-tagata*	family -	*tapu-aiga*
land -	*tapu-eleele*	community -	*tapu-nu'u*
sea -	*tapu-sami*	religion -	*tapu-lot*
sky/heaven -	*tapu-lagi*	nation -	*tapu-malo*

Fa'aSamoa is a *tapu*-retaining system, hence observance of *va*. Besides geographical boundaries, Samoan villages (*nu'u*) are also bordered against others by

[219] 1933 [1964 ed]. p.174

their socio-historical heritages identified by their honorifics *(faalupega)*, so as families (*aiga*), so as titleholders (*matai)*, the same with grounds *(malae)*, constituting their identities. Honorifics are always formally addressed (*fa'alagi*) by non-locals when visiting a village, and to all Samoans, one bears in mind the recognition of *Le fanua ma le tapu-a-fanua*[220] (The land and the *tapu* of the land). Every village or family is a different enclosure with its social bordering *vis-a-vis* appropriate conduct including speech mode. These social boundaries are locally observed as the mechanism for maintaining order in respect of activities and upkeep of moral codes. *Tapu-a-fanua* may be considered a parallel to the English 'Law of the Land' with a sacred content.

Social arrangement is installed by identifying and creating boundaries. Worth noting is the (1) revised meaning of *va* as space (open, free) to border; (2) *FaaSamoa* socio-political organization based on a bordering system (*tapu* system), for these intimate that social boundaries provide principles of the *fa'aSamoa* with *feagai* ('in relation to') the operant conditioning. Lonise Tanielu reflected on her younger life in Samoa:

> "From a very early age, I was conditioned to sit quietly in the presence of older people, lower myself when walking in front of people, behave and address people appropriately, eat and drink sitting down, and demonstrating modesty in whatever I did."[221]

Relational *(feagai)* social conditioning also is orientation towards cognisance of *va* (space) where 'in relation to people' (*feagai ai ma tagata*) operates, people as *tapu* enclosures bordered by their identities, the sociocentric self of family and village. *Feagai* has several related meanings that 'attending to' can envelop in general.

Feagai:

- facing
- opposing
- counterpart

Equals: in rank, ability, age, gender, role.

- to take care of
- be responsible to / for

not-Equals: *aide-de-camp*, mother and child etc. and attending to a task or to other bodies.

[220] *Fanua* is used interchangeably with *ele 'ele*. See *tapu* table above. Perhaps a more fitting translation of the expression can be "The land and the culture of the land."

[221] Jones, Herds, Suaali'i [eds] 1999 p.52

Where *va* is not a social space, it is a free platform. As social space, it is distance between two points (see *tapu* table above). *Feagai* is the means principle that connects the distance. Where *va* is a boundary, *feagai* is the means for opening. *Va-feagai* conjoined determines the nature of inter-relations. Leaupepe[222] explains,

> "The culture of Samoa, it is all reverence and deference, a loving heart, a giving hand, for it insist on respectful inter-facing [*va fealoaloa'i*]. These aspects of the culture begin from within:
>
> In the relation of families
> In the relation of parents
> In the relation of parents and offspring
> In the relation of the eldest and siblings
> In the relation of real and adopted brothers [and sisters]
> In the relation of the village and Church
> In the relation of the village and the district
> In the relation of the village and the Constitutional State" [223]

There are more, but to be constantly caged by the *va*-consciousness is a grip as mentioned before from which one would rather seek detachment, equally debilitative for Samoans of different cultural orientations, or with lengthy exposure to another way of life, in adjusting to village living for the same reason.[224] As knowledge, *va* is more complex than often assumed, learned through the sociocentric self by continual participation within the *va feagai* social order. Two general principles are essential for primary orientation namely *Va-tapuia* and *Va-nonofo*.

Va-tapuia is the accented *va*, - definite, rigid, tabooed. Rank and file relation in the military culture is an example. Commonwealth countries regard for the Head of State is another, and in this one, there seems to be an aura ascribed to the person in the

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[222] op. cit.

[223] ibid. Translation (mine) of the Samoan text; *va-feagai* is rendered *relation*; *of* can also be *between*. *Alo* in the word *fealoaloa'i*, means 'front' or 'stomach' emphasizing face-to-face relations in mutual respectability.

[224] See Mackay, C.G.R. 1968, ch. XIV for the parable of the returning son, and Albert Wendt's *Sons for the Return Home*. Because it is open, filled, closed, *va* continues to change and this may even be harder for some to discern the way it is played at times. An attempt to introduce another game into the *va* is often fatal.

position. Marsack[225] told a case he presided concerning a defendant charged with shooting a pastor of his village. Presented evidence in court could only confirm a murder conviction and there was unanimity of opinions between him and two Samoan assessors until the time to formalize the decision. One assessor remarked that 'no Samoan would dare shoot a pastor' which influenced a reverse decision. A pastor is accorded high regard and addressed as the *Fa'afeagaiga,*[226] and note, not of the church, but of the village. When addressed, the *Fa'afeagaiga* is identified by the honorifics of the village and therefore, no one 'dare' shoot a pastor. *Va-tapuia* is observed in many forms - between the *matai* and untitled persons, between brother and sister to name two. The sister is regarded the *feagaiga*[227] of the brother to/for whom he is responsible, and would not dare dim her aura in any way. Each extended family has a *feagaiga* in a *matai* title of another family unit, treated as per brother-sister relationship. In breaking the *va-tapuia* border, one has to 'excuse' his/herself (*tulou* action; *fa'atulou, tulouna* in speech). A defamatory act is better avoided.

In contrast, *va-nonofo* (literally - 'sitting distance') is flexible. It appeals to the notion of intimacy, of close living and neighbourliness, at the same time, the social space/distance is calculated, competed, and manipulated. Political activity is carried out in this context and if relations go sour resulting in a social crisis, the emotional content of *va-nonofo* is summoned.[228] How boundaries are juggled around is the fascination and frustration of *va-feagai* in the *va-nonofo* context. Relational actions are calculated and assessed in terms of behaviour, speech and material content of cultural presentations, even emotional quantity and weight are carefully anticipated.

Va provides the analytical space for cognitive relativistic understanding. One most convoluted but a term of great import in the Samoan language is *tofā.*

- goodbye
- sleep
- contemplation
- specific fine mat (*ie toga*) in cultural presentations.

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[225] Masack, C. C. 1961

[226] Prefix *Fa'a* - made to be; *feagaiga* - counterpart. *Feagaiga* is an intimate term. See below.

[227] Often the import of the *faafeagaiga* (pastor) is explained in terms of the *feagaiga* (sister status). The latter includes the meaning of contract, agreement, treaty; the terms of which determine the *va-feagai*.

[228] Shore, B. 1984 described the involvement of *Sa-le-Muli 'aga* socio-political unit in near villages to normalise a critical situation in Sala'ilua village through the traditional *va-nonofo* principle.

In formal deeper mode of understanding, farewell substitutes goodbye but the French *au revoir* is more applicable to the Samoan context. Sleep is not merely resting but in the sense of 'sleeping on a thought' thus linking it on to contemplation. The question now is - Why *tofä* identifies a fine mat in presentations?

To Whom
- Matai – chief [not the orator]
- Family as a whole.

When
- Presentation by one family, or group to another
- Gifting of dignitaries in special occasions

Why
- Acknowledging dignity of others
- Acknowledgement of connections
- Formally saying goodbye

All fine-mats in presentations are gift contributions for an occasion. The *tofä* is the exception. It is not presented if there is no formal concrete connection between two parties. These connections are either genealogical or historical and it is amazing how ancient some are, but still closely retained. Apart from acknowledging connections when meeting formally, the presenting of the *tofä* come parting *(mävae)* time, has a message 'to remember', and *remembering* (spatio-temporal emotional and conscious connector) will the receding party 'sleep on'. At home, the *tofä* fine mat becomes part of the *matai* (chief) bedding which literally means, he *tofä* (sleeps on it), to say that while he sleeps, he works. Subsequently, the expressed opinion or view of a chief in deliberations is called *tofä*, but note, the common antefix address of an orator is tofä as well. Being spokespersons for chiefs and the mouthpiece of communities (family, village, district, church), orators 'sleep on connections', - learning, remembering, calculating, matching, juggling, creating, and editing thoughts and speech, analysing likely circumstances, devising strategies and counter strategies, - all within the *va*-structure of consciousness. Figuratively, the *tofä*-prefix for orators suggests that they cannot relax, or that sleeping is their waking (meditating). *Toffee* synthesises knowledge (*poto*), wisdom (*atamai*), skill (*agava'a*), and knowing (*iloa*) to be demonstrated through *va-feagai* (relations) in accordance with *Va-tapuia* and *Va-*

nonofo. While *va-nonofo* is like an excursion into space, *va-tapuia* provides the anchor base.

Language of the *va* is formal, honorific and metaphoric. In *va-tapuia* vernacular, interactions exudes an ambience of sacrosanctity, saliently amplified in *va fa'atamali'i* (noble reciprocity characterized by discrete and controlled dispensation). *Va-nonofo* tends towards the exercise of rhetoric allowing incidental humour to evaporate a density of the atmosphere that may develop. But it is far more meaningfully deeper and heart reaching in its emotive capacity on occasions of social crisis, at which time, the *va-tapuia* is drawn in, explained, and appealed to, for a solution. Language constructs the *va,* and can also destroy it, and mend it as well. To be fully conversant with the *va,* mastering the language is essential to understand its ways and dynamics, in order to participate adequately and confidently in dialogues. The Psychology of the *va* is an interesting topic to probe.

APPENDIX III.

FA'ALAVELAVE.

A common meaning of *fa'alavelave* is referred to by Tim O'Meara[229] as 'public occasions' or 'ceremonial system' (weddings, funerals, dedication of buildings etc.) which he described in terms of the exchange theory of reciprocity in gift giving. Well described on the accounting side, there is much more to it than a balance-sheet explanation. Important to understand is that:

> *Fa'alavelave* ceremonies are important not only as foci for giving and receiving goods, however. Villagers also attend these ceremonies for socializing and for diversion. Ceremonies create an air of importance and excitement that interrupts the routine of daily life. In order to create a feeling of tension and excitement, villagers combine in a single public ceremony many of the things that matter most to them: food, money, competition in an open forum, a chance for men to display their knowledge and skill at oration, a chance to command and impress, a chance for women to take center stage for a moment as they display their fine mats, a chance for young men and women to meet and talk amid the turmoil of their labor. But fa'alavelave ceremonies are above all, the public affairs of large extended families, and few Samoans are yet so wealthy that they can afford to withdraw from the mutual support and security system which is the ultimate foundation. Nor is the there any significant national insurance or social security system to take over that function of the extended family...a source of economic security, as well as an important source of pleasure, power, and prestige.[230]

We have to turn to the suggestion of the language to extract a conceptual understanding.

The root *lave* (hook) is doubled *lavelave* (intermingle, complicate) and added the prefix *fa'a* (to make like) gives the noun a verb sense. *Lave* has the notion of hooking-on to hook-in suggesting constraint and prevention, including also the notion of joining and it leads on to making complicated or intermingling structures. It is a problem first, of 'impeding', and the other, of the 'many'. In any *fa'alavelave* problem or occasion, social, political, economic, and spiritual aspects are involved.

'*Ua säüa a'u i le va*' (I am affected by the *va*) is a constant reminder of the constraint that regulates. Before any orator could speak on behalf of a group, a prior negotiating debate is carried out in which intended speakers tender their credentials as according to status, ability and age until a consensus is reached. But the selection in

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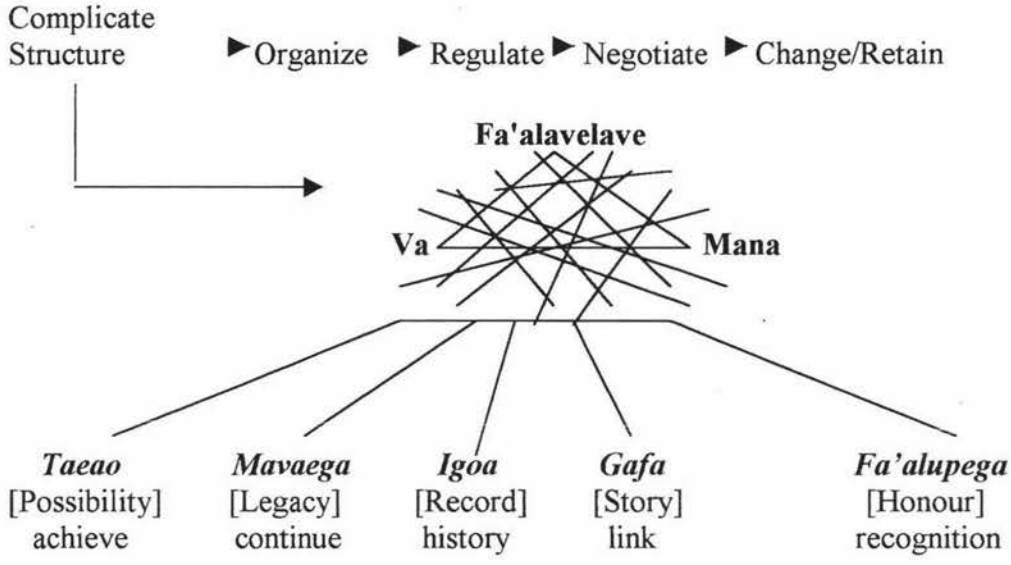
[229] O'Meara 1990 pp. 201-216.
[230] ibid. pp.215-216

this way is made complicated (*fa'alavelave*) where reasons are hooked-on-hooked-in relations, and always having in mind the relation to the audience. Regulated *va* is complicated by the allowance of negotiation. Debaters after giving in will offer a word of blessing to the selected speaker, and everyone else from his group, after which they *tapua'i* (pray for the speech to go well) as a speech in the Samoan context is complicated, and also, has to be done with caution. Writ large, the speech is like a *fa'alavelave* and the demonstrative and theoretical go hand in hand, always hooking onto/into *va* and *mana.*

Cosmological and Social Worldview



The fact that *va* regulates *fa'alavelave* yet allow for negotiation, means that "ceremonial systems is far less traditional than it appears on the surface" and "endures because Samoans have adapted it to their current needs, not because Samoans or their culture are inherently conservative."[231] Yet again, while *fa'alavelave* demonstrate culture, it burst through culture, much to say about constructivism and creativity. It retains and changes *fa'aSamoa*. Briefly, *fa'alavelave* is the social worldview and the social theory of the Samoans. It is the everyday experience or consciousness. It is the platform of learning where problem solving put the emphasis not on the answer but the method, the way, the strategy, the doing. Life is hooking-on-hooking-in, complicated, intermingling, including the obvious (observable) and phenomena.

[231] ibid p. 214.

APPENDIX IV.

Lauga

Lotu Tupulaga Talavou : Pulega
10 Fepuari 2002

Tanielu 6:6-10
Filipi 2:14-18
Mataio 5:14-16

Matua: *"O outou o le malamalama o le lalolagi outou. Ia fa'apea ona pupula atu lo outou malamalama I luma o tagata, ina ia latou iloa la outou amio lelei, latou te vivi'I atu ai I lo outou Tama o I le lagi." (You are the light of the world. Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven)* [Mataio 5:14 & 16]

Ua taou masani uma i le malamalama, o lona aoga ma lona taua mo le tagata soifua. E mana'omia e le tagata le malamalama mo lona ola maloloina i le tino, e faapena fo'I I le aoao o le foafoaga. Ua foafoaina fo'i i le poto ma le atamai pa'ia o le Atua ina ia iai le malamalama o le ao, ona e le mafai ona soifua ma ola lelei le tagata pe afai e leai se malamalama. Ua tatou maua fo'i i tala a le Kenese i le foafoaina o le lalolagi I le amataga, o le malamalama lava na ulua'I faia ina ua gaoioi le Agaga o le Atua I le so'ona nunumi ma le gaogao sa iai.

Tatou te mana'omia uma le malamalama faaletino: o le malamalama o moli ma le malamalama o le la, mo le faatinoina o a tataou fe'au ma galuega, aua e faigata ona galue I le pouliuli. Ua masani fo'i ona fa'aaogaina le upu malamala e faamatalaina ai le poto ma le atamai, ona o le iloa o se mea fou o le faapupulaina lea o mata o le mafaufau ma tatalaina ai le loto e se mea fou e malamalama ai. Ua fa'atatau fo'I le malamalama i nisi taimi I le va'ai ua manino I mata o le tagata, o le pupula o mata ma iloa ai le mea e savali ai.....

O outou o le malamalama o le lalolagai. O le saunoaga a Iesu I ona so'o, ma e ua mulimuli I le talitonu ma le fa'atuatua ia Iesu. Ua fa'atusaina I latou I le malamalama o lo'o pupula ma susulu I le lalolagai pogisa. O le ata faigofie lea ona manino ma iloa e tagata lona uiga. *We have been chosen by Jesus himself to shine for Him here on earth. That's what we are here for. Jesus said, "You are the light of the world." What a privilege!!*

O lo tatou vala'auina lea i le lalolaga. Ua tatou ola i se lalolaaga pogisa i le agasala. Ua pogisa i a tatou lava amio i nise taimi, ma o tatou vaivaiga faatupulaga talavou, aemaise p a tatou taumamao ma Iesu. O le fesili: E faapefea ona vea i tatou ma malamalama i le lalolagai, pe afai o i tatou o tagata agasala? How can we become light of the world if we are sinners? e le mafai ona avea i tatou ma malamalama o le lalolagi, pe afai e le muamua ona tatou talia faamaoni Iesu e fai mo tatou Ali'i fa'aola, ona faatoa mafai ai lea onatatou susulu.

O le upu moni e leai so tatou lava malamalama. *We cannot shine on our own, because there is darkness which needs to be dispelled from our lives.* Ua pei I tatou o le masin, ua leai sona ia lava malamalama, as ua susulu le masina i le pogisa, ona ua susulu atu

iai le malamalama o le la, ona *reflect* mai ai lea o le malamalama. *Likewise, we can only reflect the light of Christ within us.* O le finagalo o le Atua ina ia avea I tatou ma auala atu o lona malamalama e tai ese ai le pogisa, a o Iesu lava o Ia o le malamalama moni o le lalolagi na te faamalamalamaina le pogisa o aia. Ua peiseai I tatou o *light-holders* e tauaveina le malamalama o Keriso. *We are his reflected light.*

Muamua: ***O le malamalama e ao ina va'aia e tagata.*** *A light is first and foremost something wwhich is meant to be seen.* O le aoga lea o le malamalama ina ia mafai ona iloa ma va'aia e tagata. O le mana'o fo'i lea o Iesu mo ona so'o ma lana ekalesia, ia faapea ona pupula atu lo outou malamalama i luma o tagata, ina ia latou iloa la outou amio lelei, ma latou vivi'i ai i le Atua.

E toatele olaga sa avea ma malamalama o le Atua i le Feagaiga Tuai. Sa pupula ai a latou amiolelei i le pogisa o o latou si'osi'omaga. Olaga talavou e pei o Tanielu ma taulele'a sa-Iuta i Papelonia. Ua le fefefe i tulafono a le malo i mea'ai ma vaiinu a le tupu i le maota, ae ua pupula pea lo latou faatuatua i totonu o nu'uese. Ua le a'ai i mea'ai pe feinu i uaina a le tupu ona e fa'asaina i le lotu Iutaia. Na pupula malamalama o latou olaga faa-tama Iutaia i se si'osi'omaga faigata. *Even in hostile environment the Jewish youths could still shine forth for their religious values and Jewish traditions.* .....

This is the challenge for us young people today. How much of our Christian values and traditions are we showing forth in our lives and attitudes. Do we have the courage to shine for Christ even in a worldly environment? Christianity is something which is meant to be seen and perfectly visible to all men.

Lua: ***O le malamalama e avea ma fa'asino ala ma ta'ita'iala. A light is a guide. It is something to make clear the way.*** E le mafai ona tulauele'ele se vaalele I le po e aunoa ma le malamalama. E le mafai foi ona malaga se ta'avale I le pogisa e auno ma ona moli. O le apoapoa'iga lena a le aposetolo o Paulo i le au kerisiano i Filipi. O se tasi le o ekalesia sa pele ma naunau aia le aposetolo, o lo'o iai kerisiano lelei ma le tumau ma le faamaoni ia Iesu. Fai mai lana tusi: Ia avea outou ma fanau a le Atua e le pona i totonu o le tupulaga anio faapi'opi'o, ua outou susulu atu iai faapei o mea e fa'amalamalama a'i le lalolagi. "*so that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, in which you shine like stars in the world.*".....

Tolu: ***O le malamalama e mafai on lapata'iina ai tagata. A light can often be a worning light.*** E iai fale ua ta'ua o fale-malamalama po'o light houses. O totonu o ia fale ua iai se malamalama tele o lo'o taamilomilo ma 'emo'emo ai. O lalo ifo o lena fale e masani ona iai mi papa 'ala po'o se mea e fai ma faafitauli mo faigamalaga i va'a. O le faamoemoe la o lenei malamalama ina ia lapata'i ma fa'ailoa atu i tagata folau i le sami ni mea faatupu faalavelave, ina ia uiui mamao ese mai ai. *Likewise, it is our reponsibility as reflected light of Jesus in the world, to warn our brothers and sisters of the dangerous and perilous spots of life, from which we need to keep away and steer clear of.*

Blessed are you, if you have been able to save a soul from destruction, by being a warning light to it. It is sad to see many young lives being lost spiritually, emotionally, socially because we have failed to be a warning light. Ioe.....

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Susuga e,
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